

ALL  
WE  
CAN'T  
SEE

## 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](http://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.

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

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. 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..."*

*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*.

**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.**

## Curators statement

**The Nauru files show us that Australia is making human sacrifices of innocent people who have escaped some of the worst conflicts 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 another, 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 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.**



## Alex Seton

A Durable Solution? (2018)  
Bianco Carrara Marble  
120 x 490 x 800 cm  
Photography Mark Pokorny

### ARTIST STATEMENT

Indefinite detention is destroying the lives of the men, women and children on Nauru and Manus Island for absolutely no reason. Twelve lives have been lost, twelve lives under our care, our custody, our watch. These were lives we could have saved, should have saved, lives of those who were expressly asking for our help. And we let them down. All because we could not come up with a better solution. Shame on us.

Indefinite detention upon Manus and Nauru is not a sustainable solution. The Australian public were told this was the solution to thousands of deaths at sea. But this is a false choice. No lives need be lost at sea, nor be lost under our protection. We must attempt to prevent both. Australia can do better.

I believe we are a clever enough nation to find a better, more compassionate solution. Creating safe, efficient and legal regional processing and transportation for those seeking asylum is within our capability. It is not politically expedient, and it is not easy, but it will save lives.

Human sacrifice is not acceptable border policy.



---

# I left the Immigration Department to speak out

Shaun Hanns

---

I have spent the past five and a half years working in the refugee and humanitarian division of what was until recently the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

From inside the department, everything connected to asylum-seeker policy looks different. The combination of understanding the thinking behind asylum-seeker policy and daily exposure to the human impact of that policy gives a unique perspective that, for obvious reasons, rarely makes it to the public sphere. However, given the increasingly critical situation on Nauru, I believe it is important that this perspective is more widely understood. I left the department this week in order to speak out.

**I believe that both sides of the national debate about asylum seekers have lost touch with reality. I also believe that our current system is wrong, destroying the lives of the men, women and children on Nauru and Manus Island for no reason.**

**I do not support the idea of unrestricted migration, but I think the policy as it stands goes far beyond what is necessary to prevent it from occurring.**

July 19 this year was the five-year anniversary of Kevin Rudd's announcement that no asylum seeker who arrived via boat would be resettled in Australia. It marked half a decade of what is arguably the toughest asylum-seeker policy modern Australia has ever seen. Naively I believed this was a moment when the nation would pause, reflect and consider the wisdom of the path we have taken. I was convinced that there would be intense media interest in the anniversary, with several of the major newspapers dedicating multiple pages to the issue. In reality, the moment came and went with next to no one even noticing.

On reflection, it's all quite unsurprising. Being out of kilter with the public debate is part of working in the refugee space. It's a strange sensation, spending your life absolutely soaked in something and watching as a fierce debate rages about an issue that seems barely recognisable when compared with your daily experience. At times it feels hard to imagine another subject that has been talked about as much yet fully engaged with so rarely. But if you take a step back you see that this is just a standard 21st-century debate. Strident views, over-simplification, misinformation and a punishing hatred of nuance. The only difference is that when we get this wrong, which is always the result of such debates, people die.

This article is an attempt to help kick the debate back on track.

**For far too long the Australian people have been offered a false binary choice: between the suffering of those on Manus and Nauru, and thousands of deaths at sea. The answer should be obvious: we should accept neither.**

The debate needs to move on from entrenched positions to whatever is necessary to achieve an enduring solution.

The first claim that must be rejected is that any concern about deaths at sea is nothing more than a political smokescreen used to justify present policy. It is not. Of the past 50,000 asylum seekers who made it to Australia's shores, more than 1100 lost their lives in the attempt, a mortality rate of roughly 2.15 per cent. The highest estimation of casualties from the Syrian civil war is about 2.27 per cent of the pre-war population. This makes the mortality rate of direct asylum-seeking to Australia roughly equivalent to seven years of the bloodiest civil war this century.

The meaning of this is straightforward. The cost in human life of the asylum-seeking route from Indonesia to Christmas Island is extraordinarily high and almost certainly higher than the risk of death asylum seekers face in their home country. This was not a system that

saved people; it was one that killed them.

There's a reason I feel comfortable saying this so definitively: I was a protection visa case officer. My role in the department was to interview asylum seekers, objectively assess the threat they faced and decide if they qualified for refugee status. In my time I've interviewed people from Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, Egypt, Yemen, Nigeria, Ghana, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Vietnam and, yes, even a few who made it from Syria. Long ago I lost count of how many decisions I've made, but it's most likely somewhere around 300. Of those I believe that perhaps half a dozen, certainly no more, genuinely faced more mortal danger in their home country than they did on that treacherous stretch of water.

I don't say this to criticise people for their choices, or to attempt to undermine the legitimacy of the asylum claims of the many who made it to our shores. I say it because it genuinely disturbs me. There are a variety of reasons for wanting to leave a country, and expecting individuals to perform a complicated calculus of the unknowable threats they face before choosing to come is patently absurd.

**The process of assessing whether an asylum seeker receives Australia's protection isn't faceless and bureaucratic in the way you might imagine. It's intense and bordering on intimate.**

You spend perhaps a day finding out everything you possibly can about a person, then you spend anywhere from two to five hours in a room with them, discussing everything about their life. If it's

likely to be a negative decision they will almost always realise this in the interview. You see the familiar flash of realisation before their face simply falls. We crush people's hopes for a better life while looking them in the eye.

Work as a case officer also provides an understanding of just how dark things can get in this world. The worst interview I ever conducted was in my first year on the job. The man I interviewed presented like someone from whom all happiness had been bleached out. He revealed to me the existence of people who dedicate their lives to perfecting the art of hurting other human beings. It goes far beyond hatred. Some torture seems to be a concerted effort to strip the last vestiges of humanity from another person. A methodical attempt not just to treat the victim as if they are less than human, but to make them believe it. That was the kind of torture this man had been through. I told him that I accepted his story and there was no reason to go through the trauma of reliving it all. He wasn't listening. As if in a trance he stared into the middle distance and listed all the things that had made him the way he was. The things that had happened to him. The things he had seen happen to others.

That interview affected me like no other. A horrible knot of anger welled up in my chest and sat there for weeks. Not just righteous indignation, but a terrifying, consuming rage. For two weeks I was in a fury broken only by intermittent sickening imaginings of what had been described to me. I began to think that this was my new normal. Thankfully, eventually, the rage subsided.

The job undeniably has a dark side, but it also instils an appreciation of the lives of people who seek asylum, and of the world they left behind. You gain an understanding of their often

complicated and ambivalent relationships to their home countries and their sense of loss over those they left behind.

**As they become fully fleshed out people, so in one's imagination do those who did not survive the trip to Australia. The tragedy of 1100 people losing their lives becomes 1100 individual tragedies.**

More than the numbers by themselves, this is the reason I will never support irregular migration to Australia.

By the time of Rudd's July 2013 announcement I'd been in the department for four months. I'd taken the job out of a morbid curiosity and a desire to understand from the inside one of the most contentious political issues in our country's history. Besides, 90 per cent of them end up being refugees anyway, right? I thought to myself when applying. After four months of working on a seemingly endless stream of unmeritorious Sri Lankan cases, I was painfully aware of just how naive I had been. Everything I thought I knew about the issue had been completely upended. I had no idea what to think or really what I believed.

I remember the Rudd announcement quite distinctly. A few colleagues had gathered in the breakroom to watch. The immediate reaction was muted. No one said much of anything. My guess is that we'd all come to the realisation that the situation was out of control and that the government would eventually be forced to do something drastic. The only question in our minds was what, and now we had the answer. Personally, my only thought was Makes sense, but they need to



start working on a more durable long-term solution immediately, before quietly heading back to my desk. At that point I genuinely believed the response was necessary to stop a continuing humanitarian catastrophe.

**Five years later I no longer believe the ongoing refusal to resettle those on Nauru and Manus in Australia serves any purpose.**

My doubts began to form during my trip to Nauru several years ago. At the time it was common for department officials to travel to the islands. I was only deployed for a short period, but it made a significant impression on me. A lot has been written about the island already, and I don't believe any Australian genuinely believes that life there is easy or desirable. For that reason I won't go into a long description of my time there. I will, however, make two observations.

The first is that it's hard to overstate how incredibly claustrophobic Nauru feels. Often I found myself staring out at where the waves start to break, just 10 metres from the shore, and being painfully aware of how far from the nearest landmass we were. It felt like the world ended where those waves broke and that nothing else existed, or could exist. It was a deeply uncomfortable feeling, and I was more than ready to leave when my time was over.

The second observation is that even these shores were off limits for all but Nauruans. This isn't a law, just a practical outcome of Nauru's ageing sewerage system. In a briefing we were told that the E. coli concentration in the water is simply too high for anyone to swim at the beaches without getting sick – other than Nauruans,

who develop a resistance while growing up. Foreigners are confined to swimming in the harbour, a small concrete enclosure in Anibare Bay on the east side of the island.

I am well aware that these observations are trivial compared to the well-documented issues on the island. I'm just seeking to underline the strange sense of being completely out of place. You are constantly aware that you do not belong. Nauru may be home for Nauruans, but it never could be or will be for the majority of asylum seekers and refugees interned there. It's not hard to see why so many end up struggling with mental-health problems.

On Nauru I met a man who started to shake my faith in the system. He was essentially the same as the man I had interviewed in my first year working with the department. His eyes were constantly unfocused; he was only ever partially present. I saw pictures of him in his life before Nauru. They showed a happy man almost unrecognisable compared with the gaunt, haunted apparition now in front of me. Nothing I knew about his past could explain his transformation. He hadn't been tortured, he hadn't suffered sexual assault, he didn't claim to have suffered anything particularly traumatic in his home country.

**The conclusion was inescapable. We had done this to him. We had so effectively destroyed a man that he wasn't just indistinguishable from a torture victim. He was indistinguishable from the most damaged torture victim I have ever encountered. And I've interviewed many.**

My time on Nauru left me rattled, but at that point I still supported current government policy. I could not, in good conscience, support a change to policy that would restart an industry that profits from the senseless and needless loss of human life. I never will. What it did show me, though, was that there is no way to engage with the issue of asylum seekers in any serious or meaningful way without being deeply morally compromised. All of the time.

Properly constituted, the global asylum-seeking problem is simple and awful. People have an absolute right to seek protection. However, the unfettered expression of this right in first-world economies leads to higher rates of speculative asylum-seeking, fraud and, ultimately, avoidable deaths. That's before you even get to the secondary issues, like the breakdown of faith in immigration more broadly or the resurgence of the slave trade in northern Africa.

Most people in Australia focus on one half or the other of the asylum-seeker equation, which is understandable. To accept that all the considerations matter and none can be disregarded is to deprive yourself of the comfort that moral certainty provides, and for this to be replaced with gnawing doubt and a certain heaviness.

When you start carrying that weight, you find you can never really look away or reach a satisfying conclusion. You keep staring at the issue from different angles, trying to find some kind of resolution that sits comfortably within you. Finally, however, if you pay that level of attention to the issue for long enough, it becomes apparent that refusing Australian resettlement to those on the islands is unnecessary.

**Essentially the system as it stands relies completely on boat turn-backs.**

According to figures on the Parliament of Australia website, there have been 33 turn-backs of boats carrying 810 people since the policy began in December 2013. If those people had had to be accommodated on Nauru and Manus, the offshore detention solution would have collapsed under its own weight.

From a brutal efficiency perspective, the current turn-back regime has been a wild success in both preventing arrivals and deterring attempts. Since the start of the policy no boat has managed to avoid interception in the Indian Ocean, where the majority of people-smuggling activities have taken place.

Personally I believe it is also the most successful solution we've come to from the humanitarian point of view. I am not suggesting that it is pleasant, nor that a better solution cannot eventually be found, simply that out of all the solutions we have tried this is the one that causes the least damage.

**It raises a serious question. If turn-backs are so effective, why do the more damaging aspects of the deterrence regime persist?**

Why don't we have the confidence to rely on the turn-back regime and resettle those on Manus Island and Nauru in Australia? Having worked in the area for so long, I have come to believe it's due to two myths deeply held in the department that are rarely challenged and, for most, difficult to see beyond.

The first myth in which we are trapped maintains that any kindness, any whatsoever, will restart the industry. The second is that people smugglers are capable of sending large numbers of boats to Australia at short notice, enough to overwhelm any possible solution.

Although from an organisational point of view the latter may be true, it grossly overestimates the ability of people smugglers to convince people to attempt the trip. They are both myths born of the experiences of 2012 and 2013, when the people-smuggling business was running red-hot.

The single largest policy misstep underpinning these myths was the decision in late 2011 to release asylum seekers into the community before determining their refugee status. This led to a significant spike in what are disparagingly described as "economic migrants". I will not go into the merits or otherwise of that label here. Suffice to say that a large number of people with weaker-than-usual protection claims, who previously would not have made the attempt, took this opportunity to enter Australia. This is what swelled the numbers so much that the system became untenable.

With so many asylum seekers making the trip, people smugglers engaged in what the department calls "surge tactics". Facing a new attempt to stem the flow of asylum seekers, smugglers used a variety of means to convince large numbers to travel to Australia immediately. This is why the original reopening of Manus and Nauru ended up being ineffectual. The islands filled quickly, and it became apparent that any new arrivals would not be forced to endure offshore processing.

After Rudd's July 2013 announcement, people smugglers attempted the same tactics. This time they didn't quite succeed, but came very close. Inside the department it was now believed that any loosening of Australia's regime would result in a similar surge, with several thousand asylum seekers making the trip.

But just how likely is this? The last surge, after Rudd's July 2013 announcement, was relatively limited and finished mid September.

By that stage just over 3750 people had made the journey. As the number of arrivals per month was already around 3500 at the time, that 3750 over two months was fewer than expected. The smugglers weren't so much convincing people to take the risk as they were convincing people who had already committed to a course of action, and often had already paid a percentage of their fee, to see it through.

This is very different to convincing large numbers of people to part with around US\$6000 to take a risk that will almost certainly end with them finding themselves back where they started, only US\$6000 poorer. Yet the experience of 2013 still underpins what officials believe will happen if there is any change in policy. We are equating a business that is now in a state of torpor and managing to attract around 50 clients a year with what it was at its height, under very different policy settings. It is not a rational comparison.

A much more reasonable comparison is with what happened after February 8, 2008 when the Rudd government announced the closure of Nauru. Despite the absence of offshore processing, over the next 11 months only seven boats carrying 161 people arrived on Australian shores. What's truly remarkable is that this is only two more boats and 13 more people than in 2007, when the Howard government's Pacific Solution was in full effect.

It took a full 12 months for the people-smuggling business to properly re-establish itself and five years to get to the sort of numbers that it had in 2013. Nevertheless, members of my department and the government are convinced that, this time, even the smallest concession will somehow immediately lead to thousands coming every month. It's truly weird.

This is the one thing that we have demonstrated that we can deny them. With close to 100 per cent effectiveness.

**People smugglers are not so singularly charismatic that they can convince thousands of people to part with large sums of money to take a risk, particularly without evidence that they can deliver what is promised. They need successful journeys to rebuild the confidence that's required to restart the industry.**

Since the July 2013 announcement the government has made a few gestures of kindness. They have had very little impact on the smuggling trade. The most important of these happened in December 2014. Because the islands were at capacity, a little over a thousand people remained in detention while nominally being liable to be transferred to either Nauru or Manus. As part of the Resolving the Asylum Legacy Caseload (RALC) Bill, these people, provided they had arrived before January 1, 2014 were slowly allowed into the Australian mainland community to apply for, and receive, protection visas.

This point is critical. This one act was an admission of defeat. It showed that the July 2013 announcement was not practicable or actionable. As we are so often told, there is no way that people smugglers missed this shift in policy. There is no way that they weren't using it to attempt to convince asylum seekers to take the journey. According to conventional wisdom, there should have been a spike in the number of asylum seekers

attempting the journey in the next year. There was not. In 2015 there were half as many asylum seekers trying to reach Australia as there were in 2014.

Asylum seekers make their choices on what they credibly believe will happen to them. The decisions in 2008 to close the islands and in 2011 to release people into the community before assessment mattered because it changed the treatment of new arrivals. The December 2014 decision did not, because it only changed outcomes for those who had already made the trip. Similarly, the announcement in 2016 of a deal whereby the US would resettle some existing detainees might have been expected to cause a spike in boat arrivals, but it did not. What matters to asylum seekers is not what eventually happened to people who got on a boat five years ago.

What matters is what happened to the last boat that made the attempt. And for the past five years that has been a prompt return.

**Recent work by Kieren Kresevic Salazar has demonstrated that asylum seekers in Indonesia are focused on turn-backs. Those he interviewed claimed that few people considered Manus and Nauru when deciding whether to make an attempt to get to Australia, because the border is seen as "closed".**

The statistics on turn-backs would suggest that they are not lying.

In recent weeks the question of New Zealand resettlement for small numbers of those detained offshore has been raised again. That the

prime minister is openly canvassing this option is further evidence that resettling those on Nauru and Manus in developed economies, as is their wish, poses no genuine threat to the deterrence system. Such an approach will not resolve this issue anytime soon, however, and will almost certainly lead to further damage and more deaths among those remaining. It is also unnecessary.

**Resettlement in Australia today will not restart the people-smuggling industry.**

If you accept that the capacity of people smugglers has been seriously overestimated and that only concessions made to prospective arrivals change people's decision-making, the answer to this vexing issue, at least in the short term, becomes obvious. Keep the architecture, remove the people. Give parity to all those who arrived before January 1, 2014 by allowing those found to be refugees to reside in the Australian community. And, where possible, use the US deal to resettle the small number who were successful after. Then, keep the door closed to irregular boat arrivals by maintaining the current settings for future arrivals. The worst-case scenario of such an approach is that one or two boats manage to elude the naval cordon before being transferred to Nauru and we end up with significantly fewer people on the islands. The best case is we end up with none.

**If we want to, we can end this nightmare today.**

– October 18, 2018

**FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE MONTHLY, NOVEMBER 2018**

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".**

# 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] (Wilsons) 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.

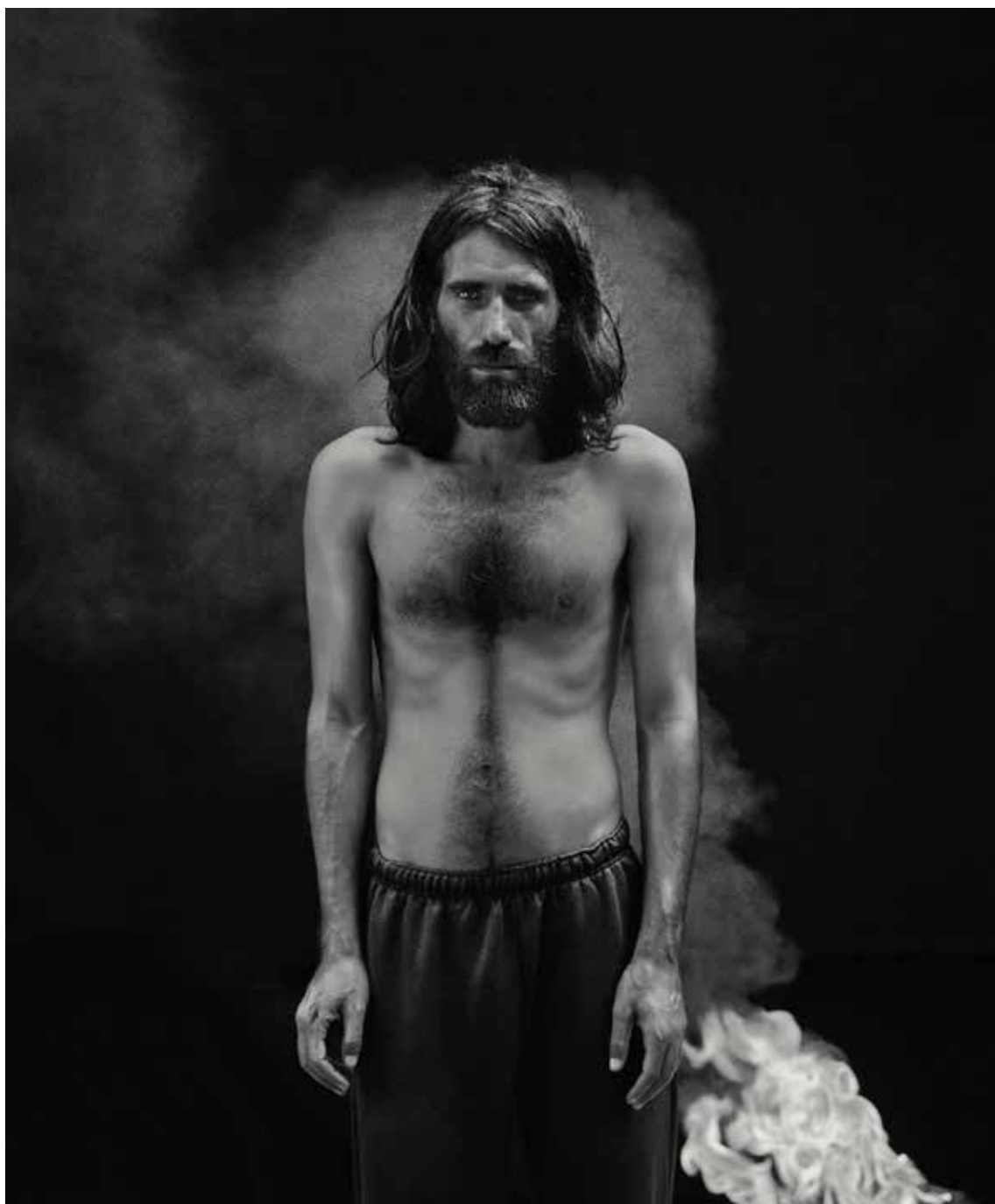
## ARTIST STATEMENT

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.





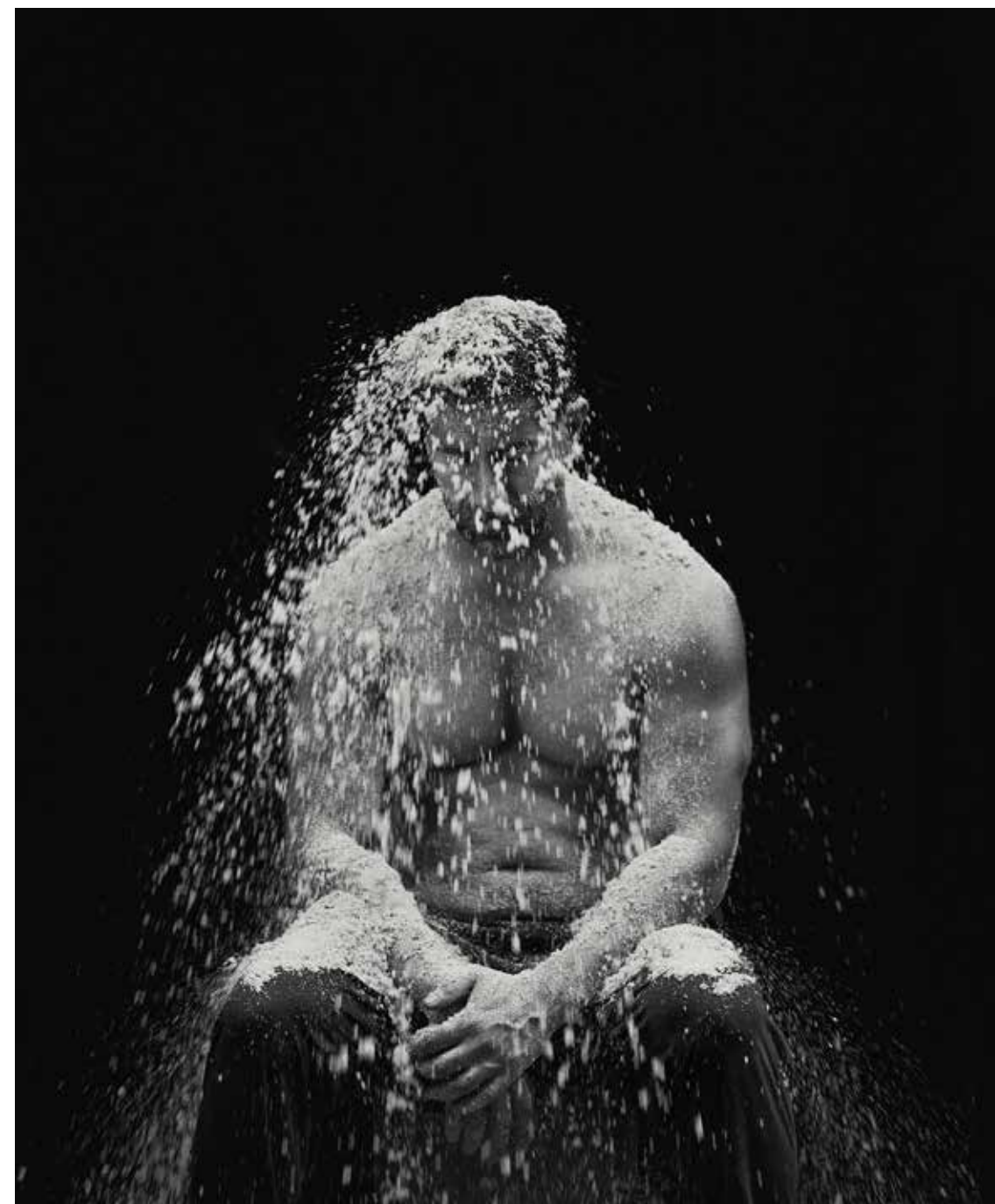


## Hoda Afshar

Behrouz Boochani – Manus Island (2018)

Behrouz is a Kurdish Iranian journalist, writer and filmmaker. He fled Iran in 2013 seeking asylum, and arrived on the shores of Australia on his thirtieth birthday – four days after the Rudd Government announced its offshore detention plan.

I sent this portrait to Behrouz after I returned from Manus in April 2018, and called him. I said, this is you, Behrouz, with your passion, your fire, and your writer's hands. It symbolizes your resistance. He heard this, and paused. You are right, he said, but I do not see myself in this picture. I see only a refugee. Someone whose identity has been taken away from him. A bare life, standing there beyond the borders of Australia, waiting and staring. He fell silent, then said . . . This image scares me.



## Hoda Afshar

Emad – Manus Island (2018)

Emad is a Kurdish refugee. He arrived at the shores of Australia in 2013 and was sent to Manus Island detention centre – or prison camp, as they call it there.

I made this portrait of Emad when I visited Manus Island in March-April 2018. I asked him to choose something from the island, a natural element like water, or fire or birds, something he felt would reflect his inner feelings most. He said soil. Why soil? I asked. He replied gently: It reminds me of land; the land I was torn from; the land that has been torn from me. Soil is the most precious idea in Kurdish culture, he said. But we are stateless. I've always been stateless.



# 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**

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.





## 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.**

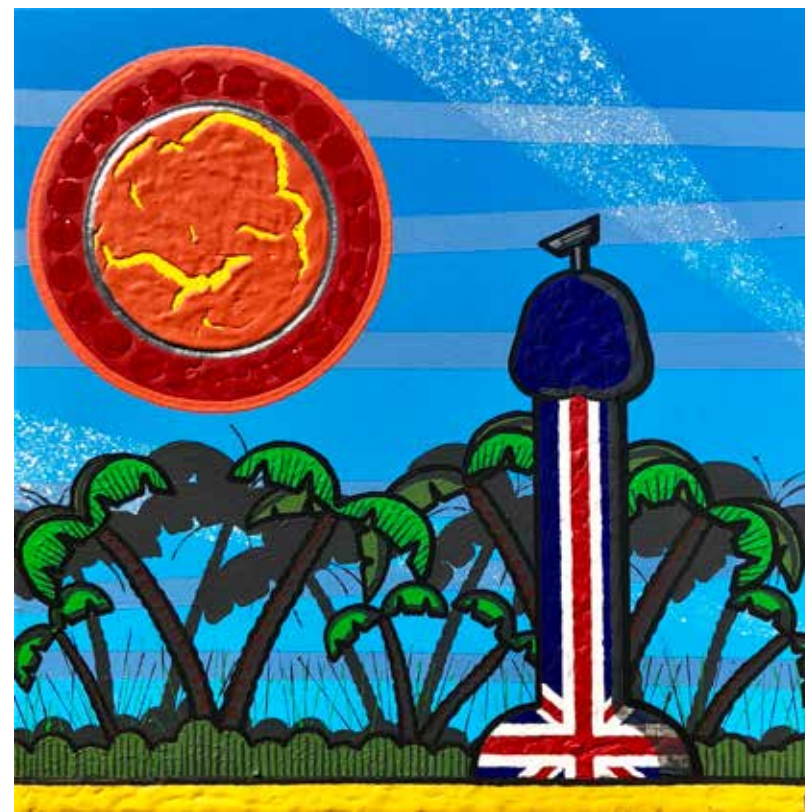
When I arrived in Australia I thought all my suffering from my country would end, but unfortunately I started suffering under the Australian government. After four years I still don't know when this suffering will end . . . If they could kill us they would. You have to know we are dead already – many people are sick mentally and physically, children, families, 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

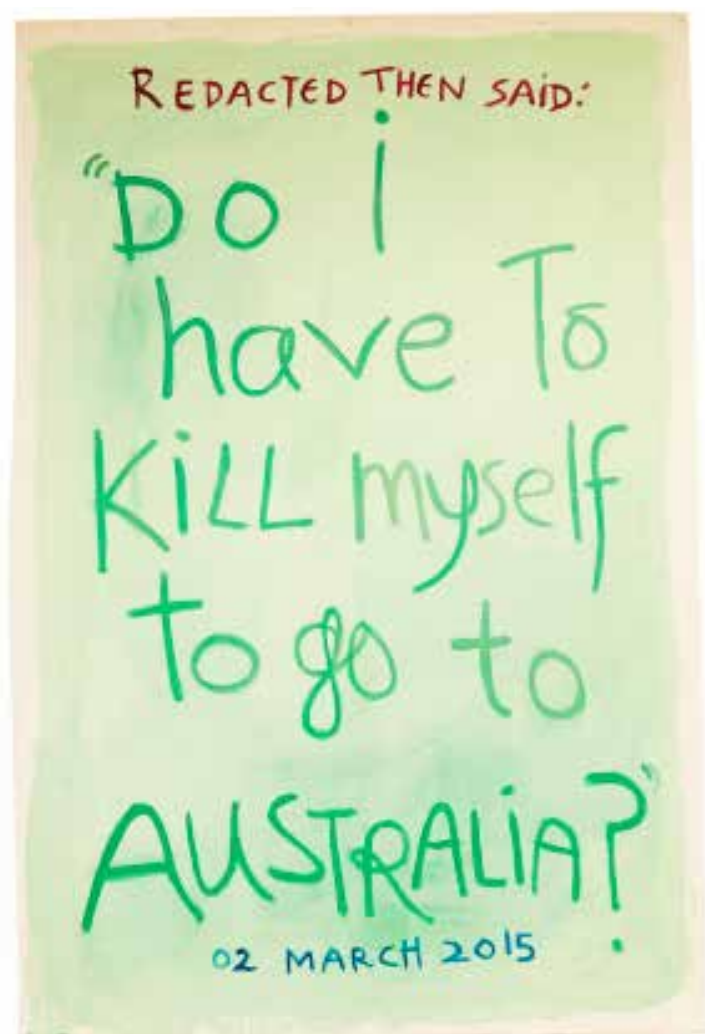
CW [REDACTED 1] and CW Manager [REDACTED 2] were having an extended conversation with various men who had stitched their lips together. During the conversation various men stated that when they hold protests at night they want to be peaceful because they have their children there, but that the Wilson's 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**

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)  
Repurposed porcelain figurine, enamel paints  
Photograph courtesy Mathew Stanton

**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.

# Paul Davies

Nauru File 8th December 2014 (2017) *opposite*  
Archival pigment print on paper  
Edition of 3 + 2 artist proofs  
750 x 600 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: UNCLASSIFIED**  
**08 DECEMBER 2014**  
**RISK RATING: UNCLASSIFIED**

[REDACTED] was visibly upset in SAF area. CM was informed by [REDACTED] the chef had been verbally aggressive toward her after reporting the food looked old and asked for a clean spoon. The chef began to shout at her in an aggressive manner in front of everyone in the mess. [REDACTED] left the mess without eating and was upset. [REDACTED] reported she fell down and banged her head, grazing and bruising her knees. [REDACTED] was examined by IHMS. [REDACTED] reported the incident caused her to have an anxiety attack and made her feel like an animal. [REDACTED] informed CW she will not be eating in the mess until the chef appologises.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

“[REDACTED] left the mess without eating and was upset... [REDACTED] informed CW she will not be eating in the mess until the chef appologises.” For me, this illustrates the way food represents an imbalance of power between the staff and asylum seekers on Nauru.

This imbalance is referred to by the painted bowl which appears like a weighing scale suspended by tropical island palm trees. The bowl is filled with what could be read as rotten fruit or precious bounty, surrounded by negative space and cast shadows it echoes the geographical isolation of Nauru and the unheard stories of its inhabitants.

The picture is made up of subjects I painted and photographed. These are collaged and held together by masking tape then re-photographed to produce the final print. Rather than editing the tape from the final print, to make a seamless picture, the tape remains visible reflecting the perpetual limbo of asylum seekers and the temporary nature of Nauru.

# Kate Durham

Untitled (2018)  
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.







Trent Evans and  
Nadia Hernández

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

**SURVEY FORM**  
**OFFSHORE PROCESSING & ME**



---

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

☐ ☐

**YES NO**

(mark only one box)

**Why? / Why Not?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode**      (please include your postcode)

## ARTIST STATEMENT

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!



## Robert Fielding

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

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: COMPLAINT**

27 SEPTEMBER 2014

### RISK RATING: INFORMATION

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”.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

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.

# Belinda Fox

Sound by George Palmer

6 letters (2017/18)  
Blown Glass, engraving, sound  
700 x 300 x 260 mm

Sound by George Palmer with recordings by  
people on Nauru during 2013-2015

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

On 26/03/2015 at 4.25pm Case Worker (CW) [redacted] was having a conversation with asylum seeker [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted] in the mess in RPC3. CW [redacted] was also present. [Redacted] then disclosed that [redacted] did something ‘stupid’. [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. (CW is unable to recall the exact name). [Redacted] advised that she did not wish to tell CW what she cut herself with as we would take it away or place her on watch. [Redacted] then showed CW’s her left inner fore arm where there were approximately 5-6 scars approximately 2-4cm in length horizontally across her arm. [Redacted] was crying during this conversation however she advised that she just becomes upset when she speaks about her husband. She advised that she was feeling calm and did not have any plans to harm herself again today. She advised that she would stay with her friends ([redacted] and [redacted]) this afternoon and if she felt worried or like she was going to harm herself she would contact Whiskey 3 and request to see CW’s.

## ARTIST STATEMENTS

**Belinda:** Glass has this amazing quality; it is quiet and still. It is transparent, delicate, precious. It’s making however is dangerous and harnessing this medium requires strength and great confidence. To engrave/incise into glass also conjures up connotations of scarring, harm, defacing, hiding a secret. To shine a light on an engraved line creates a shadow – words or images can be revealed. From the shadows the truth is revealed.

As an artist my biggest goal is to create work that is meaningful and creates a dialogue about our times. For this very special work it was clear the message I needed to convey. The challenge was to make it subtle enough to make the audience delve deeper, to engage on a human level. To feel... to feel the pain within this piece. This is a real story... read the file. No one should have this story to tell.

My second goal for this piece as an artist was to create an object that will pay homage to this woman and her story. Despite the political malaise that prevails at present, and despite how hard I protest and speak out and get ignored, this sculpture will hopefully last well beyond my years and over time will testify and honour this file, this person, and show the truth of our destructive and cruel policies that have brought great shame to our country. I see this sculpture as a historical document.

Mostly, I just hope this show brings some much-needed momentum, helping the remaining detained refugees in Manus and Nauru to be evacuated.

**George:** The soundscape for Belinda Fox’s blown glass sculpture, “6 Letters”, 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.







## Adrienne Gaha

MALAISE (2018)  
Oil on linen  
950 x 650 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM

28 SEPTEMBER 2014

RISK RATING: MAJOR

Client advised that “All the single females met to discuss mass suicide”.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

I made the painting in reaction to the report of 28th September 2014.

“All the single females met to discuss mass suicide.”

The absolute despair of this sentence is both epic and tragic. My immediate thought was how operatic or mythological in scale the action was – a kind of horrible predestined female role in response to a degrading, dangerous world. Not to trivialise the plight of these people but in an attempt to express an inexpressible universal aching for them.

I have painted a vaguely symbolic / classical, spectral, female form disappearing into a ‘high key’ landscape . A beautiful but dissolving light.

A melancholy memory of what was or could be lost.

I don’t expect or want that this painting will be read in the same way twice.

I was honoured to be part of telling their complex story.



## 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.

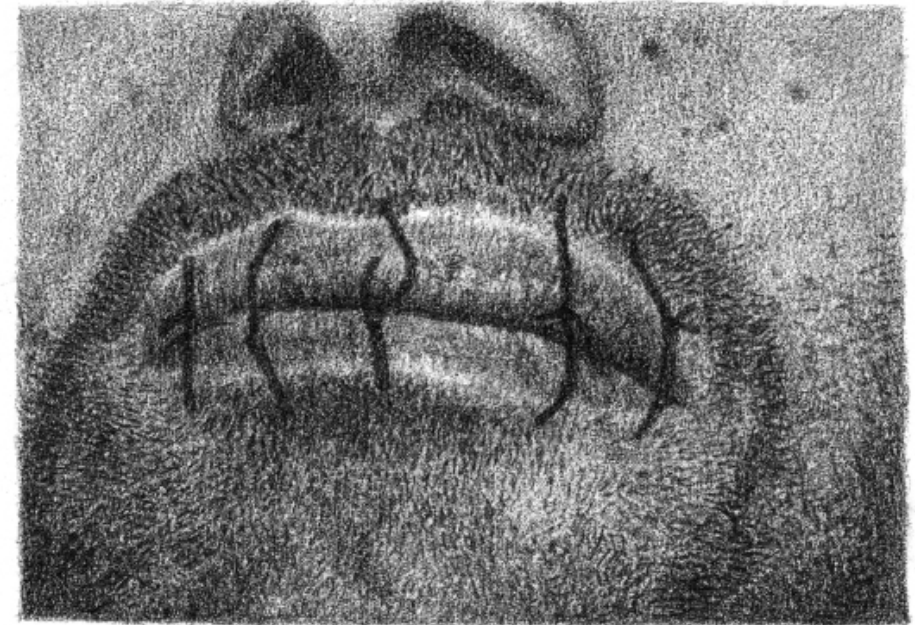




## Hasti

They tried to bury us, they didn't know  
we were seeds (2018) *opposite*  
Acrylic on canvas, 51cm x 62cm

Hasti is a survivor of offshore detention on Nauru.



## Mark Gerada

Untitled II (2017) *above*  
Pencil on paper  
115 x 80 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: COMPLAINT

28 SEPTEMBER 2014

RISK RATING: INFORMATION

[REDACTED] was speaking to CPSW about his protesting and the reasons why he has chosen to sew his lips together. [REDACTED] explained that he feels discriminated against and security at OPC3 aggravate/antagonise himself and others to make them feel angry and react. [REDACTED] said last night during the protesting, the guards turned off their camera and antagonised asylum seekers. [REDACTED] described the guards jumping up and down and laughing at them; while the cameras were off. [REDACTED] said once the asylum seekers started to react and feel angry they turned the cameras on again.

# Sam Harrison

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

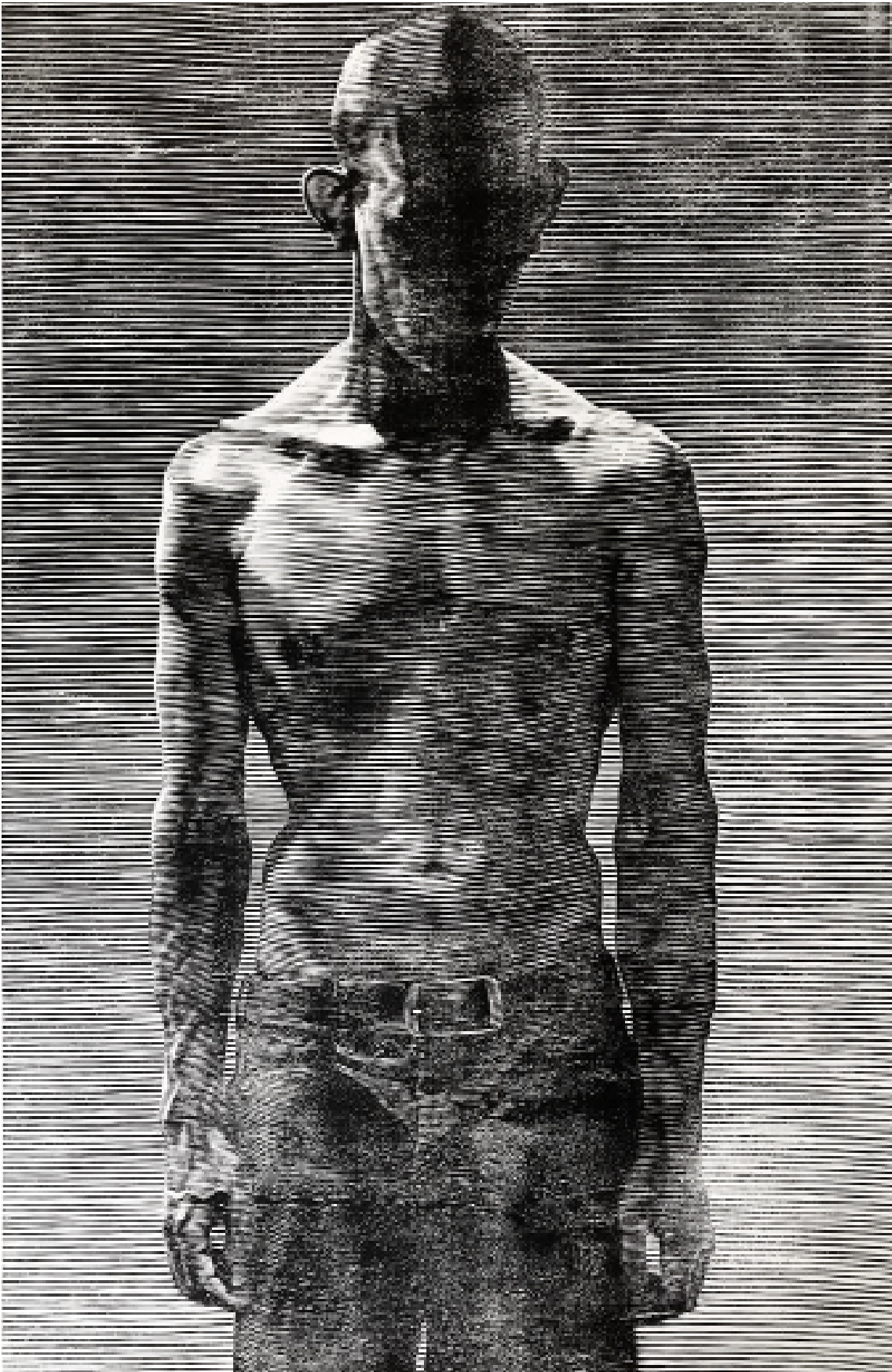
## TYPE OF INCIDENT: VOLUNTARY STARVATION

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.







## Lachie Hinton

Portrait of Saji (2018)

LIMBOLAND (2018)  
Documentary film

### ARTIST STATEMENT

My work as an artist concerned with human rights has led me to document life in fairly adverse environments such as North Korea, Cuba and refugee camps in Greece, but none proved as challenging as witnessing the despair of refugees on Nauru. I travelled to the remote Pacific island in 2018, creating a documentary and art that aimed to capture the psyche of living in limbo on Nauru.

I wanted to humanise refugees and asylum seekers detained on Nauru by illuminating their stories and identities. Intentionally hidden by the Australian government, they are unseen and unheard, yet exploited for political gain in Australia. My documentary LIMBOLAND reveals the human impact of offshore detention, where conversations of self-harm and suicide were frequent, even among children as young as eight.

[www.limboland.com.au](http://www.limboland.com.au)



## 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.

# Rebecca Jensen

This is How Tired We Are (2016)  
Reinforced concrete, donated clothing  
240 x 290 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: ABUSIVE OR AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR**

**3 APRIL 2015**  
**RISK RATING: MINOR**

On Thursday 03/04/2015 approx 12:00am, I was leaving [REDACTED] with SCA and Transfield staff including [REDACTED] (Transfield), [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] all SCA staff. As we were walking through the carpark there was a refugee on the ground and people around him. Some people were being dragged away from the situation. As we continued walking away toward the bus stop a Wilson's lady was next to me and said “There better not be any refugees on our bus.” I said, “Why can't refugees catch the bus?” She replied “She didn't want them on there.” It was clear she was intoxicated. Then a Wilson's male put his arm around me and I asked him to not touch me about two or three times and tried to remove his arm. His friends then pulled him away towards the bus and he yelled out, “I'll get you in camp tomorrow.” I am worried about the repercussions from the evening and felt it important to state what happened on the night. I am aware from talking with [REDACTED] (SCA) there had been some sort of altercation on the balcony. [REDACTED] stated to me a refugee had been annoying her that evening. She said she had told a Wilson's officer, and then when her back was turned the refugee was over the balcony on the ground. She states she did not see or know what happened. This statement is true and represents the facts of the evening as I recall.



**ARTIST STATEMENT**

I produced these works to address the Australian government's hypocrisy towards asylum seekers. Despite championing ourselves as a nation that has ‘boundless plains to share’ our refugee policies hold people arbitrarily, for years at a time, at great detriment to their mental and physical health. My research has focused on what is publicly available information and what we actively choose to overlook. Through the media's constant dehumanization of asylum seekers it has become increasingly acceptable to choose to not engage with the horrors of offshore detention. If you choose to look, the reality is harrowing. The use of clothing re-instates the human presence absent throughout the reports. In 2016 following the death of a Pakistani refugee, the refugee community on Manus Island sold their clothes in order to afford to repatriate his remains. The literal act of giving the shirt off one's own back shows the true generosity and humanity of these individuals. In the face of such humanity, how do we respond?

This particular work was initially created in response to an incident report from Villawood detention centre on 19th April 2010. A similar story echoed 5 years later on Nauru shows us that the system has not changed, and the heavy human toll of indefinite detention remains.



# Laura Jones

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

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM**

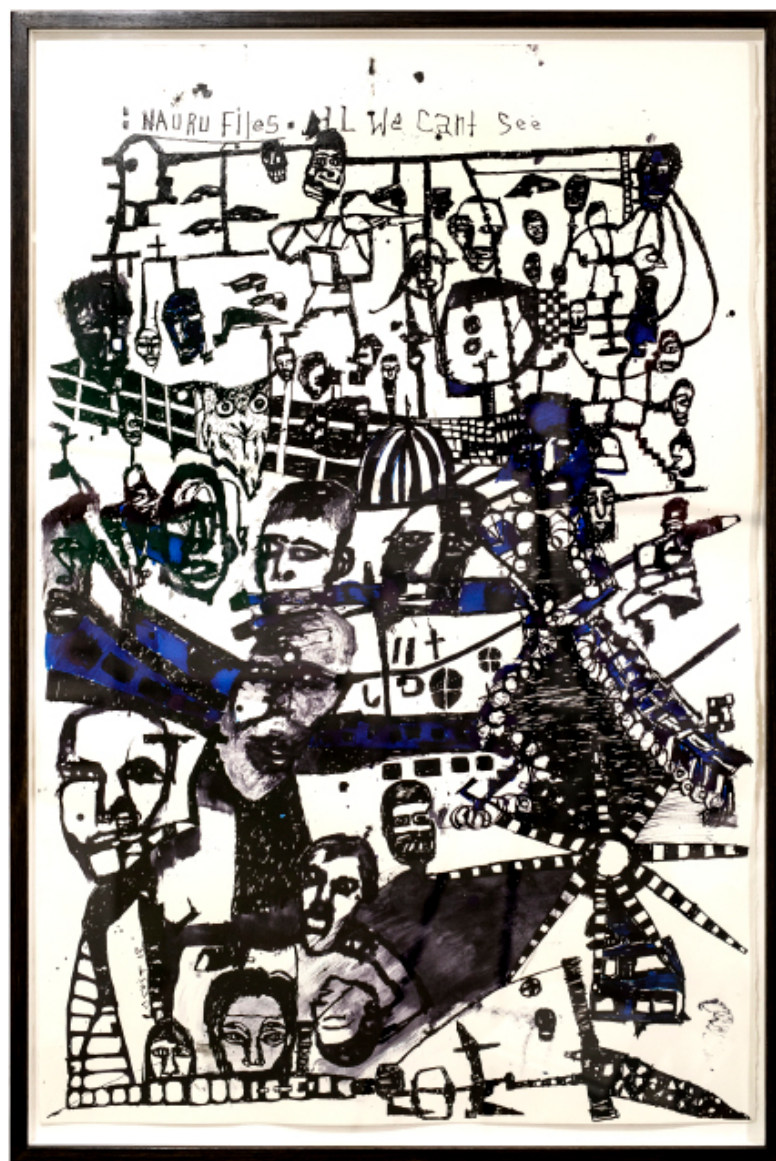
**27 JANUARY 2015**  
**RISK RATING: MINOR**

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.





## Locust Jones

20 November 2014 (2018)  
Ink on paper, 1100 x 570 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

20 NOVEMBER 2014

RISK RATING: MAJOR

Senior child protection work witness client hitting himself over the head with a rock and chair, then banging head into walls.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

Political News events including the plight of refugees have been the subject matter of my drawing practice for the last twenty years. The stories contained in the Nauru Files are important to tell and I hope that this exhibition can highlight the need for political change.



## Janet Laurence

Flotsam

/ 'flɒts(ə)m/

noun

- People or things that have been rejected or discarded as worthless. (2017)

Duraclear on acrylic, mirror, 600 x 600mm

### 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.



# Anna Liebrezeit

Portrait of Azim, 2018  
Pencil on paper, 297 x 420 mm

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 institu-

tionalisation 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.

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.



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.



## Tim Maguire

Untitled (2018)  
Oil in canvas, 1020 x 1020 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT:**  
**ACTUAL SELF-HARM**  
**2 MARCH 2015**  
**RISK RATING: CRITICAL**

[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

Beyond these documented instances of abuse and the pervasive uncertainty and misery, is the terrible injustice of children born and raised in indefinite detention in Nauru.

Freedoms denied, education neglected, potential squandered, hopes swamped, lives wasted.



## 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)  
Oil on linen, 1070 x 1630 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: UNCLASSIFIED

07 MARCH 2014

RISK RATING: UNCLASSIFIED

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].



## Anna Mould

Fever Dream (2018)  
Embroidery, 800 x 600 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: CONCERN FOR MINOR

05 AUGUST 2014

RISK RATING: MINOR

Clients complained to SCA worker that cockroaches have crawled over him throughout the night and his children are not sleeping due to fear of the bugs

### ARTIST STATEMENT

This work imagines the fear of a feverish and sleep-deprived child. Overgrown, sticky-legged monsters crawl out from the darkness of the jungle to scuttle over small, sweaty bodies night after night, after night. The satin ribbon binding was given to me by a friend, a leftover from a well loved blanket. In the sky, the all-seeing Southern Cross is formed by five shells found on an idyllic beach in Australia - shores that so many people have been so desperate to reach.



## Tomislav Nikolic

For all we can't see, I am sorry (2015-2017)  
Acrylic, marble dust, 24ct gold leaf, glass on linen and wood  
414 x 475 x 70 mm

**TOMISLAV HAS CHOSEN TO RESPOND TO THE FILES AS A WHOLE.**

### ARTIST STATEMENT

I read most of the files looking for one that I thought I could reference in my work for the project. I feel overwhelmed when I think about the Nauru Files, I can't help but think about not just these files that are accessible to us but the ones after these, that we know little about which speak of the ongoing current situations and circumstance of these vulnerable individuals and families that we are not only failing to provide assistance to but through the proxy of our government are willfully abusing. My work for the project is an emotional response to the entire cache and beyond.



## Stanislava Pinchuk

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

Information regarding asylum seekers with lips sewn:

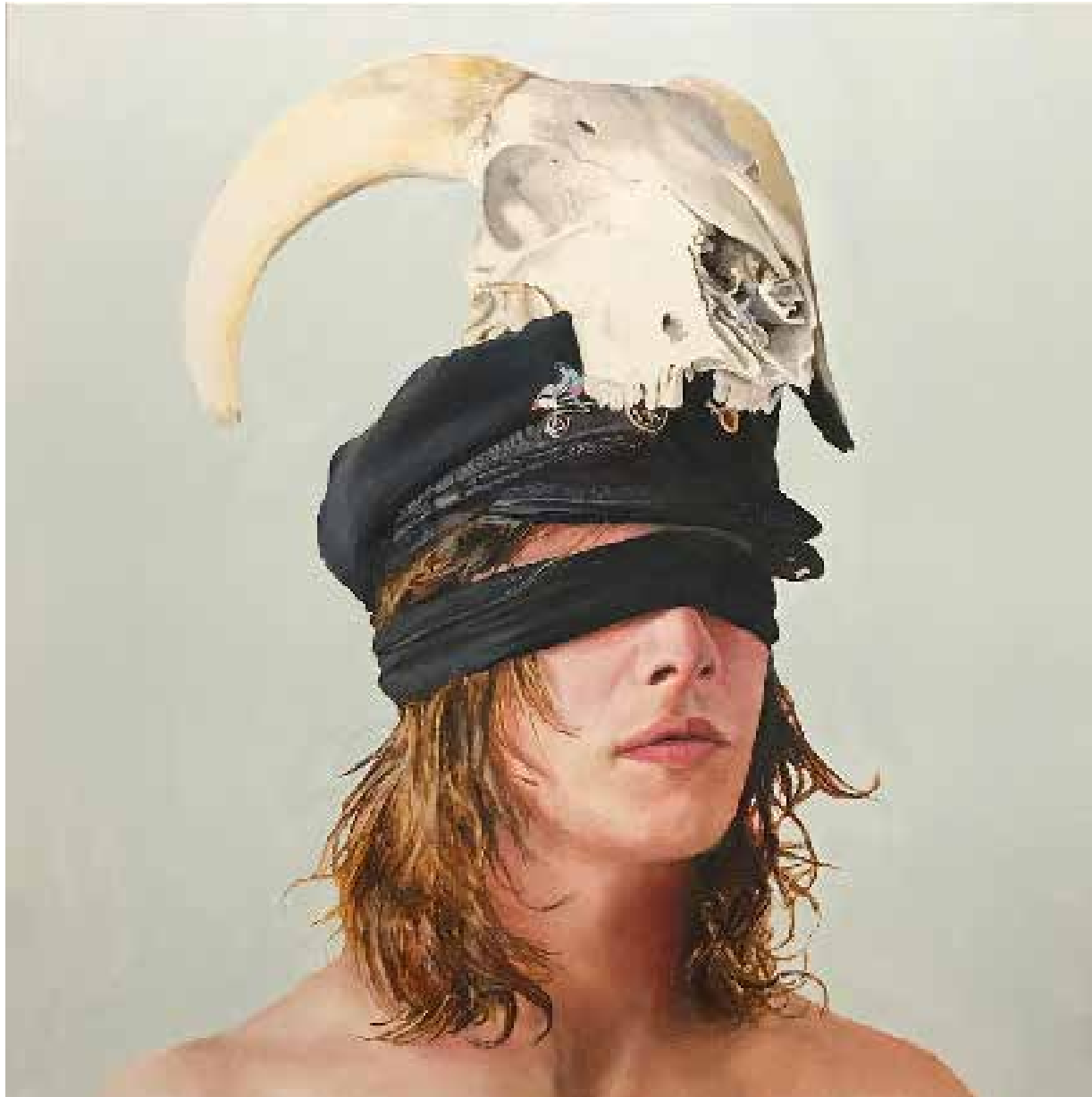
- [REDACTED] at 2200hrs had stitches cut by IHMS. He had 4 x full flesh stitches.
- [REDACTED] went to IHMS @ approx 2345 and asked to have his stitches removed. CSO reported stitches were just through the skin.
- [REDACTED] - had his stitches cut by IHMS - full flesh stitches.
- [REDACTED] cut and removed 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.



## Jamie Preisz

'Blind': Self-Portrait as the blind Captain (2017)  
Oil on canvas  
910 x 910 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: THREATENED SELF-HARM

28 SEPTEMBER 2014

#### RISK RATING: INFORMATION

CW [REDACTED 1] and CW Manager [REDACTED 2] were having an extended conversation with various men who had stitched their lips together, with the assistance of TIS interpreter [REDACTED 3]. During the conversation a small crowd gathered and at approximately 1400 hours [REDACTED 4] entered the conversation and stated that people in the camp are very desperate. [REDACTED 4] explained that he is aware of a plan for at least 15 people to complete mass suicide by using fence posts (star pickets) as skewers to stab themselves in the heart. [REDACTED 4] stated that he is not aware of the date for this plan. [REDACTED 4] stated that definitely more people will stitch their lips.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

The situation on Nauru, where vulnerable refugees are so disconnected and unheard they felt their only option was to stitch their lips together and plan a mass suicide, is a reflection on Australia's refugee policies and our attitudes. Society is judged by how it treats its most vulnerable members.

This self-portrait portrays the wilful blindness that pervades society, and that I myself was subject to, regarding the refugee crisis and the maltreatment occurring on Manus and Nauru.

Australian society is turning a 'blind eye' to the human rights issues confronting us, and obfuscating the facts before us. These refugees are rendered as 'other' or more animal than human. The 'other' allows us to disassociate and omit. This omission is part of the reason this neglect has occurred.

Suicide is a tragedy, these words ring true for me now more than ever. If we see our fellow Australians, our friends and our family with value, then all of these men women and children have value too. We cannot be blind

## Louis Pratt

Screw code (2018)  
Acrylic on canvas  
510 x 610 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

21 JUNE 2015

#### RISK RATING: MAJOR

Code Blue called at 1028 after [REDACTED] had stated to his wife that he has swallowed some screws. X-ray confirmed at least 1 screw at 1128hrs.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

'Screw code' is about when, in the depths of despair, we tell ourselves that self harm is a better way out of the pain we are in.





# Marisa Purcell

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

23 August 2014 (2017) *above*  
Watercolour pencil on paper, 450 x 550 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

23 AUGUST 2014

RISK RATING: CRITICAL

[REDACTED 1] was verbally aggressive to writer when informed he would have to wait for the phone while other used it. He physically threw a chair. [REDACTED 1] was observed to removed what appeared to be a rope from tent [REDACTED]. Writer alerted Wilsons CSO [REDACTED 2] and both followed [REDACTED 1] to his tent, where they observed [REDACTED 1] tying the rope to the beam above his room. He had also tied the rope around his neck and attempted to weigh down the rope. Writer and CSO ason supported his weight and called a Code Blue over the radio. IHMS attended and assessed health. Writer remained in sight but was not engaging with [REDACTED 1].

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

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ASSAULT

18 MARCH 2015

RISK RATING: MINOR

[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.







## 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**

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.



## Caroline Rothwell

Untitled (2018)  
Acrylic on canvas

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: SEXUAL ASSAULT**  
**30 OCTOBER 2014**  
**RISK RATING: INFORMATION**

[REDACTED] reported that during a bus journey to OPC1 for a visit on 23.10.14, she was the only asylum seeker on the bus. [REDACTED] reported the bus driver tried to take a photo of [REDACTED] in order to masturbate. [REDACTED] reported that this is not an isolated incident and that this has happened to her on previous occasions, in addition to other single females.

[REDACTED] reported that CSO [REDACTED] had approached herself and other single females, on numerous occasions following self-harm incidents. [REDACTED] reported that [REDACTED] asked why the single females cut horizontally when self harming, stating if they cut horizontally they would be successful in suiciding.

[REDACTED] reported that single female - [REDACTED] (ID unknown) was approached by a local security staff member when she was experiencing distress. [REDACTED] reports that the security officer offered her marijuana to decrease her stress, which was accepted by [REDACTED]. Following this, [REDACTED] reports

that [REDACTED] requested marijuana from the same security guard and he agrees to provide this in exchange for sex. [REDACTED] informed CW that this exchange continues to occur on a regular basis.

[REDACTED] reported that approximately five weeks ago she was in medical following a self-harm incident in which she ingested washing powder. [REDACTED] reported that Wilson security staff member [REDACTED] (female) attended her bed side at which time another security officer left the room, leaving them alone. [REDACTED] reports that [REDACTED] began stroking her leg and face. [REDACTED] reported that [REDACTED] said to [REDACTED] ‘I like you’, ‘your problem is that you haven’t had sex for two years’, ‘why don’t you try having sex with me’.

[REDACTED] reported that on a Sunday she attended RAA to have a meeting with a friend. At this time three single females who were previously residing in RAA had left for church. [REDACTED] reported that she was left alone with security guard [REDACTED] who made further sexual advances towards her. [REDACTED] reported that [REDACTED] said ‘now is a good time for us to have sex’ ‘we are alone’ ‘come on try me’, ‘we’ll have a good time’. [REDACTED] reported that she informed Whiskey 1 – [REDACTED] of this, and [REDACTED] ‘laughed at her’.





## Elliott Routledge

Untitled (2018) *opposite*  
Acrylic on canvas, 3m x 1m

**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.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

"I want death, I need death" is absolutely heartbreakingly honest. For a child to say this and have these feelings . . . I have two children. This shocked me.

## Khaled Sabsabi

28 April 2015 (2018) *below*  
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**

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.







## Luke Scibberas

Snare (2018) *above*  
Ink and pastel on paper  
560 x 750 mm

Untitled (2018) *opposite*  
Ink on paper  
750 x 760 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: ASSAULT

18 JANUARY 2015

RISK RATING: CRITICAL

When exiting the volleyball court area I observed [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] speaking rapidly with slightly raised voices. [REDACTED] continued to run around ignoring the adults, at this point [REDACTED] ran after him striking [REDACTED] on the back of the head. This was done with a half closed fist using his knuckles. This physical discipline was done with enough force to make [REDACTED] hold the back of his head and cry. The three of them continued to walk to the security check point next to the cricket net. I immediately notified a case worker [REDACTED] as I was unable to leave my work station. CW [REDACTED] followed the child, mother and uncle to the security checkpoint where she acquired their ID numbers. Note: Rating changed by Wilsons.



# Megan Seres

Untitled #01 (2018)  
Oil on linen, 1524 x 1016 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: SEXUAL ASSAULT**  
**16 MAY 2015**

**RISK RATING: MAJOR**

At about 0750hrs on 17 May 2015, information was received in the control room to upgrade an information report to a Major reporting incident of sexual assault. The incident relates to an allegation of sexual assault made by [REDACTED] who departed RPC3 on 16 may 2015 on Open Centre leave. At approx 1800hrs on 16 may 2015 [REDACTED] had failed to return to RPC3 while on open centre leave. The NPF were informed and provided with details of her description and clothing. At approx. 2107hrs information was received that [REDACTED] was located by the police, walking naked in the community and then conveyed by police to the police station. An allegation of sexual assault has been made.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

Many of my paintings to date have had a Gothic sensibility and are drawn from 18 th and 19th century themes and images found in art, poetry, texts and films. The violation and isolation of women is common to that theme.

The unique power that certain narratives can hold, especially ambiguous ones, are a great influence in my practice. Exploring the boundaries between what is observed, what is imagined and what is hidden or forgotten is central to my work. In this painting, I have explored the notion of erasure and the emptiness of both the landscape and ourselves when we are forsaken or forsake.



# Luke Storrier

All Stitched Up, 01 October 2014 (2018)  
840 x 600 x 500mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: COMPLAINT**  
**01 OCTOBER 2014**

**RISK RATING: MINOR**

[REDACTED] informed case worker that his son [REDACTED] was walking through Area 9, felt dizzy (he had sewn his lips together at the time) and sat on the chair near the guard station. Guard stated “Do not sit in front of me I don’t want to see you” and kicked the chair.





# 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\_Translucent* (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



# Ian Strange

Seventy-one Langley, Selected work from SHADOW (2015)  
Archival Digital Print, 825 x 1100mm

## TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM

02 MARCH 2015

RISK RATING: CRITICAL

[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 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 doorpost.



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 have abused  
those coming to our doorpost.

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#>.

# Abdullah M. I. Syed

Hex Constellation, 2018 *top*  
Shaving blades, Installation dimensions variable

Flesh & Blood, 2017 *bottom*  
Photographic prints of live performance, Asia Society Museum, NYC  
Image courtesy the artist and Aicon Gallery, Photograph Charlene Wanja (Lenny).

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: CONCERN FOR MINOR**  
**18 NOVEMBER 2013 (BLADE)**  
**RISK RATING: UNCLASSIFIED**

CSO’s guarding the SAA were doing a routing check on UAM [REDACTED] at approx. 1am. CSO noticed UAM was attempting to conceal her right wrist. When CSO’s entered the room and investigated more closely, they noticed blood on UAM’s right wrist. She then surrendered a small razor blade. UAM agreed to go to IHMS.

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: ACTUAL SELF-HARM**  
**22 MAY 2014 (BLADE)**  
**RISK RATING: UNCLASSIFIED**

22:43 [REDACTED] approached staff and asked for his razor. As he presented in a calm and reasonable manner, he was provided with his razor. 22:53 SCA staff checked the showers for [REDACTED] and were unable to locate him. SCA staff continued to look until 23:12 they located him in his bedroom with blood on his arms, legs and on the bed. [REDACTED] taken to IHMS.

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: COMPLAINT**  
**02 SEPTEMBER 2014 (BLADE)**  
**INFORMATION**

[REDACTED] advised C/M that asylum seekers are keeping their old blunt razors rather than exchanging them for new ones as the new ones have bendy handles and will not shave. HE advised he has had his razor for over 3 months and will not exchange because of that reason. He also advised a ‘black market’ is operating in OPC3. He alleges that people who have been to Darwin for medical treatment and such are bringing ‘proper’ razors back with them and exchanging them with other Asylum Seekers for clothes. He also alleges some of the local staff are bringing razors in for certain Asylum Seekers whom he did not want to name and they are then selling them for clothing and other items within the OPC. He has asked he not be named or spoken to any further about this as he fears repercussions.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross

We’ll toil with hearts and hands;

To make this Commonwealth of ours

Renowned of all the lands;

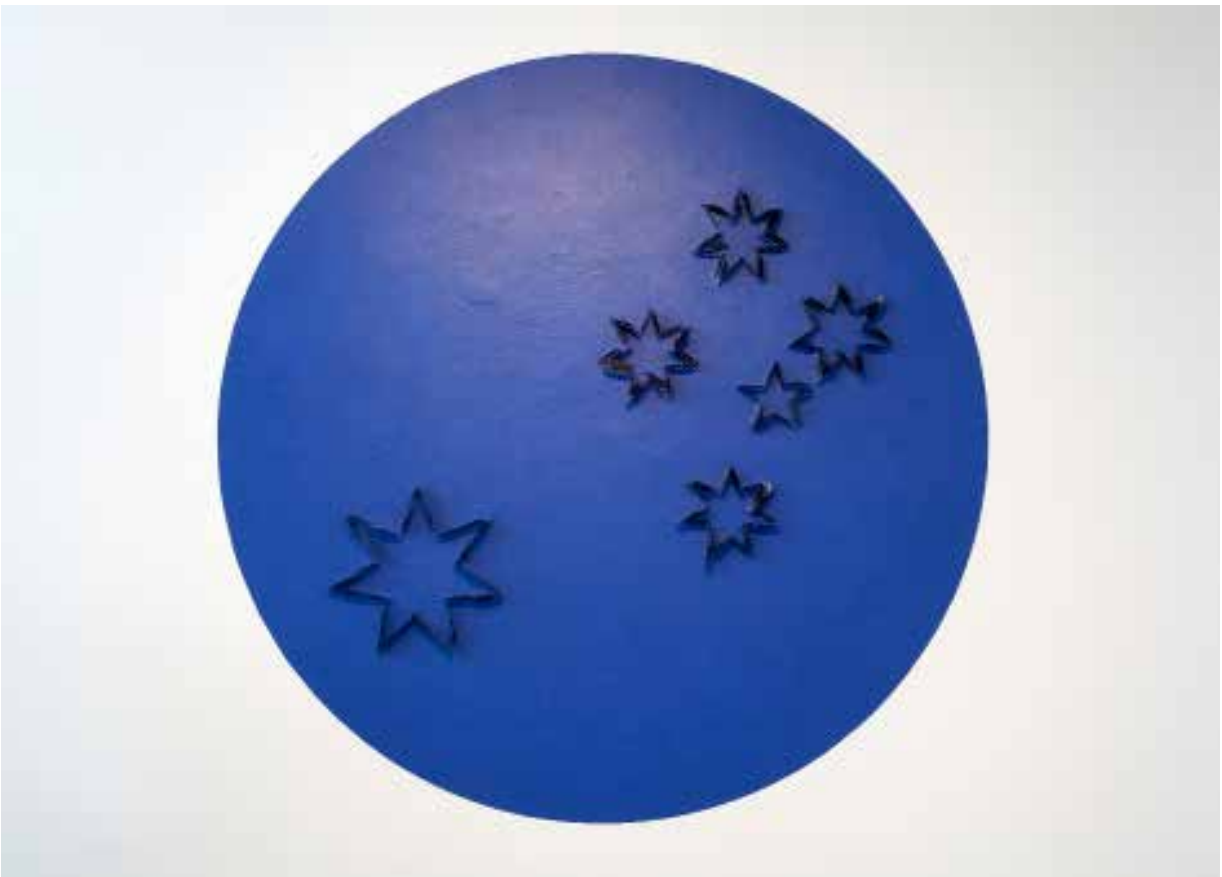
For those who’ve come across the seas

We’ve boundless plains to share.

Constellations, stars and roses are symbols of physical and emotional distance, magic, wonderment and hope. Constellations have always been used as reference points in navigation and astronomy. Historically, stars such as Polaris (the North Star) also served as guides and shining hope for slaves, captives and persecuted minorities who fled northward to find freedom. For the 2,000 men, women, and children who charted the sea to reach the ‘boundless’ plains of Australia, the journey was hexed from the beginning. They had no guiding star in the Southern hemisphere. Instead of finding freedom, these new boat arrivals were forcibly transferred to offshore processing centres on Nauru and Manus Island, where suffering, madness and death awaited them.

Hex Constellation (2018) and Flesh & Blood (2017) are poetic responses to the incident reports leaked to the Guardian from the Nauru detention centre that reveal acts of self-harm, such as hunger strikes and the swallowing of razor blades. Stripped of any control over their own lives, the asylum seeker’s bodies have become their sole means of expression and protest. Astra shaving blades, which are commonly used in Australia and are named after the Latin term for star, are used in Hex Constellation to create a constellation on a circle of blue, bringing attention to the fact that the lives and deaths of these asylum seekers have been transformed into living and bleeding protests against the decline of empathy and unchecked political power.

Their protest is further amplified in photographic documentation of an endurance performance Flesh & Blood in which the artist transformed the rose—a desirable cultural and spiritual material symbolizing love, purity, soul, and melancholia in South Asia and the Middle East—into a bloody pulp. The exposed, cutting edges of the blades and the dematerialization of the rose into an abject and unstable substance of political mess further disrupts social norms and one’s senses. It acts as a reminder that all humans are made of flesh and blood, and equally susceptible to and affected by greed, hatred and violence. These two works question what one’s beliefs and responsibilities are and how are they shared and represented in the media, popular culture and social networks.







## 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

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 worried what the consequences would be to their parents. They did not want 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.



## Aida Tomescu

In a carpet made of water,  
in a carpet made of earth 1 (2017)  
Oil, silver and gold pigment on Belgian linen  
1830 x 915 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: UNCLASSIFIED

15 AUGUST 2014

RISK RATING: UNCLASSIFIED

Writer walks/runs on crushed coral. Knee ligaments are deteriorating due to surface. Has been given various supports which do not help. Experiencing back pain.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

In reality and certainly celebrated as paradise in popular mythology the coral reef is more than an idyllic natural barrier working to keep predators at bay. Engineering an inner halo of calm against the turbulence of the ocean, the coral reef delineates a sense of safety against the tumult and multiple risks that lie beyond.

Beautiful when alive, fragile and wondrously chromatic, its defences don't rate a mention until they are growing inside your foot. Far worse than the proverbial stone in one's shoe, these seemingly benign plants are in fact sensitive clustering animals that when broken treat the attacker as host – the embedded slivers and shards, an invasive and punitive reminder of our trespass in their world.

Thus to run over them is asking for trouble, a despairing and wilful act of defiance perhaps...

Aida Tomescu's painting can be viewed as an act of defiance, a powerful resistance to the confines and restraints of orthodoxy. Shards of colour and gestures cut through the accumulation of layers of pigment and like coral one would swear that this alternative plastic reality is alive. There is calm and turbulence, sensitivity and force, freedom and restraint.





## Mirra Whale

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

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.



## Mark Whalen

Step Repeat II (2017)  
Acrylic, ink and gouache on board  
330 x 430 mm

### TYPE OF INCIDENT: COMPLAINT

27 SEPTEMBER 2014

RISK RATING: INFORMATION

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”.





## 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.



## Joshua Yeldham

Sea Of Sorrow / Prayer For Guidance  
Acrylic on carved Board, drystone, cedar and card,  
with wooden boat and resin figure with cane  
950 x 650 x 1200 mm

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: SEXUAL ASSAULT**  
**20 AUGUST 2014**  
**RISK RATING: MINOR**

Client approached writer, and had been crying. Another beneficiary had been telling stories of sexual assault on Christmas Island. He has also been acting inappropriately, asking to look at other transferees breasts. She felt like self harm but did not discuss this further.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

On reading the Nauru files I saw a sea of sorrow, my brush dropped like an anchor in deep water.





# 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](http://www.allwecantsee.com)

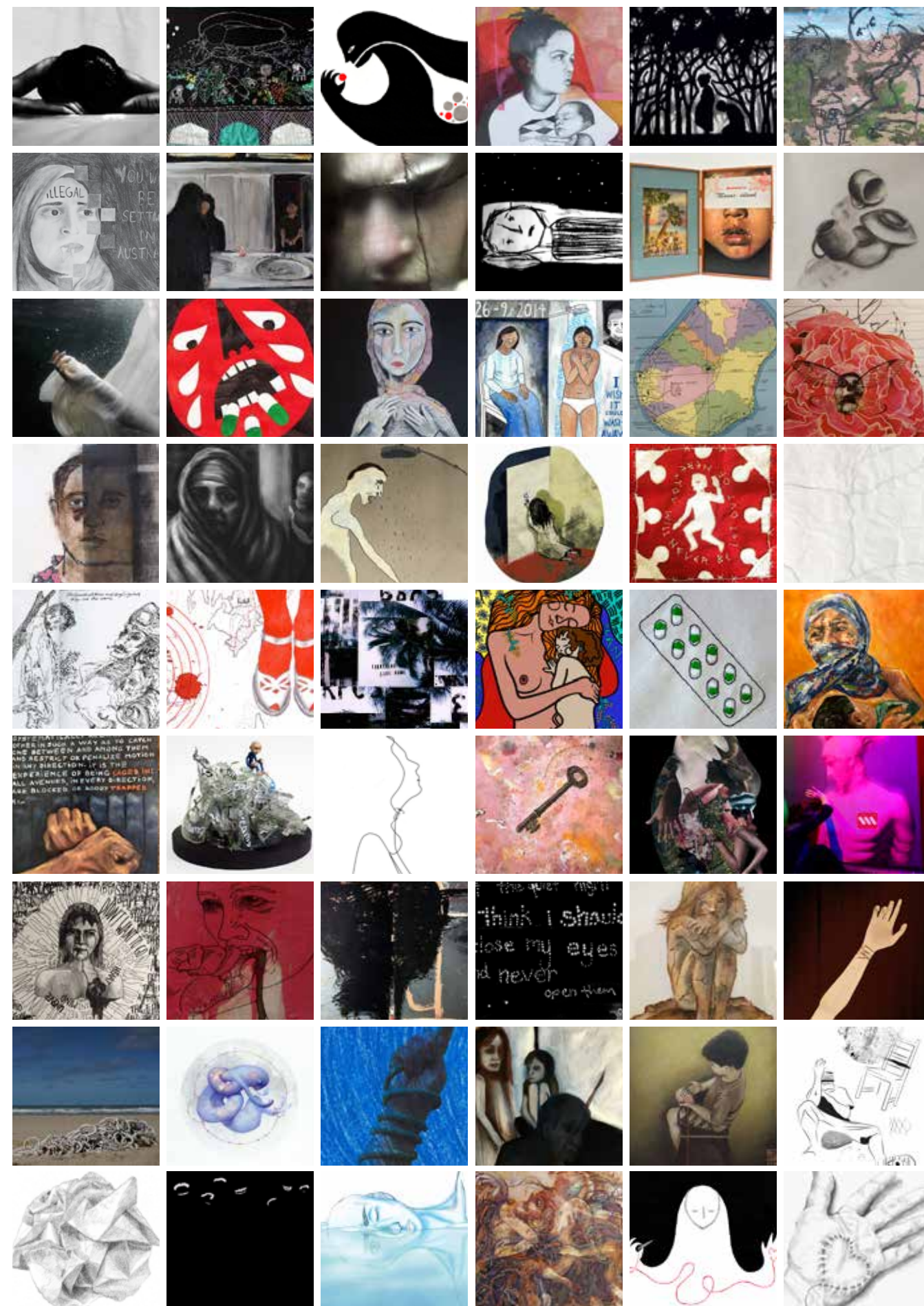
Visual responses to individual Nauru Files, submitted by the public to our purpose-built website [www.allwecantsee.com](http://www.allwecantsee.com) (opposite)

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





# 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.

Special thanks to all of the artists who have contributed to the show for their time, energy and incredible works: 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 Liebrezeit, 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.

Special thanks to Abbas Alaboudi, Hasti, Ravi, Behrouz Bouchani, Azimullah, and more unnamed artists who have courageously shared their own experiences of time in detention on Nauru and Manus Island for this exhibition.

Special thanks to all those who contributed work to our website: [www.allwecantsee.com](http://www.allwecantsee.com).

Special thanks to Angus Morgan and Hunter Valley Grammar School, and the students from Box Hill High and Ivanhoe Grammar who submitted works also.

Special thanks to Shaun Hanns and the entire Medicin Sans Frontieres team for sharing their experiences.

Special thanks to Abi Rajukumar for her support in accommodating our exhibition within Labor Fringe 2018.

Special thanks to Alex Seton for creating 'A Durable Solution?' for the ALP Conference, and to Mitch Ferrie and Charlie for their support during our Adelaide install.

Special thanks to Nikki Hamdorf from The Jam Factory and Emma Fey from Guildhouse for their generous support and advice.

Special thanks to Gus Clutterbuck for his generosity of time and support for the install of the Adelaide show.

Special thanks to Amy Tuxworth, Allie Webb, Anna Mould, Holly Greenwood, Zak Tilley, Kyra Wood, and the many more volunteers who have supported the production of our Adelaide show.

Special thanks to the Guardian for their work exposing the Nauru Files.

Special thanks to those individuals instrumental in the support of our project: Claire Ainsworth Herschell, Joshua Yeldham, Angus McDonald, Kieren Kresevic Salazar, Julian Burnside.

Special thanks to Georgie Bright, Morna Seres, Heidi Forbes and Human Rights Watch for their support in the project's first Sydney iteration.

Special thanks to the galleries involved for their continued support and assistance: Fortyfivedownstairs, Arthouse Gallery, Fox/Jensen Gallery, 4a Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Dominik Mersch, Olsen Gallery, Roslyn Oxley Gallery, Sullivan + Strumpf, Tolarno Gallery, Blackartprojects, Fehily Contemporary, Mimili Arts Centre.

Special thanks to our wonderful sponsors: Grace Removals, VisualCom Printing and Signage Solutions. Thank you to Christine Ormsby for your generous support.

Special thanks to our many other generous donors who made this project possible: Allie Webb and Anton Forte, James Brown, Jane Thorn, Angus McDonald, Jon Cady, Jackie Cesnick, Andrew Kainer, Therese Phu, Emma Lindsay, Greer Gamble, Allie Steel, Friedrich Winkelsen, Tim Wilson Brown, Penel Gamble, Clare Devine, Paolo Totaro and Patrizia Ravalico and all of our guest Kickstarter contributors.

**THIS PUBLICATION WAS CREATED FOR THE 'ALL WE CAN'T SEE' EXHIBITION AT THE LABOR PARTY'S 48<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL CONFERENCE 16-18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2018, ADELAIDE CONVENTION CENTRE - AN OFFICIAL EVENT OF LABOR FRINGE.**