

futureproof

BOXCOPY CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE

CURATED BY

TIM WALSH

ARTISTS

CHRISTOPHER BASSI

BRIONY LAW

OLIVIA LACEY

PETER KOZAK

TORIN FRANCIS

FUTURE PROOF FOREWORD

Curated by Tim Walsh, *Future Proof 2018* showcases five recent visual arts graduates currently working in Brisbane. Tim has been working closely with the artists, who have developed new works especially for the exhibition at Boxcopy. Each artist has also had the opportunity to work with an industry mentor of their choice, providing additional guidance and support: Christopher Bassi - Pat HOFFIE; Torin Francis - Ross Manning; Peter Kozak - Kyle Weise; Olivia Lacey - Emily Wakeling, and Briony Law - Simone Hine.

Boxcopy has a proud legacy of supporting emerging artists and Brisbane-based artists at all stages of their careers. From 2012 - 2015 we ran the *emerging artist program*, commissioning artists Clark Beaumont (2012), Liam O'Brien (2013), Tyza Stewart (2014) and Anastasia Booth (2015) to create and present ambitious new works for exhibitions. In 2016, we presented the first iteration of *Future Proof*, curated by Katherine Dionysius and Amy-Clare McCarthy.

Artist-run initiatives provide a place where artists are able to access the support, validation and networks necessary to build their art practice in a challenging industry. *Future Proof 2018* highlights the excellence of creative work that is happening in Brisbane, and the important role that ARIs like Boxcopy play in commissioning, cultivating and celebrating this activity.

Rachael Haynes

Gallery Director
Boxcopy Contemporary Art Space

FUTURE PROOF LIST OF WORKS

Christopher Bassi

Weaving (Mustard Yellow), 2018.

Polycotton

65 x 180 cm

Untitled (Portrait), 2018.

Oil on canvas

41 x 36 cm

Untitled (The Shell), 2018.

Oil on canvas

31 x 36 cm

Briony Law

Skeleton, 2018.

Video installation, acrylic, timber, fixings

22:35 minutes, 45 x 75 x 225 cm

Olivia Lacey

You Look Back Because You Love Me, 2018.

Acrylic text

Dimensions variable

Peter Kozak

Bench, 2018.

Two channel digital video, wood, fixings

2:52 minutes (left); 4:57 minutes (right)

Torin Francis

Span, 2018.

Aluminium, plywood, cedar, screws, 12V motor, ball bearings

Dimensions variable



Christopher Bassi
Combine (Mother-of-Pearl), 2018.
Oil on canvas, linen weave, 31cm x 47cm.
Photo: Christopher Bassi

CHRISTOPHER BASSI

Investigating the nature of identity and the continuous construction of the self, Christopher Bassi's art is driven by an intuitive process grounded in performative exploration. Depicted within a studio environment, Bassi's subjects seem to repel direct recognition. Though Bassi himself is often the sitter, his paintings resist a reading as self portraiture: the backdrops exude a temporary quality and in previous work Bassi has donned outfits or covered his face in attempts to disrupt interpretation. His interest in the instability of the subject plays out in his works in response to a long, Western historical legacy of figurative oil painting. Bassi strongly acknowledges this legacy through his adoration of canonical figures like Édouard Manet and Diego Velázquez. Bassi, though utilising similar painterly techniques, wields the gravitas that the medium of oil still embodies to celebrate the space between cultures, places, and objects. This 'third space', as Homi K. Bhabha might describe it, is one that allows Bassi to articulate his own perception of himself and his experiences.

For *Future Proof*, Bassi has included two new oil paintings and a weaving, made from hand woven polycotton fabric. In the paintings, we see a figure in three quarter profile looking out of the picture frame. Their pose suggests contemplation and thought, perhaps even deep reverie. This feeling of introspection and contemplation continues in the second painting, where the hands of the same figure, recognised through the matching jumper, holds a shell in a tentative grip – as if studying its weight and quality. The weaving, scaled roughly to the human body, is handwoven by Bassi and placed in direct relationship with the accompanying paintings – linked by their similar palette. Though partially informed by Bassi's heritage, the weavings are more ambivalent objects – yet become metaphors for how Bassi sees subjects formed in relation to the material world. The act of weaving, itself a series of performative gestures, becomes an embodiment of the complex navigations an individual takes in a society that consistently and irrationally demands we prescribe to a dichotomous world view.



Briony Law

Darkness Falls Light II, 2017.

Video installation, monitor, timber, plastic, rubber, cardboard, fan.

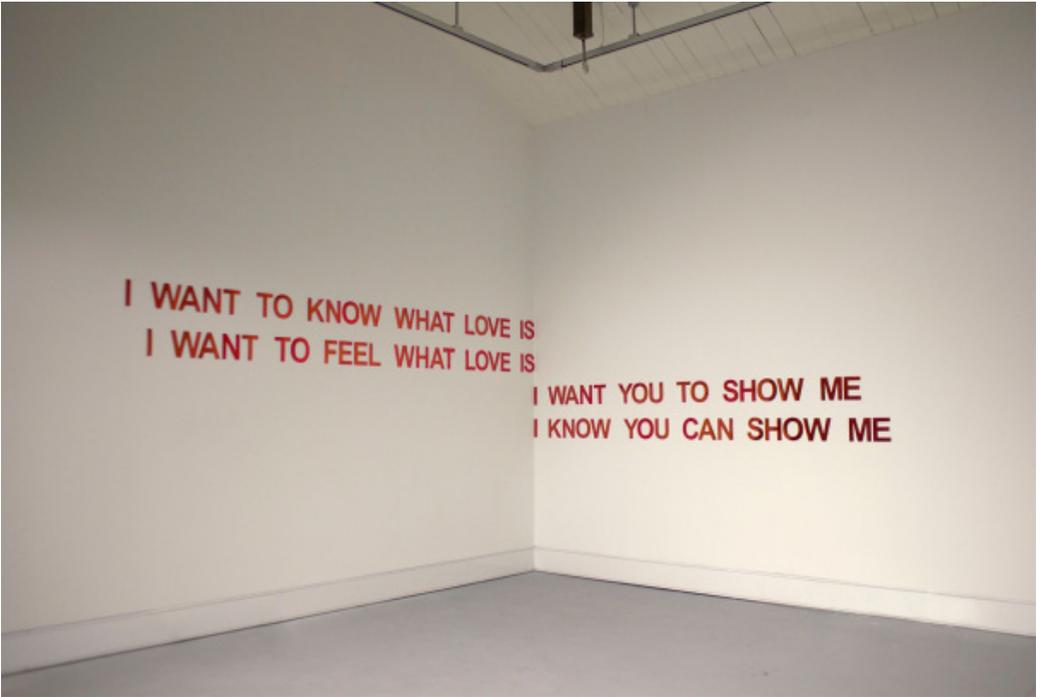
5:56 minutes, looped, 510 x 260 x 180 cm.

Photo: Seamus Platt

BRIONY LAW

Briony Law's practice analyses a contradiction inherent to our current geological age: that as we experience the collapse of nature in growing proximity through human-made climate change, our everyday relationship and understanding of the environment feels increasingly distant. This duality, of familiarity and indifference, is central to Law's installation-based practice. Her ongoing means of engagement with this predicament is the screen, which is rarely allowed to exist in her installations in its raw and common state. When we approach a screen in Law's work, even it is alienated from us. In recent work, a screen sat inside a vast, inflated bubble of matte black plastic – swallowed in the darkness of an artificial atmosphere. In another, a night sky replicated on a monitor was barely visible behind heavy fabric; brief light registering hesitantly. Despite this distance, Law still offers glimpses of recognition through these experiences: the unmistakable quality of starlight or the sun through a tree canopy. Though our view of nature within Law's work is doubly mediated—by screen and by the installation—in our core, a longing for what it shows us remains. We sense and recognise, but understanding feels out of reach.

Law's work for *Future Proof* embodies these concerns within a uniform and decidedly foreign form. *Skeleton* is an elongated, tear-shaped carapace in high gloss, rippling black acrylic, perched on a rudimentary timber sled. Recalling the futuristic equipment of the Winter Olympics, a key basis for the work is the 19th century sport of skeleton – invented in the Swiss town of St Moritz. Unlike luge, where riders hurtle feet first, skeleton demands the opposite. Head first, the sense of exhilaration must be startling. Yet no point of access is possible into Law's version. The only entry into its reflective exterior is a small, circular aperture on its top side. Through this a screen sits and footage plays of a blue, at times tree-framed, sky in motion. Turning in strange rotation, we note it as familiar. But our orientation is troubled, somehow inert and restless. The skeleton, not of this land, shows us a sky we know, yet the overriding feeling is one of strange unease.



Olivia Lacey

I Know, 2017.

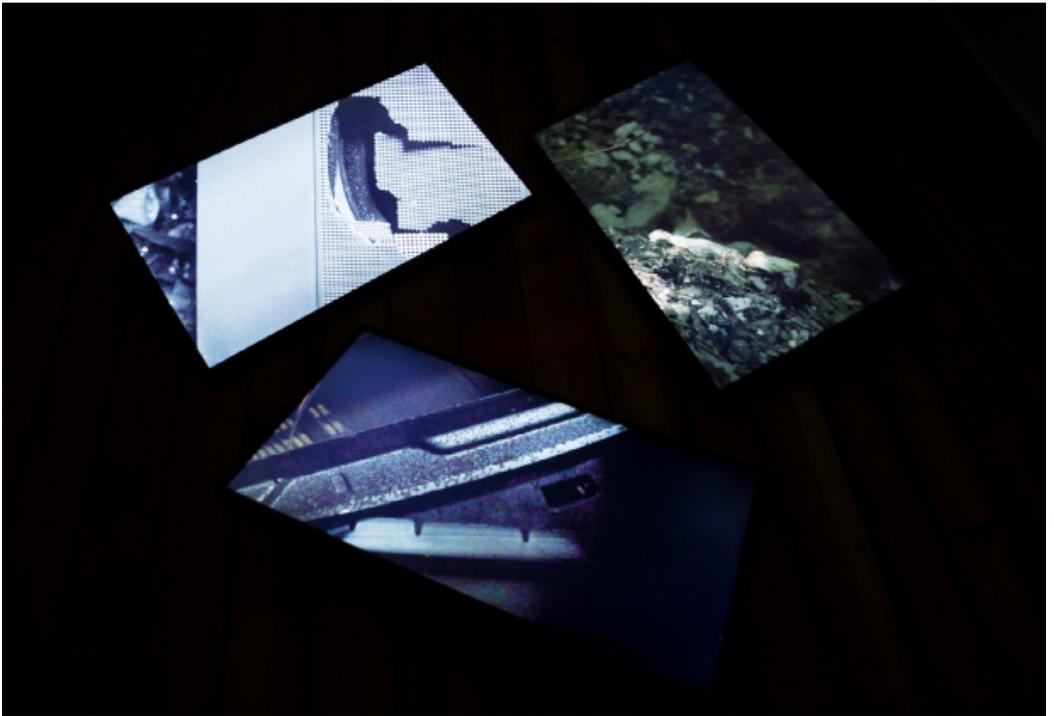
Reflective card, 60 x 550 cm.

Photo: Olivia Lacey

OLIVIA LACEY

The work of Olivia Lacey employs processes of transcription and translation to consider the ambiguities, slippages or humour that can arise in interpersonal interactions. The principal focus for Lacey's artistic analysis is language and she engages with this subject primarily through the written word. In Lacey's art, text appropriated from art history, everyday conversation, and in this case, Korean pop music is placed under hers and our close scrutiny, to the point where meaning and comprehension begin to break down. In a thematic sense, Lacey's choice of text is often romantic in nature. Yet it is a romance that seems to struggle under various pressures: overfamiliarity, repetition, misuse. As a commonplace subject of pop music globally, love and its less serious synonyms, is a relatable (and profitable) sentiment, but one fatigued in Euro-American pop discourse.

In Korean pop, which largely reflects the Republic of Korea's conservative political and social views, love still seems to reign supreme. Yet in our direct interaction with the lyrics from K-Pop band N.Flying's *How R U Today* (2018), translated into English and replicated in laser-cut acrylic in Lacey's *You Look Back Because You Love Me* (2018), we look upon a phrase visually, culturally, and contextually relocated. It would be remiss to consider any subject's meaning untouched by such a process. On a base level it remains recognisable as a claim to love, but it is stuck in a place of doubt. We are left to wonder who is being addressed or even the recipient of this confession – our minds drifting between two ill-defined subjects, the 'you' and 'me' unclaimed. Cut from clear, hot pink acrylic, the text itself embodies both a sense of commodity and vacuity. But in its open meaning - the 'because' in particular teasing us with the promise of comprehension - it becomes an opportunity for projection of our own personal desires and experiences, and a pertinent reflection on what exactly we are communicating when we express them.



Peter Kozak

Cave, 2017.

Three channel HD digital video, 4:32 min duration.

Photo: Thomas Oliver

PETER KOZAK

In Peter Kozak's video art, the objects and phenomena he documents are subjects commonly overlooked in our day to day lives. Baubles dangling in the wind from a bridge; a degraded plastic bag caught in the crook of a tree; a cave filled with the shards of a broken television screen – through Kozak's detailed, camera-based analysis each are revealed to be dense, micro worlds deserving of closer scrutiny. Normally detritus of human life, Kozak's nurturing and attentiveness to these objects through the lens builds a sense of rapport between viewer and subject. Rather than simply waste, they become through our vision imbued and emboldened as reflections of human experiences. Presented as multi-channel video studies, Kozak constructs a bond with these fragile remnants and through this returns them to a space of relevance.

Bench documents a standard issue National Park bench, broken apart and covered by mould. Left to rot where Brisbane's urban sprawl meets dry forest, we grasp this liminal environment through its collected sounds: equal parts automotive hum and bush ambience. As Kozak's lens drifts across its constituent parts, we see the sites of the damage inflicted upon it. Wood joints split apart with connector plates still attached. The mouldy ridges of the once green timber. The lower half of the bench wrenched off and dragged away. Like the bench itself, Kozak's installation of the two monitors that display this violence has been amputated: one remains rigid and upright, the other half-prone on the floor. The perpetrators of the violence enacted on this object remain absent, yet through Kozak's repetition of their action in his installation, he seems invested in empathising with their dissent. This empathy is split, directed to those who enacted the damage and towards the bench itself. Left alone in the scrub, an aura of vulnerability falls across the decimated object before us.



Torin Francis
Lapsed, 2017.

Installation view, Cut Thumb Laundry, Metro Arts, Brisbane.

Photo: Carl Warner

TORIN FRANCIS

Torin Francis considers in his practice the devices we use to quantify, navigate, and comprehend the way in which the passing of time is perceived and experienced – often in lieu of our own bodies and senses. His engagement with these mechanisms is explored through poetic relationships between objects and space in site-responsive installations, kinetic sculpture, assemblage, and moving image works. Of particular focus in his recent work has been the weather balloon – utilised for scientific purposes, these balloons withstand volatile atmospheric conditions to measure and communicate readings relating to air pressure, temperature, and other factors to ground-based research teams. In Francis' art, these balloons are utilised within gallery spaces in various guises: deflated and twisted; loose and leathery; inflated and squeezed amongst architectural elements - their pliability encouraging manipulation and experimentation with form and structure. Yet their creamy, almost skin-like texture also encourages bodily associations, engendering a sense of life that troubles our perception of them as simple, cold mechanisms. While somewhat divorced from their intended function, they continue to be investigated as a 'measuring' instrument of the effects of their own materiality over time.

In *Span* (2018), Francis' contribution for *Future Proof* 2018, the artist has created a new kinetic sculpture that reevaluates and recontextualises the formal, material and conceptual concerns of nautical equipment and weather-measuring instruments. The form of *Span* sits somewhere between abstracted windmill and the hull of a wooden vessel: as if catching a light breeze, its scalloped vanes spin slowly within the gallery space. Historically, windmills have served two main purposes: to mill grain and to pump water. Their contemporaries, wind turbines, convert the energy of wind into rotational energy. Both examples are normally situated in outdoor environments open to a complex network of atmospheric relations. Within the stillness of the white cube, we are left to consider what Francis' device is measuring or converting. In its stoic motion, it takes on a sentinel-like dedication to its task, becoming a poetic device to measure the uncertain flow of time.

FUTURE PROOF BIOGRAPHIES

Christopher Bassi's practice examines the nature of liminality, transculturalism, globalisation, and philosophical reflections on the nature of identity. With a focus on the legacies of figurative painting, Bassi's work functions as a playful ontological inquiry between fact and fiction. Christopher graduated from the Queensland College of Art in 2017 and recently exhibited at Stable Art Space, Brisbane.

Briony Law's work follows a core interest in nature and sensory experience, and their relationship in the context of urbanisation and the Anthropocene. Briony practices across various media, including sculpture, video, installation and photography. Briony graduated from the Queensland University of Technology in 2017 and was awarded the Hilde Chenhall Memorial Scholarship in Visual Arts.

Olivia Lacey employs in her textual-based practice processes of transcription and translation to explore the ambiguities, slippages, or humour that can arise in interpersonal interactions. Her works combine referents appropriated from art historical texts, pop music lyrics, and everyday conversations in order to examine the romantic dialogue as an intersubjective space of exchange. Olivia graduated from the Queensland University of Technology in 2017 and recently completed an artist residency with 3331 Arts Chiyoda in Tokyo, Japan.

Peter Kozak works primarily in video and video installation. Focusing on objects and phenomena that are often overlooked, such as dust, water vapour and abandoned detritus, Peter's works seek to draw connections between their material qualities with human experiences. He graduated from the Queensland College of Art in 2017 and recently completed an artist studio residency with Outer Space, Brisbane.

Torin Francis explores through his practice poetic relationships between objects and space in site responsive installations, kinetic sculpture, assemblages and moving image works. Torin's current work re-evaluates and re-contextualises the formal material and conceptual concerns of nautical equipment and weather measuring instruments. Torin graduated from the Queensland University of Technology in 2017 and recently exhibited at Cut Thumb Laundry ARI, Brisbane.

Tim Walsh is an independent curator and writer based in Brisbane, Australia. Tim is currently the Australia Desk Editor for ArtAsiaPacific, as well as an MPhil Candidate at the University of Queensland. He has held programming, communications, and gallery management roles in commercial and public galleries in Brisbane and London.

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Gallery Hours
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