

COOL CHANGE CONTEMPORARY

31 OCTOBER - 21 NOVEMBER, 2020

ELLEN BROADHURST & TOM ROGERS

LIA MCKNIGHT

OPIE ROBINSON



ELLEN BROADHURST & TOM ROGERS: LEGALLY SPEAKING.. GALLERY 1

The following text was an effort to compile and memorise our story, written in the months following our first contact with *Trial by Kyle* production.

When they move in together Ellen tells Tom that she is pretty messy and often uses shared living spaces as art studios.

They have a golden period for a month or so with lots of dinner parties. Ellen's friend Jesse is over a lot and they are drinking a lot. It is fun but a bit too hectic to be sustainable.

Ellen buys the eggs from Gumtree; someone who has heaps of chickens and gives her a good deal. Ellen buys them because she wants to make art about being a woman, focusing on her period, using eggs. She isn't sure if she wants to make a short film or a sculpture –

Ellen leaves the eggs in a big pile in the middle of the lounge room because she wants them somewhere where she can see them all the time as that is how she conceptualises her ideas. Also, her room is way too messy to keep them in there.

Over the next few weeks they have a few little arguments over Ellen's general mess; Tom brings up the placement of the eggs being annoying but Ellen doesn't care. Jesse is around too much and is always

freestyling and rapping.

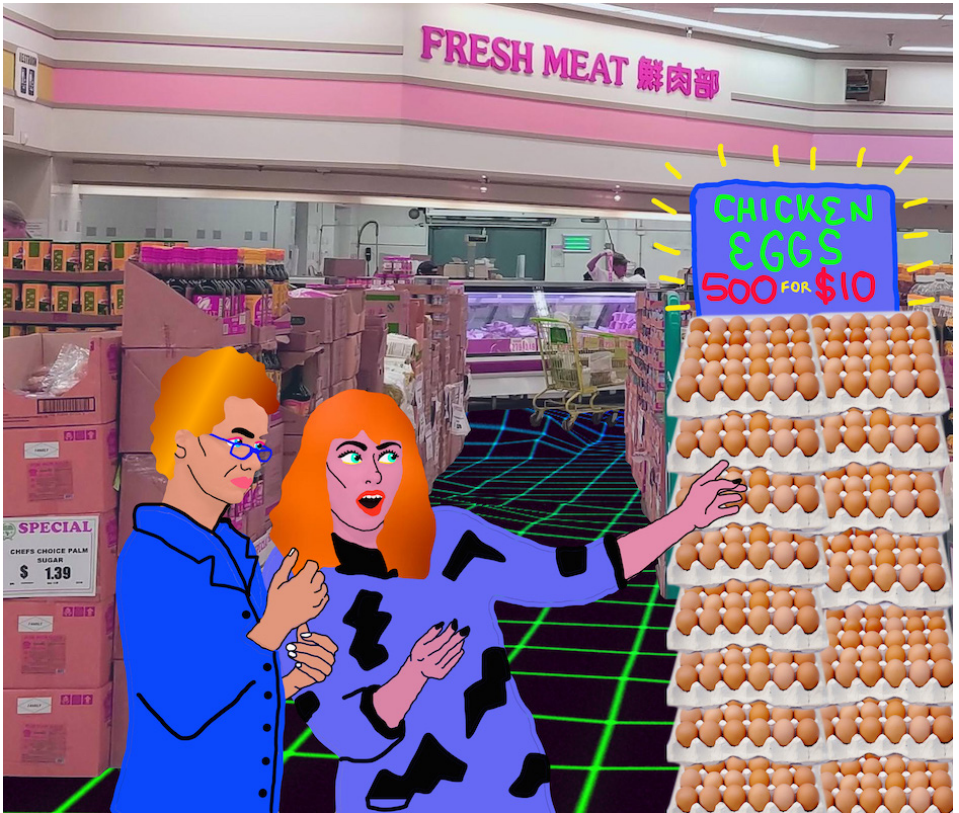
The weekend that it happens, there is a sheep boat in town. Lots of sheep trucks on Stirling Hwy, super smelly and hot.

Ellen and Jesse go out to an art exhibition where there is free wine. They get super lit and go to a tinder guy's house. He turns out to be pretty lame and keeps playing dad rock and not letting the girls DJ, so they go back to Ellen's. Tom comes out of his room and asks them to please keep it down. Tom is worried 'cos they look totally busted up. Ellen and Jesse play *Wuthering Heights* by Kate Bush on repeat with Jesse doing her routine. Jesse jumps on the cupboard during "Let me in through your window-ow-ow" and it falls onto the eggs. They think this is extremely funny and do a photo shoot on top of the cupboard, making the damages way worse. They pass out and Jesse leaves for Bali in the morning. Ellen wakes up for work, looks at the eggs and thinks, "omg too-hard-basket for now", goes to work to do a double shift.

Does the smell bother Ellen over the next couple of days? No, she has a high tolerance for pain and also is just disinterested in the whole affair as she is quite busy and getting over a bender. She was planning to clean it up but just wasn't prioritising it.

However, the smell extremely bothers Tom who can't even eat inside the house. When he sees the mess he slips a note under Ellen's door saying, "Ellen WTF what happened?" He doesn't text her because Ellen is useless with her phone.

It isn't in Tom's nature to create drama or push people, so he eventually decides to just clean it up himself



Ellen Broadhurst & Tom Rogers, *Legally Speaking* (film still), 2020, rotoscoped animation. Image courtesy of the artists.



Ellen Broadhurst & Tom Rogers, 2020, Legally Speaking (film still), rotoscoped animation. Image courtesy of the artists.

but he is a bit hot headed, it's really hot and smelly and he is not coping well. Tom removes the cupboard and cartons and see's that the floor is already a bit scratched from the cupboard, and the eggs have been baked into all of the cracks in the floor boards. He tries boiling hot water, gumption, bleach and steel wool to clean it. Even when all of the egg is gone it still smells (like regret). Tom spews during this process, which he absolutely hates.

Ellen works and comes home on Wednesday to find that Tom has cleaned up the mess. Ellen is stoked and thanks Tom, who is pretty cold. Ellen thinks that this has been done because they are friends and it's like the Ben Franklin effect where someone does you a favour and they like you more. Ellen is not reading the room correctly. Tom is pretty off it, but is also a bit of a push over and too polite and nervous to make a big scene.

Over the next week Tom is passive aggressive, so Ellen just backs off and becomes more self-involved. No more dinner parties or gigs and exhibition outings together. Tom watches more TV than usual and Ellen makes art and hangs at Jesse's a lot. Eventually, we just become strangers (warm ghosts).

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Ellen Broadhurst is a multi-disciplinary artist working in sculpture and experimental film. In 2015 Broadhurst co-established HotSoup, a soup kitchen and exhibition space for emerging artists. Interested in fiction presented as reality, Broadhurst has appeared in character in the magazine Take 5 and the reality TV show Trial By Kyle. Broadhurst has exhibited at Fremantle Arts Centre, Sculpture by the Sea, Geraldton Regional Art Gallery and Pig Melon.

Tom Rogers is a self-taught multidisciplinary artist currently living and working on Noongar Boodja, (Perth/WA). Rogers' uses drawing, video and sculpture to explore their personal relationships with nature, intuition, Australiana, magick, remix culture and the divine/surreal in everyday life.

LIA MCKNIGHT: HOMELY GALLERY 2

In the summer of early 2015, my abandoned dresser was claimed by bees. The drawers were filled with honeycomb, becoming seething containers of honey, and the hum of hundreds of bees filled our back veranda. I bought the dresser from a vintage store 20 years ago when broke and living in Sydney as a recent arts graduate. For over a decade it held my most intimate possessions: precious trinkets, love letters and underwear. This dresser has a long history and its past life far pre-dates my own. In the period of my mother's early childhood it was a site of feminine ritual: most women in at least the first half of the 20th century owned a dresser, complete with a brush and mirror set placed on top. This specific history is less significant than the fact the viewer will transcribe their own imaginative story upon it (albeit subconsciously). But, for this dresser to be eventually taken back by nature was a wholly satisfying outcome for me. Intrigued by the idea of secret worlds pulsing and thriving beyond our awareness, the drawings and sculptures that have increasingly comprised my art practice over the last 5 years reveal a sense of magic in the natural world. Immersed in nature, I find my way back home.

Exploring domestic spaces and the subconscious, *Homely* takes the form of a disquieting diorama in which material space and form intersect with immaterial time and memory. The 1940s vintage dresser is central to this scene, reworked with cabriole legs, upwards seeping ink stain and ghostly copy in silk organza. Before this uncannily tall and gendered

object (and its double) the viewer is repositioned as a child. The use of reflection, inversion, and mirror-image are familiar visual elements to my practice, revealing an ongoing interest in dualities and the connectivity of opposites. Here, this eerie scene recalls the *doppelgänger* and its associations of horror, personal identity and the human psycheⁱ described in Freud's theory of 'The Uncanny'. The uncanny is a tool I am consistently drawn to. Catching us off guard, it can allow an experience to occur which can't immediately be understood or categorised by the mind. Freud's use of the phrase 'unheimlich', translating as 'unhomely', has strong associations with the domestic, and it is from this term I derive the exhibition title. Collectively, the works presented in *Homely* question notions of (feminine) beauty, the 'gaze', and paradoxical experiences of comfort/and terror within the home. Acknowledging that all suffering contains a transformative potential for growth, the themes of this body of work align with my core interests: transformation and the interconnectedness of all things.

Over the strange year of 2020, I began to create small 'ritualistic' objects, using among other things, feathers, balga resin, vintage jet beads and banksia nuts: these enigmatic and endlessly fascinating objects that have become a personal 'totem' of sorts in my work of the last five years. I have been placing these small objects on the dresser in my studio and, like the precious personal trinkets that have traditionally found their place in women's bedrooms, they feel at home together. The drawings that accompany them are intentionally abstract and I have allowed them to unfold without a prescribed idea of what they are or may become. Unlike the dresser/s, the small objects and drawings are playful and instinctive like a visual stream



Lia McKnight, *Homely* (detail), 2020, ink-stained vintage dresser, silk organza and found objects, dimensions variable. Image courtesy of the artist.



Lia McKnight, *Memento*, 2020, Saggur fired Indonesian Raku clay, vintage jet beads, feathers, tassel fringe and glass knob fixing.

of consciousness: mental maps to a strange and erotic terrain where suppressed desires and fears emerge as eerie dreamscapes.

Within developed countries, free from war, the domestic space is where our best and worst experiences often unfold. This observation seems even more pertinent in the midst of a global pandemic, as communities worldwide are subject to varying degrees of isolation within the home. Now more than ever it is the place where nightmares, pleasures and mundanity meet.

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Lia McKnight is a Waylyup /Fremantle-based artist whose practice includes drawing, sculpture, textiles and installation. In 2020, McKnight has been invited to participate in the Joondalup Invitation Art Prize, the *York Botanic Art Prize* and *SIX:2020* at Mossenson Galleries. In 2018 she developed the major exhibition, *Sensual Nature* in collaboration with Fremantle Arts Centre Curator Ric Spencer and presented a solo exhibition at Turner Galleries. She has been invited to participate in 2019 *Midwest Art Prize*, 2019 *Minnawarra Art Prize*, 2018 *Perth Royal Art Prize*, 2017 and 2011 *Joondalup Invitation Art Prize* and 2017 *Stations of the Cross* (Uniting Church in the City). She has been an artist in residence at Art on the Move (2019), PICA (2016) and Fremantle Arts Centre (2014 & 2012) and has undertaken major exhibitions with c3 Contemporary Art Space, Melbourne (2014), Paper Mountain (2014), free range Gallery (2013), Heathcote Museum and Gallery (2011) and created temporary public art commissions in collaboration with Stephen Armitstead for the City of Fremantle (2013) and the City of Subiaco (2011/2012).

OPIE ROBINSON: GASSED UP GALLERY 3

Opie Robinson is a queer visual artist born, living and working on Whadjuk Noongar Bibulmun boodja (Perth, Western Australia).

At present, Robinson employs semi-industrial materials to develop sculptural and printmaking works, exploring the relationships between gender, body and vehicle.

Gassed Up is a private ritual made public - the artist's internal negotiation with dysphoria, dysmorphia and exploration of body and gender materialized.

On the speedway a green flag is waved to start the race, a black flag waves to stop it and the checkered flag signals its finish. In the center of the room, a green and black checkered flag, encased in an inanimate rubber flesh, combines all three of these commands. It confronts the viewer with the possibility of permanent laps of uncertainty and discontent. One is forced to accept the object in the room and the notion of self-image as an internal circuit that stops and starts and never ends.

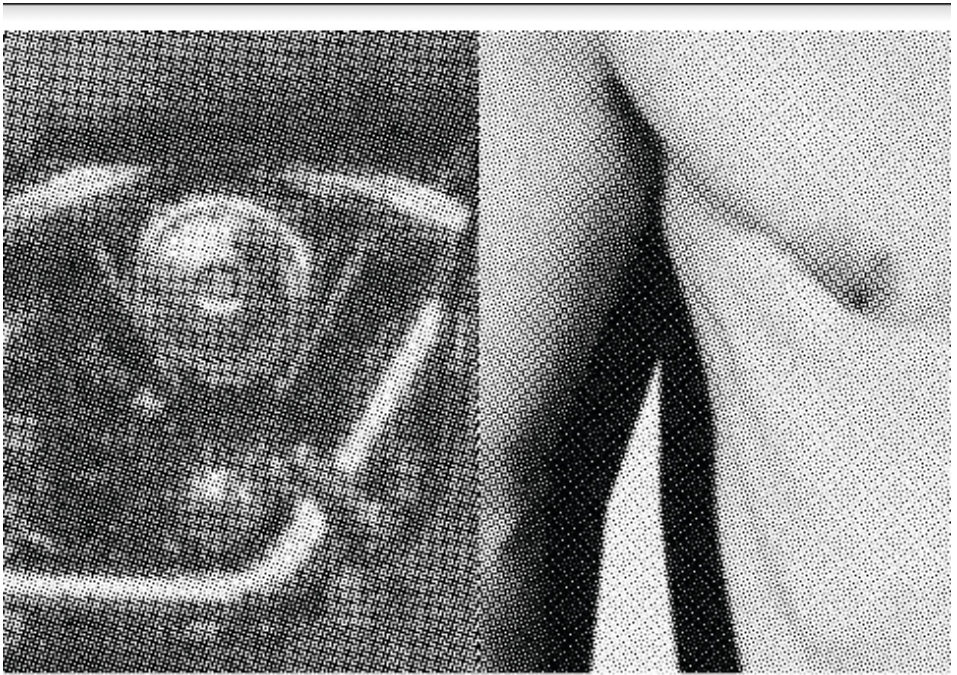
In old magazines, cars, motorcycles, races and faces are frozen in time and fragmented in halftone. This resonates with Robinson – the notion that these halftone photographs are all derived from the same shape; an abstract representation of intimacy, reduction and extension which the artist has re-interpreted. Sections of the body, the car, have been etched into metal and paint but the subjects are faded, reduced to a shared, calm

murkiness. The topic of corporeal incorporation and disappearance discussed in *The Absent Body* by Drew Leder is one that has inspired Robinson and informed both the conceptualisation and making of the featured images.

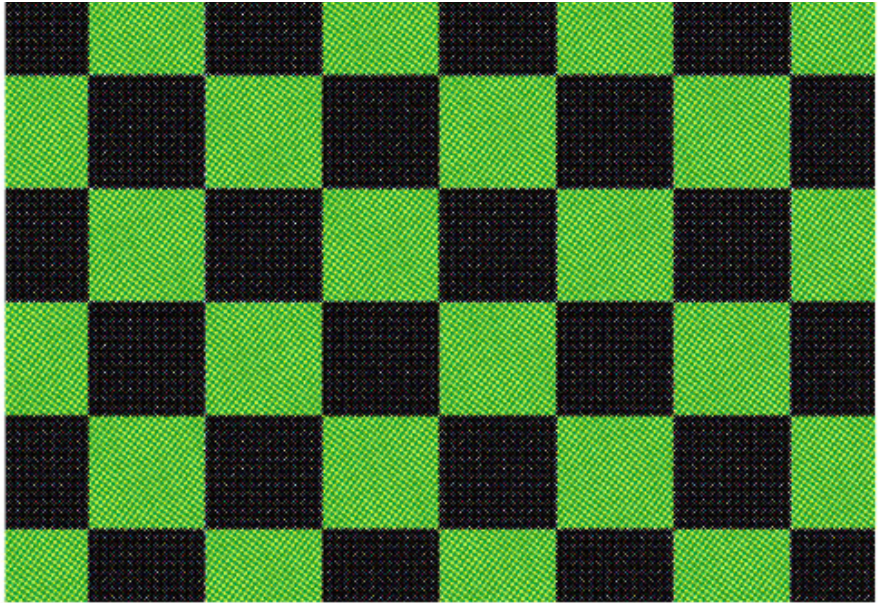
The roar of an exhaust is a primal scream. “I too am not a bit tamed—I too am untranslatable; I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.”

The acts of slicing, welding and rearranging of parts are subversions of prescribed purpose. Mounted upon the wall, bare-metal pipes and manifolds join, extending upward and outward, streamers twist and dance from the exhaust tips. *Gassed Up* imposes upon the viewer and dominates the space. It is an exclamation of self-affirmation that cuts through the turbulence of self-criticism, overwhelming introspection and the burdens of societal expectation. Robinson re-invents, liberates and affirms themselves in this large-scale reconstruction of automotive off-cuts.

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Opie Robinson, *Body/Vehicle Halftone_1* (detail), 2020, digital image. Image courtesy of the artist.



Opie Robinson, *Chequered Flag* (detail), 2020, digital image. Image courtesy of the artist.

Opie Robinson is trans-masculine non-binary emerging artist living and working on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar (Perth, Western Australia). Their artistic practice is multi-disciplinary, employing mediums and techniques in relation to a project at hand. Heavily influenced by personal experience, Robinson's work presently revolves around investigations into gender, embodiment/ disembodiment and representation, and reflects their keen interest in queering the visual tropes of male-dominated or hyper-masculine cultures and ventures, such as car and motorcycle enthusiasm.

Robinson recently completed a Bachelor of Contemporary Art and will commence postgraduate study as an honours student in 2021.

Cool Change Contemporary acknowledges the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, the traditional and rightful custodians of the land on which we operate. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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