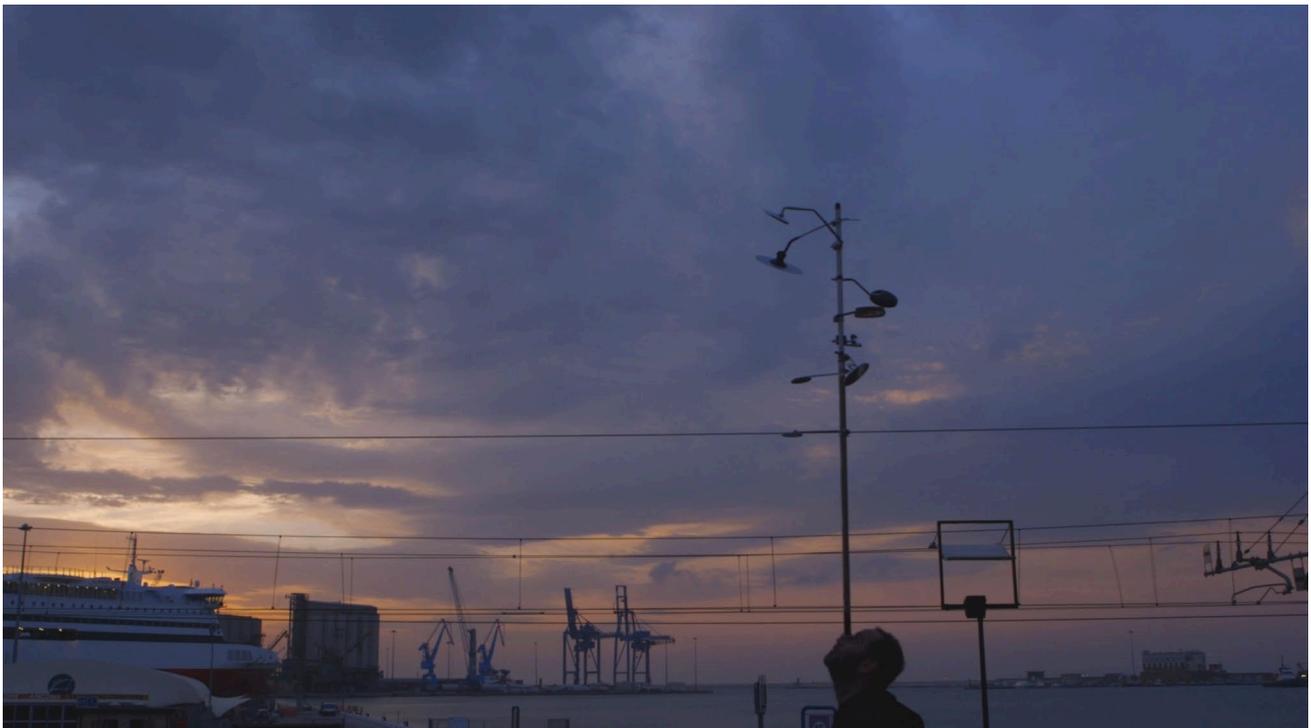


TarraWarra International 2019: *The Tangible Trace*

8 June – 1 September 2019

Curated by Victoria Lynn



Hiwa K, *Pre-Image (Blind as the Mother Tongue)* 2017, single-channel HD video, 16:9, colour, sound (with English language), video duration 00:17:40, ed. 5 + 2AP, Coproduced by Open-Vizor, Abbas Nokhsteh, Courtesy the artist and KOW, Berlin

A man kicks a flaming soccer ball through Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, tracing a pathway through the dark city. A large piece of engraved concrete is fragmented into hundreds of pieces, laying in wait for the audience to take a piece away as a trace of the work. The trace of the sun in the sky causes fluctuating shadows and ephemeral visual effects upon five large, floor to ceiling panels.

Showing from 8 June – 1 September 2019, the TarraWarra International 2019 exhibition, *The Tangible Trace*, explores the notion of a trace as a residue or marker of a place, situation or body of knowledge.

The exhibition includes the works of **Francis Alÿs** (Belgium/Mexico), **Carlos Capelán** (Uruguay/Sweden), **Simryn Gill** (Singapore/Malaysia/Australia), **Shilpa Gupta** (India), **Hiwa K** (Iraq/Germany) and **Sangeeta Sandrasegar** (Australia), including newly commissioned works by Capelán, Gupta and Sandrasegar.

Curator Victoria Lynn said, 'The artists in this exhibition explore the concept of trace through tangible fragments – natural materials, pressings, mappings, markings, journeys and gestures. The artworks in *The Tangible Trace* are about sensations that exist in the world: they can be seen, felt and experienced in our real environments. They are not imagined. They are material, situated and responsive.'

'For each of the artists, place and situation are complex and entangled. In their artworks, the trace is like a touchstone for memory but is also part of the formation of a new memory. The artists look at their surroundings like a living body of knowledge, tracing and retracing their often oblique relationship with it,' Ms Lynn said.

In Francis Alÿs's major video installation *Paradox of Praxis 5: Sometimes we dream as we live & sometimes we live as we dream, Ciudad Juárez, México* 2013, Alÿs kicks a flaming soccer ball at night through Ciudad Juárez, a city that the artist has worked with for over 20 years. Situated opposite El Paso, Texas on the US-Mexico border, Ciudad Juárez has, since the height of the violence in 2010, become a city marked by displacement, extortion, and social and economic crisis as a result of drug trafficking and turf wars between rival cartels.

Paradox of Praxis 5 follows the artist under the darkness of night, where details of the streets, people and housing are illuminated only by the fiery ball. The flame creates a trace of light, and the journey of the artist with the ball creates a kind of map, route and trace of this event.

Carlos Capelán will produce a suite of new paintings for *The Tangible Trace*. His multi-layered, atmospheric installations and paintings explore issues of displacement, dislocation and identity. In his new works, figures are depicted against a patchwork of abstract squares and rectangles. Inspired by analytical cubism and geometric abstraction, the works appear almost like spectral images, with their multiple gazes out towards the viewer suggesting they are like ghosts or echoes from the past.

Simryn Gill's wide-ranging practice considers questions of place and history, and how they might intersect with personal and collective experience. Gill will present multiple works including a series of photographs and monoprints that the artist made in the remains of a Malaysian seaside motel by pressing paper directly onto inked walls, and large pieces of cloth onto the mosaic floors. The troughs, holes and grooves become a negative space on the prints; a void for the imagination; a material trace of both a situation and a memory that becomes abstracted and unclear in the process.

Gill will also create a new body of prints and present her major installation *Domino Theory*. Comprised of large vitrines designed by the artist and Belgian architect Hilde Daem, the structure is filled with materials from Port Dickson, Malaysia, where Gill lives and works, including bricks, tiles, stones and corals collected from beaches and cubes made from termite soil. The items are catalogued in the vitrines based on form, material, function, size, colour and other systems known only to the artist.

Indian artist Shilpa Gupta will create two new works for *The Tangible Trace*, including one that takes the form of a large piece of concrete, engraved with text in multiple languages. Gupta will fragment the work into hundreds of pieces on site, with the audience invited to take away a piece as a 'trace' of the work. Gupta's second work will be a continuation of her copper maps series, for which she will create an outline of Australia from fine copper wires.

As a member of the immigrant generation that illegally journeyed from Iraqi Kurdistan to Europe on foot, Hiwa K's video work *Pre-Image (Blind as the Mother Tongue)* 2017 simulates the experience of walking through foreign territory. Using an 'object-sculpture' made of sticks and motorbike mirrors which he balances on his nose, Hiwa K finds his way with the object acting as

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a navigation device, an extension of the organs and senses, providing the traveller (and viewer) with various mirrored perceptions.

Sangeeta Sandrasegar's art practice engages with our understanding and acceptance of vision, and explores the nature of shadow and light. *Things fall from view* 2019, developed for *The Tangible Trace*, expands upon concepts of what is seen and unseen. The installation, comprising five large, floor to ceiling panels, will disrupt windows which frame picturesque views of the Yarra Valley landscape outside, and change with the shifting light and shadow throughout the day. Her new development into botanical dyeing marks the beginning of a new investigation tracing the story of colour production as a means of exploring the cultural, political and economical relations of place. In this case, the use of Indian Indigo and Australian native cherry alludes to the post-colonial relationships between Australia and India.

Since its establishment in 2013, the TarraWarra International series has supported a number of Australian artists, including Janet Laurence, Louise Weaver, Tom Nicholson, Patrick Pound and Cyrus Tang, to exhibit their work in a global context by presenting it alongside leading contemporary artists from abroad. Each of these exhibitions has uniquely identified and meaningfully considered significant developments in contemporary art practice – from the interrelationship between the animate and inanimate, to the experience of temporality, to imaginative responses to the archive.

The TarraWarra International's strength lies in its rigorous curatorial research, reception of new ideas, commissioning of new works, exposure for exhibiting artists, and for providing a publicly accessible context for seeing major work by leading Australian and international artists. Previous TarraWarra International exhibitions include *Animate/Inanimate* (2013), *Pierre Huyghe* (2015) and *All that is solid ...* (2017).

TarraWarra International 2019: *The Tangible Trace* is on display at TarraWarra Museum of Art, 313 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Healesville VIC 3777, from 8 June – 1 September 2019. Museum admission applies – \$10 Adults; \$8 Seniors; \$5 Pensioners and Students; Museum Members and children under 12 free.

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Opening Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am to 5pm. Open all public holidays except Christmas Day. Open 7 days a week from Boxing Day to Australia Day.

Museum Admission: \$10 Adults; \$8 Seniors; \$5 Pensioners and Students; Children 12 and under free.

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