

Local Brew

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Under the Influence

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Boomalli - A Brief History

Compiled by Boomalli members

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Under the influence

Chippendale is a small suburb nestled between Broadway, Cleveland St, Central Railway Station and the University of Sydney. Long ago the land had rich soil, fresh water and has a long history of Indigenous ownership but got its current name after William Chippendale was granted a 95-acre estate over the area in 1819. Chippendale sold his namesake for a couple of hundred pounds and the fledgling settlement passed through a few hands as it grew into an urban slum known for its narrow streets and substandard housing. In 1835 the fortunes of the area shifted when Kent Brewery was established between George and Regent St with a pub springing up on each corner. As the amber ale began to flow so did life in Chippendale, with many poor people coming to the area to live and work. A sobering thought is that today the tiny suburb reportedly has the smallest amount of open space of any in Sydney.

Despite, or perhaps because of, its small size Chippendale's cramped streets have enabled an intoxicating combination of cheap inner city living, beer and creativity to develop - fermenting within its tiny borders much of Sydney's underground performance, art and entertainment venues, spaces and places. From Boomalli in the 80s, Jellyheads in the 90s, Lan Franchis Memorial Discotheque in the 2000s to Serial Space today Chippendale has seen many "on the hop" artist run spaces which have emerged briefly to challenge, delight and intrigue Sydneysiders before staggering off into the night.

The heart of Chippendale was the Kent Brewery and the smell of burning malt that would waft across the suburb. Long before the liquid lunch of the '80s the brewery had established "beer o'clock" for its workers giving them time-out for a schooner to refresh their working spirit - plant operators were even allowed to tap a leaking cask (the honey pot) to drink at their leisure.



When the stout men of brewery management tried to ban the honey-pot the Industrial Relations Commission initially upheld it as a worker's right: "fare shake of the barely mate".

Eventually however the stout men got the upper hand and the honey-pot was outlawed. The Kent Brewery was also later sold - its operations bottled off to more efficient Queensland and WA breweries. The massive complex lay wasted for years with a stoush raging over its future. In 2007 the liquid gold of Old Kent was replaced by a more solid variety: Frasers a major construction company bought the site for redevelopment. The state government and council must have been wearing beer goggles during the negotiations - Frasers were granted permission to build 11 towers the size of the adjacent UTS building housing as many new residents as currently already live in the area. The staggering size of the proposed development left Chippendale seeing double.

To allay concerns over the frothy pace of change Frasers set aside one part of the development for artist studios and a steady stream of Sydney's artists started to flow through the doors: after all, everyone thought, it was their shout. But as artists jostled to get free drinks at the bar there were mutterings that the beer tasted like piss and no one felt like it was their turn to get the next round.

As the night wore on news spread that while the rest of us had been fighting over the dregs the banks and developers had been drinking on the house: they were totally plastered with Frasers particularly unsteady on its feet. The Brewery was already knocked down, a massive hole gaped from the middle of Chippendale and everybody could "feel a cold one coming on".

The artist runs spaces which had enlivened Chippendale for so many years were severely under the hammer, many had passed out and the few that remained survived on Dutch courage alone: the hole in the wall venue was losing out to the hole in the ground developer.

We were being drunk under the table! (Brew)haha! A challenge was thrown-down to defend the traditions of this tiny suburb - a toast was proposed to those who made Chippendale what it is today: the workers, the artists, the poor, the revelers. Chippendale may have been cramped, industrial and lacking in green spaces, but it was home and nothing tasted as satisfying as a good local brew.

This publication, a joint effort with Keg de booza, is a toast to the suburb of Chippendale containing stories from some of the bar-flies who made it what it is today. Cheers!

Zanny Begg

Enjoy development responsibly.

It is alleged that two Saxon brothers, Hengis and Horsa, landed at Ebbsfleet, Kent, in 449 AD with an expeditionary force of Saxons, Angles and Jutes. On the crowning of Hengist's son, Eric, as the first King of Kent, a white horse was chosen as the standard of the ancient Saxons. Known as the Rampant Horse it has become the ensign of Kent.

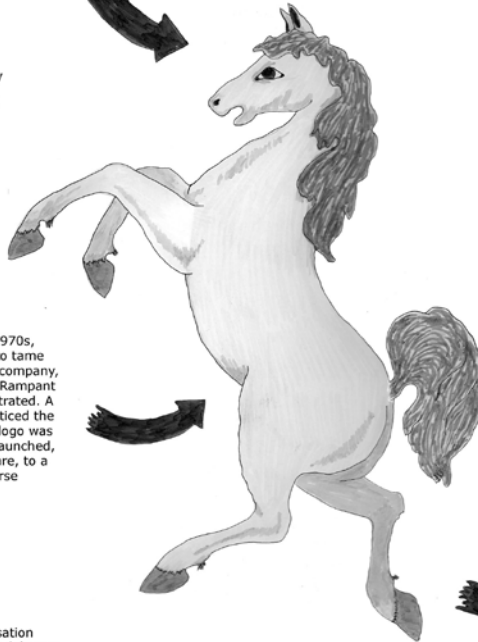
The historical existence of Hengis and Horsa has been called into question, however, with some historians likening the two to the legendary founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus. An alternative explanation might be that Hengis (the Anglo Saxon word for Stallion) was just an honorific name for an officer who was considered a bit of a stud.

In the early 1970s, in an attempt to tame the image of the company, the White Horse Rampant was secretly castrated. A staff member noticed the change and the logo was subsequently relaunched, with some fanfare, to a stylised horse head.

After colonisation much of Chippendale was originally set aside as a Military Garden for enterprising service men to grow vegetables and other produce. The land was then subdivided into small plots and used for cheap housing. By the 1830s the area had evolved into a residential slum.

Blackwattle Creek was a tidal watercourse flowing through a valley thick with the wattle that gave the area its name. There was abundant fresh water, wildlife, alluvial soil and a swamp. Before white invasion the Gadigal people fished and collected shell fish in the area.

John Tooth was born in Kent, emigrated to Australia in the early eighteenth-thirties and opened Kent Brewery (1835) with a his brother-in-law on the site of the old Military Gardens along Blackwattle Creek, Chippendale. The Tooth family chose the White Horse Rampant as the company's trademark placing it over the entrance gates.



Zanny Begg

As part of my residency at FraserStudio in October 2008 I researched some of the history of the Old Kent Brewery and produced this cartography.

Tooth brewery was a large employer in Chippendale and offered numerous staff benefits. For example, there was a staff social club coordinated by Kent Brewery, a gym, a "Wet" canteen and a reading room/library. Employees had a generous ration of beer at morning tea (the beer break), lunch, afternoon tea and when they clocked off. Plant operators were allowed to tap a leaking cask (the honeypot) to drink for their own enjoyment. In the 1970s Tooth unsuccessfully sought a ruling from the Industrial Relations Commission that the honeypot be banned.

This ruling was over-turned after a drunk employee fell under a train on his way home from work and died.

In 1983 Tooth Breweries were taken over by Carlton United Brewery (CUB), the Australian division of Foster's. By this time the site had expanded to 5.8 hectares encompassing an area bounded by Broadway, Abercrombie, Wellington and Kensington Street.

The German born Emil Resch became the first general manager of the newly formed CUB. After WWI nationalist fervour helped to increase the sales of local lager, in particular Foster's, at the expense of German brews. The Australian Brewer's Journal wrote: "The Teutonic brands which have been exported here by the enemy are taboo. Our lagers are equal if not better than their fancy brands" Emil Resch was given a large payment and told that his services were no longer required at CUB.



Beer consumption in Australia remains parochial - top selling beers by state are: New South Wales: Tooheys; VB, Queensland: XXXX; VB; Tooheys, South Australia: Coopers; West End, Tasmania: Cascade; Boags; Victoria: VB; Carlton Draught; Melbourne Bitter, Western Australia: Swan; Emu; Tooheys.

Class divisions in beer are more standard: Crown Lager (beer for yuppies), VB (working class brew).

This was no big deal for Foster's who successfully pulled off a double swifty and marketed their decidedly average European beer, Stella Artois, back into the Australia as a premium beer. The British get Foster's Lager and we get Stella Artois.

Until the end of the 1970s CUB's signature beer, Foster's Lager was a reasonably popular with a relatively premium image. In the early 1980s, however, Alan Bond merged Castlemaine (Brisbane), Swan (Perth) and Toohey's (Sydney) into a powerful national brewing group. Faced with inroads into its market, CUB attempted to re-position its brand. Foster's Draught was introduced, served on tap alongside established draught brands such as XXXX and Toohey's. The beer was very unpopular and eventually withdrawn from sale. At the end of this exercise Foster's Lager was no longer viewed as a premium brand, relegated to an export beer rarely available on tap in the local market (despite its all Australian export image).

From its slum beginnings the small suburb of Chippendale gradually evolved into a poor area with many rental properties and empty warehouses where students and low income people live. Its close proximity to the city, and relatively undeveloped status, has meant that since the 1980s it was the site for many artist run spaces and venues including Jellyheads (early 90s), Broadway Squats (2000), Space 3 (2000-2005), The Wedding Circle (2005-2006), and Lanfranchi's Memorial Discotheque (2002-2007) among others. These venues often survived through selling bootleg beer.

The University of Technology Sydney's (UTS) imposing Tower Block was built in 1985 and the growth of the campus has bought many students into the area. Despite its demonstration proof architecture students occupied UTS in 1997 in a protest against upfront fees and cuts to higher education.

Lanfranchi's was named after Warren Lanfranchi, a heroin addict and stand over-man for Neddy Smith, who was murdered in 1981. A meeting had been arranged in Dangar Place, Chippendale, between Lanfranchi and Detective-Sergeant Roger Rogerson supposedly to allow Lanfranchi to pay a bribe to avoid prosecution for a robbery. Rogerson turned up to the meeting with 18 police officers and shot and killed Lanfranchi. The bribe money vanished.

Lanfranchi's girlfriend Sally-Anne Huckstepp, a sex worker and heroin addict, publicly agitated for an investigation into the murder - her evidence leading to the Royal Wood Commission into police corruption. In February 1986 Huckstepp was found drowned in Centennial Park.

Roger Rogerson was also famous for his role in convicting Tim Anderson for the 1978 Hilton Hotel Bombing in Sydney. Anderson spent 7 years in jail for charges relating to climate of fear surrounding the bombing before being released and exonerated in 1985. He was then re-arrested in 1991 and charged with the Hilton Bombing before being released again and pardoned.

Tim Anderson helped form the prison rights group Campaign Exposing Frame-ups and Targeting Abuses of Authority which had its offices in Blackfriars street, Chippendale. He also worked with the CRC Justice Support a prison rights group based on Broadway, Chippendale.

In February 2000 people occupied a series of abandoned Sydney Council buildings along Broadway. The squatters created SquatSpace gallery, a venue and a place to live for a community of artists and activists. In Sydney's Olympic year the squats became a flash point for discussions over the right to public space.

The main headquarters for the socialist organisation Resistance and the newspaper Green Left Weekly were established on Abercrombie Street, Chippendale, in the 1980s.

In 1987 a group of Aboriginal artists, including Tracey Moffatt, Brenda L Croft and Michael Riley, founded Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative in Chippendale to change how contemporary Aboriginal art was exhibited, sold and understood. It is now one of Australia's longest running Aboriginal owned and operated art galleries. The word Boomalli, is derived from three different NSW language groups, and translates as: "To strike; to make a mark".





In 2003 Foster's decided to sell Kent Brewery to concentrate production in its more efficient Western Australian and Queensland breweries. The site was sold to the international development company Frasers Property Group for \$208 million in 2007.

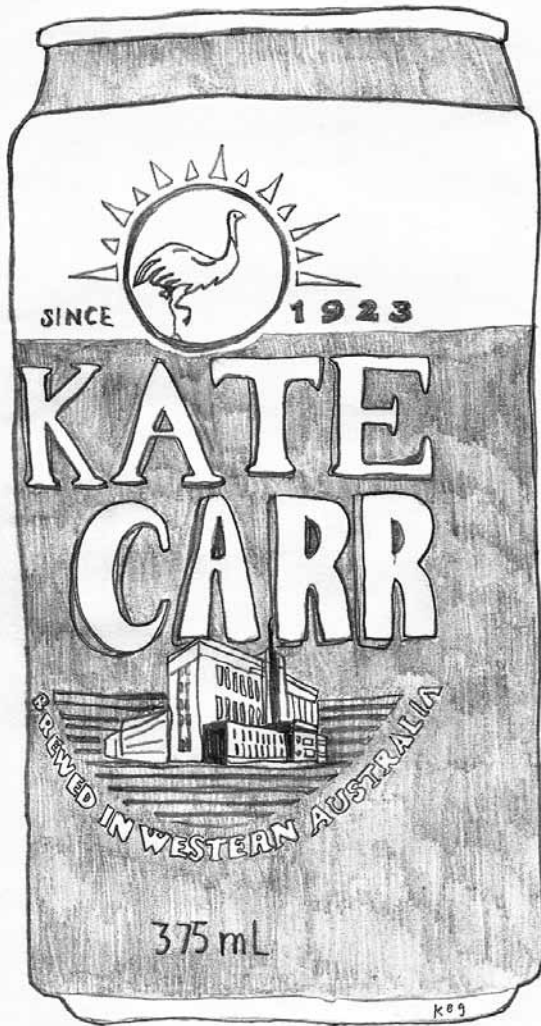
By the end of 2007 many of the artist run venues in Chippendale had closed. Chippendale was no longer considered a low cost rental neighbourhood but an increasingly yuppie place to live.

After a tense wrangle over building restrictions on the site between the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore, and the state Minister for Planning, Frank Sartor, Frasers gained permission to build 11 towers of apartments and office space creating 1666 apartments and 90,000 square metres of commercial and retail space. The \$800 million development will double the population of Chippendale. The tallest tower will rival the UTS tower, at 120 metres.

Frasers has stated it wishes to create a village atmosphere in the neighbourhood which it hopes will become a cultural precinct complete with car free laneways, an area of cafes, artist activities and galleries.

It was rumoured that to increase floor space in the new building, Frasers transformed a section of the 'old Kent Brewery' site into artist's studios, managed in partnership with Queen Street Studio, a Chippendale-based, not-for-profit arts organisation. Visual artists have been offered three months residencies of free studio space and performance artists will be offered subsidized rehearsal space.

Binge Development



After announcing plans for a \$2 billion redevelopment of the Carlton United Brewery (CUB) site, Frasers Property threw the arts community a bone in the form of FraserStudios. A closer look reveals there were a few strings attached.

Chippendale is changing fast. Once renowned for the smell of hops from the brewery, car break-ins and dirty student share-houses this inner city suburb is now replete with wine bars, cafes and warehouse conversions. The brewery and its infamous smell is a thing of the past, and slowly but surely the artist-run spaces which had mushroomed in the area are making way for more commercial set ups.

In 2007 Frasers Property Group bought the CUB site for \$208 million. Four months earlier NSW Planning Minister, Frank Sartor, had approved an 11-block concept plan for the site. In 2008 Frasers came back with a modified plan that included more floor space, and higher buildings. In February last year this was approved by Kristina Keneally, the planning minister who succeeded Mr Sartor.

“Basically Frasers have been able to [develop] as dense as they wanted right from the word go,” local resident Lindsay Charles

said who added that the entire community was opposed to the level of density Frasers are planning. According to Ms Charles, one of the few concessions locals opposed to the development were able to achieve was the establishment of Queen Street Studios, a gallery and artist-in-residence scheme, at the brewery site. “There were a lot of artists living on Kensington Street who were evicted,” Ms Charles said. “This was something we wanted for them.”

However, while this was a good outcome, Ms Charles said she was suspicious of Frasers motivations. “It would be naïve to think it was done for altruistic reasons”, she said. “It was done for PR.”

Announced in 2008, FraserStudios is “a non-profit arts facility produced by Queen Street Studios on behalf of Frasers Property”. It offers free three-month residencies at the space for participating artists as well as a subsidised rehearsal space for arts groups. According to Peter Volich, the Queen Street visual arts coordinator, the venture is a ‘win-win’ situation “... what we have been able to offer the visual and performing arts community is absolutely

incredible - we would not have been able to do this without this relationship". He described the relationship between Frasers and Queen Street Studios as "fresh and new and something I would like to see grow and be nourished". Asked if Frasers had ever attempted to directly influence the direction of the visual arts program, Mr Volich said: "Never".

A different version of this story, however, is told by artist Mark Gerada, who had acted as a peer assessor for Queen Street Studios in the first round of residencies. Mr Gerada was planning a show, called 'The June Fourth Incident', to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Protests which he hoped to hold at FraserStudios. He initially discussed the project with Queen Street Studios but the offer of a venue was withdrawn once the exhibition was discussed with Frasers. Fraser Property Group's parent company Frasers Centrepoint Ltd has built four major projects in Shanghai, Beijing and Chengdu. Mr Gerada subsequently held The July Fourth Incident at Serial Space.

Other artists have also complained about Frasers restrictions on artistic freedoms. Sydney artist Sarah Goffman said she was very concerned to see the contract she signed to take up residence at FrasersStudios included a clause prohibiting participating artists from making work critical of Frasers. "I've never seen anything like it," Ms Goffman said. "A clause like that sticks out like dogs balls."

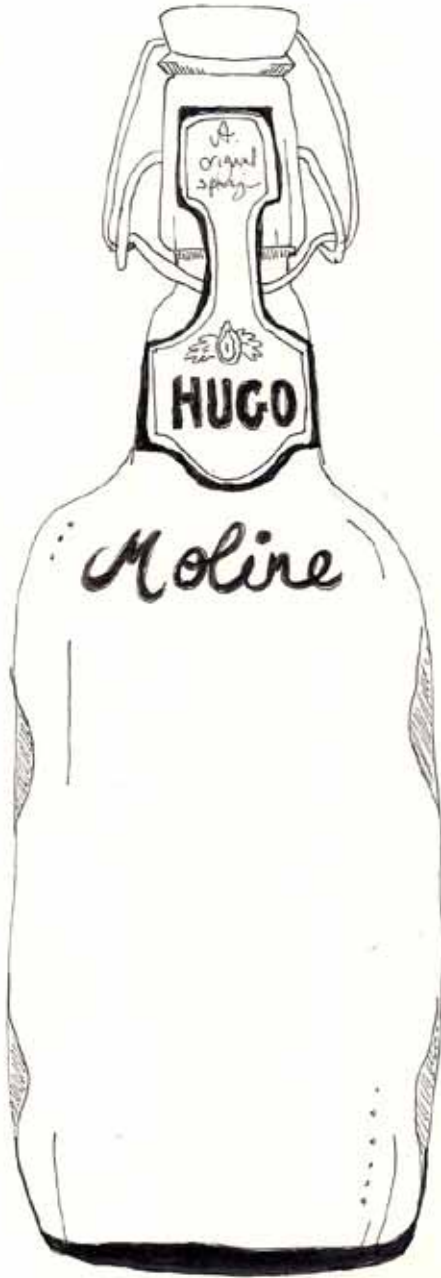
Section 2.2 of FrasersStudios' artist in residence contract states: "The Resident agrees that: (a) they will not do or omit to do anything that will: (i) prejudice the name, reputation, brand or products of FraserStudios Project or Studio Management; or (ii) result in the creation of a controversy that has the potential to damage the goodwill or reputation of FraserStudios Project or Studio Management"

Ms Goffman said while she was happy to use any space which was offered up to artists free, Frasers risked a backlash from artists by including such a clause.

"It really does shine a spotlight on what they are doing," Ms Goffman said. As a former resident of the area, she said she was well aware of residents' concerns about Frasers development plans. "They are trying to put high cost housing there and it is not a high income area," Ms Goffman said. "There are residents' action groups who are very angry about what has happened."



In Praise of Brutalism: The Misuse of Building One



Just outside the borders of Chippendale looms the University of Technology Sydney's mighty tower 'Building One'. Twenty seven floors of iconic banality rising one hundred and twenty metres above street level. The building possesses an almost mystical drabness, at once devoid of any human character and incredibly ripe for reinterpretation and reappropriation.

The construction of Building One began in 1969 giving rise to speculation by later generations of student activists that its design was a direct reaction to the student uprisings of Paris in 1968. The legend goes that in a climate of fear the administration of UTS (in its former guise, the NSW Institute of Technology) commissioned a building in which students would not want to congregate, a fortress university, a pebblecrete panopticon which could never be overrun by the radicals.

It is perhaps an overestimation of the political centrality of NSWIT they they would consider themselves to be the next University of Paris and the legend omits that plans for the tower date back to 1965 (as one in a row of seven!) . It is also worth noting that Micheal Dysart, the architect for the Department of Public Works credited with the initial design of Building One also designed some of the more humane affordable and cooperative housing projects of the time. Nevertheless the bare utilitarian formula of the building (train station + floor space = university) and the paternalistic attitudes to education embedded in the design (such as the shoulder-height window sills to prevent distracted view gazing) did make it a potent example of the control society that students of the time were seeking to change. The originators of the building may not have been conscious that they were

creating an environment which actively sought to tame and control students but such desires were certainly implicit in the 'machine-for-learning' design which they produced.

More interesting than the intentions of Building One are the results. The stiff and bleak design of Building One not only failed to calm and control its inhabitants it has actually encouraged them to challenge and subvert its rigid order. Over the years inhabitants of the building

have repeatedly reasserted their spatial rights through unsanctioned acts ranging from illicit mezzanine construction to full scale student invasion and occupation.

Ironically, given its lack of inviting public or social space, Building One is custom built for protest. The convenient 'brutal-fist' image of the tower creates the perfect backdrop to any demonstration, a pre-cast concrete manifestation of oppressive uniformity and institutionalised brutality. Building One's position on Sydney's major East-West artery close to Central Station make crowds in the forecourt highly visible. Add to this the tremendous banner hanging potential offered by the prominent balconies and the building itself is easily transformed into a giant billboard/loudspeaker. The highly concentrated nature of the building, which ostensibly makes it more 'defensible' equally makes for a much more potent blockade. As it houses the full administrative machinery of UTS, Building One is, for dissidents, a fortress to besiege, storm and occupy. Throughout the 90's Building One repeatedly 'fell' to student protestors. These actions reached their height in March of '97 when, in response to federal government plans to introduce mandatory up-front fees, more than eight hundred students occupied the Chancellor's office and administration for four days until the building was forcefully recaptured by one hundred and twenty policemen complete with dogs and sledge-hammers.

It is the meanness, the blankness of Building One which seemingly makes it so fertile for misuse and reappropriation. On numerous occasions the building has been subject to autonomous retro-fits. Using milkcrates a group of students transformed one of the notoriously slow lifts into a mobile theatre serving a transient audience. On another occasion an academic, frustrated by the blinking effect of the high windows, built a mezzanine in his office so that he could fully enjoy the view. Such actions, however minor, are examples of true spatial democracy, whereby people dissatisfied with what is presented alter the space to meet their immediate needs and desires. Such democratic processes do not occur in 'nice' buildings where people would not dare to alter anything. Likewise the building becomes for many of its users a kind of 'common enemy', the cause of shared frustrations which becomes the grounds for solidarity. In such a way the building becomes a curiously unifying force

Building One, with its unsentimental utilitarian awkwardness provokes its inhabitants to rally and rebel, to transform their both space and their society. It provides both the impetus and the framework for user-defined environments and other radical actions. It is a useful counterpoint to such such prettier urban monsters as the ubiquitous Westfield Shopping Centres. Those spreading amoebas of smooth space, hyper-abundance and corporate sanctioned pleasantness control behavior in much more subtle and insidious ways. They create a space in which the students of today do want to congregate, but only to participate in the consumer spectacle.





Boomalli - A Brief History

During the mid eighties three exhibitions helped forge the community which founded Boomalli. *Koori Art '84* was the exhibition that introduced the label urban Aboriginal art into contemporary debates; it was a benchmark that acknowledged that many artists practicing in the 1980s did not fit into stereotypes of Aboriginality. Held at Artspace, Sydney, the exhibition included works by Euphemia Bostock, Fiona Foley, Fernanda Martins, Arone Raymond Meeks, Avril Quail, Michael Riley, Jeffrey Samuels, Gordon Syron, and Banduk Marika.

The *Exhibition of Aboriginal and Islander Photographers* (initiated by Tracey Moffatt and curated by Ace Bourke) exclusively profiled Indigenous photographers and became the launching pad for a high-art Indigenous photography movement. This exhibition included 60 photographs by Mervyn Bishop, Brenda Croft, Tony Davis, Ellen José, Darren Kemp, Tracey Moffatt, Michael Riley, Christopher Robinson, Terry Shewring, and Ros Sultan. Brenda Croft, Tracey Moffatt, and Michael Riley were three photographers who would go on to be the founders of Boomalli. This was the first contemporary art exhibition of work exclusively by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander photographers, and it was held as part of the week-long NADOC celebrations.

Urban Koories: Two Exhibitions of Urban Aboriginal Art was held at the Workshop Arts Centre in Willoughby (Sydney) called brought together Euphemia Bostock, Fiona Foley, Arone Raymond Meeks, and Jeffrey Samuels.

These three exhibitions were seminal to the development of a discrete contemporary Indigenous art movement in Australia. Artists were responding to doubts of their authenticity and their Aboriginality, as well as to criticism of their art for being overtly political. Between November 1987 and May 1992 Boomalli is founded and located at 18 Meagher Street, Chippendale with support from Gary Foley who was then chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board. The Chippendale location was chosen for its proximity to Redfern, with its large Indigenous population, so it could provide community-access gallery space.

The premises were a converted sewing factory above an Asian wedding outfitters in Chippendale's industrial area.

Some gallery highlights:

1988:

Boomalli perceived this Bicentennial year as an opportunity to present art, culture, and politics as integrally linked.

Michael Riley's film *Boomalli: Five Koorie Artists* was commissioned by Film Australia and captured the dynamic energy of the cooperative's early years; it featured Bronwyn Bancroft, Fiona Foley, Arone Raymond Meeks, Tracey Moffatt, and Jeffrey Samuels, and used footage from the launch of Boomalli au-go-go.

De Facto Apartheid (August-September) presented the recent work of Boomalli members at the Performance Space in Redfern

1989:

Inside Black Australia (January 20-February 12) was a photographic exhibition by 11 Indigenous artists (premiered at Albert Hall in Canberra in May and then) was shown at Boomalli (to coincide with Invasion Day) before commencing a national and international tour. This exhibition was organized by Kevin Gilbert in 1988 and explored Aboriginal views of Australia and included works by Brenda Croft, Kathy Fisher, Kevin Gilbert, Alana Harris.

Gomileroi – Moree Mob (February 22-March 12) was an exhibition by 13 artists of Gomileroi country. The talents of 13 people—painters, carvers, dancers, and didgeridoo players—were showcased, including Boomalli member Michael Riley. Pam Johnston did the design and layout of the exhibition catalogue. Together, the Kempsey and Moree shows were very important as they were the first to showcase regional NSW artists.

A Koori Perspective (June), curated by Boomalli member Avril Quail, was hosted by Artspace (Surry Hills) to coincide with the mainstream *Perspecta* show at the Art Gallery of New South Wales and redress the imbalance of *Perspecta* including only 2 Aboriginal artists.

Aboriginal Women's Show (September 21-October 25) was a selection of mixed media by Aboriginal women from all over the country, including established artists such as Euphemia Bostock, Bronwyn Bancroft, Pam Johnston, and Sheryl Parnell, as well as Tracey Bostock, Daneille Gorogo, Leeanne Hunter, and carvings and paintings from the Arnyingini Congress of Northern Australia. This show was curated by Bronwyn Bancroft, and opened by Euphemia Bostock.

In October, Boomalli hosted the book launch of *Aboriginality*, a publication of Aboriginal painting and prints.

Eurobla was a Boomalli exhibition hosted by the Tin Sheds (University of Sydney)—a group exhibition of Boomalli artists in conjunction with the reconstruction of a carved tree from Warren, NSW, which had been severely damaged by a lightning strike.

Early 1990s:

Boomalli faced a series of closures due to severe cutbacks in funding, but resurrected itself with funding from the Australia Council, the NSW Ministry for the Arts, and the Department of Employment, Education, and Training. In this period, Boomalli grew from a studio-based gallery and local resource centre into an internationally-recognized arts organization. People from a wide range of backgrounds were represented: young artists, artists in custody, gay and lesbian artists, Torres Strait Islander artists, Indigenous artists from overseas, and artists of colour.

1990:

On the Line (April 23-May 19) was the first group show of new members at Boomalli, and it inaugurated the exhibition program for 1990. Featured were Tracy Bostock, Deborah Breck-eridge, Gavvy Duncan, Janice Gardiner, Joe Hurst, Keva James, Rochelle Patten, and Susan Vaughn.

Lineage Landscape was a Boomalli exhibition showcasing the work of Bronwyn Bancroft and “promising newcomer” Tracey Bostock. Bancroft’s work in this exhibition was a series of collages in homage to her father; photographs of her relatives showed how she had traced her own identity. The works were veiled with a net, a reference to mourning for her father.

1991:

Ian Abdulla (Ngarrindjeri) & Harry Wedge (Wiradjuri) (October 1991) was an exhibition curated by Fiona Foley, pairing two great, distinctive narrative painters living in rural communities (in SA and NSW, respectively). Abdulla’s work reflected memories of his early, itinerant life in the Riverland and Murray River region of SA.

Kudjeris (meaning “women” in Northern Australia) was an exhibition held at Boomalli, curated by Fiona Foley, and featuring the work of Destiny Deacon, Lisa Bellear, and Brenda Croft. Deacon’s work “blak lik mi” coined “blak” here in an effort of reclamation and affirmation of identity. Together, the work of these three artists highlighted the diversity of contemporary photographic practice. Hetti Perkins wrote the text for the poster/catalogue.

In May 1992 Boomalli maintained an administrative office in the Performance Space (Redfern) and leased occasional gallery space there, but had no permanent home again until mid-1993.

1992:

In January, it looked like Boomalli was going to close. At the end of 1991, the Aboriginal Arts Unit of the Australia Council of the Arts refused Boomalli’s application for funding; said they needed a 5-year plan, including an upgrade of premises, computers, administrative systems, put on better shows in a better space. Boomalli appealed the Australia Council’s decision, won, and were offered half of the funding they applied for. Boomalli then decided to close. An article ran in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on January 7, 1992, and Boomalli got many offers of help. The Aboriginal Arts Unit, led by Lin Onus, called a meeting with Boomalli and sorted things out. Lin Onus goes on the record saying ATSIIC should play a role in funding Boomalli.

Hetti Perkins becomes curator at Boomalli in 1992, invited by Brenda Croft. Brenda has said that Hetti arrived with a vision, and took Boomalli from “smell-of-an-oily-rag community arts centre to putting it on the map with international touring exhibitions”; she changed the whole look of the place, from designing letterhead and business cards to finding the group a really good venue (the Abercrombie Street, Chippendale premises; was a much nicer place, not a warehouse like Meagher Street). re a became a member of Boomalli after talking with Hetti Perkins and Brenda Croft about her new series “Look Who’s Calling the Kettle Black.” re a credits Boomalli for launching her career: “my career wouldn’t be at the level it is if I didn’t connect with Boomalli because the shows in the early days were not about categorizing anyone. They were all about opening up all of the artists as they stood within their practice to a national movement as well as an international movement...” (Half Light catalogue, p107).

Recent Works by Euphemia and Tracey Bostock (August 5-30) was an exhibition of paintings, textiles, and sculpture, presented by Boomalli Aboriginal Artists’ Cooperative (listed in this catalogue as being located at 199 Cleveland Street, Redfern), and held at Craftspace (88 George Street, The Rocks, Sydney). This exhibition sought to applaud the achievement of a decade of exhibiting by Euphemia and recognize the rise of Tracey’s work in the art world; collectively, their works emphasize matrilineality and the significance of female relationships to their lives and the art world more broadly.

Between June 1993-1997 Boomalli premises were at 27 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale (just off Broadway).

1993-1994:

International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples, a high point in Boomalli's operations. The events calendar was full to capacity for the whole two years, including: 1) relocation to new premises that included a gallery, artists' studio, slide and publications library, and archive; 2) the securing of funds for four full-time staff; 3) the organization of 14 in-house exhibitions, 9 exhibitions at other venues, 2 international exhibitions, and several international residencies; 4) the hosting of international exchanges; 5) the production of several publications; and 6) the hosting of forums and events both at Boomalli's premises and elsewhere.

1993:

Wiyana/Perisferia (Periphery) was an exhibition with a catalogue, held by Boomalli Aboriginal Artists' Cooperative at The Performance Space in Sydney. Curated by Hetti Perkins and Liliana E. Correa, this exhibition consisted of 9 installations by Aboriginal and Latin American artists articulating the ongoing discontent of colonized peoples. It was a satellite event of the 1992-1993 9th Biennale of Sydney. Featured Boomalli artists were: Bronwyn Bancroft, Brenda Croft, Fiona Foley, Judy Watson, and Harry Wedge.

Boomalli hosted H.J. Wedge's major solo exhibition *Wiradjuri Spirit Man* that instigated a monograph on the artist's work (exhibition was first at Tandanya in 1992, and then went to Boomalli in 1993). The monograph was published in 1996 by Boomalli and Australia Books with the support of the Australia Council. *Wiradjuri Spirit Man* was the first exhibition to launch the new Boomalli premises at Abercrombie Street, opening June 18, 1993.

Sayin' something: Aboriginal Art in New South Wales (August 5-September 10) celebrated 10 years of land rights in New South Wales, and included works of Shirley Amos, Euphemia Bostock, Tracey Bostock, Treahna Hamm, r e a, Elaine Russell, and H.J. Wedge. The exhibition was co-sponsored by Boomalli and the NSW Aboriginal Land Council (Sydney).

Postcards from the Bay: Aboriginal Artists from Long Bay (September 30-October 30) was an exhibition held at Boomalli—the first in what was to become an annual event organized by Boomalli in association with a different gaol each year. This effort was made in response to community interested and requests from artists themselves—who are isolated from opportunities available to those not in custody—and will testify to the endurance of Indigenous creative spirit through the art of the prisoners of an undeclared war.

Announced November 1, 1993: Sydney is set to get an Aboriginal Performing Arts Centre. The NSW government allocated \$1.5million towards it and was to provide the site—at Walsh Bay, bond store no. 3 (until this time, the secondary site to the Art Gallery of NSW of the Sydney Biennale, in Windmill Street)—expecting the tenants to match that \$1.5million for a \$3million centre to include exhibition and performance space for contemporary Aboriginal arts, as well as house conference and seminar spaces, workshops, studios, a coffee shop, and informational facilities for local and international visitors.

The tenants were looking to ATSIIC, the Department of Tourism, and other sources to raise the balance of the money. Five organizations and their representatives—Rob Bryant (director of Aboriginal Arts Management Association); Michael McMahon, Kevin Cook, and Jack Beetson (Blackbooks in Glebe); Rachel Perkins, Adam Perkins, and Michael Riley (Blackfella Films); and Jody Chester (acting coordinator of Boomalli); and Bangarra—hope to take possession of the new space in January 1995. Boomalli and Bangarra been lobbying government since 1991 for shared space.

1994:

It is reported in the press that the future of a proposed Aboriginal Cultural Centre is unclear because of a wrangle of the lease between Aboriginal groups and the NSW state government. The Cultural Centre Executive Committee representing the five groups supposed to move there is now claiming that the government has reneged on its promise of a 99-year lease, only offering a 7-year lease.

Secretary of the Committee, Brenda Croft, said a 7-year lease would not be viable because it offers no security for the groups involved, most of whom depend on ATSIC for funding, and ATSIC won't look at funding anything to refurbish unless it's a minimum 30-year lease. Spokeswoman for the NSW Minister for the Arts, Mr Collins, says negotiations are continuing (between the Maritime Services Board, the entity responsible for Walsh Bay; the Ministry for the Arts; and the Government's Property Services Group), and is hopeful a longer lease will be offered.

Brenda Croft opened *Strange Fruit* at the Performance Space (Sydney); the exhibition focused on the 'icon' of the urban black woman

Narratives (June 30-July 30) was curated by Hetti Perkins; designed to showcase and draw out the links between Aboriginal women artists of diverse backgrounds: Kerry Giles (Ngarindjerri), Pantjiti Mary McLean (WA), Peta Lonsdale (Kamileroi), and Elaine Russell (Kamileroi).

Jumna Millatunth (August 5-20) was an Aboriginal Youth Art Exhibition held at Boomalli. Boomalli put out an internationally-touring exhibition, *True Colours: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists Raise the Flag* (including 200 tea towels by Brook Andrew, and works by H.J. Wedge), coordinated by Brenda Croft and Hetti Perkins. This exhibition was a collaboration between Boomalli and INIVA (the Institute for New International Visual Art) and Black curator, writer, academic Eddie Chambers, and it toured venues in Britain and Australia 1994-1996. In Britain, funding was from the Greater London Arts Council and the British Council in Australia—enabling Hetti Perkins and r e a to present a series of workshops and lectures in 1994. Further funding from the Australia Council enabled the Australian tour 1995-1996. In May 1995, *True Colours* showed at Boomalli and at the Performance Space Gallery—it was a deliberately confrontational exhibition designed to explode white myths of Aboriginal pasts and passivity.

Blakness: Blak City Culture! (October 8-November 6) was curated by Clare Williamson and Hetti Perkins and was held at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) in Melbourne, and Boomalli in Sydney. The catalogue won Lin Tobias of La Bella Design 1st place in Group B Catalogues of the NSW Design Awards. The exhibition featured works by Brook Andrew, Joanne Currie, Destiny Deacon, Peter Noble, Clinton Peterson, and r e a. Using Destiny Deacon's reclaiming of the meaning and spelling of the word "black," *Blak City Culture* is the assertion and exploration of the possibilities of identity, of Blakness. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists who participated in this exhibition elegantly affirmed an interventionist, pragmatic approach to politically-informed aesthetic production.

Late 1990s was a time period that brought many changeovers in staff at Boomalli, as members left to undertake new projects, and the Cooperative underwent several relocations eventually moving out of Chippendale.



The Unofficial, Unblessed History of the Rise and Fall of Jellyheads (and a Few Other Things)

When I arrived in Sydney in 1988, as a 23-year-old student with no financial aid, to attend Sydney College of the Arts, squatting seemed the only viable accommodation choice available. I headed down to Woolloomooloo, where I had stayed with a bunch of anarchist squatters during the January 1988 Bicentennial protests, to try to find my way into the Sydney squatting scene.

I soon discovered that this scene, in the late 80s, was vibrant and active, but fragmented – an ever-changing kaleidoscope pattern of shifting sub-cultures bonded by a confused tangle of personal affinities, political affiliations and shared interest. Being the cusp of the 80s and 90s, identity politics was everything; political and social declarations were mapped directly onto the body. The theoretically inclined were reading Foucault, Irigaray, Kristeva, Lacan, while others were living it all out directly at the sharp end of a tattooing and piercing needle – and some, of course, were doing both.

There were a few old established “big name” squats – The Gunnery in Woolloomooloo, and The Federal Arts Squat (which was demolished shortly after for the Bicentennial Park) on Glebe Point, and the remnants of the Glebe Estate Squats. The residents of these squats, seemingly interested only in securing permanent tenure for themselves somewhere, distanced themselves from involvement with the current politically active squatting movement.

Palmer Street, Woolloomooloo, was a hot spot for politically active young squatters with anarchist leanings and Newtown was where an older crowd of socialist squatters, mostly veterans of the Glebe Estate, had settled in empty houses owned by the hospital, on Gibbes Street. Both these groups of squatters were motivated by ideals far beyond simply finding affordable accommodation. They saw squatting as a significant political act and a vital community-building tool.



These idealistic attitudes linked the squatters with institutions such as the Black Rose Anarchist Bookshop and Skid Row Community Radio Station and a range of people involved in grassroots activism and cultural activity across inner city Sydney, but who were already otherwise accommodated, and whose interest in squatting was, therefore, often more conceptual than practical. Unlikely coalitions met and discussed the political implications of squatting but, more practically, also wrote squatter's manuals, went squat spotting and created lists of abandoned buildings, stock-piled tools to lend to people who needed them to set up and maintain squats and, periodically – when the need and/or opportunity arose – squatted buildings, en masse.

Raper Street, in Newtown, Rose Street, in Darlington – a suburb on the border of Chippendale that has long since been almost entirely subsumed by Sydney University, and Cross Street, alongside the Camperdown Children's Hospital, were some of the more organised large scale squatting actions of varied longevity that took place in Sydney between 1988 and 1990. 269 Rose Street, my home on and off for several years, was one of the longer lasting Sydney 'squats;* a hub of varied social, creative and political activity over 6 or 7 seven years.

One of the last big group squatting actions of this period was the first Broadway squat – the precursor to the Broadway squat of 2000, which occupied the same buildings, almost exactly a decade later. The Broadway squat of 1990 lasted a month or so and involved extended negotiation with South Sydney Council to legitimise it. During this time, real efforts were made to set up a grass-roots cultural centre in the space, and for a short time the Broadway squats housed a functioning café, a rehearsal and meeting space, and a drop-in advice centre for the inner city alternative community.

The negotiations with the council looked hopeful – for a second or two – but, sadly, eviction was the ultimate outcome. However, what was very evident was that accommodation was not the primary concern of this squat; a space with creative potential was what was really wanted and needed. With energy and enthusiasm for the idea running high, a collective formed to set-up a permanent community event space and, after a period of planning and fundraising, eventually, the group rented a two storey warehouse, with a courtyard, at 33 Wellington Street, Chippendale: Jellyheads was born!

The Jellyheads space was initially envisaged, primarily, as an alternative venue to Newtown's increasingly gentrified pubs. Tutti Parze, a hard-core punk band formed in the Palmer Street squats was a regular performer in the early days. The influence of electronic dance music, in the process of growing into the unstoppable cultural force it still is, soon crept in and was seen in other regular performers, such as Mahatma Propagandi and Non Bosse Posse, who combined techno beats with topical political lyrics.

Jellyheads is mostly remembered for its lively events – an eclectic mixture of music, art, video, performance, circus skills and interactive installation but once the space was established endless possibilities opened up. A pool table and video projector were put upstairs and regular film and discussion nights were held. Various community groups used the space for meetings, rehearsals and other activities. The collective put out a regular newsletter which was printed by the Prisoners Action Group, who had their own space upstairs. Eat the Rich Café provided vegan food to hungry attendees of Jellyheads events.

At around the same time, a group of queer women rented a warehouse in Buckland Street, Chippendale, which became a thriving cultural centre for the queer lesbian community – home to the publication, Wicked Women, and site of the infamous annual Ms Wicked performance competition and regular dance parties. Chippendale suddenly seemed the hub of alternative Sydney life.

Sadly, however, the joy was short-lived: despite amicable relationships with most of the community, a few local residents, apparently discomfited by the good – and perhaps sometimes chaotic – times had by one and all at Jellyheads lodged a complaint with South Sydney Council, the old foe. After eight months of frenetic, but happy, activity at 33 Wellington Street, South Sydney Council declared the building illegal for public events.

The Jellyheads collective immediately mobilised what resources it could and went to court to challenge the injunction but, faced with a long-winded, expensive, and potentially unwinnable bureaucratic battle the collective reluctantly decided to move on to other things. The space was put up for grabs and has housed various members of the alternative creative community ever since but the Jellyheads collective didn't survive the demise of the its premises intact for long. The group fragmented and regrouped in new configurations.

Vibe Tribe, one such transmogrified group, maintained a high profile presence in inner city Sydney by organising a series of free and fundraiser raves in public spaces, such as Sydney Park, providing an anarcho-liberationist alternative to the rapidly commercialising Sydney dance party scene. When repressive police action almost aborted a Vibe Tribe rave in Sydney Park in '95 – the party went ahead with a last minute change of venue – and made future events there impossible, the Vibe Tribe collective gradually drifted up the coast to Northern NSW where the parties continued until it mutated into yet other forms.

Jellyheads may have occupied only a fairly brief moment in Chippendale history but it remains an important item in the genealogy of Sydney's grassroots activism and alternative politics. Jellyheads arose from a confluence of energies that converged in a particular geographical location to produce a short-lived but vibrant explosion of creativity and activity and then flowed on again.

*It actually quickly became a low rent lease arrangement with Sydney University, the owners of the building.





JELLYHEADS

38 WELLINGTON STREET CHIPPENDALE '3192798'



PRICELESS
PO BOX
691
NEWCASTLE NSW
2042

NO JUSTICE... JUST US

Today we were told that Jellyhads is illegal... so here it is for the ourstory books.

THE STATE VS. JELLYHEADS.

Today we were told that Jellyhads is illegal... so here it is for the ourstory books.

THE STATE VS. JELLYHEADS.

Last friday we got some South Sydney Council phone calls telling us that the space was illegal (thanks for telling us after eight months folks!!!) and an injunction would be placed on our Friday night rave 'Wobble'. After ten minutes notice we turned up at court and found out that our jellyheads were firmly on the chopping block. Complaints from three locals referred to the area as a 'war zone'. With allegations ranging from bum flashing, cat napping, constant abuse, and much more...

A quick whip round of our neighbours got an 80% support rate on a petition, and we felt that we could show up the moral minority for what it was. We were told to appear in the Land and Environment court in four days... The Council had done their home work, and determined not to let the space go without a fight, we responded with an indepth reply, rushed legal advice, a whole lot of community support letters (yay team!), and crossed fingers.



Wednesday at court looked promising, the judge gave the Council a bit of a roasting. It seemed he was quite pleased to see the underdogs not taking things lying down, representing themselves, and taking on the system on it's home turf. But we were cautioned, the injunction was upheld, and the council got an adjournment to hone their argument.

Thursday. Ah yes, but 'the law is the law' and it turns out that not only do we have to put in a development application (wait six weeks to get the council thumbs up or down), but in that time the only access the community has to their lawfully rented space is gatherings of no more than eight people between 9am to 8pm.

Spin out! But hang on, what did we expect? The system and its rules are not what we are about any way. So the collective decision to pay the rent up to date and move on was fairly clear, with a commitment to something new...

The judge at one point showed interest in becoming a paid up member of Jellyheads, its a strange world indeed.

WHAT NOW?

Basically the space is up for grabs, preferably to an interested group with some community commitment.

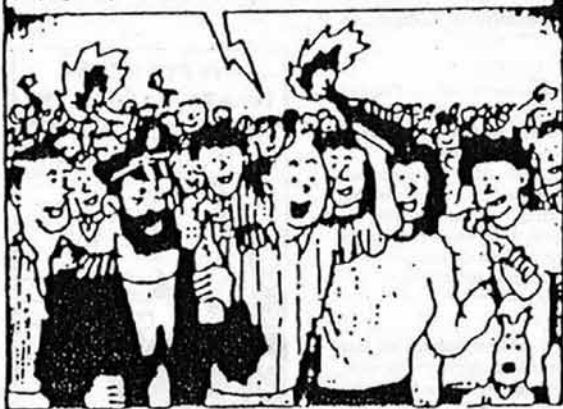
The immediate requirements involve a \$150 development application, \$300 a week rent (negotiable with the supportive landlord), and money to be spent meeting the council's requirements for fire regulations.

As a collective we will take the name Jellyheads and its assets with us to continue its activities elsewhere, the flying circus is now airborne.

We are very negotiable, and are into handing over a large part of what we have accumulated over the last 10 months of operation, kitchen stuff, office equipment, knowledge, a dodgy pool table and heaps more shit on shelves and in cupboards that we can offer to anyone wishing to make this community space a legal venture.

FINAL MEETING

AND WHO KNOWS? MAYBE A WHOLE LOAD OF FUN LIES AROUND THE CORNER!



However corny it sounds we would like to send a huge thank you to all you fucking crazies out there who have put time, energy, and hard earned dosh into something a little different and more encouraging than what we are normally given and labeled as entertainment.

Even though the workload was a little overbearing at times and the cleaning up a little tedious, the beauty and pure lust for ideas into action which engulfed us all far outweighed the negative.

FINAL MEETING
A meeting to wrap up the loose ends will be held at **BLACK ROSE BOOKSHOP 524A King St Newtown, 6PM TUES 2ND MARCH.**
We want community input to the end, or a new beginning, of this three year project.
Please join us, all opinions would be highly valued.

We regret fuck all and have never claimed to have done all the right things. Each day was a learning process and each event became a step in the development of a much more crucial and closely knit community network, which we as a collective feel proud to be a part of.

Our diversity is our beauty, and these networks must be maintained if we wish to remain strong, confident, and liberated.

Love and Anarchy, the Jellyheads collective. 26-2-93





When asked to write something about Lanfranchis for this publication I thought it would be silly just to talk only about the end of the Chocolate Factory, as it was a seminal place for DIY culture in Sydney and Lanfranchis was just a full stop in three decades of activity in the building that gave us the Cherry Ripe. Over the years many artistic groups have used the space for differing reasons I remember my first interaction with the place in the early 90s was with a collective of cybernerds calling themselves the evil brotherhood of mutants who introduced me to a thing called the internet and gave me my first ever email address lucas@ebom.org (which had a green screen interface before free email services like hotmail even existed). So instead of talking about the end I thought it would be more interesting to know about the beginnings and hear from the people to first inhabit the space and enabled us all to enjoy it for three decades.

-Lucas Abela

Pigeon Poo, Carcinogens and Art

by Tim Welfare

Every generation in Sydney has had its own artist run spaces such as the Yellow House and the Gunnery which was, in its time, the template for an artist run space. Many of my peers were inspired by the Gunnery and started squatting spaces. While some only lasted a few months, others made arrangements with the owners. I guess I didn't want this uncertainty – and I was happy to pay for a large space. I also didn't have grandiose views of opening another Factory or Gunnery. I didn't want to live in a toxic environment marked by territory wars, people annexing new spaces at 2 o'clock in the morning and the bitchiness and backstabbing that went along with it. I just wanted a creative environment with peers I trusted and respected.

I hooked up with my partner in crime Damien Dillon. After living in Chippendale for a number of years in some of the grubbiest terrace houses that ever existed I began to notice that there were as many warehouses FOR LEASE as there were terraces. All it required was for a Real Estate agent to turn a blind eye. Over a period of many months, Damian searched Land Titles during the day to find owners of buildings that looked abandoned, while at night we entered (or tried to) a multitude of spaces searching for anything we could live and work in.

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There was always, if you wanted some culture, St. Barnabas or the Broadway Hotel where the slogan wars had become infamous – or the 100's of SCRATCH MY NOSE hilarious scribbled slogans on walls chased by the scratch-ee drawings of OLLIE THE OCTOPUS. But Chippendale was about BEER – not culture – probably still is - really. If you didn't drink from one of the 14 hotels or bars between Cleveland Street to Broadway, you could always smell the HOPS. And in combination with a hangover - yeek!

On Cleveland Street above an old auto mechanic high up was a small FOR LEASE sign that was old, faded and hand painted. We rang the advertised six digit phone number and spoke to an elegant, eccentric man named Henry Summer. He lovingly wore his three-piece suit, flares and loud ties – while his wife looked like a gypsy with diamontie encrusted talons with a “soprano-esque” dyed black hair. The look matched our own ‘ill-fitting’ look – a mixture of Vinny's 70's clothing with a punk aesthetic. Henry and his wife were very supportive of converting the CHOCOLATE FACTORY into a creative space. We picked up the keys from Henry's office in Martin Place and entered.

It was huge open space with staircases leading up on each side of the building into the roof where there were five toilet cubicles. It was like a scene out of Hitchcock's ‘The Birds’ with 100's of pigeons flying out as I opened up the doors. The floor was covered in a 10 cm crust of pigeon shit - later on we found out that no business had operated out of the building for over 8 years. 8 years of pigeon poo – layer after layer after layer. The Chocolate Factory now seemed an appropriate name to the space. I still have vivid memories of Damian – looking very un-sporty – running around with the eye and tongue of Rex Mossop swatting a tennis racket killing pigeons. Another one of Australia's great sportsmen lost to Coopers Beer, Dunhill Red cigarettes and gaffa tape.

With only some pretty primitive cleaning equipment for the next week I cleaned up the area which would be used as toilets and showers - the pigeon poo became a fine dust. I remember not soon after after completing cleaning off the 10 cm crust of poo (now there is a good name for a crusty crappy band that probably played at the Jellyheads space in Wellington St. a few years later) I was sitting with some medical fella in I guess one of the 14 bars in the area – who told me how (in some detail) the dust of the pigeon poo was carconogenic. For years this has lingered in my mind – thinking just like those poor bastards affected by asbestos – that d-d-d-do-doc-doctor-dre-hook-seuss-spock-who-death would come knocking one day and I would rue volunteering myself to cleaning the poo.

After a few weeks after cleaning up the top floor – and with little resources at hand – the warehouse was still without showers or a formal kitchen area. Mind you – the Photographic Darkroom was already set up and running. In the back of my mind I knew it would be months before some sort of fit out would be possible – and I sure knew I wasn't handy or skilled in this department. At this same time (quite possibly again in one of 14 waterholes) I ran into an old art school friend who had spotted another space around the corner in an old shoe factory at 77 Buckland Street – which was huge and attached to the open warehouse

space was a granny flat with all mod cons (you know - bathroom – shower - kitchen benches – cupboards – oven – walls - twisties – sunnyboys – musk sticks). I felt terrible – but I jumped ship.

No bad blood – and interestingly – it brought the 2 creative groups together. Many great projects were created or initiated in both spaces from claymation films, performance, sound art, photography, video clips and a little-wee 'bub' who we will just call Ernie. Yes – and many of these art projects (including possibly the forever young Ernie Sigley.com) were brainstormed over beer – cigarettes – wine (generally casked). I remember vividly encouraging Damian at an exhibition at First Draft during this period – where he recreated a fantastic slab of mini suburbia including the use of a real life dog – our sense of humour (or self-sabotage) was on show including serving bottom of the cask wine list GOLDEN GATE at the opening (that had a beautiful scenic photo of the West Gate Bridge on the packaging – go figure).

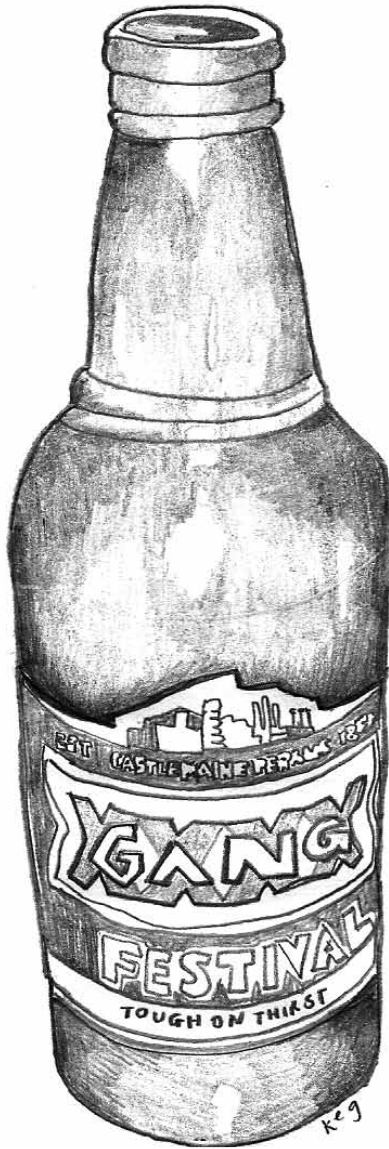
Frighteningly – not everything was about ART / BEER / AND FRIVOLITY. In the most surreal circumstances one early evening - three gunmen (yes that's right – GUNMEN) entered the Chocolate Factory searching for drugs and money. The gunmen moved from space to space - and in the process took hostages parading them with guns to their heads. Many were threatened verbally at gunpoint – while a number of male occupants were pistol whipped. It was obvious even at this point that this was some sort of botched job gone wrong. The gunmen were obviously frustrated by the size of the space and the amount of occupants in the building – and possibly realising that they were in the wrong place added to the confusion – which made them more desperate and angry.

As far as most of the occupants were concerned no-one sold drugs at the warehouse except for one fella who sold small amount hashish from time to time – and who luckily was not present. What was found out much later on was that occupants on the level below were dealing drugs on a large scale without anybody's knowledge. After an hour the gunmen left the building with nothing in hand. A number of weeks later it was found out that the gunmen were shot dead shortly after a bank hold-up.

As you could imagine this incident changed the dynamics of all of the studios. It also was evident that by late 1992 – that some individual living arrangements were taking over the creativity of both spaces. SOUND FAMILIAR? Green Fanta Soy Bean Mousaka with Roast Bic Pen and Ricotta Frittata-ta-ta-ta. Damian and myself decided that we would start to look for a creative space without the kitchen accessories – #5 foccacia or satay sticks. 12 months later HENO Studios in Haymarket was born.

Wedding Circle and Ceremonious Gangs

Bec Conroy



Gang erupted onto the street of Chippendale in 2006 after a strange and serendipitous wedding of various artist collectives and self-brewed adventures. I returned from Indonesia in July 2004 after a calamitous four-month community cultural development project in the iron heart of Jakarta. I dragged the feisty and lovely Alexandra Crosby with me and three others to work with a factory workers theatre company that had been banned from performing for the last seven years of the Suharto regime. This experience guaranteed that despite the pitfalls and shortcomings Ali and I would lurch headways into another adventure. That adventure was Gang (a bi-lingual term straddling dual meanings of laneways and a posse of cool possibly dangerous people (like us)).

For sure there is much in the artist run scene that is scenius (collective genius – thank you Brian) and dually clique and clichéd. But our intentions genuinely ran much deeper; beyond the underground in its simplest simple sub-cultural definition and beyond the growing undercurrent of attendant exclusiveness perceived by the outside 'ordinary' world. Our common desire came from a genuine grounding in creating a counter culture, conscious and critical of the attendant historical socialist and anarchist movements that gave birth to prior ruptures. Ali and I had both been inducted into the Indonesian underground where military regimes made art gallery openings a little more than a fashion statement.

The intentions of gang were to highlight the idiosyncratic historical moment of our spaces and our playgrounds. This came from a desire to articulate a growing meaningfulness in our art community and to contest a perceived meaninglessness of expression in contemporary art practice.

Then it was Sydney artist James Hancock who came to us with a grant application outlining a concrete opportunity for us to create something together with Indonesian artist communities.

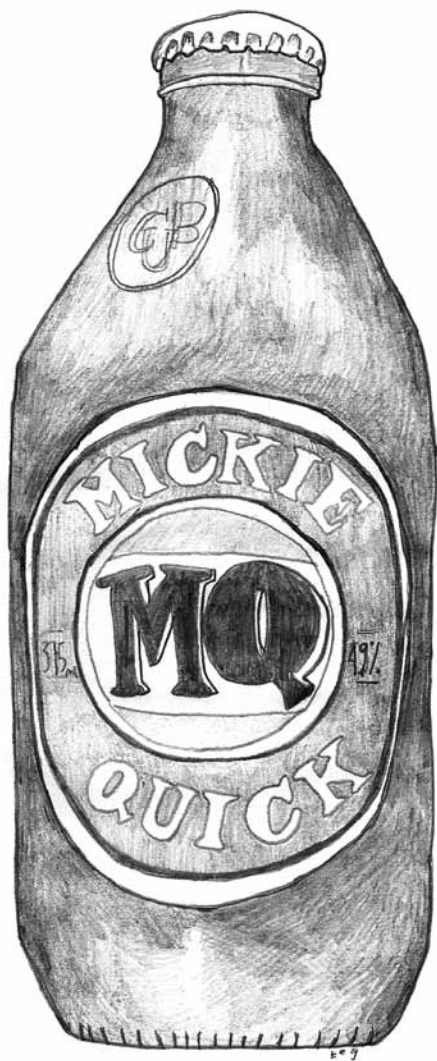
At the time I was resident at Wedding Circle a newly conceived artist run space in the heart of Chippendale headed up by three collectives and featuring a gallery and screening room/event space along with a number of artist studios. James was intensely involved with the Space3 collective, and Ali could often be found at the infamous warehouse space Lanfranchis.

In the months that ensued, Gang was born. I don't know exactly how but there seemed to be a magnetic curiosity from artists in our community about our nearest neighbour, stories passed from person to person about the romantic revolutionary spirit over there, and silent rumblings of artists identifying with the need to articulate community on their own turf.

We were a rambling - sometimes connected - embroidery of spaces littered throughout the Chippendale Redfern and Surry Hills boroughs. We were collectively hanging onto the last pockets of un-renovated warehouse spaces in the area, imminently aware of our own demise but too excited and energised by the seemingly impossible number of moments to create art in or own spaces. Fuck trying to apply through official channels (although there was that too) but in the meantime we could create our own playgrounds and invite our friends to drink at our own bars. Why not?

It's been four years since the first gang and a million moments in history have occurred – more than 20 artists have left Indonesia for the first time to participate in Sydney gang events; New initiatives such as Festival Mata Air have erupted across our networks; The wedding circle was bought by Andrew Denton shortly after the first gang festival and we all got kicked out and scrambled to find another warehouse Bill+George; Ali moved to Austria and had a baby (Welcome Luka!). We are all still here. And Ali is coming 'home' Thank god. It's probably time to gang up again. Yes, I think it is.

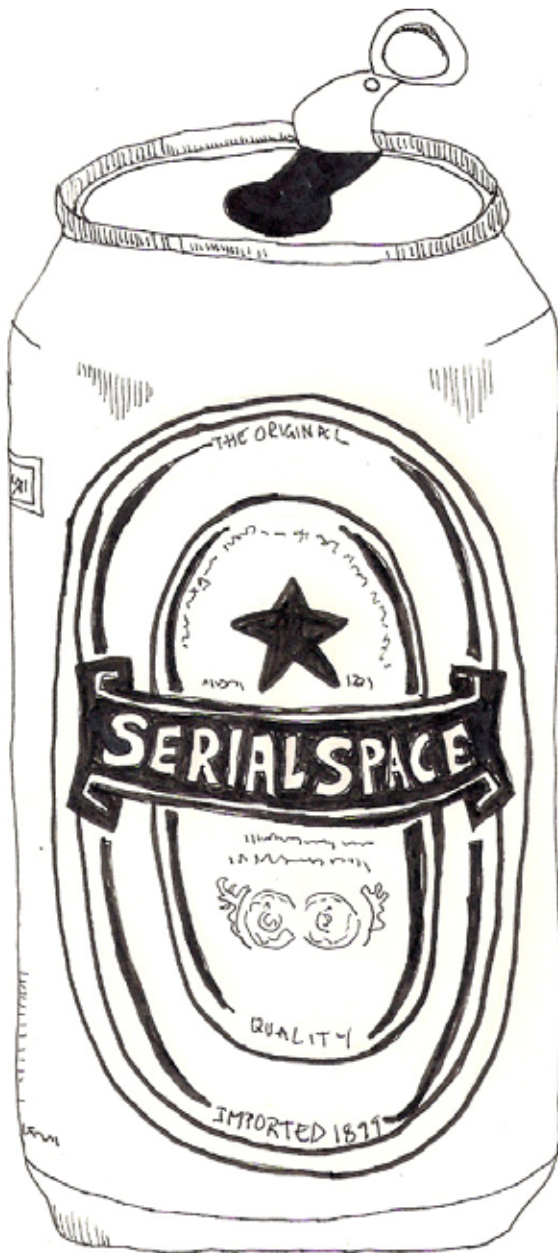






Night Emissions From The Nostrodamus Kid: A Terrifying Message of The Future Serial Space - 2008 to 2047

by Bob Ellis



When I was approached to write something for this collection of Sydney Art Space Obituaries, the only institution that sprang to mind worth mentioning was Serial Space. As I'm currently writing to you from the year 2072, I have the unfair advantage of hindsight and I can tell you no gallery will ever match Serial Space in terms of sheer loathsomeness or moral decline.

The first question you may ask is how a man with my lifestyle managed to make it to the age of 130. There are many possible answers: Vitamins; The fortifying nature of red wine; A good chiropractor. But the most likely reason is that, over the years, I have harvested the vital organs of my children and grandchildren. As I write this now it is with the hands of my dear eldest son Jack. My eyes are the eyes of my dead wife Anne. When I clear my throat it is with the larynx of my 8 year-old Grandson, Max (I also speak with his voice, which makes sex awkward).

The second question you might ask is how am I managing to bring you this information in the year 2010? That is simple: Astral Projection. Let's move on.

Serial Space was a squalid little speakeasy in Chippendale, founded by Louise Dibben and Tameka Carter in 2008. Over the years it had many directors. "New Media" electro con-artists such as Tom Smith, Alex White and Pia Van Gelder; Alice Williams, the awful feminist poet; Smug dick-joke impresario, Eddie Sharp; Fran Barrett and Kate Blackmore, both members of that vile lesbian cabal: Brown Council; even Zanny Begg, one of the editors of this very

pamphlet of insipid self important backslapping, was a co-director. There were other directors too. There were many. And so it goes.

Over its remarkably long 39 year reign the gallery focused mainly on cross-art form, hybrid art and events. Art that was ephemeral and unsellable, and by its very definition, quite bad. There were no John Olsen Retrospectives, no seasons of Great Works from international galleries and I was never invited to give a poetry reading. Instead going through the archives of their promotional material I find it littered with meaningless buzz phrases such as “D.I.Y. awesomeness”, “exploratory” and “hybrid performativity”.

The artists and events that were held there included the Now now Festival, Electrofringe, The Imperial Panda Festival, Camera Obscura, Dan Deacon, Holy Balm, Matthew Hopkins, Splinter Orchestra, Jon Wah, Ducktails, Naked On The Vague and Mary Macdougall. As it was, the gallery was able to stay afloat for many years on government arts funding until 2013, when Arts Minister Peter Garrett abolished traditional arts funding in favour of paddle pop lick-a-prize giveaways and the artspace had to resort to corporate tie-ins to get funds: “Pepsi-Max presents the Now now Festival” was a remarkable low point.

The gallery is gone now, thank goodness, but the original building is still there, over-priced loft apartments. Still I suggest that we, the people of Sydney, take to the structure with flaming torches, burn it to the ground and sow the ashes with salt. This way we can ensure that nothing of its kind will ever manage to take root again. Good riddance.





Last Drinks

Keg de Souza

Images from my residency at FraserStudios in July- September 2009, located in the old CUB brewery, Chippendale.

The brewery closed its doors in early 2005 but I decided we all needed just one more brew and during my time there made "The last beer ever brewed at the brewery".

On September 29th I called Last Drinks and invited people to the brewery to toast with me in honour of the old site and have one for the road...





'As the name suggests, Beyond The Pale, does not seek to be acceptable - morally or socially. This was almost true for all beer in the time when the prohibition movement was in full swing - but we won that fight! This edgy brew came was a response to a cry for help - as other beers seemed pale in comparison. After 70 years of brewing Toth's closed its doors in 2005 but Keg decided that we needed one last drink - for old times sake.

The fruity character and robust flavour, a sentiment celebrating the past brewers who have brought us fine beers from this very same site and the employees and citizens who helped carry stocks of barley and maize to safety when the brewery was on fire in 1853. A special Beyond The Pale toast must be had to the others who at the same time were down in the cellars drinking "to excess of whatever they could find" when scorching trouble was brewing above.

It's Last Drinks so don't end up acting beyond the pale, just drink up.

