MEMORY

COVA GRADUATE ACADEMY CONFERENCE
2 - 3 SEPTEMBER 2021

SCHEDULE

CENTRE of VISUAL ART
COVA

THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

DAY ONE

	Webinar https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/86007487582?pwd=R3VHUE95TThLY1ZvdG5QbVdsR2NiQT09	Room 1 https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/85149013136?pwd=UGY4ZEF5WkptK211N0p3VlJiZzB2dz09	Room 2 https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/84455460715?pwd=SG1saTcrQnBHTEhrNVl5KzdqQjBrZz09
11:45am - 12pm **12pm - 1pm**	**Opening Remarks** Dr Suzie Fraser **Keynote presentation:** Yalinguth Team		
1pm - 2pm	**1:30pm Performance** *forever* Chelsea Coon **2pm Performance** *Blech* Mia Salsjo **3pm Exhibition** *Genealogies* Curated by Elyssia Bugg & Belinda Scerri, featuring Judith Martinez Estrada, Dr Kathleen McCann, Penelope Hunt.	**Panel:** *Transformation of Civic Culture/Public Spaces: FIELD* Chair: Chris Parkinson Presenters: Pauline Bianca B. Ma-alat, Alice Edy, Stephanie Parker, Soo-Min Shim.	**Talk:** Dr. David Sequeira #BrownManinAWhite Museum
2pm - 2:30pm			
2:30pm - 3:00pm		**Break**	**Break**
3pm - 4:30pm	**3:45pm Film Screening** *Resonant Incantations* Melody Woodnutt **4pm Performance** *forever* Chelsea Coon **4:30pm Performance** *Blech* Mia Salsjo	**Panel:** *Re-making the Archive: Photography & History* Chair: Sanja Pahoki Presenters: Emmanuel Rodriguez-Chaves, Eliane Touma, Isabella Capezio	**Workshop:** *'Let's Object' Salon* Facilitators: Dr Susanne Pratt, Jianni Tien, Jessica Larance Williams, Corinna Berndt, Eloise Florence, Zo Sadokierski
4:30pm - 5:00pm			

Yalinguth Team (presentation by Bobby Nicholls, Max Piantoni, Dr Chris Barker)

Yalinguth is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history of Gertrude Street, Fitzroy (Ngár-go) as told by notable Elders and artists. Yalinguth means "yesterday" in the Woi Wurrung language, the spatial sound experience is designed to connect past accounts from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, to provide today's generation insight and context of this popular Melbourne meeting place.

In keeping with oral traditions, and to minimise screens, Yalinguth is expressed entirely through sound. The app reveals a map of one's location that points to areas to access stories, historical events and songs. Within the spatialised sound environment, the user largely navigates by audio cues. Some stories and soundscapes recreate pre-colonial times, whilst others walk users through a 'Black GST' protest or an intimate personal reflection on finding family and community on the streets and in the pubs of Fitzroy (Ngár-go). This immersion in the past encourages us to think about our own history and identity, and how we relate to the people and places around us. For more information, please visit www.yalinguth.com.au

Genealogies Exhibition:

Judith Martinez Estrada
El Apartamento - The Apartment

My presentation will apply Pierre Nora's theory of 'Les Lieux de Memoire' (sites of memory), to an investigation of personal history as a visual and academic study of 33, Menendez Pelayo, Madrid. This address has been the residence of my paternal family in Spain for over a century. I have investigated this location through documentary photography, and the creative interpretation of objects, documents and spaces. During this process, a testament for a collective family narrative — one that has somehow become diluted through emigration, The Spanish Civil War, Spain's consequent transition into democracy, and the death of family members — was created. My presentation will showcase the process of this on-location investigation, and how individual acts of witness and interpretation have allowed for a certain poetry to take place between the dichotomy of memory and history.

In Archive Fever, Derrida suggests the archive is an address, a home, one that is controlled and kept by the patriarchs and/ or matriarchs. My presentation will discuss the connections and overlaps between sites of memory (in particular that of domestic sites) to institutional and bureaucratic archives, and the readings of the historical artefacts/documents found therein.

Dr Kathleen McCann
Unforgettable

Unforgettable is a staged performative work that enacts erasure, as both commemoration and relinquishment. Using blackboard portraits of my mother who died from Alzheimer's, I make a conscious, ritual deconstruction of her image to echo the disease's displacement of self and reflect upon the fickle ephemerality of memory and identities.

In a darkened space, a series of spectral portraits are made present by projection. Merging through dissolves, slowly dematerialising and re-materialising bridged by an intermediary image of my mother between two stages of life, a blurring of time and state. A vintage desk-lamp illuminates one physical portrait on a table easel. An old record is cranked up to play the song Unforgettable. To dissonant crackling audio, I erase the portrait in a methodical directional gesture. I crank the record again, redraw my mother's face from memory until the end of the song. I collect the remnant dust of my mothers' image in a small vessel, stand to remove the record's needle and leave the space.

Deconstruction of memory, both personal and cultural, rather than an iconoclastic act, can open a third state between presence and absolute absence, a space of the intermediate and discursive acknowledging the unfixed nature of memory and assumptions about the fixedness of history. Erasure, deconstruction and even the material fact of the ephemeral, can act counter-memorially allowing for emergent perspectives on the past. Rather than obliterate, a "remembering to forget" can forge recuperative relationships to both memory and history.

Penelope Hunt
Reflections from The Pool

The Pool is the result of a 10-year durational investigation exploring my family's abandoned swimming pool as a suburban Memento Mori. This practice-led research project reflects on ideas of truth, memory, place and time. Situated on Wurundjeri land, I began the project during my VCA Masters in 2013/14 and have continued to explore the site into my PhD at Deakin University, investigating photography, not only as a record and a measure but, as a medium of loss. I am interested in memory, and the buffered and personal space created by memory and its artefacts and its transcriptions, particularly in the recorded form of still and moving photographs. This research investigates the paradox whereby perceived reality can shift with time, yet indexical records can be made to anchor a site simultaneously to both the present and the past.

Used as a strikingly analogue metaphor for change and a vessel to trigger memory, associations, and slippages, The Pool photographs and video works are a real-time study, which both reveal and reflect. Almost unrecognisable in its verdant and present form, the abandoned and overgrown pool, like any ruin, reveals enough of its past to act as a springboard for associations, understanding and memories. It acts variously and simultaneously, as a micro/macrocosm, a portal, a place of reflection, a mirror, a measure, a timekeeper and a constantly evolving habitat containing remnants of what was, what is and, seems to somehow predict with an impending sense of urgency, a looming future.

Dr. David Sequeira
#brownmaninawhitemuseum

Focussing on the work developed through his current Creative Researcher in Residence at the Grainger Museum, David Sequeira's presentation #brownmaninawhitemuseum, explores the ways in which a gay mid 50s, brown-skinned, Indian born, Australian artist/ curator/ academic makes sense of museum dedicated to an openly racist composer/musician who was committed to promoting his genius.

Sequeira's research at the Grainger falls into three spheres:
- A focus on 1938: the year the Grainger opened; the year of Sequeira's mother's birth and the year the NGV acquired a suite of replica British Crown Jewels.
- Grainger's interest in whips and other fetish objects.
- The relationship between colour and music
These three aspects of Sequeira's research are connected via his interest in the all-pervasive nature of colour and geometry as contemplative devices within museums.

This presentation navigates the often dimly lit pathway through some of the limitations and possibilities inherent in museums which seem chained to colonial values. Signposted by discussion of new creative works including sculpture, installation and curatorial intervention, #brownmaninawhitemuseum interrupts traditional narratives around interpretation, linear histories, ownership and archives.

Alice Edy
The City is the Palace
To "meet" a city by map produces a very particular kind of understanding of a place. It is a second-hand knowing. On the page or screen, navigation is mediated by language rather than the embodied geographies of childhood. Last year I found myself redrawing maps of my past-homes (specifically Johannesburg and Cape Town), a practice less to do with nostalgia than it was to do with movement: gravity, earth, weight, place.
Using the line rather than my body, I have been exploring how mentally retreading well-worn paths may offer an emergent archaeology, excavating fragments of the past that would not have been available for spontaneous recall. The resultant marks are artefacts in an archive of now-obsolete knowledge. Could the routes themselves become a system of signs? And if so, what are the potentialities and limits of such an intimate alphabet?
My current work investigates the idea that a digital Font might be able to serve as an archive. While we typically understand the archive as a collection of materials or texts, I am interested in the archival potentialities of the letterforms themselves. I argue that each glyph simultaneously performs both its past and present tense, expressing its own genealogy through its structure (similar to a cell). A digital typeface doesn't exist anywhere as an artefact, but rather, as potential: a series of signs-in-waiting. Can the encoded architecture of a Font provide an intangible place to keep floating signs? If the purpose of a font is to materialise language in order to communicate, then what does it mean to make a font that is, by design, a hiding place?

Soo-Min Shim
Charting Islands:
Memory and Maps of Migration in Oh Haji's 'Grandmother Island Project'

For immigrant, migrant, expatriate and diasporic individuals, memories of migration and movement are embedded in the warps and wefts of the cloth they carry with and around them. In opposition to nation-state histories that are monumentalised, textile visual artists have created 'anti-memorials' that instead commemorate individual subjectivity. The proximity of cloth to corporeality and phenomenology is useful in generating what Jill Bennett has termed 'sense-memory' which in turn produces insight into the lived experiences of human migration. Using the case study of artist Oh Haji this paper investigates how fabric and textiles are crucial in materialising a tactile world. Oh is a Zainichi Korean artist born and raised in Japan now based in Australia using a multiplicity of traditional textile techniques from Korea, Japan, Guatemala and Indonesia. Whilst Asian-Australian artists are often reduced to two binaristic poles shuffling between Asia/Australia, Oh demonstrates an understanding of the Pacific Ocean more broadly as a transit zone for the exchange of memory and movement. Textiles become the medium and mode through which Oh privileges individual memory and navigates post-memory, reconceptualising static expressions of spatio-temporality and unravelling the borders of the nation-state through her transnational approach to fabric.

Pauline Bianca B. Ma-alat
Mapping the Istorya: Narratives of Place with Communities of Albay

Over the years, the province of Albay has developed a strong infrastructure for community-oriented disaster mapping. However, the data-driven maps that are produced inadvertently blur out the unique and visceral histories that communities have in regard to disaster. Informed by participatory and process-oriented modes of curatorial engagement, this paper explores the imaginings of a sense of place and of community anchored on memory in two barangays in Albay. These communities were chosen because of their shared history as the hardest hit towns during the 2006 Super Typhoon Durian. Through a cultural mapping project, the partner barangays are encouraged to harness their own memories of place in the implementation of creative projects that embody community histories. It is here that we observe manifestations of the community's istorya ("story"), herein defined vis-à-vis three spatially bound strands of signification--istorya as folklore, istorya as institutional memory (histories), and istorya as community voices. Central to this understanding is the need to look into how different institutions and cultural players have framed community memory. This paper proposes that it is through participatory modes of curation and mapping that we might understand why and how these communities persist in sites of loss and despite threats of disaster. When communities are given the opportunity to take upon themselves the project of self-expression and framing their own istorya, how would they go about it? Further, when confronted with contentious narratives of memory embedded within their immediate physical space, how do these communities now approach the task of placemaking?

Dr Stephanie Parker
The Role of Rhythmical Pattern Body Movement in ANZAC Commemoration and Site Connotations

This studio practice investigated the role that rhythmical pattern body movement has in communicating connotation in a commemorative environment to an attending audience. The project's inspiration was the Australian War Memorial's (AWM) daily Last Post Ceremony (LPC), which transmits the Cult of Anzac.
There is an interactive relationship in an environment between architectural structures and people. Stephens argued that architectural structures act as focus points that transform and communicate knowledge by bodily affecting moods, feelings and emotions. Kelly theorised that performances allow for the 'correct' knowledge or belief to be transmitted orally, which can be mnemonically associated with specific locations in the environment to give purpose. However, the role of the performance element of rhythmical pattern body movement is unknown.
For this exploration, the principle instrument was me using my Hilal Dance practice, which was recorded through performance autoethnography and video. However, Thrift's non-representational theory (i.e., written text inadequately communicates multi-sensual practices and experiences) applies here. Through my Anzac Parade Series, Wreath-Laying Series and art exhibition, rhythmical pattern body movement communicated a commemorative meaning that modified sites' significance. Combined with the ceremonial object—the red poppy wreath—this significance is translated through movement quality and rhythm to provide solemnity and gravitas to the remembrance of sacrifice and hope for the future. At the Reconciliation Place, the red poppy wreath lying on the mound located physically on the AWM–Parliamentary land axis meant the mound was the central point for remembrance to all those who died for their country. Through the repetitive red poppy wreath-laying performance and the LPC, the exhibition explored the idea of how not only a particular commemorative connotation is given to a space but also this performance's frequency has religious associations. The project demonstrated how rhythmical pattern body movement communicates connotations in a performance.

Performances:

Mia Salsjo
Blech
Mia Salsjö is the host and channel of Blech, a performance entity whose preferred communication resides in systems, sequences and sonic abstractions. Guttural speech, operatic diction and discordant flute is just some of her communicative array. Eerily reminiscent of the Bletchley Park code breakers of World War Two, Blech articulates a poetic parsing of information gleaned from architectural sites, passages of air and the electric energies of organic life. Her performances draw on systems both ancient and futuristic, pronouncing the infinite potentials within the present moment.

Chelsea Coon
forever (2021), Performance for video. Digital. Colour. Sound. 1:16 of 9 minutes, 41 seconds. Courtesy of the artist.

I adjusted the hands of a battery-operated clock face in the directions of "forwards" and "backwards" for variant intervals as I repeatedly oriented the clock over 4 points on my body: the skull, ribcage (over heart), stomach, and pubic bone. This performance utilises post-production effects of duration acceleration as well as the application of a sci-fi colour filter to reflect on the aspects of distortion often present in our experience of "real" time. The clock placement cycles on my body occurred as actions across 15 videos, approximately 10 minutes each, and were stitched together to loop continuously. "forever" plays with a sense of the real and unreal, and draws attention to the constructed, regulatory aspects of time—which are forever in relation to the body's experience of space. This project was generously supported by CAIR2021 Artist Residency production grants (University of Tsukuba)

Film Screening:

Melody Woodnuttt
Resonant Incantations

Resonant Incantations is made using 16mm negative film that I had shot near Dawson City, Yukon, Canada in winter 2018, I worked in relay/symbiosis with Hanley's sound recordings taken from their early 2020 residency at Bogong Centre for Sound Culture.

My field work in and around Dawson City led me to a 'missing' film reel that was left behind after an excavation in 1978 uncovered over 500 films that were buried in Dawson City; it was the last stop for the East to West film roadshows across Canada in the early 20th century - after which films were stored (and spontaneously combusted), buried, or dumped in Dawson City. After excavation, the military was involved in moving the highly flammable nitrate film reels to Library and Archives Canada and the U.S. Library of Congress for restoration and storage (you may recall the 2016 film, 'Dawson City:Frozen Time' by filmmaker Bill Morrison and scored by Alex Somers). When I encountered a rare missing reel in 2018 that was left behind, I filmed it on my Bolex while struck with a kind of awe. I held the film, it was heavy and on a decayed metal spool. I placed it down into the crack of light coming in from the door and in -30ºC I wound my Bolex and filmed it in detail - this material (and that of its environment) form the imagery for the short film, 'Resonant Incantations'.
Here, cinema eats itself through the memory of cinema roadshows, the collapse of time, sound and image within analogue processes using the JK Optical Printer for rephotography and manipulation to create a new film, from film.

Emmanuel Rodriguez-Chaves
1 de julio, 1981. Single-channel video, duration 5:12". 2019.

In the video July 1, 1981, an anonymous user juxtaposes, associates distorts and intervenes in a series of images on their monitor screen. These images are associated with the famous assassination of Viviana Gallardo in the 1980s (Costa Rica). It is a detective-esque game. Thus, the image is a trap for the gaze; it directs and frames it as it pleases. The synthesized voice that accompanies the video warns us that knowing through images is truculent, the image admits an infinity of possible distortions that translate into cover-ups, steering and mechanisms that control the way it is received.

'Let's Object' Salon

Facilitators:
Dr Susanne Pratt, Jianni Tien, Jessica Larance Williams, Corinna Berndt, Eloise Florence, Zo Sadokierski

The framing of this 2-hr workshop is around knowledge generation and creative practice through reflection on different notions of "objects"—boundary objects, diegetic objects, discursive objects and other objects. The session will kick off with short 5 minute provocations by transdisciplinary scholars each responding to a different notion of object, leading to an expansive understanding of what an object is and what they can do.
As part of this workshop, participants are invited to bring an example of an object from their own practice, or something that they have written about, and in small groups we will discuss it in relation to a number of supplied provocations and readings.

Workshop concept originally developed by Dr Zoë Sadokierski and Dr Susanne Pratt

Re-making the Archive: Photography & History

Eliane Touma
Memory, Landscape and Violence

On August 4 2020, I woke up to photos and videos from the massive explosion tearing through Beirut. The city where I lived for more than 15 years, was no more. The ubiquitous photos and videos shared on the blast was unprecedented. I spent days and weeks browsing satellite images, tracking paths that I might've done if I was there and wondering what one street or another looks like now.
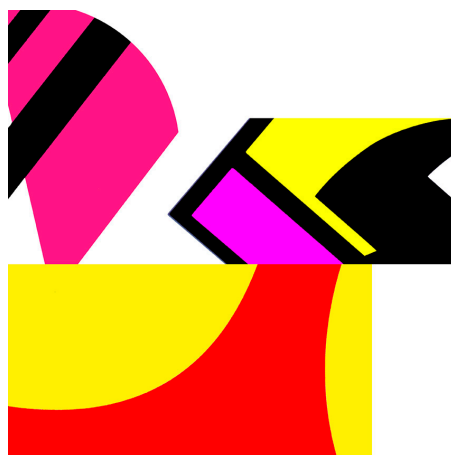
How did the sonic wave that swallowed the city and rendered thousands of glass pieces mute weapons? That day it rained glass. A blizzard of sharp glass wounded the bodies of the inhabitants and the scars remain the indexical traces of the event. All that I can remember from that day is the number of images and videos that I saw over and over again, from distance, from the ground, from air, from a balcony, from a street, from a car, and even from below the ground. For some of those images exist now on the web posthumously, since people who witnessed the blast closely, disappeared in one second or two in the Mediterranean Sea. The only proof of their fragile existence became photos and videos, encrusted like fossils in the "intangible" world of image circulation.

In this paper/presentation I'm questioning how an event like Beirut's blast was reconfigured on online platforms and how the ubiquity of photos shared can corroborate new ways of living the event and the internet as a "site of memory" ?

ABSTRACTS

Isabella Capezio
Photobooks in the Asia Pacific and the undoing of the Archive.

From Family albums, to intuitional archives, the photograph and collections of photographs have been place holders for history and memory. But what does it mean to reconfigure the collective and or the personal past? Why has there been a flood of photobooks that specifically look to the archive as a source for inspiration, contestation and aesthetic? This paper seeks to investigate new trends in photobook making and publishing within the Asia-Pacific region with particular focus on photobook making as a political device/ practice. From Thomas Sauvin's Beijing Silvermine Project to Yumi Goto's Reminders Project in Japan as well as Nepal's Picture Library I will discuss individual and collective practices that engage with memory and the archive and argue for the necessary reworking of institutional archives. Threaded throughout this paper I will recount personal challenges dealing with my Grandmother's archive and her murky past that elucidates a projection of whiteness and cultural ideologies visible in a broader Australian context. Employing Ariela Azoulay's claims presented in her text Potential History, Unlearning Imperialism (2019) I argue for a situated and collaborative approach to photobook practices that activate the outdated, and engage in "the practice of potential histories; legible, perceptible and redistributed" (p.16). What can be gained through the process of re-working and remaking an archive? And where can it survive if our institutions continue the practices of imperial power?

DAY TWO

Friday 3rd September

Time	Webinar https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/86007487582?pwd=R3VHUE95TThLY1Z-vdG5QbVdsR2NiQT09	Room 1 https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/85149013136?pwd=UGY4ZEF5WkptK211N0p3VIJiZzB2dz09	Room 2 https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/84455460715?pwd=SG1saTcrQnBHTEhrNVl5KzdqQjBrZz09
11:00am - 11:30am	**In Conversation:** Wukun Wanambi (The Mulka Project) & Kade McDonald (Agency)		
11:30am - 1pm	**12pm Performance** *forever* Chelsea Coon	**Panel:** *Objects, Materials & Spaces* Chair: Elyssia Bugg Presenters: Tess Mehonoshen, Claire Lambe, D.A. Calf	**Panel:** *Science & Technology: Digital Memory & Post Human Encounters* Chair: Dr. Suzie Fraser Presenters: Natasha Narain, Alison Kennedy, Jen Valender.
	12:30pm Performance *Blech* Mia Salsjo		
1pm - 2pm		**Break**	**Break**
2:00pm - 3:30pm	**2pm Exhibition** *Genealogies* Curated by Elyssia Bugg & Belinda Scerri, featuring Judith Martinez Estrada, Dr Kathleen McCann, Penelope Hunt.	**Panel:** *Re-making the Archive: Counter-Colonial Methodologies* Chair: Jessica Amy Clark Presenters: Olga Bennett, Dr Kirsten Lyttle, Suzannah Henty	**Panel:** *Science & Technology: Song & Cuisine as Mnemonic Technology* Chair: Dr. Danny Butt Presenters: Tina Stefanou, Priyanka Jain, Siying Zhou
	2:45pm Film Screening *Resonant Incantations* Melody Woodnutt		
3pm - 3:45pm		**Room changeover**	**Room changeover**
3:45pm - 5:15pm	**4pm Performance** *forever* Chelsea Coon	**Panel:** *Re-making the Archive: Performing the Archive* Chair: Mark Shorter Presenters: Chelsea Coon, Scotty So, Kathryn Henry, Erica Charalambous	**Panel:** *Transformation of Civic Culture/Public Spaces: GUIDE* Chair: Chris Parkinson Presenters: Samuel Holleran, Eloise Florence, Amelia Winata, Caroline Austin
	4:30pm Performance *Blech* Mia Salsjo		
5:30 - 6:45pm **Webinar link**	**Closing Event & Panel Discussion** *ACCA x CoVA: A Biography of Daphne* Moderator: Belinda Scerri Panellists: Mihnea Mircan (curator), Lauren Burrow, Nicholas Mangan. Pre-recorded provocations: Ho Tzu Nyen, Inge Meijer. **Closing Remarks**: CoVA Graduate Academy		

Wukun Wanambi (Yolŋu Artist and Cultural Director, The Mulka Project) and Kade McDonald (CEO, Agency)

The name 'Mulka' means a sacred but public ceremony, and, to hold or protect. The mission is to sustain and protect Yolŋu cultural knowledge in Northeast Arnhem Land under the leadership of community elders. The Mulka production house, recording studio, digital learning centre and cultural archive are managed by Yolŋu law and governance.

Objects, Materials & Spaces

Tess Mehonoshen
A Gentle Labour, Splitting in Place
Understanding attachment, separation and longing for place through haptic interactions with displaced, site-sourced, memory material

My ongoing practice-led research attempts to understand how a significant home-place of the past can be contained within a displaced material. The 'gentle labour' of slow, repetitive bodily gestures with raw material are used to examine how the intimacy of touch facilitates a gradual, emotional understanding of place attachment, separation and loss through the re-visiting and re filtering of memory fragments.

I use the term 'splitting place' to define the physical, emotional and psychological divides resulting from an internalised sense of disconnection from 'home'. I draw upon the work of writers Lucy Lippard, Gaston Bachelard and theorist Edward S Casey, who states '…the body goes out to reach places; it also bears the traces of the places it has known. These traces are continually laid down in the body, sedimenting themselves there … which, being reawakened, can bring the place back to us in its full vivacity.'1 As I repeatedly roll the red clay sourced from my lost childhood home in my hands, to create hundreds and hundreds of coils, memories ebb and flow into my consciousness. These fragments form the basis of poetic text works, that are presented in conjunction with my site-responsive sculptural installation practice. This haptic interaction with memory material fosters a purposeful distillation, where the 'splitting' of place, with all its intimacies both forgotten and remembered, are redistributed across time and distance, into the present.
By interweaving a personal narrative with these reflections, this research asks: In what ways can a process of 'gentle labour' with a site's materiality be used as a strategy of 'splitting place', that can embody emotional lived experiences and memories?

David A Calf
The Grain of the (Archaeological) Voice - Applying earth sciences thinking to sound in search of memory

Imagine if every sound ever produced continued to exist as an energetic trace-in-place, no matter how inaudible. How could we think about this sonic archive as a bulwark of resistance against dominant approaches to site and tendencies towards univocality in politico-historical narrative production? And how could archaeological paradigms be applied in the task of 'listening' to this corpus? This discussion paper seeks to reference recent ontological experiments that have been justified by their originators on the bases of their ethical import (Bennet, 2010; Olivier, 2011), in order to posit a speculative approach to sound. This approach finds sound, in the form of its trace, in a potential infinite existence. If sound is the trace of agency, its sequestration - situated all around us and throughout the earth - forms a colossal sono-archaeological archive. These audial lines and strata could suggest an alternate way of assessing site, particularly those that are contested - what sites aren't on some level? All of a sudden a vast spectral chorale of the historical past bellows in opposition to the forced utility of the deaf and agglomerating forces of nationalism, anthropocentrism, and other homogenising tendencies. This paper references the artist's recent creative works - sculptural, sonic, and textual - alongside explorations of monument sites and diaspora experiences, to illustrate this research project and to suggest methods of listening more respective ofour place in the world of things.

Claire Lambe
I just can't help myself

What makes an object moving?
How can an artwork evoke feeling?
How can an environment communicate an experience?
How can a material say something, how can sculpture talk?
How to give a work a voice, so it can communicate a past?

Inspired by the memories from a Survivor-style social experiment facilitated by the British military in 1987. I would like to try expressing a memory of an experienced event, (that took place on the remote southern Japanese island of Iriomote), through a series of writings and videos from the perspective of a sculpture.

Apart from the other 38 participants in the expedition, there is very little evidence of this event. I only have one roll of 35mm film and an article that was written in a Japanese newspaper, which has never been translated.

My installation and sculptural practice focus on compiling experienced memory fragments as a platform to communicate a broader or more complex set of ideas.
I am interested in the body as a vessel of knowledge and language, how making can be felt. How a moving experience becomes part of your knowledge. Witnessing, feeling, living through, become part of your making language.

The presentation of this body of work will take the form of an interview with a sculpture (creative writing), a video essays and the translation of the newspaper article from Japanese to English.

Science & Technology: Digital Memory & Post Human Encounters

Natasha Narain
(Producer: Kavita Gonsalves. Artists: Agapetos Fa'alaeva and Natasha Narain)
Transhuman Saunter: Multispecies Techno-Entanglements in the Brisbane City Botanic Gardens
Creative Producer: Kavita Gonsalves. Artists: Agapetos Fa'alaeva and Natasha Narain

TransHuman Saunter is a digital geolocative artwork created in Brisbane on the Indigenous land of the Turrbal and Yuggera people. It involves four women artists of colour who invite one to saunter alongside the "non-human" Indian Banyan tree.The project deploys participatory design as a research method. It uses digital media such as audio, images, and poetry to reflect on ecology, mythology, social, cultural, postcolonial, and personal narratives creating an accessible space for unknown histories. The artists are Agapetos Fa'aleava of Samoa, Lan Thanh Ha of Vietnam, Naputsamohn Junpiban of Thailand, and Indian- Australian Natasha Narain. Creatively produced by Kavita Gonsalves, the iteration for the Conference on Memory at COVA focuses on Agapetos' and Natasha's work in the form of a combined performative presentation. Agapetos' work explores her relationship with the Banyan Tree through the traditional Samoan tattoo called the Malu- shelter/protection. The malu's motif is a map of her ancestors navigating through the ocean to find land and opportunity. Like the Banyan tree, the malu has travelled far and wide to settle on Australian soil. Natasha's work offers a polyphonic pilgrimage invoking the earth goddess of Bengal while exploring the colonial history of botanical gardens, trade, and indenture, revealing memories etched into barks and speaking for the tree as having feelings and forming new friendships. The works contribute to pluralistic ways of knowing through an evocation of unseen narratives: the "lesser"-beings and the "non"-beings.

The project is accessible via a smart phone or a computer on https://research.qut.edu.au/morethanhuman/projects/thsp/

Alison Kennedy
Technology, Memory and Forgetting

Alison Kennedy will suggest that technology is to be re-placed from a functional (evidential) tool to a more nuanced and complex position. How shall we re-member (or put together the limbs of history), particularly in the face of structural forgetting? Are we to suffer amnesia, and grief, through loss of contemporary truth? What does technology present as the future?

Jen Valender
Deaf Pixels

In the lecture performance Deaf Pixels I narrate a personal history using 35mm film projection as a metaphor to explore constructed realities. A collection of silent film clips is used to illustrate a recollection of history. In this version of truth, abstracted experiences are brought together to patchwork a narrative byway of the history of projected image technology. Lecture performance is utilised to investigate silent film fiction through the medium of digital film. In this format, associations between the language of film and the language of cognitive psychology are drawn closely together. Deaf Pixels is a self-referential film; an echo chamber that makes connections between histories of fading memory, the digital archive and soon-to-be obsolete technologies.

Suzannah Henty
Anti-Colonial Undoing in Contemporary Film: Kamal Aljafari and the Karrabing Film Collectives' use of mimesis as counter-narration

The appropriation of colonial archives in film is a type of collage that uproots the origin of the occupying nation-state by mirroring its erasure (Dabashi, 2016). In the context of settler-colonialism (Wolfe, 1999, 193), colonial archives undermine Indigenous sovereignty through shielding itself from the memory it dispossesses (Derrida, 1995, 9; Anderson, 1993, 160). Art provides a space to disrupt the flow of occupation by rendering visible attempts made by the settler-colony to purify itself and become imperceptible, namely through cultural appropriation and Indigenization (McLean, 2020, 222). This presentation examines two films that re-appropriate settler-colonial archives—Kamal Aljafari's Recollection (2105) and the Karrabing Film Collective's Night Time Go (2015), arguing that the films counter-memorialise (Tello, 2016) the settler-Australian and settler-Israeli nation-state. I will argue that is an act of anti-colonial resistance given that it intervenes at the epistemological heart of colonial erasure—that is, the through the logic of firstness.

Dr Kirsten Lyttle
The Whakapapa (genealogy) of Imaging: or how the photograph is descended from carving

The camera, and its product, the photograph, have often been used as a recording device; capturing a "slice of time" and viewed as a physical manifestation of a memory keeper. This paper challenges the Western-centric idea that the photograph is a memento mori—a symbolic reminder of the inevitability of death, or "a token of absence[1]" as writer and cultural critic, Susan Sontag once described. Contrastingly, I argue that by reading photography through a Māori methodological framework, the photograph recalls presence, rather than absence. For at least 120 years Māori have not only adopted the photograph but have Māorified it. Following the work of Māori scholars, such as Professor Deidre Brown (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu) and others, I will discuss the ways in which that photography can be viewed from within a Māori framework as having its own whakapapa (geneology), thereby giving it importance and mana in the Māori world. Photography can be made compatible with Māori protocols and customs and be used in distinctly Māori ways. In the contemporary Māori world, photographs of ancestors, are displayed, addressed, touched, lamented over and brought along to important cultural events, such as tangi (funerals). The rendered image of an ancestor, whether carved or photographic, is considered to be a living presence through which the wairua (spirituality or everlasting spirit) of the person can be transferred. Ancestors can be in the present, in the past and in the future -simultaneously.

[1] Sontag, S 1977, On photography, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, p.12.

Olga Bennett
Can history learn from memory: Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne Atlas as a model for speculative historiography

Comparing two differing ways in which an episode of familial history is recorded in 'official history' and in the collective memory of the members of my family, made me speculate on the possibility of an alternative historiography, the one that 'learns' from memory and is capable of registering affective realities, is performative and relational, and as a result challenges the very definition of what we regarded as 'knowledge' about the past.
My grandfather spent three years as a Soviet spy in Greece at the beginning of 1950s.

The archival documents register neither his lived experience, nor the effects this work had on his mental and physical health and his family in the longer term.
This enquiry led me to Aby Warburg's Institute and Archive in London to study the Mnemosyne Atlas, Warburg's famous attempt to record cultural history, named after the Ancient Greek goddess of memory. On my visit in 2019, I was able to access Warburg's little known diaries kept during his time in asylum, directly preceding his work on the atlas. Hoping to trace the formation of his unique methodology, I encountered a system of graphic notation that helped me reconsider the constellations of images in the Mnemosyne as a series of scores.

Warburg's work informs my proposition for a speculative historiography, one that approaches archival document as a score, as it was understood by experimental composers and Fluxus artists: a starting point for a multiplicity of performative re-readings, its potential never fully foreclosed. In my presentation, I will further elaborate on the similarities between such historiography and operations of personal memory, as well as considering its potential for the writing of history of people excluded from or poorly represented within the archives.

My presentation will comprise a paper, weaving together poetic and academic approaches, alongside a short 16 mm film, responding to and documenting the research carried out at the Warburg Institute.

Tina Stefanou
002# Manifesting Voice: 34+ Mn(p)ne(u)monic Actions

'Mimesis got your tongue'

002# Manifesting Voice: 34+ Mn(p)ne(u)monic Actions is a more-than ensounding event. It is both personal and public and acts as a political engine and loving disruption. Dissolving words into geo and biophonic murmurings, shifts language from a human culturally encoded position into a Mn(p)ne(u)monic voice.Mn(p)ne(u)monic becoming memory and breath in relational motion.
Singing-with mother tongues across the biological and the more-than brings grief into skillfulness. Poethical gestures and vocal associations reflect what it means to live in a time of limited elderhood and planetary commons.

'Voice-as-urgency'

Priyanka Jain
New memories in culinary Bārahmāsā

Bārahmāsā were songs of the seasons composed from 14th century AD onwards in India. A Bārahmāsā song describes the cycle of the twelve months of the Hindu calendar year from the perspective of the singer who could be a farmer, a travelling trader or the desolate wife left behind by the traveler and include details about the changing seasons, flora and social or religious activities. Often these songs can also be considered as recollections of the past year or as mnemonic lyrics[1].

One form of Bārahmāsā[2] which was often illustrated into a set of twelve folios of miniature paintings (one for each corresponding month) was based on a set of verses in which a female heroine implores her lover not to desert her, but rather stay with her and enjoy the peculiarities of the season and the festivities of that month. These verses are steeped in Shingara Rasa - the erotic affect of Indian arts and aesthetics, which during the British colonization suffered censorship under Victorian codes of morality.

My practice of decolonizing this censorship combines the writing of erotic verses about local seasonal foods composed within digitally drawn miniatures, which evoke the bodily journeys of the nutrients in the foods. Using research from Phytochemistry, Neuroscience and Microbiology these verses carry the potential to become contemporary mnemonic aids for knowledge about the benefits of seasonal foods.

[1] In the month of Karttik, one should eat ol,
in Marga, the bel fruit,
In Paush, kanji
in Magh, mustard-oil.
In Phalgun, one should eat ginger,
in Chaitra, bitter things,
In Baisakh, nim and jute leaves.
In Jeth, one should have buttermilk,
in Asharh, curds,
In Shravan, roasted grains,
In Bhadra, the tal fruit.
In Ashvin, one should eat cucumber,
says Daka:
Such is my Barahmasa.
Vaudeville, C. (1986). Bārahmāsā in Indian Literatures: Songs of the Twelve Months in Indo-Aryan Literatures. Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi. p-47.
[2] The month of Jyestha. May/June. 1675-1700 (circa), Bundi District, Rajasthan, India. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/A_1999-1202-0-5-6

Siying Zhou
Taste Your Memory, 2020-ongoing

Memory provides an organic pathway for individuals to interrupt the present with things from the past. Individual's memory does not only shape a biographic narrative about who they are but also contributes to the larger social histories. However, memory is not a stable entity. The performance of remembering fluctuates along with the changes of one's physical conditions and mental status. When the stability of one's memory is compromised, what kinds of past and social value does this person inform? and how does it affect others' understanding towards history and personal identities during social interactions? By introducing and reflecting a working-in-progress project titled Taste Your Memory, I intend to unpack how a series of participative events of recipe swapping, cooking and eating and conversation-making connect the ideas about memory, representation of a self and history together. Initiated in 2020 during the 2nd lockdown in Victoria, Taste Your Memory invites the participants to exchange the recipe of their favourite childhood dish with me. By following the cooking and eating the dish from the given recipe, we connect online and share our memories about the dish in exchange and the process of cooking in the present time. In the process of carrying out this project and produce video works, I explore the key propositional idea: the authenticity of an individual memory can be potentially compromised through the social interaction of hearing about others' memories and making and consuming the food that has significant meanings in the past of others.

Chelsea Coon
Hard & Fast

The performing body is an archive of experiences and memories. Performance can be produced through questioning how information acts on the body and the body's role in the making of external archives. For this presentation, I will discuss my recent livestream performance "hard and fast" (2021). In this work my body was on display and revealed traces of the significant physical and psychic transformation it has undergone in the last 18 months. I undertook gestures to address feelings of precarity and lack of control while I sought to find balance in the brief acts under the critical eye of my distanced audience.

Scotty So
Memoirs of a Time Traveler (maybe?)

This is an ongoing project of mine that involves the act of making images that replicate different eras authentically and jamming them onto different Wikipedia pages as "authentic" images for academic purposes. This project has been continuing since 2019 when I questioned the realness in drag practice, "If I can be as real as I can be and no one can clock it, does it mean I am authentic?"

In this project, I gathered and made costumes of replicas from different eras from the late Qing Dynasty 1860s to the present time and dress up as women from the different eras creating "vintage" photos and uploaded them on Wikipedia pages with matching captions. Some of the images were then identified to be "fake" but some of them were considered as "real" and were used and shared on other websites and media including news, scholars' articles and Twitter.

In this project, I explore the meaning of truth and fiction by changing the historical narrative, or maybe, I am actually a time traveller if some of the photos are considered authentic.

Kathryn Henry
Escaping the time trap: using long durational performance art to investigate temporalisation

In 2017, I built and entered a temporal isolation chamber and stayed in that chamber, without leaving, and without any contact with anyone on the outside, for a period of 240 hours – ten days. For ten days there was no way to tell the time – not any natural sunlight, not any sound seeping in from outside, not any perishable food, not any device to indicate clock time. The intention was to attempt as complete a de-construction of post-industrial temporality as possible, and endure that de-construction so that I might encounter a temporality-void.
This paper draws on the experience of that temporal isolation chamber, seeking to investigate the nature of time via long durational performance art analysis, ultimately putting forward a hypothesis for a new conception of time, that it terms smooth-time. It takes as its starting point the assumption of a temporal conception that it terms constructed temporality as the ubiquitous temporality of post-industrialism. It posits that it is a performed temporality in which human actions of daily life are performed, the accumulation of which is perceived as the passage of time. The proposal is that if constructed temporality is de-structured to the point of the removal of its habitual markers, time loses its hold over temporal experience. The claim is that as a result, what is left are processes of change and the condition of temporal smoothness: smooth-time. Further, the paper investigates long durational performance art's inherent temporality, proposing it as an ideal medium within with to make a practical experiment of the de-construction hypothesis.

Erica Charalambous
Memory, 'unarchived' Dance Genealogy and the 'archive-as-body'

Our attention span is being tugged and pulled in all directions simultaneously rendering our memory into diffracted bits and bytes of data. However, our 'bodymind' constitution has a longstanding ability to process vast amounts of data (information) every second of every day and embodied practices are more in need than ever before. I have recently submitted my thesis in which I discuss my investigation in dance archive collections and repositories in Germany, Australia and the UK. Through my research, I developed a conceptual framework, 'archive-as-body', for re-thinking how we view the archive, advocate for drawing on embodied approaches as a form of inquiry. Thus, drawing on 'memory' as a process, tool and lens and furthermore approach research in archives through thinking of 'dance genealogy', the 'activist archivist' and transforming the post archival landscape as an embodied ecology for the 'unarchived'. In this presentation I would like to share my research findings and open up a space for discussion about an interesting tension in archives of dance between the record keeping system (the systematic and systemic),the content (ephemeral matters and uncategorizable items) and the generation of hybrid strategies according to location, cultural memory and the people invested in these collections. What does the journey of a single item; a performance remain; a dancing trace; through these archival digital and non-digital topographies reveal about dance genealogy, the memory of the dancer and the archive?

ACCA x CoVA: A Biography of Daphne

A Biography of Daphne is a curatorial project that revisits the Classical myth of Daphne as the starting point for an investigation of trauma and metamorphosis, symbiosis and entanglement in contemporary art. Daphne, the nymph who turned into a tree to evade the assault of the god Apollo, is a figure in, and of, crisis, but also a symbol of resistance and transformation.

The panel will discuss how local and international artists have translated the myth and reshaped its meaning for their times, reflecting on the sexual violence that precipitates Daphne's metamorphosis, and the enduring prevalence of misogyny and aggressions towards women that continue to mark our present moment. It will consider the connections between memory and metamorphosis; how we might overcome prescribed identity, and fashion new forms and behaviours from the space between what we have been told we are and that with which we identify.

Caroline Austin
The Woolstores Project: between the inside and the outside

In her book, The Lure of the Local, artist Lucy Lippard states that "places are stories waiting to be unearthed," and that artists "help people see their places with new eyes." But she also urges that "Every story told suggests those that remain buried and untold…. which in most cases can only be guessed at."

This paper will interrogate the practice-led project, The Woolstores Project, that takes place in Brisbane's historic Teneriffe Woolstore buildings, examining the movement of the body between the spaces of the Woolstores—both by residents, locals and visitors to the site and the relationship between these subjects to the materiality of the artworks and artists themselves to the memory of the place. It will examine the history of the Teneriffe Woolstore buildings which highlights the colonial history of Brisbane, one that was built on the back of the sheep industry, as well as those of mining, logging and tourism.

Samuel Holleran
Public Life Amongst The Dead, Cemeteries as Park Spaces

This presentation will examine the role of legacy cemeteries as spaces for recreation in the urban core, with a particular focus on the rediscovery of local green spaces, and the heightened appreciation of memorialisation and death culture stemming from the 2020 Covid-19 outbreak. Using case studies from cemeteries in Melbourne's inner suburbs, this research explores changing notions of cemeteries, their place within space-constrained cities, and attitudes towards the reorientation of cemeteries that have been closed to burial. Aging cemeteries are ambivalent public spaces, they often suffer from declining visitation but (within the UK-influenced world) are held in the public trust for perpetual care. In late 19th century London, civic leaders successfully oversaw the conversion of dozens of disused churchyard burial-grounds into small parks, partially compelled by new notions of public health and the creation of Open Space societies. To accommodate new burials Victorian cities established large 'rural cemeteries' at what was then the urban periphery. Today, these sites are within middle-ring suburbs. With proximity to housing came new pressures to utilise cemetery spaces for leisure and recreation. While a 1970s push to convert Melbourne's cemeteries into parks largely failed, some park-like functions have crept in.

This presentation will explore the tension between spaces set aside for memorialisation and the recreational and civic uses. It will examine the received design elements and European notions of landscape that have defined funerary spaces and some of the bottom-up ways in which community groups have sought to 'activate' cemetery spaces that they perceive as underutilised.

Amelia Winata
Charlotte Posenenske's Melancholia

This paper considers how the sculptures of Charlotte Posenenske (1930-1985) operated within the post-war West German climate of rapid technological and industrial developments. These advancements (precipitated in large by U.S. financial aid known as the Marshall Plan) had the dual effect of rebuilding the nation after immense wartime destruction while, significantly, also erasing memories of the war and Holocaust. Thus, in place of remembering or needing to express guilt, Germans instead turned their attention to building new cities, ramping up industrial production and consuming more and more mass-produced products than ever before.

On the surface, Charlotte Posenenske's late sculptures (1966–1968) are the personification of West German production; they are serial sculptures produced in un-editioned numbers in industrial workshops and sold for the cost of production. Many commentators have argued that Posenenske's works operate as affirmative responses to the post-war German climate, stating that they embody a democratic logic that equates mass-production and industrialisation as a great equaliser. In this paper, however, I argue that Posenenske's sculptures represent a more dialectical relationship with the future-oriented West Germany. I contend that Posenenske's sculptures were, in fact, more critical of her contemporary moment than commentators would like us to believe, and that they actually include a strong consideration of the past. By painting a picture of Posenenske's sculptures as sitting in tension with post-war technology and mass production, I will argue that Posenenske's works are, in fact, embodiments of her melancholia for a pre-war utopian avant-gardism that never came to fruition.

Dr Eloise Florence
Vandalism as cultural memory: Taking destruction seriously in public commemoration

The recent (and welcome) global trend of destroying, vandalising, and removing colonial monuments proves that beyond universities, parliament, talk-back radio, and opinion columns, our historical memory has been shaped by and in the streets. This article will draw on examples from a long history of destruction of public space to show how history happens when we encounter 'the past' in everyday life. Destroying, removing, and vandalising monuments is memory-in-process; history is never fixed in stone or bronze, and our public space will always shift and reform when historians, artists, politicians and activists use it to decide who and what is worth remembering. I will draw on my research on remembering through destroyed places, primarily concerned with the destruction of parts of Berlin during and after the Second World War, to frame my own and others' studies of the fate of sites of historical violence and trauma against Indigenous people in Melbourne, and emerging debates over the fate of public memorials in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020. Whist destruction and vandalism has emerged as a form of civic and anti-racist resistance, modern development of Indigenous sites of mourning and trauma has simultaneously acted as colonial suppression and exploitation. Destruction of public space therefore emerges as a legitimate yet contested text of cultural memory, the materials with which a renegotiation of cultural, political and national memories are reshaped and reformed as a way of confronting and reframing difficult and traumatic pasts.

Memory Bank 2021, *Currents*

For the <u>Memory Conference 2021</u>, Currents presents Memory Bank, an online platform that hosts conference resources for each research stream, alongside a conversations series with recent graduate and current graduate students from both the University of Melbourne and the University of Western Australia..

Therese Keogh, *Imaged in Absence*, 2019, 4 channel video installation

currentsjournal.net/memory–bank

About Currents

Currents is an interdisciplinary arts and practice-led-research journal dedicated to the flow of ideas occurring between the disciplines of visual art, film, production, architecture, design, dance and theatre; along with art, architecture, theatre and music history. Collaboratively published between the Centre of Visual Arts (CoVA) University of Melbourne and the University of Western Australia, Currents charts the social, creative and historical dialogues generated by early career researchers across these discrete yet interrelated disciplinary fields.