

HUW DAVIES GALLERY 12 February–8 March 2009

A U t o n o m i e s

 | Jessie Boylan with Emma King

Jessie Boylan returned to Canberra in 2008 after several years in Melbourne. She joined us as Gallery Program Coordinator and as a teacher in February, making a strong contribution to the work and spirit of PhotoAccess. Unfortunately for us the pull of Jessie's deep humanist convictions was too strong, and towards the end of the year she left for the places and people affected by the Australian Government's 'Intervention'. More recently Jessie has travelled to Israel where, through her images, she continues to bring to world attention issues of intolerance, oppression and dissent.

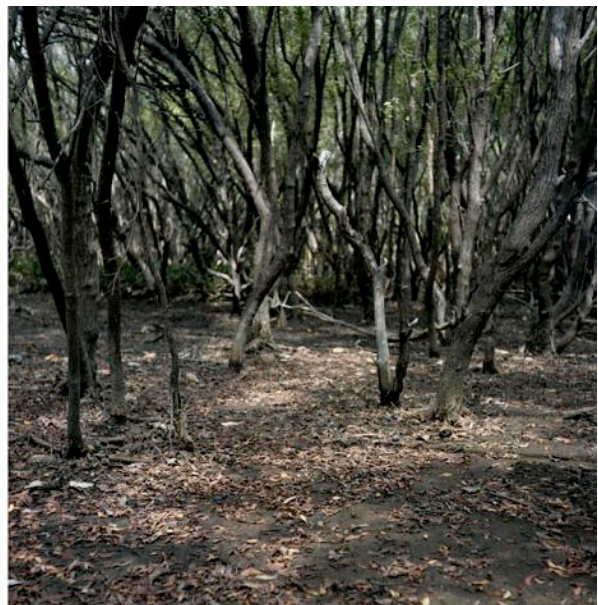
While we miss her presence, *AUtonomies* is one benefit we have gained from Jessie Boylan's departure. This new work builds on the moving, very personal *Inhabited* exhibition—dispelling the myth that the centre of Australia is an uninhabited and lifeless place—which showed in Melbourne and the Northern Territory from 2006 to 2008. Jessie worked with radio producer Bilbo Taylor on *Inhabited*, allowing Indigenous communities to tell their stories in sound and images helping to protect their country and culture from the threatened disaster of uranium mines and radioactive waste dumps.

AUtonomies is, likewise, intended to give voice to issues confronting Indigenous people, this time the controversial Commonwealth 'Intervention', which continues to divide opinion more than 18 months after its introduction. Emma King has been her collaborator, recording the stories of people who must be heard on the subject if we are to understand the reality of their lives and the impact of too often remote decision making.

Jessie Boylan's work is not typical of the documentary style of the concerned photographer. Although Jessie and Emma are invisible players in *AUtonomies*, allowing only the voices and images of the people to tell their stories, their presence is palpable. From the selection, naming and juxtaposition of images to the recorded voices, the artists have created a platform for communicating the substance and complexity of lives many Australians would generalise as unimportant and irrelevant—as did then Federal Minister Brendan Nelson in 2005 who said, when announcing a decision to establish a nuclear waste dump in the Northern Territory, '... why on earth can't people in the middle of nowhere have low-level and intermediate level waste?'

Jessie Boylan's return to PhotoAccess, albeit not in person, is very welcome. PhotoAccess is proud to present *AUtonomies*, by Jessie Boylan with Emma King, in the HUW DAVIES GALLERY at the Manuka Arts Centre.

David Chalker



Tibby Quall

Artist statement

On 21 June 2007 [then] Prime Minister John Howard and Minister for Indigenous Affairs Mal Brough declared a 'national emergency' in relation to child sexual abuse in the Northern Territory. In an unprecedented set of actions, the Commonwealth has taken direct control of communities, overriding the authority of both the NT Government and local community organisations in the name of creating safe and healthy environments for children.

(From Coercive Reconciliation, Stabilise, Normalise Exit Aboriginal Australia, Arena Publications, 2007)

The Intervention has imposed a range of actions on remote communities and town camps in the NT—actions which forced the Australian Government to suspend the Racial Discrimination Act in order for them to proceed. The Intervention has included quarantining 50 per cent of the Social Security payments of all residents in affected communities, compulsory five year leases over townships, placing government selected business managers in each community with unprecedented powers to veto community decisions and seize assets, and abolition of the Community Development Employment Program—often the only path to employment in remote communities. No charges of child abuse have yet been laid, and community residents are still living in sub-standard, over-crowded housing with inadequate access to education and healthcare.

Between September and November 2008 we travelled to Indigenous communities and town camps in the Northern Territory: Bagot, Knuckleys Lagoon and Malak communities and Palmerston Indigenous Village in or near Darwin; Yuendumu Community; Mt Nancy Town Camp; Alice Springs; Elliot and Tennant Creek. We made photographs and recorded oral stories from Indigenous and other people who have been affected by the Federal Government's Intervention. We wanted people to share the ideas and plans they have for the future and how they would like to see their communities develop.

AUtonomies explores the ways in which mainstream government and society affect and disregard concepts of land, culture, conflict, community and kinship.

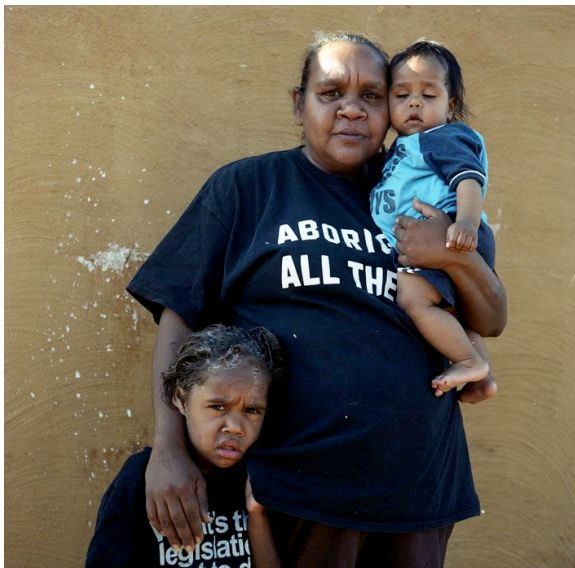
By working with people in communities and people directly involved in the Intervention processes, and by allowing a space for people to 'speak for themselves', the work specifically attempts to avoid the trap of victimisation which is disempowering and contradictory to the Intervention's purpose.

Over time, white settlers tried to become accustomed to denying that otherness was in their midst even as they put it to work, dispatched it or imprisoned it. Great tracts of the landscape spurned agriculture and pastoral profitability, but the colonists continued trying to wring profits from it. Aboriginal people were everywhere and culturally distinct but the colonists avoided the quandary of them by insisting that they were dying out. This is how the colony was maintained: by sensing but trying not to see, by fearing and knowing but trying not to acknowledge.

(From Seven Versions of an Australian Badland, Ross Gibson, University of Queensland Press, p.III, 2002)

Jessie Boylan and Emma King

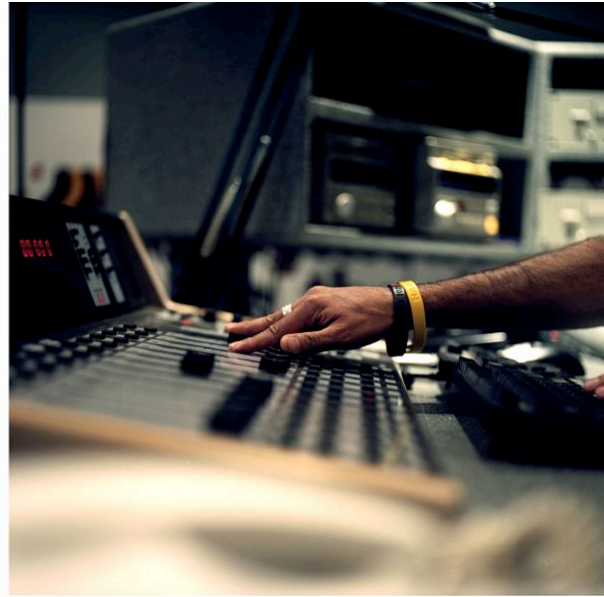
January 2009



Barbara Shaw with her daughter Danae Moore and nephew Sebastian Shaw



Dulcie Munamara fishing at Scott Creek near Darwin



Steve Gumerungi Hodder

Artist CV

Education: Bachelor of Fine Arts (Photography), RMIT University, Melbourne (2007)

Solo exhibitions

- 2009 *AUtonomies*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, PhotoAccess, Manuka Arts Centre, Manuka, ACT
- 2007–08 *Inhabited*, Touring exhibition, Sustainable Living Festival Melbourne Dudley House Gallery, Bendigo; Watch This Space Gallery, Alice Springs, 'ArtLandCulture', 'Shifting Ground', Casuarina Library, Darwin, Darwin Fringe Festival, Synergy Gallery, Northcote, VIC, Adelaide (2008 Fringe Festival)
- 2006 *Inhabited*, with Bilbo Taylor (sound recordings), Gasworks Arts Park, Albert Park, Vic
- 2005 *Standing on Sacred Ground*, Lab X Gallery, St Kilda, Vic

Group exhibitions

- 2007 *The Nuclear Posters*, Breakdown Press, The Artery, Fitzroy, Vic, *How The Light Gets In*, RMIT Fine Art Photography Graduate Exhibition, Red Gallery, Nth Fitzroy, Vic, *The Josephine and Win Schubert Photography Award*, (with commendation) Gold Coast Art Gallery, Qld
- 2006 *These Girls Give Good Art*, with Jeana Bajic, Clare Rae and Victoria Bennetts, Kings Artists Run Initiative, Kings Street, Melbourne, *Rent Party*, with Adam John Cullen, Brandon Tay and Anni Wu, Sway Gallery, Melbourne, *Maps*, with Mandy Warr, Brandon Tay and Claire Slattery, Workshop, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne
- 2005 *First Capture*, RMIT group show, Dantes, Fitzroy, Vic

Work experience

- 2008 HUW DAVIES GALLERY Program Coordinator, Manuka, PhotoAccess ACT; Disability support worker, JACKmail, ACT; Photography Theory (casual teacher), Canberra Institute of Technology, Reid, ACT; Organiser and Manager, Friends of the Earth Radioactive Exposure Tour, Educational Tour to South Australian outback to see uranium mining and its effects on Indigenous people
- 2004–08 Lab Assistant/Photo Technician, Lab X, Professional Photographic Services, St. Kilda, Vic
- 2007–08 Images Editor, ARENA Magazine, 'The magazine of the left, political and social commentary', Fitzroy, Vic
- 2005–07 Photographer: Friends of the Earth, Melbourne, Australian Nuclear-Free Alliance; Campaigner, Friends of the Earth, Melbourne, Nuclear FreeWays Project
- 2007 Editorial and Selection Committee member, *The Nuclear Posters* series, Breakdown Press
- 2006–07 Director, *Sustenance Garden* project, Prague House Rehabilitation Centre, Kew, Vic
- 2005–06 Centre for Contemporary Photography, City of Yarra Rotary Youth Arts Project, photography workshop lecturer and facilitator

Awards: Artist in Residence, St. Vincent's Hospital, Carlton, VIC (2007)

Published in: The Big Issue, Roving Eye, September 2008, Australian Photojournalist, September 2008, Chain Reaction, 2006–2008, Arena Magazine, September 2007, The Age & Sydney Morning Herald newspapers (article on uranium mining), 2006



Barbara Shaw and family members at House 5, Mt Nancy Town Camp, Alice Springs



Helen Fejo-Frith



Marguerite and Dulcie fishing at Scott Creek near Darwin

A U t o n o m i e s | Jessie Boylan with Emma King

Inkjet prints on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag; audio accompanies images 3, 4, 6, 8, 13, 14 and 15

		Image (mm)	\$
1.	House at Bagot Community, Darwin	500 x 1440	650
2.	Black objects at Bagot Community, Darwin	62 x 1480	320
3.	Helen Fejo-Frith (10 minutes)	645 x 1430	830
	Helen is from Ngukurr near the Roper River. She lived for many years in Katherine and moved to Darwin 10 years ago after the 1998 flood. She has eight children, 34 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. She lives at Bagot Community in Darwin where she has been a Community Council member and president.		
4.	Dulcie Munamara fishing at Scott Creek near Darwin (6.20)	550 x 1160	NFS
	Dulcie's country is in Arnhem Land near Maningrida. Dulcie currently lives in the Darwin suburb of Malak with her grandson Nathan. Over the years she has lived in Aboriginal Hostels Silas Roberts and Daisy Y in Darwin, and bush camps—Fish Camp, Lee Point and Marrara Creek—in the Darwin area.		
5.	Marguerite and Dulcie fishing at Scott Creek near Darwin	825 x 1450	980
6.	Barbara Rachel Shaw with her daughter Danae Moore and nephew Sebastian Shaw (10.50)	550 x 560	520
	Barbara lives at House 5, Mt Nancy Town Camp in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) with her four daughters. She is a fourth generation town camper. She is a descendent of Arrente, Kaititj, Warlpiri and Warramunga people. Barbara is a leading spokesperson and advocate for her people, expressing strong concerns about the Federal Intervention in the NT including speaking up at national and international events.		
7.	Barbara Shaw and family members at House 5, Mt Nancy Town Camp, Alice Springs	433 x 1440	750
8.	Phillip Goodman with his grandson Randell (9.50)	560 x 560	420
	Phillip comes from Murunungu near Daly River. He is currently a community leader at Palmerston Indigenous Village (PIV) just south of Darwin where he has lived with his family for 15 years. Phillip has worked hard to improve services and infrastructure at PIV.		
9.	Washing at Palmerston Indigenous Village near Darwin	390 x 1050	420
10.	New houses at Palmerston Indigenous Village near Darwin	400 x 720	370
11.	Shady playground for the kids at Palmerston Indigenous Village near Darwin	400 x 1060	420
12.	Life at Palmerston Indigenous Village near Darwin	570 x 1430	NFS
13.	Steve Gumerungi Hodder (9.45)	560 x 1140	520
	Steve is a Lardil man from Mornington Island who has lived in Mparntwe (Alice Springs) for about 21 years. He describes himself as a desert fish—a saltwater man who lives in the desert. Steve currently works full time for CAAMA radio as a journalist and presenter. He also creates a mean rhyme.		
14.	Tibby Quall (5.25)	570 x 1135	920
	Tibby's Aboriginal name is Madjilimba, clan Danggalaba, country/people Kulumbiringin–Boonaloo (Larrakia). He lives in Darwin, which is on Larrakia land. Tibby has been fighting for nearly 30 years to establish his clan's land rights through the court system.		
15.	Christopher Japangardi Poulson at home in Yuendumu (9.20)	540 x 1430	830
	Christopher was born in Yuendumu community, approximately 180 km north west of Alice Springs, in 1956. His grandfather's land runs from west of the community out to Pikily Springs in the Treuer Ranges. Christopher is in the process of establishing the Red Centre Aboriginal Corporation to develop and run a roadhouse on the Tanami Highway near Yuendumu.		
16.	Yuendumu—inner and outer	280 x 560	NFS
17.	Yuendumu	330 x 890	NFS