



Lisa Jones MIND MAPS 8 November to 1 December 2007

Mind Maps and Other Topographies

The site of sleep is a time when memories surface, morph shape and take hold upon us...sometimes as nightmares, at other times...constructing fantastic worlds, bringing us in and out of our daily lives to re-familiarise us with our ordinary surroundings.

The *Mind Map* series follows on from Jones' recent exhibitions at Multiple Box Sydney with an original sculptural intervention of the Arne Jacobsen 3107 Series 7 chair entitled *Symbiosis*. At Peloton, Jones exhibits artwork she has pursued along a related direction.

Mind Maps are Jones' explorations of the intersecting states of mind and polarities of N/S geographic regions. Jones' reflections are based upon the communication between the right and left hemispheres of the brain, as well as the uneasy migration of living betwixt and between her former homeland, the United Kingdom, and her new abode in the Antipodes. Jones has an ongoing

preoccupation with the neurological system and connections between the right and left cerebral cortex of the brain for language development, reading and writing skills and balanced functioning. In 2008, Jones' upcoming body of work¹ involves her own Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans. Jones' artistic investigations tease the viewer's expectations about the function of enduring sculptural materials and play with sculptural concerns about the concept of the traditional pedestal.

Mind Map Islands

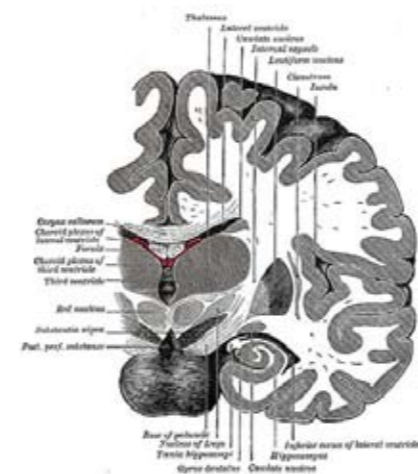
In this exhibition all Jones' sculptures, excepting the carefully hand cut wooden relief *'Sigmoid's Wings'*, constitute cross-sections of the human head. The floor pieces in the show are what I term *'Mind Map Islands'*. They are partially made from wool felt discards from Jones' previous artwork, *Butterfly Wings – Wall Zips, 2006*. The *Mind Map Islands* are three-dimensional, topographical imagery derived from graphs of brain waves during sleep, called a 'polysomnogram'. Jones' rough, over-sized organ-islands of the brain are constructed mainly in banal materials of cardboard and sisal packaging string. Line drawings in crochet are visible among the greater amorphous shapes, weaving sisal 'veins' or 'nerves' throughout the 'grey matter' which Jones' has, interestingly, coloured white. The *Mind Map Islands* are thoroughly over-painted with a fleshy-looking sloppy, translucent, silicone rubber. Silicone rubber is an elastomeric material typically used in casting sculpture. Casting in silicone is a preliminary step towards obtaining a detailed wax which is later burnt out in a traditional bronze pour. Silicone also has numerous bio-compatible medical uses, such as surgical implants. Yet, Jones' silicone coating remains a part of the final sculptural object.

In this exhibition, Jones' Jacobsen chair legs serve as pedestals for several of the *Mind Map Islands*.

According to Tracey Clement², the chair is symbolic of the ghost of the human body and the female form . A



Sigmoid's Wings, plywood, 2007



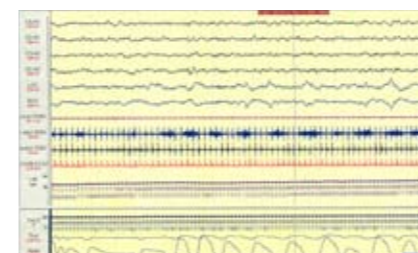
Gray's Anatomy – drawing of the brain



Encyclopedia of Needlework – crochet



Symbiosis Installation, 2007



Polysomnogram, 2005

chair is usually 'housed', a chair can represent hospitality. Since the 1950s, women artists have addressed such questions are 'What is home?'³ and 'What constitutes home?' Jones is playing with traditional notions of home comforts and 'body-as-vessel', as well as sentimental ideas about 'holding onto memories'. Jones' islands are inverted vessels. Feminist questions about home have been reformulated in the 1990s by migrant and refugee artists due to globalisation and endocolonialism⁴. Both an island and a vessel only hold a certain amount of information at any one time and both isolate that which is within. Australian artists have long questioned nationalism and the European settlement of this Big Island, a settlement which included the displacement of Aboriginals. As a recent resident trying to make sense of her new working context, Jones, too, questions Australia's national identity.

Jellyfish Storage

Lisa Jones' sculptures force the viewer to pick apart her various metaphors. Jones' needlework drawing-lines subvert the overall 'whiteness' of Jones' 'arte povera' choice of materials for 'brain matter'. Jones uses whiteness not simply as pure colour, but as a concept which relates to race and imperialism in the Australian context. Jones' abject crochet-lines⁵ are about the opposite of 'whiteness' and 'affluenza'⁶. The messy, hairy sisal speaks about that which is debased and unclean or improper, referencing Kristeva⁷.

Jones has left bits of text visible to remind the viewer of the prior use of the boxes. Parts of words or lone letters are left-over on the cardboard packaging, still visible under the silicone-coating atop the various artwork-islands. Jones' use of commonplace packing materials critiques affluenza and represents how we translate and store not only belongings, but memories. The packing-up and removal or transportation of one's possessions also

reminds the viewer of the dissolution of identity brought about by migration. Jones' silicone-coated blobs remind me of spineless jellyfish, seemingly directionless, but very much formed by the particular waters in which they stay afloat. 'The jellyfish' likeness seems to recur in Australian contemporary art imagery; it is an animal which lives in the waters off the coast. Packing-up, remembering and forgetting are a part of Jones' exploration of her new Australian support structure. Jones' use of both commonplace cardboard packing materials and felted tid-bits are metaphors for discarded and stored memories. As a compressed material, felt represents the compressed luggage and archaeology of memory.

Jones' Mind Map Island sculptures remind us that we are all adrift...slowly and haphazardly finding our way in restless, yet attenuated, moments of awareness and wakefulness.

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¹ Funded by the Australia Council of the Arts new works grant, 2008.

² Jones' previous exhibition catalogue, *Symbiosis, 2007*

³ Women and migrant installation artists, around the world, have used the 'art of textiles' in contemporary sculpture as a metaphor for the domestic and/or referencing the maternal.

⁴ See Paul Virilio, who proposed the concept of endocolonisation.

⁵ Needlework, dissident commentary & 'the grotesque'. See Wood Conroy, D. *Texts from Edge: Tapestry & Identity in Australia*. Adelaide Jam Factory Craft & Design Ctr, 1994.3,13

⁶ A term popularised since the late 1990s to critique materialism.

⁷ 'Abjection' & that which disturbs order. See Kristeva, J. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. trans L. Roudiez, NY: Columbia U P, 1982.

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