

Artist: **David Manley**

Exhibition: *The Spectral Scape* 5 May to 3 June 2023

*Post-traumatic Urbanist #2*, 2017, archival inkjet print, 50 x 50 cm



*Brute #1*, 2023, burnt paper and cement, 25 x 128 x 22 cm

### About

The artists in *The Spectral Scape* use photographic processes to represent Australian identity by using an idea, coined by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, called **hauntology**. This idea suggests that the past continues to haunt the present, considering ways in which history, memory and identity are all intertwined and in a constant state of flux.

### The Artist

David Manley references architecture and the built environment to explore the psychological effect of urban surroundings on the individual. His works signify the nature of modernity, human conflict and impacts of technological progress. Much of Manley's work occurs in the studio where he builds sets, constructs sculptures/models from discarded packing and paper. He considers he is *compositing*\* - creating composites with images of the environment.

\*compositing: the process or technique of combining visual elements from separate sources into single images, often to create the illusion that all those elements are parts of the same scene.

### Studying

Contemporary photographers have engaged with the idea of creating a contrived environment or scene rather than a documentary or realist view. This is also known as staged or tableau photography. However, some photographers, like David Manley, create their own structures for their studio installations.

Briefly look at the photographs of each of the following photographers, and then research the ideas and processes behind the work of one photographer: Sandy Skoglund; Jeff Wall; James Casebere; Thomas Demand;

### Making

Construct a sculpture/model of a fictitious architectural space and photograph it in various locations to explore the tension between the real and the imagined.

- Construct a sculpture/model from coloured paper and cardboard of an architectural space or element. You could reimagine a place that has personal meaning for you or a place of cultural significance. When thinking about your sculpture consider how it can influence the audience's perception, and evoke emotions and memories associated with the place. Consider colours, tones, and shapes.
- Take your sculpture to a chosen location – consider scale and surroundings.
- Photograph your sculpture with a smartphone or camera. Save and print the image. By photographing the sculpture/model in the chosen location you create a juxtaposition between the physical space and the sculpture, reinforcing the connection, and inviting the audience to see the location in a new light.