

Ross Coulter & Meredith Turnbull The Body Electric

April 18 – May 9 2009

Gallery

“The love of the body of man or woman balks account, the body itself balks account,
That of the male is perfect, and that of the female is perfect.”
Walt Whitman, *The Body Electric*, 1867.

The Body Electric project comprises a series of new works by Meredith Turnbull and Ross Coulter made in response to Walt Whitman’s 1867 poem by the same title. The project seeks to explore aspects of the human condition within an existential context.

By no means are we perfect nor are we an ideal. Could it be that any body is ideal? That every body is ideal. The body of a man balks account in the afternoon light. Or is it the two half-full glasses of orange juice, a Scrabble board and Olive Grove spread that contribute to the scene. Seeking to undermine the perfect, finding beauty in the incomplete. Finding man or woman and essential meaning in the un-comprehensible.

Video images are re-captured, a video replayed and re-recorded, re-edited and projected. “If I could only capture that feeling I once had. That very first time, when you went away and I felt so sad, how I longed for you.” “Emotion like a fountain of water inside me” Something is passing over to the other-side. Loop it and replay it again.

The Body Electric project explores the male/female dichotomy and what, if anything is essential about a woman or a man? Reflecting on collaborative modes of practice and artist duos in performance history the exhibition suggests a meta-narrative – a romance or relationship between a man and a woman, that is either coming together or falling apart.

Meredith Turnbull uses craft-making techniques in combination with photography and video to explore geometric abstraction, small-scale sculpture and site-specific spatial installation. This process is influenced by dystopic visions and psychological landscapes inspired by the elemental, supernatural and science fictional within literature and pop culture.

Ross Coulter explores the body in the landscape, psychological states, interior worlds and the influence of technology on identity, communication, and being. He uses photography, video and increasingly installation to explore the material qualities of these media and psychological definitions of screen and projection. Together they explore the human condition through physicality and technology and how these interfaces effect and change us.

Meredith Turnbull

Meredith is a Melbourne based artist, writer and curator. She completed a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Art History from Latrobe University in 2000 followed later by a Bachelor of Fine Art from RMIT University in 2005. She was editor of the online magazine *ACCAMag* between 2004 and 2005 and Project Manager/Assistant to the Artistic Director at ACCA from 2003-2005. Recent exhibitions include, *Folded* curated by Dr Kyla McFarlane, Monash Art and Design Faculty Gallery, Caulfield; *De Architectura*, curated by Kirsten Rann, Level 17 Artspace, Victoria University, Melbourne; *Transmission*, Slide, Gertrude Street Contemporary Art Spaces; *I thought that love was Science Fiction*, TCB art inc, 2008; *Happiness is a complex form*, The Narrows, Melbourne; *AO*, Peloton, Sydney in 2007 and *Selekta*, Westspace, Melbourne 2006. Curated projects include *Once More with Feeling*, VCA Gallery, 2009, *World's End*, Carlton Hotel and Studios, 2008, *Zonal Marx*, VCA Gallery, 2007 and *Five Minutes to Midnight*, Victoria Park Gallery in 2006. Meredith is currently a member of the Next Wave Festival's Curatorial Advisory Committee and Gallery Manager/Curator of the VCA Margaret Lawrence Gallery.

Ross Coulter

Ross is a Melbourne based visual artist. He completed a Bachelor of Fine Art with Honours at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2007. In 2009 he also featured as a dancer in the Lucy Guerin Inc production *Untrained*. Recent exhibitions include in 2008: *Fuck Your Heroes*, West Space, Melbourne; *Worlds End*, Carlton Hotel, Melbourne; *Man Running...Center for Contemporary Photography*, Fitzroy; *Play Heads*, Alliance Française Gallery, St Kilda; *Mono Brow Hell Gallery*, Richmond; *Contemporary Australian Video Screening Institute of Contemporary Art*, London. In 2007; *National Graduation Exhibition Federation Square*, Melbourne; *Camera Obscura* TCB Gallery, Melbourne; *Melbourne Operatic* Te Tuhi, Auckland, New Zealand; *Melbourne Operatic*, Loop, Melbourne; Slide, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne; *Experimental & Conceptual Shorts Program*, Melbourne International Film Festival. Ross has exhibited numerous times in a variety of public spaces including the Tweed River Regional Art Gallery, Federation Square Melbourne, Te Tuhi, New Zealand, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Cube 37, Frankston, as well as other local Artist Run Initiatives. Ross has received several awards and grants, including the City of Melbourne Arts Project Grant in 2008, the 2007 Orloff Family Charitable Trust Scholarship, the Alliance Française Award (2007), the National Gallery of Victoria Trustees Award in 2006, the Stella Dilger Encouragement Award in 2005. While working at Channel 31 in the mid 90s, he was awarded "Best TV Entertainment" three times for Richmond 3121 Oh! by the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia.