

# ★ CRITICAL ANIMALS ★

CREATIVE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM THURSDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER - MONDAY 2ND OCTOBER, 2006 NEWCASTLE

## Critical Animals 2006

### Program:

#### Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September

Mulubinba Room, Newcastle City Hall, First Floor,  
290 King Street, Newcastle.

Time: 9.30 – 11.00 am

#### Panel: Poetry: Perceptions, Publishing, Prestige

Chair: Maria Freij

This panel discusses how prestige and kudos affect what the poetry reading public reads and embraces. Poets examine attitudes toward the heritage of poetry, as well as contemporary publishing.

**Michael Farrell** recycles poetics at Deakin. His books, *ode ode*, and *BREAK ME OUCH* (cartoon poems), are in his backpack. Blog: <http://readingrevival.blogspot.com>

**Sarah Attfield's** first collection of poetry, *Hope in Hell* was published by Five Islands Press. She is undertaking a PhD in working class poetry at UTS.

**Debra Hely** is the current president of Newcastle's Poetry at the Pub.

Time: 11.30 – 1.30 pm

#### Panel: Beyond Ones and Zeros

Chair: Gareth Sion Jenkins

How do we represent very humanistic things (isolation, history, nostalgia) using current digi techs? How might new technologies redevelop ideas of nature? New media artists/theorists explore the dialectic between new and old technologies and how might we critique the digital interface.

**Greg Shapley's** installations and digital manipulations attempt to create new aesthetics using largely non-aesthetic means, often exploiting the failure of digital technology itself.

**Jason Tuckwell** is currently engaged in a PhD project: Mapping Monsters: Deleuze/Guattari/Mandelbrot and the Question of Nature.

**David Wolf's** work explores at real time interactivity and network awareness in digital media, software and performance. He is currently completing his MA at RMIT  
<http://hypertext.rmit.edu.au/~dpwolf/blog/>

**Denis Kratz** are collaborative interdisciplinary artists. Together they have engaged a range of media and disciplines to explore issues of place, memory, history and time.  
[www.denniskratz.com](http://www.denniskratz.com)

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Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September continue ...

**Time: 2.00 – 4.00pm**

**Panel: Art Apropos Academia**

Chair: Keri Glastonbury

How does the compulsion/repulsion of academic study sit with artistic practice? Artists and writers who double as students discuss their work and the different ways in which it is perceived and influenced by different communities.

**Vanessa Berry** makes the zine *I am a Camera*. Her first book will come out next year with Local Consumption Publications.

**Lucas Ihlein** is just over a third of the way through his 'practice led' PhD in art. 'Practice led' means that 'academic research questions' are supposed to grow from the whimsy of his art projects (and not the other way around). Egged on by his zealous supervisor, Ihlein believes that if this can occur then a necessary (yet precarious) cosmic order remains in balance. Some balancing is done here: <http://bilateral.blog-city.com>

**Mandy Field** is currently undertaking a Research Masters in Dance Animateuring at the Victorian College of the Arts. Dance is explored as a form of experiential investigation, intermeshing the subjective and objective through a process of collaboration and community consultancy. Themes draw on the contemporary context of home and varying levels of outside and insideness. <http://thesilentlandscape.wordpress.com/>

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September**

**Mulubinba Room, Newcastle City Hall, First floor,  
290 King St, Newcastle.**

**Time 9.30 – 11am**

**Panel: Lost in Transit**

Chaired by: Katharine Aitken

The transit zone is place that is neither here nor there, a dead space often sealed off from the environment. It is a physical space but it can also be an imaginary one. Artists and writers explore what Keith Deverell has eloquently termed, 'inadvertent milieu'.

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**Keith Deverell** is a Master of Design by Research student at RMIT University, Melbourne. He works on a range of topics and within a number of situations, from experimental audio visual performance, installation, fashion and grass roots political campaigns.  
<http://www.decomm.net/keithdeverell/>

**Melissa Laing** (PhD candidate, SCA) engages with aspects of travel, transit and control space, utilising multimedia and installation. Her thesis theorises the state of transit within international travel.

**Danuta Shaw** (University of Newcastle) Her mother's experiences as refugee and displaced person have been the springboard for a life long interest in multicultural issues and the creation of identity. Research is just another word for looking at the world and writing down what you find. An MPhil means two people read it.

**Maria Freij** (BA; MAppLing) is a PhD student who teaches at The University of Newcastle. She is writing a poetry collection entitled 'I was here'.

**Time 12.00 – 1.30pm**

## **Panel: We reserve our right to doubt**

What is doubt? Is there a role for doubt in critical and creative practice? This session includes a demonstration of the online writing tools available on the [doubt2.org](http://doubt2.org) website, and a historical look at the original [doubt.org](http://doubt.org), an online gallery dedicated to digital art works on the theme of doubt.

**Anna Poletti** met Johannes Klabbers in 2006; the same year she received a PhD. Discovering their shared doubt, they decided to collaborate on the project [doubt2](http://doubt2.org).

**Johannes Klabbers** met Anna Poletti in 2006; four years after receiving a PhD and building a website on doubt. Discovering their shared doubt, they decided to collaborate on the project [doubt2](http://doubt2.org).

**Time: 2.30 – 4.00 pm**

## **Panel: Ganesh in the room: the spiritual dimensions of poetry**

In the mystical tradition, Christians, Sufis, Buddhists, Beats and others, play and praise, in and with the tools of language, at the vivid boundaries of being; wrestling in erotic struggle with words to say, and unsay, the unspeakable.

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**citizen tom** (a.k.a Tom Keily) is a poet anchored in rhythm and fascinated with politics and spirituality. He currently holds The Word Wrestling Federation's Australian Poetry Slam Title with his team, Housecat Havoc.

**Ivy (Amanda) Ireland** is currently studying an M. Phil in writing at the University of Newcastle. She has a curiosity about GOD and has sometimes been referred to as a 'mystic', but she is not sure what that means, or whether she deserves the title.

**Sarah (Sass) Nicholson** is completing her Doctorate in feminist philosophy of religion at UWS. She has a fascination with the mythical dimensions of language, story and being.

## Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September

**Watt Space Gallery, University House  
Cnr Auckland and King Streets, Newcastle**

**Time: 12.00 – 2.00 pm**

**Panel: Journeying between the Imagined and the Tangible**  
**Chair: Chris Palagy**

It's a long way from our minds to the written word, and the journey is not always straightforward. An artist with schizophrenia documents his journey through psychotic landscapes, a poet experiments with both real and imagined materials, and we examine the visual aspect of how written words provide meaning.

**Gareth Sion Jenkins** is a writer, performer and new media artist based in Sydney. He teaches creative writing at the Universities of Wollongong and Newcastle.

**Johanna Featherstone** is the founder and Artistic Director of The Red Room Company. A published poet, she has produced and presented television and radio shows.  
[www.redroomorganisation.org/](http://www.redroomorganisation.org/)

**James Stuart** is a poet, editor and new media artist. He is completing a Masters of Creative Arts on the materiality of poetry at UTS.  
[www.c-side.com.au/](http://www.c-side.com.au/)

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## Special Critical Animals Event:

### Edit Metropolis

Friday 29<sup>th</sup>, September\*, Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September

Banquet Room, Newcastle City Hall

290 King Street Newcastle

(\*Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September: official Critical Animals closing party)

Time: 7 – 10pm

'The bazaar is the last hangout of the flâneur.' (*The Flâneur*)

Edit Metropolis is a DIY virtual arcade constructed out of cardboard and inspired by the work of Walter Benjamin. Behind the facades, each store is a separate installation by a different artist, an audio or visual work, culminating in a sensorium of sound, sight and smell. A media montage drawing on the leftovers of 21<sup>st</sup> century Sydney, while emulating the indulgent atmosphere of 1830s Paris.

The arcade is both an exhibition and performance space, a frame for static and evolving installations, and a site for audio performance during the festival. It is somewhere to pass through, somewhere to browse, somewhere to linger and to loiter.

#### Contributing Artists:

**Vanessa Berry** is a writer and zinemaker whose first book will be published by Local Consumption Publications in 2007.

**Briohny Doyle** is a writer and performance poet. Her fiction has won prizes and been anthologized in Australia, the UK and the US. She has performed as part of the Sydney festival, at the Cockatoo Island Music festival, Wordstorm in the Northern Territory and Overload poetry festival. Her performance work featured on the Mouthpiece spoken word CD compilation in 2003. She has been a regular columnist for Voiceworks magazine and her zine 'large flightless bird' can be found in selective retail establishments staffed by surly terminal adolescents with great hair. She would die for lazy Sundays and her dog but only endure slight malady/maiming for art or rock and roll.

**Pat Grant** is finished up at UTS and is currently wallowing in a buttery hole with other arts graduates. No one has a career but everyone has a volume of Derrida or Heidegger on their bookshelf and that makes it all ok. Pat has tried to read his. Since leaving uni he has become more politically moderate, started eating meat with every meal, and given up as an artist because he realises that all he ever did well was draw little pictures of penises. There is an abstract cock hidden somewhere in this bio.

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**Haylee Elizabeth Kerans** was born in Avalon twenty odd years ago to two Australians that should have known better. She has been an A-grade netballer, artist's model and euphonium player, but is currently trying her hand at writing. If this doesn't work out, she can always go back to working at Coles.

Ferretting through various histories of situationist, modernist and dada paraphernalia, **Nick Keys** has embroiled himself in an ongoing study of the contemporary consciousness. Although his interest in poetics, cinema and sound make for an impressive catalogue, he is still at heart very much a Shane Warne fan.

**Darryn King** is a writer, insofar as he has written things. Also, he saw David Stratton in Borders once.

**Astrid Lorange**, a bona fide Gertrude Stein sycophant, is interested in modernist poetics and composition and seventies Canadian folk music. She is currently completing her Honours thesis in Cultural Studies, and hopes to spend the rest of her life deep in the snuggery of language.

**Aden Rolfe** may have been to some places that Walter Benjamin has, although Walter never visited anywhere that Aden has. Aden is currently producing an audio piece on Walter Benjamin for ABC Radio National, to be broadcast later this year.

After returning from a year and a half in Spain, **Joel Scott** is rediscovering his misplaced chutzpah with the English language. He is at the rump end of a writing course and is currently dabbling in the poetics of multilingualism and translation.

**Tom Smith** is governed by a strict economy of movement, and opinion. In his wonderful world, things must be okayed or dismissed on the head of a pin.

Once described as 'unflappable', **Tom Spiers** is a moving image aesthete and filmmaker whose work nudges the edges of animation, video art and digital/theatrical architecture. His interest in the spatial dynamics of imagined place has been titillated by the challenge of developing and inhabiting the Arcade space.

Though **Tim Wright** has lived in Sydney since 1999, it has been said that he is still, inimitably, a West Coast gangster.