

Joseph Breikers  
*Brown Stagemaker*

Gallery Director: Channon Goodwin  
 Design: Adam Cruickshank  
 Photography: Marc Morel

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**CREATIVE  
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Any self-respecting BMX rider with their finger on the pulse of cycling courtier will, at present, find great pleasure in the donning of a swish pair of shin-high striped tube socks. Joseph Breikers is one such BMX rider. Some would argue that his fingers are so firmly on the pulse that they have breached the epidermal layer and are now happily twiddling around in a fetid mess of blood and tendons. Others would say that he has no pulse at all, let alone fingers with which to seek one out. Nevertheless, these socks (with their height and horizontal stripes) are a most elegant way of hiding that ugly map of pedal scars, while making the wearer's calves appear that slight bit bigger. HAILS!

Joseph Breikers  
*Brown Stagemaker*  
 06.11.13–23.11.13

Joseph Breikers completed a Masters in Arts (Research at the Queensland University of Technology in 2012. He is an artist and founding member of Boxcopy artist-run initiative. Joseph was awarded an Arts Queensland Career Development grant in 2011, to undertake a residency in Skagaströnd, Iceland. Key exhibitions and projects include, *Fresh Cut 2013: Part 1* (Institute of Modern Art, 2013), *Night of Terror I: 3 Hours of Heavy Metal and Demonic Ales* (Scratch Bar, 2012), *Go Kill Everybody and Come Back Alone* (First Draft, 2012), *Qaphqa* (Ryan Renshaw, 2011), *Regards, the Pit* (Metro Arts, 2011), and *Acoustic and Luminous Effects* (DB Projects, 2010, curated by Amanda Rowell).

## Bad Act

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari refer to the brown stagemaker (*Scenopoeetes dentirostris*), an Australian species of bird native to Queensland that each morning lays down landmarks 'by dropping leaves it picks from its tree, and then turning them upside down so the paler underside stands out against the dirt.'<sup>1</sup> In this act the brown stagemaker creates its own scene. For Deleuze and Guattari this bird and its act is a significant study, as it both disrupts the idea of art as an activity existing within an anthropocentric hold, whilst demonstrating that territory or possession emerges with expression.

In year eight, my high school drama class decided rather ambitiously to stage a version of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. I was cast as Vladimir the more verbose and philosophical of the plays' central two characters. I rehearsed for weeks, painstakingly practising to look into my hat, to turn it upside down, to stare into the paler underside. I imagine Joseph Breikers was standing somewhere not-so-nearby looking into his shoe.

Performance can imply a 'doubling', in what Derrida would describe as the ability to pretend to pretend. It provides a suspension and inversion, a purposeful act of willing and meaningful deception. Inside of pretending, there is both a tension and a security that the pretence may end at any time. All you have to do is step off-stage.

During rehearsals I would stand on the stage desperately trying to twist my brow into an expression that would clearly articulate what I knew of the search for Godot. Joseph and I of course knew that the search was fruitless, that we would find nothing more than the insides of our hats, the insides of our shoes; my unruly hair, his striped socks.

In his exhibition, *Brown Stagemaker*, Joseph Breikers gently overturns his materials and makes his stage. Not with the brown leaves chosen by a small bird, but with an object of equal everyday mundanity, the humble striped sock. As Deleuze and Guattari point out, the relationship between the brown stagemaker and the artist can quickly be drawn through their desires to set their stages, through the subtle inversion of an object. It is a decisive act within the context of the lives of each of the agents, one of recognition and repetition; it is a turning upside down, and a waiting. The artist and the bird pretend to pretend that the

socks and the leaves are something more, each willingly knowing that they are what they are, while willingly acting that they are something else.

When asked about the meaning of *Godot*, Beckett mentioned "a veteran racing cyclist, bald, a 'stayer,' recurrent placeman in town-to-town and national championships, Christian name elusive, surname Godeau, pronounced, of course, no differently from Godot."<sup>2</sup> *Waiting for Godot*, is not about track cycling and Joseph Breikers' *Brown Stagemaker* is not about BMX's, but perhaps both perform the pulling up of striped socks to hide pedal scars, and perhaps both upturn objects to reveal their delicate undersides. Or perhaps both simply leave us staring into our hats, into our shoes, performing ourselves and waiting for Godot... in which case there is 'nothing to be done', aside of course, from setting the stage...

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London: The Athlone Press, 1987), p. 315.

<sup>2</sup> Hugh Kenner, 'The Cartesian Centaur', *Perspective* 11 (Autumn 1959), ed. Ruby Cohn, p. 132-41.









# Not only but also

Bus Projects is an independent arts organisation dedicated to supporting the critical, conceptual and interdisciplinary practices of Australian artists. Since its establishment in 2001, Bus Projects has acted as a space to produce, present, discuss and engage with contemporary art. In addition to its core gallery-based program of exhibitions, events and residencies, Bus Projects collaborates with a range of artists and like-minded organisations to produce projects off-site and within the public realm. Through this diverse programming, Bus Projects continues to be a crucial convergence point for art, artist and audiences.

This exhibition and publication series, *Not Only But Also*, invests in the creation of innovative works by 24 young and emerging Australian artists and writers, forming an integral part of Bus Projects' inaugural artistic program in its new galleries on Rokeby Street in Collingwood.

Sarah Byrne

Juliet Rowe

James L Marshall

Joseph Breikers

Sam Cranstoun

Meredith Turnbull

Veronica Kent

Kenzee Patterson

Sebastian Moody

Kate Mitchell

Catherine or Kate

**B**

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