



ILLUSTRATING THE NAURU FILES



**In August 2016 The Guardian published The Nauru Files, leaked incident reports written by staff in Australia’s detention centre on Nauru between 2013 and 2015. These files detail 2,116 separate incidents, including many cases of assault, sexual abuse, self-harm, child abuse and abhorrent living conditions endured by asylum seekers and refugees in the care of the Australian Government. Despite the harrowing nature of the files, the situation remains and the abuse is ongoing. In the absence of media access to the island, our objective is to illustrate these stories through creative expression, using art to shed light on all we can’t see.**

**www.allwecantsee.com**

## All We Can’t See

Julian Burnside

In the middle of 2016, *The Guardian* Australia published The Nauru Files: more than 2000 incident reports recording things that had happened in Australia’s refugee gulag on Nauru. The incident reports – made by people directly or indirectly employed by the Australian government - contained reports of assaults, sexual abuse, self-harm and child abuse. They gave an insight into the living conditions endured by asylum seekers held by the Australian government. Unsurprisingly, they painted a picture of routine dysfunction and cruelty.

A few key facts: Nauru is an island republic in the South Pacific. It is about 4000 kilometres from Sydney. It is almost exactly on the equator, so it is fairly hot. It is very small: about 2 square kilometres smaller than Tullamarine airport in Melbourne. It has a population of about 9,500 people: less than most Australian suburbs.

**Whoever leaked the Nauru files took a risk, by disclosing facts which should shock the conscience of every Australian.**

Nauru was first used by Australia as a place of detention from late 2001, after the Tampa episode, until about 2007. Its use was revived in 2012. It is used primarily as a place where families and unaccompanied women and children are sent. Manus Island (part of PNG) is used as a place for unaccompanied men.

Almost all the people held on Nauru now have been there for five years. The cost to Australia is enormous: it costs Australian taxpayers about \$570,000 per refugee, per year to keep them in Nauru. And that’s just the financial cost: think what it is doing to the soul of our country. Australia is increasingly seen as a country which is intentionally cruel to innocent people.

Although most of the refugees on Nauru have been there for five years, some of the children are younger than 5. They were born there to refugee women. They are classified in Australia’s Migration Act as “transitory children”. They are treated as boat people, even though they have lived their entire lives in detention on Nauru.

**Children are a very important part of offshore detention. More than half of the Nauru files concern mistreatment of children.**

Children are a very important part of offshore detention. More than half of the Nauru files concern mistreatment of children. They range from a guard grabbing a boy and threatening to kill him once he is living in the community to guards slapping children in the face. In September 2014 a teacher reported that a young classroom helper had asked for a four-minute shower instead of a two-minute shower. “Her request has been accepted on condition of sexual favours. It is a male security person. She did not state if this has or hasn’t occurred. The security officer wants to view a boy or girl having a shower.”

The Nauru files are the first chance most Australians had to get a glimpse inside the detention centre on Nauru. It is extremely difficult for ordinary Australians to get to Nauru: a visa application costs \$8,000, which is not refunded if the visa is refused. Journalists find it virtually impossible to get a visa to go to Nauru. So: how else do we find out what our government is doing to the people who have come to Australia asking to be protected from persecution?

It is interesting to think about the secrecy which surrounds offshore processing. Prime Ministers, including Tony Abbott and Malcolm Turnbull, and government Ministers like Scott Morrison and Peter Dutton refer to asylum seekers as “illegals” and describe offshore processing as “border protection”. In saying these things, they are lying to you. Boat-people do not commit any offence by coming to Australia asking for protection. And we do not need to be protected from them.

The end result is that many Australians think offshore processing involves protecting us from criminals, which might make sense if it was true. But it is false.

We are imprisoning innocent human beings – men, women and children – without charge, without trial. And we put them in hellish conditions until

young children try to kill themselves or engage in self-harm, and are denied decent medical care because Nauru does not have a sophisticated medical system. When an application is brought in the Federal Court of Australia to have those children brought to Australia for proper mental health treatment, Mr Dutton pays lawyers to oppose the application.

And all this is hidden from us, because we can’t go there to see what is happening and in any event Australia makes sure that visas are only available to people it likes. In 2015 the Federal Parliament passed the Australian Border Force Act. Part 6 of the Act is headed “Secrecy and disclosure provisions”. It includes section 42.

Section 42 of the Australian Border Force Act makes it a criminal offence, punishable by up to 2 years prison, if a person who works in the Immigration system discloses any fact they learned while working in the immigration system. Whoever leaked the Nauru files took a risk, by disclosing facts which should shock the conscience of every Australian.

Reading the Nauru files, you learn that in September 2014, a girl had sewn her lips together. A guard saw her and began laughing at her. In July 2014 a child under the age of 10 undressed and invited a group of adults to insert their fingers into her vagina.

The government’s response to the publication of the Nauru files was little short of astonishing:

*“The documents published today are evidence of the rigorous reporting procedures that are in place in the regional processing centre – procedures under which any alleged incident must be recorded, reported and where necessary investigated...”*

It was also evasive:

*“Many of the incident reports reflect unconfirmed allegations or uncorroborated statements and claims – they are not statements of proven fact...”*

**It is important that we all know the truth of what our government is doing to innocent people. Because our government, while spending billions of taxpayers’ money harming refugees, is anxious that we should not know the truth.**

*All We Can’t See* is an opportunity for artists to respond to the hidden facts on Nauru. It is painful to see a sculpture of a child who has cut herself and has sewn her lips closed. But it is important that we all know the truth of what our government is doing to innocent people. Because our government, while spending billions of taxpayers’ money harming refugees, is anxious that we should not know the truth. It is the reason we need *All We Can’t See*.



Kate Durham

Resin and glass  
200 x 200mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT:  
CONCERN FOR MINOR**

**25 AUGUST 2014**

**RISK RATING: INFORMATION  
DOWNGRADED? UNKNOWN**

Client seems withdrawn. Monitored by writer. Stated to another teacher that feels she would rather be dead.





## Abdul Abdullah

View from Manus II (2016)  
Oil and tile on board, 600 x 900 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM**  
**03 FEBRUARY 2015 | RISK RATING: MINOR | DOWNGRADED? YES**

On the 3rd of February during an informal engagement with [REDACTED] and his brother [REDACTED], [REDACTED] disclosed that he had thought about causing harm to himself. [REDACTED] stated that he has had feeling of self-harm over the past several months however, has been reluctant to disclose due to wanting to safe guard his other family members. [REDACTED] stated that last night he was unable to sleep. [REDACTED] stated that he stared at the ceiling of his living area and begun to have thoughts of ending his life. [REDACTED] stated that he has feeling of hopelessness. [REDACTED] stated that he left [REDACTED], his home country to flee from physical torture and by coming to Australia believed he would be safe. [REDACTED] stated he believes that Australia is utilising psychological means (i.e. Separating him from his immediate family) to cause harm to him and his family. [REDACTED] stated that there is no difference between him dying in [REDACTED] than in Australia or Nauru. NB: Risk rating and incident type changed by Wilsons.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

View from Manus II (2017) is a part of a series of paintings that were motivated by the release of the Nauru files in 2016. These works were reflections on conversations I had been having with people seeking asylum in Australia in my hometown Perth, here in Sydney, and also with a group that were still in Indonesia. As harrowing as their stories were, something that stayed with me was their longing for home. Even though they were all quick to acknowledge the horror they fled, these young people described the mountainous region where they'd come from with an aching melancholy; it was where they were born, it was where their friends and family were, and if the world was fair they would be able to go back. Instead these brave young people had travelled thousands of kilometers to forge a path for them and their families to find safety, and in doing so had made that return trip an impossibility. Fleeing their homeland was not driven by a choice – it was driven by a need, and after a long, life-threatening journey Australia imprisons them, humiliates them, and as the Nauru files reveal: torture them. In this painting I have depicted a mountain in the Hindu Kush as it was described to me. Alongside the image is a panel of bare tiles. These images are both reflections of memories: of home and of imprisonment.



## Hoda Afshar

Guardian #1, 2018  
Ink-jet print  
580 x 460 mm edition of 5

Guardian #2, 2018  
Ink-jet print,  
580 x 460 mm edition of 5

Untitled, 2018 (pictured)  
Ink-jet print,  
580 x 460 mm edition of 5

**TYPE OF INCIDENT:  
ACTUAL SELF-HARM**  
**18 MARCH 2015 | RISK RATING: MAJOR**

Approximately 0950 hours today I, [REDACTED] (Wilson's) as Whiskey 3A was on a Whiskey high watch of asylum seeker [REDACTED] within room 5 of tent [REDACTED] in Area 1. At this time [REDACTED] was speaking with the mental health nurse from IHMS. A male interpreter was also present to assist in this interview. She was sitting on her bed and the mental health nurse was sitting directly in front of her on a chair. I was seated on a chair immediately to [REDACTED] left. I heard the nurse ask her if she had been eating. [REDACTED] replied "Eating? I don't want to eat I want to die". Then she threw the top half of her body around and hit her head on the end of the bed metal railing. I immediately reached for her, pulling her back towards me, I did this by placing both hands on top of her shoulders and pulled her away from the bars which were fitted to the bed. CSA [REDACTED] entered the room and we sat either side of her and held her elbows with minimal force to retain her from any further self-harm. We held her in this position until about 1030 hours, because [REDACTED] was making fists with her hands and kept trying to punch herself in the face.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

The Nauru files are for me the fragments of a broken mirror reflecting our ruined humanity. They are the silent screams of those whose humanity we have ruined. A desperate few whose search for refuge turned them into criminals and sacrificial animals. Their rewards are recorded here. Their names have been redacted.

On Nauru and Manus, the most vulnerable and broken are placed under high watch – under the watchful eyes of these guardians. Entrusted to the wardens of a system that is there not to protect them, these wretched few, but us. Wardens whose names have been redacted from their deeds are guardians of a system designed to safeguard our borders. Deeds redacted to guard us from feeling compassion.





## Abbas Alaboudi

What would you do, Peter Dutton? (2016)  
Acrylic on canvas

**ABBAS ALABOUDI IS AN IRAQI ASYLUM SEEKER, VISUAL ARTIST AND PLASTERER BY TRADE WHO HAS BEEN DETAINED ON NAURU FOR OVER FOUR YEARS. AS ABBAS REMAINS TRAPPED ON NAURU, BELOW IS A MESSAGE TO THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE HE HAS ASKED US TO SHARE ON HIS BEHALF.**

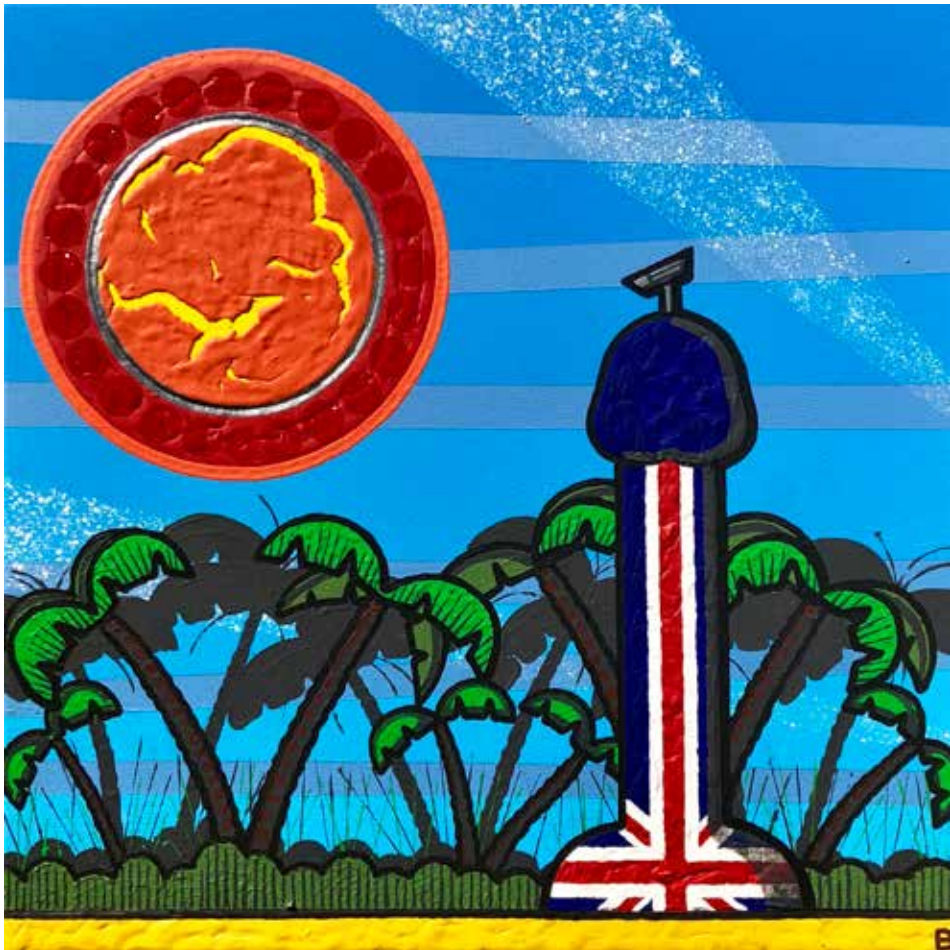
When I arrived in Australia I thought all my suffering from my country would end, but unfortunately I started suffering under the Australian government. After four years I still dont know when this suffering will end . . . If they could kill us they would. You have to know we are dead already – many people are sick mentally and physically, children, familes, single girls, they are suffering.

If someone is guilty of a crime they will they will charge him and sentence him, but here on this dirty policy we don't know what our crime is, and we don't know why they don't say to us when this will end . . . or why some of our friends, who arrived on the same boats, are living in Australia free.

I can't forget this suffering. I can't forget when I see how our children are suffering here. There is no future for them. Our life has stopped. I want to understand why Australian government enjoys torturing us like this. We are powerless, we can't do anything, we can't talk about our rights.

Please Australian people, don't stand by, protest. Please do something, do something to help us now. Almost all people don't like to go Australia, I am one of them. I don't like Australia any more, yet this country still tortures me.

Help us.



## Blak Douglas

Naurutic surveillance (2018)  
Synthetic polymer on canvas, 550 x 550 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: COMPLAINT

28 SEPTEMBER 2014 | RISK RATING: INFORMATION | DOWNGRADED? UNKNOWN

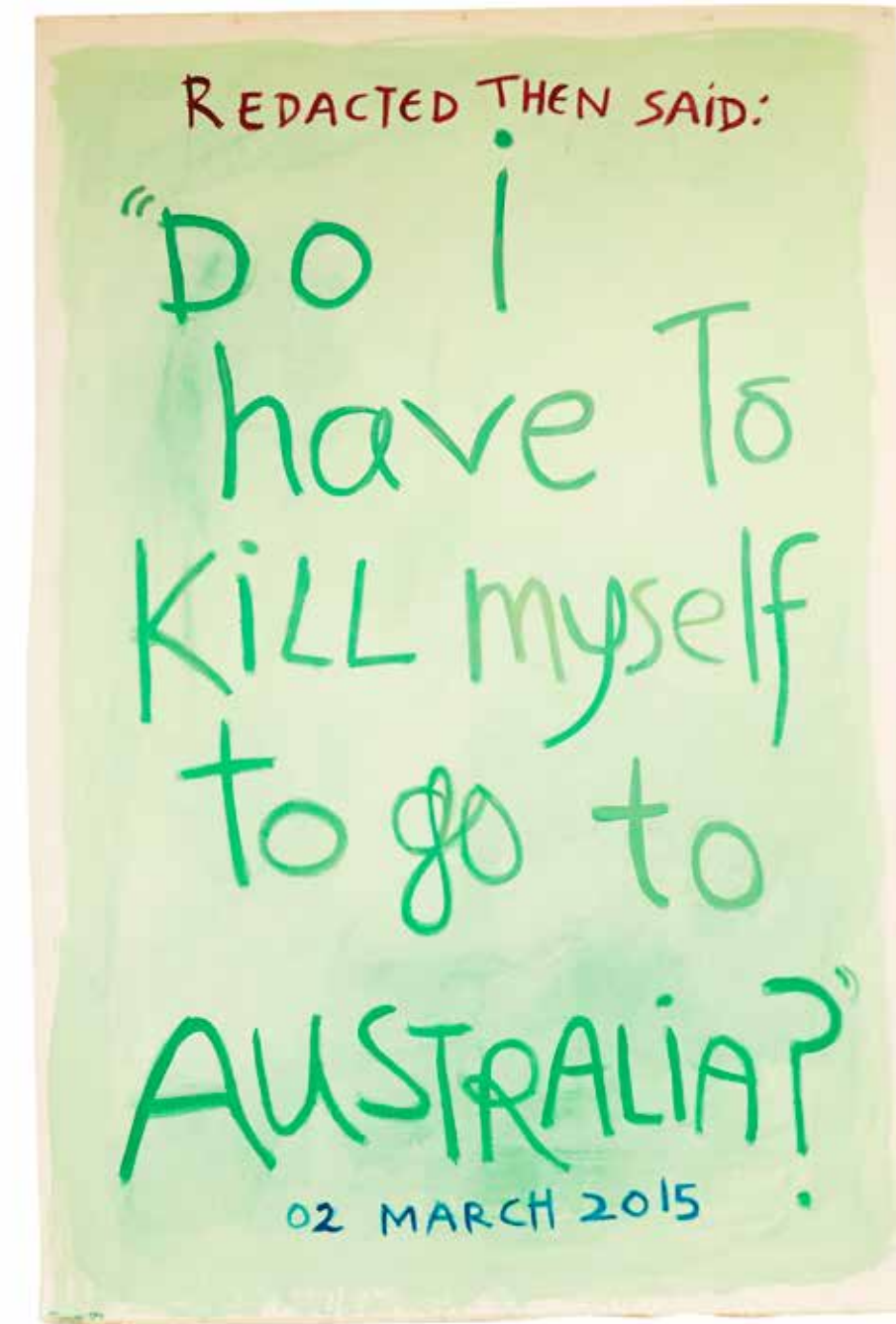
CW [REDACTED 1] and CW Manager [REDACTED 2] were having an extended conversation with various men who had stitched their lips together. During the conversation various men stated that when they hold protests at night they want to be peaceful because they have their children there, but that the Wilson's officers are trying to make them angry and make them fight and provoke them. The men stated that the Wilson's officers laugh at them and dance around and mock them when they are chanting. The men stated that for the first half an hour the cameras are on but after that the Wilson's Officers turn them off and run through the protest trying to 'skirmish at them'. The men stated that the asylum seekers always remain peaceful despite the provocation.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

I chose to engage in this project because the subject of detention strikes a chord close to home. My work often focusses on the ironies that exist in being a survivor of the genocide of my Aboriginal ancestors whilst being expected to comply within the Commonwealth of "Australia".

I have a history of calling out the government's successive actions, including the 28 caucasian bigots who've 'held power' on stolen land. It wasn't indigenous peoples who erected the compounds or fences. The fact that now . . . one of the wealthiest white males who's elected as Prime Minister maintains the concept of 'commodification of human lives' nearly makes me puke.

My thoughts and prayers go out to those detained and if I can be of further assistance in any way I'm open to it. (Wait... does that sounds like a response from a Ministerial office?)



## Angela Brennan

Redacted then said (2018)  
Oil on canvas, 1830 x 1280 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM

02 MARCH 2015 | RISK RATING: MAJOR | DOWNGRADED? YES

At 13:35 [REDACTED] asked to speak with me. She said that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] became upset during maths because they believe a recently medivac'd family will now get a visa in Australia, while they stay there. [REDACTED] saw them crying and told [REDACTED] he was worried about them. He then said, "Do I have to kill myself to go to Australia", "What place makes a [REDACTED] yr old try to kill themselves". We believe he is referring to [REDACTED]'s self harm attempt as he has been distressed and anxious to see [REDACTED] all day. [REDACTED] has withdrawn from classes and was sobbing for twenty minutes after attempting to go to IHMS earlier in the afternoon.



## Penny Byrne

I Heart Nauru (2017), pictured  
Photograph courtesy Mathew Stanton  
Photographic print and repurposed porcelain figurine, enamel paints

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas (Island, or Nauru, or PNG), (2010)

Leaking like a SIEV (Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel), (2011), pictured overleaf

Photographic prints (original sculptures in collection of Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra)

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

13 OCTOBER 2015 | RISK RATING: CRITICAL

On the 13/10/2015 at approximately 1345 SCA Case Worker [REDACTED] was approached by asylum seeker [REDACTED] her daughter [REDACTED] ([REDACTED], age [REDACTED]) was also present. [REDACTED] disclosed the following: three days ago [REDACTED] had self-harmed and had used something sharp to cut her wrist with. [REDACTED] explained she did not inform anyone what had happened because [REDACTED] was frightened of getting in trouble. [REDACTED] explained she was very worried about her daughter and needed support. [REDACTED] disclosed the following: she had cut her wrist because she "was sad", she explained that she was sad because all her friends had received positive RSDs and was worried she would be left in the RPC3 all alone. She expressed she had no friends at school and didn't enjoy attending. CW observed the cut on [REDACTED] wrist. It was approximately 1cm long and had some dried blood on the cut. CW advised [REDACTED] that she should take [REDACTED] to IHMS to ensure the cut did not get infected. CW also requested that [REDACTED] also take [REDACTED] to be assessed by IHMS mental health. [REDACTED] agreed to take her to see IHMS.



# Apathy, the mistreatment of non-citizens, and the problem with public accountability

Dr Cynthia Banham

Apathy in the face of human suffering: when it is close to home it is most confounding, even if it does concern the mistreatment of non-citizens. Why don't we care more about the suffering of others, especially when it is within our power to end it?

Like the story of the mother, an Iranian asylum seeker, who needed heart surgery. Without it, she could die, but she was unwilling to leave her son – a minor with acute mental health issues – behind, alone, on Nauru, an island northeast of Australia in Micronesia. Would not any mother, or father for that matter, sympathise with this woman's position? For 18 months, the Federal Government refused to let her bring her son with her to Australia, where doctors recommended she come to have the operation. Instead, she remained in a hot mouldy tent with her son in the isolated detention camp, her life-threatening condition going untreated. Eventually, the woman was flown to Taiwan with her son for surgery. Stories detailing her plight were published in sympathetic media outlets like *The Guardian*. But the screaming headlines about Australia's asylum seeker policies were not about the mother. They were instead about the Australian Border Force Commissioner, Roman Quaedvlieg, who had been on paid leave since May 2017 while he was investigated over his personal conduct and allegations he abused his power to help his girlfriend get a job. In March 2018 – the same week it was reported the Iranian mother was flown to Taiwan – the government terminated Quaedvlieg's appointment for alleged misbehaviour.

These two examples send conflicting messages about public accountability in Australia in a field that has immense consequences for individual rights and liberties. To understand why Australians don't care more about the wellbeing of the almost 2,000 asylum seekers and refugees currently detained at the behest of our government in miserable conditions on Nauru and Manus Island, Papua New Guinea – some for over four years – it helps to examine the issue in the context of the common public accountability challenges that liberal democracies face today. The asylum seeker issue in Australia – the government's policies and the public's responses – demonstrate both the fragility of our public accountability systems and the consequences for individual rights that can ensue.

On the one hand, the level of interest in the inquiries into the actions of the Border Force Commissioner suggest there are robust checks in place for challenging the questionable exercise of public power. According to its website, this is the agency responsible

for “facilitating the lawful passage of people and goods”, for “investigations, compliance and enforcement in relation to illicit goods and immigration malpractice”, and for offshore detention. There was not one but two official investigations into the Quaedvlieg controversy: one by the Federal Government's Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, the other by the Secretary of Prime Minister and Cabinet and head of the Australian Public Service, Martin Parkinson. There has also been intense questioning in Senate Estimates hearings of public officials over the status of the investigations and Quaedvlieg's ongoing position.

Why so much scrutiny of the Border Force Commissioner? There are no doubt multiple reasons. Foremost among them, however, must be how embarrassing it looks for a government that stakes its credentials on its tough stance on Australian border security to have the future of its top uniformed official under such a cloud.

Lest one conclude from the Quaedvlieg case that public accountability in Australia is in a healthy state, we can consider the diverse ways in which the Federal Government has sought to avoid accountability for the human impact its harsh border security policies have had on individual asylum seekers and refugees. Briefly, these policies, known today as 'Operation Sovereign Borders', have evolved over the last 17 years and are supported by both major Australian political parties. Asylum seekers are mandatorily detained and assessed offshore, and are unable to resettle in Australia ever, even after obtaining refugee status. They are also held in conditions so unbearable as to act as a disincentive for others seeking asylum to attempt the same passage to Australia. Meanwhile, new boats are intercepted and turned back by Australian authorities to the country they departed from.

The government's attempts to avoid scrutiny of these policies have included diffusing and obscuring its exercise of power over the individual asylum seekers and refugees affected by its policies in two major ways. The first involves outsourcing the running of detention centres to private contractors, and the second is by detaining individuals offshore in countries with less robust accountability systems, where asylum seekers and refugees are removed from supportive advocacy networks and the Australian public is less conscious of their presence. The government's efforts to prevent accountability have been both direct and indirect. For example, it has directly sought to limit the investigative power of national agencies and parliamentary committees as well as international human rights monitors by preventing visits to offshore detention centres. Indirectly, it has militarised the language around the handling of asylum seekers, so that 'on-water' matters have become beyond challenge, just like 'operational security' matters are for the defence force: which readily bats journalists' questions away.

Accountability mechanisms can be understood to operate horizontally and vertically. That is, horizontally within government, through the separation of powers and public agencies empowered to restrain the political executive, and vertically, imposed by citizens and civil society from outside government. Again, the government has tried to

thwart horizontal accountability of its treatment of asylum seekers by, for example, minimising the courts' powers to scrutinise its decisions. It also punished the Australian Human Rights Commission for issuing a report that exposed the abuse and harm being done to children inside offshore detention centres, by cutting funding and trying to discredit the agency's former head Gillian Triggs. The government's attempts to shut down the effectiveness of vertical mechanisms of accountability have been no less severe. They have included passing laws making it a criminal offence punishable by jail for current or former immigration detention centre staff to publicly raise concerns about matters they witness inside the centres.

This time, we might ask why the government has put so much effort into avoiding accountability for its treatment of refugees in offshore detention? A possible answer is that if the Australian public does not know the upsetting details of the suffering of individuals inside the centres – the toxic accommodation tents, the suicide attempts, what the actual day of a child kept in offshore detention looks like – it will not question the humanity of the actions the government takes to prevent asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat. Pursuing such policies would make Australians uncomfortable, but would be accepted by the majority as a necessary evil. Or, as the former prime minister, Tony Abbott, explained to the 'countries of Europe' in 2015, it would 'gnaw at our consciences' but it was 'the only way to prevent a tide of humanity surging through Europe and quite possibly changing it forever'.

The asylum seeker issue in Australia – the government's policies and the public's responses – demonstrate both the fragility of our public accountability systems and the consequences for individual rights that can ensue.

Something else is going on, aside from the government obscuring the full picture of how asylum seekers are deterred from coming by boat so that, while the public's conscience is gnawed at, it will still accept the measures are necessary and justified. What of the public's obligation to demand to see the full picture, in all its ugliness, to insist on robust accountability of its elected representatives for policies that damage the physical and mental wellbeing of a minority of others, among them children? Of course, there are many examples of civil society actors in Australia challenging the government over its treatment of asylum seekers. They include refugee advocacy groups, human rights NGO's, sections of the media, religious groups and some medical professionals. But the offshore detention regime remains in place and, while there have been small victories for advocates, the calls for change have not coalesced into a force strong enough to be of concern to the government at the ballot box.



The question posed at the start of the essay – why don't we care more about the suffering of others, especially when it is within our power to end it – led me to examine the existing scholarship on public accountability, looking for a clue. Public accountability is a two-sided relationship between governors and the governed that entails responsibilities on both sides. Sifting through the literature with fellow contributor, Kirsty Anantharajah, we were struck by the lack of close examination of the responsibilities of the governed to demand accountability; most of the focus is on the governors. Flowing from this, there is minimal exploration around the question of what underpins the responsibilities of the governed in the public accountability relationship. This led us to explore the ethical dimension of accountability which, while sometimes (if infrequently) discussed in the literature, is most often considered in relation to the motives of account givers in serving the people who elected them.

What can we say about ethics in the context of public accountability? Ethics has an inherent social quality. As Jean-Marc Coicaud and Daniel Warner write, it is about feeling that our individual lives extend to the lives of others. We recognise that others have rights and acknowledge that there exists a duty to respect them. Proponents of accountability argue it will become more effective when it is understood to encompass an ethics of doing what is right and having a regard for others. However, must this regard for others be limited to fellow citizens? When a public official's actions encompass harm to a non-citizen, is there no ethical obligation on the part of the citizens who elect that government to demand accountability? It is a clear, if sometimes awkward truth, that important social connections exist not only between the citizens of a liberal democracy, but also between citizens and those non-citizens affected by their governments' actions that are carried out for their benefit.

Citizens and non-citizens are linked not only by a common humanity, but also by the fact that the world

is thoroughly internationalised and globalised. The policies pursued, and privileges enjoyed, in wealthy countries are not without consequence for those in distant, less prosperous or more troubled, places.

To take one example of where a social connection between citizens and non-citizens affected by the Australian Government's actions has been largely overlooked in public discourse, consider the issue of arms exports. Earlier this year the Federal Government announced it was creating more jobs by increasing the manufacture and export of arms for warfare. Religious-based justice groups pointed out the ethical issues implicit in pursuing national prosperity by growing an industry whose existence depends on ensuring the continuation of wars that terrorise, maim and kill civilians and cause them to flee their homes and countries. There are obvious social connections between Australian citizens profiting from the manufacture and export of such weapons and the populations overseas where these wars will be fought – between us and them. They are connections the government would have voters overlook.

I link the issues of jobs from arms exports to the cruel treatment of refugees because at the core of the ethical case against both is a dimension that is so often missing from public and political discourse in the fields of security, immigration, defence and foreign policy.

Australians don't often talk about this, but globalisation and internationalisation connect all of humanity, and renders the ethical obligation to have regard for the rights of others in assessing the acceptability of their government's conduct inescapable. There is a clear deficiency in the way we understand and practice public accountability around the obligations of citizens to make accountability demands of their government, where the rights of others (non-citizens) are concerned.

It was the Iranian journalist and refugee on Manus Island, Behrouz Boochani, who pointed out

that Australian citizens have a stake in holding their government to account for its treatment of others. In *The Saturday Paper* he wrote that by failing to do this, the Australian public risked the future of its own democracy. The resistance of refugees on Manus Island against their treatment was:

*“In order to return something valuable to the majority of the Australian public, to return what it has lost, or what it is in the process of losing”.*

The apathy we have seen with regards to offshore detention is only possible because of a widespread denial by the public of the social connections that exist between citizens and non-citizens affected by its government's policies. Were such connections acknowledged, it would be much harder to be so dismissive of the wellbeing of others.

**DR CYNTHIA BANHAM IS A SYDNEY-BASED WRITER AND VISITOR AT THE SCHOOL OF REGULATION AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE BASED AT ANU. SHE IS A LAWYER, A FORMER FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT FOR THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD AND WAS, UNTIL RECENTLY, A RESEARCH FELLOW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND IN THE SCHOOL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES. DR BANHAM OBTAINED HER PHD FROM ANU IN 2015. SHE HAS PUBLISHED TWO BOOKS: LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES AND THE TORTURE OF THEIR CITIZENS (HART PUBLISHING, 2017) AND A CERTAIN LIGHT (ALLEN & UNWIN, 2018).**

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Artwork by Penny Byrne, Leaking like a SIEV (Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel) (2011)



## OFFSHORE PROCESSING & ME



**NO**

## Why? / Why Not?

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Postcode

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(please include your postcode)



Offshore Processing & Me (2018)  
Cardboard polling booths, 600 x 500 x 1800 mm each

Are we accountable for the lives of those in Australia's offshore processing centres?

The simple answer is, Yes! We are. As citizens of Australia we have a duty to protect those in our care, those in vulnerable positions, and demand that better decisions, actions, policies and laws be made and passed by our Government to ensure that the lives of people in offshore detention centres are protected and that each human being is brought to Australia. What else can be done? Sometimes speaking out doesn't seem like enough, sometimes writing a letter doesn't seem like enough, sometimes voting doesn't seem like enough, but these are the collective steps we need to take as citizens to make our voices heard. It's a privilege to make art and have both a voice and a platform, why not use it to demand change?

Offshore Processing & Me is about juxtaposing the values, attitudes, and idiosyncrasies Australia loves to flaunt with the realities of the brutal system of offshore detention.

Don't look the other way, instead look within, grab a pen, and take action!



"Milkali Kutju", One Blood (2018)  
Two glass-bead blasted car doors, each 1200 x 1800 mm

## 27 SEPTEMBER 2014 | RISK RATING: INFORMATION | DOWNGRADED? UNKNOWN

I was informed by [REDACTED] that during the protests last night, he witnessed Wilsons guards being inappropriate towards other asylum seekers. He revealed that when an asylum seeker slashed his neck, other rushed to his aid. They were stopped by Wilsons guards who stood in a circle around the hurt asylum seeker. They then started to tease the asylum seekers about their desire to go to Australia, and told them "you will never be let out of here".

Where I am from, in the heart of Australia, the car is a vessel that transports not only people but also stories, moving between cultures, worlds and languages. The landscape between communities is covered in rusted and burnt car wrecks, reminders of the impermanence and imminent risk every journey entails.

Milkali kutju means “one blood” in Pitjantjatjara, one of many languages spoken on my land. This expression reminds us that here on the APY lands as well as globally, one blood unites everyone. We all have different heritage, different stories running through our lives. But no matter your language, culture or skin, we all have the same blood flowing through our veins. Borders and the segregation of nations have led many to forget that the one thing that gives us life is shared by all equally.

By printing these words across the car doors I am questioning the act of control, the act of forceful transportation and detention. There is a link between the closing of doors to keep people out and closing of doors to keep people in, to confine certain people, to abuse authority.

We all belong to humanity. One blood. Love for all, hate for none. Let us not forget the importance of these ideas.





Peter Gardiner

Burning house II (Devil's Island) 2017  
Oil on canvas  
1500 x 1300 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM**  
**30 SEPTEMBER 2014 | RISK RATING: MINOR**

[REDACTED] told SCA staff that her along with many other youths were considering a mass self harm with razor blades, detergent and cigarette buds.

**ARTIST STATEMENT**

When you watch your house and country burn down, your family ripped apart, the life you once had destroyed irrevocably, you get out, because that is all you can do. You seek a new life, to start again, have another crack, because that is what you do. Rebuild out of the ruins. You can only seek asylum, relying on the compassion and understanding of your fellow man. The country you seek is supposedly built on the ideals of a western liberal democracy but they shunt you off to a tropical jail, where you spend the best years of your life as a prisoner of a political doctrine that serves power, not humanity. What's left of your home – your security – is burning again.

We as a nation are not who we think we are. We have trashed our reputation with policy that demonises and punishes the innocent. Our house is on fire and the leaders, if not actively feeding the flames, are standing around paralysed with indecision, letting it burn, because it seems this is what you do.

Sam Harrison

Untitled (2017)  
Woodcut on fabriano edition 1/7, 1000 x 700 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: VOLUNTARY STARVATION**  
**28 MAY 2015 | RISK RATING: MAJOR**

[REDACTED] had informed the staff that he will not eat or drink anything until he gets to Australia.

**ARTIST STATEMENT**

Sam Harrison has always been drawn to the human figure. For Sam, the figure contains and holds all of the passions and anxieties, the allure and the fragility that humans embody. There is often a gentle melancholia in his figures or, at the very least, an introversion that we bear witness to and cannot absolve. Their deportment is such that we immediately sense that psychological and emotional conditions impact hugely on the stature of the figure. However ultimately, Sam reminds us that the human form is at once fragile and strong, of its enduring ability to remain fundamental and confronting when stripped bare of its armour.







Pia Johnson

Untitled I (File date, 28 Sept 2014), 2017  
Archival inkjet print  
210 x 297 mm  
Edition 2 of 5

Untitled II (File date, 28 Sept 2014), 2017  
Archival inkjet print  
594 x 840 mm  
Edition 2 of 5

Untitled III (File date, 28 Sept 2014), 2017  
Archival inkjet print  
297 x 420 mm  
Edition 2 of 5



TYPE OF INCIDENT: COMPLAINT  
28 SEPTEMBER 2014 | RISK RATING: INFORMATION

I was asked on Friday (26-9-2014) by a fellow teacher [REDACTED 1] if I would sit with an asylum seeker [REDACTED 2] who was sobbing. She is a classroom helper for the children. A secondary teacher assistant [REDACTED 3] was present. She talked about several situations, some from Christmas Island, some from RPC3. She reported that she has been asking for a 4 minute shower as opposed to 2 minutes. Her request has been accepted on condition of sexual favours. It is a male security person. She did not state if this has or hasn't occurred. The security officer wants to view a boy or girl having a shower.

Laura Jones

Up and Away (2018)  
Oil on linen, 1830 x 1520 mm

TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM  
27 JANUARY 2015 | RISK RATING: MINOR | DOWNGRADED? YES

I attended the tent of [REDACTED] with Persian interpreter [REDACTED]. I spoke to [REDACTED] around taking her medication. She has stated this was out of protest and that she feels like she is unable to go on and is tired. She used the metaphor that “they” were cutting off her head with a plastic sword and killing her slowly. She stated that she would take “this” into her own hands. That she would not do anything like take shampoo to end her life but would stop taking her medication. [REDACTED] stated that her son [REDACTED] would be better off on his own. I asked [REDACTED] if she would like IHMS mental health, she declined as she did not want to attend IHMS, I asked would she see them if they attended her tent and she stated that would be better. Nb: risk rating and incident type changed by Wilsons.



ARTIST STATEMENT

For Laura, the chance to respond to human fragility is of great importance. Her intention in researching a particular refugee, and her shocking predicament in detention on Nauru is an opportunity to express the collective disappointment in the current political response to the refugee crisis. Rather than offering a literal reconstruction of events or circumstance, Laura has chosen to offer hope, in the form of a painting. It should be viewed as a gesture of recognition of the human rights owed to the nameless woman. Above all, Laura wanted to paint a place of sanctuary for her unidentified storyteller.



# Community sponsorship of refugees: An idea whose time has come

Khanh Hoang

The Australian government’s current policy of “offshore processing” — whereby those who arrive in Australia are transferred to Papua New Guinea and Nauru for processing and can never be resettled in Australia — is premised on the logic that the policy saves lives at sea. Yet, nearly five years after offshore processing was reinstituted, the majority of asylum seekers and refugees remain trapped in limbo without access to a safe, durable solution. Twelve individuals have died and many of those still alive have been psychologically and physically damaged. From a humanitarian and international refugee law perspective, the policy has been an abject failure.

Nearly five years after offshore processing was reinstituted, the majority asylum seekers and refugees remain in trapped in limbo without access to a safe durable solution. Twelve individuals have died and many of those still alive have been psychologically and physically damaged. From a humanitarian and international refugee law perspective, the policy has been an abject failure.

When dealing with refugee flows, the need to expand access to durable solutions is a challenge not only for Australia, but the entire international community. Recently, UN member states have agreed to a final draft of a Global Compact on Refugees, a document that provides a blueprint for enhanced responsibility sharing of refugee protection amongst States. The compact calls for the expanded use of community sponsorship models as a way to increase access to durable solutions for refugees.

The idea of community sponsorship is simple enough – community sponsors in a receiving country would fund the resettlement of refugees living in limbo in other countries waiting for a long-term solution. Sponsors would provide refugees with practical support through the integration process and this would be in addition to existing government-funded resettlement programs. More refugees can find a safe place to call home, and be supported in integrating into their host community, at minimal cost to the taxpayer. Community sponsorship of refugees is not a new idea. It has been a feature of Canada’s refugee system since 1978 and has helped resettle more than

300,000 people. Other States including New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Argentina are piloting their own schemes. In Australia, a consortium of refugee and humanitarian organisations under the umbrella of the Australian Community Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (CRSI) – including Save the Children, Amnesty International and the Refugee Council of Australia – is urging the Australian government to take a similar approach.

While it may seem that community sponsorship is a relatively new policy idea, Australia has a long history and experience with community-led refugee settlement. Our first foray into this concept began in 1979 when the Fraser government introduced the Community Refugee Settlement Scheme (CRSS) as part of Australia’s response to the Indochinese refugee crisis.

The scheme was introduced to take pressure off government-run migrant centres and hostels that operated as reception facilities for resettled and spontaneous refugee arrivals. Instead of being processed through these migrant centres, refugees coming to Australia would be moved directly into the community and be supported by community groups and individuals. The CRSS was initially set up to support only Indo-chinese refugees, but was later expanded to support Eastern European and Latin American refugees, and eventually to all refugees and humanitarian entrants.

Under the CRSS, established voluntary agencies, community groups, individuals and businesses could apply to participate in the scheme by putting forward an offer of support. Eligibility to participate was dependent on several factors, including the standing of the group or organisation and the level of financial resources. Sponsors also needed to demonstrate the capacity to assist refugees, including previous experience with refugee settlement and community welfare matters.

The scheme ran until 1997 and helped to settle more than 30,000 refugees, allowing the community to play a vital role in supporting refugees in their integration into Australia. Importantly, the scheme allowed “high needs entrants” – those who had no family or links in Australia, who had experienced torture and trauma, or women-at-risk as well as their family members to be resettled in Australia.

In recent months, the Australian government introduced a Community Support Programme (CSP) offering the chance for private sponsors from the Australian community to sponsor up to 1000 places out of Australia’s annual refugee resettlement quota (currently 16,250 places a year). The CSP allows Australian businesses and individuals to sponsor refugees for resettlement with a primary focus on providing an avenue for businesses to employ refugees. Under the program, priority is given to those who are aged between 18 and 50 who have an offer of employment or have personal attributes that would enable them to become financially self-sufficient within 12 months of arrival.

The new CSP is to be cautiously welcomed but it is not perfect. First, the focus on “job ready” entrants makes it more akin to a skilled migration pathway.

While it is important that refugees be supported in finding employment, employability should not be one of the criteria to our offering them protection. Secondly, the program is prohibitively expensive. It will cost sponsors more than \$100,000 to sponsor a family of five under the CSP, including visa application charges of about \$30,000, airfares and medical screening fees. Thirdly, the CSP is not additional to the current refugee quota, meaning that each entrant to Australia under the CSP results in one less refugee resettled through government funding. Thus, questions around fairness and shifting the cost of resettlement from government to community are issues that need to be solved.

Yet, community involvement in refugee resettlement has proved itself to be effective in the past – in Australia and elsewhere. It allows the the Australian government to draw upon the experience and strength of the Australian community in settling refugees whilst providing refugees with safer alternatives to perilous boat journeys. But if we are to implement a community sponsorship scheme on a larger scale, policy makers need to carefully consider the objectives and design of such a scheme and ensure that programs will address the needs of refugees, sponsors and the broader Australian community.

Community involvement in refugee resettlement has proved itself to be effective in the past – in Australia and elsewhere. It allows the the Australian government to draw upon experience and strength of the Australian community in settling refugees whilst allow providing refugees with safer alternative to perilous boat journeys.

If that can be done, there is no reason why the generosity and kindness of the Australian people cannot be harnessed to help offer protection to those who so desperately need it.

KHANH HOANG, PHD CANDIDATE, ANDREW AND RENATA KALDOR CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE LAW. THIS ESSAY WAS BASED ON A SHORT ARTICLE WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR FOR THE SOUTH SYDNEY HERALD.



## Janet Laurence

Flotsam  
/ ˈflɒts(ə)m/  
noun  
– People or things that have been rejected or discarded as worthless. (2017)  
Duraclear on acrylic, mirror, 600 x 600mm  
Artwork on loan, courtesy of Juliet Ashworth private collection

TYPE OF INCIDENT: INFORMATION  
06 OCTOBER 2014 | RISK RATING: INFORMATION

Whilst discussing the health of [REDACTED] on the impact the last few weeks have had on her, she revealed that one A/S is trying to organise a mass suicide. She stated that at last count there are at least 30 people who are willing to take part. She stated she would not reveal the name of the main organiser and will not repeat this to anybody.



05 May 2015

[REDACTED] showed me a heart he had sewn into his hand using a needle and thread. I asked why and he said “I don’t know”.



Angus Mcdonald

Set Me Free (2018)  
Oil on panel, 1070 x 1210 mm

TYPE OF INCIDENT:  
ACTUAL SELF-HARM  
05 MAY 2015 | RISK RATING: CRITICAL

On morning bus run [REDACTED] showed me a heart he had sewn into his hand using a needle and thread. I asked why and he said “I don’t know”. I notified [REDACTED] as soon as I got off the bus at OPC1 and she proceeded to take [REDACTED] to IHMS. [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] yrs of age.

ARTIST STATEMENT

In the file I chose to interpret, a child, a boy whose name we do not know, sewed a heart into his hand with a needle and thread on the morning bus. I have three children of my own. The idea that any of our kids would engage in such a violent, self-destructive act of their own volition is terrifying. It's extreme, also painful. It's a clear cry for help and love from someone traumatised by their situation. He is too young to have childhood experiences like this. The incident initiated by this boy occurred while under the direct care of Australia. His welfare is our responsibility.

Every person who arrived here seeking safety and ended up on Nauru is innocent. But children are always innocent in every situation. Although children represent less than a fifth of the population of refugees and asylum seekers on Nauru, they feature in more than half of the 2000 files released.

Hundreds of men, women and children have now been detained in this remote location offshore for four and a half years but the Nauru files themselves span a time period of just two and a half. Collectively, these incidents document a systematic culture of hostility, and speak to an environment reeking of despair and hopelessness that was created by our Federal Government.

My file was shocking but each is equally tragic. To read them is to see the darkest side of a country that claims that values and human rights are important. Cruelty never solved a single problem or built anything of value. It has only ever resulted in the creation of further suffering. Australians are decent, compassionate people but we have tacitly allowed this policy to continue through our silence. One reason for this is that it has been made invisible to us. I hope that people who attend this exhibition might learn more about the tragedy on Nauru, and find a voice to speak out and end it.





Julian Meagher

Untitled. Redacted (2018), pictured  
Oil on linen, 1070 x 1630 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: UNCLASSIFIED**  
**07 MARCH 2014 | RISK RATING: UNCLASSIFIED | DOWNGRADED? UNKNOWN**

At the above date and time I was approached by SCA [REDACTED] to assist locating three transferees. When I asked for what purpose, [REDACTED] informed me today is the anniversary they lost their child to drowning whilst attempting to get to Australia. Transferees are: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

George Palmer

6 Letters (2018)  
Soundscape, made with recordings of people on Nauru during 2013–2015

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM**  
**26 MARCH 2015 | RISK RATING: MAJOR**

[REDACTED] then disclosed the following: about 4 days ago (Monday 22/03/2015) she stated that she was “Feeling upset and worried as I miss my husband who lives in the community in Australia”. She stated that she “wanted a tattoo of his name but can’t get that here so I cut his name on my chest”. In a discussion about what she was feeling when she did this, [REDACTED] stated that when she feels worried or sad she cuts herself, then has a shower and the pain she experiences when the cut gets wet “releases the feelings in my heart and I feel better”. [REDACTED] then pulled down her tshirt and her husband’s name was observed cut into her skin on the top of her left breast. It appears to be approximately 8-10cm in length and 2cm high with 6 letters.

**ARTIST STATEMENT**  
The soundscape originally created for Belinda Fox’s blown glass sculpture, “6 Letters” (exhibited at Yellow House, Sydney), uses text taken from one of the Nauru Incident Report files released by the Australian Government in heavily redacted form. Despite the deletion of all personal information from the files, they speak eloquently and movingly of the desperate plight of the refugees imprisoned on Nauru.  
The words in this soundscape are spoken by people who were on Nauru at the time of these incidents. Talking to these two young people gave me a deeper insight into the trauma suffered not only by the refugees but also by those charged with taking care of them.  
Australia’s response to the refugee crisis is one for which history will rightly condemn us.



Cut and Sewed Her Own Stitches (2018)  
Porcelain and wood, 200 x 275 x 150 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: INFORMATION**  
**30 SEPTEMBER 2014 | RISK RATING: INFORMATION | DOWNGRADED? UNKNOWN**

Information regarding asylum seekers with lips sewn:  
- [REDACTED] at 2200hrs had stitches cut by IHMS. He had 4 x full flesh stitches.  
- [REDACTED] went to IHMS @ approx 2345 and asked to have his stitches removed. CSO reported stitches were just through the skin.  
- [REDACTED] - had his stitches cut by IHMS - full flesh stitches.  
- [REDACTED] cut and removed her own stitches.  
- [REDACTED] have all been seen by either Welfare or CSO eating soup or noodles.

**ARTIST STATEMENT**  
Always, I am in solidarity with the hardships of fellow migrants – never with cops, and never with governments. But always with those who, like me, have experienced war and conflict in their homes. And always with women who, also like me, have experienced unjust and undeserved violence. And more than anything, with the conviction that no child should ever, ever experience what these 2,116 cables document to the outside world in their evil, indifferent bureaucracy.  
I can’t tell you how lucky I am, to not add “like me” in that last sentence.  
I would hope that Australians by now would have learnt from our dark past, not to turn a blind eye to human rights violations in our hands in the present. But how wrong I am.



Cage (2017)  
Mixed media on linen, 1680 x 1980 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM**  
**24 JULY 2015 | RISK RATING: MAJOR**

CW [REDACTED 2] visited Asylum Seeker (A/S) [REDACTED 2] at SAA. [REDACTED 2] asked [REDACTED 1] if it was true that A/S will be transferred to Manus for medical treatment. [REDACTED 1] confirmed that that she had heard today that A/S may be sent to another island for medical treatment but it was not confirmed. [REDACTED 2] then stated that he is going to kill himself. He said ‘this is not a system, this is fucking corruption. If they don’t kill us here first, I am going to kill myself’.  
**ARTIST STATEMENT**  
The grim reality of the Nauru files cannot be fathomed by reading them. The incidents are reported as such – no emotion, no outrage, just the pure, dire facts. Upon encountering them I could only respond with horror, and then a feeling of powerlessness. Why doesn’t everyone feel horrified? How can this be happening in our time, on our watch?  
The file I chose illustrates the asylum seeker’s utter hopelessness. I responded to this file in a purely emotional way, at first painting a ground in dark tones. The hours went by as I tried to let materialise something for which I had no words. I felt trapped within this process – it felt never ending . . . I triggered the alarm when I left the studio as I hadn’t realised it was so late. Leaving that layer to dry for days and staring at it, not knowing at all where it would go, I started drawing all over the surface and eventually I realised I was drawing a cage - both literal and metaphoric.  
The cage is emblematic of how I imagine this asylum seeker must feel in his or her helplessness and also of my own inability to affect change. When life is taken away – when hope is taken away – is there any surprise that the will to live disappears?





## Ben Quilty

Nauru File 18 March 2015 (2018)  
Oil on linen, 800 x 700 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ASSAULT

18 MARCH 2015 | RISK RATING: MINOR | DOWNGRADED? NO

[REDACTED] was being rude and disruptive in class. I asked him to leave the room. He kicked me in the leg then left. We sat on the bench outside. I asked for his boat number. He did not want to say it so [REDACTED] went to the class to ask the teacher. [REDACTED] threw a box at me and hit me in the arm. [REDACTED] told him to stop and sit down. [REDACTED] went with [REDACTED] on the bus to RPC3 at the end of the school day. I went to RPC3 to inform the parents.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

Postcolonial Australia is built on violent foundations. From the beginning, convict chain gangs laboured to construct a society bent on the murderous eviction of Indigenous Australians. So, in some ways the Nauru files and the politics that have enabled it should not come as a surprise. I hope that this show can add another voice to those emboldened by compassion.

# ‘A letter from Manus Island’

Behrouz Boochani

*An extract of the poet’s manifesto reflecting on the refugee resistance during the forced closure of the Lorengau detention centre in late 2017. First published in The Saturday Paper, December 2017.*

For many watching the events on the island and in the prison from the outside, some central questions have arisen. How could we continue resisting without food, water and medicine for three weeks? How did we keep the character of our protest peaceful throughout this period? How did we continue resisting without ever resorting to violence? And what are the messages that this resistance is attempting to convey?

The refugees are overpowered.

The refugees have had extraordinary pressure imposed on them.

The refugees have resisted an entire political system; they have stood up to the power of a whole government.

From the very beginning right through to the very end, the refugees only used peaceful means to stand up and challenge power.

The refugees have asserted their authority.

The refugees have claimed power.

The refugees were able to reimagine themselves in the face of the detention regime.

The refugees were able to re-envision their personhood when suppressed by every form of torture inflicted on them and when confronted by every application of violence.

According to its own logic, and consistent with the character it has moulded itself into, the detention regime wanted to manufacture a particular kind of refugee with a particular kind of response. However, the refugees were able to regain their identity, regain their rights, regain their dignity. In fact, what has occurred is essentially a new form of identification, which asserts that we are human beings.

The refugees have been able to reconfigure the images of themselves as passive actors and weak subjects into active agents and fierce resisters. The concept of the refugee as a passive actor was an ideal instrument in the hands of power and could be exploited by Australia’s political machinations; it formed the refugees into something that could be manipulated and leveraged for the Australian government’s own purpose.

The refugees have established that they desire to exist only as free individuals. They desire only an honourable existence. They have established this in confrontation with the proliferation of violence in the detention centre, one that is implemented by a mighty power structure. Up against the determination of this monolith, the refugees have, ultimately, vindicated themselves.

The refugees have been able to refashion the image of themselves as the “Other”. We have reshaped the understanding of us as politically inept and have been successful in projecting an image of who we are. We now present the real face of refugees for a democratic Australia to discern.

The refugees have found the responses and reasoning provided by the government regarding the hostage situation and our incarceration to be absurd. There have been ridiculous fabrications. We have exposed this as a form of political opportunism, as a politics driven by economic mismanagement and incompetence, policies that benefit bloodthirsty financial investors, a politics that experiments in order to further ingrain a system of border militarisation and securitisation.

The refugees have identified and exposed the face of an emerging 21st-century dictatorship and fascism, a dictatorship and fascism that will one day creep into Australian society and into people’s homes like a cancer.

In any case, our resistance  
and the three weeks of  
hardship we endured produced  
a new perspective and  
method that was remarkably  
transformative, even for us  
incarcerated within Manus  
prison. We learnt that humans  
have no sanctuary except  
within other human beings.  
Humans have no felicitous way  
to live their lives other than to  
trust in other humans, and the  
hearts of other humans, and  
the warmth within the hearts  
of other humans.

The refugees have been resisting with their very lives.

Against the real politics of the day.

With their very bodies.

With peace as a way of being and as an expression.

With a rejection of violence.

With a kind of political poetics.

With a particular style of poetic resistance.

These features have become one with their existence.

Refugees pushed back.

Risking their lives and bodies.

Just fragile humans risking everything.

Risking everything that is beautiful.

Risking the only things of value left to them.

Risking what nature had bestowed upon them.

They never gave up these things to become mere bodies subject to politics. In opposition to a system of discipline and the mechanisation of their bodies, the detained did not surrender. In reality, they proved that the human being is not a creature that can be entirely and completely consumed by politics.

From another perspective, this mode of resistance and the messages communicated by the imprisoned is nothing more than refugees asserting and putting into practice their values and their standpoints. They took this stance in order to return something valuable to the majority of the Australian public, to return what it has lost, or what it is in the process of losing. We formulated a schema of humanity that is, precisely, in polar opposition to fascist thinking – the kind of thinking that created Manus prison.

We have reminded a majority of the Australian public that throughout their history they have only ever imagined that their democracy and freedom has been created on the basis of principles of humanity.

If a majority of Australians were to reflect deeply on our resistance and sympathise with us, they would come to realise something about how they imagined themselves to be until now.

They would undergo a kind of self-realisation regarding their illusions of moral superiority.

And they would be forced to self-analyse in relation to the principles and values they hold dear at this point in time, and realise that they are not connected to a mythical moral past.

Our resistance is the spirit that haunts Australia. Our resistance is a new manifesto for humanity and love.

In any case, our resistance and the three weeks of hardship we endured produced a new perspective and method that was remarkably transformative, even for us incarcerated within Manus prison. We learnt that humans have no sanctuary except within other human beings. Humans have no felicitous way to live their lives other than to trust in other humans, and the hearts of other humans, and the warmth within the hearts of other humans.

When we were facing off  
against a group of police  
officers, we linked our arms to  
create a chain and told them  
that we only had love for them.

Our resistance enacted a profound poetic performance. This persisted until the moment we were confronted with the extremity of the violence. We found that the baton-wielding police had killed one of the dogs we had adopted into our community. At that moment, we descended into sorrow and wept,





in honour of its loyalty,  
its beauty,  
its innocence.

This profound poetic performance was implemented on another occasion when we were facing off against a group of police officers. We linked our arms to create a chain and told them that we only had love for them. We recited this as a poem that then became a collective expression:

A poem that united us.  
A poem that we chanted in unison.  
A poem of peace.  
A poem of humanity.  
A poem of love.

When the police chief stood in front of the community of half-naked refugees and named the leaders over the loudspeaker, asking them to surrender themselves, everyone called out:

“I’m A ...!”  
“I’m Y ...!”  
“I’m B ...!”

This was the scene that emerged in Manus prison.

On the same day that we were brutally bashed, a number of individuals placed flowers in their hair. A sick Rohingya man put two red flowers behind his ears and smiled even as his body was emaciated and in the worst shape possible.

Our resistance was an epic of love.

In any case, I think that our resistance, our strategy of defiance, our message of protest, are the product of years of captivity, of a life of captivity, all produced by captives of a violent governmentality in Manus prison.

**Our resistance was an epic of love.**

Resistance in its purest form.  
A noble resistance.  
An epic constituted by half-naked bodies up against a violent governmentality.  
All this violence designed in government spaces and targeted against us has driven our lives towards nature.  
towards the natural environment,  
towards the animal world,  
towards the ecosystem.

It has pushed us in this direction since we hope that maybe we could make its meaning, beauty and affection part of our reality. And coming to this realisation is the most pristine, compassionate and non-violent relationship and encounter possible for the imprisoned refugees in terms of rebuilding our lives and identities.

We built profound relationships with the indigenous people, with the children, with the birds, the interaction between elements of society, even with the dog that was killed under the brutality of the system.

But the prison and its violence will never accept this, and in every situation the imprisoned lives and spirits have to reconfigure themselves in the face of death; they avoid projecting the malevolent dimension of their existence as the most dominant.

Ultimately, they beat us down and with violence put an end to our peaceful protest. But I think we were able to communicate our humanitarian message to Australian society and beyond. This sentiment is what all people, whether in Australia or elsewhere, need more than anything else these days.

Feelings of friendship.  
Feelings of compassion.  
Feelings of companionship.  
Feelings of justice.  
And feelings of love.

**BEHROUZ BOOCHANI IS A KURDISH JOURNALIST, HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER, POET AND FILM PRODUCER. HE HAS BEEN DETAINED ON MANUS ISLAND SINCE 2013.**

**BEHROUZ WRITES FURTHER ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE IN HIS NEW BOOK, ‘NO FRIEND BUT THE MOUNTAINS’ (2018).**

‘Bird of Paradise’ by Joshua Yeldham  
Unique hand carved archival pigment print on cotton paper, 116 x 90 cm, edition of 28.  
Donated by the artist to support the All We Can’t See tour

I was on the boat now I am on the road . . .

There wasn’t safety in my land  
and nothing free was in my hand

I couldn’t walk freely and I couldn’t talk fairly

so I search the place where is the peace on earth

I found the place and I landed the boat . . .

Five years ago I was on the boat to seek peace –  
now I am on the road to find . . .

peace that I missed . . .

**Ravi (S. Nagaveeran)**

Extract of poem ‘From Hell to Hell’ (2016)  
Available from *Writing Through Fences*

After travelling to Australia from Sri Lanka by boat, Ravi was detained in the Nauru Regional Processing Centre and Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation for over three years.

Due to the harsh regime of secrecy surrounding Australia’s immigration detention centres, it is rare to hear first-hand accounts from people who have survived years behind the fences. It is particularly rare to hear stories from within the Australian-run offshore detention centres on Nauru and Manus Island. What we do hear often comes from whistleblowers breaching contracts and deeds of confidentiality to speak out. Rarely do we have the opportunity to hear from the people detained inside our centres. Despite this, it is clear that there are countless voices longing to escape the fences that confine them.

Ravi is one man who is willing to speak out about what happened to him. He is now living in the community and has published a collection of his poems written from within our detention centre system. Ravi’s poetry and drawings can be seen as forms of art - literature in and of themselves - however his work can also be perceived as an action of resistance.

Ravi has launched his book in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth. He has travelled across the country sharing his experiences and shedding some light on his journey ‘from hell to hell’.

He stated, “I am a person who was forced to face the inhuman and unjust policies for such a long time... My heart was crushed by these all things and each night my tears makes letters, then the letters gave me my beautiful book ‘From Hell To Hell’. I used the tools I have to express my feelings so I can reach the real Australians.”

**Elliott Routledge**

Site specific work, not yet created at time of publication

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM**  
**24 JUNE 2014 | RISK RATING: MAJOR**

Teacher [REDACTED 1] read [REDACTED 2]’s school work. In her book she had written “I want death, I need death”. Teacher spoke with [REDACTED 2] who confirmed these feelings. CSPM notified.





## Abbey Rich

I Don't Know (2018)  
Acrylic on canvas, cotton thread, 580 x 410mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

05 MAY 2015 | RISK RATING: CRITICAL

On morning bus run [REDACTED] showed me a heart he had sewn into his hand using a needle and thread. I asked why and he said "I don't know". I notified [REDACTED] as soon as I got off the bus at OPC1 and she proceeded to take [REDACTED] to IHMS. [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] yrs of age.



## Mark Rodda

June 26 2015 (2018)  
Synthetic polymer on wood panel, 430 x 440 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

26 JUNE 2015 | RISK RATING: CRITICAL

[REDACTED 1] (SCA teacher) was supervising three students in room [REDACTED] of the RPC1 school, and was sitting on the floor playing cards with [REDACTED 2] . [REDACTED 3] walked into the classroom and reached up and took down a bottle of cleaning fluid from the top of a cupboard where it had been stored. [REDACTED 1] stood up and asked [REDACTED 3] to give her the bottle, but he took the top off and ran out of the classroom. As he ran he attempted to drink the liquid. [REDACTED 1] ran after him and knocked the bottle from his hands. Most of the cleaning fluid ended up on the ground and the front of [REDACTED 3]'s shirt, however he did ingest up to a cupful of the liquid. [REDACTED] (Education Manager) immediately took [REDACTED 3] aside to attend to his immediate needs, and CSO [REDACTED] who was present contacted ihms. [REDACTED 1] went into the classroom and did a sweep for any other potentially harmful items including chemicals and sharp objects.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

In my painting for this exhibition I did not endeavour to depict the specific events of the text. Instead my aim was to attempt to convey, in an abstract form, the psychological state of an individual contemplating these actions. I have lived in relatively comfortable surroundings for my whole life so I can only guess at the emotions situations like this bring forth.



## Caroline Rothwell

Untitled (2014/18)  
Britannia metal, epoxy resin, canvas, hydrostone

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

26 SEPTEMBER 2014 | RISK RATING: CRITICAL | DOWNGRADED? UNKNOWN

Six Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs) self harmed in UAM compound. UAMs also attempting to tear down tarps in the tent. IHMS called and 6 UAMS moved to RPC1 for treatment.

#### CURATORS STATEMENT

The Nauru files show us that Australia is making human sacrifices of innocent people who have escaped some of the worst conflict zones on earth, seeking our protection. We do not directly kill them – our strategy is far more insidious. We strip them of all hope and agency, reduce their children to boat numbers, and then employ guards to oversee their descent into psychological and physical self-destruction. We call this "deterrence".

The equation that you must cause the slow death of one innocent group of people in order to stop the death of a larger, hypothetical group of people is utterly appalling, yet it has somehow become accepted within our collective consciousness as our only option; as a necessary means to an end; and, obscenely, as a humanitarian solution.

It is no coincidence that a nation founded on brutal colonial violence and often unspoken shame has trouble owning up to further demonstrations of its own darkness. However it is only by doing so that we may make way for light. History has taught us repeatedly that a nation without compassion is a broken and dangerous one. As Australians, it is increasingly apparent that we must own up to our darkness, and reassert and defend the value of compassion – for both the lives of those on Nauru and Manus Island, as well as for ourselves.



## Khaled Sabsabi

28 APRIL 2015 (2018)  
Polyresin, plastic, rubber and liquid bleach, 250 x 250 x 190mm  
Work and images courtesy of Khaled Sabsabi and Milani Gallery Brisbane, Australia.

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

28 APRIL 2015 | RISK RATING: MAJOR | DOWNGRADED? NO

At about 2129hrs on 28th April 2015 [REDACTED] approached staff in RPC3 area [REDACTED]. She began to vomit. A strong smell of bleach was detected. A code blue was called. IHMS medical staff attended and [REDACTED] was transported by ambulance to RPC1 for further treatment. At this time the matter was still being treated as a medical incident. At 2220hrs IHMS informed control that as a result of their assessment it appears that [REDACTED] has ingested milton baby bottle sterilizing tablets. This has not been confirmed by [REDACTED]. At 2220hrs the matter was then reported as a major incident.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

I see art as an effective tool to communicate and converse with people, through a familiar language. I've worked in detention centres, schools, prisons, refugee camps, settlements, hospitals, youth centres, galleries and public spaces in the Australian and broader international context. I make work that questions the rationales and complexities of nationhood, identity and change.

My process and practice involves working across art mediums, geographical borders and cultures to speak in ways that may enlighten our understanding of our humanity.





## Alex Seton

Oilstone 01\_Transluscent (2015)  
Bianco Carrara Marble, engine oil, acrylic tank, 470 x 980 x 240 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: NON-COMPLIANCE

06 JULY 2015 | RISK RATING: MINOR

CW's met with [REDACTED 3] and [REDACTED 4] to discuss their RSD status appointment that was scheduled to take place today at 9am. [REDACTED 4] and [REDACTED 3] advised that their family, [REDACTED] age [REDACTED] yrs, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would not attend their appointment for their RSD today for the following reasons: they do not feel safe in the community, [REDACTED 3] is very unwell and receives daily medical treatment now and she will not receive adequate medical treatment in the community. CW's discussed the possible repercussions of them not attending this appointment, [REDACTED 4] and [REDACTED 3] advised the following: they have suffered for 1 year and 10 months here already, they can't make it any worse. In relation to the possibility of being returned home, [REDACTED 4] advised that they are already refugees in 3 countries, if they are not believed now they can be returned to where they found them, in the ocean. The living conditions in Nauru are the same as the country they fled and they did not choose to come to Nauru. [REDACTED 3] stated if they are forced to live in nauru they will jump into the ocean, indicating they will commit suicide. CW explored if [REDACTED 3] had any plans or intentions to self harm and she advised that whilst she was living in the RPC she was safe. CW's have obtained a [REDACTED] interpreter to speak with the remainder of the family this morning.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

*Oilstone 01\_Transluscent* (2015) is the first of four works in a series of sculptures by Alex Seton. In each work, a carving of a common Yamaha motor boat engine in classic statuary white Bianco Carrara marble subjected to a process of transformation.

*Oilstone 01\_Transluscent* (2015) is the engine soaking in a shallow tray of engine oil, slowly drinking in the oil and making the stone more transparent.

Seton has adapted the classical narrative of the hero's journey for a contemporary context in his Oilstone series, to discuss the plight of the refugee. This 6 July 2015 case note from the Nauru Files makes reference to the journey undertaken by this family, capturing their determination and the desperation of the circumstances that brought them to Nauru, to which Australian policy makers are indifferent.

Making reference to Australia's participation in wars in the Middle East, and subsequent inability to address the consequences of these wars by refusing to accept refugees arriving by boat, Seton acknowledges his position of privilege as an Australian citizen. The blood-red engine oil soaks indelibly into the marble, reminding the viewer of the hypocrisy in which Australia is complicit.

As the writer Linda Jaivin has contemplated: "The longer the motor lies in the oil, the more it will absorb, the more it will be stained. How many of these heroes' journeys began with the stain of oil – wars of greed that we have helped to prosecute and that have torn apart whole regions of the world? How many of us understand the stain of our own complicity?" (1)

*Footnotes: (1) Linda Jaivin, Alex Seton – The Island, exhibition catalogue essay, 2017*

# These Refugees are Australian: Vital Materialism and All We Can't See

Kieren Kresevic Salazar

Mass movement is the predominant mode of the twenty-first century. With sixty-five million people forcibly displaced around the world and over twenty-two million refugees recognised by the United Nations, forced migration tests the limits of the free and unrestricted mobility that globalisation promised. The act of seeking asylum requires one to cross a national and likely, militarised, border into a new state. Once across the border, the asylum seeker must supplicate the government official for safe haven, thereby issuing a demand for citizenship. Yet despite what Hannah Arendt told us in her famous phrase invoking "the right to have rights" (Arendt 298), little trust can be placed in many governments' respect for the basic rights and intrinsic value of human life. Instead, what guarantees the protections that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would offer all people, legal citizenship, remains elusive.

Jacqueline Bhabha comments on the lack of access to fundamental rights through her notion of firm placement, to discuss the precarious rights of the Roma in Europe. For stateless Roma, as for refugees who have not yet been resettled permanently, Bhabha outlines the lack of social and territorial belonging that she calls "constitutive displacement" (Sorensen 273). For Bhabha, this constitutive displacement demonstrates the ongoing need for a legal sense of belonging through citizenship, as "a precondition of the right to have rights" (286). Thus, it is no surprise that we see many nations erecting new walls, strengthening borders at key land and sea crossings, reducing humanitarian intakes, and depriving the stateless and precariously displaced of their fundamental rights.

Therefore, what is most definitive of the so called "refugee crisis" of this century, is not simply the figure of the refugee, but rather, it is the refugee who has made their border crossing, requested asylum, and then been told to wait. The mass forced movements which characterise this age carry a concomitant anchor with them, that of encampment and detention. From more than twenty-two million, the global intake of refugees resettled in new countries was only 189,000 in 2016.<sup>i</sup> The rest wait in limbo in sprawling camps, informal settlements, urban slums, and detention centres across the world. The refugee is not a figure of mobility, but, rather, has become a figure of an unwilling and teetering stasis. That is to say, most refugees inhabit a liminal zone between migration and being stuck, between making a claim for asylum and waiting years for a determination, and between having their rights acknowledged as citizens and being abused and tortured as precarious human beings.

The Australian Government's *Operation Sovereign Borders* is the wholesale exploitation of this liminality. Arielle Gamble's exhibition, *All We Can't See*, exposes how offshore detention on Nauru is an example par excellence of the inability of individuals to access rights as a result of their constitutive displacement. The Nauru Files detail innumerable instances of self-harm, threat of self-harm, family violence, physical assault from security personnel, sexual assault of minors, and minors witnessing severe acts of self-harm and violence among adults.<sup>ii</sup> There are 124 children still living in these conditions today, 40 of whom have lived their entire lives on Nauru.<sup>iii</sup> Australia has justified

these abuses by instrumentalising those detained on Nauru and Manus Island into "deterrents" for others contemplating asking Australia for asylum by crossing its borders.

In particular, the Australian government is engaged in a complex process of the commoditisation of refugees, through its rhetorical fixation on deterrence and people smugglers. Igor Kopytoff's "The Cultural Biography of Things," defines a commodity as "a thing that has use value and that can be exchanged in a discrete transaction for a counterpart" (Appadurai 68). For him, the commodity is in juxtaposition with the process of singularization, where societies "set apart a certain portion of their environment, marking it as 'sacred' ... things that are publicly precluded from being commoditized" (73). In the situation of refugees detained on Nauru, the human sphere has been eviscerated into an economic sphere where people smugglers and the government both trade in refugees.

Thus, by creating vital assemblages based on specific reports of violence and trauma, the exhibition holds refugee subjectivity and Australian identity together in a relational field without needing to close the distance between subjects. Instead it acknowledges this distance as the connective tissue of interrelationship, tying the detainees on Nauru irrevocably to the Australian Government, its people, and our history, at the same time as it emphasises the injustice with which we treat those excised from our mainland.

The commoditisation of refugees held on Nauru is seen most clearly in the "people-swap" deal struck between the United States and Australia in 2017. Under this people-swap, refugees on Nauru and in Papua New Guinea are being exchanged for politically inconvenient Central American refugees held in Costa Rica, that the United States is obliged to resettle.<sup>iv</sup> It is important to note that the deal struck with Obama is not a novel manoeuvre; it mirrors a similar deal from 2007, where refugee detainees at the Guantanamo Bay detention centre, under George W. Bush's presidency, were exchanged for Sri Lankan refugees held by Australia on Nauru.<sup>v</sup> The "use value" that makes up the first part of Kopytoff's definition for a commodity is bound up in the political benefit to each government under these dehumanising exchanges. Each is able to eliminate a politically uncomfortable source of

migration among antipathetic segments of the voting public – "boat people" in Australia, Central Americans who carry the spectre of gang violence in the United States, and the fear of porous, insecure borders that would challenge the racial and religious identity of both nations.

In the face of this commoditisation (the politically enacted exchange of refugees for votes from xenophobic Australians), *All We Can't See* has given us a way to singularize the twenty-first century figure of the refugee. Kopytoff suggests that "in the homogenized world of commodities, an eventful biography of a thing becomes the story of the various singularizations of it" (Appadurai 90). By reading Australia's offshore detention policies through a Kopytoff-ian lens, the transmutation of refugee experiences into "a thing", or things, offers the chance to singularize refugee's unique biographies and identities.

The exhibition's works feature a range of densely constructed things. Penny Byrne's two boatworks use mass-produced porcelain figurines to depict "boat people" as white European pastoralists, inverting our assumptions on asylum seeker's race and religion, and invoking our colonial history. Alex Seton's Bianco Carrara marble boat engine links boat crossings to Australia's interventions alongside the United States in various wars across the Middle-East. And Ian Strange's photographic work, "Seventy-one Langley", ties the erasure of home in Australia to the sublimation of hospitality towards those risking their lives to reach safety.

These assemblages and their biographies push us to reconsider refugee agency. In fleeing their homes and deciding to cross by boat to Australia, those detained on Nauru came to the Indian Ocean as a result of a myriad inter-woven factors.

"A lot happens to the concept of agency once nonhuman things are figured less as social constructions and more as actors, and once humans themselves are assessed not as autonyms but as vital materialities" (Bennett 21).

Jane Bennett's provocation to reconsider humans as "vital materialities" allows us to consider the refugee as a relational being with a complex biography, and the artworks as having their own agency. Bennett suggests that vital materialism is a "radical displacement of the human subject" in considering the nature of agency (30), through an acknowledgement that there "was never a time when human agency was anything other than an interfolded network of humanity and nonhumanity" (31). While refugees are characterised by the loss of agency in being pushed out of their homes by large geopolitical forces such as war or discrimination, vital materialism displaces agency away from a single cause and towards a complex, rhizomal origin where refugees make difficult choices in life and death situations.

Drawing from Spinoza, Bennett pushes us to consider the "encounter prone body" of the human and nonhuman, bodies which interact with each other through mosaicism to form assemblages, which are "ad hoc groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts" (21-23). Understanding humanity as vital materialities allows the works to materialise the lost trauma that has been suffered by



asylum seekers and refugees out of the public’s sight. While their individual experiences may be quashed, the assemblages of *All We Can’t See* create a field of interrelationship that irrevocably links the detention experiences of the Nauru Files to the Australian state and its people, making pre-eminent the violence that they have suffered and inculcating viewers’ own identities with refugee experiences.

The discomfort that many of the works create in materialising the most surreptitious elements of abuse on Nauru is also a stark reminder that so much remains concealed regarding *Operation Sovereign Borders*. Those on Nauru and Manus Island continue to face human rights abuses each day, and even after they are one day resettled, it is likely we will forever be demanding a full and accurate account of what has transpired on these two islands.

These vital materialities destruct the government’s political commoditisation of the refugee in the Australian context by creating a disjunction between exchange values – the refugee as an intricate biographical assemblage cannot simply be exchanged for an equivalent commodity and does not exist on its own, but rather carries a relational pull to their context, history and claim for asylum in Australia. The things in the exhibition materialise the detainees’ experiences of displacement and detention, creating assemblages through the “interfolding network” between refugees and the objects that enable their (im)mobility, such as the boat, the motor engine, and the polling booths. However, the exhibition’s works also remind us

of the inaccessibility of the full truth of refugee experiences on Nauru. A recurring motif across the illustrations is that of a veil or an enshrouded-ness, such as in Pia Johnson’s three photographs. Although the veil reveals the hidden sexual abuse faced by those held on Nauru, we are kept firmly on the other side of this translucent border. Looking onto the intimate portraits representing a detainee showering, we are made aware of our position as voyeur, and we are forced to inhabit the position of the Australian guard violating her privacy. The discomfort that many of the works create in materialising the most surreptitious elements of abuse on Nauru is also a stark reminder that so much remains concealed regarding *Operation Sovereign Borders*. Those on Nauru and Manus Island continue to face human rights abuses each day, and even after they are one day resettled, it is likely we will forever be demanding a full and accurate account of what has transpired on these two islands.

*All We Can’t See* materially secures an archive of Australia’s abuse of refugees and asylum seekers. It shows us that when a country decides to exclude others in the most inhumane way, the subjects of a nation’s rejection become constitutively anchored within that nation itself. The exhibition’s subversive power is its ability to reposition the Nauru Files’ reports and the individual people they represent into complex assemblages. These assemblages of vital materialities transport the refugee from the outside to the inside of Australian society. Through the works of this exhibition, refugees in offshore detention become steeped in Australia’s white European history of settler colonialism. These assemblages reject the rhetorical and policy-based commoditisation of refugees in offshore detention, and grate against the flattening of complex issues of humanitarian migration into an economic issue around people smuggling.

Thus, by creating vital assemblages based on specific reports of violence and trauma, the exhibition holds refugee subjectivity and Australian identity together in a relational field without needing to close the distance between subjects. Instead it acknowledges this distance as the connective tissue of interrelationship, tying the detainees on Nauru irrevocably to the Australian Government, its people, and our history, at the same time as it emphasises the injustice with which we treat those excised from our mainland.

This creates a new refugee identity for those detained on Nauru and Manus Island. These refugees are Australian. And ironically, it is our governments’ attempts to exclude them from any legal attachment to Australia over the past five years that have made them so. *All We Can’t See* reterritorializes refugees’ lack of “constitutive permanence” onto an Australian territory of contingent, ephemeral constellations of vital materialities. The material representations of the Nauru Files are “hyper territorial ... [contributing] to the variegated vision of a relational conception of the world” (Sorensen 19). If we accept this newly materialised refugee identity, we can understand the global resettlement of millions of displaced individuals that occurred post-WWII, and begin to envisage the kind of Australia that will be hospitable to the vital materialities of those still detained on Nauru and Manus Island, and to those elsewhere who will continue to seek asylum in our home.

KIEREN KRESEVIC SALAZAR IS A PERUVIAN-AUSTRALIAN STUDENT AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY, WHERE HE IS THE EDITOR IN CHIEF OF THE HARVARD HUMAN RIGHTS REVIEW, AND MANAGING EDITOR OF THE HARVARD COLLEGE LAW REVIEW. HIS RESEARCH FOCUSES ARE DISPLACEMENT, IMMIGRATION POLICY AND REFUGEE IDENTITY. KIEREN IS A CREATIVE WRITER, CURRENTLY WORKING ON THE MEMOIR OF A DARFURI SUDANESE REFUGEE WHO IS IN KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP, KENYA.

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## Ian Strange

Seventy-one Langley, Selected work from SHADOW (2015)  
Archival Digital Print, 825 x 1100mm  
Artwork on loan courtesy of Jackson Clements Burrows Architects private collection

TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM  
02 MARCH 2015 | RISK RATING: CRITICAL | DOWNGRADED? NO

[REDACTED] was walking out of IHMS toward the bus stop. SCA CM [REDACTED] witnessed [REDACTED] pick up two or three rocks and swallowed them. Whiskey 1 and another officer restrained [REDACTED] to prevent him picking up any more rocks: [REDACTED] calmed once restrained.

### ARTIST STATEMENT, WITH KIEREN KRESEVIC SALAZAR

When Ian and I talked for the first time, I was sitting on the patio of a Hazara refugee family’s home in Cisarua, Indonesia, and Ian spoke from his hometown in Perth. As we discussed how his *SHADOW* series relates to the protracted detention of asylum seekers and refugees on Nauru, the midpoint between us must have been somewhere over the Indian Ocean, perhaps not far from where asylum seekers leaving from Cisarua were intercepted by the Australian Navy and eventually taken to Nauru five years ago. Our collaboration’s locus of enunciation stretches between the densely populated hills where asylum seekers used to meet smugglers to embark on the last leg of a journey to safety, and the home denied them in Australia.

Strange’s photographic work, “Seventy-one Langley”, similarly dislocates our point of reference when considering forced migration in our region. The work engages the suburban ideal of a brick and mortar home in post-mining boom Western Australia to illustrate the erasure of the home and the loss of related notions of family, belonging, custom, communion and safety. Juxtaposed against the Nauru Files and the other works of *All We Can’t See*, Strange’s work reveals the loss of home for detainees on Nauru and Manus Island, and the accompanying abandonment of Australian hospitality towards refugees and asylum seekers. While this work was not created with the Nauru Files in mind, its curation in *All We Can’t See* refocuses our attention onto Australian hospitality.

The Innaloo house, located in the northwest suburbs of Perth, has been spray painted black and carefully lit against the dawn light to cloak it in shadow. While the front garden, full of low lying scrub, recalls the expanses of the Western Australian landscape, the plants along the front of the home have been indiscriminately painted black, defamiliarising their native affectation into amorphous, chiaroscuro masses.



By lighting the home from the back garden, the house appears to be superimposed onto the land, alien amid the Colorbond fences and neighbouring homes. Strange’s intervention onto a typical family home deterritorialises the Australian dream out of our everyday suburbia. The lighting and uniform charcoal paint flatten the house, with only slight shadows revealing that it is not a two-dimensional graphic. The front door is located behind four steel bars and a drainage pipe, the windows blackened out and the garage door closed. The house’s façade is sealed off from the viewer, eliminating the symbolic resonance of a family home. It is clear that no one lives within these walls, and we are made to feel that if we were to visit 71 Langley Crescent, we would find an empty lot.

The loss of the home and its conversion into an uncanny imposition onto a suburban streetscape signals the decline of Australian hospitality. Derrida, in his discussion *Of Hospitality*, reminds us that “the problem of hospitality ... is always about answering for a dwelling place, for one’s identity, one’s space, one’s limits, for the *ethos* as abode, habitation, house, hearth, family, home.” The Australian ethos is inescapably caught up in our suburbs, and by tearing away the familiarity of a typical home, Strange shows a parallel loss of hospitability. Set amid the other works of *All We Can’t See*, “Seventy-one Langley” forces us to answer for our dwelling places: how we live in them, and who we allow into them. This work creates a double erasure, transporting the imaginary of Australia as a welcoming country into the unreliable territory of nostalgia.

The notion of home has also been eviscerated for the detainees of Australia’s offshore processing system. However, there is an important distinction to draw between the home we have denied these individuals, and the safe haven that the asylum seeker asks for by crossing international borders. There seems to be an implicit acceptance that the telos of every migration narrative is a prosperous life in Australia. Consequently, if the demand is our own home, we (or our politicians)

become the arbiter of entry, and the onus is on the asylum seeker to justify why they are knocking our door. From here, it is easy to say that we cannot help everybody, that whatever extreme peril one is fleeing, we cannot let everyone make Australia home and indeed, for some people, “there is no way you’ll ever make Australia

Strange’s work repositions the question of hospitality from managing how others reach our home, to asking us what kind of a home we have left when we abuse those coming to our doorstep.

home”.<sup>1</sup> Instead, the supplication that asylum seekers make is much more straightforward. They ask for safety, above all else. The burden is on us to choose how to respond when individuals ask us for the chance to live rather than die. Strange’s work repositions the question of hospitality from managing how others reach our home, to asking us what kind of a home we have left when we abuse those at our doorstep. If the home has been lost from the heart of the Australian suburbs, “Seventy-one Langley” emphasises that the remainder is the land itself. The same light that makes 71 Langley appear alien, radiates onto the neighbouring homes, casting them as additional flat impositions onto the landscape. The only elements of the street that retain their depth and appear at home in the world, are the native plants that foreground the work, and the trees that rise up into the natural light of dawn. Paired with the Nauru Files’ incident report, Strange’s work shows how the Australian home has been reterritorialised into offshore detention. That is, the home that contemporary

Australia has created is a collection of mold-infested tents and demountable homes where innocent people are driven into serious mental illness. Although the government insists it is the Nauruan Government and not Australia who detains the asylum seekers and refugees there, we are the host of these individuals, these families, these children. On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, when [REDACTED] decided to eat rocks to self-harm, he was swallowing the bitter earth that we have created, and imbibing the erasure of our hospitability.

<sup>1</sup>“Operation Sovereign Borders”. Osb.Homeaffairs.Gov.Au, 2018, <http://osb.homeaffairs.gov.au/en/Outside-Australia#>.





## Craig Tuffin

Yahna Ganga (2018)  
This title is Bundjalung Language meaning;  
Yahna: To sit or sit down  
Ganga: To hear; to think; to understand

Ambrotype. This is a method used from 1851 to create a singular work (edition of 1)  
by sensitising a plate and exposing it “in camera”, 500mm x 600 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ASSAULT ON A MINOR 11 JUNE 2015 | RISK RATING: MAJOR | DOWNGRADED? NO

On the afternoon bus to RPC3 [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] told me that in camp Nauruan guards had been hitting and swearing at children. The boys voiced their concerns about disclosing this information as they were worries what the consequences would be to their parents. They did not was to discuss the matter further as there was a guard on the bus.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

The Nauru files have given a voice to those suffering constant fear and intimidation. It is our responsibility to lend weight to those now silent pleas for help, for not doing so provides its own personal culpability. This work represents those hands quietly reaching out of the darkness, seeking for aid from a society that has the means to provide it. We need to sit, to listen, to think and to act.



On Being Human (the Nauru Files) (2018)  
Pencil and water colour on paper  
840 x 660 mm Tasmanian oak framed behind glass

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM 01 JANUARY 2015 | RISK RATING: MINOR | DOWNGRADED? NO

SCA CM [REDACTED 1] and DIBP interpreter were conducting a wellbeing check with [REDACTED 2] and [REDACTED 3] when [REDACTED 2] stated he wished the CM to bring him poison stating he wanted to die. [REDACTED 2] advised CM that he has been seperated fom his mother for 8 months with little information about he condition and he is sad. [REDACTED 2] stated due to his religion he is unable to kill himself and does not want to harm himself by cutting, he would like to die quickly. [REDACTED 2] stated he is regularly thinking about suicidal thoughts.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

*On Being Human (the Nauru files)* was drawn from an incident report on the 1st of January 2014. Reading the Nauru files made me question what makes us human? What brings us together and what can pull us apart? Who are we without our family, without a sense of community, without empowerment, without freedom? Who are we when caged within a timeless sentence? Who are we without hope?  
When everything is stripped away, we are all but skin and bones.

## Judith Wright

Untitled (2017)  
Acrylic on Japanese paper, 995 x 1000 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM 23 DECEMBER 2014 | RISK RATING: INFORMATION

On 23/12/2014 at 1700 young person [REDACTED 1] spoke with case manager, [REDACTED 2]. [REDACTED 2] noticed on [REDACTED 1]’s arm a small cut in the shape of the letter ‘i’ on her arm (about 8mm): from reviewing the case, [REDACTED 2] knew that [REDACTED 1] has self harmed before and has been in a high Whiskey watch as a result. He also submitted an IR last week about [REDACTED 1] scratching a heart into her arm. [REDACTED 2] asked her about the cut [REDACTED 1] said it was nothing - she stated she did it because she was sad and angry and missing her grandmother but also out of boredom. She said she used a rock. She said she had the intention of writing ‘I lover my grandmother’ but found it too difficult. [REDACTED 1] talked with [REDACTED 2] openly about what was happening for her mentally and emotionally when she decided to scratch into her arm. [REDACTED 1] is incredibly tired, frustrated, exhausted and worn down down by the environment of OPC3. [REDACTED 1] shared the trauma of why she fled from her country; and how incredibly difficult it is for her to process her current environment without the presence of her grandmother - citing its now been eight months since she was medivac’d [REDACTED 1]’s stongly expressed that she did not want security to follow her. [REDACTED 1] has agreed to a safety plan with SCA CW and SCA have plans to meet with her Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. [REDACTED 1]’s family is also currently supporting another child in the camp which [REDACTED 1] is taking seriously.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

Judith Wright’s work has always dealt with loss. Her sensitive narratives form the backdrop to a practice that involves both painting and sculpture – the latter often “repurposes” the discarded, offering a new fictional life to her cast of forgotten characters.  
The file that Judith responded to tells of a young girl who marks herself in an expression of mourning for the loss of her grandmother. This partially completed, self-inflicted scarring certainly suggests a deeper wound - a mourning that stretches across time and generations. This narrative dovetails with Judith’s own though she chooses to make and repeat her symbolic marks on soft “vellum-like” papers, papers that feel all the world like skin.



# Reflecting on the 24 days peaceful protest, Lombrum

Azimullah, Rohingya man, 25 years old. Detained on Manus Island 2013-2018.



**TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN AZIM ON MANUS AND ANNA IN AUSTRALIA, MADE UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES, WITHOUT PRIVACY.**

That time was very difficult; you know it was very hard to survive. October 31, it was unexpected. The security guards, they left us there like animals. Everyone just suddenly disappeared.

In the morning at six or seven o'clock, every guard had disappeared. When I woke up I looked around and I couldn't see anything, they didn't even tell us, I was in shock, like, "How could they leave us like this?"

In November they stopped the generator, then after two days they cut the power. You know we were starving and they just left us there like that, no water, no food, no medical care, no electricity – everywhere is dark. You know I didn't believe that they would force me; I didn't believe that. I don't know, how did I survive in there? Twenty-four days. But you know, I have enough experience. That's why I survived in there.

When you are there, you feel dead. You can't touch anything, you don't know what to do, you just sit and you're thinking, thinking, thinking, and that's all. It's like you are a prisoner. They kidnap you, put you in the cage, and torture you. You don't know what to do and you have nowhere to go. Manus Island is like that. You forget everything, you don't know what to do. Your mind stops working, and you worry day by day and become weak. The system is like that. Nobody can survive in there.

We collect the rainwater for a drink. You feel like you are waiting for the rain to come so you will be happy. You know some people are genius and they dig a big hole so we can take the water to shower. But the water was very disgusting, you could not drink it. My friend and I, we were waiting for rain. It was very, very, very hard.

Food, we don't have food. I had some bread in November and I ate it for two or three days, then the bread became damaged so we didn't have anything.

Some people climbed the coconut tree and we ate the coconuts sometimes. Some people went to the ocean and tried to catch fish. After that, maybe one or two weeks later, some of the Australian public tried to supply food by sea. Some people, they bought food. You could only get one packet of biscuits or a packet of noodles, for everyone. But the military, they didn't allow us to take the food into our compound. We were very worried.

**They kidnap you, put you in the cage, and torture you. You don't know what to do and you have nowhere to go. Manus Island is like that. You forget everything, you don't know what to do. Your mind stops working, and you worry day by day and become weak. The system is like that. Nobody can survive in there.**

Some media at least put some drinking water here during the day. You know it's very hot, and too many mosquitoes in there. At night, you cannot believe it and during the day it's very hot . . . oh my god.

I couldn't imagine the Australian government could do that to me. You know what I am thinking? The Myanmar government is better than the Australian government. Yes, they keep us in a camp, they torture us, I know . . . since I was born on this planet I have been a prisoner, but before, my mind was fresh, I was with my family and I could just walk around.

But the Australian Government just put me in

a cage for five years and tortured me. You know they made us do a hunger strike. Twenty-four days. We did not want to do a hunger strike but we were there without food or anything, they made us, you know the Australian government kept pushing us to "go to the new accommodation, go to the new accommodation, go to the new accommodation." We all knew the new accommodation was not safe and if we went to the transit station there at Lorengau there was no guarantee of us being safe. So that's why we didn't like to go there.

The guards, after they left us for maybe twenty days, they came to our compound and they carried the iron bars and the sticks and knives and then they hit on the wall, "boom, boom, boom, you have to move to your new location, you have to move." Then one day they came at six o'clock in the morning and they left at five or six o'clock in the evening. They said, "you have to move," but we sat all together and we kept quiet and we didn't say anything to them. If we said anything, they would abuse us. And they said, "move, move, move, move."

After the second day, they came and they destroyed our shelter and our water and our food, whatever was left, everything. And you know in the heat you cannot sit outside. So we built it again, the shelter, then they came again and destroyed everything.

On Thursday, they came into our room and they just threw everything around. They destroyed everything and they cut the shampoo and you know, poured it onto our beds and bunks and blankets, everywhere. They didn't want us to sleep in the room, they wanted us to stop going there. All day, all day they tortured us. You know it's very hard, you become very weak, you don't know what to do, you have no food, no drinking water, you sit in the sun from six o'clock in the morning until six o'clock in the evening. On Friday they came again, also they put – where we dug the hole to get the water – they put rubbish inside the hole. They didn't want us to take water from the hole to take a shower.

On Friday they came in the morning, at six o'clock. We called everyone and sat together again and then I saw there were too many security cars, the police and Immigration. They had a plan, they wanted to bring us by force. So they came to the camp and they said, "This is our land, you're not allowed to stay here, move, this is our land." So we were shouting, "UN help us and Human Rights help us." You know what PNG Immigration said? "There is no human right, no one can come here and help you."

After that we were quiet and sitting together and then the police and Immigration started beating us, and they pulled one of the guys and they beat him very hard, they punched, kicked everything. Then we gave up. We said, "ok, ok don't beat us." We gave up. They catch you like you are a criminal, they catch you and put you in the bus. If you speak they will beat you until you die.

So this is the twenty-four days, that's true. It's very long and very sad. If I tell you more, you will cry.

**PHOTOGRAPH BY AZIMULLAH**

Sleeping man, Lombrum prison Manus Island, 2017



## Anna Liebzeit

Portrait of Azim, 2018

I'd taken myself to Manus to set up recording studio facilities for a friend. We had collaborated on some music and audio projects over the internet, and the next logical step was to take equipment to the island. One experience stood out. It was the 'accidental' visit to Lombrum, the now empty prison offshore detention center. To escape the pressing heat, my friend and I decided to take a break from recording music and go for a swim. A boat was organized and we were taken out through thick warm air, open sky and sea all around. After some time we moored. It was then we realised we'd been taken to the site of Lombrum. It was silent, still, and unexpected.

I asked my friend if he'd been here since they'd left. No. Lombrum is built only meters from the still sea, he said: back then we weren't allowed to swim. A large fence line traces a well-worn path. 'See that palm tree, that's where my room was. This is where we sat and talked and there was a hole under the fence here, where food was smuggled in from boats during the protest. You might not believe it but hundreds of men once lived here.'

A man was murdered here. Men's precious property was destroyed and stolen by guards who wrecked the joint. Terra nullius echoes here, where future generations will come to mourn the dark days of Australia's treatment of asylum seekers.

I've heard Manus Island described in negative ways. I believe it's unconscious, that when thinking about the imprisonment of the men on Manus, the island is branded as all bad. The problem is not Manus Island, but the hellish and cruel policies and practices that the Australian government has put in place.

The Manusians are a proud people with connections to land and language that are deeply interwoven and rich. Many have empathy and care for the asylum seekers. At the site of Lombrum, we met a local woman

who was moved to tears when she saw the men again. She remembered them and recalled cooking food during the twenty-four days' peaceful protest. We took happy snaps and she brought her young children over to shake their hands. My friend gave her boy an apple.

The beauty of Manus Island and its people belie the brutality of the Australian government's policies and practices. From my Indigenous, decolonised standpoint, I hear echoes of Australia's settler imperial violence and colonial discourse. The establishment of a jail, the forgetting of the men on Manus Island, and the subsequent impact on local communities, remind me of the heart that devised the policies of child removal and institutionalisation that affected my and many other Aboriginal families. Australia was founded on the lie of terra nullius (land belonging to no one). This led to the dispossession of peoples from their Country, language and culture. Undeniable evidence of massacres and the intentional spread of disease lie at the heart of Australia's foundation and began the lineage of our institutional relationship with humanity and respect. What is happening now in Australian policy and practice didn't 'just happen'. Let's never forget the colonial forebears of political racism and hate.

On Manus, I was cared for and respected like an old friend, a sister. Being cooked for felt like a 'thank you', and offered a glimpse into the private parts of a collective culture whose resilience and deep respect of humanity and life decentered the colonial discourse of deprivation and cruelty that aims to harm the heart. The men's dignity, generosity and humor became my teachers. Deep listening means seeing things that aren't immediately apparent, like wisdom where there's obvious injustice, and a deep pain I can never truly know.

Azim was one of these men. I first met him in the makeshift recording studio on Manus Island, May 11 2018, after I gave him three tubes of Carnation milk I'd brought from Australia. Our friendship has been like a whirlwind. A week after I left Manus, Azim's friend

Salim died in tragic circumstances. We talked through that time; Azim spoke at Salim's vigil in Melbourne on the steps of the State Library through an app. Azim had been in the boat coming to Australia with Salim and he wanted to talk about his friend.

Over the weeks, I heard a young man struggle to make sense of the insanity of his incarceration. We talked a lot about all sorts of topics, including Azim's life story. He wanted to know about my children, how they were and what we ate for dinner that night. I wanted to know what movie he'd just watched and how Ramadan was going.

**Over the weeks, I heard a young man struggle to make sense of the insanity of his incarceration. We talked a lot about all sorts of topics, including Azim's life story. He wanted to know about my children, how they were and what we ate for dinner that night. I wanted to know what movie he'd just watched and how Ramadan was going.**

Then this exhibition. Would he like to be part of it? What does he want the Australian public to know? What can't they see? He did want to be part of it, but he had to think.

I got a phone call from Azim at about 8 o'clock one night. 'Hello Anna, how are you? I have just had a meeting today and I am getting my freedom. Yes, I am very happy. My prayers have been answered.' So here we are. Two very different experiences of Manus Island, linked through our unlikely friendship.

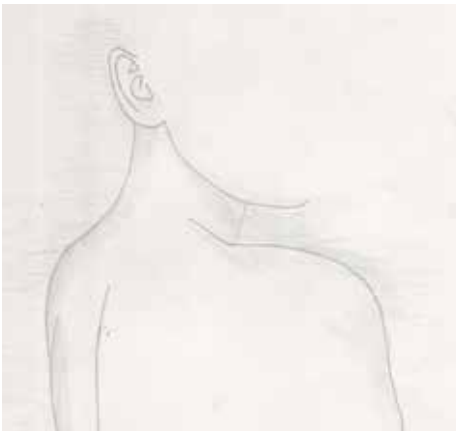
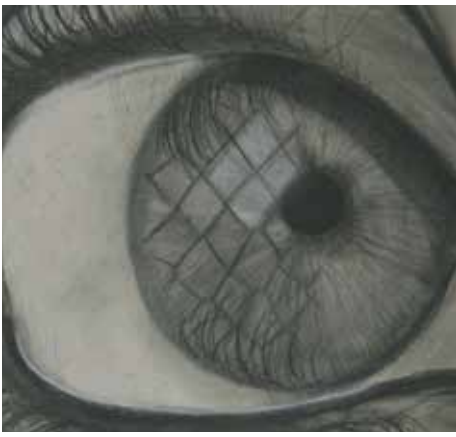


Sydney exhibition  
1-10 FEBRUARY 2018, YELLOW HOUSE GALLERY

- Abdul Abdullah
- Abbas Alaboudi
- Angela Brennan
- Penny Byrne
- Paul Davies
- Belinda Fox
- Adrienne Gaha
- Peter Gardiner
- Mark Gerada
- Sam Harrison
- Rebecca Jensen
- Pia Johnson
- Laura Jones
- Locust Jones
- Janet Laurence
- Tim Maguire
- Angus McDonald
- Abdullah M. I. Syed
- Tomislav Nikolic
- George Palmer
- Louis Pratt
- Jamie Preisz
- Marisa Purcell
- Ben Quilty
- Ravi
- Mark Rodda
- Caroline Rothwell
- Luke Sciberras
- Megan Seres
- Alex Seton
- Luke Storrier
- Aida Tomescu
- Mark Whalen
- Judith Wright
- Joshua Yeldham







## Hunter Valley Grammar School

Elise Paix, Alyssa Mitchell, Lachlan Duong, Maddy Russell, Mia Redgrave, Hannah Spicer, Daisy Lindner

### TEACHER STATEMENT

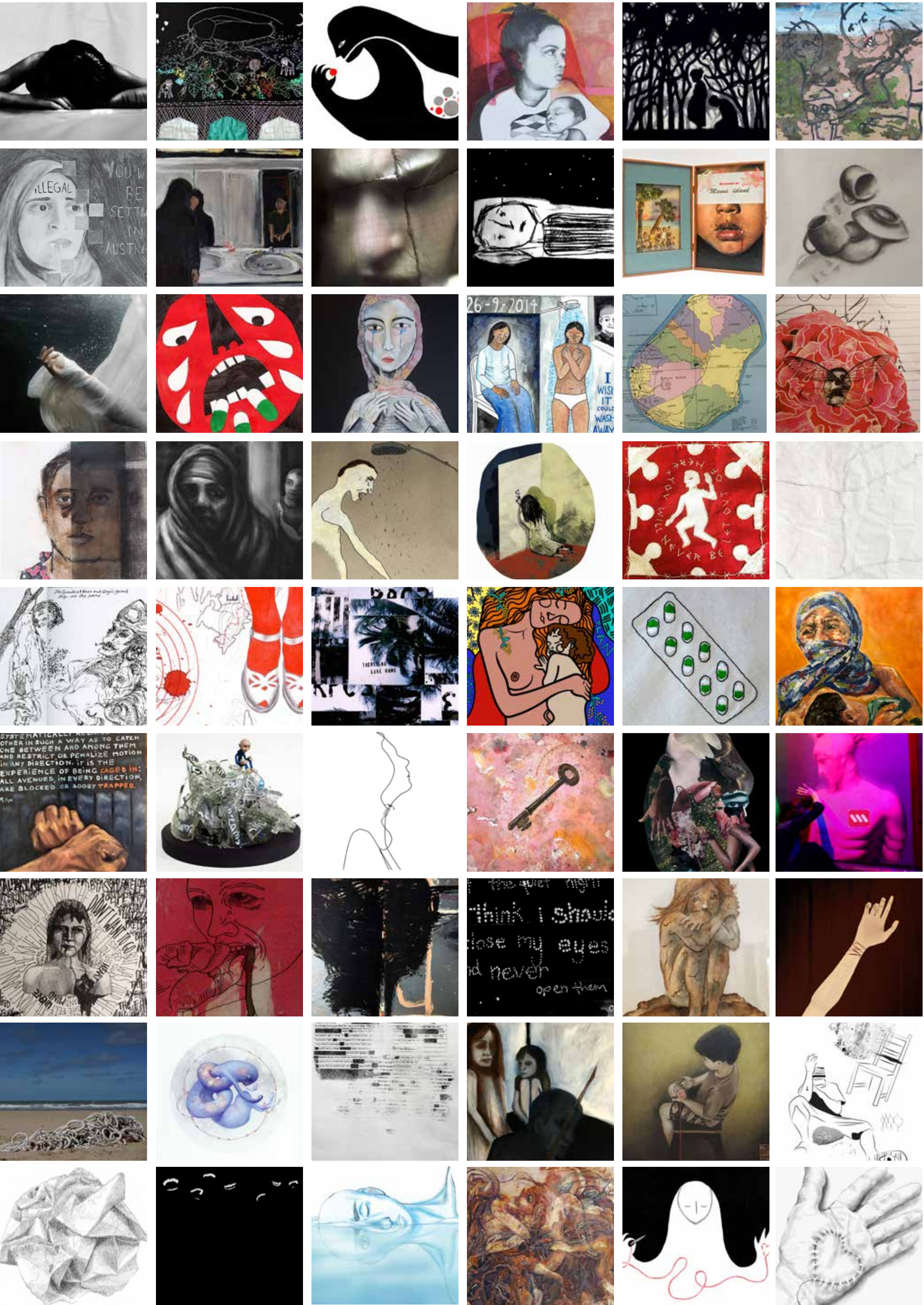
Having followed the goings on in Australia's immigration detention centres and being a staunch critic of governmental policy on these matters for some time, I followed the leaking of the Nauru files with great interest in 2016. I happened upon the All We Can't See project at the beginning of this year after returning to some old Guardian articles about the Nauru detention centre while trying to find some stimulus for my Year 11 Visual Arts class who were beginning a unit on art as social commentary. I had initially planned a short lesson activity around the All We Can't See website viewing artworks and reading the case files they illustrated, but such was the engagement from students that we ended up spending much more time with it. It followed that students wanted to make their own contribution to the project and after seeking permission from their parents and making contact with Arielle Gamble, the project curator, we agreed to make it the focus of our artmaking for the unit. The students' work for All We Can't See has irrevocably changed the way they see the world we live in and their perception of the power of art to create social change.

ANGUS MORGAN, VISUAL ARTS TEACHER, HUNTER VALLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## Works contributed to www.allwecantsee.com

Visual responses to individual Nauru Files, submitted by the public to our purpose-built website [www.allwecantsee.com](http://www.allwecantsee.com) (opposite)

Alexia Shaw  
Camilla Palmer  
Emma Lindsay  
Amani Haydar  
Deborah Wood  
Phoebe Greaves  
Dinalie Dabarera  
Michèle Heibel  
Miss Therese Unknown  
Tamara Desiatov  
Caroline Zilinsky  
Allison Colpoys  
Kathleen Whelan  
Laura Castell  
Madeleine Henry  
Edona Tabaku  
Sara Tabaku  
Patrice Wills  
Penelope Lawry  
Alex Asch  
Mariana Del Castillo  
Nikky Agnello  
Inga Hanover  
Maeve Turner  
Shannon Woodcock  
Alice Crawford  
Aven Hodgess  
Alexander  
Sophia Prestipino  
Bridie Allan  
Dorothy Maniero  
Nicole Steenhof  
Anna Mould  
Monique Lovering  
Nidhi  
Jessica Meier  
Alison Peters  
Tanushri Saha  
Holly Greenwood  
Tracy Dickason  
Vittoria Oriana  
Hugo Muecke  
Cathy Speed  
Kiata Mason  
Annabelle Hale  
Adi Fink  
John Douglas  
Craig Loxley  
Mark Gerada  
WH Chong  
Tina Stefanou  
Allie Webb  
Mark Rodda  
Tina Stefanou  
Lale Teoman  
Jessica Page  
George Gittoes  
Abdul Abdullah  
Brett Ashby





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# Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the individuals behind each redacted name in each Nauru file, illustrated in both the exhibition and the Nauru Files as a whole. We hope that by sharing these stories a broader Australian public will be encouraged to become informed, and to demand immediate change and safe futures for all of those on Manus and Nauru.

This project was initiated by two book designers, Arielle Gamble and Daniel New, who saw an opportunity to use art to engage a broader Australian audience in reading the Nauru Files. This Melbourne exhibition program was curated by Arielle Gamble with the support of Clare Ainsworth Herschell and Daniel New.

Thank you to Clare Ainsworth Herschell for her support for All We Can't See and expanding it's reach through a national tour. Thank you to Daniel New for his ongoing counsel and assistance.

Special thanks to all of the artists who have contributed to the show for their time, energy and incredible works in both our Sydney and Melbourne shows: Abdul Abdullah, Hoda Afshar, Abbas Alaboudi, Azimullah, Blak Douglas, Angela Brennan, Penny Byrne, Paul Davies, Robert Fielding, Belinda Fox and George Palmer, Adrienne Gaha, Mark Gerada, Peter Gardiner, Sam Harrison, Rebecca Jensen, Nadia Hernández and Trent Evans, Pia Johnson, Anna Liezeit, Laura Jones, Locust Jones, Janet Laurence, Angus McDonald, Tim Maguire, Julian Meagher, Anna Mould, Tomislav Nikolic, Stanislava Pinchuk, Louis Pratt, Jamie Preisz, Marisa Purcell, Ben Quilty, Ravi, Abbey Rich, Mark Rodda, Caroline Rothwell, Elliott Routledge (Numskull), Khaled Sabsabi, Luke Sciberras, Megan Seres, Alex Seton, Luke Storrier, Ian Strange, Abdullah M. I. Syed, Aida Tomescu, Craig Tuffin, Mirra Whale, Mark Whalen, Judith Wright, Joshua Yeldham.

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Proceeds from sales of artworks in Melbourne will be donated to Human Rights Law Centre to continue their important work. [www.hrlc.org.au](http://www.hrlc.org.au).

Front cover: 'I Heart Nauru'  
by Penny Byrne, image courtesy  
Matthew Stanton.



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