

## **Review - Particulate Matter: A fossil fuelled future?**

By The Review Board, April 25 2020

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Particulate Matter: Alison Clouston & Boyd, Jack Green, Itja Ntjarra artists & Fiona MacDonald at [The Cross Art Projects](#), Sydney, online. Issued out of time due to COVID protocols.

Synchronicities exist between [Biennale of Sydney](#) & this small independent show. Most obviously the inclusion of Itja Ntjarra Art Centre artists exhibiting across all spaces (see previous post). Artists whose visual vernacular is born of Namatjira's Hermannsburg School, but with recent directions in practice influenced by Tony Albert's invitational 2016 workshop.

'Don't Frack the NT' sits in [#NIRIN Museum of Contemporary Art Australia](#) . A collaborative work by Tony Albert & [Seed Indigenous Youth Climate Network](#) . A frank political voice that also lies at the heart of Particulate Matter. So too the strength of collaboration.

Australians recognise Namatjira country, the white gums, cerulean skies, violet ranges, & contrasting greeneth springing from red ochre earth. But do we understand it?

Mervyn Rubuntja's watercolour has literal collaged picture book scenes incorporated within an almost Dr Seuss treescape. This is not a Namatjira tradition intended to replicate the great artist's work, but uses our familiarity with the style to direct our gaze in new directions. 'No fracking way', puts it succinctly.

Jack Green uses acrylic paint to illustrate his concerns on Country. Naïve in style, the figuration & colour of his canvases are reminiscent of the Ngukurr School, which art audiences became familiar with in the work of late Marra painter Ginger Riley Munduwalawala, himself inspired to paint after meeting Namatjira as a young stockman.

Meta-landscape art - utilising a canon the audience recognises, while incorporating science & culture needed in this time of environmental emergency. Tied together with Clouston & Boyd's multi-disciplinary creative activism (soft sculpture, doco-digital media) & MacDonald's translation of data into culture through photo-digital imagery; impressive is the didactic accompaniments. The artists' source material is a major component of this show.

Particulate Matter feels like a precursor to an expansive, ambitious public show, but considering the source of much institutional funding, who will have the courage to take on such a curatorial proposition?

The exhibition is comprehensively presented online at [www.crossart.com.au](http://www.crossart.com.au)