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MU Student Union and the George Paton Gallery presents:

Useful Box Aesthetics

Jarrah de Kuijer, Alana Kingston, Simon McGlinn and Taree Mckenzie
Curated by Sandra Bridie

The artists in 'Useful Box Aesthetics' demonstrate a playful yet savvy low-end materiality. Their work is informed as much by recent art practice as by a 'useful box' or 'Art Attack!' approach to making craft and art objects.



An overall lo-fi aesthetic is recognisable in the work of Alana R Kingston who makes use of materials such as cardboard, packing tape and children's colouring texts. Kingston's work, 'Telepathetic' is based on the children's 'telephone' made from two tins and a piece of string. Here Kingston outsizes the original model by creating giant cups/sound domes suspended from the ceiling of the gallery. One viewer is to stand with their head inside one cup/dome and communicate with another visitor in the other dome and thereby communicate with each other 'telepathetically'.



Taree McKenzie builds video set constructions with mechanical devices such as tracking and rotation machines to enable her to film kinetic abstract works; 'I use video to create abstract images that play with the ambiguities that exist between the flat surface of the video screen and the actual three dimensional space that the objects occupy. While the finished videos appear to be not unlike the moving images that a computer can generate, the objects I video are all constructed in real space, using simple materials such as cardboard, wood and glass.'



Jarrah de Kuijer's recent practice is based around the reinterpretation of technology; his low-tech soundscapes and kinetic sculptures play on the progressive role of technology on our lives and its effect on the human condition.

de Kuijer debunks any romantic notions attached to the creation of his artworks; 'Some people say making truly great art is like giving birth. I think making art is like shitting. You consume and absorb everything around you until eventually you need release. Not in the romantic sense like a flow of passionate genius but in the everyday sense of repetition. Like shitting. Getting it out. Moving on.'



Simon McGlinn's wants it all; "I need the highs, the lows, the all and nothing and everything in between".

His 'stoner sensibility' piece, 'The ability to be above and below, ain't no escape' is an exuberant ad-hoc smoking device that is composed to appear to create an enormous amount of narcotic smoke to a direct location. Opposite this construction is a continually filling and emptying half filled glass of water.

Exhibition dates: 8/18 April 2008

Gallery hours: 11-5pm Monday to Friday

Opening night Wednesday April 9 5-7pm

George Paton Gallery, Second floor, Union House, University of Melbourne

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