

PERSONAL BEST

November 8 – December 15 2018

110%, Amber Boardman, Will French, Kate Mitchell, Sara Morawetz, JD Reforma, and Min Wong

Curated by Tesha Malott, Rebekah Raymond and Helen Waller

Public Programs

The Failure Debate: November 21, 2018 6pm

Talkin' About Talkin' About Art : November 28, 2018 6pm

Art Crit, Personal Best: December 15, 2018 1pm

Rationale:

Originally, a personal best was a sporting term, describing the greatest achievement one had ever had. Now it could be argued that achieving one's personal best is an underlying motivation for every action we take. This exhibition asks the question—what is it about the human condition that makes us push ourselves to be faster, higher and stronger and how does 'wellness' fit into this dialogue? While the pressure to be successful in the era of Capitalism isn't new, the exhibition looks at how we view achievement today, when now more than ever the the cult of the winner is revered.

Personal Best has been curated by the Verge team and features artists 110%, Amber Boardman, JD Reforma, Kate Mitchell, Min Wong, Sara Morawetz and Will French who will present works illustrating different perspectives on success, failure and the absurdity of seeking impossible perfection.

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List of works:

Windows (right to left)

Amber Boardman

Glamour Machine, 2018

Oil on canvas

153 x 122cm

Kate Mitchell (left to right)

Future Archeological Digs ((people watching people performing) , 2018

200mm x 254mm

Digital Print on watercolour paper

Edition of 5 + 2AP

Future Archeological Digs (a visual therapy) , 2018

200mm x 254mm

Digital Print on watercolour paper

Edition of 5 + 2AP

The Flowers Thought The Streakers Were Funny

Digital print on watercolour paper

200mm x 254mm

Edition of 5 + 2 AP's

The Flowers Formed A Bouquet For The Effort (streaker I)

Digital print on watercolour paper

200mm x 254mm

Edition of 5 + 2 AP's

The Flowers Formed A Bouquet For The Effort (streaker II)

Digital print on watercolour paper

200mm x 254mm

Edition of 5 + 2 AP's

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Gallery (clockwise from left)

JD Reforma

Sense and sentiments, 2018

Rubbings and inkjet print on the Manila Hotel Stationery

Amber Boardman

The Joy of not Giving a Fuck, 2018

Oil on canvas

410 x 510mm

Min Wong (left to right)

Relax and release, 2018

steel, leather, press stud, paint, brass,

1300 x 600 x 400mm

Nirvana, 2018

printed banner, eyelets, steel rod, chain,

5m x 2.3m

Crawling is acceptable

Falling is acceptable

Puking is acceptable

Blood is acceptable

Paint is acceptable

QUITTING IS NOT, 2018

printed material, steel, rubber, brass, chain,

1m x 450 mm x 450mm

Own it , 2018

bronze, found object,

dimensions variable

Crawling is acceptable

Falling is acceptable

Puking is acceptable

Blood is acceptable

Paint is acceptable II

QUITTING IS NOT, 2018

material, steel, rubber, brass, chain,

1.2 metre x 450 mm x 450mm

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Sara Morawetz

ALL MY FAILURES , 2017

[part of series All My... (2017-ongoing)]

Runway Australian Experimental Art Magazine commission

Artist Book

Kate Mitchell (left to right)

Future Archeological Digs (seduction perfected from hours of bedroom mirror practice), 2018

297mm x 420mm

Digital Print on watercolour paper

Edition of 5 + 2AP

Future Archeological Digs (expectation vs differing platforms of reality), 2018

297mm x 420mm

Digital Print on watercolour paper

Edition of 5 + 2AP

Future Archeological Digs (drinking fatblaster cocktails on holidays then documenting and sharing it), 2018

297mm x 420mm

Digital Print on watercolour paper

Edition of 5 + 2AP

Future Archeological Digs (a multitasker getting dinner ready & taking the power back), 2018

297mm x 420mm

Digital Print on watercolour paper

Edition of 5 + 2AP

Amber Boardman

The Shapes of First Class, 2018

Oil on Polyester

183 x 183cm

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110%

Three Flowing Futures, 2018
single-channel video (loop)
00:16:22

Will French (left to right)

Little Champion, 2018
Found medallion
Pewter

フレンチ (FURENCHI)

Performance remnants (timesheet),
Etching, bike grease & dirt on paper
From 'The Fastest Artist is the Slowest Rider', 2011
Performed at Tachikawa Velodrome, Tokyo, July 2010.

The Fastest Artist is the Slowest Rider, 2010
at Tachikawa Velodrome, Tokyo
Documentation of an action
&
Slow Ride (Take it easy) (Reenactment of the fastest artist's intent), 2018
Documentation of an action – Crap Bike (National Tourist aka Champ)
Tom Ashby Cycling Pavilion Kyenton Victoria

Static Dynamic, 2015
Cast Bronze flag, timber hilt, white paint.

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Artist statements and acknowledgements:

110%

Three Flowing Futures presents documentation of a performance filmed at Willoughby Leisure Centre as part of 110%'s A Summit Wouldn't Do Without You series - in which the trio imagine their ascent to the top of a Swiss mountain and envision ways of conjuring that ascent into reality.

Using spoken word text, motivational soundscapes and synchronised acts of immersion that embrace the rejuvenating powers of water, the performance considers - Where do we go from here? In this process the audience is invited to reflect with us on values of endurance, hope and togetherness in the face of failure, rejection and long-distance separation.

110% would like to acknowledge:

Videography: Dara Gill

Music: iamamiwhoami - Melter

Max Corbacho - Deep Blue Home

Becky Sui Zhen with James Grant and Alec Marshall - Holiday Feelings

Wanderwelle - Shimmering Moonlight

A.r.T Wilson - Rebecca's Theme (Water)

Thanks to Amy Claire Mills

Special thanks to Cassandra Hard-Lawrie and Willoughby City Council

Amber Boardman

For Personal Best, Amber Boardman has painted three works that reflect the endless desire to improve the body as promoted by Internet and social media culture through makeup, hair dye and spray tans —the transformative 'paint' women use in everyday life. These consequences of this desire for self-improvement—bodily alteration and transformations of the self—may be interpreted as creating a tragicomic effect that unfolds through the devices of narrative and character based on the social media feed.

Boardman's paintings explore the desire to both display a curated persona online through the appropriation of models from Internet culture, and the propulsion to constantly improve oneself as trends and fads endlessly change. The flip side of this aspirational selfhood is the creation of feelings of inadequacy or failure arising from the process of identifying with idealised others. The ideology of a striving, perfected self in search of the 'The American Dream'.

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Will French

Slow Ride (Take it Easy) 2018

&

The Fastest Artist is the Slowest Rider 2010

The symbolism and meanings of circles are many, varied and widely understood.

Circles are present in everything from minuscule cellular structure to monstrous orbiting planets.

Life is made up cycles, laps and loops. They are repeated episodically with the rotations of the moon and the sun .

Practically every cell in the human body regenerates within a seven to ten year cycle.

This work Slow Ride (Take It Easy) examines everyday cycles with the rather crude (albeit well-suited) metaphor of the velodrome.

A velodrome is little more than a loop of track to traverse endlessly or as fast as you can on a bicycle. Lap after lap, you can record distance travelled or speed, in an exercise most commonly associated with cycling as a competitive sport.

The velodrome structure comprises a loop with banked corners, the camber intended to help combat the force of the turn. In actual fact, it ebbs and flows like the highs and lows of life, all dependant on the approach and the attitude you take.

Slow Ride (Take It Easy) revisits an earlier work by Will French from 2010, 'The Fasted Artist is the Slowest Rider' created at Tachikawa velodrome whilst on residency in Tokyo.

The work, ripe with potential and ambition, was reduced to a timesheet in the final presentation. It was exhibited as an intaglio print in bike grease from the chain of the bike. It revealed (although somewhat indecipherably) that French had come last by a tiny margin in every lap. Photo documentation of the performance has never been shown to date.

The Tokyo performance came at a time when French was on the road for several years, embarking on a series of residencies, scholarships and mentorships. The thrust and flurry of emerging as an artist propelling me from opportunity to opportunity.

The work was never completely resolved, and French decided to re-perform its intention at a very different location recently in Kyneton, Victoria.

In repeating the action, the meaning of the work revealed itself as changes in the number of laps (of the sun) in the intervening period.

Reflecting on his shift in perspectives as a mid-career artist, now in his late thirties, French find himself more sated and mellowed. Consequently, the race was not against time or the track, it is a race against

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himself. Not to achieve speed, but endurance – something the younger version of French is yet to develop an awareness of, and the older version of French has started to pace himself for.

There are many uncanny similarities between the first documentation and the latest iteration of the work. The most obvious is the performer, although there are subtle through-threads in the surrounds. What is illusive is what is different, although it clear there are profound differences, it is hard to know exactly what. These differences, changes could be argued to be the truly revealing aspect of the work.

The ambition of the original action exchanged for curiosity, the struggle supplanted by acceptance, competitive swapped for casual, the exertion now exhaustion.

In many ways, this is true of how French has changed his approach to engaging with his surrounds, echoing the sentiments of John Lennon's 'Watching the Wheels', where he defends his retreat from public life to domesticity, content: "sitting watching the wheels go round and round". Forward motion can't be stopped, yet doesn't need to be railed against all the time. It can be nice to see where the tide takes you, content to go with the flow.

Sara Morawetz

ALL MY FAILURES, 2017

[part of series All My... (2017-ongoing)]

Artist Book

ALL MY FAILURES is the first volume in a series of artists books cataloguing Sara's flaws, failings and insecurities – one month at a time. Over months (and years) these books will become a 'bookshelf self-portrait' conveying her life and nature in itemised actions.

This work was produced as part of the Runway Australian Experimental Art Magazine – Issue 34 edited by Luke Letourneau, Sarinah Masukor and Talia Smith

JD Reforma

Sense and sentimos

JD Reforma's Sense and sentimos is an installation of rubbings and digital collages made with material collected from a recent holiday to the Philippines, the artist's ancestral homeland. While there he stayed at The Manila Hotel, from which he sourced the stationery on which these works are presented; in addition, rubbings were taken from furniture bearing the hotel's name, carved from Philippine mahogany.

The Manila Hotel is an historically significant site, and has played an important role in the Philippines' colonial and post-colonial relationship to the United States of America. It was designed by famed American architect Daniel Hudson Burnham and built on 35,000 square metres of land reclaimed from

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Manila Bay; opened on American Independence Day, 4 July 1909; was occupied in World War II by Japanese troops during the Battle for the Liberation of Manila; and served as the official residence of General Douglas MacArthur, Military Advisor of the Philippine Commonwealth, and widely regarded as a national hero, from 1935–41.

As well as acknowledging its relationship to the US, Sense and sentimos considers two political heroes of the Philippines who famously resisted Spanish colonisation and occupation. Lapu-Lapu, the chieftain of Mactan whose defeat of Ferdinand Magellan at the Battle of Mactan in 1521 delayed Spanish colonisation of the Philippines by 40 years; and Melchora Aquino, who, at the age of 84, became the 'Mother of the Revolution' for her services during the Philippine Revolution of 1896–98. They are represented and remembered here by collages of the 1 and 5 sentimo coins of Philippine peso currency that, until 1995, bore their likenesses.

Min Wong

I'm suffering from realness

Wong's installation examines the search and universal desire for spiritual life and a belief in the possibility of human transformation. Her art practice co-ops and borrows from her practice of Bikram yoga. Bikram yoga is a dialogue-based practice where the same 26 postures are repeated every class. They describe this as a '90 minute eye open meditation', promoting stillness of the mind and health of the body. These sculptures are hybridised props appropriated from the yoga and self care industry, adopting accouterments of 1970s spiritual countercultures and the New Age to visualise this search for nirvana.

By investigating alternative spiritual models and motivations, Wong searches for a path forward, examining the past in order to reimagine our world. Seen through an optimistic lens, her installations demonstrate a sensitivity towards the collective and the individuals plight, at a time when culture in the West is experiencing a moment of maximum polarisation.

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