

# Play On

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The art of sport

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10 years of the Basil Sellers Art Prize

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Learning Resource



## About this Resource

This education resource is intended for use as a starting point to generate discussion before, during and after visiting the exhibition *Play On: The art of sport*. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the accompanying catalogue and wall labels.

The resource includes:

- planning your visit
- curriculum links
- the curatorial rationale for *Play On: The art of sport*
- key themes
- a list of exhibiting artists
- exhibiting artists' practice and selected artworks
- starting points for discussion and learning activities
- a glossary of key terms
- links to further information about each of the artists

## Planning your visit

Before visiting the exhibition *Play On: The art of sport* it is recommended that you contact the venue to find out about:

- Gallery opening times, public transport and parking options, cloakroom facilities and relevant admission fees
- Scheduling a guided tour of *Play On: The art of sport* during your excursion
- Associated education programs at the venue

Prior to your excursion you may wish to discuss the following with your students:

- Introduce some of the key themes within *Play On: The art of sport* using this education resource as a guide
- Expectations for appropriate behaviour in an art gallery

## Curriculum links

*Play On: The art of sport* is relevant to Australian Visual Arts curricula at all levels.

Engagement with the exhibition also provides students with opportunities to foster the following general capabilities:

- Critical and creative thinking
- Ethical understanding
- Intercultural understanding
- Personal and social capabilities

Artworks by Tony Albert, Richard Bell, Josie Kunoth Petyarre and Dinni Kunoth Kemarre are relevant to the cross-curriculum priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

The exhibition also provides opportunities for teachers to collaborate on cross-curricula projects linked to Health and Physical Education and History Curricula.

This Learning Resource is broadly aimed at students from levels 4 through to 10; however the material could be modified to suit students at other levels. The starting points for discussion and practical learning activities within this resource provide opportunities for students to learn as both viewer and artist. There are suggestions for discussing artworks in the galleries and making artworks in response to *Play On: The art of sport* post-visit.

### **VISUAL ARTS**

#### ***Explore and Express ideas***

Students view *Play On: The art of sport* and make artworks in response to their experience in the galleries. They observe a variety of artworks and consider the ideas, themes and inspiration of the exhibiting artists. They

experiment with techniques, processes, materials and technologies to express ideas in their own artworks.

### ***Visual Arts Practices***

Whilst visiting *Play On: The art of sport* students will encounter a range of contemporary art practices. They will develop an understanding of how each exhibiting artist conceptualises their work, and selects and uses appropriate media or technology to produce their artwork.

### ***Present and Perform***

As they view *Play On: The art of sport* students will discuss how each artwork has been presented in the galleries. They will consider the intention of artists and curators and how this relates to the experience of the audience.

### ***Respond and interpret***

Students reflect upon and speculate about the meaning of the artworks displayed in *Play On: The art of sport*. Following the visit, they research how particular historical or cultural contexts have inspired the artists.

### ***History***

Students view works by Tony Albert and Richard Bell and discuss how each of the works portray the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at particular moments in sporting history.

### ***HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION***

Students view works in the exhibition and explore the role that games and sports play in shaping cultures and identities. Students discuss how participation in sporting activities can generate a sense of wellbeing and accomplishment. They consider how sport can challenge us physiologically, behaviourally and socially.

## Introduction to the exhibition: Curatorial Rationale

*Play On: The art of sport* presents a selection of key works from ten years of the Basil Sellers Art Prize, a biennial exhibition of newly commissioned artworks that reflect upon sport and sporting culture. With an award of \$100,000 for each winning work the Basil Sellers Art Prize is one of Australia's most prestigious awards. It has encouraged some of Australia's most accomplished contemporary artists to develop their practice and to reflect on all forms of sport and sporting culture in Australia. *Play On: The art of sport* brings together some of the best works from the last ten years, giving audiences throughout Australia the opportunity to view sport through the lens of art.

*Play On: The art of sport* is a NETS Victoria and Ian Potter Museum of Art touring exhibition encompassing painting, sculpture, video, drawing and mixed media installation by artists from diverse cultural backgrounds.

### **THEMES:**

The exhibition *Play On: The art of sport* engages with a range of ideas and themes including:

- Community sporting events and bringing people together
- Ground-keeping, rules of the game and umpiring
- Sporting equipment and architecture
- Team colours
- Representation of women in sport
- Sport and the science of human movement patterns
- Sport and participation on and off the field
- The behaviour of spectators
- Sporting legends and celebrities
- Sport and racism
- Sports psychology and performance on the field
- Emotions of winners and losers, triumph and tragedy in sport
- Sport and humour
- Historical and political controversy in sport

A range of sporting activities are portrayed in the exhibition including gymnastics, surfing, athletics, swimming, boxing, diving, cricket, AFL, soccer, netball, tennis, the Olympic Games and backgammon.

## Tony Albert

Townsville-born, Brisbane-based contemporary artist Tony Albert is a descendant of the Girramay, Yidinji and Kuku-Yalanji peoples of Far North Queensland. Working across a range of media, Albert's work encompasses painting, photography, mixed media and installation. The use of text is central to his practice. Albert is also an avid collector with an interest in popular culture. His work often draws upon an extensive collection of kitsch manufactured objects that reflect Australia's commodification of Aboriginal culture and racist past. As a founding member of the Indigenous art collective ProppaNOW his work consistently engages with Aboriginal culture and politics, reminding audiences that we still have a long way to go in dealing with issues such as racism in Australia.

Albert was the recipient of the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2014 for his *Once upon a time...* The work consists of a large red target applied directly on the wall of the gallery, over which are hung 24 small framed works, a plastic toy doll and other objects. In one frame is a letter written by Albert to the late artist Gordon Bennett. The letter asks why after the endless achievements of Indigenous sports people racism remains prevalent and continues to exist. The work was made following a crowd abuse incident directed towards AFL footballer Adam Goodes, when a thirteen year-old spectator abused the two-time Brownlow medallist by calling him an ape during a match at the MCG in 2013. Albert's compelling work asks viewers to consider how Aboriginal people both on and off the sports field have been targeted and represented throughout history, challenging the power imbalance between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

<http://tonyalbert.com.au>

<http://sullivanstrumpf.com/artists/tony-albert>



## Richard Bell

Charleville-born, Brisbane-based contemporary artist Richard Bell is a member of the Kamilaroi, Kooma, Jiman and Gurang Gurang communities of Queensland. He is a political activist as well as an artist, using his practice to challenge preconceived ideas of Aboriginal art and notions of race and identity politics in Australia. Bell's multi-disciplinary approach encompasses painting, video, installation, text, humour and appropriation, drawing on the pop-art styles of Roy Lichtenstein, Jasper Johns and Jackson Pollock.

Bell participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2012 with two paintings that portray historic moments where personal courage, political resistance and fair play are visible in the realms of sport. In *A white hero for black Australia* (2011), Bell collaborated with Emory Douglas, former Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party, to create a pop-art inspired depiction of a famous incident at the award ceremony for the two-hundred metre sprint at the 1968 Olympic Games. During the medal presentation two black American runners, Tommy Smith and John Carlos, raised their fists in a black power salute, while white Australian Peter Norman who ran third, wore a Human Rights badge to offer support to his competitors. All three athletes endured punitive repercussions for these actions: Smith and Carlos were stripped of their medals upon their return to the United States whilst Norman was prohibited from representing Australia in the 1972 Olympic Games despite successfully qualifying to compete. Norman was a rare individual who offered his support at a time when the civil rights movement in the United States was at its peak following the assassination of Martin Luther King.

In the other painting *Foley vs the Springboks (lone protestor)* (2012) Bell paints Aboriginal activist Gary Foley holding a placard with the words 'Pardon me for being born into a nation of racists' to protest against the South African Springboks rugby tour of Australia in 1971. This gesture was indicative of the anti-apartheid protests where the all-white Springboks team became known as an international symbol for apartheid. These public demonstrations reflected the need not only for apartheid to be abandoned in South Africa, but also for an end to the White Australia policy.

1998



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**Richard Bell** with Emory Douglas  
*A white hero for black Australia* 2011  
synthetic polymer paint on canvas 176 x 250 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane. Courtesy of the Parliament House  
Art Collection, Department of Parliamentary Services, Canberra

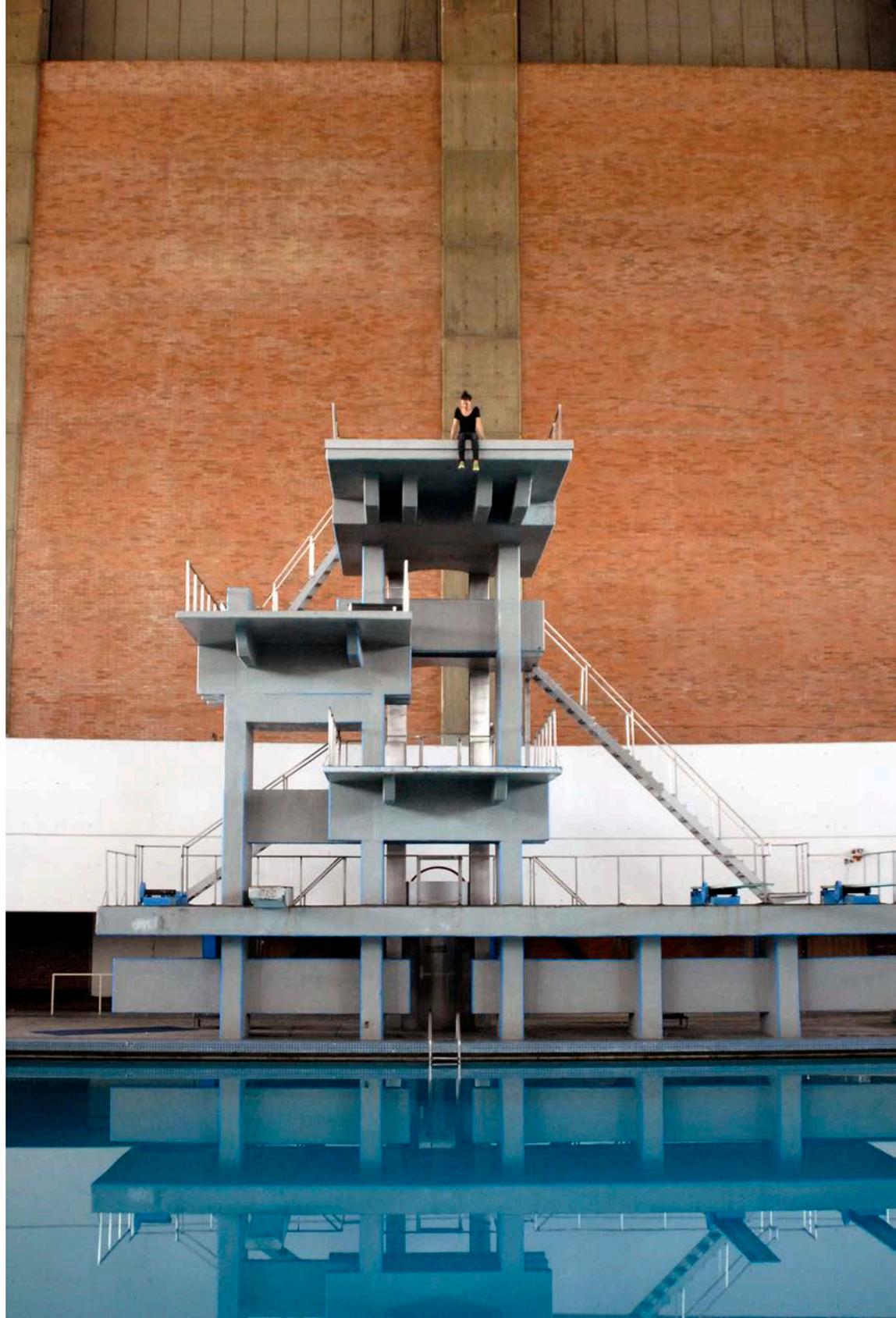
## Lauren Brincat

The practice of Sydney-based contemporary artist Lauren Brincat encompasses a diverse range of media including video, performance, sculpture and installation. Brincat's work is influenced by her formal training as a painter and an interest in performance artists working in the 1970s. She is known for her documentation of actions that instinctively find the edge of her physical and psychological limits.

Brincat participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2012 with an artwork entitled *10 metre platform* (2012). The work was filmed at the Alberca Olimpica Francisco Márquez indoor swimming pool, built for the 1968 Summer Olympics, whilst the artist was on a residency in Mexico City. This compelling work contrasts the modernist idealism of the architecture of the 10-metre platform against the human fragility of the artist. Brincat had planned to lower herself over the end of the high diving board, and hang there for as long as she could before letting go, falling into the pool. During the production process, Brincat was filmed by the crew losing her nerve, and failing to complete the performance.

Initially devastated, Brincat has since come to realise that the work is successful because it truly tested her limits and revealed her vulnerability.

[www.laurenbrincat.com](http://www.laurenbrincat.com)



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**Lauren Brincat**  
*10 metre platform* 2012  
single-channel HD video, 9:16 ratio, colour, sound 50:29 minutes  
Camera: Raphael Ortega. Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne

## Jon Campbell

Melbourne-based contemporary artist and musician Jon Campbell immigrated to Australia from Ireland as a child. Educated and practicing primarily as a painter, Campbell has an abiding interest in creating images that depict tongue-in-cheek observations of the local culture he experiences. Playful and honest celebrations of suburbia, pop-music, youth culture, sport and the typography of graphic design and advertising all feature heavily in Campbell's oeuvre. His paintings often use phrases that articulate humour and beauty of everyday Australian life from a personal point of view.

Campbell was the winner of the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2012 for his work entitled *Dream Team* (2012). Mashing art, design and advertising with sport, *Dream Team* reflects on how language is used to distinguish a true fan from a mere spectator. To create the work Campbell chose his top twenty-two AFL players from across generations and teams and rendered their nicknames in on a suite of small-scale panels in a variety of fonts. This compendium of players' nicknames for AFL heroes such as Dipper (Robert DiPierdomenico), Captain Blood (Jack Dyer) and Spud (Danny Frawley) are instantly recognisable to true fans of AFL, but even the casual viewer will recognise the very Australian habit of giving nicknames to our sporting legends.

[www.darrenknightgallery.com/artists/campbell/](http://www.darrenknightgallery.com/artists/campbell/)



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Jon Campbell  
*Dream team* 2012  
enamel paint on plywood 300 x 300 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney  
Collection of Basil Sellers AM

## Daniel Crooks

New Zealand-born, Melbourne-based contemporary artist Daniel Crooks completed studies in design and animation prior to his career as a practicing artist working primarily with video.

Crooks was awarded the inaugural Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2008 for his work *Static no. 11(man running)* (2008). This work employs digital video and photographic processes to explore the relationship between time and human movement. His work is strongly informed by the nineteenth-century work of Etienne-Jules Marey and Eadweard Muybridge in their stop-motion studies of athletes. These early scientific studies of human physiology and fitness training were instrumental in analysing human movement and forming modern concepts of exercise. Crook's video is a reminder that sport is connected to science and technology through the high-speed videos used to analyse the performance of elite athletes, slowing down time and giving us insights about moments in time that are imperceptible to the naked eye. Crook's technological manipulations and dissolving pixel animations offer the viewer an intriguing and lyrical shift in the way we experience time and the movement of the body.

[www.danielcrooks.com](http://www.danielcrooks.com)

[www.annaschwartzgallery.com/artists/daniel-crooks](http://www.annaschwartzgallery.com/artists/daniel-crooks)



## Gabrielle de Vietri

Gabrielle de Vietri is an Australian-based conceptual artist with an interest in socially-engaged collaborative practice. Her work has taken form in a variety of ways including via community events and interactive public performances.

De Vietri participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2014 with her video work *Three teams* (2013-14). This dual-channel video was created during a major project aimed at developing and staging a three team AFL game. Documentation drawn from a period of community consultation as well as footage from the first ever game of three team Aussie rules have been edited into the final artwork.

De Vietri has an abiding interest in the rules that govern our behaviour and became fascinated by the rules of AFL when she attended her first game at the MCG. At the time AFL Laws of the Game Committee had just proposed an 'interchange cap', restricting the number of players swapping positions during a match. The proposal caused much controversy for players and fans alike, revealing how passionate Aussie Rules supporters can be. De Vietri contemplated the nature of AFL and was inspired to suggest an idea that was far more radical than anything the Laws of the Game Committee would come up with: what if there were three teams instead of two?

De Vietri persuaded rural communities in Horsham and across the Wimmera region of Victoria to consult with her about reinventing Aussie Rules. In October 2013 three regional teams, the Horsham RSL Diggers, Taylors Lake and Noradjuha-Quantong played a game using the new rules developed by the community. The triumphant Taylors Lakes players were presented a three-handled trophy.

[www.gabrielledevietri.net](http://www.gabrielledevietri.net)



**Gabrielle de Vietri**

*Three teams* 2013 – 14

dual-channel HD video, 16:9 ratio, colour, sound, 30:07 minutes

Camera and sound: Kiarash Zangeneh, Lydia Springhall, James Phillips and Filip Milovac.

Video editor: Lydia Springhall. Project assistant: Renae Fomiatti. This work was made with the assistance of the Taylors Lake Football Club, the Noradjuha-Quantong Football Club, the Horsham RSL Diggers Football Club and the Wimmera Umpires Association.

Courtesy of the artist

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## Tarryn Gill and Pilar Mata Dupont

Tarryn Gill and Pilar Mata Dupont are multidisciplinary artists, producers and performers with backgrounds in dance and music theatre. They've collaborated artistically since 2001 in a practice that encompasses photography, choreography film, installation and design.

Gill and Mata Dupont were the winners of the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2010 with their video work *Gymnasium* (2010). This staged work presents a troupe of healthy young athletes performing a sequence of elaborate exercise routines in an old fashioned gymnasium. The athletes do not wear the fashionable activewear of today but instead perform their collective movements in a plain uniform that predates Lycra. There is not a treadmill in sight in the space either, only simple wooden beams, and the athletes appear to share a communal enthusiasm that is at odds with today's individualised work-outs.

The artists have created a seductive spectacle of mass-participation and choreographed movement that is reminiscent of Busby Berkeley Hollywood musicals from the 1930s. On the flip-side, the film also suggests the synchronised movements of young athletes in Nazi-propaganda films. The artists suggest that Australia's obsession with sport and tendency to inhabit a collective identity through sport runs the risk of mob rule.

[www.tarryngill.com](http://www.tarryngill.com)

[www.pilarmatadupont.com](http://www.pilarmatadupont.com)



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**Tarryn Gill and Pilar Mata Dupont**  
*Gymnasium* 2010

single-channel HD video, sound 4:07 minutes

Courtesy of the artists. Tarryn Gill is represented by Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne  
Collection of Basil Sellers AM

## Shaun Gladwell

The art practice of Sydney-born, London-based artist Shaun Gladwell spans video, painting, photography, sculpture, installation, performance and virtual reality. Born into a talented sporting family, Gladwell was a professional skateboarder prior to commencing his career as an artist. Gladwell's work reflects his interest in juxtaposing popular sports culture with art history and literature.

Gladwell participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2014 with his cinematic video *The archer (after Chuang Tzu)* (2014). The work was inspired by a poem by 4th century Chinese philosopher Chuang Tzu:

When an archer is shooting for nothing, he has all his skill. If he shoots for a brass buckle, he is already nervous. If he shoots for a prize of gold, he goes blind or sees two targets - He is out of his mind!  
His skill has not changed. But the prize divides him. He cares. He thinks more of winning than of shooting -  
And the need to win drains him of power.

In Gladwell's work Tzu's poem is read by an actor playing a character named Frank 'Jack in the Box' Leaper. Frank Leaper is brought to life from the pages of Tim Winton's novel *The Turning*. The character is a young AFL player on the verge of sporting success who inexplicably walks off the field instead of kicking the winning goal. The second part of the film alludes to the consequences of this action and asks the viewer to contemplate the future that awaits Frank.

[www.annaschwartzgallery.com/artists/shaun-gladwell](http://www.annaschwartzgallery.com/artists/shaun-gladwell)



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**Shaun Gladwell**

*The archer (after Chuang Tzu)* 2014

single-channel HD video, 16:9 ratio, colour, sound, 10:47 minutes. Camera: Jeremy Rouse.

Editor: Jesse Watt, Pundersons Gardens. Producer: Katherine Slattery, Little Window Pictures. Sound: Kazumichi Grime. Underwater photographer: Tim Tregoning. Parts of this work were originally used in the production of the 2013 motion picture *The Turning*, Arenamedia Pty Ltd, distributed by Madman Entertainment. This work was made with the assistance of Screen Australia and the Melbourne International Film Festival. Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne and Arenamedia Pty Ltd.

## Josie Kunoth Petyarre and Dinni Kunoth Kemarre

Husband and wife, Dinni Kunoth Kemarre and Josie Kunoth Petyarre, live with their family on their traditional lands at the remote outstation of Pungalindum in Utopia, Central Australia. Their language group is Anmatyerr. Contemporary artist Josie Kunoth Petyarre comes from a highly respected artistic family and has been involved in the Utopia art movement for more than three decades. Her husband, Dinni Kunoth Kemarre, worked on cattle stations in the Eastern Desert prior to becoming an artist.

For Kunoth Petyarre and Kunoth Kemarre community sporting activities are central to their lives in the outback. Since 2006 they have been making art that celebrates football. For the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2008 they presented a suite of painted wooded sculptures depicting AFL players from various teams and an accompanying painting *Melbourne Story from Alparra Store to the MCG* (2008).

To create the sculptural works the couple went on long trips into the bush to procure bean tree wood. This material is very light, and is easy to carve then paint. The large painting was made on the ground with the footy oval appearing in the centre of the composition as a focal point from where all sporting and social activity radiates.

[www.mossensongalleries.com.au/artist/josie-kunoth-petyarre/](http://www.mossensongalleries.com.au/artist/josie-kunoth-petyarre/)

[www.mossensongalleries.com.au/artist/dinni-kunoth-kemarre/](http://www.mossensongalleries.com.au/artist/dinni-kunoth-kemarre/)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vwes-h2dLPo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vwes-h2dLPo)



**Josie Kunoth Petyarre**

*Melbourne Story from Alparra Store to the MCG* 2008  
synthetic polymer paint on linen 200 x 200 cm.

Courtesy of the artist, Artlore and the Mossenson Galleries, Perth

**Dinni Kunoth Kemarre**

left to right: *Camp dog* 30 x 20 x 82 cm; *Alparra Dockers Footballer* 110 x 18 x 18 cm;  
*Arnkewenyerra Swans Footballer* 110 x 13 x 13 cm; *Mulga Bore Magpies* 92 x 16 x 16 cm  
*Soapy Bore Crows Footballer* 112 x 20 x 36 cm, 2008 synthetic polymer paint on wood

Courtesy of the artist, Artlore and the Mossenson Galleries, Perth

## Richard Lewer

New-Zealand born, Melbourne-based contemporary artist Richard Lewer works with video, animation, painting, drawing and performance. Lewer participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize three times before winning the award in 2016.

Lewer's winning entry comprises a suite of twelve paintings entitled *The theatre of sports* (2016). This work was inspired by Lewer's fascination with the highly publicised story of swimmer Ian Thorpe's personal struggle with depression. Lewer became interested in the role that sport can play in relation to mental stress, especially for high-performance athletes who experience the highs and lows of winning and losing. He began to research how public moments of failure for various sporting figures illicit extreme emotional responses.

During his research Lewer gathered hundreds of images of athletes during moments of despair, frustration, disbelief and agony from the internet and magazines. He selected twelve moments to render expressively in oil paint. The first work was made from a photograph of Ian Thorpe looking disappointed in the pool. Other images include Olympic champion Sally Pearson clutching her broken wrist in agony after crashing into a hurdle and tennis player Nick Kyrgios throwing his racket onto the ground in rage as he loses a match.

[www.richardlewer.com](http://www.richardlewer.com)



## Fiona McMonagle

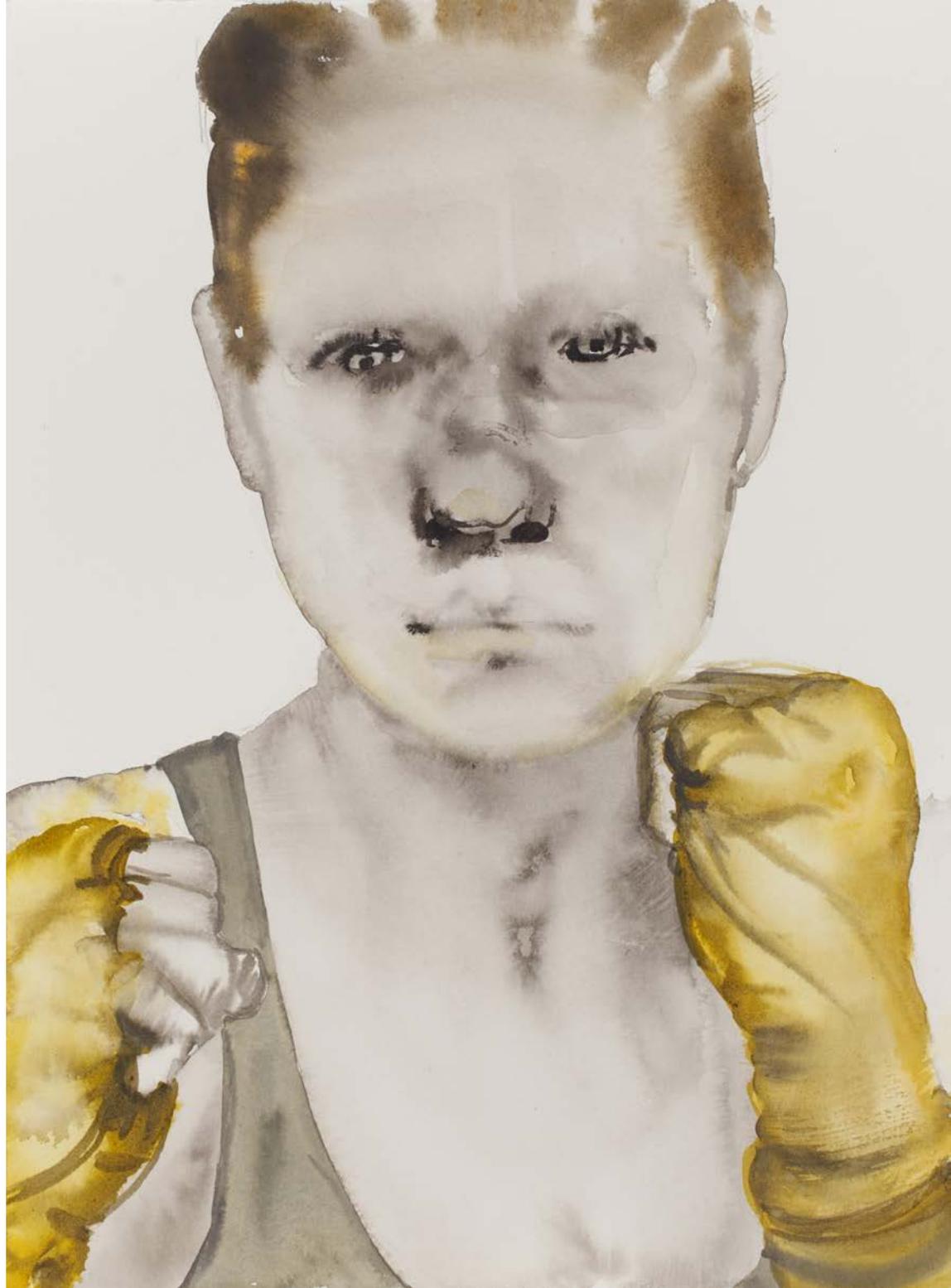
Irish-born, Melbourne-based artist Fiona McMonagle is known for her watercolour practice and compelling portraits of individuals drawn from her suburban upbringing.

McMonagle participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2014 with three life-size watercolour and ink works on paper depicting female boxers. For the first time McMonagle also created a video animation of her watercolours works, bringing the sport of boxing to life in the galleries.

The portraits reveal McMonagle's interest in raising the issues of equality of women in sport, but they are also a celebration of boxing. McMonagle has trained in professional boxing gyms for years and has a first-hand understanding of the nature of the sport, giving her work a compelling directness and intensity that conveys qualities of both vulnerability and strength in her protagonists.

The 6-minute video work *The ring* (2014) was produced by animating hundreds of watercolour stills of boxers in motion. The artist set herself a rigorous production schedule to create the work. McMonagle's capacity to undertake such an ambitious regime reveals the mental toughness and discipline required by professional sportspeople and artists alike.

[www.artistprofile.com.au/fiona-mcmonagle](http://www.artistprofile.com.au/fiona-mcmonagle)



**Fiona McMonagle**

*The ring* 2014

digital video animation, 16:9 ratio, colour, sound 7:24 minutes

Editor and technical producer: Declan McMonagle. Music credits: 'Sheezus' (writers: Lily Allen and Dacoury Natche), 'I am woman' (writers: Helen Reddy and Ray Burton). Courtesy the artist, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide, Olsen Gallery, Sydney

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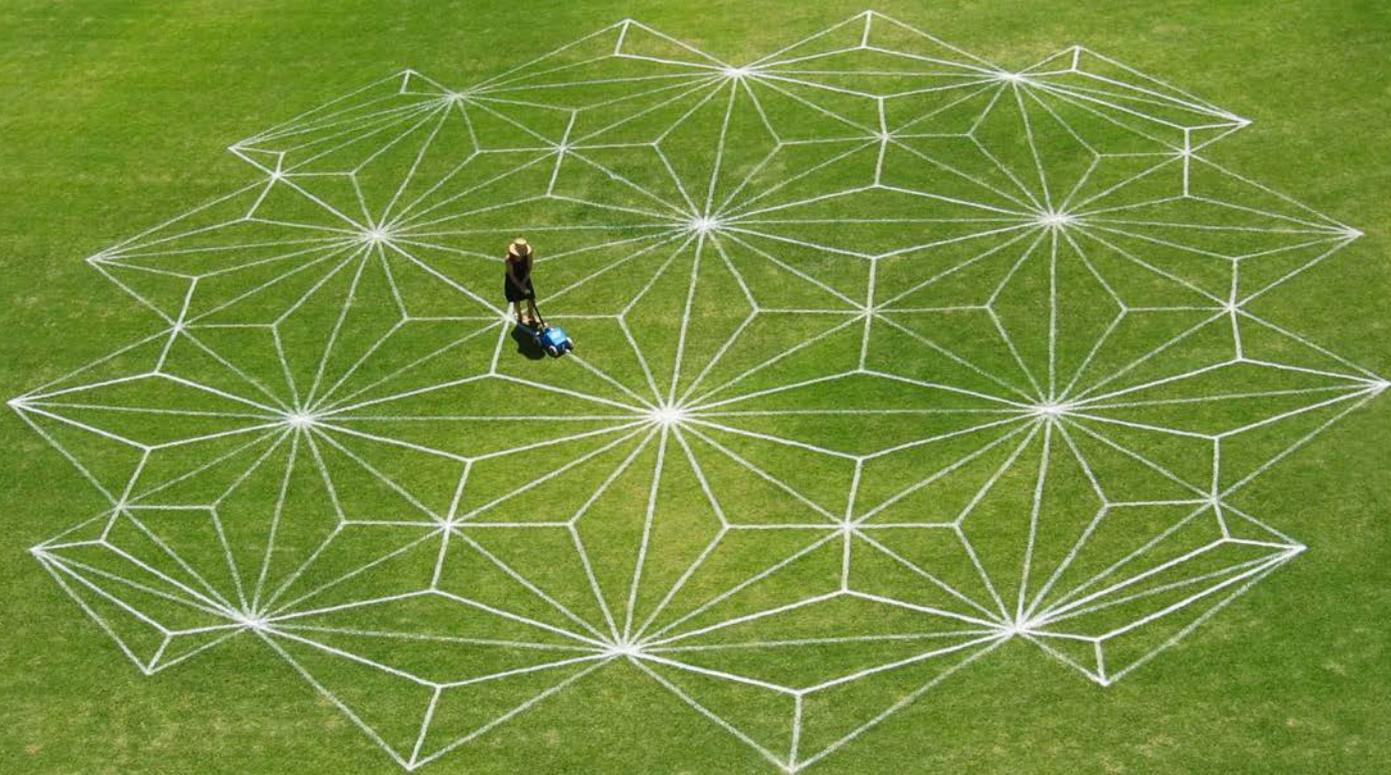
## Kerrie Poliness

Over the last thirty years Melbourne-based artist Kerrie Poliness has become well known for creating abstract instructional drawings which are typically created by unknown collaborators. Her instruction books act like a step-by-step guide to install the work.

Poliness participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2012 with works comprising *Marking the field* (2012) the filmed documentation of the artist producing a 'field drawing', and *Field drawing #1 (under construction)* (2008) the instruction book and sports field line-marking machine that were used to create the geometric drawing in the film.

In *Marking the field* the location of the sports oval has become the site and surface for an artwork and the mechanical line marker, that would usually create boundaries in the field of play, has been transformed into an instrument of creativity.

[www.annaschwartzgallery.com/artists/kerrie-poliness](http://www.annaschwartzgallery.com/artists/kerrie-poliness)



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**Kerrie Poliness**  
*Marking the field* 2012  
single-channel HD video, 16:9 ratio, colour, sound 20:00 minutes  
Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne

## Khaled Sabsabi

The practice of Lebanese-born, Sydney-based artist Khaled Sabsabi encompasses installation, video and sound. Raised in Western Sydney, Sabsabi is interested in the power of ritual and ceremony to impact our daily lives. Central to his ideas is an interest in giving voice to the concerns of communities through a lens that is both political and contemplative.

Sabsabi participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2014 with two video works entitled *Wonderland* (2013–14) and *Tawla* (2012). *Wonderland* was inspired by the rise of the Western Sydney Wanderers Football Club as an A-league soccer team and as a cultural phenomenon attracting huge crowds. The work presents single-camera footage of hundreds of the Wanderers' most fanatic supporters chanting for their team with unbridled passion. *Wonderland* suggests the triumphant pride and unity of a largely migrant community sharing a sense of identity through sport.

The second work, *Tawla* was produced in Beirut. The single-channel video captures a game of backgammon or tawla as it is known in the Middle East. The table is filmed from a birds-eye view so that players' hands can be seen continually entering the frame, moving across the board and throwing dice. Tawla is an ancient game of chance and strategy that the artist presents as a metaphor for the complex relationships between countries in the Middle East.

[www.khaledsabsabi.com](http://www.khaledsabsabi.com)



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**Khaled Sabsabi**  
*Wonderland* 2014  
dual-channel HD video, 16:9 ratio, colour, sound, not synched 25:30 minutes  
This work made with the assistance of Guido Gonzalez and Saif Jari.  
Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

## Gerry Wedd

Ceramic artist Gerry Wedd lives on the coast of South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula. Prior to becoming a professional artist he worked as a designer for surf brand Mambo for twenty years and has been a competitive and recreational surfer for over forty years. Wedd is renowned throughout Australia for his hand-built blue and white ceramics that are glazed with imagery reflecting seaside themes and his quirky and irreverent sense of humour.

Wedd participated in the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2014 with four large-scale ceramic urns that portray the careers of surfing champions Bernard 'Midget' Farrelly, Nat Young, Wayne Lynch, Peter Drouyn and Michael Peterson. As part of the surfing community Webb used photographs drawn from his personal collection of surfing magazines as source material to develop the elaborately detailed surface decoration.

The artist deliberately selected surfers who had been champions on the waves and made an important contribution to the sport, but their fame was short-lived and they are now largely forgotten because of their on-shore antics. Wedd is interested in how we construct myths and narratives about our famous sportspeople and the urns act like memento mori paying a wry tribute to some forgotten Australian surfing heroes.

[www.weddwould.blogspot.com.au](http://www.weddwould.blogspot.com.au)



**Gerry Wedd**

*MP (Dragon chasing)* 2014

glazed stoneware 60 x 50 x 50 cm

Photograph: Grant Hancock. The artist would like to acknowledge the assistance of ARTS SA in the production this work. Courtesy of the artist and Maunsell Wickes, Sydney

# STARTING POINTS FOR DISCUSSION AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR THE VISUAL ARTS:

## Respond and Interpret

Select an artwork from *Play On: The art of sport* to discuss as a class, guided by the following prompts:

- Describe the subject matter of the work. What sport/s does it represent? Who is represented in the work? How have sports teams, individual athletes and spectators been represented in the work?
- What is the mood of the artwork? What emotions are portrayed by the protagonists? How does the work make you feel as a viewer?
- Describe the application of materials and technical processes used by the artist/s to create the artwork.
- Consider the way the artist engages with sport and sporting culture through the artwork? What do you think are the key ideas and themes within the work?
- How does the artist engage the class as an audience?
- Has the artist used any digital technologies within the work? If so, how?
- What inspired and informed the artist? How do you think the artist conducted research to make the artwork?
- Speculate on the intention of the artist. What do you think they are communicating through the artwork? Is the artwork conceptually driven or are formal qualities paramount?
- Brainstorm a list of adjectives to describe the artwork
- Back at school, research any relevant influences from art history, sporting history, politics or popular culture within the work.

## Explore and Express

### *Language and typography*

Collaborate with the students in your art class to create your own “dream team” inspired by the work on Jon Campbell. Encourage individual students to experiment with lettering and typography, colour and painting techniques to create their own expressive artwork depicting their own name or nickname on a small wooden panel. Present your artworks together as a collaborative installation in the art room at your school.

### *Instructional art*

In your class research the history of instructional art and the work of conceptual artists including Sol LeWitt and Yoko Ono. Then develop instructions for a series of detailed geometric line drawings inspired by the artwork of exhibiting artist Kerrie Poliness. Consider the scale and materials used to execute the work. Once each student has completed their set of instructions, swap them with a fellow student collaborator who will create the artwork. Consider asking the school administration if there is a site at the school where you might be able to produce a temporary large scale instructional drawing. Alternatively work on paper in the classroom.

### *Drawing and painting*

Inspired by the work of Josie Kunoth Petyarre and Dinni Kunoth Kemarre, make a line drawing of your favourite sport. Sketch the event as if you are seeing it from a birds-eye view. Try and capture both the players and the spectators.

### *Ceramics*

Inspired by the ceramic urns by Garry Weld, create your own hand-built ceramic vessel. Use a cobalt-blue underglaze to decorate your whole vessel with imagery inspired by your favourite sports hero. Consider line and pattern to complete the work.

### *Watercolour and animation*

In the galleries look carefully at Fiona McMonagle’s exquisitely executed watercolour works of female boxers. Using found imagery of the body in motion create a sequence of your own watercolour works to illustrate a chosen movement. Use photography and digital animation of the watercolours and bring the movement to life in a short video work.

## Present and perform

The Basil Sellers Art Prize is an art competition for Australian artists who've made work that engages with sport. The exhibition *Play On: The art of sport* presents a selection of outstanding artwork from the Basil Sellers Art Prize over the last ten years. There are 16 artists represented in the touring exhibition, including one pair of collaborators. The following questions offer opportunities for discussion and debate with students about the exhibition:

The Basil Sellers Art Prize was supported by art collector, patron and philanthropist Basil Sellers. What is arts philanthropy? Do some research to find out why Basil Sellers is interested in supporting artists to create art about sport.

- The previous five Basil Sellers Art Prize exhibitions were presented between 2008 and 2016. Each exhibition involved the artists competing like sportspeople for an award of \$100,000. What are some of the positives and negatives of competitions such as this for artists?
- What does the gallery need to consider when preparing and presenting an exhibition such as *Play On: The art of sport*. How have the artworks been displayed in the space? Describe the types of methods used to present the exhibition.
- Imagine you're an art expert and have been invited to choose the best artwork in *Play On: The art of sport*. Which artwork would you select as the winner? Describe why you made your selection with reference to the visual and conceptual qualities of the artwork.

## Visual Arts Practices

Gill and Mata Dupont reference the Hollywood glamour of director Busby Berkeley musical films from the 1930s in their contemporary artwork *Gymnasium*. Conduct some online research and view some original films by Busby Berkeley. Compare and contrast *Gymnasium* with one of the historical works by Berkeley. Examine and consider the soundtracks, choreography, costume, subject matter, tonal range and use of colour, relationship of the performers to one another and the intention of the work. Do you think that *Gymnasium* has a contemporary or old-fashioned feel? Why?

Daniel Crooks' video work *Static no. 11 (man running)* references the early pioneers of stop motion film Etienne-Jules Marey and Eadweard Muybridge. Research Marey and Muybridge and compare the intentions of their anatomical studies of motion with that of Crooks artwork. Do you think advances to film and video technology over the last 150 years allow today's artists more freedom? Discuss.

Dinni Kunoth Kemarre's sculptures and Josie Kunoth Petyarre's paintings are very colourful and reflect the energy and enjoyment of bush footy in the Northern Territory. The remote community where the artists live is called Utopia. Many internationally renowned artists have been based in Utopia in recent decades. Conduct some research about Utopia. Find out about one of the artists and their subject matter and techniques. Share your findings with the class.

Richard Bell is both an activist and an artist. View and reflect on the artwork *A white hero for black Australia*. Conduct some research about the historic sporting moment being depicted in the work, and how it is representative of a broader context in the late 1960s. Reflect on whether you would have been as courageous as the athletes? Discuss.

Tony Albert confronts the issue of racism in sport in his work *Once upon a time...* Part of the work is a letter to the late Gordon Bennett asking why after the endless achievements of Indigenous sports people racism remains prevalent and continues to exist. As a class discuss the racism towards Adam Goodes and reflect on the impact of that behaviour on the individual and the wider community. Describe the strategies Albert has used in his work to engage audiences with this issue?

View the conceptual work *Three teams* by Gabrielle de Vietri. Do you think the artist was successful in changing the rules of AFL? Imagine you are the artist and describe the process that you undertook to create the artwork. What do you think is the meaning of this artwork? What makes it art? Find out about some other conceptual works by the artist.

Richard Lewer's *The theatre of sports* is a compelling suite of paintings about the emotional performances of various sports peopled during public moments of personal crisis. Research the events that Lewer has depicted in each of the artworks. How would you have felt if you were in the position of the athlete in that moment? Reflect on whether you think Lewer's paintings offer us a new perspective on the personality and humanity of our sporting heroes?

## Glossary

**Animation:** the process of making the illusion of motion by the rapid succession of sequential images that minimally differ from each other.

**Apartheid:** A system of institutionalised racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa between 1948 and 1991 which entailed the segregation of public facilities, social events, housing and employment opportunities by race.

**Black Panther Party:** A revolutionary black nationalist and socialist organisation active in the United States from 1966 until 1982. The history of the Black Panther Party is controversial. Some scholars have characterised it as the most influential black movement of the late 1960s while others have described the Party as more criminal than political.

**Conceptual art:** Art in which the idea involved in the work takes precedence over traditional aesthetic, technical, and material concerns.

**Instruction-based art:** The use of instructions is a strategy used by conceptual artists for other people to execute. Among its principal originators was the artist Sol LeWitt.

**Memento mori:** In art, memento mori are artistic or symbolic reminders of mortality

**Multidisciplinary art:** Inclusive art practices that blur the boundaries between traditional categories of painting, drawing and sculpture.

**Nazi Party:** A far right political party in Germany that was active between 1920 and 1945. The propaganda used by the Nazi Party in the years leading up to and during Adolf Hitler's leadership of Germany was a crucial instrument for acquiring and maintaining power.

**Single Channel video:** A video artwork that involves a single display mode such as a flat-screen monitor.

**Stop-motion:** an animation technique that creates the illusion of movement when a series of photographs are played in a fast sequence.

**Urn:** a vase with a narrowed neck above a rounded body. Describing a vessel as an urn generally reflects its use rather than any particular shape or origin. The term is often used for funerary urns, vessels used in burials, to hold the cremated ashes of the deceased individual.

**White Australia Policy:** Historical government policies that effectively barred people of non-European descent from immigrating to Australia

**Wood carving:** is an art production process involving using a cutting tool or a chisel on a mallet to create wooden sculpture.

# Play On

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The art of sport

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10 years of the Basil Sellers Art Prize

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## ARTISTS

Tony Albert  
Richard Bell  
Lauren Brincat  
Jon Campbell  
Daniel Crooks  
Gabrielle de Vietri  
Tarryn Gill  
& Pilar Mata Dupont  
Shaun Gladwell  
Dinni Kunoth Kemarre  
Josie Kunoth Petyarre  
Richard Lewer  
Fiona McMonagle  
Kerrie Poliness  
Khaled Sabsabi  
Gerry Wedd

## TOURING SCHEDULE

Hazelhurst Regional Gallery  
9 December 2017 – 11 February 2018

Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery  
3 March – 29 April 2018

Devonport Regional Gallery  
7 July – 19 August 2018

UQ Art Museum  
24 November – 3 February 2019

Bunbury Regional Art Galleries  
9 March – 5 May 2019

Riddoch Art Gallery  
25 May – 4 August 2019

Western Plains Cultural Centre  
31 August – 3 November 2019

### Front cover:

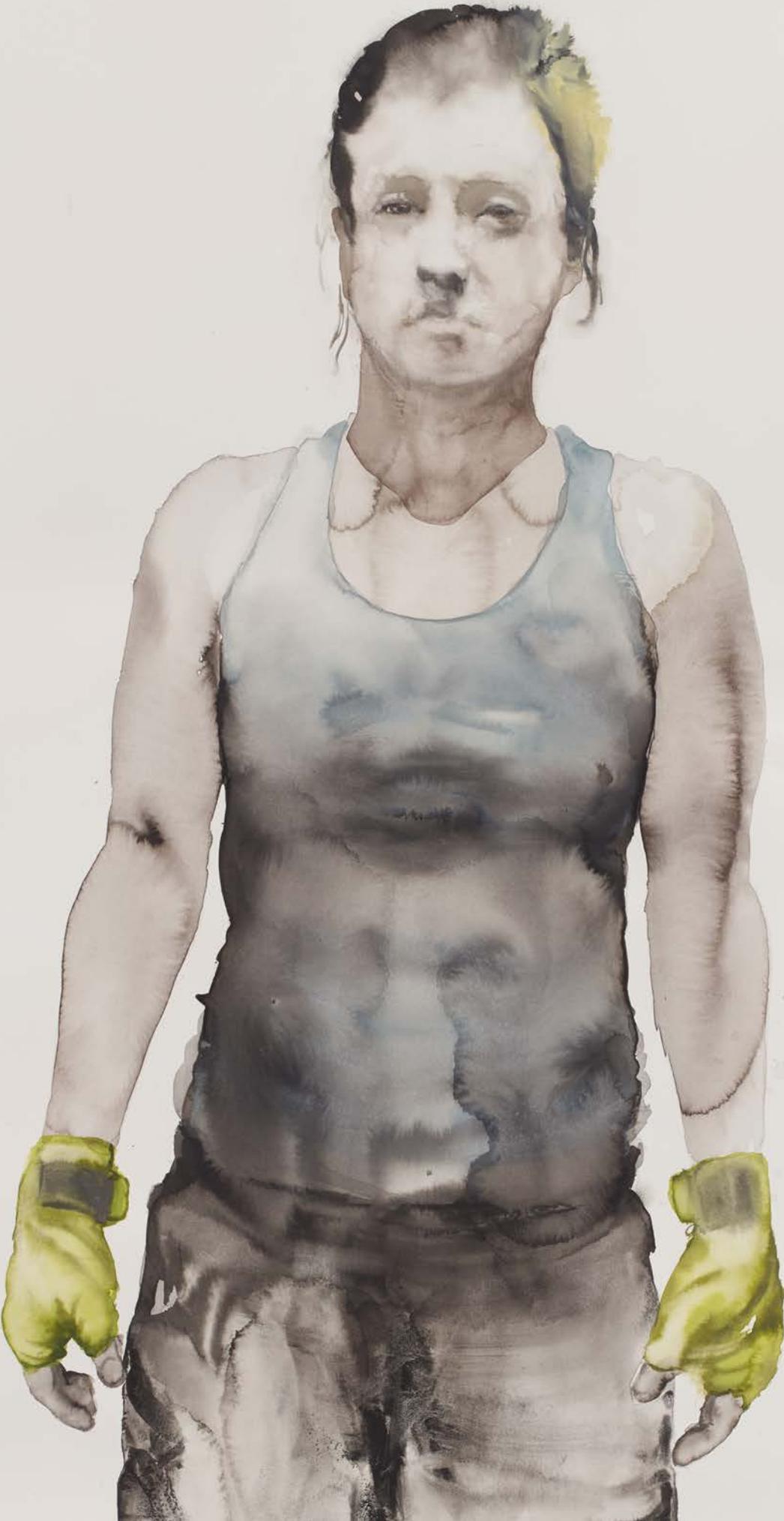
**Shaun Gladwell** *The archer (after Chuang Tzu)* 2014

single-channel HD video, 16:9 ratio, colour, sound, 10:47 minutes. Camera: Jeremy Rouse. Editor: Jesse Watt, Pundersons Gardens. Producer: Katherine Slattery, Little Window Pictures. Sound: Kazumichi Grime. Underwater photographer: Tim Tregoning. Parts of this work were originally used in the production of the 2013 motion picture *The Turning*, Arenamedia Pty Ltd, distributed by Madman Entertainment. This work was made with the assistance of Screen Australia and the Melbourne International Film Festival. Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne and Arenamedia Pty Ltd.

### Back cover:

**Fiona McMonagle** *Wonky* (detail) 2014

watercolour, ink and gouache on paper. Courtesy of the artist, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide, Olsen Gallery, Sydney. Collection of Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery. Purchased from the *2016 National Works on Paper* with funds from the Mornington Peninsula Shire.



# Play On

The art of sport  
10 years of the Basil Sellers Art Prize

A NETS Victoria and  
Ian Potter Museum of  
Art touring exhibition



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