



PARALLEL PARK

A selection of videos from 2015 - 2019.
Presented as part of Loop at
Metro Arts, with love.

Metro Arts' Epson Lumen Room
14 February 2020

Metro Arts,
with love

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Deuce (2016) | *Into Another* (2018) | *Mission Surge* (2018) |
Groundwork (2019) | *Outgrowth* (2019)

When you are committed to something, it's important to periodically assess how it's going, and where you stand in relation to it. Taking stock of a project, relationship or circumstance to reflect on how things may or may not have changed is an essential part of working towards any outcome effectively.

Time can be deceptive, its arbitrary intervals just another metric and also the very real duration of ones' lived experience. Five years. So much can happen, change, in five years. That's 60 months, 1825 days. When you've been working on something for five years, you have a lot of material to reflect on.

Parallel Park has been making art for five years. Holly Bates and Tay Haggarty began collaborating in 2015, in their final year of art school. Their collaboration was conceived and born amidst the tangle of their own separate art practices, and their romantic partnership. While themes of sexuality and gender are at the heart of both Bates' and Haggarty's own practices, their work as Parallel Park takes their multifaceted and evolving relationship as its departure point.

Creating works that contemplate the specific intricacies of navigating a long-term queer relationship together, and through distinct stages, Parallel Park work across and between sculpture, installation, moving image and performance. For Metro Arts Loop video programme, they present a selection of five works spanning their collaboration thus far. It is a good opportunity to reflect on the shift and growth in their practice since it began, and consider how it will continue to develop into the future.

First, lets consider the difference and sameness between those terms, shift and growth. Both imply movement, progress, and change. However there is a distinct additive connotation to growth, and directional quality to shift. In trying to discuss how Parallel Park's practice has shifted and grown over time, we need to accept that growth does not need to be cumulative, and shift does not need to be linear; the idea of growth as shift forms the basis of the reflections to follow.

Deuce (2016) is the earliest work screening, and the evocatively titled *Outgrowth*

(2019) the most recent, with *Into Another* (2018), *Mission Surge* (2018) and *Groundwork* (2019) bridging the chronological gap between. The increased technical and conceptual sophistication over time is obvious, and unsurprising as their artistic sensibilities developed. The role of humour, employed so readily in their earlier works, gives way to the seriousness that defines the latter works. Not to imply that humour and seriousness are mutually exclusive; both are present in all five works, however a distinct tipping of the scales occurs in terms of their equilibrium.

The selection consciously chronicles the evolution of the artists' relationship and collaboration; the smitten energy of attraction in *Deuce*, the laborious navigational journey of *Mission Surge*, and the tender acceptance of moving on depicted in *Outgrowth*. Each work stands alone, either created for a specific exhibition or made in resolution of an idea, but curated together the compilation reveals a gradation (shift) in complexity (growth), favouring metaphor over analogy.

Despite the developments, certain themes remain persistent across all of the works – synchronicity, endurance, reliance, love. It is no coincidence that these are also among the essential ingredients for resilient relationships, and their deepening over time and through transition is evident in the series of works. Furthermore, these themes are particularly resonant within the context the screening is presented.

The *Loop* programme forms part of the *Metro Arts, with Love* festival, which celebrates the 40 years the organisation has inhabited their heritage-listed building at 109 Edward Street, Brisbane. *Loop* is the last-hurrah for the iconic basement cinema, before the organisation relocates to a new premises. A lot of important moments for artists and audiences alike have occurred at 109 Edward St, and like so many others, Parallel Park have been fortunate to benefit from the existence of such a welcoming and inclusive space.

It is deeply fitting that Parallel Park's *Loop* screening deals with the joy of knowing someone, the labour of creating with them, and the pain of letting them go. This is not the end for either Parallel Park or Metro Arts – both will continue on, adapting to their new circumstances, working through change as it comes. Each will be all the stronger for it.

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Find us on Facebook and Instagram

Metro Arts and the artist acknowledge the Jagera and Turrbal peoples, as the custodians of this land, recognising their connection to land, waters and community. We honour the story-telling and art-making at the heart of First Nation's cultures, and the enrichment it gives to the lives of all Australians.

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