

Highly manicured, parks are underpinned by ideals of social and moral improvement. Paths and boundaries regulate the movement of bodies and “domesticated” vistas are at odds with the wild grasses, climbing vines, and existing natural landscapes. In public parks, landscaping, architecture and modes of social control combine to create heterotopias of colonisation.

Simultaneously, these idealised public spaces provide sites in which alternative narratives can be constructed. *A park is not a forest* brings together artists with intersectional identities. Their work draws on their own cultural heritage and the contemporary realities of living in the diaspora. Using memory, archives, or digital media, these artists critically engage with performed notions of identity and inherited colonial histories.

James Nguyen is an artist engaged in decolonial practice and collective risk. This is often explored in the ways that Vietnamese migrants and others use poetry in performance, cinema, sculpture, and the documentary medium. Together with friends, colleagues, and family, James creates conversations to trouble settler aesthetics, translation, the diasporic absurd, and of course, gambling. Nguyen has a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honors) from The National Art School, a Master of Fine Art at the Sydney College of Arts The University of Sydney, and a PhD (Deans Award) from the University of NSW.

Tiyan Baker's *Head Party* reinterprets customs related to gawai ba'ak (which translates to head party in English), a welcoming ceremony that follows a headhunt. Headhunting is a traditional practice among Bidayūh and other Indigenous peoples in Borneo, outlawed by the British in the 19th century. Following the headhunt, a ceremony was held to invite the slain enemy into a long-lasting friendship and to appease the spirits of the dead so that they would

safeguard the village longhouse.

Drawing from her family's history as durian farmers, Baker replaces skulls with preserved durian and uses community archives, oral histories, and online resources to fill the gaps found in official archives. Creating part of the work in collaboration with her mother, she reimagines gawai ba'ak in a contemporary context to undo Western notions of death, enmity, friendship and warfare.

sione_has_doubts shares its title with the artist's Instagram account.

The collection of images and videos expose Sione Tuivailala Monū's own fantasies, feelings and connection to people and place. Monū recreates movie moments through the use of framing, continuity editing, soundtrack, costume and performance.

Tiyan Baker is a Malaysian Bidayūh/Anglo-Australian artist who makes video and installation art. Baker examines sites of contemporary cultural crises, and uses field research, documentary techniques and digital processes to question established discourses and reveal bias, frailty and failure. Baker's practice also engages with her Bidayūh heritage, piecing together language, landscape and story to celebrate Bidayūh knowledge and explore its radical potential to upend contemporary Western ideologies. Born and raised on the Larrakia lands known as Darwin, Baker currently lives and works on the Awabakal and Worimi lands known as Newcastle.

Originally filmed and edited on an iPad and disseminated via Instagram, the artist's collection of videos are grouped into sections and screened as a four-channel work. When watching these snippets there is a feeling they are mimicking a recently viewed film, soap opera or documentary. Music propels the building tension of each vignette, and is suddenly broken when Monū re-performs a climactic moment. Across the screens, we encounter Sione watching Sione, Sione alone and Sione's intimate encounters with loved ones. The reinterpretation of these moments and social performances are contingent on the brown bodies present in the work.

Claudia Nicholson's single-channel video

An old spelling of my name weaves slow fades and jarring sonic changes conveying both the unreliability and importance of memory in the construction of identity.

Employing the jerky aesthetics found in cinéma vérité, Nicholson gathers memories from home videos recorded in Australia and Colombia to take us on a journey through time and space from a diasporic positionality. Anchored by Chicanx academic Cherríe Moraga's theories on the role of memory in the formation of diaspora identities, the work's title also inverts Audre Lorde's biomythography titled *Zami: A new spelling of my name* (1982).

Based in Western Sydney, Marikit Santiago's multidisciplinary practice investigates personal conflicts of cultural plurality at the conjunction of Filipino ethnicity and Australian nationality. Santiago interweaves references, imagery, and symbolism from her Australian-Filipino ancestry, Catholicism, and the Western Art canon. Within these pluralities, she interrogates their existing contradictory sensations, values, and ideas.

In 2020, Santiago won the prestigious Sir John Sulman Prize for her work *The Divine*, which examines the concepts and principles surrounding faith, creation stories, motherhood, cultural heritage and gender roles. Santiago was also a two-time finalist for the Archibald Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, a 2019 Sulman Prize finalist, and was shortlisted for Create NSW's 2018 Visual Arts Emerging Fellowship. Santiago received the Sam Whiteley Commendation Award at the 2018 Churchie Emerging Art Prize at the Institute of Modern Art.

In this wordplay, Nicholson alludes to her own name change from her Colombian name to Claudia Nicholson.

The Nguyễn Collection of Anglo-Australia Arts seeks to invert the power dynamics of colonial collecting and collections. Artist James Nguyen asks: How do diasporic communities disrupt the ownership and stewardship of nationalistic and oftentimes problematic materials in their places of resettlement? This presentation encourages audiences to play and gain unprecedented access to a selection of loaded museum quality materials. The collection, when opened up, is an opportunity to encourage reinvention and iterative narration of Anglo culture and histories and in turn re-explore national narratives of identity.

Marikit Santiago presents a portrait of the infamous First Lady Imelda Marcos, a well-known collector of footwear and conjugal dictator of the Philippines. With

oil and acrylic painting on found cardboard, Santiago depicts Marcos, fierce and powerful, foregrounded by sparring zebras, which featured in the exotic menagerie of her private

zoo. During her reign, Marcos created The Calauit Safari Park in 1976 under the ruse of conservation of endangered animals in response to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This enterprise and status symbol displaced an entire Indigenous village yet created a haven for the endangered Grevy's zebra which thrived due to the lack of natural predators. An estimated 254 indigenous families were removed from their ancestral lands and relocated to the neighbouring Halsey Island, a former leper colony. Halsey Island was barren, unable to sustain agriculture and the Indigenous people suffered. Like much of Santiago's work, the painting echoes conflicting sensations of acceptance and rejection.

From the perspective of her Indigenous Fijian and Anglo-Australian heritage, Salote Tawale explores the identity of the individual within collective systems. Examining through self-performance, Tawale draws on personal experiences of race, class, ethnicity and gender formed by growing up in suburban Australia.

Tawale completed an undergraduate degree in Media Arts and Masters of Art at RMIT University, Melbourne and a Masters of Fine art and Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney. She is currently Associate Lecturer of Screen Arts at Sydney College of the Arts, The University of Sydney.

a park is not a forest

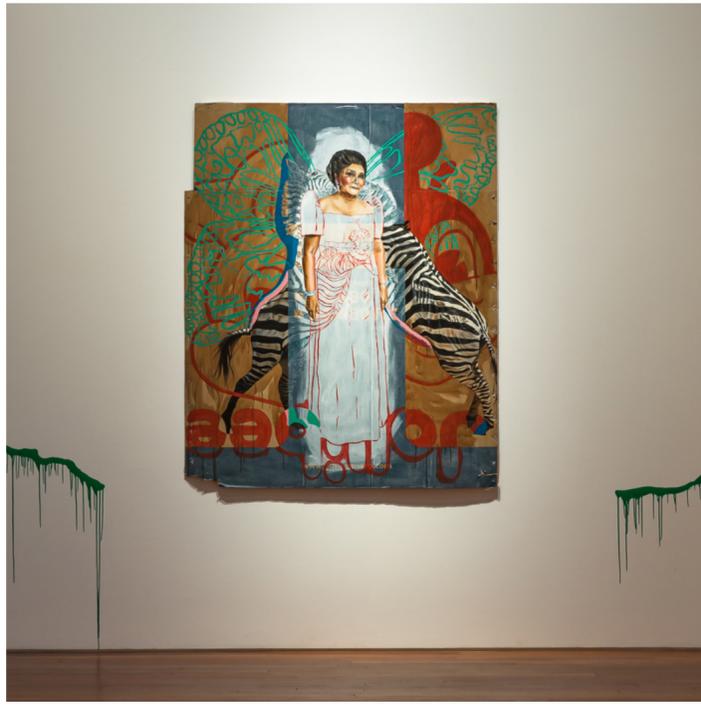
Claudia Nicholson's practice examines psychic (relating to the soul or mind) and physical connections to place through multidisciplinary forms of art making including, painting, installation, performance, and video. The conceptual enquiries in her work are driven by her position as a Colombian-born artist living in Australia. Her practice addresses the diasporic position, specifically in the Asia Pacific region, and in addition, connects with the varied experiences of the Australian Latinx community. Recently her research and art making methodology focuses on memory, collective and embodied, and memorials. Nicholson considers how the way we remember can either dismantle or re-enforce colonial power structures.

In *With Love, from here*, I have created a YouTube-style cooking show with friends. Cooking a traditional Fijian dish on a campfire, using replacement ingredients that speak to the colonial project and its impact on Indigenous life. Filmed in the Australian bushland on the lands of the Durrawal people, this video installation acts as a self-portrait and relates to my ongoing exploration of cultural identity, particularly the diaspora experience and the realities of being from a mixed heritage. Housed in a corrugated iron structure and accompanied by cutout paintings and besser blocks, each element of the work explores the coalescence of her Fijian heritage with everyday life in contemporary Australia.

Through *a park is not a forest* there is a sense of shifting landscapes over time —following desire lines these artists sit in the past, present and future.

— Salote Tawale

Sione Tuivailala Monū is an artist of the Tongan diaspora. They live between Canberra, Australia and Auckland, New Zealand and work across the mediums of photography, moving-image, fashion and adornment, performance and drawing. Monū's short films are an extension of their Instagram-based video practice and present personal encounters with everyday dilemmas and social realities to explore identity, family and the Pasifika queer experience in the diaspora. Featuring themselves and their surroundings and often cast with their friends and family, Monū's films slide between performative and documentary modes to recall a variety of genres, from home movies and video diaries to satires and soaps.



Marikit Santiago, *Ms Malacñang Series (Imelda)*, 2020. Acrylic, oil, and pyrography on found cardboard. Courtesy the artist and The Something Machine, Bellport NY.



Sione Tuivailala Monū, *sione_has_doubts*, 2022. Four-Channel HD Video. Courtesy the artist.



Claudia Nicholson, *An Old Spelling of My Name*, 2020. Single Channel HD Video (12:32). Sound by James Brown. This artwork was made with the support of Urban Theatre Projects. Courtesy the artist.



James Nguyễn, *The Nguyễn Collection of Anglo-Australian Arts*, 2022. Mixed media. All objects acquired at auction by The Nguyễn Collection of Anglo-Australian Arts. Courtesy the artist.



Salote Tawale, *With love, from here*, 2021. Mixed media, Single Channel HD Video (3:00). Courtesy the artist.



Tiyan Baker, *Head Party*, 2022. Mixed media. Courtesy the artist.



Claudia Nicholson, *An Old Spelling of My Name*, 2020. Single Channel HD Video (12:32). Sound by James Brown. This artwork was made with the support of Urban Theatre Projects. Courtesy the artist.



Tiyan Baker, *Head Party*, 2022. Mixed media. Courtesy the artist.



Sione Tuivailala Monū, *sione_has_doubts*, 2022. Four-Channel HD Video. Courtesy the artist.