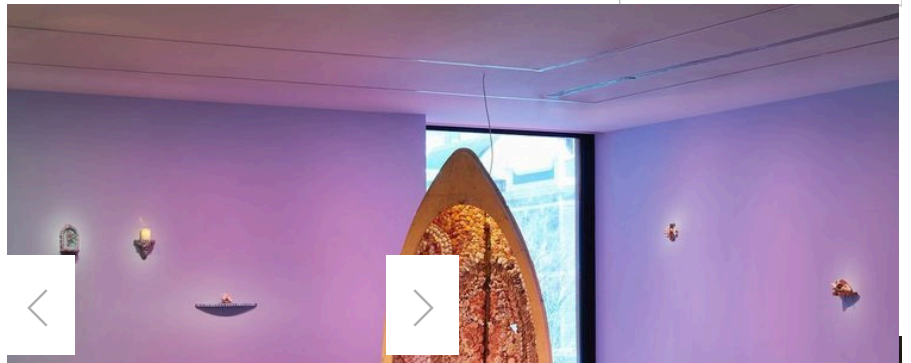


# ART MONTHLY AUSTRALASIA

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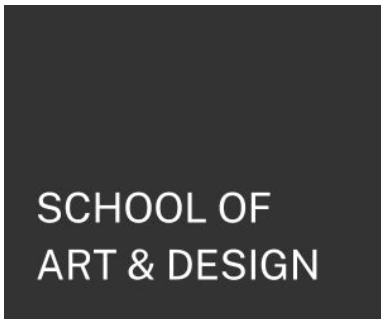
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“As well as appreciation, there is an undercurrent of love that weaves through the artworks—love for places, for people, for objects, for languages and for family,” writes Lara Chapman in her review of ‘Primavera: Young Australian Artists’ at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia. Read the full piece via the link in bio. • Curated by Lucy Latella, ‘Primavera’ features the works of Teresa Busutil, Chun Yin Rainbow Chan, Aidan Hartshorn, Monica Rani Rudhar and Sarah Ulimaia, and continues at the Museum of Contemporary Art



SPRING 2024 ISSUE 340  
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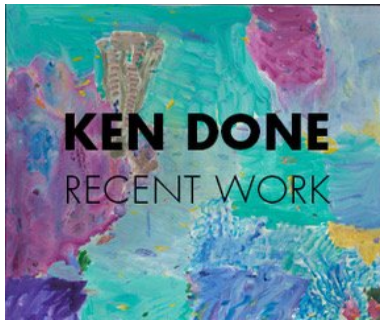


Oh my God! MONA’s  
new tunnels to  
enlightenment  
July 12, 2019

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AI WEIWEI, *WHITE HOUSE*, 2015, INSTALLATION VIEW, MUSEUM OF OLD AND NEW ART (MONA), HOBART, 2019; IMAGE COURTESY MONA, HOBART; PHOTO: MONA/JESSE HUNNIFORD

The Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Hobart has unlocked a new subterranean complex of tunnels and chambers dug from the sandstone bedrock of the Berriedale peninsula. The new excavation contains a central nave and connecting passageways that burrow up from the dark underground galleries towards the water's-edge 'Pharos' wing – 'a temple to light'. Another anti-monumental milestone in MONA's evolution, 'Siloam' is a jewel in the crown for the self-professed secular church and adult Disneyland. What better place to watch the impending apocalypse ... but not before you have a go on the art rides, take a 'journey through the birth canal' and 'commune with your inner spotlight'.

With grand gestures to the transcendental, 'Siloam' leads us on a modern-day procession ritual involving the idolatrous installation of David Walsh's contemporary-art memento mori. Just like Jesus leading the blind man to the Pool of Siloam, we too are promised the gift of sight – hallelujah! By way of ascending or descending through Christopher Townend's sonorous installation *Requiem for Vermin* (2019), the sloping tunnel unites a spacious split-level temple that is illuminated by an aperture high above. Nestled quietly beneath the Carrara marble floor (of this new-age temple to transfiguration) is the mouthpiece to Oliver Beer's *Mona Confessional* (2016–19), a somber experience which, like prayer, requires us to express our deep-seated feelings to a distant, unknown audience located up above.



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The raw stone walls of the cavernous chamber dramatically frame the white-washed wooden bones of a Qing dynasty house (Ai Weiwei's 2015 *White House*) that tiptoes on crystal balls; these transparent glass 'foundations' glibly reduce the surrounding architecture into a tidy visual metaphor: a spiritual horizon inverting dark and light, 'the MONA experience' as the medium between our earthly interior and some other Elysian elsewhere.

Ultimately playing out 'The End' across three discrete chambers is *The Divine Comedy* (2019), conceived by Alfredo Jaar (via Dante) and, presumably, executed by an array of assiduous engineers and Tassie labour. MONA literally straps audiences in for a coal-fired, techno-fuelled trip straight from hell, transitioning in purgatory (featuring a curious film with artist Joan Jonas) and onwards into paradise. Like all good comedies, it begins so badly that the successive episodes have to withstand an additional weight of expectation.

Oscar Capezio, *Hobart*

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◀ DREAMING OF SI BEYOND GEOGRAPH

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