

**REPAIR**



**INTER-  
DISCIPLINARY  
FORUM**

19.10.24

OLD  
QUAD



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND WELCOME

**Charlotte Day, Director, Art Museums, Museums and Collections**

## CREATIVE PRESENTATION

*Organisational Diagrams for Everyday Life*

**Helen Stratford, artist, architect, writer, educator and researcher**

Mass culture prioritises efficient use of time. Terms like ‘the daily routine’, ‘hustle culture’ and ‘time-poor’ exclude and devalue those who don’t fit into a narrow understanding of work ethic. Often built around ableist ideals, efficiency can damage relationships and lead to burnout, above all in disabled people.

Through playful use of flowcharts and diagramming, artist Helen Stratford invites forum participants to explore the ways in which their experiences (do not) fit within these normative standards of time and productivity. How do you decide what to do in a day? In what ways do time, energy levels, fatigue and rest play a part? The resulting diagrams will shed a critical light into the ways disability collides with day-to-day decision-making. Participants will also be invited to add their diagrams to an ongoing ‘Anti-Productivity Compendium of Complaints’ which will be on view during the forum.

## INTRODUCTORY PANEL

*Framing Repair*

**Lucy Benjamin**, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Architectural Theories, Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning

**Hélène Frichot**, Professor of Architecture and Philosophy, Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning

**Kyla McFarlane**, Academic Engagement Research Fellow, Museums and Collections

**Virginia Mannering**, Education Fellow, Architectural Design, Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning

## SESSION ONE

### *Quarry Pedagogies*

#### **Millie Cattlin, architect and Co-Director of These Are The Projects We Do Together**

Millie will discuss their project 'The Quarry' an **86,000 sq metre Arkose Sandstone quarry in the Otway Ranges, within the traditional lands of the Gadubanud People**, and how creative practices, research and education are understood as part of an ongoing practice of site remediation and rehabilitation. **These Are The Projects We Do Together** explores rehabilitation as a creative process that is open-ended and involves bringing together different communities through a range of projects that build upon core rehabilitation tasks. Millie will unpack how their practice is working with this site and what is being learnt through this relationship, and how it is informing their practice over the longer term.

### *Transitional art projects: Creating space(s) for ongoing repair in the aftermath of flood*

#### **Kate Douglas, cultural geographer, PhD candidate, School of Geography, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences**

Disaster events leave behind complex sites of damage. While some of these sites can be restored, others are irreversibly changed and often deemed irreparable. But are irreparable sites immune to the work of repair? To unpack this question, this presentation will refer to the activities of several creative arts projects that emerged following the 2022 floods in the Northern Rivers of New South Wales, Australia. Centered around material and immaterial sites of damage, these projects enabled disaster-affected individuals and communities to kickstart processes of repair. These processes

did not, however, seek to return sites to their former state, nor were they informed by a predetermined end point. Rather, underpinned by transitional activities and ethics, these projects created space for ongoing processes of repair. As this presentation will ultimately contend, it is within this space that even the irreparable may benefit from the work of repair.

### *Mending Children's Hearts*

#### **Charles Larson, paediatric intensive care specialist, The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne**

Every day at the Royal Children's Hospital, children's hearts are repaired by a specialised team of doctors and nurses. For most of the children, their heart formed abnormally before they were born – a complex embryological choreography that didn't go to plan. We call this congenital heart disease. Most need open heart surgery before their first birthday. The heart conditions are notoriously difficult to understand. Unfortunately, a hand drawn sketch or an image off Google is often the best doctors can do for families before their child is taken to surgery. A few years ago, Dr. Larson wondered if there might be a better way for families to visualise their child's heart. To become the experts. Through collaborations with university designers, they have been slowly changing the way families learn about heart disease. This is the story of that journey and of the unexpected discoveries along the way.

# CREATIVE PRESENTATION

## FINAL REPORT

**Therese Keogh, artist and writer**

FINAL REPORT is a collective reading exercise, bringing together reverberating voices in an erosional gesture of recitation, and at a moment of climatic upheaval. This exercise takes as its beginning, a document transcribed and compiled in 1857 titled Final Report from The Select Committee on Deepening the River Hunter, Together with The Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix, which set in place a largescale plan for ongoing maintenance dredging, terraforming, and offshore dumping on Awabakal and Worimi Country and Sea Country. FINAL REPORT interrogates the narrative and material practices of administrative governance, and their fossil-fuelled reproduction in the world's largest coal export port.

## SESSION TWO

Repair has dominated recent architectural discourse. Its appearance, however, reflects the contested status of repair within an increasingly commodified built environment. On the one hand, public buildings and infrastructures endure the imposed neglect of underfunding to the point that repair becomes impossible, while on the other, repair emerges as a design aesthetic in projects of retrofit and adaptive reuse. Where the former often leads to demolition and the displacement of communities, the latter is disproportionately realised by affluent communities. The right to live in housing, work in buildings, and learn in schools that are repaired and recognised as repairable is unevenly distributed. In this session, we explore the history of the unrepairable and the attempt to read building repairability by looking at two moments in the history and aftermath of the Victorian Housing Commission's slum clearances of the 1950s and 60s. This session will include a reading by Tony Birch, Boisbouvier Chair in Australian Literature at the University of Melbourne, and a short paper by Melbourne School of Design PhD candidate, Nina Tory-Henderson.

*A reading from Shadowboxing*

**Tony Birch, author, Boisbouvier Chair in Australian Literature**

*Learning from the Fitzroy Housing Repair Advisory Service*

**Nina Tory-Henderson, architect and PhD candidate, Architecture, Building and Planning**

From a shopfront at 239 Brunswick Street, on Wednesday nights between 6-9pm, the Fitzroy Housing Repair Advisory Service (FHRAS) ran as a drop-in centre that provided direct, quick and free diagnosis of common building problems for those who could otherwise not afford these services. Operating from 1975 to 1983, they protected at-risk housing and its residents who still lived under the threat of compulsory demolition by the Victorian Housing Commission following the slum clearances of the 1950s and 60s. Now is a critical time to revisit this work, as the city faces the same level of destruction that the FHRAS formed to galvanise against, with the Victorian government having recently announced the demolition of Melbourne's 44 public housing towers.

## SESSION THREE

*Infrastructures of the Infrastructure of Memory*

**Lisa Radford, artist, Research Convener in Art, Victorian College of the Arts**

**Juliet B Rogers, Associate Professor Criminology, University of Melbourne**

On invitation from Kokatha / Nukunu artist Yhonnie Scarce, artist Lisa Radford travelled with her, pre-pandemic, across the world to visit sites imbued with significant histories of devastation, including Auschwitz, Chernobyl, Fukushima, Hiroshima, Maralinga, New York, Wounded Knee and former Yugoslavia. An archive of human history and loss, these sites — in the form of architecture (brutalist buildings, monuments, and memorials) and imagery (photographs, diarised accounts)— contributed to Yhonnie and Lisa's development of the project *The image is not nothing (Concrete Archives)* and, more recently, set the groundwork for the emergence of a larger project titled *Infrastructures of Memory*. Looking at the role of political memory in archives, art and military sites, this project has included the experience and knowledge of art historian Wulan Dirgantoro, media theorist and artist David Burns (RCA) and Juliet Rogers, who works across trauma, law and violence. This iteration of the project examines the relationship between cultural memory and military history, specifically that of Australia and the Asia Pacific, via three key sites: Maralinga, Orford Ness and Buru Island.

Memory is always contested on colonised land, most painfully in relation to sites of violence and trauma. Political memory is embodied in and composed of sites of contestation. This conversation critiques the concept of “repair” through an examination of a funding failure for the project, the context and circumstances of which revealed systemic symptoms. We ask questions about the reality of racism and the perception that art has become a servant to the sciences and “real” research.

## CREATIVE PRESENTATION

*Public S/Pacing - Feeling with Crip Time:  
performance presentation*

**Helen Stratford, artist, architect, writer,  
educator and researcher**

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## BIOGRAPHIES

**Dr Lucy Benjamin** is a postdoctoral research fellow in architectural theory at the Melbourne School of Design. Her research is situated at the intersection of architecture and critical theory. Her forthcoming book (*Planetary Politics*, 2025) offers a planetary rereading of Hannah Arendt's political theory. In 2024 she will take up a British Academy Fellowship at the University of Edinburgh.

**Tony Birch** holds the Boisbouvier Chair in Australian Literature at Melbourne University. In 2017 he was awarded the Patrick White prize, in recognition of his contribution to Australian literature. He is the author of four novels, five short fiction collections, and two poetry books. In 2022 his book, *Dark As Last Night* was awarded the Christina Stead Literary Prize and the Steele Rudd Literary Award. The book was also shortlisted for the 2022 Prime Minister's Literary Award for fiction. His most recent book is the novel, *Women and Children*, (UQP 2023).

**Millie Cattlin** is an architect, and Co-Director of These Are The Projects We Do Together. Working with large site-based projects including Testing Grounds, Siteworks and The Quarry, her work is unique in its approaches to creative infrastructures, precinct and site management, and place-based programming.

**Kate Douglas** (she/her) is a cultural geographer and PhD candidate in the School of Geography, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Melbourne. Her research explores how creative arts projects are activated and encountered following disaster events, as well as the ways in which the intensities and potentialities of such projects are enacted beyond the spatiotemporal bounds of post-disaster 'recovery'. For her doctorate, she is focusing on three projects that emerged after the 2022 floods in the Northern Rivers of New South Wales. Kate lives and works on Gunaikurnai land (Lalor Valley) where she is a member of the local Red Cross Emergency Services team.

**Hélène Frichot** (PhD) is Professor of Architecture and Philosophy, Melbourne School of Design, University of Melbourne, Australia. Previously, she was Professor of Critical Studies and Gender Theory, and Director of Critical Studies in Architecture, KTH Stockholm, Sweden. Drawing on her background in architecture and philosophy, her research fosters creative practice methodologies and develops concept-tools situated in relation to feminist posthumanities, dirty materialism, the environmental humanities, and affect theory. She experiments with ficto-critical and transversal writing methodologies and environmental story telling approaches, currently with a focus on the Plantationocene. Recent publications include *Dirty Theory: Troubling Architecture* (AADR 2019) and *Creative Ecologies: Theorizing the Practice of Architecture* (Bloomsbury 2018). Recent edited collections include: with Adrià Carbonell, Hannes Frykholm, and Sepideh Karami, *Infrastructural Love: Caring for our Architectural Support Systems* (Birkhauser 2022); with Marco Jobst, *Architectural Affects After Deleuze and Guattari* (Routledge 2021); with Naomi Stead, *Writing Architectures: Ficto-Critical Approaches* (Bloomsbury 2020); with Gunnar Sandin and Bettina Schwalm, *After Effects: Theories and Methodologies in Architectural Research* (Actar 2020); with Isabelle Doucet, *Reclaim, Resist, Speculate: Situated perspectives on architecture and the city*,



ATR (Architectural Theory Review) (2019). With Emma Cheatle she has recently launched a special issue of the *Journal of Architecture* dedicated to the legacy of architect, theorist, educator and feminist Jennifer Bloomer.

**Therese Keogh** is an artist and writer living on Awabakal Country. Their practice operates at intersections between sculpture, geography, and landscape architecture to produce multilayered projects exploring the socio-political and material conditions of narrative and knowledge production. Therese works collaboratively through writing and research projects and is invested in collective imaginaries as a process of creating more just relations to land and matter. Their collaborative work includes facilitating 'Magnetic Topographies' with Clare Britton and Kenzee Patterson—looking to collective pedagogies of place—and 'Written Together'—a shared workshop for non-normative writing in arts research. Therese holds a BFA from Monash University, an MFA from Sydney College of the Arts, and an MA Geography from Queen Mary University of London. Therese is currently undertaking a PhD at Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne.

**Charles Larson** is a paediatric intensive care specialist at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne. He works mainly in the cardiac intensive care unit, where most of the children are being treated for congenital heart disease, which is where a baby's heart develops abnormally before birth. Many children with congenital heart disease need life-saving heart surgery within the first few months of life. With collaborators at the University of Melbourne, Charles is interested in designing better ways to teach congenital heart disease. They believe that if they can improve the learner, they can improve care. By turning parents into the experts; helping children take ownership of their health; and helping the team in the ICU better understand each child's heart.

**Virginia Mannering** is an Education Fellow (Architectural Design) at the MSD. Her PhD examines the way the construction of the settler-colonial city has reshaped and remade environments. She has taught across architectural design studios and architectural/art history and situates her teaching methodologies across those disciplines.

**Dr Kyla McFarlane** is a curator, writer and academic from Aotearoa New Zealand. As Academic Engagement Research Fellow, Museums and Collections, she leads a broad, collaborative program of engagements connecting tertiary students and academics with the exhibitions, art collection and programs in the University of Melbourne's Art Museums. She has a particular interest in fostering interdisciplinary and practice-based teaching and research in the museum, and mentorship through graduate research supervision and internships. As a curator, Kyla has worked independently and held key curatorial positions at the QAGOMA, Brisbane; CCP, Melbourne; and MUMA, Melbourne. Over two decades, Kyla's art writing and research practice has highlighted lens-based, feminist and performative practices in our region.

**Dr Lisa Radford's** practice emerges from the discipline of painting, and traverses writing, performance, and installation. In order to explore the shared socio-political space between images, place and people, Radford works with others as a way of examining what is both spoken and beyond speech. The evolving

project *Concrete Archives* documents the shared experiences of two women: one Aboriginal—Yhonnie Scarce; the other non-Aboriginal—Radford. It involves fieldwork to local and international sites of nuclear colonisation, genocide and memorialisation. To date, outcomes have included an editorial project with *Art + Australia* online and a major curatorial project debuting at ACE Open, Adelaide which then travelled to the Fiona and Sidney Myer Gallery, VCA, Melbourne in 2021. This digital, oral and exhibition "archive" includes historical and contemporary works. It asks how we can address the cultural amnesia which obfuscates, if not renders invisible, the Genocide of Aboriginal people in Australia since colonisation, in order to address the impact this has had on our shared experiences, conflicts and representations of citizenship. Currently working as the Research Convener in Art, Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne, Lisa shares thoughts publicly and intermittently in *The Saturday Paper*.

**Juliet Rogers** is an Associate Professor (Reader) at the University of Melbourne in the Criminology department and the Deputy Head of School (Diversity and Equity). She holds a PhD in Law and was previously a community worker, trauma counsellor and has undertaken training in psychoanalysis. Her work focuses on trauma and law with a particular emphasis on emotional responses to mass violence and genocide, including from perpetrators, bystanders and victims. She employs critical race theory, queer theory, psychoanalysis and trauma studies to interrogate the western investments in law and ideology. She is currently completing a monograph titled *Remorse and nothing more*.

**Dr Helen Stratford** is a UK-based artist, architect, writer, educator and researcher with a social practice and practice-based PhD in 'Feminist Performative Architectures: making place in and with public space' from the University of Sheffield (2021). Her work has been exhibited widely, including Oslo Architecture Triennale, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Kettle's Yard and Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge and presented at ICA and Tate Modern London, Barnard College New York, and École Des Beaux Arts Paris. She is a Senior Lecturer in Architecture at Sheffield Hallam University. Informed by her lived experience of chronic pain, she is currently exploring crip time (en)counters with public space. Most recently, this includes: 'Public S/Pacing: between art architecture and crip time' ongoing research which formed the basis of an exhibition and public events with Bloc Projects Sheffield funded by Arts Council England (2024) and 'Seats at the Table: Co-designing Equity in the Public Realm' for London Festival of Architecture (2023) with Re:Fabricate collective and The DisOrdinary Architecture Project for whom Helen is an advisory board member. Helen is also a founding member of the feminist architectural group Taking Place and her work as a critical feminist teacher and practitioner within this group is internationally recognised.

**Nina Tory-Henderson** is an architect and PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne. Within both practice and research, she has recently been focused on local social housing issues in Victoria.