Alison Bennett: Shifting Skin
Alison Bennett:
Shifting Skin
It gives me great pleasure to introduce the exhibition Alison Bennett: Shifting Skin. Each year the Deakin University Art Gallery displays an exhibition showcasing the work of staff, students or alumni. In 2012 the Deakin University Art Gallery held a call for expressions of interest from practicing artists who have previously completed or are currently enrolled in postgraduate study at Deakin University. Artists from various disciplinary backgrounds such as painting, printmaking, sculpture, photography, multimedia, film, animation, creative writing and performance were encouraged to submit their work or practice for consideration to exhibit in 2013.

Alison Bennett was chosen as the successful artist from a strong field of applicants. Alison is a current PhD candidate at Deakin University.

The theme of the exhibition followed on from the Gallery’s first postgraduate exhibition, Discovery, in 2011, which considered the relationship between practice and exegesis in recent honours and postgraduate work, thus hoping to provide further insights into practice-led research through understandings of ‘creative practice as the production of knowledge’.

Over the past decade Alison’s work has explored questions of negotiated inhabitation of space, place and embodiment through the medium of photography. Acknowledging that space and surface are indivisible and co-operative, this new body of work focuses more explicitly on a closer examination of surface and a deeper consideration of embodiment via digital encounter. The photographs on display are detailed scans of human skin marked by tattoos and scars, there is also an overlaid augmented reality component which adds an additional element to the works.

The Call for Expression of Interest process began in late 2012 and was very ably managed by Deakin University Museum Studies student Michelle Mountain. Each year the Art Collection and Galleries Unit hosts a student from the Museums Studies program as an intern, to work on a particular project, and I would like to thank Jonathan Sweet from Deakin University for his support of this ongoing internship. I would like to congratulate Michelle Mountain for successfully completing the internship and thank her for her hard work whilst acknowledging her contribution towards this project. I would also like to thank Jason Smith, Director and CEO of Heide Museum of Modern Art for his contribution as the external expert who helped to select the successful exhibiting artist.

Within this catalogue we are pleased to present the catalogue essay by Kate Warren and thank her for the extra insight it gives us into Alison’s work. I would like to also thank Jasmin Tulk for her catalogue design. On behalf of Alison I would like to acknowledge the staff of the Motion Capture Studio who were instrumental in the development of her work for this exhibition.

And finally, I would like to thank Alison for her assistance in progressing the exhibition and related catalogue and offer her my congratulations. Her work is fascinating and the augmented reality adds a dimension to the works that visitors to the Deakin University Art Gallery have not previously experienced.

Leanne Willis
Manager Art Collection and Galleries
Through her most recent series of works, Shifting Skin, Alison Bennett presents a dense unpacking of the photographic image. This is evident in photography’s exposure time, zooming—inscribing photography as a technical possibilities of the medium—framing, focus, and depth. She also introduces a crucial, different ‘surface effects’. Bennett’s Shifting Skin confronts and destabilises these inscriptions. She is reconstituting and unfolding these surfaces into a digital existence, creating virtual entities that rely on and are constituted through difference; or as Deleuze would have it, ‘dematerialised images’. These dematerialised (or perhaps, rematerialised) images are overlaid on top of the physical prints, projected outward for the viewer to observe and navigate around through the screen-based interface. This is the crucial element of the nature of augmented reality, unlike ‘virtual reality’, it is not entirely immersive. It is a superimposition, in which the ‘real’ world remains perceivable and palpably present, but is engaged in a differential relationship with the virtual. Bennett does not replace one surface with another, rather she integrates them into an interconnectivity. This underscores her consideration of the skin as not only an interface for experiencing our physical surface, but also an interface for navigating our vicarious connection to the virtual. The physical prints are extended through, but not limited to, the realm of augmented reality. Rather than embracing a totalising form of the virtual, Bennett holds onto and relies upon, and an extension of personal, subjectivity and individual realities. As Deleuze describes it, it is a virtual realm constituted through the perpetual interplay between difference and repetition, where the latter ‘is a kind of uniqueness, the external horizon of difference and more complicated internal repetitions.’

Kate Warren
June 2013

Friedrich Kittler was an early commentator to identify the technical possibilities of the medium—framing, focus, and depth. She also introduces a crucial, different ‘surface effects’. Bennett’s Shifting Skin confronts and destabilises these inscriptions. She is reconstituting and unfolding these surfaces into a digital existence, creating virtual entities that rely on and are constituted through difference; or as Deleuze would have it, ‘dematerialised images’. These dematerialised (or perhaps, rematerialised) images are overlaid on top of the physical prints, projected outward for the viewer to observe and navigate around through the screen-based interface. This is the crucial element of the nature of augmented reality, unlike ‘virtual reality’, it is not entirely immersive. It is a superimposition, in which the ‘real’ world remains perceivable and palpably present, but is engaged in a differential relationship with the virtual. Bennett does not replace one surface with another, rather she integrates them into an interconnectivity. This underscores her consideration of the skin as not only an interface for experiencing our physical surface, but also an interface for navigating our vicarious connection to the virtual. The physical prints are extended through, but not limited to, the realm of augmented reality. Rather than embracing a totalising form of the virtual, Bennett holds onto and relies upon, and an extension of personal, subjectivity and individual realities. As Deleuze describes it, it is a virtual realm constituted through the perpetual interplay between difference and repetition, where the latter ‘is a kind of uniqueness, the external horizon of difference and more complicated internal repetitions.’

Kate Warren
June 2013
untitled (chest scars) 2013
photograph, 111 x 145 cm

untitled (totem) 2013
photograph, 111 x 145 cm

untitled (Duchamp) 2013
photograph, 111 x 145 cm

untitled (temptation) 2013
photograph, 111 x 145 cm
untitled (velvet) 2013
photograph, 111 x 148 cm

untitled (camera) 2013
photograph, 111 x 132 cm

untitled (mother) 2013
photograph, 174 x 111 cm
untitled (monkey) 2013
photograph, 111 x 145 cm

untitled (ankh) 2012
photograph, 111 x 145 cm

untitled (paper doll) 2013
photograph, 111 x 145 cm

untitled (paper doll) 2013
photograph, 111 x 145 cm
Cherrie and Treadlie magazine. In magazines such as editorial and fashion photography has been published performance and party scene for several years and her scene photographer documenting the Melbourne queer photography at Deakin University. She worked as a

In addition to her visual arts practice, Alison teaches of Geelong. Australia, the Historic Houses Trust of NSW and the City has works in the collections of the National Museum of 'negotiated inhabitation'.

Alison Bennett is a visual artist investigating the theme of ‘negotiated inhabitation’. Bennett holds a BA (visual arts) majoring in photography from the UNSW College of Fine Arts and a research Master of Fine Arts from Monash University. She is currently undertaking a PhD creative practice research project on the topic of the shifting surface in digital photography at Deakin University as a member of the Motion Capture Lab.

Solo exhibitions include ‘Shifting Skin: transforming fabric’, a moving image projection work commissioned by www.whitestreetproject.org with the support of Frankston Arts Centre and Arts Victoria in 2013, ‘Cavity’, also supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria, which toured to a number of regional galleries 2009-2010 and was discussed by Robert Nelson in The Age 22 July 2009; the ‘to occupy’ series galleries 2009-2010 and was discussed by Robert Nelson in The Age 22 July 2009; the ‘to occupy’ series

The augmented reality component may be accessed via a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet via the Aurasma icon. That you will need a Wifi signal to access the content. On your mobile device, go to http://auras.ma/Pqi06 and download the app. Alternatively, you can download Aurasma from itunes or googleplay.

Within the app interface, touch the Aurasma A icon to open the menu. Navigate to the search function (the magnifying glass icon) and point your camera at the trigger image. You will see a swirling icon as the app downloads the 3D content. Return to the viewing window (the four corner brackets icon) and point your camera at the trigger image. You will see a swirling icon as the app downloads the 3D content. You can now look around the 3D content by moving the screen across the surface of the 3d virtual object projecting out of the physical print. You will need to keep the trigger image within the view of the camera to hold onto the content.

Alison Bennett: Biography

Alison Bennett is a visual artist investigating the theme of ‘negotiated inhabitation’. Bennett holds a BA (visual arts) majoring in photography from the UNSW College of Fine Arts and a research Master of Fine Arts from Monash University. She is currently undertaking a PhD creative practice research project on the topic of the shifting surface in digital photography at Deakin University as a member of the Motion Capture Lab.

Solo exhibitions include ‘Shifting Skin: transforming fabric’, a moving image projection work commissioned by www.whitestreetproject.org with the support of Frankston Arts Centre and Arts Victoria in 2013, ‘Cavity’, also supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria, which toured to a number of regional galleries 2009-2010 and was discussed by Robert Nelson in The Age 22 July 2009; the ‘to occupy’ series

The augmented reality component may be accessed via a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet via the Aurasma icon. That you will need a Wifi signal to access the content. On your mobile device, go to http://auras.ma/Pqi06 and download the app. Alternatively, you can download Aurasma from itunes or googleplay.

Within the app interface, touch the Aurasma A icon to open the menu. Navigate to the search function (the magnifying glass icon) and point your camera at the trigger image. You will see a swirling icon as the app downloads the 3D content. Return to the viewing window (the four corner brackets icon) and point your camera at the trigger image. You will see a swirling icon as the app downloads the 3D content. You can now look around the 3D content by moving the screen across the surface of the 3d virtual object projecting out of the physical print. You will need to keep the trigger image within the view of the camera to hold onto the content.

Augmenting Reality

The Shifting Skin work includes an augmented reality component that overlaps the physical prints. The augmented reality component may be accessed via a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet via the Aurasma icon. That you will need a Wifi signal to access the content. On your mobile device, go to http://auras.ma/Pqi06 and download the app. Alternatively, you can download Aurasma from itunes or googleplay.

Within the app interface, touch the Aurasma A icon to open the menu. Navigate to the search function (the magnifying glass icon) and search for the ‘Shifting Skin’ channel. If you ‘follow’ my channel, your device will be opened the menu. Navigate to the search function (the magnifying glass icon) and search for the ‘Shifting Skin’ channel. If you ‘follow’ my channel, your device will be receptive to my content.

Return to the viewing window (the four corner brackets icon) and point your camera at the trigger image. You will see a swirling icon as the app downloads the 3D content. You can now look around the 3D content by moving the screen across the surface of the 3d virtual object projecting out of the physical print. You will need to keep the trigger image within the view of the camera to hold onto the content.

All works pictured are in the collection of the artist.