

The Blue Oyster is pleased to present the annual 'Grad Show' featuring 2007 graduates from Otago Polytechnic School of Art. This show is by no means a comprehensive review of the graduating class of 2007 but a small selection of artists whose work is exciting and innovative. The Artists have been given a substantial amount of gallery space to allow their final body of works to be seen in their entirety.

Upper Gallery

Aroha Novak

Aroha Novak's work focuses on media consumption, destruction and escapism, specifically how mass media manipulates imagery, pushing the boundaries between truth and fiction. Aroha takes a horrific image of a freshly bombed Baghdad in April 2007 from the New York Times, which is then represented and replicated into a three-dimensional sculpture.

The medium used for recreating this image is cardboard, which is a readily reproduced material used solely for packaging purposes and discarded day to day, much like the media referenced. There is also a video loop of a cardboard city based on Beirut being blown up, which is played continuously added further intensity and dynamics to the work.

Darkside

Jenna Todd 'The youtube Criers'

Jenna Todd presents 'The youtube Criers', an original representation of the different extremities of video that appear on the website youtube.com. Contemporary culture allows any person/group to make a video available for public consumption. 'The youtube Criers' attempts to contrast visually similar scenes that are the results of vastly different circumstances, begging the question is one 'criers' problem more important than the other?

A woman bawling her eyes out because she was called a douche sits beside an Iraqi woman recalling her experience of rape. Does this phenomenon generalise our compassion? Does it drain compassion? Is it a natural progression? One thing is certain it exists!

Lower Gallery

Alissia Holzer 'Transcend Enclosure'

Whilst the representation of the natural environment in Alissia's work continues a long artistic history of landscape painting, *Transcend Enclosure* simultaneously works in contrast to it.

Lush features of the land, flora and fauna are depicted in these works to mimic recreational landscape painting as a genre which both celebrates the beauty of life and fails to indicate signs of its demise. Ideal scenes that venerate landscapes are a form of souvenir, *selectively* depicting that which satisfies a nostalgic desire while avoiding the dirty complexity of reality.

The transformation of Aotearoa's landscape through colonisation, agriculture, and the continual development of industry affects the degree of intimacy shared between humanity and habitat, physically altering connections between people and land. This environmental relationship is the basis of this body of work and the foundation of my art practice. The taming of that, which was once wild, can be viewed to a degree as an instinctual means for survival, comfort and security.

Alissia explains 'wilderness is manipulated physically and imaginatively to fit constructs of order and control. An objective perception of nature *as* material is the ground for the commodified articles that are exhibited here.

Hallway and Alley Way after hours

Aliki Boufis Corridor II and After Hours Window

Aliki's describes her work as 'a parody of space'. Through video projection Aliki transforms the way we perceive our surrounding architectural space. Her projections act as distorted reflections, creating a sense of three-dimensionality where there is none, she draws our attention to space as not necessarily being solid and structurally sound but rather as something fluid and translucent.

'*After hours window*' takes this concept a step further by incorporating the space outside the gallery. In this work, Aliki films through the window from inside as people walk by and vehicles drive up and down the alleyway. This is then projected onto the window so people walking past outside the gallery can see the very same alley projected back at them. Here, Aliki has created a complex distortion of time and space, using our visual comprehension of the world to trick us and make us look more closely at the world around us.