



Two Factor Authentication

City Library
SALA Exhibition

6 Aug – 30 Sep 2021



Curated by Rose Larsen

Supported by City of Adelaide and Adelaide City Libraries

Featuring Cameron Longshaw, Dainis Zakis, Danny Jarratt,
Emmaleise Maxwell, Frances Cohen and Tom Borgas



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Exhibiting Artists

Danny Jarratt

Frances Cohen

Emmaleise Maxwell

Dainis Zakis

Tom Borgas

Cameron Longshaw

Words by **Rose Larsen**

Two Factor Authentication

"The boundaries ... are drifting away, sliding over pristine ridges and valleys, lodging in tenuous places, slipping again. At its edges, where the city fades momentarily into the veld, unimaginable new atmospheres evolve ..." Ivan Vladislavic, *The Exploded View*, 6

This exhibition is about exploring identity – about who we are in the physical world, who we are in the digital world, and how this changes the way we see the world around us.

Two Factor Authentication explores how our experience of the physical world is mediated by our digital identities. An immersive experience that merges analogue and digital production methods, this exhibition considers the convergence of physical and online realms and what that convergence reflects about contemporary life. The exhibition's title acknowledges the complexity of separating these realms in our highly connected world, where identity-forming practices are enacted on the digital stage and realised in our day-to-day lives.

As we collectively delve deeper into the digital landscape, convictions that were previously crucial to our understanding of the world around us changed by uncertainty. The opportunities presented to us from this uncertainty are grounded in a new social and cultural world that freely flows between mediums.

The artists in this exhibition are, in one way or another, interested in the expanded possibilities of technical mediums that allow them to occupy space within and outside of traditional artistic practices.

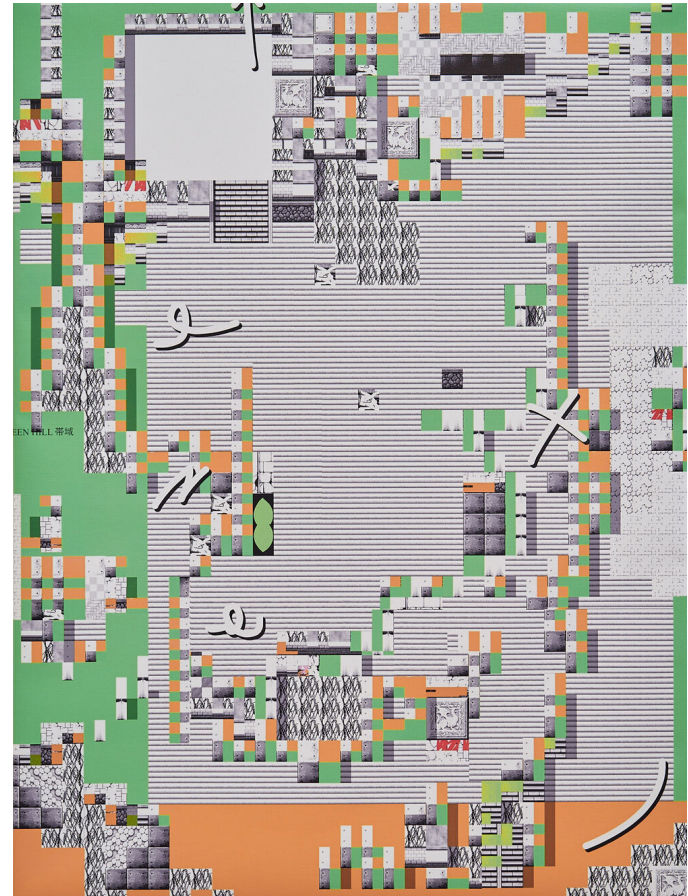
Their work uses techniques like collage, computer programming and digital manipulation to create a dialogue about creativity, originality, and authenticity in the contemporary era. The resulting artworks utilise bright colours, engaging forms and multimedia elements that lead the viewer to discover live networks of activity and connectedness that hum beneath the surface.

In Two Factor Authentication, we are invited to explore how dichotomies, or oppositions, help us to understand the world. The critical couplings that are invoked in these works – real/fake, physical/digital, surface/subterranean, material/imaginative – paradoxically help us to see beyond them. We are invited into a literary and artistic space that looks beyond oppositions to imagine new ways of creating.

The artists in this exhibition each draw from different backgrounds, ideologies and artistic rationales, with diverse techniques coloured by their own experiences of the world. Whilst their works are, at first glance, thematically and aesthetically distinct, close inspection of their creative processes reveals ripples of familiarity.

"I kept thinking about the uneven quality of time—the way it was almost always so empty, and then with no warning came a few days that felt so dense and alive and real that it seemed indisputable that that was what life was, that its real nature had finally been revealed. But then time passed and unthinkably grew dead again, and it turned out that that fullness had been an aberration and might never come back." Elif Batuman, *The Idiot*

Danny Jarratt's new works are a pastiche of 1950s hard-edge painting styles, 1990s video game aesthetic, and the cultural lexicon of science fiction. Drawing from speculative fiction, alternative universes in popular culture and queer theory, Jarratt's work is a self-described "crash of timelines" that unpicks the queer experience of time. Pixelated freeforms, reminiscent of a close-up motherboard (or an isolated corner of a QR code for a contemporary comparison), dominate this series of works, wherein shapes and colours are employed to invoke the non-linear timeline associated with a deviation from heteronormativity. With this series, Jarratt presents an alternative to the linear experience of time through the invocation of queer micro-utopias – an escapist's imagination of the possibilities presented by the digital-physical spheres of science fiction and video games.





Frances Cohen's work engages with slippery notions of authenticity and self-image to construct new iterations of identity. Collage is used as a visual metaphor to represent the identity-forming process that Cohen undergoes as she explores her own self-image – pieces of herself are drawn from self-portraits, magazine editorials, popular culture, mainstream discussions of mental health and the DSM-5. Colour codes borrowed from psychoanalysis signpost her emotional state while thick layers of gap filler obscure what's hidden beneath the surface. Cohen's work can be conceived as a physical palimpsest, wherein layers of digital inscription are traced over physical realities as we absorb the styles, colours, language and worldview of that which we experience online, to construct our sense of self based on a stitched-together semblance of originality. Cohen's idiosyncratic self-portraits are an exercise in both introspection and extrospection; they consciously unpick an unconscious process of identity-formation, affording the artist space to explore both her own view of herself, and the way in which these processes manipulate her understanding of the world around her.

*"It is not that the meaning cannot be explained.
But there are certain meanings that are lost
forever the moment they are explained in words."*

Haruki Murakami, 1Q84



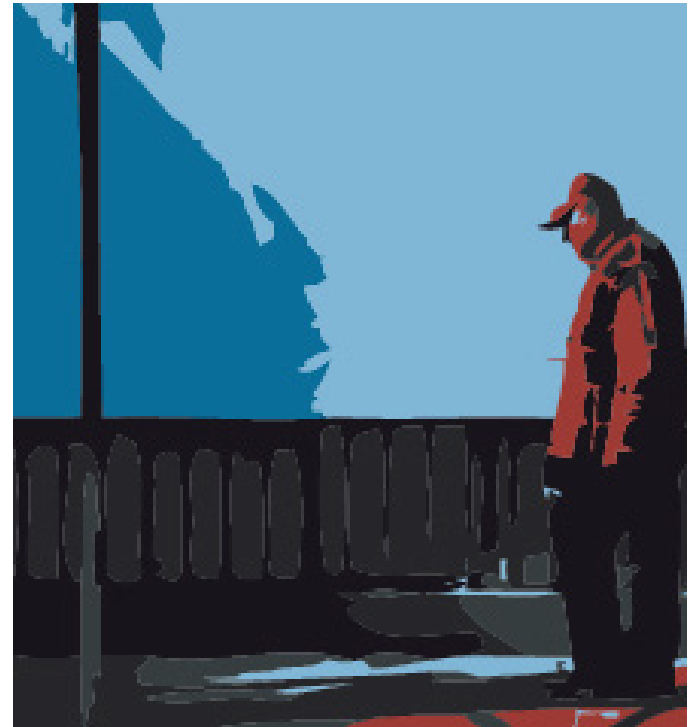
Emmaleise Maxwell's digital collages use a similar palimpsestic construction to a different end, tracing and retracing the imprints of ostensibly mundane moments in everyday life, and exploring how their expressions of sentimentality manifest in emotional responses. Layering fleeting moments, household artefacts and pieces of personal history, Maxwell's works transmit the viewer to a moment in time, occupying a space somewhere between the material and imaginative worlds. Household motifs like a shopping trolley and a Hills Hoist clothesline float in collective memory, inserting themselves into a paradoxically familiar-and-strange narrative of Australian suburbia. These gestures, sporadically recurring throughout the works, nurture a nostalgic feeling of belonging. The manipulation of images to mimic this sense of shared experience speaks to the possibility for digital production methods to inhabit the emotional world.

"Symbols are important ... we happen to have these rifles and soldiers' uniforms, so we play the part of sentries. That's our role. Symbols guide us to the roles we play."

Haruki Murakami, Kafka on the Shore, 434

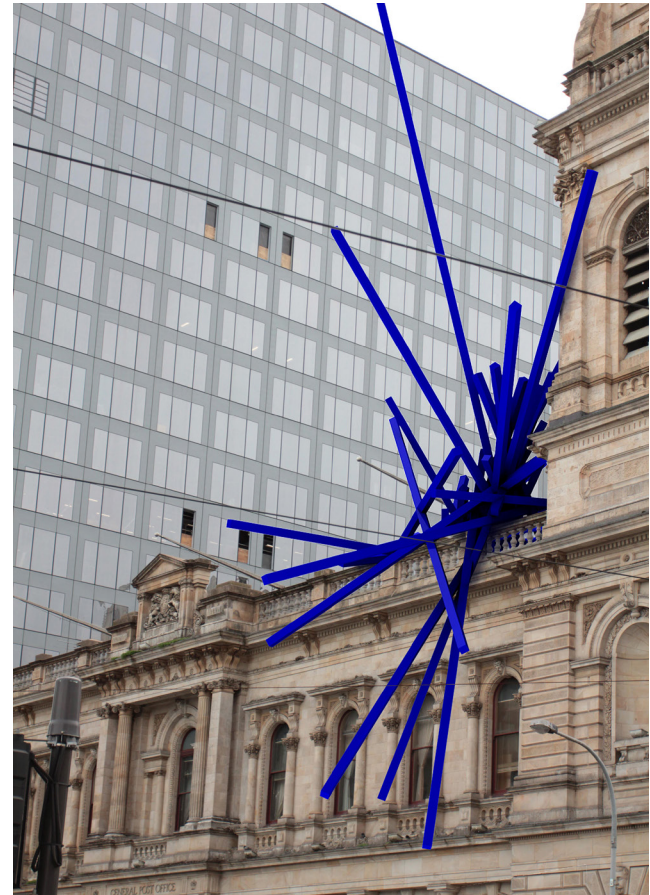


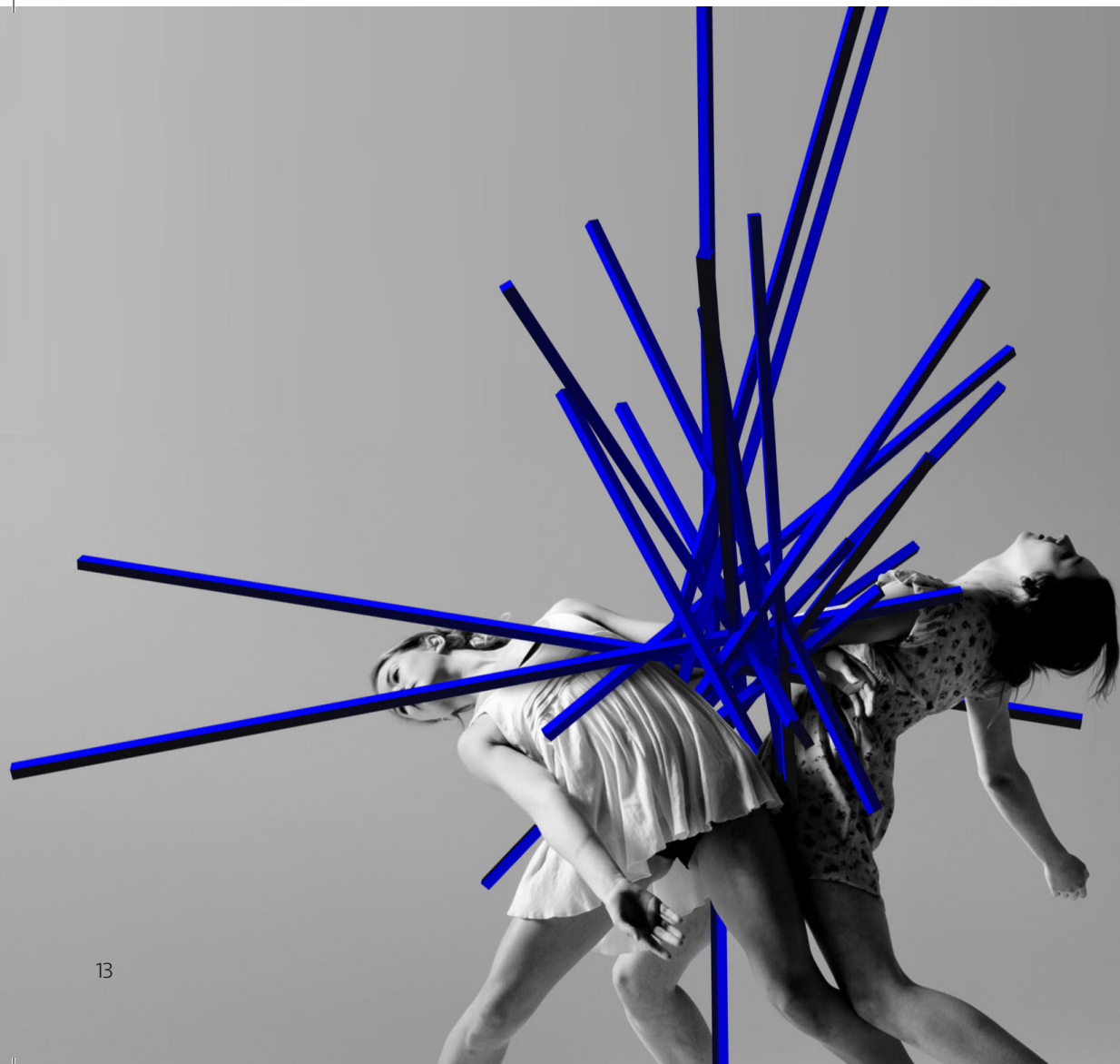
Dainis Zakis conceives of the computer as his creative partner in the development and creation of art. Working within a tradition of generative art, Zakis uses applications and self-written computer programs to guide the creation of works that move freely between digital and analogue mediums. Generative art was defined by Philip Galanter as “any art practice where the artist uses a system ... which is set in motion with some degree of autonomy contributing or resulting in a completed work of art” (2003). Zakis’ images are cropped, contrast and resolution-modified, and converted into vector images based on limited colour palettes. Computation autonomy is melded with analogue painting practices, with the resultant shapes hand-drawn onto canvas and painted in acrylic. The completed works eschew oppositional notions of digital and analogue, imploding the two to posit a new approach to making.





Tom Borgas disrupts our understanding of the digitisation of experience by conceiving of its inverse, “presenting the aesthetic and structural motifs of digital technology as actual objects and events in real space/time” (n.d). In the *Hyperobject series*, Borgas inserts objects – incongruous manifestations of connectivity, wireless technology and digital networks – into recognisable sites of physical and social interaction. Borgas’ collages flip the script on the central trope of cultural tours-de-force like *The Matrix*, which ponder the insertion of human materiality into digital realities, to ask what our world would look like if traces of technological development and its consequences erupted as intrusions on the contemporary city’s architecture. These works form the basis for an ethos of disruption, resulting in the development of architectural-scale installation works across South Australia and Victoria.





Cameron Longshaw's enigmatic practice hovers between sculpture, video and installation to create augmented experiences that mirror and distort reality. Architectural elements like angled walls and stairs are a nod to the artist's training in architectural and real-estate photography. These fixed elements are juxtaposed with hanging mediators – sheets of plastic or material – that manipulate the projection of moving image, resulting in living shadows that collide and interact with the looped video on display. Longshaw's multimedia installations draw attention to the mediated nature of our experiences through physical manipulations of space and vision.



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