

To remedy means to heal, to cure, to mend, to make good or repair. Remedies draw on the wisdom of generations, of innumerable makeshift solutions for survival. As intimate recipes and rituals that emerge from crisis, remedies can be both process and tonic. Remedies take time; they are promises of repair that require trust in the deep and cyclical motions of healing. Even if not fully effective or resulting in what we might hope for, like seeds, they can activate growth and change in the face of despair.

In *From Their Hands to Mine*, Jasmine Craciun has placed gilded replicas of ancestral artefacts along two beds of sand and mirrors. The originals were retrieved during a cultural dig in Tibooburra, on her grandmother's Country of Malyangapa, before the construction of a road. The work holds space for mixed feelings: on the one hand, gratitude for what was recovered and on the other, sadness with respect to unknown others now destroyed or buried beneath the tarmac. The slow and thorough process of replicating the artefacts becomes an act of reclamation, to revive cultural value amidst suboptimal circumstances. Gilded with gold lustre and with some half buried, the work speaks to a clash of value systems – asking us to consider what is preserved and protected, and who gets to decide.

Jacqueline Olivetti's artwork also alludes to a friction when different systems of healing collide. This large sign, *Park Pharmacy*, once signalling a local chemist, was retrieved upon its closure. The independent pharmacy is nowadays a rarity, overtaken by big pharma conglomerates. Park Pharmacy is a readymade pun, a poem, a testament to the origins of the pharmacy as a place to seek advice and care. Playing on the double meanings of park – to be still or an urban site for nature – placed alongside the word 'pharmacy', the work opens up multiple interpretations of what medicines can be, beyond the narrow consumer and capitalist definitions we are overwhelmed with.

Jacqueline's readymade sign resonates with Sehej Kaur Sehmbhi's installation nearby, which features a video of the artist making chai in Parramatta Park. *Kisan di Kirat, Kirat da suad* (the farmours labour, the taste of labour) references the farmers' protest in India during 2020-21 and which has recently been reignited this year. Demanding more protections and economic security for farmers, the protests highlight that farming practices have become economically and environmentally unsustainable; the capitalist hunger is incompatible with the ways of the earth and the people. In this park sanctuary, Sehej crushes spices with her own hands and brews tea, making the labour of food service visible through the body in practice. In her film Sehej quotes Pakistani poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz who writes of the Palestinian struggle in the [ongoing] loss of their homelands. By braiding the experiences of forced displacement together through poetry and video, a layered yet clarifying historical mapping of the land is provided. Here is a ritual offering to the hardship of farmers and all those who commune with and fight for the land, past and present.

Tom Isaacs' *Emergency Blankets* were made in response to two consecutive emergencies: the 2019 Black Summer bushfires then the Covid pandemic. The blankets are made from Mylar on one side – a material that reflects and retains body heat used to survive overexposure – and on the other, scraps of material sewn together. The artwork references "depression blankets", when people would

make quilts from tailors' fabric samples during the Great Depression. Through this tradition, Tom has repurposed his late grandfather's suits; another work utilises more recent offcuts from his life to create patterns resembling a childhood blanket of his; while the work in the Hunter St window incorporates a hessian blanket that Tom's grandfather used when he was called upon in crisis to protect community from life-threatening fires. Drawn from different periods in the artists' life and family lineage, these fabrics have created warmth and protection for different contexts, in ongoing, repeated attempts to soothe amidst compounding crises.

In the centre and a corner of the gallery, Lourdes David has installed twisted forms amidst piles of soil. Titled *And crawling on the planet's face, some insects called the human race*, the work deals with the aftermath of war and destruction caused by humans. The rusty pipes, resembling rubble or bones, emerge randomly from the ground as remains of something that used to be. Rust is a process of both decay and growth, showing that nature survives and transforms in unexpected ways - especially when left to rely on its own devices. The broken pipes are uprooted and mangled, yet still finding their way back to the earth. In the context of time, they will eventually decompose and become something else again, an occurrence to anticipate well beyond our lifetimes.

*Remedy* features two artworks by Dana Albatrawi in which she cuts, stitches and paints onto traditional carpets. There is an intimacy and domesticity to the use of carpet, a material that evokes comfort and warmth, that demarcates a space for home, leisure and prayer. *Shattered Freedom* responds to the ongoing genocide in Dana's homelands in Gaza. Pieces of carpet have been pinned to the wall, at times distressed and inverted, forming the skeleton of a rug. While the installation is fragmented, it holds onto the jagged parts that remain, to reassemble something that's being torn apart by outside forces. A line in Arabic affirms "the land is free", a multiplicit meaning that insists on the sovereignty of Dana's homelands, as well as encapsulating the earth as bountiful. In *Spirit Weave* the face of a girl emerges from the patterns of a rug. Innocent and hopeful, her bright eyes level our gaze, inviting us into her world. In contrast to the fracturing of *Shattered Freedom*, the edges of *Spirit Weave* have been sewn back together in an act of care to remedy the ruptures.

Chatchakonrak Promchan's *Li Phay quilt* incorporates a patchwork of faces drawn from the artist's research into and re-interpretation of various news stories of refugees, as a reflection of her own lived experience. Initially training as a fashion designer, Chatchakonrak learnt machine sewing skills since coming to so-called Australia and now works in ethical clothing manufacturing. Through an extended period of machine and hand sewing and fabric dyeing, Chatchakonrak utilises the tools of her trade to create a collage of portraits, giving life and surface to people seeking asylum.

Ming-yueh Tsai similarly invokes the use of whatever tools we have at hand in his artwork *25CM LINE GUA-SHA ON 3 FRIENDS ON SCREEN*. In the video, the artist instructs three friends over Zoom on how to perform gua sha on themselves using household objects. While gua sha has become somewhat of a beauty trend recently in the Western world, it has been practised by East Asian cultures for generations to move energy, stimulate circulation and promote healing. Gua sha literally translates

to “scrape sand”, referring to the scraping process which results in temporary red blotches. The blotching is a residue of the procedure that reveals the body’s health and is a necessary visceral phase in the cycle of renewal and healing. Ming-yueh adapts this traditional remedy for a new context by sharing the process online; an old healing practice made anew via the digital. The work reminds us that healing is not a perfect process, but often, relying on makeshift solutions to configure something that feels right in the body.

The exploration of the body and collective healing is further explored in Vishal Kumaraswamy’s multi-channel video work, ಇರವು *Iruvu (Presence)*. Drawing solidarities between Black and Dalit struggles and liberation, the work features a performer moving through spaces, overlaid with audio containing dialogues, critical theories; ruminating between the infrastructures of caste and race. The work demonstrates that, as bearers of trauma, we have the power to adapt the temporary vessels of our bodies, so we may soften the impact of choppy waters ahead. Movement is a way to shift, awaken, and relocate trauma that can reside within the body. Meanwhile, the audio text encourages us to rewire our thoughts through hearing and digesting new perspectives and experiences. The liberation of the body opens up a liberation of the soul; the liberation of language opens up a liberation of the mind. The work invites us to reimagine an emancipated future “in dimensions beyond [our] comprehension”.

As commitments to healing and acts of resistance, the artists in this exhibition attempt to remedy broken systems, bodies, spirits, relationships and timelines. While each responds to particular contexts, stitched together they offer medicines for collective struggle and liberation.

### 1. Jasmine Craciun

*From their Hands to Mine, 2024*

stoneware, glaze, gold lustre

dimensions variable

In my work *From their Hands to Mine*, I explore the relativity of value, particularly in the context of land and cultural preservation.

The idea for this work was conceived during my time on my grandmothers country in Tibooburra, where I was involved in the relocation of ancestral artefacts to make way for planned roadwork. The artefacts told us stories of the landscape and gave us a small glimpse into the lives my ancestors lived there. I photographed and videoed the artefacts, trying to capture the feeling of meeting each one. Our roles relocating artefacts were ultimately idle, we know the digger came through in the following weeks and likely destroyed countless others below the surface of the sand.

The gold lustre reflects the current gold mining projects occurring in Tibooburra as well as a reference to western value systems. The gold is a scream from these relics to be seen, to be held and to be valued, as they should. Hiding within the metrics of capitalism are they more worthy of preservation?

Bearing witness to what feels like inevitable developments, I feel an innate

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sense of responsibility to my ancestors who created the original inspiration for these objects. The memory of those makers live within the process of shaping each artefact as does the healing of my own loss.

## **2. Jacqueline Olivetti**

*Park Pharmacy, 2019*

Found object

51 x 14 x 246 cm

Instead of writing this, was out weeding. A reprieve, relief from continuous encroachment. Found object. A sign statement. Independent Chemist was closing. Opposite the park, in Glebe. Park, as verb. To still, to pause. Park as Pharmacy.

## **3. Tom Isaacs**

*Emergency Blankets, 2022*

mixed media, incl. mylar, felt, hessian, recycle clothing, thread

135 x 185 cm

Beginning in 2021, with support from the NSW Government through CreateNSW, I developed a series of textile works for, *Carnivale Catastrophe*, curated by Dr Fiona Davies and presented by Modern Art Projects Blue Mountains at Cementa22 in Kandos. Collectively titled *Emergency Blankets*, these works highlight the importance of care as a response to crisis, whether natural disasters, economic hardship, or mental illness.

The works in this series are made from recycled materials--hessian sacking and wool suits from my late grandfather's estate and leftover felt from my art practice--and backed with Mylar--a reflective material which can be used to treat people suffering from hypothermia or shock, and also to signal for help. The *Emergency Blankets* are based on traditional Australian waggas--quilts or blankets traditionally made from low-cost and recycled materials, particularly during times of financial hardship such as the Depression. There is a tradition of Waggas being made by community groups such as the Red Cross, the CWA and St Vincent de Paul to aid the needy. During the development of this project, I made a number of visits to Kandos to meet with members of Nannas Haberdashery, a local charity, and to spend time with the Kandos & Rylstone craft group. These visits impressed upon me the power and importance of community support as a form of care.

#### 4. Sehej Kaur Sehmbhi

*Kisan di Kirat, Kirat da suad, 2022-24*

single channel video 9:45 min

table, white cloth, kettle, tea cups, loose leaf tea

Sehej Kaur's work *Kisan di Kirat, Kirat da suad* (the farmours labour, the taste of labour) forms as a diasporic response to India's farmers protests that began at the start of the pandemic and re-ignited in 2024. In the recorded performance piece, Sehej revisits the familiar grounds of Parramatta Park, a place of passageway between childhood and adult worlds, where she first witnessed the grounds as a gathering place for brown families.

Barefoot and cross-legged, Sehej reflects the stance of the thousands of farmers who formed blockades on the streets before Delhi and participates in a stripped and tedious process of chai preparation. As the familiarised gesture loses its domesticity, Sehej creates a reminder of her Punjabi lineage and transforms acts of ritual and routine into one rooted in solidarity.

In 2024, the interconnected struggles for liberation between a Punjabi and Palestinian has never rung clearer. As police brutality begins to mirror Israeli tactics and weeks of blockade and encampments resound for both the farmers and Palestinians, reminders of the steadfast nature existing amongst both peoples informs this 2024 iteration. Whilst conducting serving tea as an act of seva (a core sikh value, translating to selfless service), Sehej invites viewers to sip chai in resistance, remembrance and solidarity.

#### 5. Lourdes David

*And crawling on the planet's face, some insects called the human race, 2023*

black clay rust base, oxide patina

dimensions variable

My sculptures resemble man-made objects that are destroyed by either nature or man. My work communicates ideas about the explosive nature of the human race to cause destruction amongst each other. I decided to use black clay to create medium-scale pipes with add-ons to symbolise man-made objects intertwined with nature to convey the reciprocal relationship between the two of destruction. My work relates to issues connected with war and through my work, especially as an Australian, I allude to the destruction that man has had on the environment and its people. Coming from a family who came to Australia due to war in my home country, I was determined to create a piece that spoke to this issue but related with the audience. The rust medium utilised in all my works symbolises how the human race ironically rely on the natural environment despite destroying it and leaving footprints among the planet.

## 6. Dana Albatrawi

*Shattered freedom*, 2023-24

rug, acrylic, oil, canvas, 3D printing

dimensions variable

126 x 122 cm

This artwork, titled *Shattered Freedom*, is a powerful mixed-media piece that uses a torn rug as its primary medium. Portions of the rug are mounted on canvas panels, while other fragments hang independently. The work features 3D-printed Arabic phrases that convey messages of resilience and hope:

الأرض حرة (The land is free)

سأقاوم حتى تعود الأرض حرة (I will resist until the land is free again)

الحرية من البحر إلى النهر (Freedom from the river to the sea)

سلام (Peace)

المقاومة أعمق أشكال الحب (Resistance is the deepest form of love)

*Shattered Freedom* narrates the enduring struggle of Gaza, a region that has faced continuous wars, destruction, and blockades over many years. Despite the repeated devastation, the city's residents persist in rebuilding from the ashes and rubble left behind by conflict. Each cycle of destruction and renewal is a testament to their unwavering claim to their homeland and their right to peace and a dignified life.

## 7. Ming-Yueh Tsai

*25CM LINE GUA-SHA ON 3 FRIENDS ON SCREEN*, 2023

desk, lamp, laptop, single channel video

4:24 min

The workshop on "Gua Sha" (scraping therapy) evolved during the pandemic. Hosted on an online video system, it involved sharing personal experiences with Gua Sha, allowing participants on the other end of the screen to search for similar bodily sensations. Ultimately, three participants combined their scraping results to form a Gua Sha line that was 25 cm long on my screen. Through the "Gua Sha" practice, which requires two individuals to complete, this project discusses the communication patterns established by "video conferencing" in contemporary life. I edited the process of one of the workshops, transforming my descriptions of the bodily sensations brought by Gua Sha, the participants' reactions to Gua Sha, and the marks left on the body by Gua Sha into a "video message".

Workshop participants: Zech Lee (甄聃欽), Shih Yi Feng (饒蕪銀), Lawrence Kuo (崑緯那)

**8. Chatchakonrak Promchan***Li Phay Quilt, 2023*

hand and machine stitched thread, patchwork fabric, indian ink, blanket stitch with raffia, unprocessed natural calico  
170cm x 170cm

I started working on the quilt from December 2022 - June 2023. I draw with thread in place of a pen or brush. I create artworks which combine hand and machine stitching, patchwork and painted elements. I have layered faces of men, women and children creating a highly textured, three-dimensional work on cloth.

Textile paint and Indian ink is applied with brushes after stitching is completed. The edge of the quilt is embellished with a blanket stitch using Raffia. The reverse side of the quilt conveys a reductive duplicate of the portraits and the stitched detailing.

The "Li Phay" quilt is embellished with stories drawn from the daily news about the experience of refugees, which is my story also. I researched portrait photography online, connecting with the faces of refugees. I can imagine their stories through their eyes and the facial expressions.

**9. Vishal Kumaraswamy***ಇರವು Iruvu (Presence), 2022*

multi-channel video

14:33 min

Text: Suriya Balakrishnan

Performers: Tyrone Isaac Stuart, Vishal Kumaraswamy

Camera / Producer: John Antony Thadicaran

Location: Samantha Harvey

Sound Design: Rahul Giri (\_RHL)

*ಇರವು Iruvu (Presence)* is a multi-channel video examining the hyperreal viability of the subaltern body, within broader themes of Caste and Race.

Using the metaphor of a never-ending voyage, the work references histories of geographic and social migration, examining the conditions of sites of physical and digital commons. The work doubles as a search (and interrupted conclusion) for a surface of projection, upon which the aligning, orienting, assimilating impulses of caste, capital and state are lost, and an un-intercepted affect can begin to exist, where unforeseen bodies then become emergent. Over the course of four brief acts, *ಇರವು* shifts between numerous images of the subaltern male body, captured through traditional and volumetric film-making processes. It imagines uncontested environments where a collective assertion of presence can precipitate.

P A R I

REMEDY

30.06.2024  
– 25.08.2024

DANA ALBATRAWI, JASMINE CRACIUN, LOURDES DAVID, TOM ISAACS, VISHAL KUMARASWAMY, JACQUELINE OLIVETTI, CHATCHAKONRAK PROMCHAN, SEHEJ KAUR SEHMBHI AND MING-YUEH TSAI

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**10. Dana Albatrawi**

*Spirit Weave*, 2023-24

carpet, acrylic, oil, threads

60 x 90 cm

This artwork, titled, *Spirit Weave*, is a striking piece that features the painted and embroidered image of a girl's face intertwined with the fabric of a rug. The use of acrylic paint and thread embroidery on the rug, set against a golden background, symbolizes the enduring nature of identity. No matter where one lives, the threads of heritage passed down from ancestors remain a clear and defining part of one's soul. These threads are what inspire each spirit to one day return to its homeland.

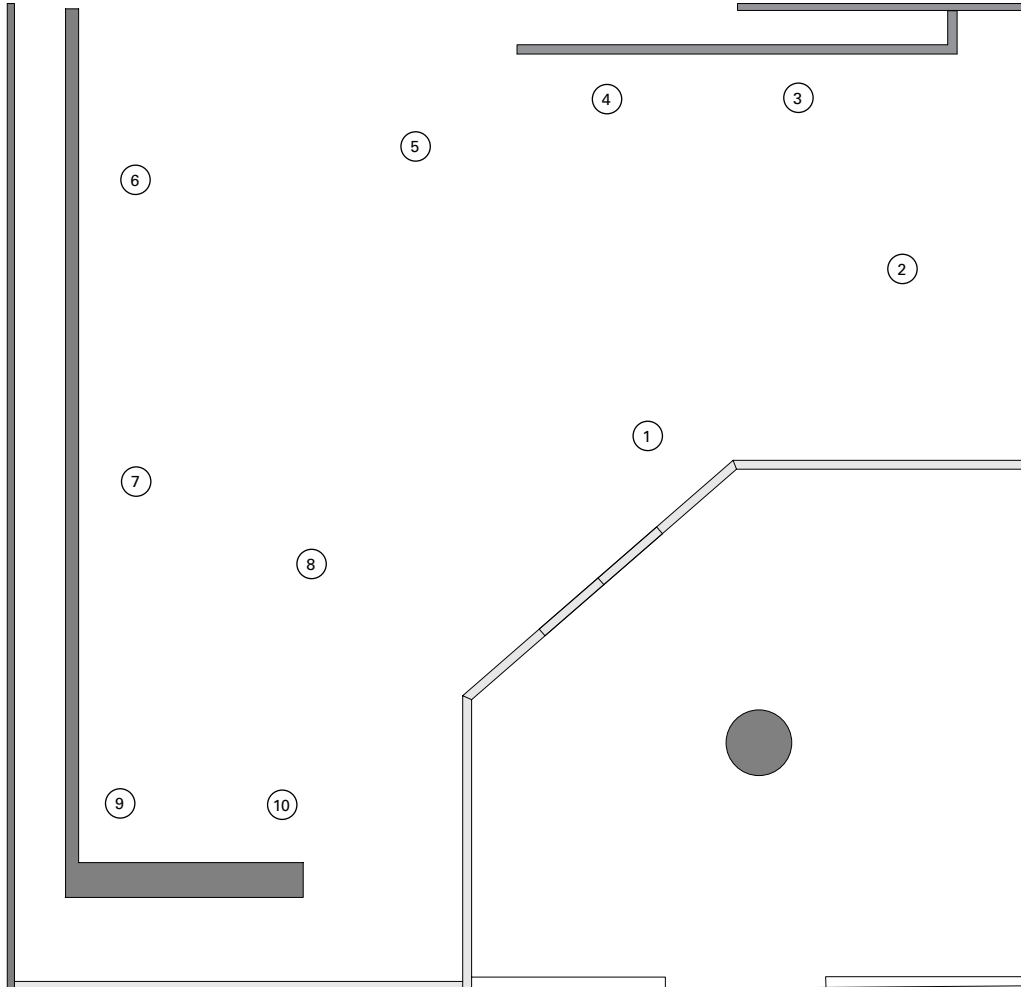
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- 1 Jasmine Craciun
- 2 Jacqueline Olivetti
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