

MOYA DELANY

dreamcargo

'THINGS ARE SWEETER WHEN THEY'RE LOST'
F. Scott Fitzgerald

OPENING
Thursday May 2, 6 - 8pm

THE LENNOX - 208 Lennox Street, Richmond
Exhibition dates: 2 - 12 May, Wednesday - Sunday 11am - 5pm

www.moyadelany.com.au @moyadelany_art 



The wish that the modern world felt as epic as the one depicted in old stories and folktales—a place of tragedy and transcendence, of oaths and omens and fates, where everyday life felt like a quest for glory, a mythic bond with an ancient past, or a battle for survival against a clear enemy, rather than an open-ended parlor game where all the rules are made up and the points don't matter.

*John Koenig
Dictionary for obscure sorrows*

Moya Delany is a Melbourne based artist who finds beauty in the unexpected and the disregarded detritus of the world, Delany creates works layered with age, history and visceral meaning. Using only original vintage materials, arranging found, collected, unrelated objects together, these works simultaneously evoke mystery and familiarity. There is a cocktail of optimism and regret in these aged artefacts and souvenirs relating to travel and misadventure, excitement and exoticism, nostalgia and the unexpected.

Biography

Born in Swan Hill 1969, Moya graduated with a BA of Fine Art in Sculpture from Phillip Institute of Technology and began exhibiting in Australia and abroad.

Moya is an assemblage artist, a visual poet celebrating optimism and regret with surreal preciousity and creating sculptures exuding elegant decay.

Living and working in Bangkok and New York ignited a passion for collecting original paraphernalia from the forgotten cultural detritus of the early 20th century

Collected artefacts and tattered souvenirs form part of Delany's partly autobiographical, evocative, sculptural assemblages. The decadent, tragically romantic epoch described by Hemingway, Capote and Fitzgerald provides the aesthetic material (inspiration), behind this work.

Recently part of 'Radical Utopia -an Archaeology of a Creative City' at RMIT University gallery 2023 and a finalist in several prizes, her work is held in various private collections and has featured in numerous publications. Delany has also completed several large sculptural lighting commissions.

As an extension of her sculpture practice, Moya also creates sculptural lights and chandeliers from repurposed parachutes, flags, banners and spinnakers.

A love of original materials, historic, aged and irreplaceable inspires these one of a kind pieces.

MOYA DELANY

BORN: 1969, Swan Hill, Australia.

LIVING: Melbourne

EDUCATION

- 1987-89 **Phillip Institute of Technology.** Bachelor of Fine Art. Sculpture.. Hons.
1986 **Prahran College.** TOP Art.

EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 **Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf. Small sculpture prize.** Finalist.
East Gippsland Art Gallery. *Wrap prize.*
One Star Gallery. *Blue Period.*
Linden New Art. Design Fringe, SPECULATION: Eight Billion Little Utopias.
RMIT University. *Radical Utopia, an archeology of a creative city.*
- 2022 **Deakin University. Small sculpture prize.** Finalist.
- 2021 **NotFair. Melbourne.** Finalist Anne Runhardt art award.
- 2017 **Yering Sculpture prize - Finalist .**
- 2016 **Light sculpture commission.** *Swisse HQ.*
- 2015 **Mars Gallery.** *One night with 25 Sculptors.* Group Exhibition.
Bakehouse studios. *Mirrorball. Light sculpture. The Bakehouse Project.*
- 2014 **The Design Files.** *Open House. Light sculpture.*
- 2004 **Span Gallery, 45 Flinders lane.** *Snow dropping in the concept store.*
- 2001 **Span Gallery, 45 Flinders lane.** *Guilletta.* Group exhibition.
- 1997-2008 **Valkyrie Wings and Feather Creations, (later known as Moya Delany).**
handcrafting high end fashion accessories, stocked globally in Barneys (NY & JAPAN), Browns (UK) and Lane Crawford (HK) and Denmark
- 1996 **Gasworks Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition.'Where are my uncultured pearls ?'**
- 1995 **Dantes. 150 Gertrude st Fitzroy. D8.** Group Exhibition.
Gasworks Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition. *The Ultimate Accident.*
Thailand International Art group. *Bangkok, Thailand.* Group Exhibition.
- 1994 **St Martins Gallery, South Yarra.** *Sculpture Bunker.* Solo Exhibition.
- 1993 **Russell St Gallery** *Spiritlevel.* Solo Exhibition.
1992. **ROAR 2 Gallery Fitzroy.** *Next wave Festival. Mind the Gap.* Group Exhibition.
- 1991 **N.A.V.A. No Vacancy.** *Wanted.* Site specific Installation, Melbourne.
- 1989 **Museum of Victoria.** *Home Sweet Home.* Logo and poster illustration for RAI.

PUBLICATIONS

- 2015 **The Maker.** p.187 Tamara Maynes. Murdoch books. Allen & Unwin
- 2014 **The Bakehouse Project.** p.67 Helen Marcou, Quincy McLean & Sophy Williams. Schwartz
- 2006 **Handmade in Melbourne.** p.64 Jan Phyland & Janet de Silva. Geoff Slattery
Sugar. *Works by various artists. Paper Stone Scissors*
- 2005 **Timber.** *Works by various artists. Paper Stone Scissors*
- 1992 **What does this art world mean ?** p.50 Visual Arts Next Wave Festival. Backyard Press Co/Op LTD
- 1997-2008 **Vogue, Vogue UK, Harpers Bazaar (cover), Marie Claire, ELLE UK, Country Life**

COLLECTIONS

Shirley Manson / Garbage / Bono / Bruce Springsteen / Sheryl Crowe / Private

Travelogues, Transit Lounges and Explosives

Dr Ashley Crawford

Travel can be a strange thing. Mis-booking a hotel in Venice leading to sitting pondering spending a night in a gondola when a former lover finds you in a state of despair but leading to a night of wonderment. Bumping into an old friend in the packed streets of Shinjuku leading to an evening of drunken debauch. But sometimes such coincidences occur in your own lounge room when one begins reading on-line about an ex-employee's new book on the extraordinary American pilot Amelia Earhart only to receive a visit from an artist friend who suddenly proclaimed that she had been compared in appearance and adventures to a famous pilot by the name of Amelia Earhart!!

Now, to fill in the gaps of the strange itinerary just outlined. For those not in the know, Amelia Earhart was the first female aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean during an attempt at becoming the first woman to complete a circumnavigational flight of the globe in 1937 in a Lockheed Electra plane and disappeared over the central Pacific Ocean on July 2, 1937, just three weeks prior to her fortieth birthday.

The writer to whom I referred is Laurie Gwen Shapiro, an award-winning documentary filmmaker and journalist whose writing has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. Shapiro's biography of Amelia Earhart will be published next year by Viking Books. I first met Laurie in 1993 when I began publishing a magazine called *World Art*, in part based in New York, when I employed her as our marketing guru. To my ongoing chagrin I had no idea she was a fledgling writerly genius.

The artist who proudly proclaimed her apparent likeness to Earhart is Moya Delany and, like the aviator, Delany has had her share of adventures. After graduating with a BA in Fine art 1989 she exhibited here in Australia before going to Bangkok where she lived at The Artists Club of Thailand. She worked as a journalist for Bangkok *Time Out* magazine, was an extra in Thai movies and soaps, made art and was part of an exhibition in Pattaya. In the 1990's Delany lived in New York and was befriended by Deborah Harry who was enraptured by

Delany's feather fashion accessories and introduced her to a fashion agent who represented her for five years and led to her work being sold in such high-end boutiques as Barneys, Browns and Patricia Field. At this time she also came to spend time with film director Abel Ferrara while he was filming *Bad Lieutenant*, Ferrara's 1992 American neo-noir crime film starring Harvey Keitel. She spent most of her time, she says, "walking in the footsteps of my heroes and inspirations like Dorothy Parker, Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald and loitering around The Algonquin and Chelsea Hotels."

Returning to Australia, Delany's collection was picked up for the Georges Department Store reopening and she began accessorising brands such as Zimmerman, Scanlan and Theodore and Bettina Liano for their runway shows at Sydney Fashion Week and stocking her leather and feather creations at Christine, Robby Ingham and the MCA store where rock icon Bruce Springsteen snapped up her entire collection.

After ten years in fashion, Delany returned to her art practice and the results were somewhat startling. She began creating montages, both one and three-dimensional, inspired by both her own travels and those of her parents alongside such figures as Amelia Earhart and Earnest Hemmingway, pilfering stored detritus and thus becoming a bowerbird of both on-line finds and dusty opportunity shops. Often the flotsam and jetsam of the dead, bringing it back to life in a carousel of adventure and exoticism, a form of nostalgia *la surrealiste* or an ultimate postmodern travel guide.

Given that much of Delany's current oeuvre revolves around this history of plane travel, it inevitably raises its hazards and its history of crossover with war. Military apparatus often appears, repurposed as a sedentary aesthetic of sexiness. Repurposing is a key element as when Delany makes sublime sculptural light shades from repurposed parachutes and vintage (at times military) flags. One may suggest the influence of Delany's mother who worked as a nurse during the Vietnam War, a horrific venue where re-use, recycling and innovation were key necessities.

Her sculptural assemblages create narratives reminiscent of Hollywood B-Grade movies of the 50s and 60s or their more sophisticated versions in the new millennium. We cannot help but jolt from *Casablanca* (1942) with Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, to *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*

(2008) with Harrison Ford and Cate Blanchet (who, of course, would have to play Delany in any filmic adaption of her art career.) With their roped-up luggage and bizarre assemblages of stickers, often warning of dubious and decidedly delicate content, Delany's packages are not for the faint of heart!

A classic example of Delany's adventurous output would be the poignantly titled *One Day We'll Find Everything We've Lost* from 2023. For those of an academic of technical persuasion it must be noted that Delany is far from a lazy artist. This work is compiled of "plaster, cement, glass, miniature Haliburton case, fake diamonds, parachute, bottle, cotton, butcher paper, vintage luggage and train labels." Everything a girl might need. The labels, not so subtly, include rather prominently "Explosives: Shunt with Great Care."

The works are also inarguably elegant. In appearance they cross from danger to décor, perfume to poison, whether sculptural *object de art* or photographic montage they scream secret meanings, hidden codes, perfumed codex. Even when illuminated and glowing by scarlet parachute lighting.

So, on the same day that Laurie Gwen Shapiro emailed me from New York to tell me of her new book on Amelia Earhart I receive a visit from Moya Delany telling me she's been compared in appearance and adventures to a pilot by the name of Amelia Earhart. A bit weird, but OK. But then Delany, in utter delight, announces she's been sent a stick of 'Delany Dynamite', disarmed, thankfully, but a real brand of explosive dynamite from America. And, one wonders, what would Indiana Jones do?

