

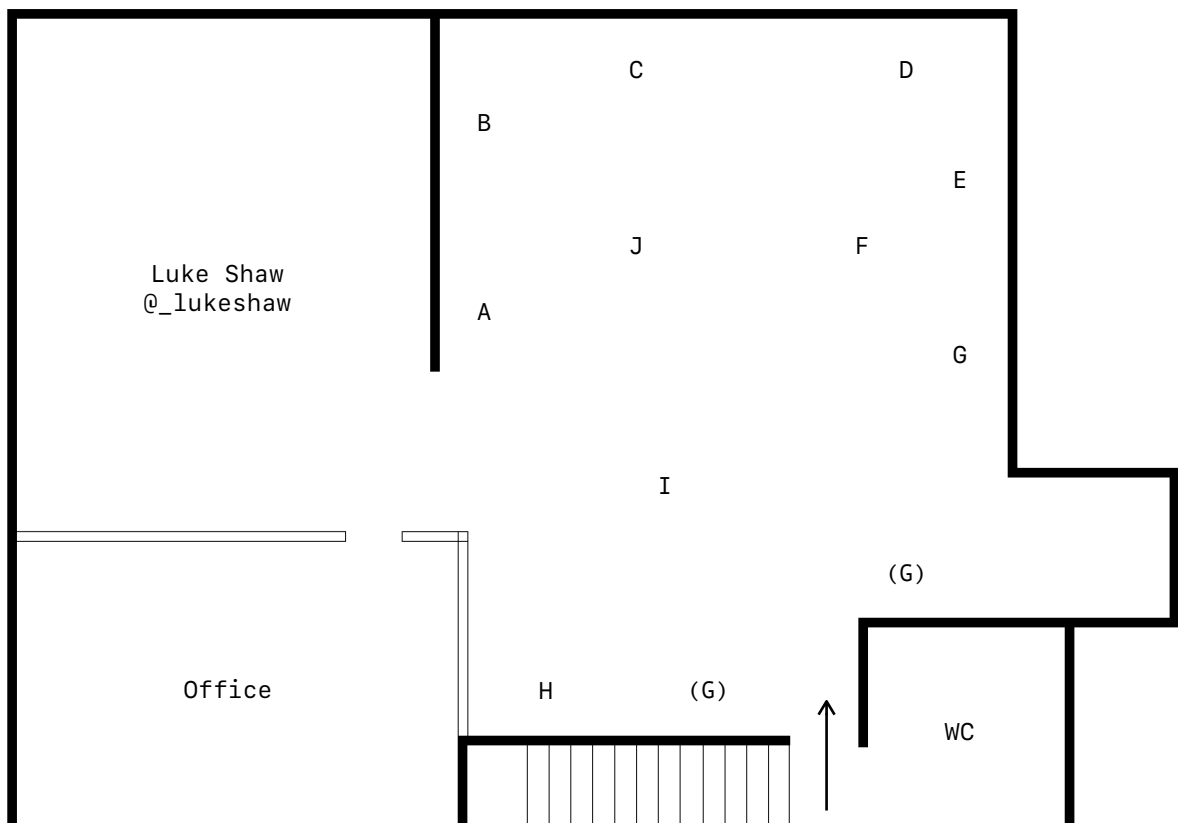
# Kerning

Darcey Bella Arnold, Fernando do Campo, Mitchel Cumming,  
Emmalyn Hawthorne, Sebastian Moody, Aaron Perkins

May 11–28, 2023

*The typographic process of kerning ensures the readability of a text by adjusting the space between its individual letters. In a well-kerned text this process is invisible; it simply 'looks right'. Yet we live in an age when what 'looks right' has often been insidiously engineered to remove any space for interpretation or nuance.*

*Bringing together text artists from Naarm, Meanjin and the Gadigal and Bidjigal lands of the Eora nation, Kerning navigates the spaces between letters, words and sentences to consider with both scepticism and wonder the spaces within language.*



Sebastian Moody is a

MOODY

Sebastian Moody is a Queensland-based conceptual artist with a wide-ranging practice centred around language. His recent projects include Open Studio at Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art where he engaged with their collection of instructional Fluxus art works to build a meditation space and poem-generating machine. Moody also recently completed commissions for Museum of Brisbane, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane City Council, and Home of the Arts. He is represented by Onespace, Meanjin/Brisbane.

A. *Opinion Fatigue (smooth mammal)*, screenprint on linen, 150 x 120 cm, unique edition, 2023

The *Opinion Fatigue* artworks continue in the tradition of 1960s and '70s Australian concrete poetry, which used mechanical and commercial applications of text to expand possibilities for art-making. For RM Gallery, Moody has produced a unique edition screenprint on linen. Unlike Moody's previous text works where the meaning of the words is central to the concept, these works problematise our logical understanding of language by moving away from poetry and closer towards abstract expressionism.

The artwork also carries something of the strict, rule-based processes of conceptualism. Designed in Microsoft Word, it utilises the inherent flatness and simplicity of the word processing software to expose the finite possibilities of the grid. Each point on the grid is an option to assign—or not assign—a single piece of data. This mechanical gambling aesthetic contradicts the painting's 'expressionism' and, like Fluxus artists tossing coins to make the broken and solid lines of the *I Ching*, reveals the random esoteric structures of the universe through chance.

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Darcey Bella Arnold

BELLA ARNOLD

Working within painting, drawing and sculpture Arnold's practice is informed by experience and research. Beginning with the personal as a departure point, her work drifts between language, art history and pedagogical theses. Darcey Bella Arnold completed a BFA, Drawing at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2007, and a BFA, Honours at Monash University in 2009. She is represented by ReadingRoom Naarm/Melbourne.

- B. *Untitled*, acrylic on board, 30.5 x 30.5cm, 2022
- Untitled*, acrylic on board, 30.5 x 30.5cm, 2022
- C. *Untitled 1*, acrylic on board, 41 x 41cm, 2022
- Untitled 2*, acrylic on board, 41 x 41cm, 2022
- Untitled 3*, acrylic on board, 41 x 41cm, 2022
- Untitled 4*, acrylic on board, 41 x 41cm, 2022

Arnold has painted six works on board which are an ongoing series of concrete poetry explorations. These studio experiments are composed of the letter 'e' and 'o'. They partly arrive from reading on the work of Georges Perec, especially his novel *La Disparition*, the artist's ongoing use of the word 'Entropy,' along with investigating the subjectivity of pre and postpartum psychology.

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Aaron Perkins

PERKINS

Aaron Perkins is newly Naarm/Melbourne-based logophile and artist who is running out of walls to line with bookcases and art. Operating in the space between reading and looking, his preoccupation with words and wordplay drives a conceptual painting practice that interrogates language, language systems, narrative, and narrative structure through strategies of graphic, typographic, and grammatical abstraction. He recently earned a Doctorate of Philosophy from the Queensland College of Art for his research into fiction and autofiction within painting.

- D. *Rote (The Ten Commandments)*, Conté crayon, ink, and acrylic on lined A4 exercise book pages with ruled margins, mounted on board, 70x60 cm, 2023
- E. *Rote (The Wicked Bible)*, Conté crayon, ink, and acrylic on lined A4 exercise book pages with ruled margins, mounted on board, two panels, 70x60 cm, 2023
- F. *The Dictionary Perkins*, paperback, 14.8 x 10.5 x 0.7 cm, 60 pages plus cover, edition of 30, 2023

Compiled from typos encountered throughout Perkins' reading practice since 2017, *The Dictionary Perkins* is an absurd and idiolectal supplementary update to the dictionary. It coalesces around the so-called *Wicked Bible's* (1631 KJV) infamous seventh commandment that "Though shalt commit adultery". Taking this omission of 'not' as gospel, Perkins treats all the 'typos' he has collected as intentional and as evidence of the English language's evolution. Perkins then applies *The Dictionary Perkins* to various texts as a strategy of grammatical abstraction. For *Rote (The Wicked Bible)*, he trained ChatGPT – an artificially intelligent chatbot – on this idiolect to generate an absurd (and entirely immoral) version of Exodus 20:2–17; for *Rote (The Ten Commandments)* Perkins playfully restates a list of common laundry instructions. Through each of these works Perkins disrupts comprehension, prompting a consideration of how we know what we know.

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# Fernando do CAMPO

Fernando do Campo (b. Mar del Plata, Argentina 1987) is an artist and academic based at UNSW Art & Design, Sydney. Since 2015 he also produces work as the HSSH (House Sparrow Society for Humans). Fernando's practice engages the histories of non-human animals via anthropomorphism, speculative fiction and archival research to produce multi-disciplinary exhibitions and projects. Fernando has presented solo exhibitions in Australia and the USA, and group exhibitions internationally. He is a Sir General John Monash Foundation Scholar, the first artist to ever receive this prestigious award for emerging Australian leaders to study abroad, which he used towards completing an MFA at Parsons School of Design, New York. He completed his PhD at MADA, Monash University in 2022 and was Artist-in-Residence at the State Library of NSW 2021-22. In 2024 he will be presenting major solo projects with the Rockhampton Museum of Art, QLD and the Bundanon Museum of Art, NSW. He is represented by Gallery Sally Dan-Cuthbert, Sydney.

G. *Singular Chuckles 1-8 (WHOSLAUGHINGJACKASS)*, acrylic on board, 25 x 20 cm, 2023

All artworks connected to the *WHOSLAUGHINGJACKASS* Cycle aim to reimagine the introduction of the laughing kookaburra to Western Australia and Tasmania at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century through speculative abstraction. The project proposes the soft pink, blue, and brown tones of the kookaburra, having successfully established itself across the country, as an alternative nation-building narrative to the green and gold of the wattle, or red, blue and white of the Union Jack. The phrase 'WHOSLAUGHINGJACKASS' metaplasmically interrupts the colonial species name of Laughing Kookaburra (Laughing Jackass) and plays on the ambiguity of who is laughing and who is the jackass, and is used to produce a geometric typography, which I then dissect, tessellate, and re-construct across different materials and forms. These studies of singular WHOSLAUGHINGJACKASS shapes function like single notes or chuckles, iterations of a counter-nationalistic speculation at play alongside non-human companion histories.

[@ferdocampo](https://www.instagram.com/ferdocampo) [www.fernandodocampo.com](http://www.fernandodocampo.com)



Mitchel Cumming

CUMMING

Mitchel Cumming is an artist and poet living and working on unceded Gadigal and Bidjigal land. His work frequently involves the establishment and/or manipulation of exhibition contexts: a process in which elements generally considered supplementary to artistic production become instead a primary material.

H. *Unders anding*, acrylic on and off gallery wall, 82 x 61cm, 2022

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*Kerning*

August 9–September 2, 2023



Emmalyn Hawthorne

HAWTHORNE

Emmalyn Hawthorne is an artist and writer. A process of collage investigating negative space has brought her to an expanded practice using new media processes. She is interested in how unusual juxtapositions and semantic multitudes in life foreground our need to make meaning. "There is something sad but also really human and honest in trying to narrativise the incongruous."

Since completing honours in 2018, Emmalyn's work has been shown within Meanjin/Brisbane and Naarm/Melbourne and her writing has been published locally by zines and for exhibitions. She is currently one of Outer Space Brisbane's studio artists, and recently completed *Orrery*, an online project with Hannah Jenkins for KINGS Artist-Run, as well as *Astrolabe*, her first solo show, at TCB in Naarm/Melbourne late last year.

- I. *Astrolabe: hmmm war w*, 3D printed PLA, 21.9 x 15.4 x 13.8cm, 2023.  
Skyline documentation by Nina Dyer
- J. *Astrolabe: hor m { = we ~*, 3D printed PLA, 21.8 x 15.4 x 13.2cm, 2023.  
Skyline documentation by Nina Dyer

In her recent practice, Emmalyn has been using a combination of Optical Character Recognition software (OCR) and 3D printing to 'read' skylines and create site-specific models of the output. The OCR interprets the skyline as though it were handwriting, comparing the curves and angles it finds to its database of those that appear in written text. Sometimes just jumbles of letters and punctuation come out and other times whole words or phrases. For these works, Emmalyn has engaged with two skylines that can be seen from the windows of RM Gallery and Project Space, installing the sculptures in alignment with their real world views.

Emmalyn finds skylines and words are similar in that the way we perceive them depends upon our own positioning within both physical and cognitive landscapes. Always in flux, they evolve and morph as we continue to interact with them over time. 3D printing then gives form to these histories – its layering of a thin line of filament across a surface not dissimilar to stacking pages and pages of writing. An astrolabe is a hand-held astronomical instrument, sometimes regarded as a rudimentary analogue computer, used for reckoning time and making measurements that enable the user to orientate themselves both on Earth and within the celestial sphere. The works offer a similar means of orientation and understanding, charting lines back through times, perspectives, and our, frequently destructive, use of the landscape and of words.

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*Kerning*

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