



# SETTLED / UNSETTLED

ART ON REFUGEE, ASYLUM-SEEKER  
AND MIGRANT EXPERIENCES



CATALOGUE

# SETTLED / UNSETTLED

SETTLED/UNSETTLED explores issues around war and cultural displacement through the lens of asylum-seeker, refugee, and migrant experiences. By investigating the themes of conflict and exile, home and belonging, the exhibition contributes to the movement of empowerment and acceptance.

The artists included in Settled / Unsettled examine how experiences of conflict, the separation of families and cultural displacement shape the lives of new Australians, and how issues of hybrid-identity, intergenerational trauma and guilt affect first-and second-generation immigrants.

Initiated by artist Kathrin Longhurst, Settled / Unsettled hopes to encourage empathy, and empowerment, and the exhibition acknowledges the important role migrants have had in the making of our nation.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- Penny Byrne
- Mehwish Iqbal
- Kathrin Longhurst
- Angus McDonald

# PENNY BYRNE



Penny Byrne has been creating work in response to the world-wide refugee crisis since 2010. She uses her skills as a specialist ceramics conservator to reconfigure vintage porcelain figurines and mixed media to create sculptural works that often elicit visceral responses from viewers. She is concerned with the state of the world and our place in it, and her works ask us to consider where we stand and how we feel, never preaching, but rather gently guiding us to a deeper understanding of our times.

Byrne is not afraid to tackle the big issues head on, often with wry humour and wit, and always with a deeply considered and intelligent compassion.

Born in Mildura in regional Australia, she now lives and works in Naarm/Melbourne.



Penny Byrne

**#EuropaEuropa** 2017

vintage porcelain blue and white figurines, porcelain cups, gravy boats, saucers, epoxy putty life jackets, bright orange enamel paint, epoxy resin.

Courtesy of the artist

From 2015 onwards, there was a period of significantly increased movement of refugees and migrants into Europe. 1.3 million people came to the continent to request asylum, the most in a single year since World War II. They were mostly Syrians, but also included significant numbers from Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Iraq, Eritrea, and the Balkans.

During this time there were many news reports showing images of people crammed on small dinghies wearing bright orange life jackets, all hoping to make it to Europe for a better life.



Penny Byrne

**Leaking like a SIEV (Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel)** 2011

digital print of vintage model wooden boat, vintage porcelain and ceramic and plastic figurines, vintage action man accessories and guns, epoxy resin and putty.

Original sculpture in Museum of Australian Democracy Collection, Canberra.

SIEV stands for Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel and is the acronym used by authorities for any boat that has entered Australian waters without prior authorisation. These boats are almost exclusively carrying asylum seekers.

# PENNY BYRNE



Penny Byrne  
**I Heart Nauru** 2017  
repurposed porcelain figurine, enamel paints.

Collection of Lloyd Harris and David Collins

The Nauru Regional Processing Centre is an offshore Australian immigration detention facility in use from 2001 to 2008, from 2012 to 2019, and from September 2021 to the present day. It is located on the South Pacific Island Nation of Nauru.

An overwhelming sense of despair has been repeatedly expressed by detainees because of the uncertainty of their situation and their remoteness from loved ones. In 2013, a veteran nurse described the detention centre as "like a concentration camp".

When Byrne made this work in 2017 there was a Government imposed media blackout prohibiting reports from Nauru. Brave whistle blowers smuggled images of self-harm out to the media, which highlighted the plight of children in offshore detention. This work is her response to those images.



Penny Byrne  
**It's Beginning to look a lot like Christmas (Island, or Nauru or PNG)** 2010  
digital print of vintage ceramic boat, Vintage porcelain and ceramic figurines, Christmas decorations, ceramic Santa figurine, epoxy resin, enamel paints.

Original sculpture in a private collection, Sydney.

Australian immigration detention facilities are currently used to detain people who are under Australia's policy of mandatory immigration detention. Asylum seekers detected in boats in Australian waters have been detained in facilities on the offshore islands of Nauru and Manus Island, which is part of PNG, and Christmas Island, previously under the now defunct Pacific Solution and (since 2013 and as of March 2019) under Operation Sovereign Borders.

# MEHWISH IQBAL



Mehwish Iqbal (b.1981 in Sangla Hill, Pakistan) works across painting, printmaking, textiles, ceramics, sculpture and installation art. Her work provocatively explores notions of womanhood, courage, liberation, and power. She experiments with themes involving migration, integration, assimilation and separation. This has included works exploring the influx of refugee and migrant diaspora, the monopoly of power-play, the commodification of human agency, hybrid identities, and the unfolding fragile and complex state of individuals. Iqbal actively engages with various communities to generate a universal discourse around the vulnerabilities and survival strategies of the human condition in present and universal contexts.

Iqbal holds Masters of Art from UNSW in Printmaking 2011. She has participated in several prestigious residence programs and has been finalist in many art awards and prizes including Hobart Art Prize, Blake Prize, Fisher's Ghost Art Prize and International Emerging Artist Award.

She has also been the recipient of Victoria Marinov Award UNSW, Ian Potter Travel Grant and Australia Council for the Arts grants. Iqbal has shown both nationally and internationally across USA, Turkey, Australia and Pakistan; participating in International Print Biennale, Istanbul Contemporary and Hong Kong Art Central in 2017. She was a resident artist at Parramatta Artists' Studios, Sydney in 2019.

When I walk, they walk was inspired by the experiences of a young Syrian father confronted with mobility in the action of protecting his family through crossing the borders. "When I walk, they walk. When I stop, they stop" is the dialogue that the father expressed as he relayed the sense of community and values that have united and strengthened the bond between his people and himself. Resilience in the face of starvation, homelessness, and loss points to the strength of these individuals carrying the uncanny power within themselves, undergoing a constant state of flux.

# MEHWISH IQBAL



Mehqish Iqbal  
**Infiltration of a Foreign Entity**, 2019  
Silk Screen, Etching, Collagraph, 100 x 107cm  
Courtesy of the artist



Mehqish Iqbal  
**Vasal (Separation)** 2022  
Etching, collagraph, silk screen, 24 karat silver leaf, hand embroidery on paper, 100 x 107 cm  
Courtesy of the artist

# MEHWISH IQBAL



Mehqish Iqbal  
**Badshah**, 2022  
Etching, collagraph, silk screen, 24 karat silver leaf, hand embroidery  
on paper, 135 x 103.5 cm  
Courtesy of the artist



Mehqish Iqbal  
**When I walk, they walk** 2017  
etching, collagraph, silkscreen, hand-embroidery on paper, 83 x  
123cm  
Courtesy of the artist



# KATHRIN LONGHURST



Kathrin Longhurst grew up in Communist East Germany and experienced first-hand the effects of a totalitarian regime and the desire for freedom that drives people to leave their homelands and seek refuge in other parts of the world. Longhurst's art practice aims to empower women. My recent body of work portrays women as protagonists, active agents in charge of their destiny.

"Too much of Western art depicts women as passive and objectifies them. It is important to me to change that and create imagery with which modern women can identify and relate. Imagery that inspires and empowers. I also believe in the incredible force and power that comes from overcoming adversity and trauma."

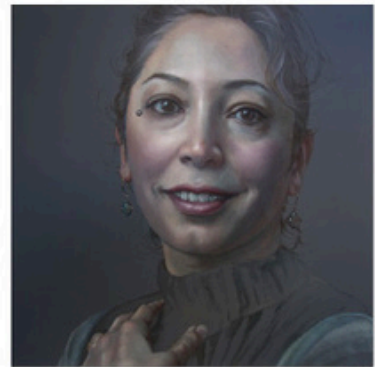
Being a mother of a young girl who has gone through her own emotional turmoil as a natural part of a young child's development, Longhurst developed interest in the incredible resilience and emotional strength children show. Especially children exposed to emotional stress, such as experiencing loss of loved ones, extensive bullying, surviving natural disasters, financial hardship, homelessness, fleeing war and prosecution.

I want to give a voice and a face to these incredible women, so that the viewer will have a sense of recognition, empathy, and compassion and maybe love. I hope to build a connection between cultures, communities and social backgrounds and to bring these faces to a larger audience around the country, creating understanding and insight through these paintings.



Kathrin Longhurst  
**Mariama**, 2017  
acrylic on linen, each 180 x 180cm  
Courtesy of the artist

# KATHRIN LONGHURST



Kathrin Longhurst  
Rows L-R: **Haya, Mabinty & Tamil; Rebecca, Naw Ester & Shiva; Isoken, Wissam & Naz**  
acrylic on linen, each 180 x 180cm  
Courtesy of the artist

# ANGUS MCDONALD



Angus McDonald is an award-winning artist and documentary filmmaker. After graduating with an economics degree at the University of Sydney, he studied painting at the Julian Ashton Art School, winning the school's Brett Whiteley Scholarship in 1994. He continued his studies at the Florence Academy of Art in Italy in 1999 and 2000.

Since 1995, he has staged more than 30 solo exhibitions across Australia and internationally. In 2007 he travelled to Antarctica as the expedition artist for the Mawson's Huts Foundation, and returned there in 2009.

McDonald has been a frequent finalist in numerous national art awards, including Australia's most prominent art competition, the Archibald Prize. He was nominated an Archibald finalist on six occasions, including in 2020 for his portrait of Kurdish Iranian writer and filmmaker Behrouz Boochani, that received the Prize's People's Choice Award.

McDonald is an ambassador for Human Rights Watch Australia and Asia and World Vision's KidsOff Nauru campaign. In 2017, McDonald created a film project to advocate for more humanitarian approaches to managing the welfare of forcibly displaced people seeking asylum. His film content was created under the name Howling Eagle, and his series titled "Philoxenia" (a Greek word meaning: 'extending hospitality and friendship to the stranger'), is a selection of short films and interviews about current refugee policies in Australia.

In 2019, McDonald directed and produced his first film, *Manus*, screened in this exhibition, a documentary short about refugees and asylum seekers held for years under brutal conditions by the Australian federal government on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. The documentary centred on testimonials of numerous men held offshore, secretly filmed by Walkley award-winning journalist Olivia Rousset who was smuggled into the Manus detention centre with two other Australians in 2017.

*MANUS* won multiple awards and nominations at film festivals in Australia and internationally for Best Documentary and Best Direction. *MANUS* also qualified for selection at the 2020 Academy Awards in the Documentary short category.

McDonald writes a weekly social commentary column for the Northern Rivers Review. He lives with his family in Lennox Head, in northern NSW.

# ANGUS MCDONALD



Angus McDonald

**Manus 2019**

Directed & produced by Angus McDonald

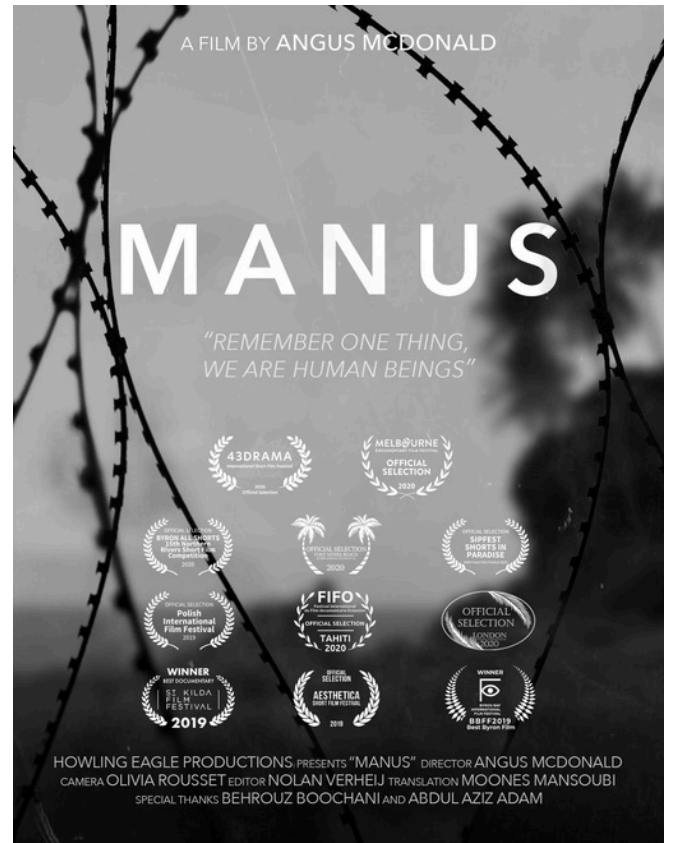
Original footage & field production by Olivia Rousset

Editing & sound design by Nolan Verheij

With Special thanks to Behrouz Boochani and Abdul Aziz Adam

Howling Eagle Productions

L-R: Jarrod McKenna, Olivia Rousset, Abdul Aziz Adam and Behrouz Boochani



# ANGUS MCDONALD



Angus McDonald  
**Life Jackets**, 2019  
61 x 121cm  
Photographic Print



Angus McDonald  
**Behrouz Portrait 1**, 2019  
116 x 100cm  
Photographic Print



Angus McDonald  
**Behrouz Portrait 2**, 2019  
86 x 100cm  
Photographic Print