

# RELAY

RECEIVE AND PASS ON

26 Feb – 30 Mar 2018 | Midland Junction Arts Centre



Image: Fiona Harman, *Empty Stands* (detail), 2018, oil on canvas, 150 x 100 cm. Image courtesy the artist

The Queens Baton Relay will tour from Midland to Guildford this month as part of its journey towards the 2018 Cold Coast Commonwealth Games. Timed to celebrate this event, *Relay* brings together a diverse group of Western Australian artists to exhibit art objects that speak of our unique local sporting culture and history. Held at the historic Midland Junction Arts Centre from 26 February to 30 March 2018, the exhibition features works by esteemed and emerging artists including Peter Dailey, Judith Forrest, Ron Gomboc, Marie Haass, Dr Fiona Harman, Robert Hitchcock, Alex Maciver, Desmond Mah, Nalda Searles, Dr Bruce Slatter, Dr Nicole Slatter, Alastair Taylor and Richard Woldendorp AM.

The Queen's Baton Relay is a tradition celebrating the Commonwealth's diversity, and seeks to inspire community pride and excitement. The baton carries a message from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II that calls the Commonwealth's athletes to come together in friendly competition. The City of Swan leg of the Baton Relay will kick off at the Midland Town Hall and conclude with a celebration in Stirling Square, with a packed route of festivities in between. City of Swan Mayor David Lucas says the celebrations beginning on the balcony of the Midland Town hall will be, fittingly, "a nod to the wartime era."

Each Games features a custom made baton that reflects the local spirit and culture of the host nation. This notion, of an object imbued with special meaning, was a driving force for the artists preparing works in this exhibition.

Artworks presented in the exhibition vary widely from sculptural to two-dimensional, figurative and abstract, and utilize diverse technical approaches and mediums. The artists strive to impart the significance of cultural events, including sports and the arts, in building a strong, inclusive community. Participating artists present a range of new works made specifically to celebrate the Baton Relay in Midland, and selected early works that reflect local culture and history.

Local artist and State Living Treasure Richard Woldendorp AM will exhibit two rare black and white photographs from 1958 and 1962 which feature yachts and row boats on the Swan River. These significant early works will be seen alongside a 2006 photograph of the Manly Regatta, seen from above in Woldendorp's trademark aerial viewpoint, which captures the buzz of a community gathering in activity; the small scale of the figures serves as a cue that the individuals form a small part of a much greater whole.

Perth Hills based French Australian artist Marie Haass also works from an aerial viewpoint, depicting the Baton Relay route in painterly abstraction; "On previous projects I have explored mapping and, working from a discarded USB, I concentrated on the Midland and Guildford pages. *Map* is an oil painting made up of street names interwoven to create a pattern, with red dots referring to Google Earth where locations are drawn by positioning a red pin," she says.

Another Perth Hills artist, Alastair Taylor, has created a sculpture inspired by commemorative mugs, "like for coronations and royal occasions, since the Queen is involved," he says. Large, profusely decorated with sporting stuff, "rather wonky", the mug features images of local sporting icons such as The Invincibles, an Indigenous cricket team formed in New Norcia in the late nineteenth century.

Interpretations to the theme amongst the diverse group of artist are broad; to name a few: Dr Bruce Slatter and Dr Nicole Slatter work collaboratively to evoke visualizations of territory and competition; Alex Maciver represents considered chaos, or restricted movement; Fiona Harman explores feelings of possibility in relation to the landscape, in this case empty sporting grounds. The diversity of artists, styles and final works celebrates the diversity of the Commonwealth. The exhibiting artists also hail from a range of backgrounds, despite all now living and working in Perth, such as the UK, Singapore, Slovenia, France and The Netherlands.

#### **PUBLIC PROGRAM**

*Relay* offers a number of unique opportunities for the public to get involved through a comprehensive public program of workshops and events. Gayle Mason leads *On Your Mark*, a four-week acrylic painting class, in which participants build on the skills they acquire in each lesson to manipulate and explore the possibilities of a single mark. Monique Bosshard-Curby will lead a *Relay Printmaking Workshop*, investigating visual representations of movement through relief printing; participants will work on a printing plate that is handed from one person to the next, forming a collaborative artwork when all individual parts are assembled together. Marie Haass will lead a *Weekend Drawing Marathon*; exercises of non-stop drawing to push participants limits.

Be part of local history and see Midland come alive for the Queen's Baton Relay event on Monday 26 February, as the baton passes through the City of Swan. To celebrate this event, Midland Junction Arts Centre will be open from 12pm - 4pm, with an artist panel discussion to take place from 1pm - 2.30pm. Artists participating in the *Relay* exhibition will come together to discuss their works in the exhibition and the broader significance of cultural events, including sports and the arts, in building an inclusive community.

*Relay* will be open to the public from 10am-5pm Wednesdays to Fridays, from 28 February to 30 March 2018. For more information about the exhibition and workshops, call 9250 8062 or visit [www.mundaringartscentre.com.au](http://www.mundaringartscentre.com.au)

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