



ANDY QUILTY
HOON

HEATHCOTE MUSEUM & GALLERY
14 NOVEMBER - 20 DECEMBER 2015





An article I encountered in the City of Melville newspaper archives, detailed residents' complaints regarding 'hooning' and celebratory loitering occurring at the vacant site of the demolished Majestic Hotel. Located amongst the affluent mansions of Point Dundas, this disturbance to quality of life and residents' sense of security was considered an affront to the community's wellbeing.

Consider then the notion of hooning in the context of European settlement and the post-colonial Australian experience. What better personification of the allegorical kinship between the Anglo Australian mind-set and that of the 'hoon' than the act of the burnout - a marking of territory made with aggressive disregard to the areas occupants, altering both the physical and psychological landscape of the environment in which the act is committed.

In eulogising the memory of white settlement through celebrations such as Australia day (a date on which Heathcote is a popular site for revelry) and forging the Anglo myth of territorial entitlement, the 'hoon' psyche not only disregards its impact upon the original occupants, but also engenders an environment in which absurd notions of 'love it or leave' and 'fit in or fuck off' become not just bumper stickers, but catch cries for a hoon nation.

Growing up in an area made up of predominantly Anglo descendants, this 'hoon' mentality was intrinsic to my identity and sense of place within the suburban experience. It was not until meeting my soon to be wife Eva, a migrant from Singapore of Indian descent, that I gave any real thought to the merit and impact of such an entitled and territorial mind-set. The influence of an outsider's perspective has proved to be both potent and humbling, and is a vantage point I have attempted to reconcile alongside my own experience in responding to the Heathcote site.

Andy Quilty 2015

ANDY QUILTY - HOON

The title of the exhibition 'Hoon' by WA artist Andy Quilty, references a colloquial term used by authorities to describe the wreckless act of marking common roads with motor vehicle burnouts. The act of performing a burnout generally involves creating a substantial amount of friction between rubber tyres and bitumen, consequently leaving behind an individual imprint and record of the event in the suburban environment. In a series of new works that explore spontaneous and expanded processes in drawing, painting and mark making, the artist examines notions of territory and suburban identity in response to the rich history of Point Heathcote and its surrounding areas.

Spanning across large-scale abstractions and intimate studies in charcoal and enamel, the limitations set by the canvas surface and frame are reevaluated and developed into progressive artistic enquiry and expanded methodologies. Discarding traditional materials in favour of industrial surfaces, household paints and workshop peg boards, Quilty departs from his former graphic renderings of male subjects in his distinct ballpoint pen style, and turns to exploring hyper masculine landscapes through monumental gestures and fractured expressions that pay homage to the quintessential, bad-boy of our times; the hoon.

The burnout paintings mark an important transition period in Quilty's practice. Emergences and disappearances of the medium are clearly integral to the artist's evolving visual language. In *Burnout Painting #8*, daggered overlaps and abrupt turns reveal a power grinder struggling to find traction on a sheet of aluminium composite panel, while frenetic lashes of fluorescent spray paint find themselves at odds with more muted areas of delicate activity. Alongside burly tyre marks and surface scouring created with the edge of a metal spatula, a range of rudimentary marks are set against one another in a way that is reminiscent of deeply etched scars on a moving landscape. These ambitious paintings bring together many opposing forces that clash and gouge at the surface as if in war.

Further to the suburban abstractions are smaller, bastardised appropriations of early colonial portraiture sourced from Wikipedia. Executed with enamel and aerosol paint, these studies see the artist interrogate the reverence for manufactured cultural iconography and sanitised accounts of Australia's colonial history. What appears central to these works is a commitment to prolonging the shifting state of the medium's journey across the surface, and where the process of resurfacing, also becomes integral to exposing the embedded archaeology of the layers beneath.

In studies such as *Captain James Stirling - after Wikipedia search found image #1*, the imperceptibility of the subject is maintained through the shifting states of the wet medium; here the enamel is used to literally slough away identity, layer by layer. Charcoal is similarly employed in *Man Drawing #1 - The Dad*, where the common role of the line to construct and define the subject, is instead subverted.

The exhibition raises important questions pertaining to personal and cultural anxieties, not to mention the capacity for new directions in artistic expression to cleanse and revitalise marginalised gender views through bold and experimental enquiry.

Stephanie Reisch
Artist & Lecturer Visual Arts (UWA)



Captain James Stirling - after Wikipedia search found image #1 (detail), 2015, enamel on paper, 47.5 x 34cm

The *Tilt* program is part of the annual exhibition schedule and has been developed by Heathcote Museum & Gallery to support local art practice, inquiry and arts practitioners.

Each year an artist is invited to respond to the Point Heathcote site, with its many layered history, by creating a new body of work. *Tilt* provides local artists with an opportunity to bring a range of ideas and practice to new audiences, plus engage with a heritage site. *Tilt* is an invitational exhibition.

This year's *Tilt* artist Andy Quilty has taken a contemporary approach in responding to the site of Point Heathcote. Quilty has explored the site almost from a neoevolutionary perspective delving into the hyper-masculine Australian culture, executing it in rich, frenetic, unapologetically bold mark making. This strong body of work is both challenging and mischievous in its exploration of the 'Hoon' dogma.

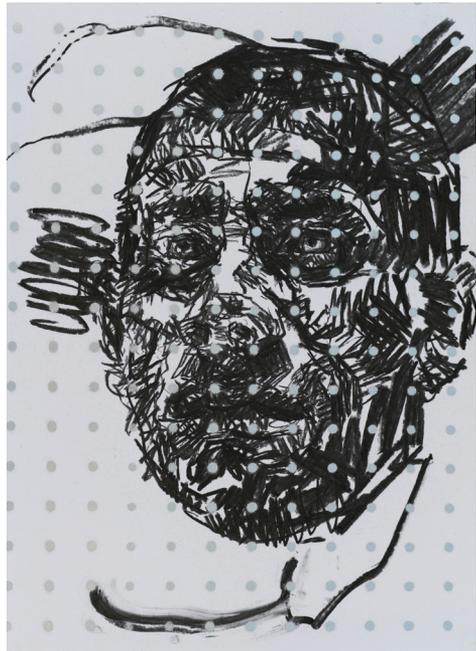
Jana Wallace Braddock - Curator

The artist would like to thank the following people for their support and assistance with this project: Eva Lean, Pete Le Scelle, Joe Clarke, Herb, Briza, DVE, Jerry Lean, Pedro, Mum and Dad, Nigel Darbyshire, Jana Braddock, Stephanie Reisch, and the City Of Melville.

Andy Quilty is represented by Linton and Kay Galleries.



Study for self portrait after being bashed #1, 2015, graphite on Arches paper, 23.5 x 17cm



Man drawing #2 - the brother, 2015, charcoal and aerosol on paper, 42 x 29.5cm



Above: *Burnout painting #8*, 2015, motorbike burnout, electric sander polisher, oil and aerosol on aluminium composite, 150 x 150cm

Front cover: *Burnout painting #13* (detail), 2015, motorbike burnout, electric sander polisher, electric drill, oil and aerosol on aluminium composite, 150 x 154cm

Inside Front cover: (pictured L-R) Andy Quilty, Briza and Herb - burnout painting process image

Back cover: *Man portrait #1* (detail), 2015, enamel and charcoal on paper, 42 x 29.5cm

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City of
Melville

Heathcote Museum & Gallery • Heathcote Cultural Centre
Swan House • 58 Dun Craig Rd, Applecross
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