



From Afar
Alannah Gunter

Futility
Liam O'Brien

Notes on Becoming
Alix Perry

Gestural Clusters
Tara Callaghan

Where Bloodlines End
Katie Mitchell

Cut-out Beauty
Emily Hornum

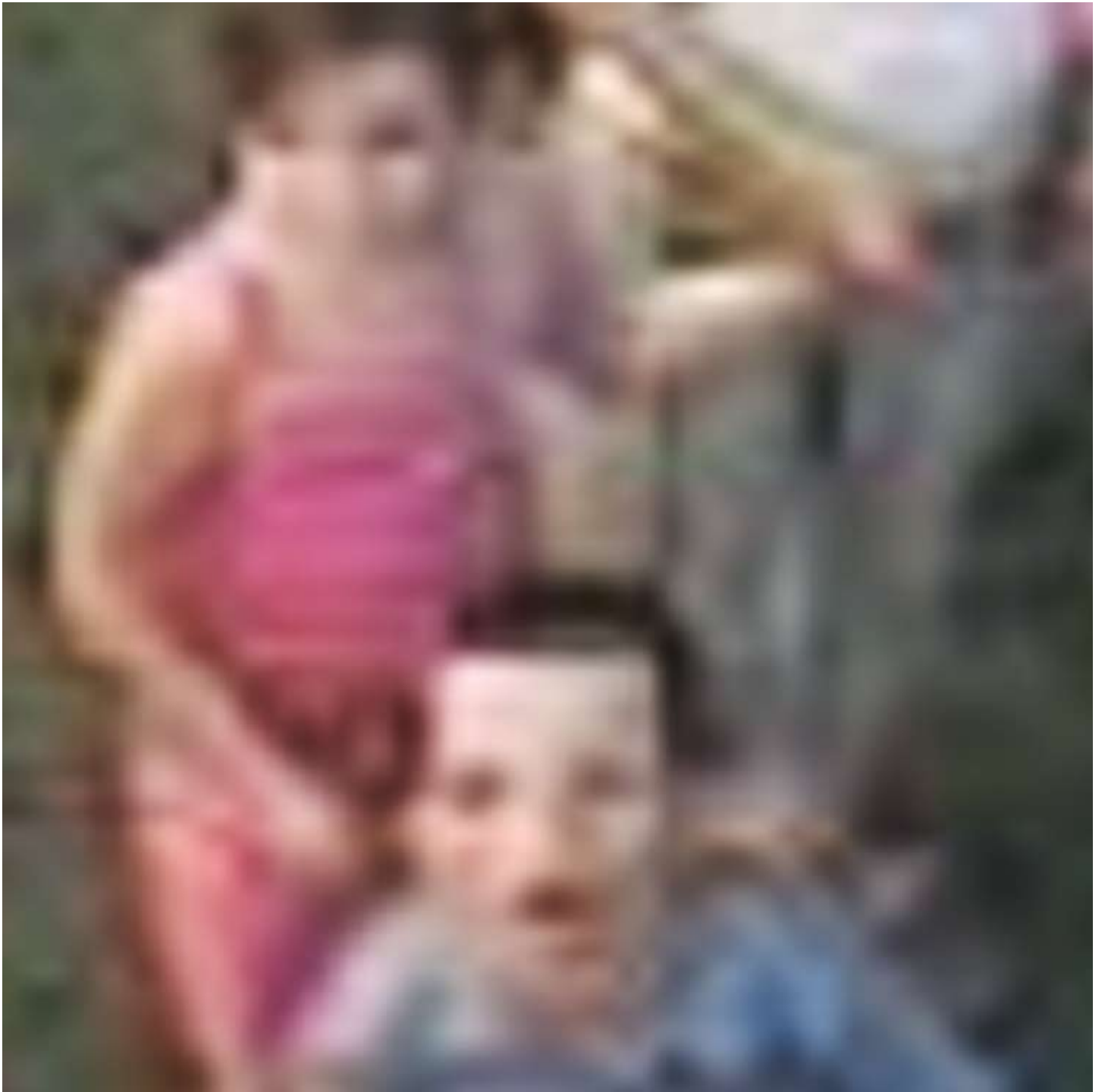
**Every man wants to
build something**
Audrey Lam



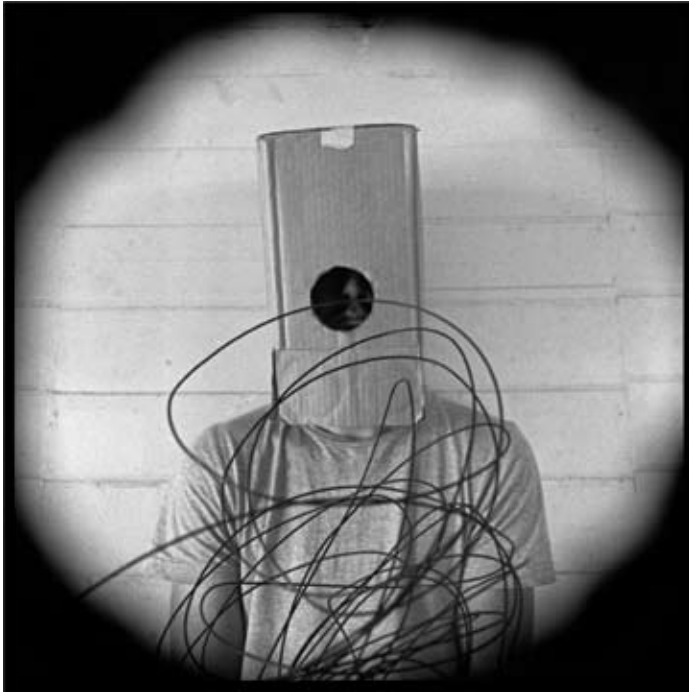
Alienation is a central part of contemporary life and culture, and it is the underlying thread between the works of the seven Queensland-based artists in this exhibition. These works showcase the proliferation of photo-media currently challenging the boundaries of what is considered photographic; from traditional monochrome works to images ultimately devoid of photographic matter.

Alannah Gunter's portraits in *From Afar* are taken from a New York City street webcam captured via her computer while she was based in New Zealand. The traditions of portraiture and street photography have been turned upside down; the connectivity of cyberspace makes the physical closeness previously inherent to this kind of photography void. The digital

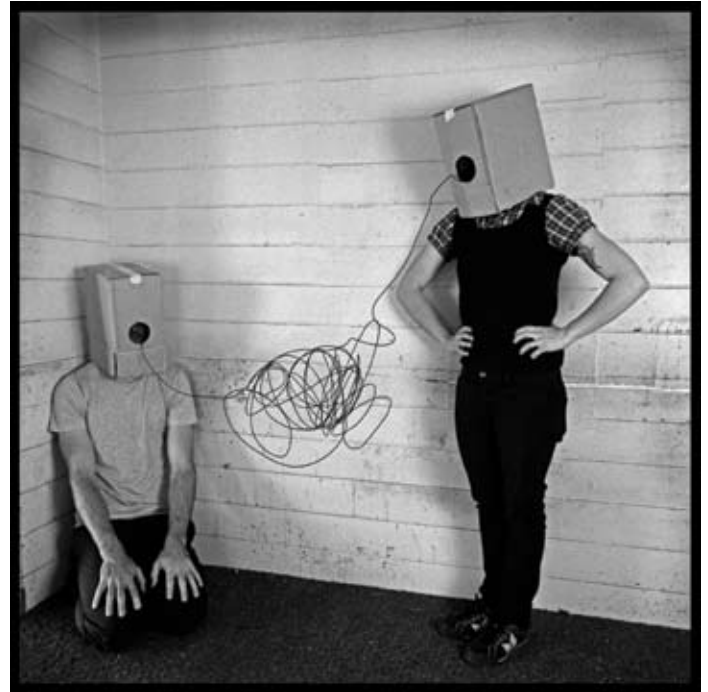




Alannah Gunter *From Afar 2* 2008, Giclee print, courtesy of the artist



Tara Callaghan *Gestural Cluster 13* 2009, inkjet print, courtesy of the artist



Tara Callaghan *Gestural Cluster 14* 2009, inkjet print, courtesy of the artist

degradation of the image and consequent distortion of these portraits also creates a tension between what we recognize as smiles of tourists (some are purposely posing for the camera) and their skull-like appearance - like monsters or aliens in horror and science fiction movies.

Futility is **Liam O'Brien's** exploration into the restrictions of professional expectations and the need for freedom. His staged photographs features an archetypal businessman literally tied to his concrete environment. They reveal this man's extreme efforts to break free, setting up a series of frozen moments alternating between the hope of freedom (the man in mid-air) and failure (the agonizing impact against concrete). This fictional character's struggle, as in Kafka's literary works, is never resolved and poses to us questions about the equilibrium of our daily lives, questioning the value of personal freedom and the commitments created by a society of consumption.

Tara Callaghan's *Gestural Clusters* explores the complexities of personal communication, where faceless people try and fail to interact. Her theatrical stage presents to us individuals striving to relate to each other, both physically and through sculptural manifestations of dialogues. Their facial expressions are hidden behind boxes – metaphors of the mental walls we erect to protect ourselves from the emotions of communicating. The characters make every effort to connect yet they remain isolated even when inhabiting the same space. This performance is a dark and sometimes humorous view of today's



Katie Mitchell *China* 2009, human blood on silk fabric, courtesy of the artists



Audrey Lam *Every man wants to build something* 2008, Still from 4 min video courtesy of the artist

lack of human engagement and our fight to overcome it.

Where Bloodlines End is a disturbing yet fascinating unveiling of mothers who have taken the life of their own children. **Katie Mitchell** has made portraits of these women, using stencils and blood on fabric, questioning society's traditional notions of motherhood. These faces are no different from ours and yet they stain our idea of a mother's unconditional love and devotion for her child. These portraits are beautiful with strong links to the female traditions of textile craft, yet when knowing the source of the images (Mitchell's own blood) and the reason why these women were chosen, they serve as

a harsh reminder that in all of us there is a darker side.

Emily Hornum looks at the feminist ideals of beauty and the feminine in popular culture. She uses life-sized cardboard cut-outs of sexualised women from the world of fashion, advertising and pornography, which are juxtaposed against a familiar domestic setting. These two vastly different worlds of fantasy and reality collide in *Cut-out Beauty*, and our instant recognition of these silhouettes stress the raised expectations placed on women from the multitude of stereotypes that populate commercial culture.

Audrey Lam's stop-animation video work presents us with a disjointed world, where nothing is tangible and everything is in constant reforming and motion. A lone figure moves through this chaotic realm, trying to construct a concrete space. This continuous journey and sparring against the surroundings are at once claustrophobic and stimulating, evoking our fear of losing control and our intention to succeed no matter what the circumstances.

Alix Perry's works are delicate and intimate, exploring the photograph as a vessel for memories. Her images are poetic moments filled with the unease and vulnerability of growing up. She enforces this emotional state by spending hours embroidering and therefore enhancing certain parts of the image – making more prominent the veins on a leg or the pattern of a teacup. Although quiet and subtle, the works in *Notes on Becoming* are infused with an unspoken strength – a hope for what is to become.

These seven exhibitions are a testament to the rich photographic culture of Queensland, and to the dedicated talent that is emerging here to take on the world.

Camilla Birkeland

Deputy Director, Queensland Centre for Photography



Emily Hornum *Unpack My Washer* 2009, Type C print, courtesy of the artist

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Camilla Birkeland

Wed-Sat: 11am-6pm
Sun: 11am-3pm

Opening night: Saturday 5th December, 5-8pm

Exhibition dates: 6 December - 17 January 2010

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Notes on Becoming: Alix Perry

Gestural Clusters: Tara Callaghan

Where Bloodlines End: Katie Mitchell

Cut-out Beauty: Emily Hornum

Every man wants to build something: Audrey Lam



Emily Hornum *Welcome Home* 2009, Type C print, courtesy of the artist

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