

EXHIBITION PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Atamur meets Mhought and Flaze

23 March–23 April 2023

Boom Gallery, Big Boom Gallery Space
5 Rutland Street, Newtown VIC 3220, Australia

Opening Hours:

Monday–Saturday, 9am–4pm
Sunday, 9am–3pm

Venue access:

Wheelchair access, disabled toilet and disabled parking available outside
The exhibition is free to attend

Art et al. announces an exhibition in Boom Gallery, Victoria, titled 'Atamur meets Mhought and Flaze'. Over the end of 2021 into 2022, Art et al. commissioned Matt Robertson from the ArtGusto studio in Geelong, Australia, to collaborate in their Peer/Peer programme with John Powell-Jones in Manchester, UK. The exhibition will feature the two stories that have been created digitally, to show how the characters that had been created met and shared stories. This collaboration was part of Art et al.'s international programming, with one artist working from a supported studio, and the outcome was left completely open.

What happened? With both artists fascinated with character creation and storytelling, and wanting to share real-life emotions and events, the storyboarding began. Over several weeks two separate storylines began simultaneously: characters Mhought and Flaze, created by Matt Robertson, met with Atamur, created by John Powell-Jones. The characters decided to crossover into each other's worlds to see what the other was like and to learn more about the characters, their lives, and the environments they inhabited. Across the two storylines, we get an insight into the minds of two incredible illustrators with their own unique styles, both telling stories of developing trust and overcoming anxieties. The drawings have been digitally worked, so that both artists' drawings could be combined.

Matt explains the project as: "...a story of bringing two worlds together. By introducing our characters to each other's worlds and bringing them out of their comfort zones. The characters realised they weren't all that different from each other and that they could learn from each other."

Mhought and Flaze are two characters experiencing homelessness, who take Atamur on a trip around to places where they like to spend time, including the beach, a golf course, and attending a beautiful fireworks display. Atamur is a nervous system who has built himself a suit to protect himself from everything the world throws at him, but over time the suit softens, and sometimes comes off completely when he feels comfortable with those around him.

Of the experience, Matt said, "I found it engaging and it brought together two continents. It came at the right time for me. It gave me my mojo back and helped me to be creative."

This commission was supported by the Australia Council for the Arts, the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Aesop Foundation. Art et al. is founded by Arts Project Australia, Jennifer Lauren Gallery, and Slominski Projects.

Image copyright: John Powell-Jones, Matt Robertson and ArtGusto studio



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Matt Robertson

Being a true artist, Matt Robertson is always thinking of his art and what he is going to create next. His drawings bring characters to life on paper that have evolved through his imagination. His narratives are quirky, and he delights audiences with his instinctual use of colour. Robertson also works in film and animation. He has attended the ArtGusto studio in Geelong since 2015.

Robertson has had his work featured in several group exhibitions, including at The Geelong Gallery (2014), Deakin Waterfront Gallery (2016 & 2018) and in Federation Square in Melbourne (2013, 2015 & 2019).

John Powell-Jones

John Powell-Jones' practice deals with themes of perception, power structures and personal reality in an on-going study into how the warped Western view on progress and success acts to inform our perception of morality. These ideas are explored using speculative fiction played out through video, performance and installation, interweaving costume, dance and ritual, and taking inspiration from European folklore, body horror and science fiction. His aim is to form a dialogue between our present and an imagined dystopian future in which the horror of capitalism and neoliberal ideology are presented as cyborgs and demons.

Recent exhibitions include solo shows at Castlefield Gallery, Manchester (2021), IMT Gallery, London (2021), and the group show 'This is a Not Me' at IMT Gallery, London/Online (2020).

Art et al.

Art et al. is an international platform of collaborations between artists from supported studios, peers, and arts professionals that highlights diverse voices and creative practices. These collaborations and partnerships result in commissioned writing, multimedia content, and exhibitions - expanding the scope, role, and definition of contemporary art. It was set up in 2020, where founding partners, Arts Project Australia, Slominski Projects, and Jennifer Lauren Gallery, identified a need for more inclusive programming and access in the contemporary arts for neurodivergent, intellectually, and learning disabled artists to be seen, heard, and participate.

ArtGusto

ArtGusto is a working art studio for artists living with disabilities. They are based in central Geelong, Victoria, Australia, and offer opportunities for artists to practice their art in a group studio. Artists have access to qualified arts practitioners for one-to-one assistance. ArtGusto support artists to exhibit and sell their work and to engage in community arts projects. artgusto.com.au

Need Help?

Art et al. strive to provide open and clear communications regarding what we mean and publish, and we have invested resources to help ensure that the content presented is clear, concise, and appeals to a wide range of people. If you have any questions, concerns, or other access needs, please contact Jennifer – details below

Contact: Jennifer Gilbert, Art et al. co-founder
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Supporters and funding bodies:

@Dfat (Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade)
@BritishCouncil @BritishCouncilArts
@AusCouncilArts (Australia Council for the Arts)
@AesopFoundation

Website: artetal.org

IG: @art.etal #ArtEtAl

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Founders:

@ArtsProjectAust

@JenniferLaurenGallery

@Slominski_Projects

