

# A.R.I.



RONDEAU

STREET  
LEVEL

An ARI (artist run initiative) may be a studio, a gallery, a listing service or a publication. Over the last two decades ARIs have provided important facilities for artists, significant amongst these being the provision of exhibition space for experimental and innovative work. Artist-run galleries have now established themselves as integral and diverse elements in the contemporary art circuit and have fostered a variety of services created specifically for use by artists. These have included: *Art Network*, *Studio Access*, *The Art Workers' Union* and *Arts Law*. From such beginnings as *Shepard and Newman*, *Creative Space*, *Alpha House* and *Betaville*, there is now a growing number of artist-run studio complexes around Sydney, such as *The Ultimo Project*, *The Alpha House Association*, *Sylvester Studios*, *EMR* and *KSK*.

The diversity and vigour of the current number of ARIs calls for the coordination and promotion of ARI: a collective of representatives from artists' initiatives. Currently in Sydney there are approximately ten ARIs meeting once a month in the galleries/studios of the participants. But there is a need for the extension of ARI to the national level; for the development of a united and organized association which would operate independently from the commercial gallery network and government run institutions. This would facilitate the sharing of information and resources and help establish a commitment to issues on which ARIs could act collectively as a lobby group. With the current lifespan of an ARI averaging approximately two years, there is a definite need for those initiatives phasing out of existence, to be able to hand on relevant experience.

Current objectives on the ARI agenda are:

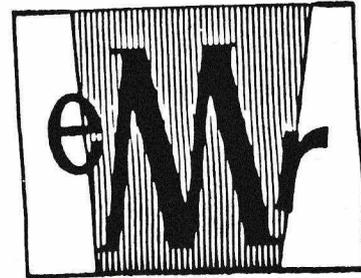
1. To facilitate ease of communication between, and provide a resource and data base for, artists and artist run initiatives.
2. To organize ARIs into regional, national and international networks.
3. To assist in the realisation of projects such as the production of catalogues and organizing of exhibitions.
4. To develop a co-operative for the publicising, advertising and programming of the activities of ARIs.
5. To highlight and maintain the diversity of individual artists and ARIs.

ARI sees itself as a resource and not as a governing body. Artist-run initiatives interested in participating in ARI can do so by contacting:

Russell Barker, *EMR*  
PCD 88, *Rondeau*  
Jacqueline Eyers, *KSK*

BARKER, EYERS, PCD88

ULTIMO PROJECT



THE GUNNERY

FIRST DRAFT

ARTHAUS



338 GALLERY

Taylor street Press



AVAGO

AUGUST 88

ISSUE NUMBER 2

# ARIENNALE

An exhibition focussing on Sydney's artist run galleries.

EMR GALLERY, REDFERN JUNE-JULY, 1988

An exhibition is a machine for various kinds of work: it is itself an art work. Once it is installed, the viewer — that unreliable bag of precept, prejudice and preference — is its operator, but one who may not know which levers to pull. The operator is liable to an initial dislocation, when the logic of the machine is not evident in its visible components (the catalogue often functions as a manual). It happened at the Biennale, there's no reason it shouldn't have happened at the Ariennale (if for quite different reasons). At the Biennale as seen at the NSW Art Gallery there was supposed to be a unifying principle or focussing device evident on the walls. A clue was provided by series of mind-numbingly coarse and/or arbitrary juxtapositions, but the hapless viewer, exposed to these series of cogs that never quite meshed, was left floundering for some visual spanner. The operator, subject to the machine's dysfunction, was left to wander among its bits and wait for the presence of Great Art to spark something off. And of course Great Art's iconic status allows it to work — with and against the weight of history and expectation it carries — despite its immediate context.

A similar dislocation or functional suspension struck the would-be operator of the Ariennale. Again, a unifying principle was not immediately evident in its components. There was the instruction manual, though, so one knew that the exhibition provided a political and historical housing for its working parts: these were all provided by Artist Run Initiatives (ARIs), alternatively-funded, independent, non-profit galleries and studios. The first level of the exhibition's operation was to provide a broad sample of the works of artists who wish to and/or must work in the margins of commercial and government systems. This was a valuable operation but it didn't, necessarily, provide an aesthetic context or principle beyond attention to the conditions of production. Some of the participating ARIs, Kelly Street Kollektiv for instance, specify as selection criteria only participation, in turn, in their own internal democratic processes. So while there might have been some great art, there was no Great Art: the Ariennale was loaded with different history, but only the combination of works displayed could (re)locate the viewer in relation to it.

Entering the exhibition meant passing between two machines, two techno-installations (art and information technology as each other: junk culture). Then the viewer turned along a wall of surprisingly different references, attuned to better-known conventions, which raised more familiar names — say, Lindy Lee, Vivienne Shark Le Witt, Imants Tillers, Terry Burrows — than the artists' own. Not that those artists need have been unhappy to appear in this company, but their names were levers for this viewer to pull. So, disparate components, and among them a dislocated familiarity (where have I seen . . .?). Centrally positioned, in a glass case which might have sat in a museum, were 'Surviving Works and Images From The Yellow House' — relics, but of a machine that did a particular kind of work, an early ARI reinvigorated among its descendants. Still, the works from The Yellow House had a poppy, zany bohemianism which sounded the notes of an aesthetic gear crunching with its neighbours. A clue this, a distinction constructing an aesthetic framework, another logic for the machine, and a

point at which conditions of production and aesthetics met (or, shall we say, history and desire). Of course, there are historically-determined changes of style in the margins as much as anywhere. The Yellow House operated from 1969 to 1973: the surviving works were theatrical, bright and expansive. *Magritte Boots* might have tramped anywhere. Against this background many of the other, recent works in the Ariennale appeared more guarded, more ironic, more conscious of threat (take the shadowy qualities and classical references of work from the 338 Gallery for example, or the intriguing containment of work from First Draft). It's not that the contemporary work was more serious, but much of it seemed to say: let me work where and as I want, with whatever history I find — or this may yet be the Greiner age.

Only so many artists, working with limited ranges of history, can be supported by commercial galleries, even less by government institutions. The others fall into the abyss of market forces, to survive as best they can. This is one of the things addressed by a work which stands as an analogue for the whole Ariennale, Jacqueline Eyers' wall-installation *And Desire Filled the Void*. Elaborate frames contain continuations of a dark background, metaphor for all kinds of threat, studded with fragments of mirror. Artist and viewer alike are constructed in fragmented, partial relations to aesthetics and history fostered by various institutional and economic interests. Like Eyers' work, the Ariennale was a machine for thinking about the desires which are excluded by and/or escape from those constructions.

FRAZER WARD

The aim of this supplement is to fill in some of the gaps left by other art publications while remaining accessible to a broad spectrum of the gallery going public. Rather than soliciting material appropriate to identifiable editorial interests we wish to make this publishing space available to a wide range of writers referring to diverse art practices. Unfixed and variable, the supplement aims to flesh out rather than intrude upon, the detached role of the ART ALMANAC.

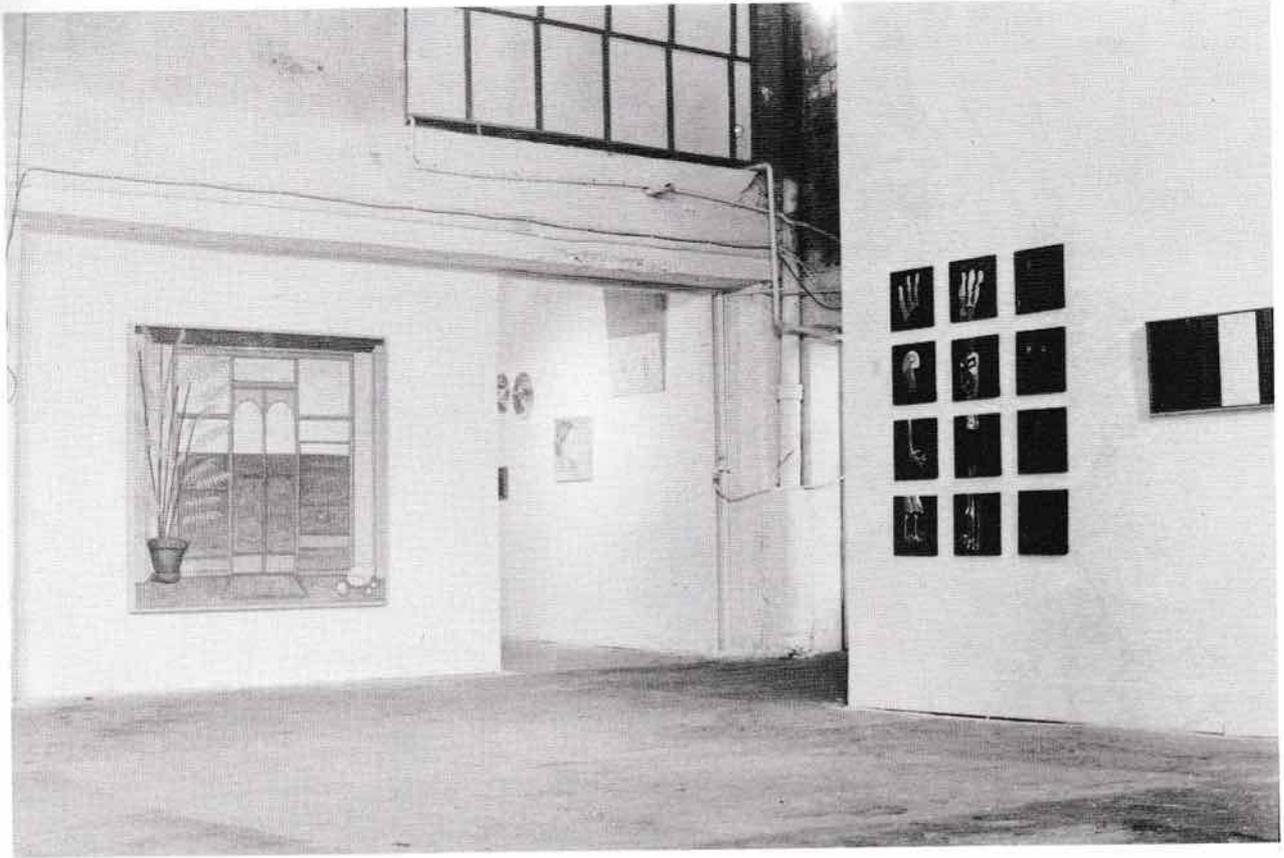
Contributions are welcome and contributors should note the following guidelines: all contributions must be original, unpublished material and should be typed, double-spaced, with material intended for italics underlined. Any editing will occur, whenever possible, in consultation with the author who should retain a copy of the manuscript as the ART ALMANAC accepts no responsibility for loss or return. Contributors are requested to contact the coordinators prior to submitting work. Published contributions are paid at the rate of \$50 per thousand words. Accompanying images should be photographs, preferably black and white, with caption details written on the back. Contributors' opinions are not necessarily those of ART ALMANAC.

The deadline for the September supplement will be August 12.

Correspondence should be addressed to: Coordinators:  
ART ALMANAC Bill Seeto, Anne McDonald  
5/171 Darlinghurst Rd  
Darlinghurst, 2010  
Tel: (02) 332 3225

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**DIAMORPHIC HEDONISM.** Down in the bowels of inner Sydney's Off Broadway arena, where "Real punks can't spell cappaccinno" and "Apathy breeds terrorism", where rent is still relatively cheap and large warehouse space abounds, are the adjoining developments of the Darling Harbour Scheme and artist run initiatives. Their co-existence is no accident. When Brisbane's Expo was under construction and during preparations for the America's Cup in Fremantle, cheap and temporary space was made available to artists in these cities. This situation facilitated an upsurge in ARIs. Currently the majority of ARIs are in Sydney and tenuously occupy locations such as Ultimo and Chippendale, suburbs marked for partial demolition and refurbishment.

*Existential parameters form a loose framework around which a nebulous flow of particles proliferate in the ebb and flow of discursive practice. Unusual entities dissassociate pre-mediated dichotomies, disaffected desires articulate in a maelstrom of nervous penance.*

ARI maintains a tenuous point of focus, resisting seductive translocations and establishing an interference pattern in relation to sublime responsibilities and hidden agendas. As an amorphous activity, ARI is forced to continually re-examine its own narrative flow. It encourages participation in, and promotion of, a divergence of response in a process

oriented scenario: a re/definition and re/negotiation of unknown parameters. An artists' initiative is a response to cultural confines and involves the maintenance of disequilibrium. A simulacra of dissimilarities establishes an agenda pertinent to the concerns of artists within a broad, cultural context.

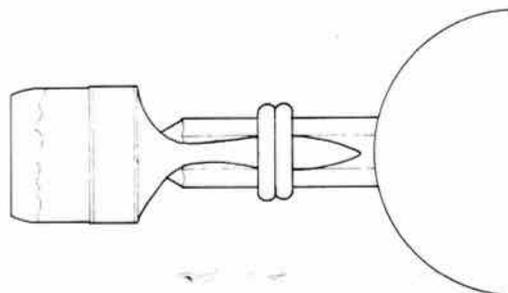
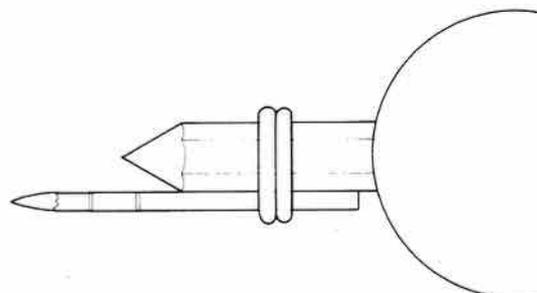
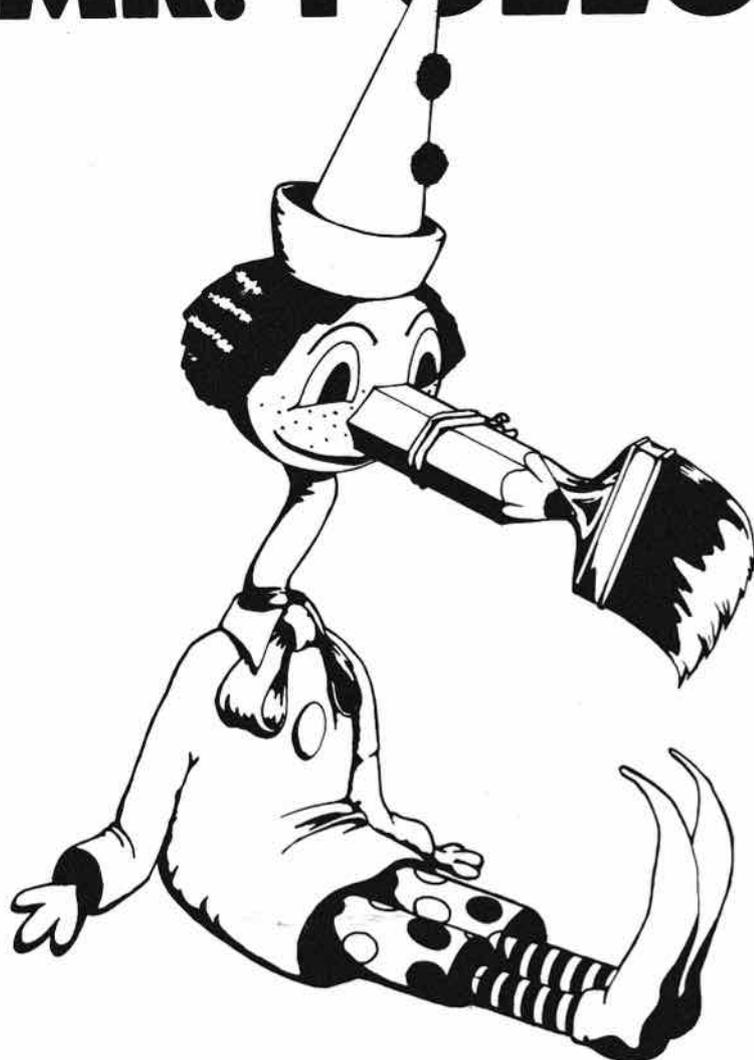
**EYERS**

**ONE IOTA. WORKING AND LIVING, SPECULATION, HOUSING AND LAND, DEALINGS IN THE MARKET PLACE. A CITY IS THE SUM OF ITS PARTS AND SOMEWHERE AND HOW THE ART OBJECT IS CREATED. BUYERS DO NOT CREATE THE SPACE AT REASONABLE PRICES. REAL ESTATE IS WHEELED AND DEALT AND SO WITH ARTISTS A NEED TO PRESENT THEIR OBJECTS AND A CASE: THAT THEY APPRECIATE THE LOW COST REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS LIKE AS A MEANS TO PROSPER. SOMEHOW ARTISTS MUST MAKE OBJECTS AND SPACE. A CITY IS A SUM AND BODIES MAKE LITTLE CONCESSIONS. IT IS THE ARTISTS WHO APPRECIATE INTOLERABLE CONDITIONS. WORKING AND LIVING IN REAL ESTATE.**

**NEIL HAWKES**

# MR. POLLOCK

POST<sup>2</sup>



431 - *n.* (*for-three-wun*) - 1. 431 ELIZABETH ST was established as a facility for the production of artwork. 2. it is the production centre of art and art-criticism for Post Squared. 3. POST SQUARED is a co-operative effort of two artists - Mark Boxshall and John Bleaney. 431 is the venue for such Post Squared productions as - *A Catalogue (mag.)* - *Works in Progress (exhib.)* and numerous artworks (*art*).



431 WAS ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE THE ARTISTS INVOLVED WITH GREATER CONTROL OF BOTH THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION AND THE CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION OF THEIR ARTWORK. 431 SUPPORTS DIVERSITY OF OUTPUT AND THE EXPLORATION OF ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF PRODUCTION. REALISING THE NEED FOR A SYMPATHETIC ENVIRONMENT FOR EXPERIMENTATION 431, AS A MEMBER OF ARI (ARTIST RUN INITIATIVES), IS ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH MUTUAL SUPPORT AND EXPLOITATION OF POTENTIAL BETWEEN ARTIST RUN SPACES; THUS PROVIDING A FLEXIBLE, INDEPENDENT ALTERNATIVE TO COMMERCIAL GALLERIES AND GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.