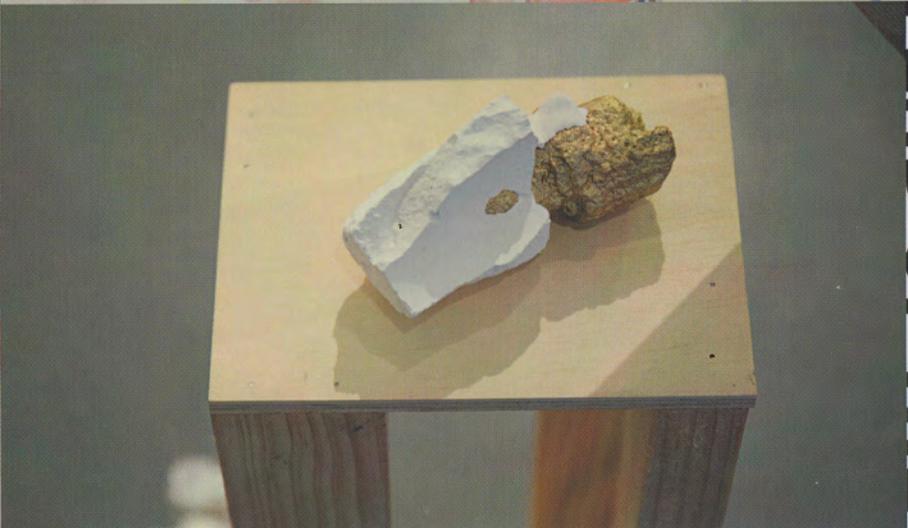


**CURTAIN CALL
THE ROUGH END OF THE PINEAPPLE**



BLINDED IT'S

In recent times, it seems like the Queensland arts scene is always in the ascendant. Visitors to the northern capital come back excited by the latest exhibition at the imposing QAGOMA on the banks of the mighty Brisbane River. In August this year guests at the opening of the 2014 Melbourne Art Fair were treated to the spectacle of a triumphant procession through the colonial architecture of the Royal Exhibition Building by the bizarrely costumed Pope Alice, the creation of Brisbane artist Luke Roberts. At the same event they were scrambling for the golden coins being tossed around by tuxedoed models and paying homage to the always suave Gold Coast artist Michael Zavros as he held court in a gleaming Rolls Royce in a physical and cultural space that had traditionally been reserved for Melbourne and Sydney galleries and artists.

However beneath the bling this supposed cultural ascendancy has shallow roots. The recent death of former Queensland Premier Wayne Goss reminded many people of how he had deposed the corrupt National Party government that had held power across generations, institutionalised anti-intellectualism and overseen an extended period of cultural stagnation. While there were those who stayed and supported the tough independent art scene that struggled to survive in Brisbane it wasn't so long ago that there seemed to be a one-way flood of Queensland artists, musicians, writers, curators, intellectuals and thinkers away from the Deep North fleeing to the southern states or further afield, escaping the shadow of what was effectively a police state.

Melbourne has always been a tough nut to crack if you hail from other parts of the country. It has also been the place where you can make a truly national (or even international) reputation for your work. In more recent times the traffic of artists and curators has usually been more about seeking new opportunities to extend their practice and creating new networks rather than escaping the depredations of a corrupt regime. It was this that drew Christine Morrow, Renai Grace, Pip Haydon and Simon Koger to Melbourne in the early 2000s.

Each brought with them a wealth of experience from their artistic or curatorial practice in Queensland, being involved in major exhibitions

and projects across the state. However they discovered that all of their experience and knowledge counted for very little in the big pond that is the Melbourne arts scene. In response they needed to make their own opportunities and founded BLINDSIDE in the heart of the unique creative hub known as the Nicholas Building. Their first exhibition coincided with the Melbourne Art Fair of 2004 and immediately attracted attention.

Although the original BLINDSIDE board would probably have thought the idea incredibly parochial, it is apparent that from the outset BLINDSIDE has created opportunities for artists from north of the Tweed River to showcase their work in the southern capital through its exhibitions and projects. This special *Curtain Call* exhibition celebrates this tradition, bringing together the work of a selection of artists who originally hailed from Queensland, but now call Melbourne their home. It asks them the question whether their upbringing and experience of Queensland has had any effect upon their identity and artistic practice.

Xanthe Dobbie made the move to Melbourne in 2010 to study at RMIT. Growing up in Queensland instilled in her work an attitude that is based around challenging certain social and political approaches. Dobbie's work has been coloured by a cynicism towards those who share certain views, bigots, racists and homophobes—attitudes she felt were prevalent in the Sunshine Coast. For Dobbie, the move to Melbourne was an easy one, Queensland was never a good fit for her, and Melbourne promised more opportunities for her practice, more galleries and more art schools.

The Asia Pacific Triennial, which began in 1993 at the Gallery of Modern Art, became the first major project of its kind in the world to focus on the contemporary art of Asia and the Pacific and has had a strong effect on artists from Queensland. For Troy Emery, being able to see work from a hugely diverse range of art practices on such a large scale was influential in pushing him towards a career in art. Emery grew up in Toowoomba, one of Queensland's regional centres about an hour and a half from Brisbane. For him Queensland will always feel very regional when compared to Victoria, but it is a place that holds a certain nostalgia, magnified by his experience

of childhood and growing up in a country town. After stints in both Hobart and Sydney, Troy moved to Melbourne with the view to establishing his practice in the 'real world'—outside of the art school institution—and pursued a new engagement through new materials.

The APT was also hugely significant for Simone Hine in informing her art practice, and particularly cemented installation as the basis of her practice. Queensland locations play a significant role in Hine's work, which is concerned with the intersection of cinematic memory and lived experience. Living in Brisbane, locations that held strong childhood memories for Hine became the settings for her work, natural landscapes and bushland, Moreton Bay, the Blackall ranges. Her move was motivated by her practice and study, a view to challenge her work in a new context and expand her audience. It was a challenging move, the awareness of Brisbane and its institutions in Melbourne was little, the stigma around Brisbane was strong, and as such Hine felt she was starting again from square one. Hine's first experience exhibiting in a Melbourne gallery was at BLINDSIDE, back when it was only one gallery with a large office attached. Hine also held her first solo exhibition at BLINDSIDE in 2009.

Ted McKinlay said goodbye to Brisbane in 1994, and spent some time in Sydney and London before choosing to settle in Melbourne due to its active and accessible arts industry. For McKinlay, Brisbane was characterised by hard-arse cops, beer and rugby, a place where infrastructure was neglected and irreverence towards the police was rife. McKinlay, like many others, felt the oppressive regime that stifled arts and culture may have also encourage people to push back hard against it, stimulating a more underground and subversive attitude towards arts and culture. Maybe it was because the grass was greener in Melbourne or maybe it was the boredom that developed from growing up and staying in that big country town, but McKinlay's move was motivated by cultural attitudes at the time; like Dobbie, he sought a more open, larger community in which to develop his practice.

The suburbs are Melanie Upton's memory of growing up in Queensland. Her work investigates

the human intervention—and interruption—in the surrounding environment, an interest that stemmed from watching her childhood home being built: the clearing of bushland, the removal of wilderness for the quarter acre housing estate that was her home. Upton moved to Melbourne to pursue study at the Victorian College of the Arts, hoping to become a part of an arts community larger than what she had found in Queensland. The distance from home, from family and friends was a challenge for Upton, but her quick absorption into the community lessened the blow and provided a dialogue that would help the development of her practice.

After winding up his involvement with Boxcopy, founding director Tim Woodward moved to Melbourne in 2012. His genuine affection for this city as well as his Boxcopy connections here encouraged him to make the move. For him Melbourne was a place where public interest and generosity of opinion regarding contemporary art operated on a much larger scale. Unlike Brisbane, there was the feeling that the art industry extended beyond a specific group.

The cultural differences between these two places will always be apparent. Neither will ever feel like the other, nor are they trying to. The connection between Queensland and Melbourne continues to grow and thrive, but maybe in time we will see more Victorian artists moving North to Brisbane, as its arts industry grows and develops. But each of us preserves nostalgia for the Sunshine state (some more positive than others). In some way or another, Queensland, or our move away from it, has influenced our practice or identity, and we have found communities and circles that share this connection and experience. For ten years BLINDSIDE has acknowledged this connection as a place for collision and collaboration, where the intangible effects of movement are placed into physical space.

Robert Heather and Verity Hayward, 2014

CURTAIN CALL THE ROUGH END OF THE PINEAPPLE

XANTHE DOBBIE
TROY EMERY
SIMONE HINE
TED MCKINLAY
MELANIE UPTON
TIM WOODWARD

Curated by

VERITY HAYWARD
ROBERT HEATHER

3 DEC TO 20 DEC 2014
OPENING 4 DEC 6-8PM
FORUM 13 DEC 2.30PM
BLINDSIDE.ORG.AU
OPEN TUE TO SAT 12-6PM

In recent times, it seems like the Queensland arts scene is always in the ascendant. Visitors to the northern capital come back excited by the latest exhibition at the imposing QAGOMA on the banks of the mighty Brisbane River. In August this year guests at the opening of the 2014 Melbourne Art Fair were treated to the spectacle of a triumphant procession through the colonial architecture of the Royal Exhibition Building by the bizarrely costumed Pope Alice, the creation of Brisbane artist Luke Roberts. At the same event they were scrambling for the golden coins being tossed around by tuxedoed models and paying homage to the always suave Gold Coast artist Michael Zavros as he held court in a gleaming Rolls Royce in a physical and cultural space that had traditionally been reserved for Melbourne and Sydney galleries and artists.

However beneath the bling this supposed cultural ascendancy has shallow roots. The recent death of former Queensland Premier Wayne Goss reminded many people of how he had deposed the corrupt National Party government that had held power across generations, institutionalised anti-intellectualism and overseen an extended period of cultural stagnation. While there were those who stayed and supported the tough independent art scene that struggled to survive in Brisbane it wasn't so long ago that there seemed to be a one-way flood of Queensland artists, musicians, writers, curators, intellectuals and thinkers away from the Deep North fleeing to the southern states or further afield, escaping the shadow of what was effectively a police state.

Melbourne has always been a tough nut to crack if you hail from other parts of the country. It has also been the place where you can make a truly national (or even international) reputation for your work. In more recent times the traffic of artists and curators has usually been more about seeking new opportunities to extend their practice and creating new networks rather than escaping the depredations of a corrupt regime. It was this that drew Christine Morrow, Renai Grace, Pip Haydon and Simon Koger to Melbourne in the early 2000s.

Each brought with them a wealth of experience from their artistic or curatorial practice in Queensland, being involved in major exhibitions

and projects across the state. However they discovered that all of their experience and knowledge counted for very little in the big pond that is the Melbourne arts scene. In response they needed to make their own opportunities and founded BLINDSIDE in the heart of the unique creative hub known as the Nicholas Building. Their first exhibition coincided with the Melbourne Art Fair of 2004 and immediately attracted attention.

Although the original BLINDSIDE board would probably have thought the idea incredibly parochial, it is apparent that from the outset BLINDSIDE has created opportunities for artists from north of the Tweed River to showcase their work in the southern capital through its exhibitions and projects. This special *Curtain Call* exhibition celebrates this tradition, bringing together the work of a selection of artists who originally hailed from Queensland, but now call Melbourne their home. It asks them the question whether their upbringing and experience of Queensland has had any effect upon their identity and artistic practice.

Xanthe Dobbie made the move to Melbourne in 2010 to study at RMIT. Growing up in Queensland instilled in her work an attitude that is based around challenging certain social and political approaches. Dobbie's work has been coloured by a cynicism towards those who share certain views, bigots, racists and homophobes—attitudes she felt were prevalent in the Sunshine Coast. For Dobbie, the move to Melbourne was an easy one, Queensland was never a good fit for her, and Melbourne promised more opportunities for her practice, more galleries and more art schools.

The Asia Pacific Triennial, which began in 1993 at the Gallery of Modern Art, became the first major project of its kind in the world to focus on the contemporary art of Asia and the Pacific and has had a strong effect on artists from Queensland. For Troy Emery, being able to see work from a hugely diverse range of art practices on such a large scale was influential in pushing him towards a career in art. Emery grew up in Toowoomba, one of Queensland's regional centres about an hour and a half from Brisbane. For him Queensland will always feel very regional when compared to Victoria, but it is a place that holds a certain nostalgia, magnified by his experience

of childhood and growing up in a country town. After stints in both Hobart and Sydney, Troy moved to Melbourne with the view to establishing his practice in the 'real world'—outside of the art school institution—and pursued a new engagement through new materials.

The APT was also hugely significant for Simone Hine in informing her art practice, and particularly cemented installation as the basis of her practice. Queensland locations play a significant role in Hine's work, which is concerned with the intersection of cinematic memory and lived experience. Living in Brisbane, locations that held strong childhood memories for Hine became the settings for her work, natural landscapes and bushland, Moreton Bay, the Blackall ranges. Her move was motivated by her practice and study, a view to challenge her work in a new context and expand her audience. It was a challenging move, the awareness of Brisbane and its institutions in Melbourne was little, the stigma around Brisbane was strong, and as such Hine felt she was starting again from square one. Hine's first experience exhibiting in a Melbourne gallery was at BLINDSIDE, back when it was only one gallery with a large office attached. Hine also held her first solo exhibition at BLINDSIDE in 2009.

Ted McKinlay said goodbye to Brisbane in 1994, and spent some time in Sydney and London before choosing to settle in Melbourne due to its active and accessible arts industry. For McKinlay, Brisbane was characterised by hard-arse cops, beer and rugby, a place where infrastructure was neglected and irreverence towards the police was rife. McKinlay, like many others, felt the oppressive regime that stifled arts and culture may have also encourage people to push back hard against it, stimulating a more underground and subversive attitude towards arts and culture. Maybe it was because the grass was greener in Melbourne or maybe it was the boredom that developed from growing up and staying in that big country town, but McKinlay's move was motivated by cultural attitudes at the time; like Dobbie, he sought a more open, larger community in which to develop his practice.

The suburbs are Melanie Upton's memory of growing up in Queensland. Her work investigates

the human intervention—and interruption—in the surrounding environment, an interest that stemmed from watching her childhood home being built: the clearing of bushland, the removal of wilderness for the quarter acre housing estate that was her home. Upton moved to Melbourne to pursue study at the Victorian College of the Arts, hoping to become a part of an arts community larger than what she had found in Queensland. The distance from home, from family and friends was a challenge for Upton, but her quick absorption into the community lessened the blow and provided a dialogue that would help the development of her practice.

After winding up his involvement with Boxcopy, founding director Tim Woodward moved to Melbourne in 2012. His genuine affection for this city as well as his Boxcopy connections here encouraged him to make the move. For him Melbourne was a place where public interest and generosity of opinion regarding contemporary art operated on a much larger scale. Unlike Brisbane, there was the feeling that the art industry extended beyond a specific group.

The cultural differences between these two places will always be apparent. Neither will ever feel like the other, nor are they trying to. The connection between Queensland and Melbourne continues to grow and thrive, but maybe in time we will see more Victorian artists moving North to Brisbane, as its arts industry grows and develops. But each of us preserves nostalgia for the Sunshine state (some more positive than others). In some way or another, Queensland, or our move away from it, has influenced our practice or identity, and we have found communities and circles that share this connection and experience. For ten years BLINDSIDE has acknowledged this connection as a place for collision and collaboration, where the intangible effects of movement are placed into physical space.

Robert Heather and Verity Hayward, 2014



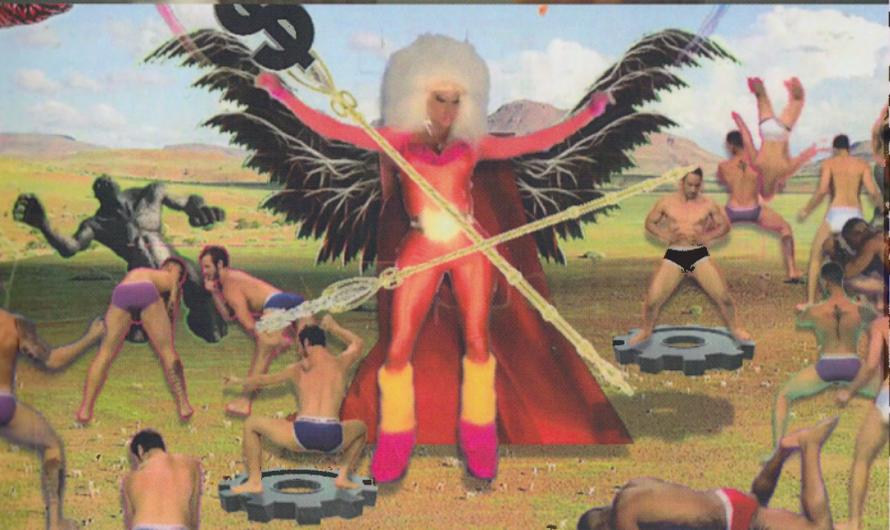
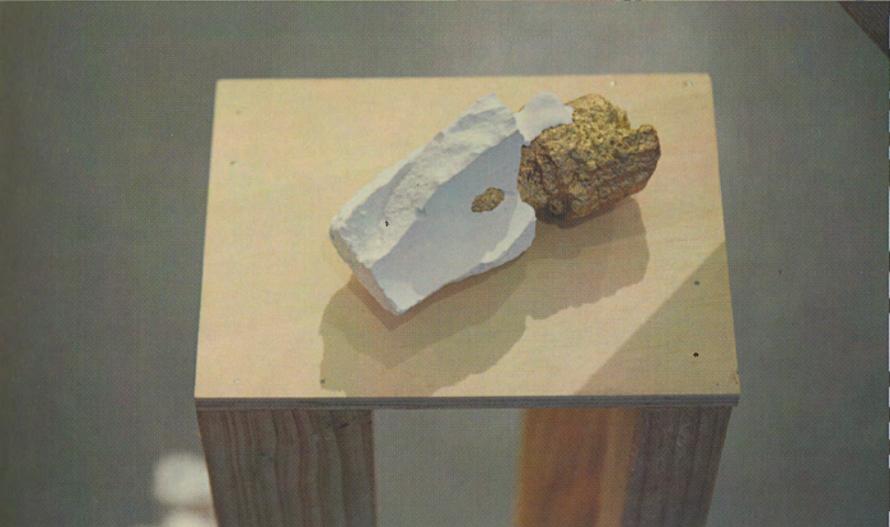
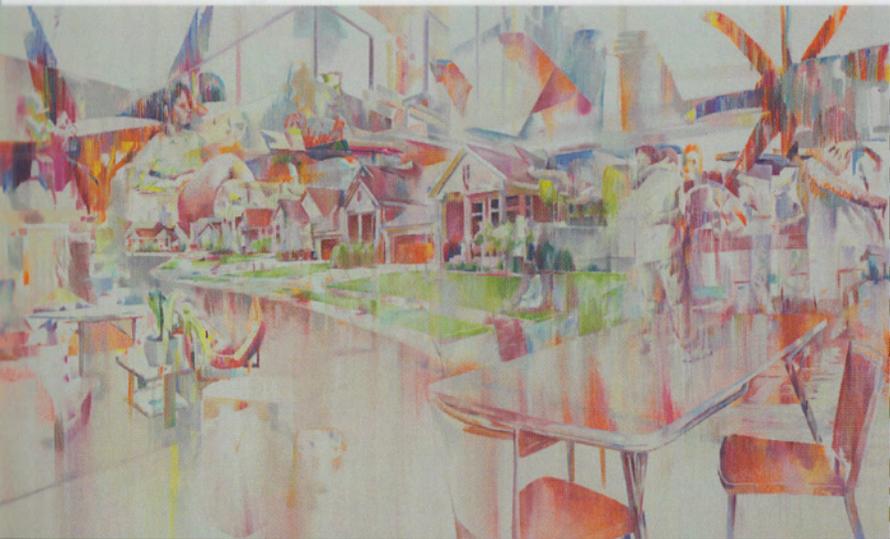
ARTS
VICTORIA



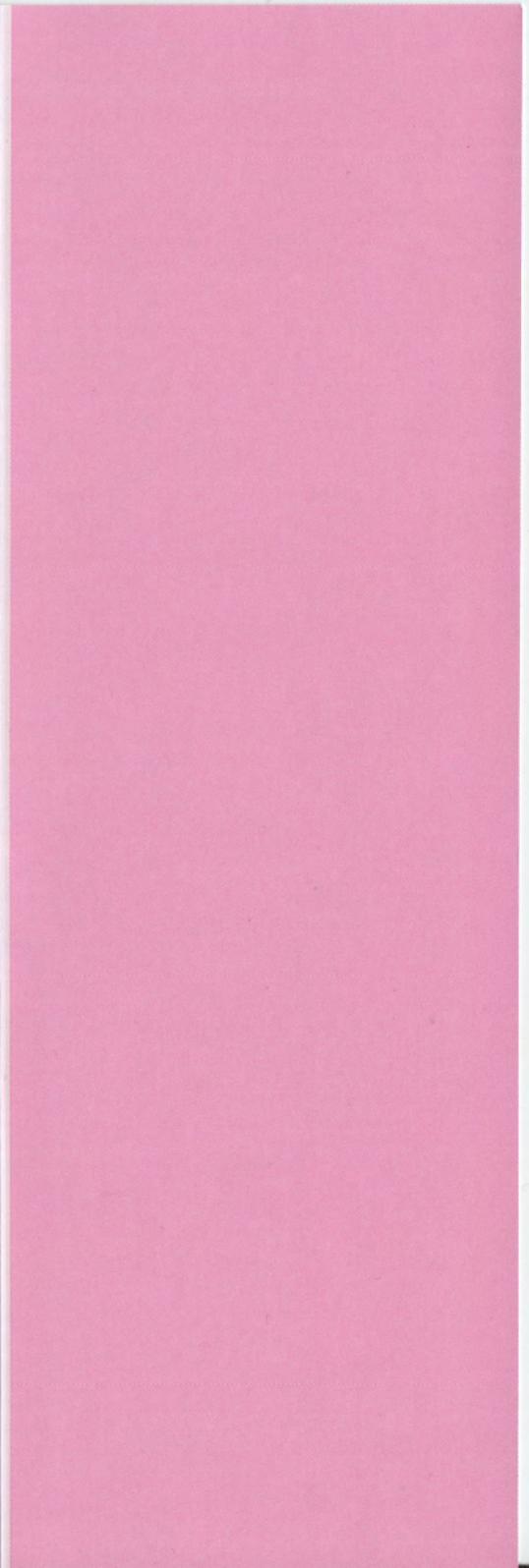
This project is supported by the Victorian
Government through Arts Victoria.

BLINDSIDE

Printed on 100% recycled paper



**CURTAIN CALL
THE ROUGH END OF THE PINEAPPLE**



Cover

Ted McKinlay, *Everything You Have Ever Wanted*, 2012, Pastel on paper, 1110 x 1630 cm

Melanie Upton, *Vague Terrain: Things Calling* (detail of installation), 2014, Mixed media installation, dimensions variable

Xanthe Dobbie, *Not Today Satan* (still), 2014, Digital video Youtube web collage

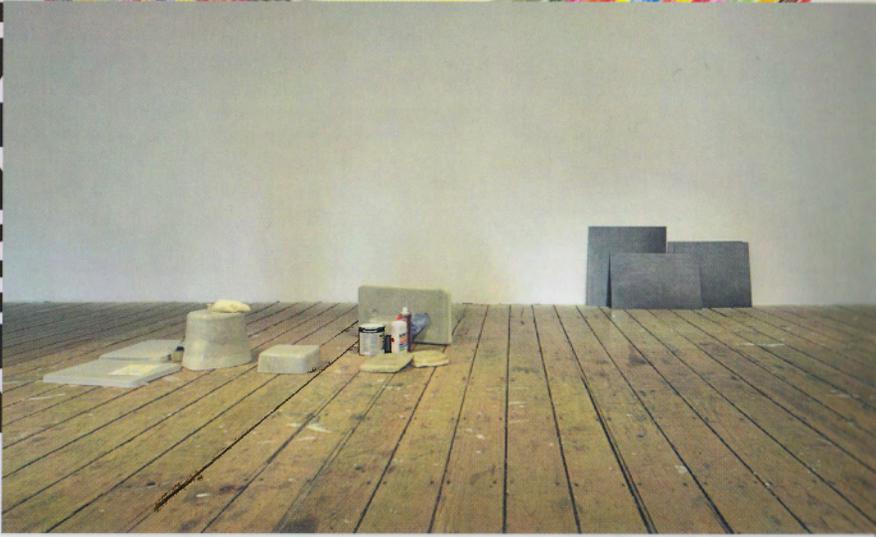
Back

Simone Hine, *Waiting for Yesterday (In Two Places at Once)* (production still), 2014, Two-channel video

Troy Emery, *Black hole VI* (detail), 2013, Pencil on watercolor paper, 76 x 56 cm (framed)

Tim Woodward, *Going in all languages* (detail of installation), 2010, Mixed media installation, dimensions variable, photography by Carl Warne

Images listed from top to bottom



BLINDEDIS