

# firstdraft

Gallery 1

6 April - 19 May

## Unruly Edges

Ellen Dahl, Emma Pinsent, Eduardo Wolfe-Alegria

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*Unruly Edges* brings together the works of three seemingly disparate artists whose works are connected through notions of boundaries, edges and postnatural intersections. Emma Pinsent's site-responsive works transform encounters with porosity within the intertidal zone, informed by situated fieldwork and walking within Arakwal beaches in the Northern Rivers NSW. Sculptural experiments engaged on and off-site, aim to reveal fraught entanglements between colonial legacies of extraction, property, ecology, weather and waste. Ellen Dahl explores the expanded field of the photographic medium to creatively engage with overlapping and ambiguous concepts like the Anthropocene, the edge, time and geological imaginations. Eduardo Wolfe-Alegria's anthropomorphic sculptures and paintings merge human and non-human, imagined and real, to create bucolic fantasies underpinned by narratives of ecological dissonance.

In *Unruly Edges*, these artists have collaborated to create an imagined ecotone or contact zone, formed as the boundaries of their works dissolve and entangle, initiating new dialogues between their works in order to draw out previously unexplored or emergent ideas in their practices. The works are visually connected through a bluish light, casting the gallery space in a "strange iridescence" evoking connections to water, the subterranean and the geological as well as to "unnatural" colours of plastics, mining and other synthetic materials. By establishing a porous zone – where art practices, materials and conceptual ecological thinking blend, the artists reference Jeffery Jerome Cohen's eco-theoretical concept of Prismatic Ecology. It argues that creating a green exclusivism (or focus on what we consider 'precious' or 'pristine' environments) ignores the aesthetic potency of nature's polychromatic diversity, and in turn undermines its full potential to inform our cognitive, aesthetic and imaginative experiences. This tendency to lump ecologies together as 'green', Cohen argues creates limitations for aesthetic understanding of ecology beyond the nature/culture binary.

*Unruly Edges* sets out to destabilise this binary, incorporating a polychromatic framework, arguing that an expanded and reimagined aesthetic approach is needed to contend with an increasingly complex and uncertain ecological future.

Gallery 2  
**Class S2**  
Firstdraft

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**gadigal land**  
**13–17 riley street**  
**woolloomooloo**  
**nsw 2011**  
**+61 2 8970 2999**  
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Gallery 3  
**Kate Coyne**  
Why is my age so important?

Gallery 4  
**Ali Noble**  
Cubbyhouse (Nothing is certain, said the curtain)

**we acknowledge and pay respect to the gadigal people of the eora nation, the traditional owners of the land on which firstdraft is built and operates.**

firstdraft is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW; and assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.



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**Ellen Dahl** is originally from arctic Norway and of Sámi descent. Ellen moved to Australia as an adult and now lives and works on Gadigal land (Sydney) NSW. Working across photography, video, sound and installation, much of her practice is rooted in working with or around the landscape, while conceptually informed by trepidation on around the anthropogenic condition. She has an ongoing interest in the photographic medium's intrinsic involvement in how we see and feel about the world around us and its potential to engage new conditions for assembling ecological meaning and geological imagination.

Ellen has exhibited extensively throughout Australia, including Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne; Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney; National Portrait Gallery, Canberra; ANU Gallery, Canberra; Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, and Verge Gallery, Sydney. She is the winner of MAMA National Photography Prize (2024), and has been finalist in The Fauvette Loureiro Memorial Scholarship (2021), HIDDEN sculpture Award (2022), The Josephine Ulrick & Winn Schubert Photographic Award (2022), Hazelhurst Works on Paper (2021), and won the judges Commendation prize in the Contemporary Landscapes in Photography award (CLIP) in 2017. Ellen received an MFA (research) from Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney and is currently completing her PhD at School of Creative Arts, University of Tasmania.

**Emma Pinsent** is an artist, researcher and arts administrator based between unceded Arakwal, Gadigal-Bidjigal and Darkinjung lands. Her practice engages sculptural and installation processes to explore porosity between humans and nonhuman nature. She is interested in re-configuring encounters with her local environment to reveal complex interdependencies within place. In 2019 she completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) at UNSW: Art & Design, and in 2022 began a PhD (Art & Design) at the same institution supported by the Australian Government RTP Scholarship. She has exhibited across Sydney and in Brisbane, Tasmania, and Canberra in both commercial and ARI spaces and has been a finalist in a number of awards

**Eduardo Wolfe-Alegria** interprets his memories and encounters through a lens of surrealism, drawing from tropes of mythology and fantasy to create imagery that is at once anthropomorphic, metamorphic and psychedelic. Laced with a distinctly queer sense of camp and humour, his work seeks to remind us of our connection to the more than human world, its seen and unseen forces, proposing enchantment as a means through which to enrich our lived experience. Wolfe-Alegria

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currently lives and works on Gadigal land, Sydney.

He completed an MFA at Sydney College of the Arts in 2014 and has exhibited in numerous group exhibitions and prizes around Australia, as well as solo shows including Opening Ceremony at Passage Gallery, Sydney. His work was recently curated into the survey show Painting Now at Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney and he has a solo show scheduled later in 2024 at OIGALL PROJECTS, Melbourne. His work is held in private collections nationally and internationally. He also teaches at the School of Design, University of Technology, Sydney.

### Artworks (clockwise from left, and top to bottom)

Eduardo Wolfe Alegria

*Mother*, 2024

digitally printed PLA filament, acrylic, epoxy, resin, fabric

214 cm x 89 cm x 87 cm

Eduardo Wolfe Alegria

*Spawn*, 2024

digitally printed PLA filament, acrylic, epoxy, resin, fabric

79 cm x 50 cm x 42.5 cm

Emma Pinsent

*infill (movements)*, 2024

14 plaster casts of hole in the sand within Arakwal beaches, oxide, seawater dimensions variable

Emma Pinsent

*tailings*, 2024

9 nickel bronze castings, sea glass dimensions variable

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Emma Pinsent's works have been developed in consultation with Arakwal Traditional Owners and on-site within Arakwal beaches

Emma Pinsent

*hiding power*, 2024

salvaged float glass

170 cm x 8 cm

Ellen Dahl

*The Edge (detail)*, 2024

archival sublimation print on fabric  
255 cm x 170 cm

Ellen Dahl

*In the Balance*, 2024

eco solvent pigment print on cotton rag, custom frame

30 cm x 22 cm

Ellen Dahl

*Flow*, 2024

single channel 4k video with sound  
6 minutes

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