

MEDIA RELEASE



OCTOPUS 13: ON THIS DAY ALONE

ARTISTS: ANSEL ADAMS, TIM BURNS, KUSHANA BUSH, AGATHA GOTHE-SNAPE, PATRICK HARTIGAN, JOANNA MARGARET PAUL, MADELEINE PRESTON, LUKE WILLIS THOMPSON
CURATED BY GLENN BARKLEY
EXHIBITION DATES: 26 JULY - 26 SEPTEMBER 2013
OPENING: FRIDAY 26 JULY, 6 - 8PM

Gertrude Contemporary is pleased to present *Octopus 13: on this day alone* curated by Glenn Barkley, Senior Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Sydney. Each year Gertrude Contemporary invites a leading Australian curator to develop an exhibition for Octopus - our flagship curatorial program, which is now in its 13th year.

This year Barkley's exhibition *on this day alone* explores the ways that eight Australian and international artists, most of whom are not normally considered photographers, employ photography within their practice. The artists in Barkley's selection use photography as a means to an end rather than an end in itself, highlighting how photography can be both research material as well as a final object.

This exhibition identifies the unique nature of the medium of photography, showing how despite its fleeting temporality, a photograph's meaning and significance can persist and morph over time. For example, the meaning and significance of Madeleine Preston's series *Darlinghurst Eats Its Young* - which comprises of a collection of snap shots taken in Sydney during the 1980s - is dramatically altered by the passage of time.

Likewise the original significance of a collection of photographs by Tim Burns is indelibly transformed through its exhibition treatment. The post-card like works that were produced in 1974 featured in an artists book that documented the ephemeral and conceptual ideas coming from The Tin Sheds in Sydney. Originally intended to be treated three dimensionally, removed and sent via the post as mobile sculptural ideas, these works have now been archived behind acrylic. With handling prohibited, their original intention and their dynamic form has been disavowed.

The only artist in the exhibition whose predominant medium was photography is Ansel Adams - the world-renowned American photographer and environmentalist.

However, rather than exhibiting one of Adams' photographs, Barkley has selected a sound recording that documents Ansel Adams typing a note or a letter in 1983. The sound recording points to the significant and often contestable role that both photography and sound recording play as documentary mediums. Whilst both mediums transcribe a moment or moments in time, they are also easily influenced by fiction or context, which can slant the objectivity of the moment.

The exhibition also features new works by Patrick Hartigan and Kushana Bush who explore the act of documenting, tracing the extraordinary journeys they take in search of their source material and how these journeys mould the work's eventual significance. These works reveal photography's role as source material and its ability to capture a fleeting connection to a moment of inspiration. *on this day alone* also features new or significant works by Agatha Goethe-Snape, Joanna Margaret Paul and Luke Willis Thompson.

In *on this day alone* each work reveals how image and image making is in constant dialogue with the object. Highlighting photography's transformative shape-shifting tendency, the exhibition shows the medium's ability to function as a photograph, whilst being conceptually able to transform into another media, beyond itself.

Octopus is made possible with generous support from Proclaim Management Solutions

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IMAGE CREDIT: Joanna Margaret Paul, *Aberhart's house 1976*, (still), Super 8 transferred to digital file, 2.54
Courtesy Circuit, Artist Film and Video Aotearoa/New Zealand