

# BORDERS

7 to 29 October 2022

Murray and Burgess

Sarah Fitzgerald

Jan Handel

Michelle Le Dain

Ro Murray

Lisa Pang

*'I love borders. August is the border between summer and autumn; it is the most beautiful month I know. Twilight is the border between day and night, and the shore is the border between sea and land. The border is longing when both have fallen in love but still haven't said anything. The border is to be on the way. It is the way that is the most important thing.'*

Finnish artist and writer Tove Jansson

Inspired by this quote from Finnish artist Tove Jansson, six artists have come together with an exhibition built around the idea of 'borders'. Each artist has responded differently to this theme; some contemplating physical ideas of borders between real spaces within real landscapes, while others have been inspired by conceptual ideas such as life on the edge of extinction, or transitions through spaces and separation from place and belonging.

**Michelle Le Dain, Jan Handel, Ro Murray and Murray and Burgess** have been inspired by borders that exist in the landscape but in very different ways. **Michelle Le Dain** contemplates an imagined view from above, like that of fields seen from a plane while travelling to far away destinations that she playfully describes in constructions using children's blocks. In contrast **Jan Handel** uses organic forms as a contrast against the rigid structure of the grid. Her work in this exhibition expresses the evolving changes to boundaries between wild country, tamed agricultural fields and urban consolidation. **Ro Murray** looks past artificial manmade borders designed to divide the land, to natural borders like the horizon. She looks at these natural borders as changing, extending connections, below and above ground, where new geographical discourse suggests that species are connected, not bound by borders that once divided us. **Murray and Burgess** collaboratively consider the plight of the Regent Honeyeater (*Anthochaera Phrygia*), a bird on the edge of extinction. The longing for the wholeness of life undamaged by human borders is contemplated in a visual interpretation of the disappearing birdsong.

Moving away from tangible places and the landscape, **Lisa Pang** looks at borders within art itself. She locates her works between painting and sculpture; surface and object; art and craft. She has responded to the idea of borders as transitional spaces, of porosity, exchange and movement and has used *Noren* curtains to playfully enact actual and metaphorical divisions between spaces. In a similar sense, **Sarah Fitzgerald** has used the actual spaces in the gallery to divide her work to suggest a separation from a sense of place. Looking at the history of the gallery space itself, as both home and boarding school, a *home away from home*, she suggests that we create a sense of identity and connection to place based on an a prior understanding that home continues to exist when we are displaced and dislocated.



Main foyer left to right

Sarah Fitzgerald, *Separation (Part I)* 2022. Lisa Pang, *Three Halves (3/3)*, 2022, Sarah Fitzgerald, *Home Sweet Home*, 2022



Lisa Pang, *Three Halves (3/3)*, 2022

Installation image



Installation image: Room one  
Michelle le Dain, *Kindergarten Fields* series, 2022



Room two installation image: Ro Murray, *Above and Below*, 2022,



Room two installation image: Right to left : Jan Handel and Ro Murray



Jan Handel, *Nature/Un-nature (progression – bushland, agriculture, urbanisation)*, 2022  
Installation image



Room three installation image: Murray and Burgess, *Lost Song (Yellow) Sequence I*, 2022 and *Regent Cantos*, 2022, Sound/still image



Room three installation image: Murray and Burgess, *Lost Song (Yellow) Sequence I*, 2022

Photography Richard Glover

# THE ARTISTS

**Sarah Fitzgerald** is an artist and architect interested in contemporary issues of place and identity and the role structures such as architecture and language affect the way we live and communicate with each other. She has an MFA in painting from National Art School Sydney.

**Jan Handel** makes paintings and installations using the language of hard-edge abstraction. She is particularly interested in the never-ending permutations of the grid and the formal elements of painting. Handel's work references familiar situations and instances in everyday life. She holds a BFA from the National Art School, Sydney, and exhibits regularly in Australia and France.

**Michelle Le Dain** is a New York/Sydney based artist and holds an MFA from The National Art School, Australia. Her multi-disciplinary practice deconstructs manmade features in the landscape, and through memory, reconstructs it in her singular visual language. Play is always a fundamental element of her work and used as a spontaneous and intuitive vehicle enabling her exploration of abstraction.

**Ro Murray**, a NAS graduate, works in a cross-disciplinary arts practice, with an attention to form, site and materials relating to her previous career as an architect. Ro is a creative partner of Murray and Burgess.

**Lisa Pang** is an artist, writer and curator living and working between Tokyo and Sydney. She has exhibited in Australia, Japan and Europe and has a particular interest in non-objective painting and alternative art platforms. Lisa holds a BFA (Hons) from the National Art School.

**Murray and Burgess**, the creative partnership of Ro Murray and Mandy Burgess, make large-scale installations which address environmental issues and human rights. Both are National Art School honours graduates after careers as architects.

