

**Ben Speth** was born in 1963 in Bend, Oregon, USA. and now lives and works in Melbourne, Australia. Speth worked as a painter, cinematographer and filmmaker in NYC before moving to Melbourne in 2000. His first feature film, *dresden* (1999) was licensed by the Showtime Network and was shown at the Sundance, Belfort, Mar del Plata, New York Underground and Brisbane Film Festivals, among others. In 2002 Speth was commissioned by the Australian Centre for the Moving Image to make a silent work entitled *dummy*. His second feature film, *Forever*, was part of the ACMI/NGV show *2004: A Survey of Recent Australian Visual Culture*. Speth's most recent works include two drama/documentaries: *Forever* (2004) and *Satellite* (2005) which screened at the Melbourne International Film Festival. He continues to work with artists, architects, designers, dance and theatre companies and most recently has begun writing and directing plays. His play *Make Me Cry* was performed at Forty Five Downstairs, Melbourne in 2007. Speth was involved in the original documentation of the Swiss House and site for *The Avoca Project* and returns to document each development of the project as a video work.

**Gosia Wlodarczak** was born in Poland in 1959, completed an MA of Fine Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts, Poznan, Poland and settled in Australia in 1996. Wlodarczak has exhibited widely in Poland, the US and Australia. In 2005 she moved to Melbourne where she now lives and works. Wlodarczak has held more than 25 solo exhibitions, including at The Drawing Centre of New York. Wlodarczak has been a finalist three times for the Dobell Drawing Prize at the Art Gallery of NSW and has received several grants and awards, most recent being a New Work grant from the Australia Council in 2006. In 2004, an extensive survey of her work, *NOW: Gosia Wlodarczak Drawing 1986-2004* was written by David Bromfield (2004, Brown Art). Exhibitions in 2008 include *Shared Space, New York*, Kentler International Drawing Space, Brooklyn, NY. USA; *Safety Zone Shared*, OFFicyna Place of Art Gallery, Szczecin, Poland; *Cinderella II – The Dreamer*, SASA Gallery, University of SA, Adelaide and Arc One Gallery, Melbourne; *Entropy* (touring exhibition), Consulate General of the Republic of Poland, New York, USA; *Multiplex*, Boutwell Draper Gallery, Sydney, the Fremantle Print Award, Fremantle Art Centre, WA; *New Social Commentary '08*, Warrnambool Regional Gallery, Victoria and the *Robert Jacks Drawing Prize '08*, Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria, Australia. Wlodarczak is represented through the Drawing Centre of New York Viewing Program, New York, USA and in Australia by ARC One Gallery, Melbourne.

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**Nigel Frayne** is an Acoustic Designer and Soundscape Composer with a background as a rock musician, sound engineer, theatre sound designer and graduate in composition and music technology from Latrobe University. His expertise in acoustic design and electroacoustic soundscaping encompasses a unique blend of design and technical skills developed through broad experience. Frayne is director of his Melbourne based company, Resonant Designs and has traveled throughout the USA, Europe and Asia as a senior designer for sound and electroacoustic soundscaping, projects have included zoos, museums, aquariums, science and exhibition centres, shopping and arts and leisure precincts. He has received research and travel grants from the Australia Council and has presented at the Sound Design Symposium in Paris (2004), Acoustic Ecology conferences in Japan, Portugal, U.K. and Canada, the Dis Positionen symposium at the Academy of the Arts, Berlin and the 6th International Radio Biennial, Mexico. Resonant Designs was selected by RMIT University to join its exhibition *Hot Spots* at the 2004 Architecture Biennale in Beijing.

**Aldo Iacobelli** has exhibited extensively and was included in the 2003 issue of the London based art journal *Contemporary* (special issue on 21 painters). In 2006 he exhibited in parallel lives: Australian Painting Today, curated by Victoria Lynn for the inaugural TarraWarra Biennial, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Victoria. Iacobelli has recently been the subject of a Wakefield Press monograph by art critic John Neylon titled *I love painting. Transient Architectures*, 2006 – an installation work that includes painting and ceramic objects– was recently acquired by Museo de Bellas Artes de Santander. Iacobelli's works are also in the collections of the Art Gallery of South Australia, the National Gallery of Australia (Canberra), and the Alava Museum (Vitoria, Spain). Aldo Iacobelli is represented by Valencia-based Galleria Tomas March who showed his work at Arco 07 Madrid. Iacobelli's most recent solo exhibitions were with Galeria Manuel Ojeda, Las Palmas de Gran Canarias, Spain 2006, Galleria Sibony, Santander, Spain, 2007 and the Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide, curated by Linda Marie Walker, also in 2007.

**Antoni Jach** is a novelist and a painter. He is the author of the novel, *Napoleon's Double* (Giramondo) – a narrative enlisting history and philosophy for its own neo-baroque purposes. He is the author of *An Erratic History* (Brunswick Hills Press), a history of Australia in poetry, and two other novels: *The Weekly Card Game* (McPheeGribble/Penguin), a tragicomic study of quotidian repetition and *The Layers of the City* (Hodder Headline), a meditation on contemporary Paris, civilization and barbarism (which was shortlisted for The Age Book of the Year Award and was translated into Turkish as *Sehrin Katmanlari*). He is the author of *Miss Furr and Miss Skeene*, plays 1 & 2 and is the creator of a series of video pieces that use Still Life as the series title. He is the publisher at *Modern Writing Press*, is an advisory editor for *HEAT* literary magazine, and is a part-time lecturer in creative writing at RMIT University.

**Lyndal Jones** is an artist who focuses on context, place and empowerment through very long-term projects that initially utilised performance then concentrated on video installation. Throughout, her works have addressed the power of the experiential and the development of interactivity. Jones has been recognised for this work with an Australian Artists Creative Fellowship from the Australian Government (1993 – 1996) and selection to represent for Australia at the 2001 Venice Biennale. Jones currently works at the School of Creative Media at RMIT University as Associate Professor in Multimedia and Director of Research having completing her PhD in mid 2005 on the propositional nature of art research and use of the web to archive complex, time-based artworks. Jones has undertaken five major research projects since 1977- *The Avoca Project: Art, Place And Climate Change* [www.avocaproject.org](http://www.avocaproject.org) (2005 –2015); *Tears For What Was Done*– interactive video works on emotion (2003 - 2005); *From The Darwin Translations*, video installations, films, performances (1992 - 1998) examining Darwin's study of Sexual Selection; *The Prediction Pieces*; performances & slide installations (1981 - 1991) examining optimism and *At Home*, a solo performance series (1977 - 1980) that utilised domestic imagery to address the complexities of feminism. In all of these works she has engaged with artists and specialists from a wide range of disciplines, and has shown in major exhibitions throughout Australia and in Japan, China, Korea, Canada, Great Britain, France, The Netherlands, Germany and Italy. Lyndal Jones is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne.

**Mel Ogden's** practice for the past ten years has engaged with landscape spaces ranging from large acreage to small urban areas. It is commission based, often working with architects and is responsive to the diversity of people, skills and materials used. Ogden is currently involved in nine projects both in Victoria and Tasmania. In 2005 Ogden won seven design awards, including Overall Winner of the Idea05 (inside) Design Excellence Awards and two Royal Australian Institute of Architecture Awards in 2004, in conjunction with Multiplicity Architects, for a historic church conversion. Ogden has also designed the site for WestWyck, the first urban multi-house development to utilise sustainable practices for both conversion and new stock, continued work on her own project, *reverie* and, in collaboration with Lyndal Jones, has designed the site for *The Avoca Project* to simultaneously heighten the image of the house as 'foreign' in the landscape while making the site self-sustaining in terms of water.

**Longin Sarnecki** was born and educated in Poland where he studies both photography and medicine. In 1996 he settled in Perth and has exhibited his photographs regularly in both group and solo exhibitions. Sarnecki's work has been selected for numerous competitions including the Shell Fremantle Print Award, the Hutchins Art Prize in Hobart and the Bankwest Art Prize in Perth. He was the managing editor of *Saro* publishing house in Poznan, Poland, and as a freelance essayist and photographer his work has been published in several international magazines. Sarnecki has organized and led photographic expeditions around Africa, Asia and Europe. His latest project was to publish 320 photographs in the book *Now, Gosia Wlodarczak Drawing 1986–2004* by David Bromfield. Sarnecki is represented in the Australia Post Collection (Perth), the Holmes a Court Collection, the Singapore Lotteries Collection and in private collections.



## PROJECT SPACE/SPARE ROOM

### The Swiss House - From the series: Propositions for an uncertain future

NIGEL FRAYNE  
ALDO IACOBELLI  
LYNDAL JONES  
ANTONI JACH  
MEL OGDEN  
LONGIN SARNECKI  
BEN SPETH  
GOSIA WLODARCZAK

FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER – FRIDAY 31 OCTOBER

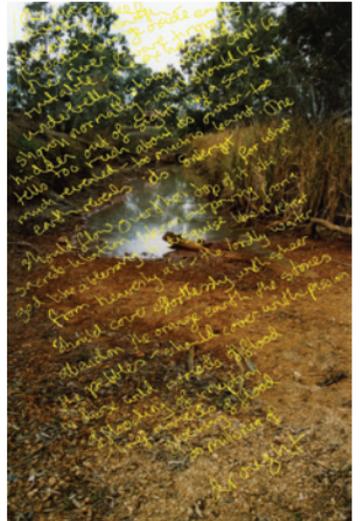
OPENING THURSDAY 9 OCTOBER 5-7PM

FLOOR TALK THURSDAY 30 OCTOBER 12-1PM





The Swiss House Avoca Project



Antoni Jach *Still River in the Numinous World*. 2008. A page from a book.

**The Swiss House - From the series: Propositions for an uncertain future**

This research project is developed through the *Sustainability Through Art, Media and Technology* Research Group at the School of Creative Media at RMIT University. Within this umbrella group, I lead *The Avoca Project: Art, Place and Climate Change* and Antoni Jach leads *The Future of the Book*.

**The Swiss House** as an exhibition began as a conversation between us about ways that both might carry out research on issues of sustainability at this house which is the central image and site of *The Avoca Project*. As a result, **The Swiss House** exhibition manifests our very different responses to the proposition that issues of 'place' are central in addressing climate change.

**The Swiss House** as proposition.

While *The Avoca Project* is based in Avoca in regional Victoria it is equally present internationally through its website [www.avocaproject.org](http://www.avocaproject.org). As a result, the project was one of 25 nominated internationally for the OISJ Prix Green for Environmental Art at the San Jose *Art on the Edge* Festival in 2008.

It is also present through a series of Propositions for an Uncertain Future; exhibitions developed elsewhere to provide connections between the research on art (in the broadest, most

interdisciplinary and hybrid sense of that term) and climate change being carried out in Avoca with that occurring in larger communities (in this case Melbourne). Central to this is the larger proposition that the Swiss House, indeed Avoca itself, might serve as a laboratory for engagement with climate change action through art at the local level.

**The Swiss House** as an exhibition becomes the 5th of component of *Propositions for an Uncertain Future*.

**Lyndal Jones**

08.12.2008. Sobota. Avoca (Central Victoria). Prąd słońca led. do Sarnecki; po abstrakcyjnym pokrowanie do podłogi; zabieg na „Grovers M.”; po łamku pół goła, drzewki na ulicy o 15:45; trawamiem łuki 48 o Bridge Rd; do Flinders St. Station; wjeżdża w kolejarni przy „NGV - A.”; o 15:58 S. Sinec zabiera nas do Avoca (177 km na pn. - zachód od Melbourne w „Central Goldfields”); po rejestracji w „Avoca Motel” pozostawiamy do podłogi na 3; ok.19:20 spacer do „Swiss House”; gospodarze ze znajomymi smaki kielbaszki; przyjazd gości; zrobim 25 zdjęć; a Gosia 3 (przełamano kawy w ciemności); ciasto kawa i herbata w restauracji przy drodze o 20:45; po 22-giej wróciliśmy do „Avoca M.”; o 23:45 zgasiłmy światła w pokoju.

Gosia wstała przed słońcem, by zafiksować do mamy do Sarnecki i poinformować ją, że nie będziecie drzewni jak zwykłe o 6:45 rano w sobotę, jako że nie będzie nas w domu o tej porze (dziś wczelniej próbowałem uzyć to samo, postarzałem wyutki po południu, wieczorem i w noc, ale bez skutku: na Monte Casino 11:7 na każdym razem niktogo nie zastanowi). Prowadziła przy tym w płacie wyjazd o 16:45 do Avoca i tu w związku z tym wykapłamy w dzień późnie, o 6:45 rano czasu południowego. Czuli po powrocie... Po abstrakcyjnym przygotowaniu się do podłogi. Chciał wypracować tyko na jedną noc, to niestety im celówtek starczy, tym więcej potrzeba dostrzegów do życia. Bez kremo do twarzy, mrydo do skóry ciała, chłodziłki tabliczek, zębnych, kłosek, mają poprawić kręgosłup w karkowym, odciążać do siły, pływać do zębów, szacowniki i pasty, stądnie nie można się tonar ruszyć (niektórzy z nich wzdrygali się już wczelniej, jak przybyli do pielęgnacji zębów). Ale chciałem mieć również przy sobie inne przybory - bardziej wypracować - jak cielecy spacer „Nikon D 700”, czy też kamery (tam drugi nie bardzo wiem dlaczego, skoro i tak nikt do mnie nie drzewni)... Po 10:45 pozostawiam na sobotni „Grovers Market”, gdzie kapłany zapasy owoców na cały tydzień: jabłka, pomarańcze, awokado, czereśnie, morele, nektarynki, rd. Nianogę „przyniosłem” to „House of Bread & Pastry” na Bridge Rd., gdzie czekał na mnie francuski regał na sobotni lunch (zjadłem go tylko raz w tygodniu, a to z powodu dużej zawartości cholesterolu, ale przecież smaruję otyłowie podłogi powłokami silikonowymi - by pochłonię więcej cholesterolu). Ekspedientki w sklepie zastanowiły się może pod jaką ciłarą się dziś czepać w sobotę, że wygryk rozbuchali się w „cała nigierian” zaparkowanego w mojej szerokiej kieszonki zegarka... Po prośbie, kłosek na kamperze nogami skierowanymi do siebie (cofa ta powstała z dwóch połączonych części i mierzy 3 m długości i emituje więc dwie, nieobcy wysoki mowy - takie jak my), zamglony na pół godziny... O 15:45 wyjeżdżamy na naszym do Bridge Rd. (lata o 48), by pojechać nim do Flinders St. Station. Mając kilkadziesiąt min. wolnego czasu, weszliśmy do kolejarzy artystycznej przy NGV. Płatom pozostawiam na schody przy zabytkowym budynku Flinders St. Station, gdzie umówiliśmy się z Simone Sinec. Jest ona artystka, która nie tak dawno temu otrzymała prestiżowego grantu „Sunset” na studia na granicy, więc studiowała 3 semestry we Frankfurcie do ubt. Mhada dziewczyna zjawia o czasie o 15:50. Widać, że do jej blasku „Heldner” combi i muryfikony na ponad dwa godzinę tracę, do miejscowości Avoca (wieśka, czyżżośa to liczy 700 mieszkańców) i jest położona w „Central Goldfields”, na północno-zachód od Melbourne (177 km od stolicy australii)... Podczas jazdy odbył się panie dość intensywnie rozmawiali (nagajęcy na tematy wypracowujące, jak: co robisz, jak się znalazłam w Melbourne, co studowałam, kto jest kim w mojej rodzinie - itd., itp.). Użytkownicy również o kilka dniach do Mhadek z nie Sinecowa o doświadczeniach o młodzi. Parę dni przygodny jazdy zaczęły przenosić się w uciążliwe oczekiwanie na metę... 08.18.20 podjechałmy do recepcji „Avoca Motel”, gdzie wczelniej, telefonicznie zrobim rezerwację pokoju.

Longin Sarnecki *08.12.2008. Sobota. Avoca*. 2008. Page from a diary.

**A response to the proposition by Antoni Jach**

As a result of a number of visits to Avoca, I have made an artistic response to the site of the Swiss House and the adjoining Avoca River. I have found the almost-dry Avoca River to be a powerful inspiration for, as well as being actual, a river is a symbol of transformation. For this exhibition I have created a video work entitled *Still River in the Numinous World*, which is accompanied by a book of images and text using the same title.

**A response to the proposition by Lyndal Jones**

While this project began as individual long-term art research, it is only made possible through a continuing series of collaborations with other artists, designers, builders, climate change experts across the disciplines and engagements with local groups and individuals who have with a wide range of friends and acquaintances, volunteered their time to support this climate change action undertaking. My own role has shifted to that of artist/director of a project that importantly engages many voices. In keeping with this complex, layered (sometimes contradictory) presentation of the house, my response to this brief has been to invite a number of additional artists to each contribute a work from their own engagement with the house/project. This is based on the proposition that the fragments produced by such a range of voices will provide a stimulus for viewers to find a more active role in creating the project as an imagined space that potentially includes their own climate change actions. Additional artists invited: **Nigel**



**Aldo Iacobelli**  
*Un paese vuol dire non essere soli, sapere che nella gente, nelle piante, nella terra, c'è qualcosa di tuo, che anche quando non ci sei resta ad aspettarti*. (from *La Luna e I Falo* by Cesare Pavese). 2008. Drawing, 18 x 25cm. 1 of 7 objects

**Frayne** who recently recorded the sound over 24 hours in the house/town; **Aldo Iacobelli** who has painted a series of small responses to the website from his home in Adelaide ([www.avocaproject.com](http://www.avocaproject.com)); **Mel Ogden** who has collaborated in development of the water conserving design of the grounds; **Ben Speth** who documented the 2005 Field Day and has produced a video work of memories of the day; **Longin Sarnecki** who has contributed a page from his daily diary written during a visit to the house in 2005 and **Gosia Włodarczak** whose performative drawing on the shop front window of the gallery will continue throughout the exhibition as a response to both the exhibition and the street outside thereby bringing Avoca and Melbourne together on the glass. My own contribution will be to design the space itself.



**Lyndal Jones**  
*The Swiss House, Avoca*. 2008. Digital photograph. Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne.



(Above) **Mel Ogden**  
*Rock Garden for the Swiss House*. 2007.

(Below) **Ben Speth**  
*Field Day*. 2007. Video still.



**Gosia Włodarczak**  
*Presence*. 2008. Pigment marker on the wall, dimension variable. Courtesy the artist and Arc One Gallery Melbourne, Boutwell Draper Gallery, Sydney and Helen Maxwell Gallery, Canberra

**Footnote**  
Other exhibitions include: The Axe Murder incident, DMZ, 2005, South Korea; Field day at the Swiss House, 2007 - a collaboration with housing researchers Ralph Horne and Tony Dalton from RMIT University, Eric Bottomley from Ceres, Sustainable Farmer Peter Andrews, Climate change activist Simon Pockley, Heritage Architect Lorraine Huddle, artist Mel Ogden and filmmaker Ben Speth; Counterbalance - an installation in the grounds of the Swiss House by British artist Jane Prophet, 2007 and the bridge of no return, 2008, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne.