

Confusion Spell

16 February - 14 April

sweet pea at Lawson Flats

A group show featuring

Bruno Booth, Iain Dean, Brian Fuata, Maggie Lee and Jess Tan

Can I ask you something?

A ruminant is a hoofed herbivore grazing mammal which acquires nutrients from plant-based food by fermenting it in a specialised stomach before digestion. Rumination is the act of chewing cud.

As a language model, I don't have personal beliefs or opinions. However, it's not uncommon for people to feel confused at times. Life can be complex and there are many things that we may not fully understand.

Who is it?

Who is it?

What is it?

Why, tho?

... *"In a House Besieged"* by *Lydia Davis* is a short story that can be interpreted as a meditation on confusion, uncertainty, and the unknown. The narrator of the story describes a man and a woman trapped in a house that is being besieged by an unknown force. They are struggling to make sense of their experiences and to find a way out of the situation. The story can be seen as an allegory for the internal struggles that we all face, and the ways in which we can become trapped by the projection of our own thoughts and fears.

Maggie Lee's video *'Hand Dryer'* informs us at its start that it was filmed at *Loews Theatre Union Square* in 2012, while the artist had seen or was seeing *Men in Black 3*. In the subsequent 20 odd seconds we see a hand being blasted by a hand dryer, the force of the air flattens the skin. There are notes sprawled on the back of the hand. Words like 'Panic' and 'Lost'. The sound is too loud. The screaming of the hand dryer melts into techno for a few seconds before the film ends abruptly. *'Maggie Lee'* it says. And then it repeats over again.

Jess Tan collects from the residual of what she has eaten, broken, found and previously made, as well as what the things around her have made in the process of being. She likens her studio activities to an endless circulation of slow digestion, regurgitation, indigestion and re-digestion as she navigates various stages of learning and unlearning.

Her practice follows an inquiry into how materials morph through ongoing reconfiguration and can generate unfamiliar ways of knowing and understanding through their affective capacities. This follows a series of process-led transitions that lead to outcomes which embrace failure, adaptation and uncertainty as matter transforms into altered states, adopting an internal logic as they accumulate. By engaging with matter, she seeks to rethink human agency as a relation which recognises speaking in dialogue with nonhuman worlds.

Rumination is a type of deep, considered and repetitive thought. It is a form of preservative cognition that focuses on negative content, generally past and present, and can result in emotional distress.

Who is it?

How can it be?

How will I know?

Who is it?

Who is it?

Short-term memory, also known as working memory, is a temporary form of memory that can store small amounts of information for a short period of time. The average duration of short-term memory is estimated to be between 15 to 30 seconds, although it can be longer or shorter depending on several factors such as the type of information being stored and the individual's attention and rehearsal of the information.

Iain Dean applies a distinct vocabulary of colour, shape, text and symbol to paintings, prints and sculptures. These works share a cartoon-bright palette and seemingly casual and intuitive approach to form and mark-making, offset by self-deprecating pathos and deadpan references to modernist formalism. *Iain* aims to create 'non-hierarchical, non-judgemental images' that 'free-associate' between the culturally familiar and privately meaningful, operating simultaneously as a joke and an homage.

How do I start?
When do I finish?
Is it good enough?
Is it bad enough?
Is it too silly?
Is it too serious?

The painting 'This is me, this is me giving up, this is me done' features a cartoon man who has fallen over and doesn't appear to be able to get up.

Brian Fuata is an artist who performs structured improvisations for live audiences. These performances are often timed and employ reoccurring motifs such as inhabiting the figure of the ghost and transforming into a dog. *Brian's* speaking in these performances moves between monologue and conversation, sense and nonsense.

What is it?

What is it?

In the *"Men in Black"* franchise, the device used to erase memories is called the *Neuralyzer*. It's a handheld device that emits a bright flash of light and is used to erase the memories of individuals who have witnessed events or information related to the existence of aliens on *Earth*. *The Neuralyzer* is a key tool used by the *Men in Black* to maintain secrecy and protect the public from knowledge of the extraterrestrial presence on *Earth*...

How can it be?

Who is it?

Cause its all in my head
I think about it over and over again
I replay it over and over again
And I can't take it I can't shake it

'In a House Beseiged (Preposition Tweaked)' was produced during the pandemic and constitutes *Brian's* first film work. Commissioned for an online exhibiton during a time of lock down, *Brian* improvises to the camera in the building of the *Art Gallery of NSW*, then closed to the public. For this performance he carried in his mind the short story *'Of a House Beseiged'* by *Lydia Davis*, which in only seven sentences describes the story of a man and a women hiding in their home, speculating on the loud noise outside that has frightened them.

Bruno Booth's drawings are the recordings of uninvited conversations and interactions that happen in public places. Each drawing records a moment an unknown person has approached *Bruno* to talk to him about disability. Although sometimes well intentioned these 'conversations' are often one-sided and patronising. In his drawings *Bruno* illustrates the topics of these conversations, along with other moments and objects from his day.

Stemming from *Bruno's* long held interest in memory and nostalgia, these drawings have been paired with photos from the artist's own archive and presented in a 1990s style retail poster rack (courtesy of *Joynt Venture Perth*).

... some memories are depicted as being more resistant to being erased than others. For example, memories that are deeply emotional or traumatic, or memories that have been repeated and reinforced over time, are often portrayed as being more difficult to erase. Additionally, memories that are related to a person's core identity or sense of self are also depicted as being more resistant to being wiped.

How can it be?

How can it be?

I apologize for any confusion, as a language model, my knowledge is based on the text that has been input into me, and my knowledge cut-off is 2021, so I might not be aware of certain artists or works that were created after that date or that have not been widely covered in the media or literature that I have been trained on.



SWEET PEA

sweet pea is a gallery located at *58 Pier Street* in *Boorloo* on *Noongar Boodjar* (*Perth, Western Australia*). *sweet pea* exhibits significant solo exhibitions from and represents *Western Australian* artists. Our aim is to build meaningful and sustainable, long-term artistic careers and to play our part in building a collegial, fair and accessible local arts community.

For all inquires
andrew@sweetpea.gallery

@sweet.pea.arts
www.sweetpea.gallery

58 Pier Street,
Boorloo (Perth), 6000

Confusion Spell is the first of four group exhibitions to take place at *sweet pea's* sibling space at *Lawson Flats* over 2023. Each exhibition will explore ways to imbue the ordinary with meaning and power.

In role playing and video games, confusion spells are a type of magical attack which disorients an adversary. As well as relating to magic, a 'spell' can also indicate a fleeting emotional or physical state (for example a 'spell of sickness'). *Confusion Spell* reframes confusion as a positive opportunity for introspection, expression and creative departure.

sweet pea acknowledges that this exhibition takes place on unceded *Whadjuk Noongar boodjar*. We pay our respects to elders past and present. This exhibition has been made possible with support from the *West Australian* government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. *sweet pea* would also like to extend a special thanks to *Lawson Flats* for their generous support.