

GERTRUDE CONTEMPORARY

MEDIA RELEASE



FROM THE COLLECTION: GERTRUDE CONTEMPORARY REGIONAL RESIDENCIES, CHAPTER THREE

ARTISTS: SARAH CROWEST, DAMP, NATHAN GRAY, DYLAN MARTORELL
CURATOR: EMILY CORMACK

EXHIBITION DATES: 5 September–25 October 2015
OPENING CELEBRATION: Saturday 5 September 2015, 2–5.30pm

Benalla Art Gallery
Botanical Gardens
Bridge Street, Benalla, Victoria

Gertrude Contemporary is pleased to present *From the Collection: Chapter Three* at Benalla Art Gallery, which is the third and final exhibition in the *From the Collection* series. This series of exhibitions has seen eighteen of Australia's most innovative contemporary artists explore the permanent collections of three regional art galleries (previous venues are Warnambool Art Gallery and Latrobe Regional Gallery), using them as a starting point for twelve major new art commissions. For *Chapter Three* of the project, curator Emily Cormack has invited artists Sarah crowEST, Nathan Gray, Dylan Martorell, and artist collective DAMP to respond to Benalla Art Gallery's collection.

Each of the selected artists has ventured into the vaults of the Benalla Art Gallery, spent time in the region, and in the process have uncovered a wealth of artworks and objects that they have then transformed and embedded into their own practices. DAMP has selected works from the BAG collection to be reconfigured as paintings on the surfaces of ceramic vessels. The seemingly simple transposition of a painting from canvas to ceramic is complicated by a gesture of violence: first, DAMP smashes the ceramic object, then they paint

its broken pieces, and finally they reconstruct the ceramic object to produce a 'subjective interpretation' of the original artwork. crowEST has made a series of Ned Kelly-esque costumes (comprising masks, smocks and collars) inspired by works from the BAG collection, including *The Lady in Pink* by William Dobell, *Beach Scene* by Clarice Beckett, and *Listening* by Danila Vasiliieff. Gray has produced a performative sound artwork by treating the object files in BAG's collection database as a score that has the potential to be enacted. And Martorell has created interactive sound sculptures that sonify paintings from the BAG collection that he considers to be in some way already 'noisy'. Martorell's selection includes paintings by Sally Smart, Turkey Tolson, Siri Hayes, and Robert Jacks.

In contrast with the previous two chapters of *From the Collection*, this exhibition specifically invites the viewer to physically engage with the artworks—focusing on ideas of play, improvisation and the handmade. For instance, DAMP will present a ceramic painting workshop where audiences will have the opportunity to make their own ceramic sculptures and potentially display these alongside the artists' works (more details below). Visitors to the exhibition will also be invited to try on crowEST's collection of hoods and tunics, which feature text and imagery lifted from works in the collection.

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The artists in *Chapter Three* build instruments, write scripts, compose scores, make sounds, sew costumes, and paint ceramics—all offering multiple opportunities for visitors to Benalla Art Gallery to explore their own expressions of creativity, and to rethink their local art collection.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS ON SATURDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2015:
12–2pm — Ceramic painting workshop with artists collective DAMP (Bookings essential on 03 5760 2619. For ages 15+)
2pm — Exhibition tour with Gertrude Contemporary curator Emily Cormack
2–5.30pm — collaborative durational performance by Sarah CrowEST and Nathan Gray
4–5.30pm — Exhibition opening. Guest speaker Emily Cormack, Curator, Gertrude Contemporary

PUBLIC PROGRAMS ON SUNDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2015:
12–2pm — Ceramic painting workshop with artists collective DAMP (Bookings essential on 03 5760 2619. For ages 15+)

RSVP: Wednesday 2 September 2015
+61 3 5760 2619 or gallery@benalla.vic.gov.au

From the Collection is supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria. This project has also been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body. This project also received development funding from the National Exhibitions Touring Service (NETS) Victoria

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Image: Sarah crowEST, *Strap on paintings*, 2015.