

ART MONTHLY

A U S T R A L I A



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Art + Community

Editorial



Mymo at 19Karen

Mymo, Mural work, 2009, aerosol on wall

Editorial issue 230 MAURICE O'RIORDAN

How to make your monster friend

SOMETIMES THE BEST IDEAS TURN MONSTROUS. Not that monstrous is necessarily a bad thing. The veritable 'monster under your bed' might just be a friendly beast, as wary of you as you are of it. This month's bumper Art + Community issue is monstrous in the broadest, most curious sense. It harbours a copious twenty-two contributors, altogether thirty-six if one counts our vigilant Artnotes correspondents – as one should (even the ones who've missed this month's deadline). Its bumper-ness is so bursting with content, one might say this issue and its writers legitimately form a community. I might, as editor, even lay claim to 'curating' this community. As David Hansen's wry observation in his article 'Show me' suggests, I wouldn't be the first magazine editor to (ab)use the term 'curating' to this end, applied so liberally these days to anyone responsible for (the) 'a' list. Just how many people make up a community? Is it more than two, the sum of a partnership, or as many as twenty-four, the number of 'Paperbag' people parading on our front cover, courtesy of Berlin street/graffiti artist Mymo (short for 'My Monsters'), currently artist-in-resident at the Gold Coast's 19Karen Contemporary Artspace, for an exchange program involving emerging Australian artists? Does a community even need to be peoplebased?

Can it be a lone individual communing with nature, as with painter Caroline Rannersberger's metaphysical-becoming-landscape, or John Reid's heart-stopping 'plunge' into the depths of the Goobarragandra River in Tumut, of which he writes: Immersed in an unsustaining medium, without clothing or artefact, with physical forces modifying the familiar fall of the flesh, with senses heightened by the prospect of being touched by the unknown, with the imagination forming monstrous aquatic beasts, I will strive to create a portrait of the human condition. The Art + Community theme coincides with that of our second Emerging Arts Writer's Award, as outlined in the following address from the AMA Chair, Professor David Williams. However disparately the theme is interpreted herein: from public sculpture, street art and performance, to art as a vehicle for social investigation and commemoration, this issue sets out with the noble aim of recognising the monster in ourselves enough to see the light, 'the lives of others'.

Yours (in a hood) Maurice

1. The title of Mymo's workshop (29 May) in association with the exhibition/project Lightmares, 19Karen Contemporary Artspace, Gold Coast, 27 April to 19 June 2010. www.19karen.com.au/