

THE BROTHERS GRUCHY





DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Brothers Gruchy is a curatorial first for Bundaberg Regional Galleries—bringing together the artistic practices of Tim and Mic Gruchy in a new media exhibition that draws heavily on the themes of human perception, artificial intelligence, synaesthesia, memory and cultural identity.

Raised in Bundaberg in the 1960s and 1970s, brothers Mic and Tim have long been fascinated with the innovations in sound and image technology. Throughout their formative years, the Bundaberg region had an arts scene that was vibrant but still in its infancy. The arrival of Mervyn Moriarty and the artists and tutors he brought through his Flying Arts School had encouraged an exploration of mediums and new practice, and while digital artworks were still far in the future, the region was becoming a fertile ground for new artistic expression.

It was also a time that saw incredible developments in sound and image technology, with records being displaced by cassette tapes, and home video reels becoming a part of family documentation. In the original exhibition at Bundaberg Regional Galleries, it was *Anamnesis* created with early family slides, digitised but displayed through old-style projectors that reflected the time. Taken by

their father, a well-known Bundaberg physician, Dr Mike Gruchy, and his wife Jean, the images, while so different from the contemporary artworks in the exhibition, had a sensitivity and reflectiveness that underpins the practices of Mic and Tim.

Of course, it was the 1980s, that saw a huge change in the way we interacted with the audio-visual world, and it was at this time, that Tim and Mic started working collaboratively. Together they pioneered the use of video and multimedia in theatre, opera, contemporary dance, musicals and commercial projects. Both as individual artists and collaboratively, they have exhibited nationally and internationally in galleries and public spaces.

While the development of *The Brothers Gruchy* occurred prior to my commencement as Gallery Director, I had the opportunity to work alongside Mic and Tim in the final stages of curation and installation. The inclusion of Mic's work, *Time and Tide*, with its 12 metre long pool reflecting the Burnett River that flows past the gallery, sitting alongside Tim's immersive digital works, reinforced for me the mastery of these artists, both individually and as a collaborative force.

The addition of an education component playing to the theme of 'local boys make good' by using a pictorial timeline of portraits of the artists married with the technology of the time only served to strengthen the messaging.

Opening to the public in February 2020, the exhibition drew large numbers of visitors keen to experience moving image and interactive work in their regional gallery. This swell of support is testament to the scale of the exhibition and the sense of connection that the community had with Tim and Mic.

Sadly, a month after opening, the exhibition had to close prematurely due to COVID-19.

This makes the touring iteration of this exhibition even more poignant. It has been an absolute honour to work with the artists, Museums & Galleries Queensland, and our funding bodies to reinvigorate *The Brothers Gruchy* exhibition and take it to new audiences across Australia, and I look forward to seeing it light up other regional galleries as it did here in Bundaberg.

REBECCA MCDUFF
GALLERY DIRECTOR,
BUNDABERG REGIONAL GALLERIES

Above image: Mic Gruchy, *Time & Tide* (still), 2017, synchronised three-channel video, colour and soundscape by Tim Gruchy, 00:21:36, displayed at Griffith University Art Museum, QLD. Courtesy of the artists and Griffith University Art Museum.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay respect to elders past, present and emerging.

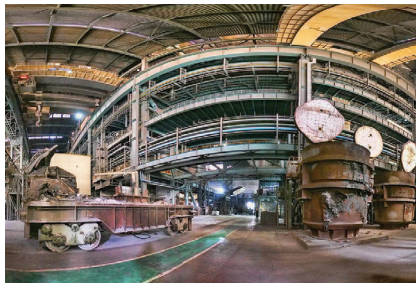


TIM GRUCHY

ENTANGLEMENT (still), 2023,
single-channel video with sound,
00:09:35.

Entanglement (2023) explores how the phenomenon of quantum entanglement informs how we might think about the relationship between ourselves and the world we inhabit. Entanglement tells us of the inextricable state of deep ensnarement in the mesh. To even imagine ourselves as outside the world we inhabit would seem a folly.

Tim Gruchy is influenced by the 2023 book "The Entanglement" by philosopher Alva Noë that explores the inseparability of life, art, and philosophy. In the book, Noë argues that we have greatly underestimated what this entangled reality means for understanding human nature. He offers a new way of thinking about human nature, the limits of natural science in understanding the human, and the essential role of art and philosophy in trying to know ourselves. In *Entanglement*, Gruchy shows our continuous struggle to understand ourselves and how our relationship to the world and existence never ends.



TIM GRUCHY

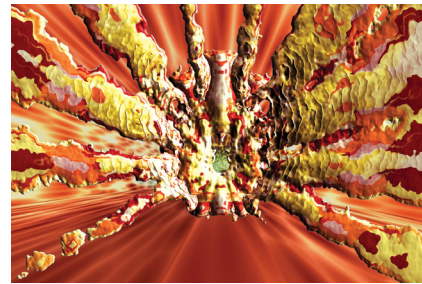
BAOSTEEL (detail) (still), 2019,
synchronised two-channel video with
sound, 00:17:30.

Baosteel (2019) was conceived as a mirror work to *Moving Mountains* (2018) and observes nature reclaiming a post-industrial site. The now-decommissioned 28-hectare Baoshan steelworks site in Shanghai was once one of the largest steelworks in the world. The gardens throughout the complex are now slowly, overtaking the landscape whilst the site awaits redevelopment. Gruchy has composed a soundscape of field recordings and an animation from photographs to convey this surreal post-Anthropocene vision.

TIM GRUCHY

DISSOLVING WORLD (still), 2021,
single-channel video, 00:14:30.
(Cover Image)

Dissolving World (2021) ruminates on change and impermanence. Influenced by themes in classical Chinese ink painting, the work hints at the ephemeral nature of human perception. Using the twin notions of fungal growth and fluidity to examine the changing nature of the world we inhabit, *Dissolving World* plays with the themes of biological, breakdown and transformation via the changing states of solid to liquid to gas.



TIM GRUCHY

GEOMORPHOSIS (still), 2022,
single-channel video with sound,
00:10:36.

The study of landforms and their evolution is known as geomorphology, which has been described as a 'dark art' and open to interpretation. *Geomorphosis-01* is a poetic interpretation of Gruchy's contemplations around geomorphology, biogeology and biomorphism, specifically inspired by the extraordinary geology of the Limestone Coast in southeast South Australia. He uses mathematical visualisation techniques to allude to relations between lifeforms and the world we inhabit. Thinking about the extraordinary land formations of this region, Gruchy approaches it through his interest in biogeology, which examines biotic and hydrologic systems in relation to each other.



TIM GRUCHY

BEAUTY UNBEAUTY (detail)
(still), 2019, non-synchronised five
channel video, 00:50:00.

In *Beauty Unbeauty* (2019) Tim Gruchy explores the flower as a fundamental motif in which human notions of beauty are invested. The work is based on a set of flower images drawn from Gruchy's large personal photo library and, utilising the artificial intelligence (AI) program 'Deep Dreaming Generator', his process takes two paths: to beauty and unbeauty. These two sets of AI deep-dreaming are then animated and juxtaposed to prompt reflections on the differences between human and AI aesthetics.



TIM GRUCHY

STORM (detail) (still), 2016,
interactive digital display installation.

Contemporary medical science examines, dissects, analyses, and models the human body at continuously higher and higher resolutions. As our digital selves become more sophisticated through pervasive technologies, hyper-communication and social networks that permeate so many aspects of our lives, Tim Gruchy predicts that at some point there will be a transubstantiation between these realms.

STORM explores some of these dynamics in a nondeterminate real-time interactive audio-visual installation. Using combined mathematical and scientific visual and sonic generation principles, body sensing generates and moderates a highly resolute and complex visual display and soundscape. It probes the biomorphology and relentless evolution of humans from our increasingly redundant biological forms into an imagined future.



TIM GRUCHY

WORK-01 (still), 2019,
single-channel video, 00:18:31.

WORK-01 is a meditation on abandoned work gloves found in the landscape of Shanghai's Baoshan District in China. It reflects the gradual degradation of the value of manual labour. As Tim Gruchy describes:

I began this series over 25 years ago—photographing discarded gloves whenever I came upon them. They are always untouched by the artist's hand and never disturbed in any way. Gradually it became apparent that nearly all the gloves were used for work, thus they became signifiers of work done, the collective physical toil and the disregard and devaluing of these labours that ultimately sees the gloves just cast asunder to decay or be swept up in the detritus of modern life. This draws a direct comparison to the disregard and undervaluing of all manual labour. The series now encompasses a score of countries and continues to grow, but for this first showing, a subset of 37 glove images from the Baosteelworks in the Baoshan district of Shanghai has been selected.



MIC GRUCHY

COAST (still), 2023,
synchronised three-channel video,
colour and soundscape by Tim Gruchy,
00:25:53.

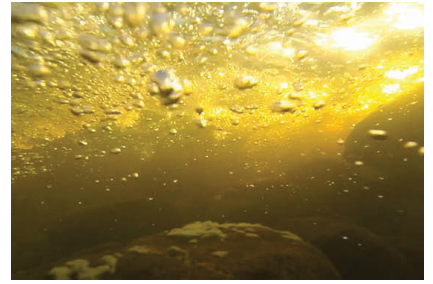
Coast (2023) is a recently completed companion work, which explores the tidal region along the coastline and uses footage shot by Mic Gruchy in Australia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. When adopted into the Yaglnu nation of East Arnhem Land many years ago Mic received the name and totem of Djarrak (seagull), fitting, as so much of his life has been spent wandering the coasts of Australia and overseas, surfing and filming the natural environment.



TIM GRUCHY

ANAMNESIS (still), 2016,
vintage slide projectors.

Anamnesis (2016) is selection of vintage slide projectors that evoke Tim and Mic Gruchy's personal family histories and address processes of memory. The objects of projection themselves—as industrially manufactured items from the first half of last century—indicate an analogue era now long-past. Notions of slide shows are cause for reminiscing family and educational presentations to a certain generation. The aesthetics of the images in *Anamnesis* denote an archaeological or archival classification that trigger cultural narratives. The very chemistry of film emulsion undergoes a relentless decomposition, just as human memory decays. This disintegration is particularly acute when tracked across complex multicultural and multigenerational histories so common in relatively recently colonised parts of the world given that the work's making was inspired by a small slide projector found in Ooty in Tamil Nadu, the city where the Gruchy brothers' father was born. The work gathers these tangential ideas and personal histories and offers an immersive meditation on memory, redundant technology and imaging.



MIC GRUCHY

TIME & TIDE (detail) (still), 2017,
synchronised three-channel video,
colour and soundscape by Tim Gruchy,
00:21:37.

Time & Tide (2017) is a three-channel video installation by Mic Gruchy, with an accompanying soundscape by Tim Gruchy. A meditation on the great Shoalhaven River at the Bundanon Estate Artist's Reserve in south-eastern New South Wales, it uses time-lapse, high-speed slow motion, and above and underwater video cameras, to explore the life of rivers, the tide, and changing flows and geography.

Both works explore the delicate and timeless nature of our oceans and waterways, encouraging the viewer to contemplate, appreciate and protect our natural environment.



**THE BROTHERS GRUCHY
PROJECT TEAM:**

Bundaberg Regional Galleries
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Queensland State Archives

The Brothers Gruchy is a touring exhibition curated by Bundaberg Regional Galleries and presented in partnership with Museums & Galleries Queensland. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program and is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

Museums & Galleries Queensland is supported by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation and receives funds from Creative Australia through the Australian Cultural Fund.

TIM GRUCHY

VISUAL MUSICIAN,
MULTI-MEDIA ARTIST

b.1957 Wales, UK. Lives and works on Gadigal lands/ Sydney, New South Wales

Tim's extensive career spans the exploration and composition of interactive immersive multimedia through installation and performance, redefining its role and challenging delineations between cultural sectors. He's exhibited multimedia works, photography, video, music and performance since the early 1980s. Works are in private, corporate and museum collections, and the public art arena. His installations and performances feature in international and Australasian institutions, festivals and public spaces. He has exhibited in Africa, Australia, New Zealand, China, Taiwan, Holland, Belgium, UK, USA, Japan, France and Thailand. He is a Distinguished Professor at Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts and Adjunct Research Professor, University of South Australia, his research includes interactivity, the human computer interface and performative interactives.

He is represented by Mais Wright Gallery in Sydney.

MIC GRUCHY

ARTIST, VIDEO DESIGNER

b. 1962 QLD, Australia. Lives and works on Gadigal lands/ Sydney, New South Wales

Mic works across stage, screen and video art. He is a pioneer of Video Design for Theatre, designing shows for all the major companies and festivals around Australia. He's edited TV, documentary, feature films and his video artworks are in collections and museums around the world. Commissioned works include video installations for the Sydney Opera House, Sydney Olympic Park and the Biennale of Sydney. His shows have won Helpmann Awards and he was awarded an Australia Council Established Artist's Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Practice in 2012. Mic teaches Video Design and Production at the National Institute of Dramatic Art in Sydney.

Portrait of Tim Gruchy and Mic Gruchy. Image courtesy of the artists and Bundaberg Regional Galleries. Photo by Sabrina Lauriston.



For more information about the exhibition and tour, please visit www.magsq.com.au

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