INTERFACES

ART AND TECHNOLOGY

An Exhibition from the Griffith University Art Collection
popular culture (either in the form of “high” or “fine” art, or the radical arm of the avant-garde). Today however many artists actively seek opportunities to participate in popular culture and certainly to make open references to it in their work, in order to reach broader audiences, comment upon contemporary life, and extend and challenge their own practice.

Peter Callas’ videos are based on “found” images from popular culture and history which he “redraws” using computer software, examining these images as cultural artefacts and transforming them into cultural emblems or icons. Night’s high noon: an anti-terrain was produced in 1988, and is the artist’s personal response to Australia’s bicentennial. The way the images float, flash, change, return and repeat upon the screen is dreamlike, as if flowing from a collective Australian consciousness or imagination. The references to different cultures (Aboriginal, American, Asian, European) show how all of these cultures have contributed to the place we call Australia. Like a dream, Night’s high noon represents collective fears (such as the fear of nuclear threat), or a violent past which we’d perhaps rather forget (such as colonial conquest), as well as romantic myths (Ned Kelly, Van Gogh).

Neo geo: an American purchase was produced in 1989 whilst the artist was resident in New York. In the same way that Night’s high noon maps the Australian imagination, Neo geo maps the collective American mind. Neo geo is a very disturbing work which speaks of the deeply imbedded languages, images, and practices of violence and conflict which exist in contemporary America and reach back to its frontier origins. The floating symbols refer primarily to the US military (missiles, warheads, Uncle Sam), the Puritan-Christian tradition (the martyr image reproduced in the catalogue, the crucified Santa Claus), and the economy (the suited Asian and American businessmen, the hour glass of money).

VNS MATRIX is a collective of four women artists (Virginia Barratt, Francesca da Rimini, Julianne Pierce, and Josephine Starrs) who explore a feminist-based critique of new technologies. The artwork DNA sluts is from a prototype for a computer game entitled All New Gen. It takes the concept of the “Gameboy” computer games as its basic architecture and site for critique. Gen is a “Gamegirl” whose enemy is “Big Daddy Mainframe” the essence of a futuristic omnipotent military industrial complex. The DNA Sluts are her fellow warriors. This humorous and confrontational work aims to startle the viewer into questioning values which lie behind popular computer games and also behind persisting ideas of “fine” art.
Adam Walter. The ghost in the machine 1988
computer-generated image, thermal transfer print.

"My exhortation to artists is not to wait for
someone else, someone more technical, to
create a system which you can control, but
rather to wade into whatever is available to
you with your boots on."

Adam Walter
(Artlink, vol 7 nos 2 & 3, 1987, p. 37)
LIST OF WORKS

Gordon BENNETT
Australian Aborigines (notes on perception no. 4) 1989
acrylic on paper
67.0 x 51.5

Mervyn BISHOP
Warning sign, 30km from Maningrida N.T., 1974 1974
black and white photograph
30.4 x 40.3

Peter CALLAS
Neo geo: an American purchase 1989
VHS colour video
9:17

Peter CALLAS
Night's high noon: an anti-terrain 1988
VHS colour video
7:26

Linda DEMENT
Arm and cut mouth (cut wet like at the touch of a lover) 1993
type C colour photograph, computer-manipulated image
45.0 x 58.7

Lyn FINCH
(Commissioned by the Australian Telecommunications Employees Association)
Beam me up Scotty! There's no future here 1986
colour offset lithograph poster
81.8 x 60.0

Elizabeth GOWER
Untitled from Precious life series 1992
laser print
18.5 x 25.0

Lindy LEE
Untitled (triptych) 1987
photocopy on paper, acrylic paint
28.3 x 21.3 (each)

Wendy MILLS
View of Divine union: a temporary affair 1983
cibachrome colour photograph
23.4 x 34.9

Wendy MILLS
View of Divine union: a temporary affair 1983
cibachrome colour photograph
23.3 x 34.5

Tracey MOFFATT
(commissioned by the Women's Advisory Council to the Premier, Western Australia)
Moodalji yorgas (Strong women) 1989
VHS colour video
22:00

Stieg PERSSON
#89009* 1989
collaged photograph and acrylic paint on paper
74.0 x 55.0

STELARC
cibachrome colour photograph
59.0 x 86.0

Hiram TO
Untitled from The printing room series 1989
photocopy with wax and sepia toner
29.6 x 21.0

Hiram TO
Untitled from The printing room series 1989
photocopy with wax and red toner
29.6 x 21.0

VNS MATRIX
(Virginia BARRATT, Francesca da RIMINI, Julianne PIERCE, Josephine STARRS)
DNA slits* 1992
cibachrome colour photograph
28.7 x 36.0

Ruth WALLER
Deep time and a brand new kitchen with two white jugs 1994
colour photocopy, wax crayon, wax pencil
60.0 x 42.0

Adam WOLTER
Simulated but empty 1989
colour laser copy of computer-generated ink jet print
29.3 x 38.8

Adam WOLTER
The ghost in the machine 1988
computer-generated image, thermal transfer print
99.6 x 95.0

All works are held in the Griffith University Art Collection. Measurements show image size in cms, height x width, or, for video, running time, minutes: seconds.

* Acquired with the assistance of the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.