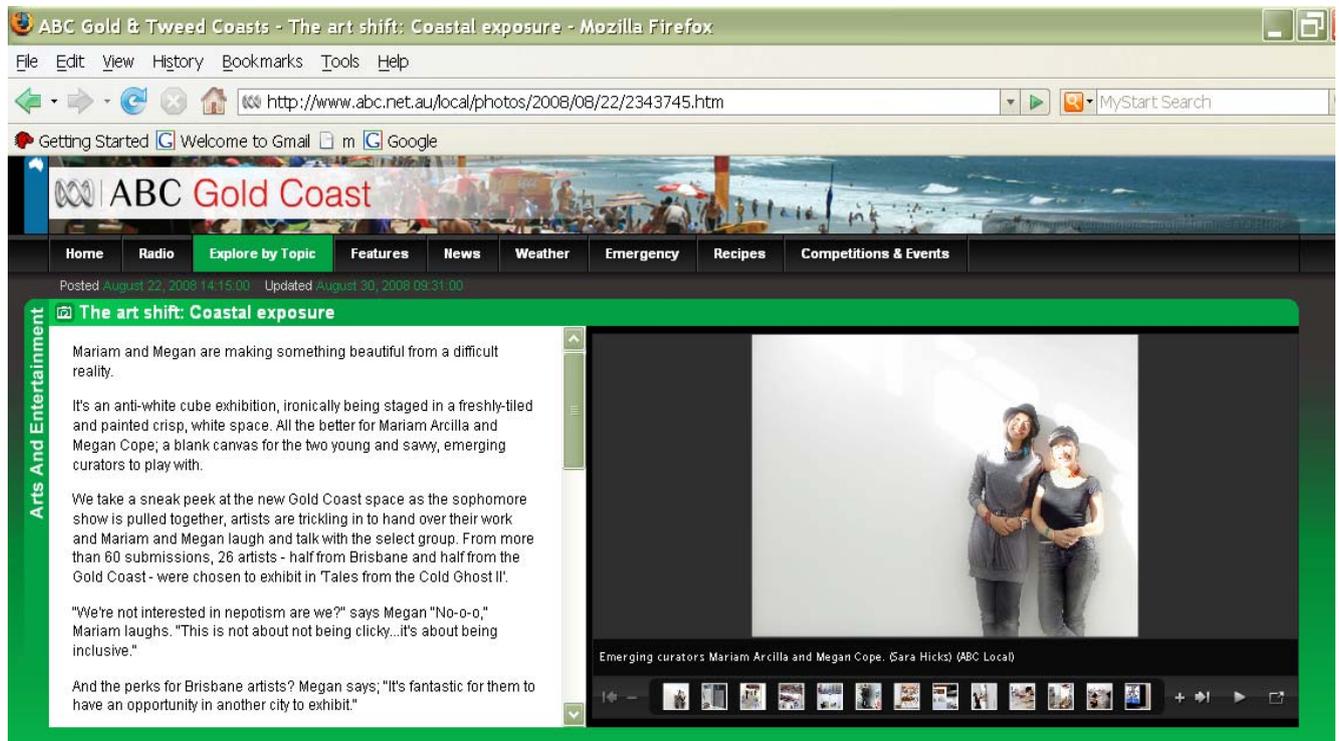


THE ART SHIFT: COASTAL EXPOSURE

by Sarah Hicks August 22, 2008

Radio Interview: [ABC Gold Coast & Tweed coasts / ABC 612 'The Drive'](#)

ABC Online Feature: <http://www.abc.net.au/local/photos/2008/08/22/2343745.htm>



Transcript:

Mariam and Megan are making something beautiful from a difficult reality.

It's an anti-white cube exhibition, ironically being staged in a freshly-tiled and painted crisp, white space. All the better for Mariam Arcilla and Megan Cope; a blank canvas for the two young and savvy, emerging curators to play with.

We take a sneak peek at the new Gold Coast space as the sophomore show is pulled together, artists are trickling in to hand over their work and Mariam and Megan laugh and talk with the select group. From more than 60 submissions, 26 artists - half from Brisbane and half from the Gold Coast - were chosen to exhibit in 'Tales from the Cold Ghost II'.



Alice Lang with one of her works 'Decoy', made of wet-look vinyl, liquid foil and wadding. (Sara Hicks)



The back-street gallery in the centre of the Gold Coast has room for everyone. (Sara Hicks)



Mariam Arcilla and Megan Cope, artists turned curators, go where no-one's gone before to nurture local artists. (Sara Hicks)

"We're not interested in nepotism are we?" says Megan.

"No-o-o," Mariam laughs. "This is not about not being clicky...it's about being inclusive."

And the perks for Brisbane artists? Megan says; "It's fantastic for them to have an opportunity in another city to exhibit."

The aim of their artist-run and self-funded initiative, tinygold, is to offer artists from Brisbane and the Gold Coast the opportunity to spread their wings, network and find exposure in their home-town.



The space (Sara Hicks)



Megan and Mariam's blank canvas.
(Sara Hicks)



Terri-Lou, art lover and gallery owner, has donated the space (19 Karen Ave) for Tales From the Cold Ghost II. (Sara Hicks)

"It's a good chance to explore the myth of whether this place is a cultural wasteland," says Megan.

Mariam adds (and they both enthusiastically agree); "I think there's going to be a shift soon."

"I believe that you need people to stay here to make something work," she says. "There's no excuse if you take the initiative. Although Megan laments that funding is not reliable, and in fact the survival of tinygold is thanks solely to financial and in-kind support from the community. But she argues the spaces do exist - if hidden - it's just a matter of will.

"We were tired of hearing the same old story and thought well hang on why isn't anyone else doing this?" says Megan.

The exhibition space is exciting and surprising, with a high roof and natural light pouring into the large, refurbished warehouse. Neither of the new curators are daunted by the thought of taking the gallery from white space to a popular show, perhaps because the inaugural tinygold exhibition in 2007 was such a big success. Their belief in the power of creating things for a community is strong, and the support is so far being returned.

"It's one of those secret wonders," muses Mariam. "People aren't prepared to see something this amazing and this beautiful off an industrial road on the Gold Coast highway."

"But there's no point in doing this if it doesn't benefit the community."

Opening night of 'Tales from the Cold Ghost II' is Saturday August 23, 6pm-9pm

The exhibition will run to September 6 at 19 Karen contemporary artspace, Mermaid Beach