

Melissa Laing is a artist, theorist and curator living in West Auckland. Her practice spans film, dialogue, sculpture, conceptual writing and artist books. Her practice is situated in the intersections of visual language, critical theory, social history and politics. Previous works have focused on the construction of insecurity through the lens of immigration and aviation. More recently she has focussed on the structures that shape how knowledge is gained and shared. Through artworks, essays and conversation groups she has engaged with the ideologies of intellectual property, practises of education, and the role of science in New Zealand. Since 2012 Melissa has been the lead researcher for the Performance Ethics Working Group, an initiative of the University Without Conditions. She has a PhD from Sydney College of Arts, University of Sydney and her writing has been published in magazines, academic journals and galleries. Currently she is the lead researcher for Stable Spaces.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- Solo
- Sea water and mud, Audio Foundation, Auckland, New Zealand, 2023
 - Controlled Environment Laboratory, Corban Estate Arts Centre, Auckland, New Zealand, 2018 & Te Manawa, Palmerston North, New Zealand, 2019
 - Newsland, The Rumpus Room, Melbourne, Australia, 2013
 - a small metal pin, a piece of rubber, a section of metal pipe with securing nut, two red engine plugs and red ribbon, a reverse thruster hatch stopper bush, some down strapping, a signal horn, a piece of brake lining, a screwdriver, a broken omni directional threshold light, multiple bird, bat and turtle carcasses, a plastic water bottle, a block of wood, a beer can and a piece of paper, Blue Oyster, Dunedin, New Zealand, 2010
 - Melissa Laing : Thirty Two Heavy, SCA Gallery, Sydney, Australia, 2008
 - A video, a tent and accessories, Rm 103, Auckland, New Zealand, 2004
 - Harbouring I by Tentline, Damm4, Vienna, Austria, 2003
 - Shifted Rotating Door, Mercer Union, Toronto, Canada, 2003
 - The City's Open Spaces, Einsichten Ausblicke, Display Window, Kastanienallee, Berlin, Germany, 2002
 - Epic(2), Physics Room, Christchurch, New Zealand, 2001
 - Epic/Episch, Video Screening, Basis Wien, Vienna, Austria, 2000
 - He regarded the elements of fiction as the cards in the pack. They were always all there. There was no surprise; solitaire always came out if you cheated, Lift Space, High Street Project, Christchurch, New Zealand, 1999
- Group
- Sculpture on the Gulf, Waiheke, Auckland, New Zealand, 2022
 - Hither and Thither, Enjoy Public Art Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand, 2013
 - Make Something, A Collection of Collaboration, Saatchi Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand, 2011
 - Species of Space, Westspace, Melbourne, Australia, 2009
 - Underbelly, Carriageworks, Sydney, Australia, 2008
 - Limn file, High Street Project, Christchurch, New Zealand and China Heights, Sydney, Australia, 2007
 - Post it, Peloton Gallery, Sydney, Australia, 2006
 - JOC Jewelry Out Of Context, The Muse, Sydney, Australia, 2006
 - Tourist City, Kulturzentrum Schlachthof, Bremen, Germany, 2004
 - International Stopover, Pugh Pugh Barney McGrew Cuthbert Dibble Grubb, Berlin, Germany, 2003
 - Experimental, Museu de Arte Contemporânea do Ceará, Fortaleza Ceará, Brazil, 2003
 - Surviving Berlin, Jewelbox Projektraum, Berlin, Germany, 2003
 - Sempur Sursam, Te Manawa, Palmerston North, New Zealand, 2002
 - Ritual Comforters, High St Project, Christchurch, New Zealand, 2002
 - Starting Now, Four gallery exhibition, Sixty4Steps, Toronto, Canada, 2002
 - Hide and Seek, Villa Weiner, Ochtrup, Germany, 2001
 - Goggle Box, Light Box, Auckland, New Zealand, 2001
 - Rezone: Our Generation, Central Post Office, Auckland, New Zealand, 2000
 - Open Studios, Artists in Residence House, Vienna, Austria, 2000
 - Up and Coming, Articule Gallery, Montreal, Canada, 2000
 - Fairytale, Centre for Metamedia-Plasy, Czech Republic, 1999
 - Inappropriate Occupations and Transient Preservations: Here Today, Gone Tomorrow, Public Art Project, Rezone, Auckland, New Zealand, 1999

Projects & Performances Standing at the edge, with Mustaq Missouri, Walking about, Te Uru, Auckland, 2020
The Stoat, the Kereru and the Karaka Berries, with Christina Houghton, Auckland Fringe Festival, 2019
Boat Date, Auckland Fringe Festival, 2018
Performance Ethics Working Group, University Without Conditions, Auckland, ongoing since 2012
Boat Dates, with Christina Houghton, Auckland waterways, 2016
dull, dull, dull. Interesting people talk about boring things, Auckland Fringe Festival, 2013
Happiness in two parts, Video with live monologue, Vive le Bonheur, Workshop Showroom, Sydney, Australia, 2007
A Turbulent Mind, Direction & Sound: Melissa Laing, Performance: Paul Gonzalez & Nick Nestorovski, Nighttime #1, a Night of Short Works, Performance Space, Sydney, Australia, 2007
Shopping Mall (2002), 2.30 min section of Track 2 from, Trip, remix your experience, a visual music-film with live performance which was shot over 4 years in 12 countries and incorporates 4 feature-length films, 36 directors and 14 musicians. Directed by Frank Otto and Bernt Koehler-Adams. Premiered Expo 2005 in Aichi, Japan. Hamburg Film Festival 2005, European premiere, 59th Festival de Cannes, Marché du Film, 2006. Toured Germany 2006.

Reviews & Catalogues Johannes Klabbers, "Not the void exactly: Species of Spaces", Art Monthly Australia (#229, May 2010)
Adrian Blackwell, Spinning off Orbit, Mercer Union Exhibition Catalogue, Toronto, Canada, 2003
Thomas Hirschmann, White room, Now, Toronto, January 23-29, p 69, 2003
Emma Bugden (ed.), Physics Room Annual 2001, Physics Room Trust, Christchurch, New Zealand, 2002
Denise Carvalho (ed.), Fairy-tales, Centre for Metamedia-Plasy, Plasy, Czech Republic, 1999

PUBLICATIONS

Page Works, Artist Books, Conceptual Writing 'A Report on Progress', bookwork, 148 pp, 2018
'Untitled (for Victoria)', bookwork, 2017
Boat Date, a poster and essay, 2016
'Reduction', video poem for Art West, 2015 <https://vimeo.com/142360327>
'Wrong In The World' vol I - IV, zine 2015 - 16
'Climate Laboratory Newsletter', zine, 2014
'These undesirable immigrants, lunatics, people on these boats. we do not want these people to come - and I make no apology for it', bookwork for Enjoy Public Art Gallery, 2013
'Commonly Occurring', a book of edited text from the Australian Transport Safety Bureau Aviation Safety Database, August 2010 to August 2011. 2012
'Manifestos for thinking and living', with Sarah Laing, 2011

Edited Books Christina Houghton, Melissa Laing and Becca Wood (eds) 2021, About Walking. 15 months of artist walks in Tāmaki Auckland, (Auckland: Te Uru Waitākere Contemporary Gallery)
Negotiating Conversational Frequency, Performance Ethics Working Group Report July 2017, University Without Conditions, 2017
978-0-9864650-5-5, ST PAUL St Publishing, 2012

Podcasts Episode 1 - 9 Performance Ethics Working Group, University Without Conditions, Auckland, New Zealand. universitywithoutconditions.ac.nz/?page_id=492, 2014

Selected Essays 'Shaking the snow-globe and changing the city' Cameron Catiere and Leon Tan (eds.) Routledge Companion to Art in the Public Realm, Routledge, 2020
'Some parallel discussions' in Bruce E. Phillips (ed) Share/Cheat/Unite vol 4, Te Tuhi, 2018
'The (quieter) romance of suburban rail', Pantograph Punch, 02 March, 2017
'Being here, with you' in Bruce E. Phillips (ed) Unstuck in Time, Te Tuhi, 2015
'Out at Sea: On Taking a Year off and Building a Boat' Pantograph Punch, 4 June 2015
'Under a Flag', What do you mean, we? Te Tuhi, 2012
'Negotiating an ethical commons of expression' 978-0-9864650-5-5, ST PAUL St Publishing, 2012
'In My Empty House: Ruark Lewis with Loma Bridge', Studies in Material Thinking Vol. 5, 2011
'Into a void', Revolutions per Minute, Narrow Gauge, 2011

SELECTED CURATORIAL PROJECTS

Independent

Nikau Superette Art, Kelston, Auckland, 2023
Urban Walking Festival, Tāmaki Auckland, 2019 - 2022, urbanwalking.nz
About walking, 15 months of walking artworks, co-curated by Christina Houghton and presented by Te Uru, Auckland, New Zealand, 2019 - 2020
Tasting Words, a Poetry and Food Walk on Great North Rd, New Lynn, Auckland, 2017, Whau Arts Broker
New Lynn Street Performance Series, Auckland, Winter 2016 & 2017, Whau Arts Broker Waterview
Sounding the Whau, sound walks in collaboration with Audio Foundation, Kelston, Auckland, 2016 & Green Bay, Auckland, 2017, Whau Arts Broker
Assembly, co-curated with Charlotte Huddleston and Vera Mey, 2012, St Paul St Gallery, AUT
Print Season 2011, a season of four curated exhibitions, a print fair, a symposium and a publication, St Paul St Gallery, AUT
In My Empty House, Ruark Lewis with Loma Bridge, 2010, St Paul St Gallery, AUT
Bricolage Disco, Wade Marynowsky, 2010, St Paul St Gallery, AUT
Sculpture Season 2010, a season of six curated exhibitions, St Paul St Gallery, AUT
New Work for Screen, commissioned video artworks for Air New Zealand's Inflight Entertainment, 2013
Blick-Box, window gallery Friedrichshain, Berlin, 2003
Einsichten Ausblicke, window gallery, Kastanienallee, Berlin, 2002
Rezone, pop up exhibitions across Auckland, 1998 - 2000

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS & RESIDENCIES

Review of the Copyright Act, a one week focus on Copyright in response to the MBIE review of the Copyright Act, St Paul St Gallery, AUT, 2019
On Conversation, a research residency at Te Tuhi Gallery, Auckland, 2016
Henry Moore Institute Research Fellowship, Leeds, 2012
Trinity Grammar School, Artist in Residence, Sydney, 2007
Scholarship for Language and Cultural Exchange, Goethe Institute, Berlin, 2001
Huygens Scholarship, Postgraduate Study in the Netherlands, Dutch Art Institute, Enschede, 2001
Federal Chancellery of Austria & UNESCO-ASHBERG Bursaries for Artists, Vienna, 2000
Centre for Metamedia-Plasy Residency, Czech Republic, 1999

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Cities in a Climate of Change: Public Art, Environmental and Social Ecologies, IAPA Conference 2015, Auckland, New Zealand 2015
Cultural Studies Association Australasia (CSAA) Conference 2014, Wollongong, Australia 2014
Postcolonial Studies Research Network Conference, Citizenship in an Era of Global Crisis, University of Otago, Dunedin, 2011
6th European Consortium for Political Research General Conference, University of Iceland, 2011
32nd Congress of the International Committee of the History of Art (CIHA), Melbourne University, Australia, 2008
Art Association of Australia and New Zealand Annual Conference 2012, 2009, 2006

EDUCATION

PhD, University of Sydney, Australia. 2008
One year of postgraduate study, Dutch Art Institute, The Netherlands. 2001
Bachelor of Visual Arts, Auckland Institute of Technology, New Zealand. 1998

PANELS & MENTORING

Mahia Atua Advisory Panel, Arts Regional Trust
Temp^o Advisory Panel, a biennial outdoor art science climate change event
E-Press Advisory Panel, Unitec
Artists Alliance Mentor, 2016 & 2017