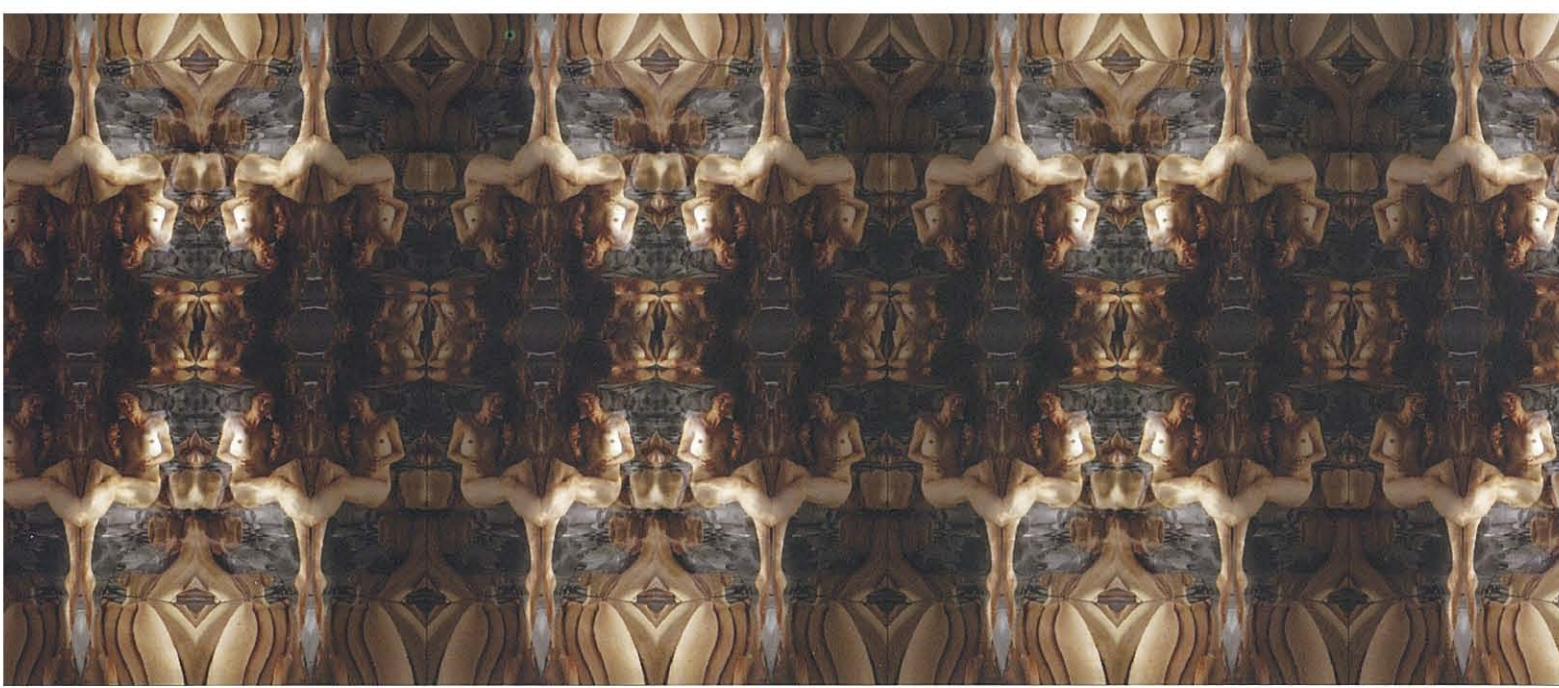


*The
Exquisite
Resonance Of
Memory*



The Exquisite Resonance of Memory

Bonemap takes the emphatically ordinary suitcase as an emblem for the events and relationships of the past. Hundreds of suitcases have been used to create organic structures that turn out to be topographical landmasses, navigated as though on a voyage of discovery through the space of the gallery. Imbued with the odour of many journeys—of departures and arrivals, of age and storage, these suitcases are sentient reminders of our community's disparate origins.

"As a symbol, the suitcase is double-edged, ambivalent in the extreme: on the one hand, it evokes travel, displacement, emigration, exile and transience; on the other, it is that part of home that travels with us, a reminder of belonging and stability, the world of things we collect around us, the promise of continuity in the midst of change, of order restored. The suitcase is a portable heterotopia, an 'other space' that is always there and here at the same time, a home away from home, but also offering the endless possibility of new departures, whether desired or forced." Elliott and Purdy

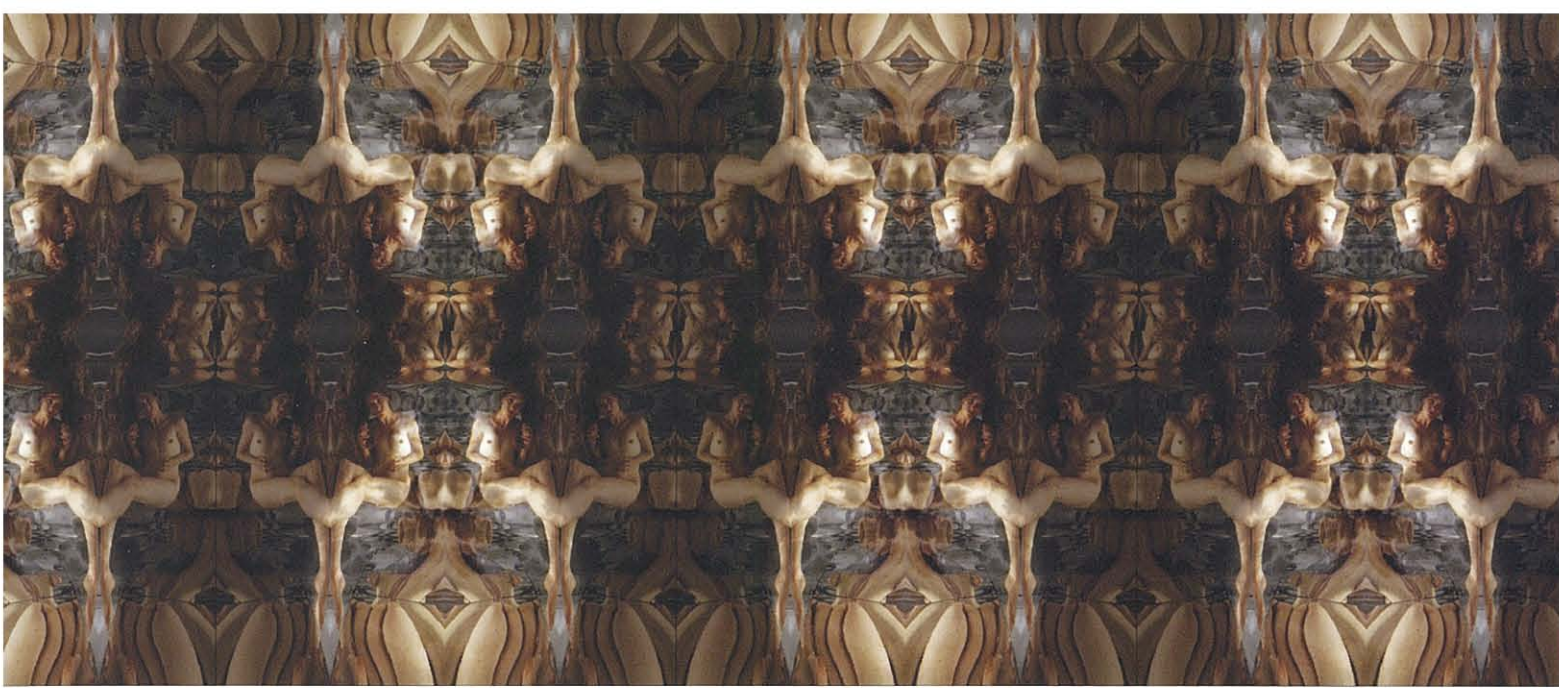
Through juxtaposition with the traditional European 'cabinet of curiosities', also known as Wunderkammer, a predecessor of the modern museum and, in addition, reference to Vanitas iconography, the seventeenth

century visual arts genre of still life painting incorporating memento mori, the work connects directly with the visual elaboration of the Baroque language of metaphor. This is characterised by the visual elucidation of messages that remain a potent tradition even today—the presence of life in the passage of time as a reminder of mortality. In direct reference to the genre, skulls and clock hands symbolise the inevitability of death, while musical instruments signify the fleeting pleasures of life, broken strings—discord and string instruments without strings—silence. Flowers and insects suggest the ephemeral quality of life in the continuum of time and the empty vessels imply absence.

The mimetic tradition in art is also referenced strongly in the work through the temporal moving image projections of a female body caught in the multiple and uncertain life of mirrors. The rich cognitive effects amplify the ambiguity between form and pattern seemingly contemptuous of the philosophical differences between fine art and decoration. However visual pattern is in itself a significant trigger for memory.

Both the Wunderkammer and the Vanitas genre were popular inventions of the Dutch Baroque and it is at this time in 1606, during the European "voyages of discovery", that the Dutch East India Company commissioned the Duyfken, captained by Willem Janszoon, to search for "south and east lands" beyond the furthest reaches of their known world. Leaving from Banda (Indonesia), the Duyfken reached the Cape York Peninsula and charted 300km of the coast. This is the first historically recorded voyage to Australia. For the first time, all the inhabited continents of the world were discovered to the European science of geography.



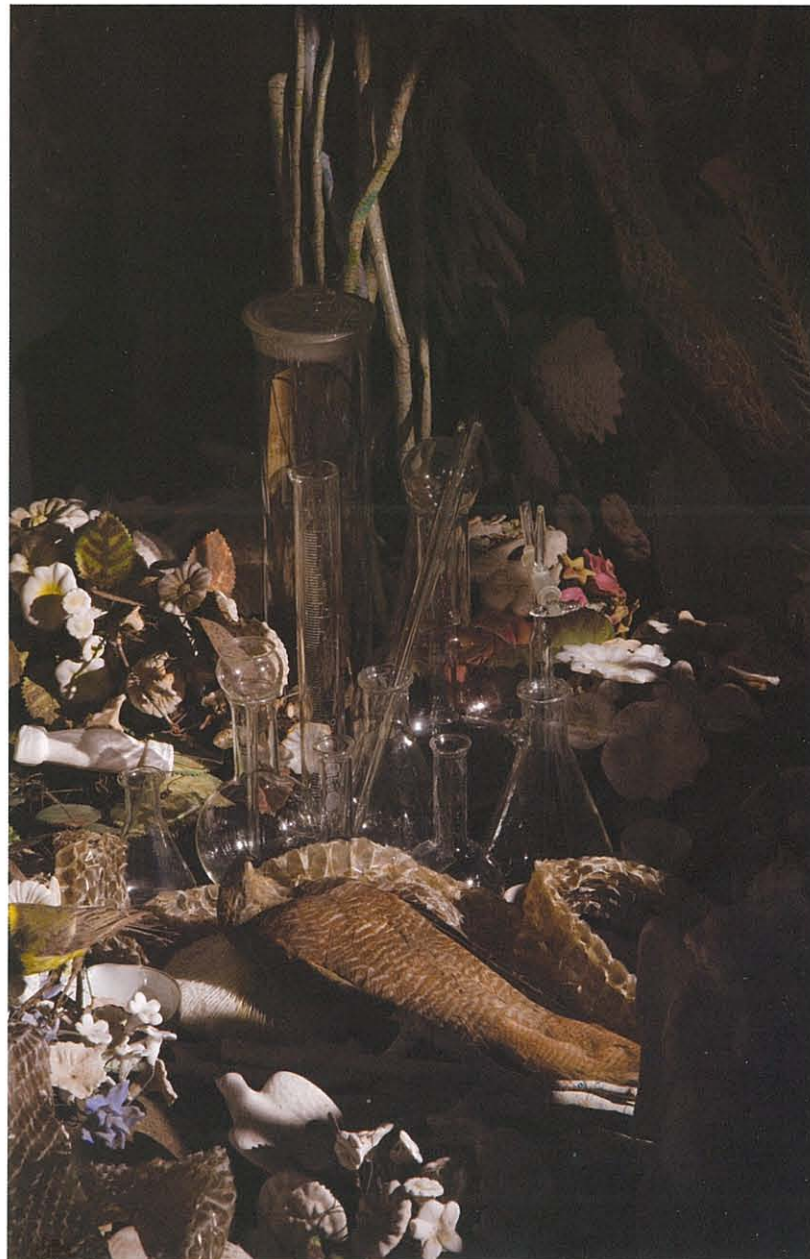


The Exquisite Resonance of Memory is a work about how memories are encountered through provenance and circumstance. The manifestation of collective or cultural memory through reframing the visual representation of the Baroque (to pin-point a time of early European awareness of the Australian continent) reflects on the role memory plays in lending form and consequence to our idea of self.

The work dramatises the way memory functions through association, leaps, or dislocates to become the shadows of ideas and how the more profound of these occurrences can give us a new understanding of our relationship with the world.

Russell Milledge 2008

1. Elliot B. and Purdy A., *Man in a Suitcase: Tulse Luper at Compton Verney*, Image [&] Narrative, Issue 12: August 2005





Bonemap: Rebecca Youdell and Russell Milledge with Steven Campbell (sound)

Rebecca Youdell is a choreographer and performer working via interdisciplinary collaborations involving multimedia, installation, live art and intercultural exchange. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, Rebecca studied movement in Australia, USA and UK attending the Royal Ballet School in London, and working with the Royal Swedish Ballet Company in Stockholm. Currently Rebecca is Co-Director of Bonemap.

Russell Milledge's practice is focused around both visual art and performing art genres. He has presented work internationally with Bonemap including Singapore, Tokyo and Cardiff. Signature works are in the collections of the Queensland Art Gallery, Cairns Regional Gallery and Cairns Convention Centre amongst others. He is Co-Director of Bonemap and lectures in media arts at the School of Creative Arts, JCU.

Dr. Steven Campbell's formal training is in music. He has performed extensively as a guitarist and on double bass, and as a composer has a focus on electronic and computer music. This focus has led to his development of a music technology system called PLaY+SPaCE, and the development of compositions specifically for this system. He is currently Director of Research and Post Graduate Studies at the School of Creative Arts, JCU.



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