



9 September 2021

Mass media targeted in new exhibition of moving-image works



Matthew Griffin, *Keytar*, 2020, digital still from *Unchained Malady*, 2020, 133 videos on a big-screen television, private collection, courtesy of the artist and Fine Arts, Sydney.

Mass media, with its constantly updating news feeds and content algorithms across innumerable channels, infiltrates our minds 24/7. It plays a huge role in our lives, whether we like it or not, and artists are well placed to offer insights into how it affects us.

Image Processors, Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery's new exhibition—opening on 14 September and running to 7 November—surveys a history of moving-image works that focus on mass media.

The show begins with Australian artist Matthew Griffin's *Unchained Malady* (2020), which features a compilation of 133 short videos that remix imagery from online news and social media to track the last days of the Trump Administration and the Australian Government's early responses to the COVID-19 pandemic as a series of TikTok-like parodies presented on a large-scale LED screen.

The exhibition then unfolds to present a range of works that also appropriate found footage, restage familiar genres, or scrutinise the mechanisms of the media. These include American artist Arthur Jafa's hugely influential *Love Is the Message, The Message Is Death* (2016), Lisa Reihana's breakout *Wog Features* (1990), Dara Birnbaum's *Technology/*

Transformation: Wonder Woman (1978–79), and Italian-American ‘electromedia’ pioneer Aldo Tambellini’s *Black TV* (1968-69), amongst others.

Image Processors is curated by Adam Art Gallery director Christina Barton. She conceived the exhibition as an opportunity for local audiences to view landmark works that have never before been brought together in Aotearoa New Zealand. A feature of the show is the inclusion of works by New Zealand artists Megan Dunn, Mike Heynes, and Lisa Reihana, who Barton believes have all made important contributions to this strand of moving image practice.

“While a Google search will allow you to see at least some of the works in *Image Processors*, the opportunity to experience them together in a physical space like the Adam Art Gallery will provide a stronger impact and allow visitors to form a deeper understanding of these works’ meaning and significance,” says Barton.

“*Image Processors* uses a variety of installation strategies to present the works in the exhibition: These include sculptural interventions, large-scale projections, and thoughtful juxtapositions where the choice between a monitor or a flat screen has been made according to the work’s original format and mode of delivery,” says Barton.

Image Processors brings together artists who are at once fascinated observers of the imagery that floods us daily, and fierce critics of the mass media’s coercive and corrosive effects. This timely gathering serves as a prehistory for the tactics employed by today’s users of social media, offering a reminder of the valuable role art can play in exposing the persuasive power the media plays in our lives.

Exhibition details

Image Processors

Artists in the Medium – A Short History 1968–2020

Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery

14 September – 7 November 2021

Featuring works by Aldo Tambellini, Richard Serra, Dara Birnbaum, Martha Rosler with Paper Tiger TV, Harun Farocki, Lisa Reihana, Megan Dunn, Ryan Trecartin and Lizzie Fitch, Wynne Greenwood and K8 Hardy, Josephine Meckseper, Mike Heynes, Arthur Jafa, and Matthew Griffin

Curated by Christina Barton

Opening hours

Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery

Tuesday–Sunday 11 am–5 pm

The Gallery is closed at COVID Alert Levels 3 and 4

For the safety of all during Alert Level 2, visitors to the Gallery are required to wear face coverings, contact trace, practice physical distancing, and sanitise as instructed by the Ministry of Health. The Gallery welcomes group visits and to ensure they can safely accommodate you, please let the Gallery know in advance if your group is larger than 10 people. Contact the Gallery Administrator, Ann Gale, ann.gale@vuw.ac.nz or 04-463 5229.

Address

Te Herenga Waka–Victoria University of Wellington

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Wellington 6140

For more information, high resolution images, or to arrange an interview with artists or the curator, contact:

Christina Barton, Director, christina.barton@vuw.ac.nz or 04-463 5254 / 027-563 5254
or Ann Gale, Gallery Administrator, ann.gale@vuw.ac.nz or 04-463 5229.

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University name: The University's full name is Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington. Where space constraints require our name to be abbreviated, please retain the word 'Wellington' to ensure our location is clear to readers.

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