

Hatched – National Graduate Show 2013

National graduate show 'Hatched' is back and just as popular as ever in its 22nd year at PICA. Showcasing 37 artists from around Australia, this really is the freshest the country's contemporary arts can get. This is an important exhibition that kick starts the recent graduates' careers and gives them the chance to reveal their work fresh out of art school. As well as this, participants are given the opportunity to receive the Dr. Harold Schenberg Art Prize of \$35 000, available to one artist. This year, the winner of this prestigious offer was Shan Turner-Carroll with his photographic and sculptural work 'Primal Crown'.

The disciplines and styles are featured in a broad range, from painting to video installation and everything in between. Whether intended or not, snippets of art history emerge from the layers of paint or, in Lauren Broom's case, the weaves of high visibility fabric. The intricate pattern reflects in some ways the paintings of 19th century Romanticist J. W. Turner. This year, a recurring theme appears to be, in either an obvious sense or with underlying tones is the human condition, whether it be the subject of feminism or the human impact on the environment, or right down to the most basic and natural human intuitions and emotions. Irony, juxtaposition and relationships between one idea or physical thing and another are also two key aspects of the premise of the exhibition. Though the variety of medium, scale and aesthetic is very diverse the underlying relationship, though loosely, is ever present. The works can be simply categorised into main groups – the two dimensional, the sculptural, the video and the installation, with the common overlapping of two or more. Each 'category' is placed evenly among the others throughout the building in a certain harmony in the relationship between each work. In the main space downstairs there seems to be a sort of loop from two dimensional works and installations, with a gradual blending between the two. Start from Anna Gore's painting and sculpture installation 'Untitled' and walk around the room until you return to it.

At 'Hatched', there are always the pieces that remain somewhere in your mind, long after the exhibition is over. Last year, Skye Kelly's 'Creep', a large installation made of toffee and nylon cord was a significant one for me. Tom Borgas presented a stunning layout of pieces of slate flocked with nylon and acrylic paint, the colours forming a graduation from red to purple. This was his response to the human obsessiveness to reshape the environment. Quirky installations seem to be a common occurrence in the annual show, and this year is no exception. 'Meddling Medley' is a series of sculptures and photographs of commercial objects displayed on an entire wall. The handmade ceramic objects are familiar icons but have been manipulated slightly for a playful interaction with recognisable imagery. The Bubble O' Bill on the exhibition posters is difficult to forget.

For a first glimpse of a brand new batch of emerging artists, 'Hatched' is an exhibition not to be missed.