



# Slippery Stories

JUNE 25 – JULY 16

CURATED BY MICHAEL VALE  
& TOM DUNN

EMILY COUNTS (USA)

TOM DUNN (USA)

RONI FELDMAN (USA)

LINSEY GOSPER

NICHOLAS IVES

DONNA MCRAE

ESMERALDA MONTES (USA)

MICHAEL VALE

## **Slippery Stories**

“A good story cannot be devised, it has to be distilled”

Raymond Chandler

The stories contained by and surrounding the works in this exhibition are slippery to define. They were born in a puff of smoke, from a lamp rubbed by a thousand Aladdins. There is a network of cities around the globe whose citizens share inner worlds, think similar thoughts and walk similar streets. They share a language of experience, hope and desire and this language floats across the air like magic dust, sometimes landing in unlikely places. Through slippery stories and obscure ideas the dreams of the city become a mirror for the dreamworlds of all, both publicly and less so. While the dream factory of Hollywood has both shaped and appropriated our fantasies, an underbelly of dark and drunken poetry has been no less influential. This exhibition presents the work of artists from two different cities who have inherited, borrowed and rearranged the catalogue of urban dreams. Each sees dreaming as a spill of ill-matched jigsaw pieces, approaching visuality as something to be read, a basket of clues or signs that can be moulded in myriad ways.

### ***The darkly erotic, the compulsive & wild...***

what happens when blinds are drawn, doors are closed and shadows cross the floor

Linsey Gosper (Melbourne)

Tom Dunn (L.A.)

Linsey Gosper's photographs offer subjects that are fully aware of the camera and willing to share strangely private moments with the viewer. They invite the viewer to become complicit in a wry and fictional moment, cryptic and seductive at the same time.

Tom Dunn's interest in the excessive side of celebrity casts him as Kenneth Anger with a wild paintbrush or intrusive video camera. His work suggests postcards from a volcano, erupting with hilarious abandon and reckless invention.

### ***The remembered, the re-enacted, the spectral...***

there are ghosts surrounding us, in all the buildings and floating in the silvery air

Donna McRae (Melbourne)

Roni Feldman (L.A.)

Donna McRae's ghostly video work conjures up forgotten hopes and dreams through filters of eerie beauty – she somehow creates a tapestry of quotation and nostalgic mystery using all the tools of film making. Even the sweetest of visions has a shadow lurking somewhere.

Roni Feldman's opaque spray paintings use digitally stencilled layering as metaphoric cross-sections of urban histories. The viewer is cast as pop archaeologist, invited to explore and penetrate the surface of an inky-black lagoon.

### ***The absurd...***

when reality is shattered like a fallen chandelier on a concrete floor

Nicholas Ives (Melbourne)

Esmeralda Montes (L.A.)

**Nicholas Ives's** whimsical paintings suggest psychedelic associations where images are allowed to spiral, unfettered, in druggy wafts of irrational momentum. Dancing on the edge of familiarity, they offer us views of the everyday through a rippling and lyrical lens.

**Esmeralda Montes's** work offers traces of fantasy that draw from multiple sources, interweaving modernist painting with TV cartoons and candy-coloured palettes. The world of innocence suggested at first glance soon unfolds into layers of possible readings, all of them ambiguous.

### ***The constructed...***

a map that's upside down is still a map, a narrative that's hidden is still a narrative

Michael Vale (Melbourne)

Emily Counts (L.A.)

**Michael Vale's** imagery derives from collaged moments colliding in carefully orchestrated situations. To stay alive in the mind, narratives must remain open-ended, shepherding associations like a leaf-blower. Stories are interchangeable, overlapping and metaphoric.

**Emily Counts** constructs totems that might have been built by surviving innocents after the collapse of contemporary civilization. Inscribed with forgotten languages they resonate with tribal power, offering a technology that is somehow beyond our reach – either from the future or the past.

This exhibition will travel to Durden & Ray Gallery, Los Angeles in November 2016.

— Michael Vale & Tom Dunn, 2016

Cover: Tom Dunn 'Barbra Streisand Portrait Bender, Las Vegas:  
*Fear and Loathing Returns to the Flamingo*' (detail) 2014, video still

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