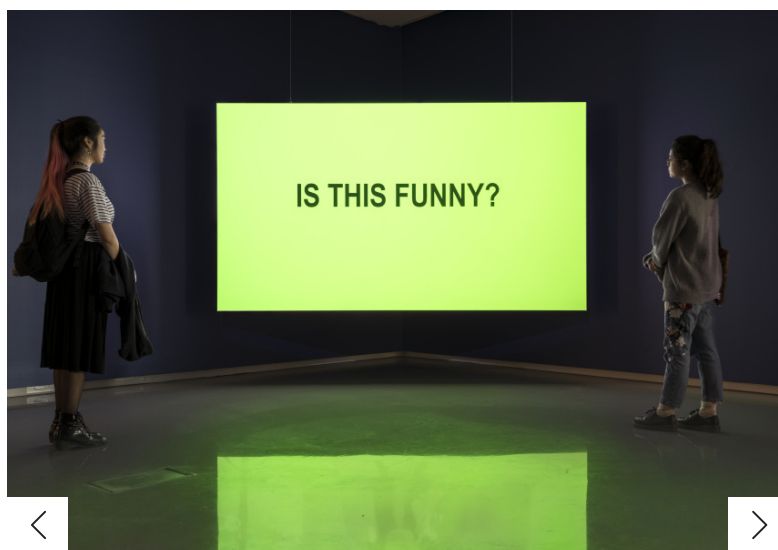


What are you looking for?



In the Galleries: Six Shows to See Right Now

Fairy tales, celebrities bound in fabric and kindergarten patterns. Here's your month in art.



1/25 The Humours at MUMA

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2017 CCP Salon

Every year the Centre for Contemporary Photography invites anyone and everyone to submit for its salon show. This, the 25th annual Salon, is the biggest yet, with 722 individual entries. Photography is a democratic medium, and this is a truly democratic exhibition – there are prizes awarded for the best work, but every entry is part of the show, and the walls are heaving with photography from all over the country.

It's been curated into groups of black and white and colour, pinned and framed, with a separate room for video work. But this is organised chaos in the best possible way. In no particular order, expect to find cityscapes, the claws of a barn owl, crying babies, clouds, palm trees, a curtain, shipping crates, a woman in water, the West Gate Bridge, a snake, suburban homes, water ballet, letterboxes and fairground rides. This one warrants repeat visits because there's no way you can take it all in in one hit.

The 2017 Salon is at CCP until December 16.

Pattern Making by Madeline Kidd

Building blocks, landscapes, half-letterforms, all cut into sharp, pastel geometric curves. If you think Madeline Kidd's paintings and prints look like they belong in a kindergarten, you'd be right. She was halfway through developing this show when she started reading about Friedrich Froebel, the German pedagogue who invented the nursery school. As the catalogue essay says, kindergarten teaches abstraction. They were “designed to launch young souls on their lifetimes' passage of spiritual growth, which was, to him, closer to forms before things before words.”

Kidd's geometric abstractions draw on the forms *behind* everything – the forms we teach children before words or big ideas. They're colourful and comforting and transportive. And – particularly the works that incorporate mirrors – they'll drag you back to your formative years of abstract thinking.

Madeline Kidd's Pattern Making is at Daine Singer until December 2.

All the Better to See You With

Leaving kindergarten behind, this new group show at the Ian Potter Museum is all about fairy tales, specifically how they've evolved and mutated through the centuries due to countless

retellings, rewritings and reconstructions. They reflect the politics, anxieties and morality of the times. *Little Red Riding Hood*, for example, can be traced back to the 15th century when it was a simple tale about a girl being brutally attacked by a wolf, and the versions we know are adaptations of the original. This huge exhibition, across three floors, presents a huge range of hyper imaginative, colourful work offering up fairy tales as everything from utopian visions to acidic nightmares, including some extraordinary prints and illustrations.

Australian Amanda Marburg photographs plasticine sculptures in macabre tableaux. Broersen and Lukacs's video work *Mastering Bambi* removes the dewy-eyed deer from the landscape entirely, leaving only a haunting forest. In Dina Goldstein's photos, Disney princesses are unceremoniously dumped into contemporary working class America. In an unnerving take on *The Little Mermaid*, our heroine screams silently underwater as her voice is taken from her. Top it off with an uncanny and unsettling Patricia Piccinini sculpture on the top floor, and there's plenty to think about far beyond the imaginative pleasures of these centuries-old folk tales.

All the Better to See You With *is at the Ian Potter Museum, University of Melbourne, until March 4.*

Monster by Polly Borland

Polly Borland is an artist and editorial photographer who shoots for glossy magazines such as *Vogue*, and whose subjects have ranged from Nick Cave to Queen Elizabeth II. In her new show ambiguous, conceptual photographs show women bound in fabric and gagged with something red. They are, as the artist says in a statement, quite "straitjackety" and discomfiting. Bright and slick, one woman encased in material is Australian actress Bella Heathcote, her celebrity shrouded.

Then there are the tapestries – Borland's photographs faithfully recreated in thread by inmates in the British penal system as part of the Fine Cell Work charity's rehabilitation program. It's as if Borland's subjects are trapped at an even deeper level, bound up in yet another layer of textiles. These images stay with you long after you leave the gallery.

Polly Borland's Monster is showing at Murray White Room until December 21.

Bonfire Park

In a bar on Smith Street, local videogame designers have teamed up with artists and writers to create games and artistic responses (prose, poetry, comics or illustration) to them.

The games are small and strange. In Jonothan Rubok's *One Button Nipple Golf*, the player palpates a plastic nipple to control a game of golf taking place across the course of a human body. Ive Sorocuk has responded with a comic based on the weirdness of knowing the owner of the body in the game. In PlayReactive's game *The Best Thing* there are two buttons and two choices. Which is better? Summer or winter? Fingers or thumbs? Legs or arms? Make selections, keep going, and it becomes a knockout tournament. The choices get weirder. Psychology or cats? Dexterity or frogs? Conversation or bread? Glass or flirting? Writer Yuki Iwama responds with a tense prose poem. In the exhibition's second week, there'll be new strange world to dip into, when these games are replaced with new ones and new responses.

Bonfire Park is at Bar SK, Smith Street, until December 6.

The Humours

This show at MUMA is about comedy, but there's very little in here that will make you laugh. It's about humour as a strategy to disrupt the norm, and how that manifests in comedy and art. First up is Barbara Cleveland, a collective named after the famed performance artist, with the video work *The One Hour Laugh*, a deeply grating film featuring four women in dunce costumes laughing for an hour: forced, sarcastic and exhausting. "Is this funny?" ask the absurdly costumed performers in the next piece, *Bad Timing*. The answer is no - it is not inherently funny. The most compelling piece is Glenn Ligon's *Live*, a multi-channel video piece consisting of muted footage of comedy legend Richard Pryor. It's an exercise in assessing his body language. Stripped of the jokes, there's intelligence behind his eyes and fury in his hand movements. This isn't a funny show. It's a serious show about what's funny.

The Humours is at MUMA until December 16.

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