







**From:** "ella barclay" <ellabarclay@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Hello there, am alive and well...  
**Date:** 5 September 2008 6:28:50 AM  
**To:** "Ryan McCay" <twinkletoes@gmail.com>

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*Ryan D. McCay,*

*My wonderful friend who I found in snowy Vienna at the end of last century consuming William Gibson and Gösler in a dark basement bar. You wrote your first email to me shortly thereafter – describing the red marble floor of Budapest train station as a butcher's shop pressed under glass. Thanks for the raves and mussels and barbiturates in Brussels, for the steaks in squats in Amsterdam, for Jeff Mills and police frisks in Manhattan, for bourbon and hot wings in Brooklyn, for dirty martinis in Washington diners on drugs, for reading my stories, for watching my movies, for telling me to get up on my feet when I feel broken, for patience in my enduring attempt to sculpt language, for morphing, like magic, the mundane, the sickly, the daunting, the impalpable and the sublime into prose. I'm scared, so fucking scared, to now be writing alone, without you, my most trusted correspondent and confident on hand to proof read and advise.*

*But by letting your jealous freak of a fiancée into your email account you have rattled a nine-year writing space carved out by you and me. You've caused me great panic, humiliation and pain and I now need to respectfully cry NO MORE. Stephanie, as I know you're reading this, I request in kindness that, if anything ever happened to him, you would let me know, and short of that I do not want to hear from either of you ever again.*

*Best wishes for the future and/or go fuck yourselves.*

*Ella Rose Barclay*

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That's what I've been up to this week. Pulling the plug on a writing buddy of almost a decade. When we met, he was a 23 yr old River Phoenix double who'd literally jumped ship from his post as an F-14 Tomcat mechanic with the US Navy, I was an 18 yr old ex-Hoyts employee doing the standard sit-on-the-floor-of-European-galleries-and-write-in-your-diary-while-you-wear-a-fluffy-hat-and-pretend-it's-all-epic-but-really-you're-just-sipping-Heineken-in-bad-backpacker-bars tour. We have written to each other pretty much every day since and met up from time to time. His words and warped slant on the world has always made me excited for, well, life and what it might contain. We never fucked or even kissed. It wasn't really about that. I mean, he was hot, but he was my idea, my dream. Through all my eventless years at art school in Sydney and my boring/busted-up brushes with boys, I had this vision of him – my rough poet, my dusty blond vagabond, with his deep Texan voice and stiff old denims, who smelt of Chevy engine and old fedora, of drive-through taco, heroin and Wild Turkey, who sent me William S. Burroughs, Joy Division and tenebrous tales of his life as a Camel cigarettes promoter in 24 hr roadside bars, who was always right there, in my inbox, with a line or two about how weird shit is.

Anyway, he left Brooklyn for Houston, and, a few months ago, hooked up with his high-school sweetheart, who promptly divorced her accountant husband, grabbed the kids and moved in. He dotingly gave her all his passwords and by this time last week she's dedicating most her time to calmly constructing emails to me from his account. Highlights have been "BRIAN HAS CHOSEN TO BE WITH A REAL PERSON", "ALL MAIL FROM YOU WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY DELETED" and "THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS OVER". Which brings us to the above email, which in turn brings us to the end of things.

Invasive psychopath? Totally. Ill-motivated? Nope. For many, most in fact, there just comes a time to cull the dream - to snap to grid and focus on what's at hand - the bird you're shagging, the place you're inhabiting, the job you're doing - time to stop faffing around try to simply make things stick.

But not for fucking artists though, none of that for them.

This exhibition STUPID LITTLE DREAMER contains work by a group of Sydney-based artists who are not, as the title might imply, silly lost visionaries. They have, with courage and force, grasped onto this stuff, their lamentations and desires, and pushed it through the heavy mystic vortex of anxiety and common-sense out into the gallery space, exposed, for all to see and explore.

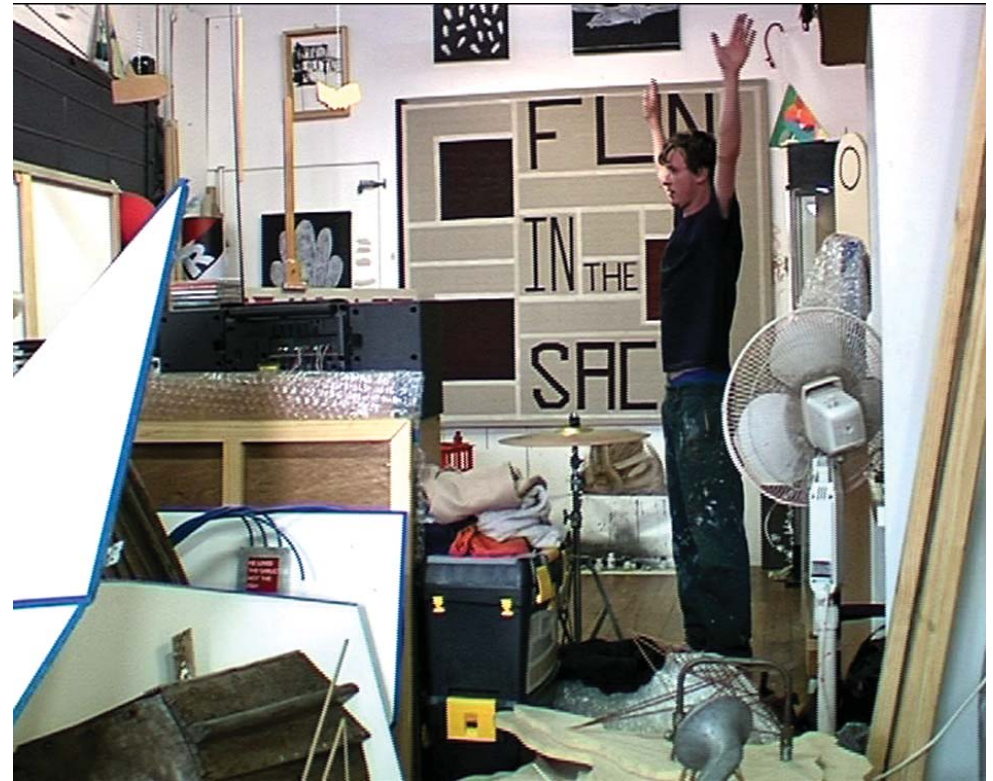
We initially find comfort in **Ron Adams'** modernist puzzles, but as our eyes snuggle into what we think are the good old cold clean edges of colourfield abstraction, he trumps us with imbued lyrics from Brian Eno and David Byrne's *The Jezebel Spirit*, like us all, it is rich with references and confusion, a minimalism that teeters towards excess. **Drew Bickford's** grotesquely delectable *Small Goods*, a crafted Devon with the delicate legs of a fawn giving birth to a string of footy-franks, evokes a certain strange nostalgia for the food and folklores on which we've been raised. **Mitch Cairns'** video of the artist performing the 'completion V' of gymnastics informs us, with somber humour, that things might still end well and with dignity. **Daniel Mudie Cunningham's** rendition of *Proud Mary* by Tina Turner captures him, awkward and sober, performing in an empty gallery. It's a marriage between flashes of drunken karaoke stardom, his chosen life as an artist and curator and our faith in refrains that will extend beyond death. **Marita Fraser's** shapely Styrofoam cluster resonates towards the viewer like clouds in a reverie, a burst from life's daily bubble to speculate upon bigger forms and their place in space. **Ms & Mr's** *Teenage Telepathic* features drawings that Ms made 15 years ago, enhanced by Mr, in an act that transcends time, introspection and connection. **Adam Norton's** *Library of Fact and Fiction* consists of carefully hand-crafted books, super-recommends for the daring and the fantastic. **Nana Ohnesorge's** works on paper and sculpture meditate on what it is to be a disconnected artist in Paris, and perhaps, the romance of loneliness. **Anna Peters'** great drawing captures a conversation about The Office, a sad gag and dagger-sharp acknowledgment of the day-to-day. **Emma Thomson's** portraits of models, each respondents to her advertisements in suburban newspapers, capture the nervous, the curious, the aspirational and the dubious. **Holly Williams'** delicate sonic work is a nervous-sounding voice, exclaiming 'Hello....? Hello....?' in space. Listeners are simultaneously crushed and enriched as they discover these are in fact telemarketers from call centres in India, lost on her voicemail.

So it's with great privilege I mark the closing of my distant literary dream with the opening of this show. When looking at the images contained in this catalogue I feel an overwhelming sense of relief and reassurance that there exists a strong, quiet army, who've dedicated their lives to chasing those floaty, absurd, thick visions, who've tenuously teased them out and pitched anchor, firmly and confidently, into real time and space. This shit is bigger than Texas.

**Ella Barclay**



Adam Norton



Mitch Cairns



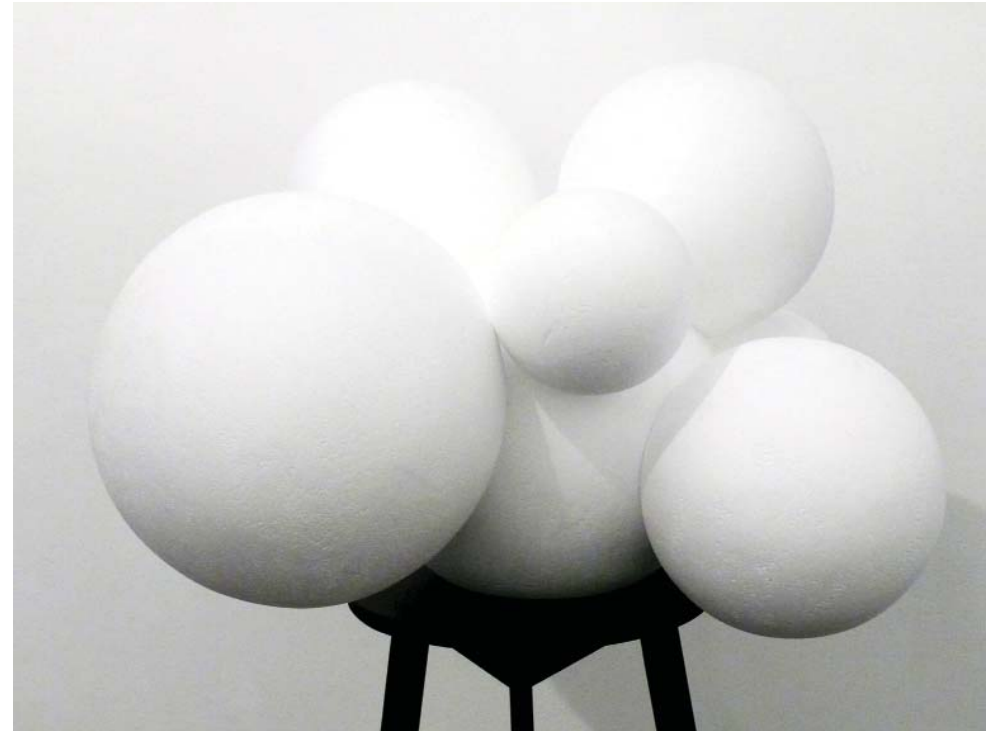
Nana Ohnesorge



Ms & Mr Courtesy Kaliman Gallery



Ron Adams Photo: Silversalt



Marita Fraser



Anna Peters



Drew Bickford



Emma Thomson



Daniel Mudie Cunningham