

SYNOPSIS

NEIL ALDUM

Encountering an array of conceptual and material challenges, the *Rounds* project has forced me to take a more flexible approach to my practice. Each response has required a deep understanding of both the work presented and the artist’s practice. Therefore, I have tackled each round with a unique strategy; whether this is creating a semi-autonomous algorithm of generating ideas or conducting historical research into the local landscape. Gauging the quality of these responses will be difficult and forms an interesting dilemma for the participants and patrons alike.

Round 1 – Contractory Physical Policy

The admiration of free market economies has faced explicit opposition in recent years, and for many has become a tarnished ideal. In view of this, *Contractory Physical Policy* aims to describe how an unrelenting desire for growth relates to doubt, disorientation and disappointment. The interactive structure allows participants to generate, through their own choice, an uncertainty that is both felt and seen.

Special thank to Evan Gist

Round 2 - Garden/intrigue /heat loss noise loss /the bum non-migratory and non-working

After receiving a series of words: Motor, Monkey and Motor from Bennett Miller a decision was made to create a system that could generate the ideas for sculptures. Using historical references, memories and associations based on each word, columns of potential works were generated. The titled sequence was chosen after numerous strategies were used to eliminate alternative choices. Since the words still needed to materialise as a work, personal objectives also played an integral role in the sculpture’s components and their placement.

Round 3 – People Person Park Bench

Responding to George Egerton-Warburton’s visions of various interactive works *People Person Park Bench* was developed after a series of failed experiments. Creating a work that could be functional and initiate a natural form of collaboration, play and cooperation were the goals. The decision to use music as a catalyst stemmed from its inherent ability to overcome human insecurities.

Round 4 – Wetland

Wetland was developed in response to Sarah Rowbottam’s investigation into the systematic destruction of natural wetlands within Perth’s inner suburbs. After conducting my own research it became clear that my response should be direct, allowing associated materials to inform the outcome. Migration, urbanisation and displacement have enveloped landmarks that now sit below and partly alongside our homes. By using of wood, concrete and movers blankets I have created three panels that compartmentalise the lengthy and fractured physical history of the land.

REBECCA BAUMANN

Rounds has been rigorous and challenging, and has offered an interesting and unique method for undertaking art making and the generation of an exhibition. I approached the project with the view that I wanted to continue with my ‘regular’ practice and body of work. When responding to the work of the other participants I tried to react instinctually and focus on the elements that piqued my interest. For me the process was a meditation on the generation of ideas – how a small spark can be the catalyst for something much bigger.

Round 1 – You know more than you know

Two nearly identical units ostensibly interact by shooting a sole tennis ball back and forth in you know more than you know. Although imagined as a ‘perpetual machine’, the differing variables of the shooting mechanism mean that the ball will eventually miss, and end up on the floor. Notions of transience sit within the perceived failure of the work.

Round 2 – OFF /ON

In receiving Tim Carter’s work, my interest was in the simplicity of the act of taking a t-shirt on and off. My response was sparked by the difference between the states of activity and inactivity that the words ‘on’ and ‘off’ imply. A minimal intervention made up of a fan, a solitary streamer and a timer, *OFF /ON* offers a two-minute cycle of activity and dormancy, sitting in a space between kinetic sculpture and drawing.

Round 3 – Untitled Cascade

By utilising a small domestic fan on a curtain of tinsel, a shimmering field of gold is created in *Untitled Cascade*. This piece is a material response to Elise/Jürgen’s work, specifically their use of a fan that interferes and interacts with their projection screens. *Untitled Cascade* is an assault on the senses, a visually overwhelming spectacle, and a creator of meditative and intimate moments as the fan creates a gentle ripple across the surface of the tinsel.

Round 4 – The Good Times Are Killing Me

A piñata inspired sculpture will be simultaneously activated and destroyed in a singular performative event. Responding to Shannon Lyon’s ‘targets’, which have an implied activation, the work seeks to only truly exist during its destruction. The remnants of the sculpture and its contents will be left for the duration of the exhibition as ambiguous evidence of an act of violence and celebration.

TIM CARTER

Many of my responses have been translations of elements from the works passed to me in the *Rounds* process, filtered through the interests and methods of my own practice. My desire for this project, whilst going through its rigorous framework, was to present a body of work that recognisably addressed my individual artistic concerns. I found quite early on that I didn’t enjoy responding in an analytical way that was specific to the agenda of each work. Instead, I found it more engaging to tease out threads, which have been a combination of conceptual and formal elements that could be developed and translated through my own practice. When I started to operate in this more instinctual way I found the outcomes much more interesting and hence my involvement in the project was sustained.

Round 1 – On/Off

I wanted to create a work that represented my practice in an accurate and recognisable way. *On/Off* met these criteria as it examines a seemingly mundane activity: the ritual of dressing, through the use of the video camera in intimate proximity to the body. The viewer is presented with a heightened account as the camera maps the ensuing process of fabric enveloping flesh. Exhibited as a series and seconds in length, each gesture becomes a minute moment of transformation in which the common experience turns into one that is foreign.

Round 2 - Blinds

What I most enjoyed about Elise/Jürgen’s Round One work was the way information was gradually revealed. Initially I wasn’t sure what I actually was watching: was it a video, was it video of a projected image, or was it documentation of an installation? The boundary between projected and ‘real’ was initially uncertain, only becoming distinct when Elise turns to one side. It was like seeing behind-the-scenes of a magician at work. In Round Two I wanted to respond with a work that similarly explored obscurity and understanding of visual information. The resulting work, *Blinds*, is a six-minute video in which the experience of sight is prioritised as the viewer witnesses the activation of a white, blank screen fluctuating through tonal progression.

Round 3 - Episodes

Carefully and methodically folded and bound, I received a parcel roughly A5 in scale from Shannon Lyons. Upon further investigation past its compact shape, enforced by luminous orange twine, I noticed a hidden narrative in which the twine was sewn fold to fold, frame to frame. It was such a mysterious package and one that I decided not to open, which would involve cutting the twine and hence ruining its secrecy and integrity as an object. Due to the strong linear qualities of the concertinaed paper and bound twine, it felt natural for me to respond via drawing and a strong formal focus towards line, shape and colour. *Episodes*, my resulting series, employs the drawn and diagrammatic, along with a spatial interest in placement. The drawings collectively examine narrative structure.

Round 4 - Pane

I was presented with Neil Aldum’s musical picnic-table for the final round. I was thinking of what Neil had made throughout the project, what that might look like in the space and how my work would sit alongside it. Neil has a persistent interest in landscape that I envisaged may look like some sort of reconstructed external environment. The presence of a swing-set and picnic table when put together does allude to parks and other similar social venues located outside. So, I decided to respond to the representation of exterior environments. *Pane*, a video of an exterior view, details a domestic landscape seen internally through a glass window. The image becomes increasingly surreal as distortions appear due to the surface of the window and the camera lens. What remains is a highly photographic vision that alters the traditional window-gazing experience from contemplation and stillness to disquiet and impending dread.

Special thank to Murray Clarke

GEORGE EGERTON-WARBURTON

The approach I have taken for *Rounds* has been to make work that formally relies on its context; that of a group show in a spacious gallery comprised of a number of ambitious practices. In each work I have attempted to make something physically small that conceptually extends to, or beyond the gallery walls, by way of personal or political narrative, history and even energy. Although I had thought of a number of responses that I could have made for each round, the process of each work remains largely hidden, or communicated through dialogue. I found the process of responding to the group of artists challenging and engaging, it’s interesting to see so many disparate practices stemming from the same little city. I’m quite sure that none of us understand each other.

Round 1 - THE FIREFIGHTER WAS ASSIGNED HIS FIRST JOB, HE DECIDED TO LET THE CHURCH BURN DOWN

This work was conceived in my final year at art school and has been continually reworked. It was the first initiative of my boutique Fire Department, St Werburgh’s Fire department. Part of my surname, Egerton-Warburton, was derived from the word ‘Werburgh’, after St Werburgh, whose most notable miracle involved resuscitating a goose. The surname was at one stage recorded to be ‘Warburgetone’, and then eventually ‘Warburton’ to make it easier to pronounce. I constructed the Church depicted, out of drawings on wood from different St Werburgh Chapels from around the world, to make a kind of building collage. It’s a work about distancing oneself from family and institution, in part informed by Rousseau; “The lives of pre-civilised ‘natural’ human beings, were ones of contentment and benevolence. But when the great human interventions of civilisation and private property arrived, everything went downhill”.

Round 2 - (Sunken) Relief

No.

Round 3 - Welcome to Mirth

Responding to Rebecca Baumann’s streamer work with the line ‘I schemed a tumour of merriment to grow’, I wrote this rap to include a wider and more personal critique of a certain genre of the learned, as informed by a correlating investigation into the philosophical notion of ‘the good life’. The formal make-up of the vehicle from which the rap is played has a relationship to Beccy’s sculpture, and it has also adopted several different meanings over time, of varying relevance.

Round 4 – I was asked to make a work in response to a series of drawings that my good friend Tim Carter had made. The drawings were bantam and precious, with lines constructing triangles as they emerged from various points and intersected numerous times. The colours were limited; shades of yellow, orange and black. Given the pleasure of possessing some prior knowledge of Carter’s esteemed oeuvre, I sensed that the drawings were perhaps screen tests or diagrams for speculative cinematic experiences, as a part of an ongoing dialogue between the personal, and the cinematic. As I mulled over the drawings and recalled my own experiences of the cinematic, I recognised a vague resemblance to the case cover of the timeless surf film “Endless Summer 2”. With Carter’s diagrams in mind, I watched

“Endless Summer 2” and took note of every point at which there is a camera lens depicted in the film; the original province of what is to end up on the screen. From here, I attempted to talk in response to the dialogue in the film, resulting in a conversation with whoever was speaking in the film at the time, Bruce Brown, Robert ‘Wingnut’ Weaver, or Patrick O’Connell. We talked about some plans for some things. I recalled Robert Barry’s Electromagnetic energy field as an appropriate medium for communicating our findings, only in this instance a small transmitter would emit energy waves that correspond with our dialogue, achieving a sculpture that is experiential, although immeasurable and immaterial, like an Endless Summer.

ELISE / JÜRGEN

It would be nice to think that epiphanies exist as singular experiences and ideas that are formed and owned by their creator. However, our practice as collaborative artists has always tried to challenge this notion, whereby information and ideas are always there, it is just how and through which means we access them. Similar to the way a song on the radio can incite significance to a particular moment, whilst simultaneously being able to affect another person who happens to be tuned in at the same time, the *Rounds* experience has illuminated the synchronicities that develop within the creative process, questioning where ideas end and begin.

Round 1 – Round One

Our works are often captured on video which allows us to reflect and contemplate a particular moment in time. However, the original experience is removed from the viewing experience, bringing a different understanding to the work through each repetition. This parallel between cognition and experience forms a rupture for each consecutive viewing.

Round 2 – Round Two

Round two arrived to us in the mail as a series of postcards amongst the bills and real estate agent calendar magnets. They had been lovingly constructed, hand stamped and posted to us and depicted what looked like visual instructions on how to build something. This reminded us of being in a foreign place where you have the time to delve into such activities as postcard writing.

Round 3 – Round Three

On receiving a list of the entire material history of Bennett’s work from Neil, we contemplated the non-linear order of time. Through developing ideas surrounding access of information and ideas, we worked with a long playing record, finding new ways to retrieve the information held within materiality of its surface. This resulted in a quiet cacophony of the convergence of tracks 1 to 4 whilst they still exist in their original form.

Round 4 – Round Four

The fourth round brought us news and recollections from a journey in India. Considering our process thus far, and our own interests in the nature of experience and how it is represented through the camera, we began to question the ancient art of yoga and its ability to find one’s ‘centre’.

SHANNON LYONS

The *Rounds* project, for me, has involved periods of frenzied making leading up to a handover, followed by weeks spent contemplating and literally ‘getting my head around’ the information that I received from an artist at the beginning of the next round. I have found the handover of my work, at the end of each round, to be the most enjoyable part of the project. I have sought to establish a direct relationship with the artist I pass work on to and a ‘little bit’ of the work produced during a particular round. I consider the works that I have made for Rounds to be conduits between the works I have received and what I think the next artist in line, after me, might make. I also like the idea that ‘I am less visible in the work I am making for this project than I am in my other work outside of *Rounds*. I like the idea of disappearing, completely, in the process.

Round 1 - Untitled (Preliminary_Sketches_For_SL_E/J_10)

The outcome for Round One consists of two sketches for larger works that could be made, in-situ, at PICA. The position and visual appearance of the linear elements in the drawings reference artistic relationships and particularities of the practices of the three artists involved in this round; these artists being Elise/Jürgen and myself.

Special thanks to Emma McPike

Round 2 - Untitled (NA_SL_TC_10)

The outcome for Round Two is an attempt to formally reduce and statically represent the movement of the rocking pendulum in Neil Aldum’s Round One work. The dualistic rocking/swinging motion was initially mapped out via rudimentary means of mark making (drawing circles with a pencil attached to a sting line) before being visually articulated in simple, wall based, constructions.

Round 3 - Untitled (BM_SL_RB_10)

At the handover for this round, I was presented with a work that I had been employed to finish by another Perth based artist, Paul Caporn. This object had been ‘destroyed’ by Bennett Miller; smashed with an old, turned table leg of some kind. Round Three saw me toy with notions of precision, activation and artifice in relation to the various means of production and modes of manufacture that artists employ when making work.

Special thanks to Emma McPike

Round 4 - Untitled (GEW_SL_10)

I had a conversation with George Egerton-Warburton about an A4 colour print out he gave me of a 90° CD player, adorned with stickers, that sits on a little wooden table in his home. George told me this table had once been painted red and that he sanded it back to the raw timber. We also spoke about the idea of ‘joy’ and the importance of aesthetics in regards to our respective practices. The outcome for Round Four is an attempt to synthesise some of this conversation and marry it with my own affinity for working with additive and

subtractive processes.

BENNETT MILLER

Round 1, 2, 4 and 4 - Milieu intérieur

This installation will host occasional performances from an elderly dachshund dog named ‘Rolly’ and a younger dachshund dog named ‘Otto’. These dachshunds will occupy the sculpture on Saturday afternoons throughout the exhibition. *Milieu intérieur* allows for a dachshund dog to be observed within a sculptural ‘set’, during which time the dachshund will have an implied ownership of this environment. The sculpture documents the entire *Rounds* process as a singular work; the outcome of an original premise that has since been mutated by the influence of three other artists.

Two of the artists, George Egerton-Warburton and Rebecca Baumann, are the owners of the dachshunds ‘Rolly’ and ‘Otto’, mentioned above. In this way these two artists contribute to the artwork directly via the inclusion of their pets. More specifically, George has influenced this work with a quote about the utility of civilisation in the context of the natural world. Rebecca has influenced the work via her explorations into celebration and ritual within Indian culture. Sarah Rowbottam has influenced the work in an odd way, via the nature of her response to Baumann’s work, which drew attention to a technical failure within a celebration ‘machine’.

Ideas and objects generated by this exchange have been included or referenced in this work and, at an earlier point passed on to Neil Adlum, Shannon Lyons and Elise/Jürgen in various forms. This work continues an ongoing appreciation of the dachshund as a respected formal and conceptual device, within the new and unique context that is offered by *Rounds*.

SARAH ROWBOTTAM

There has been nothing assuming about the *Rounds* process. Although we set out to create finished works, we ended up passing over ideas and studies that we had been musing over for six-weeks. Constrained by time to generate an immediate response to works which otherwise may have required lengthy contemplation, I found myself attracted to the unforeseen outcomes. Knowing each work would not take its complete form until installation, I decided to utilise the entire six-week cycle to generate studies. The responsive process allowed me to take tangents to the point where my work boreed almost no formal resemblance to the work I was presented with. What I handed on was usually decided on the last day of each cycle and due to the durational nature of some of the works, many have exceeded well into subsequent rounds. To me personally, *Rounds* was a chance to experiment – an opportunity to take risks; my work has taken an investigational form, playing into concepts I had never considered and media I have never tried.

Round 1 - Encounters

Staring is one of our most primal forms of communication and as species we often are enigmatically drawn to the act of looking closely at one another. With years of cultural conditioning, staring has become inherently a rude and almost hostile gesture. It has been turned it into ‘a contest’ so it is socially acceptable. *Encounters* offers a platform for people to privilege the act of looking. Subjects are paired at random in a variety of environments and are given an indefinite amount of time for the stare to occur. They are allowed to stop and walk away at any point.

Special thanks to all who participated in the work

Round 2 - Long Distance Relationship

The synchronicity between Rebecca Baumann’s dual tennis ball-firing machines isn’t always as tight as the artist planned. The anticipated perpetual motion is flawed and, due to the distance, velocity and materials used, the ball sometimes misses. To me the inept and repetitive nature of the work signals technological crises we have endured since the industrial revolution. I wanted to translate this conversation from the mechanical into the human, and discuss how communication and relationships persist in today’s modern world regardless of the failures that technology continually presents.

Special thanks to Carly Hunter

Round 3 – Study for a Swamp, Test 1. The Black Waters Project.

Tim Carter’s interest in re-staging ‘authentic’ moments in his everyday environment and translating them into video works has provoked me to consider how our ‘larger ‘natural’ environment is slowly depleting and how we can re-stage as well as create a conversational zone of inquisition for this. *The Black Waters Project* investigates the colonisation of natural wetlands within Perth’s inner suburbs. Areas of pre-existing wetlands have been sought out as possible locations to stage a public participatory installation with hundreds of inflatable paddling pools. *The Black Waters Project* will, when realised, draw attention to our forgotten environment, and re-evoke the indigenous use of the land as a place of meeting and celebration by inviting the community of Perth to participate in a day of swimming on top of what was once a swamp.

Special thanks to Royce Alido

Round 4 - Field (Prototype 1)

Field (Prototype 1) was made in response to Elise/Jürgen’s record player with four needles all simultaneously playing Berlioz’s *Symphonie Fantastique* at different points on the record. Using a readymade mechanism too, *Field (Prototype 1)* developed as an attempt to render a foosball table musical. Altering some of the core components of the table to produce musical harmonies, participants are invited to engage in the competitive nature of the game, and at the same time, the opportunity of making music reciprocally.

Special thanks to Ainsley Canning

