

IN THE GALLERIES



Dan Rule

TRILOGIES

The tangle of themes that weave their way through *Trilogies* - a group show featuring works by video, sound and multimedia artists and collectives such as Erik Bunker, Soda_Jerk, OtherFilm and Willoh S. Weiland (of Aphids) - covers ideas surrounding science fiction, performance, pop-cultural sampling, and discursive and technological histories. Unfortunately, a good share aren't half as engaging as their premise. Swedish artist Bunker's suite of "speculative essays" is a longwinded highlight. His 60-minute film and monologue *The Girl Who Never Was* (2013) sees him use Stanley Kubrick's *2001: Space Odyssey* (and its central protagonist, artificial intelligence unit HAL 9000) as a lens through which to explore histories and mythologies surrounding the first example of a recorded human voice. Soda_Jerk samples and juxtaposes various filmic sequences to explore notions of hauntology, which proves playful in part, but is so light in its gestures that it leaves us wanting more.

Until March 15; The Substation, 1 Market Street, Newport, 9391 1110, thesubstation.org.au

WITH HER FEET OFF THE GROUND

Organised by curator Simone Hine, *With Her Feet off the Ground* centres on the female form in various states of flux, suspension and transition. The show's allegorical trace is clear from the start, but poignant. Today's supposedly liberated context has only added to the miasma of expectations besetting contemporary women. Heidi Yardley's stunning oil painting and Barbara Brugola's split-screen video both operate via the visual language of collage, each representing the female cut and



(Clockwise from above) *After the rainbow detail 1*, by Soda_Jerk, from the *Trilogies* group show; Clare Rae's *Untitled Testing; North*, by Brent Harris, 2014.
PHOTO: (TRILOGIES) MATT MURPHY

spliced into the landscape. Clare Rae's ongoing photographic investigation of performance, gesture and self manifests in three works featuring the artist, semi-dressed, in various states of gestural and contortive "conversation" with the architectural setting. Her works might be read as flashes of ingenuity and improvisation - the female form embracing and transcending its environment. Likewise, Kawita Vatanajyankur's video work *The Robes* shows the artist testing the limits of the body in a kind of balancing act, hanging precariously above a bed of laundry, her own body "pegged" to a washing line until she eventually falls.
Until March 29; Counihan Gallery, Brunswick Town Hall, 233 Sydney Road, Brunswick, 9389 8622, moreland.vic.gov.au/gallery

BRENT HARRIS: DREAMER

Rarely has prominent Melbourne artist Brent Harris made works to the dimensions of the towering canvases that fill Tolarno Galleries for his new show *Dreamer*, let alone in the form of

highly detailed and rendered oil paintings. These new works are the after-effect of his recent forays into compact, highly energised and colour-drenched gouache and charcoal works - a suite of which occupies the remaining wall of the space. There's a direct dialogue at play between these stunning small paintings on board - which feature vibrant clusters of abstract daubs and vague, shadowy figures amid almost toxic colouration - and the large oils. Some act as direct studies, where others seem like looser testing grounds. There's an obvious figurative and fantastical element to the oils, with impish figures and bearded nudes frolicking and reclining amid the landscape. While the gouaches feel more realised and happily elusive, Harris' oils shine when he employs a lighter palette; his cloud-like hazes of whites and blues are a breath of fresh air amid the muddles of murkier, darker colours.
Until April 4; Tolarno Galleries, level 4, 104 Exhibition Street, city, 9654 6000, tolarnogalleries.com