

# MAVA PATHFINDERS: ARTEFACTS OF THE WORKING PROCESS

## JAMES BARTH

### 1. Silkscreens for paintings

These silkscreens were used to produce *Heap*, featured in the exhibition *Embodied Knowledge* at QAGOMA in 2022. The image depicts a compost heap sprawled on a tarp with many objects that typically shouldn't be in the compost, such as plastic and whole fruit.

**2. Digital avatar:** These images depict the digital avatar I designed in Blender that I use in my paintings and digital animations. Please note the articulation of the hands, the terrifying face texture and the noticeable lack of eyebrows. During the MAVA Pathfinders' beginning, I was able to research, implement and reiterate this digital avatars' armature and body mesh to be compatible with full body and facial motion capture rigs.

**3. Performance capture:** These images of the dancing avatar represent a working example of using motion capture animation data (specifically from the Rokoko animation library) with the updated armature. During the MAVA Pathfinders program, I focused on acquiring funding to purchase a fullbody motion capture suit and begin collaboration with other practitioners, such as performers, choreographers and musicians. After a few attempts, I successfully received funding through the Arts Queensland showcase program. With the funding

I received, I will be collaborating with the performance company Studio1 and will be able to acquire a full performance capture suit. I am very excited :^)

**4. Sky dancers wind, gravity and movement:** These images depict a pair of digitally rendered inflatable sky dancers featured in the video work *EarthBound* by Gertrude Contemporary in Melbourne. When designing the sky dancers, I contemplated methods of generating movements or dances that could inform my exploration

into performance capture. This led me to use physics simulations to create characters. The sky dancers are animated cloth simulations with wind and gravity forces to influence their movements.

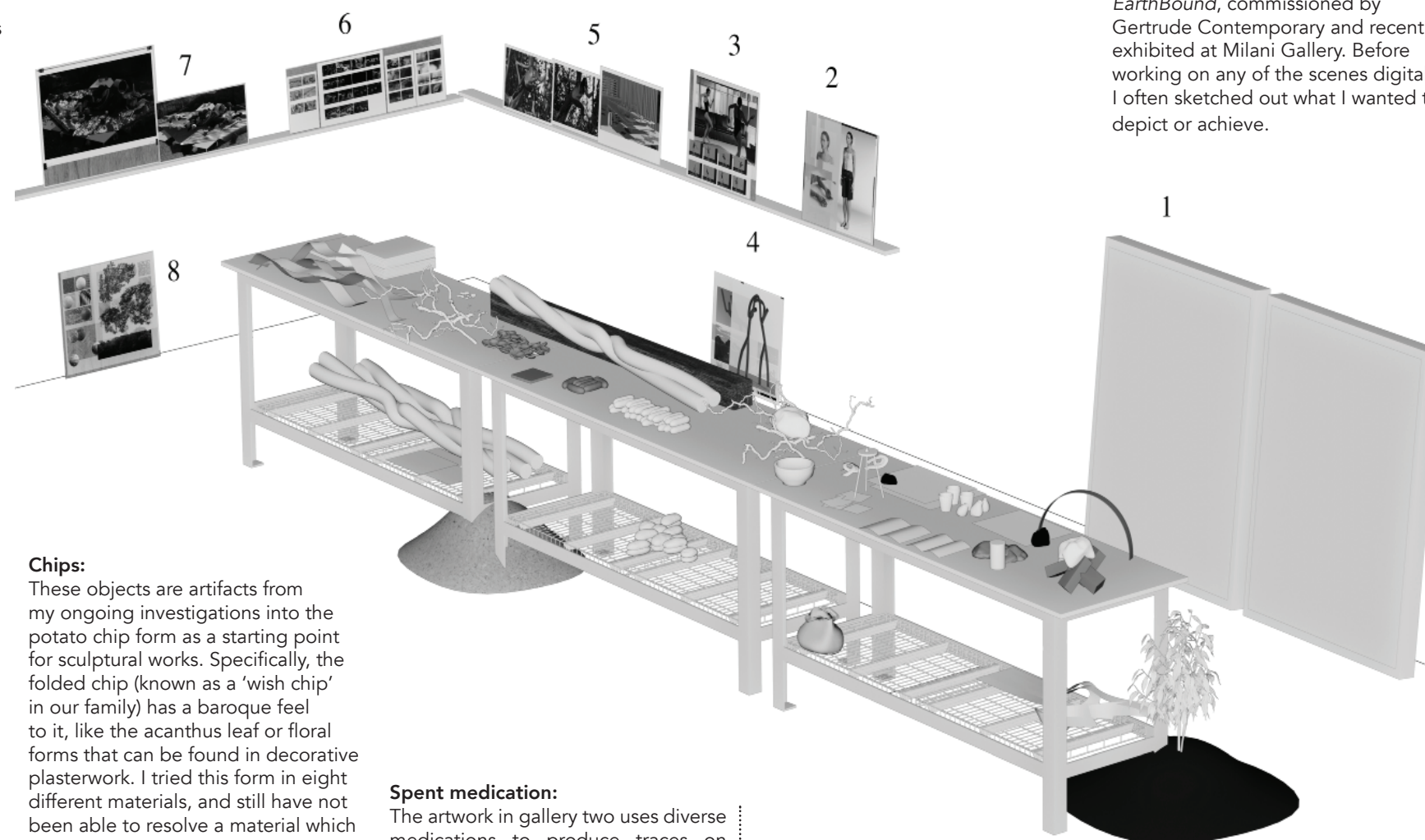
**5. Designing and rendering for paintings and video:** These examples show the drafted preliminary steps for creating paintings (left) and an un-rendered video still from *EarthBound* (right). The purpose behind showcasing these images is to highlight the digital components and assets that play a crucial role in the

paintings and the videos, shedding light on their interconnectedness within my practice. I was playing with a few of these puzzles with my daughter when I began thinking about them through the lens of my creative process. These puzzles generally portray cartoon bodies which come apart, and which we put back together again and again. The outside frames have become useful print blocks for my linen works, allowing me to reference the absent body, or a kind of formless vessel.

**6. Earthbound:** These storyboards were created during the video work *EarthBound*, commissioned by Gertrude Contemporary and recently exhibited at Milani Gallery. Before working on any of the scenes digitally, I often sketched out what I wanted to depict or achieve.

**7. Compost:** This image is a draft of the ongoing compost paintings I have been working on from the beginning of the MAVA program, it was specifically designed for the painting *Heap* (see the silkscreens at the front for context), but I reiterated on it to use within *EarthBound*. Compost, an ongoing subject of interest to me, acts as a site where identities break down, and meaning becomes lost. Still, the act of decomposing is a significant material change and renewal. Collecting digital assets for other projects usually ends up in one of these compost images.

**8. Materials and textures creating narrative, context and feeling:** These images show a very small collection of digital textures and materials I have used within my practice. Throughout this program, I have compiled textures and materials and contemplated the narrative and emotional potential present within material depictions. The tree shadow textures cast over a scene help to imply space or a world outside of the in-view camera. These were inspired by landscape painting, theatre, and video game techniques.



## ELIZABETH WILLING

### Puzzleboards:

I was playing with a few of these puzzles with my daughter when I began thinking about them through the lens of my creative process. These puzzles generally portray cartoon bodies which come apart, and which we put back together again and again. The outside frames have become useful print blocks for my linen works, allowing me to reference the absent body, or a kind of formless vessel.

### Ribbon:

When I first came across ribbon carvings in historical plasterwork, I felt immediately that I wanted to isolate it from its baroque context. The ribbon could for me be a form that retained the decorative, while also potentially representing the limp intestine, its folds and ripples. Of the many ways I have tried to explore this ribbon form this year, here I show two, carved in branches and in extruded polystyrene.

### Kipfler and Frankfurts:

This selection of moulds and casts represent a year of experimentation with the kipfler potato and Frankfurt sausage forms. Though I have made dozens of moulds, and hundreds of casts I have yet to consolidate these objects into any kind of artwork. These two food items speak to perceptions of class, and technological food processing.

### Chips:

These objects are artifacts from my ongoing investigations into the potato chip form as a starting point for sculptural works. Specifically, the folded chip (known as a 'wish chip' in our family) has a baroque feel to it, like the acanthus leaf or floral forms that can be found in decorative plasterwork. I tried this form in eight different materials, and still have not been able to resolve a material which speaks in the way I want it to.

### Gates:

These items are cast-offs and studies for a large-scale timber sculpture created over the past year. The sculpture takes as its starting point modular cattle gates used to contain and direct livestock, an industrial form which I have rendered soft and intestinal. In the development of this artwork I first carved the sculpture to scale in extruded polystyrene, followed by carving in recycled hardwood, but I envision many iterations of this gate cast in aluminium and set in public spaces.

### Spent medication:

The artwork in gallery two uses diverse medications to produce traces on black cardboard. I began collecting some of the used medication a few months ago because I liked how the semi-dissolved pills revealed their internal textures – but they are really just discards from the image making process.

## CAITLIN FRANZMANN

### Materials of place:

My processes of responding to place involve walking, smelling, deep listening and collecting discarded materials. I work with these found materials in an attempt to translate ideas and stories connected to the environments I'm engaging with. Transformation continues in the studio and gallery, as mushrooms and plants grow in amorphous glass vessels hand blown by artist Jarred Wright.

### Rust:

A clump of rusted condensed milk tin found during my residency with The Condensery: Somerset Regional Art Gallery. Iron, oxygen and water, the main compounds of rust, play important roles in many geological and biological processes, including those that keep plants, fungi and humans alive. I've experimented dissolving this material in vinegar to create a stain, visible on the timber arc and lantana root displayed here.

### Gift of Scent:

Ensayos is a collective research program founded by Camila Marambio with 'pods' located in Chile, New York, Norway and Australia. Our most recent work is dedicated to policy, care, and awareness of the ecosystem and cultural importance of peatlands through creating posters, podcasts, poetry, performance and scent. Our local pod includes Sonja Carmichael, Freja Carmichael, Leecee Carmichael, Jasper Coleman and Renee Rossini. Together we have made incense, ceramic vessels and scented cards in response to the unique subtropical fens of Minjerribah and to the revival and strength of Quandamooka people's cultural practices and ongoing care of Country. Follow the QR code for further information.

### Publications:

- Text co-written with dancer Amaara Raheem for un-magazine 16.2 edited by Hilary Thurlow and D Harding  
- Ensayos 'olfactory offering' in collaboration with agustine zegers (layout design), Christy Gast, Denise Milstein, Karolin Tampere, Randi Nygård, Simon Daniel Tegnander Wenzel for Turba Tol Hol-Hol the book, edited by Carla Macchiavello and Camila Marambio.

### Mutual Making:

I've been collaborating with artist/naturopath Dhana Merritt since 2017 to host plant inspired events that include guided activities and conceptual refreshments using ingredients such as blue-green algae, hibiscus flowers and dandelion root. For the MAVA open studio we offered an uplifting refreshment 'hi-voltage' in bespoke ceramic vessels by artist Tyza Hart. The vessels carry impressions of the Norman Park building, a former electrical substation now transformed by Metro

Arts into a space for generating and transmitting creative energy.

### Snake skin:

I've been gifted the lifetime sheds of a pet python, Tommy. Snake skin sheds consist mostly of keratin - dead cells that are also present in human skin, hair and nails. Ongoing studio experiments have involved washing, sculpting and grinding the sheds whilst contemplating the material's protective and growth enabling properties.

### Experiences:

I've been developing arts and ecology based experiences as an offering through community groups, schools, universities and art institutions. This drawing was created by Yejin Jung and Sara Guilbert, participants of a workshop I facilitated titled 'drawing stories from old stones'. Landscape architect, Christoph Pester shared his petrified plant collection and participants were invited to create collaborative drawings whilst considering the ancient stories of earth revealed in each fossil's cellular patterns.

### Knots and whorls:

'Tell a story about your ancestry' was a question that initiated a series of serendipitous encounters on Gubbi Gubbi/Kabi Kabi country, where my Danish ancestors worked as timber-getters and millers. Hoop Pine is a native timber, valued by the timber industry for its smooth grain. In contrast, I've been heat bending hoop pine veneer (waste from a plywood factory) to honor the visible traces of relational healing and growth in knots and whorls. This ongoing research and experimentation has been supported by the University of Sunshine Coast MISTRA Artist in Residence Program.

## MAVA PATHFINDERS: ARTEFACTS OF THE WORKING PROCESS

Metro Arts, 24 June - 15 July 2023

The MAVA Pathfinders program supported three Queensland, mid-career visual artists to explore entrepreneurial opportunities and harness their potential to build sustainable careers. Based at the MAVA Substation, the program involved a 12-month paid residency for each of the three artists, studio space, materials budget, and professional development opportunities.

At the close of their residency, MAVA Pathfinder Artists, Caitlin Franzmann, Elizabeth Willing and James Barth share developments and learnings from their time in the MAVA studio..

# Metro Arts



Metro Arts is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body. Metro Arts is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

Metro Arts' Artist in Residence Program is proudly supported by Brisbane City Council. Norman Park Substation No. 9 is assisted by Brisbane City Council. Metro Arts Visual Arts (MAVA) Substation is supported by Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund – an Australian Government initiative.

Metro Arts acknowledges UAP as Project Industry Partner of the MAVA Pathfinders Program.

The artists would like to thank Jo Thomas, Jenna Green, Annelize Mulder, Genevieve Trace, Kyle Weise and Daniel Clifford.