

AN ART AND DESIGN SMORGASBORD

Leoni Schmidt

This issue of *Scope: Art & Design* includes a range of submissions evidencing the broad spectrum of interests amongst staff engaged with the creative fields at Otago Polytechnic and further afield amongst their networks. The retention of studio disciplines underpins Michele Beevors' focus on slow drawing; Michael Greaves' exploration of the ontology of painting in our time; Anita DeSoto's alignment of her painted tableaux with her teaching practice; Steev Peyroux's musings on his painting process; David Green's moving image in the expanded field; and Rachel Allan's interest in the materiality of the photograph. Their contributions speak of an enduring and in-depth engagement and of a deep involvement with the studio practices they so admirably present to the reader. The same is true of Jane Venis' artist pages about her sculpture, installation, and music, of which the reading leads to laughter and an enjoyment of the hilarious aspects of creative work.

Reading this issue takes one from the funny side of things to a sense of gravitas where Andrew Last explains the process of cultural consultation with Kai Tahu around the creation of a touchstone for the entrance of the new public hub of Otago Polytechnic. He takes us through the events as they unfolded and of the considerations so important to bicultural relationships in New Zealand, particularly here in the light of a Memorandum of Understanding with local *rūnaka* signed in responsiveness to obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi.

In stark contrast, Ruth Evans ensures that we are aware of the risks to our country's well-being posed by resource extraction and the greed of corporations. Through her *Go Mine* project, she brings a twist to the argument as in playing a game devised by Evans we all become complicit. And, from far away in Turkey, Dilek Alkan Ozdemir signals that such concerns are world-wide. As if in response, Pam McKinlay and Jesse-James Pickery report on their installation in response to pollution due to the use of fossil fuels. Siau-Juin Lim presents her large-scale paintings as tools for the fostering of human relationships with nature, asking us to consider what plants feel. It is deeply disturbing when reading her compassionate view and then to move on to Susan Nunn's account of the ubiquitous food waste resulting from our reliance on junk as underpinned by a divorce from the natural world and the species that inhabit it alongside us. Again from Turkey, Nilgun Salur signals how important sustainability is in different parts of the world.

Sustainability can also flourish within communities of practice. Marion Wassenaar explains how such communities can connect and protect artists. Alicia Hall presents her community-orientated work and show how she works with groups of people towards well-being and a sense of belonging. Simon Swale argues for the importance of blogging in the world of fashion for the creation of a more democratic discourse in which everybody can participate. Johanna Zellmer describes an example of a democratic way of achieving an exhibition and related events where she introduces the jewellery CLINK project and Lesley Brook reports on audience participation in this project.

On a more introspective and melancholic note, Megan Griffiths points out how her recent textile work is related to her experience of caring for a father with Alzheimer's Disease. And, Susan Videler considers how the wound is integral to the history of women's suffering at the hands of the patriarchy and how wounded skin is central to her making practice.

In response to moments in the presence – real or imagined – of other artists, Peter Belton offers a suite of poems.

And last, but not least, EM Davidson brings us all back to earth where she reflects on the employability of the artist in today's monetized and commoditized world.

I wish all the readers of *Scope: Art & Design #13* new insights into the studio practices of a broad range of artists and to the pressing issues they lend their voices to.

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