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Exhibition at TarraWarra Museum of Art focuses on sensations existing in the world

The exhibition *TarraWarra International 2019: The Tangible Trace* explores the notion of a trace as a residue or marker of a place, situation or body of knowledge.

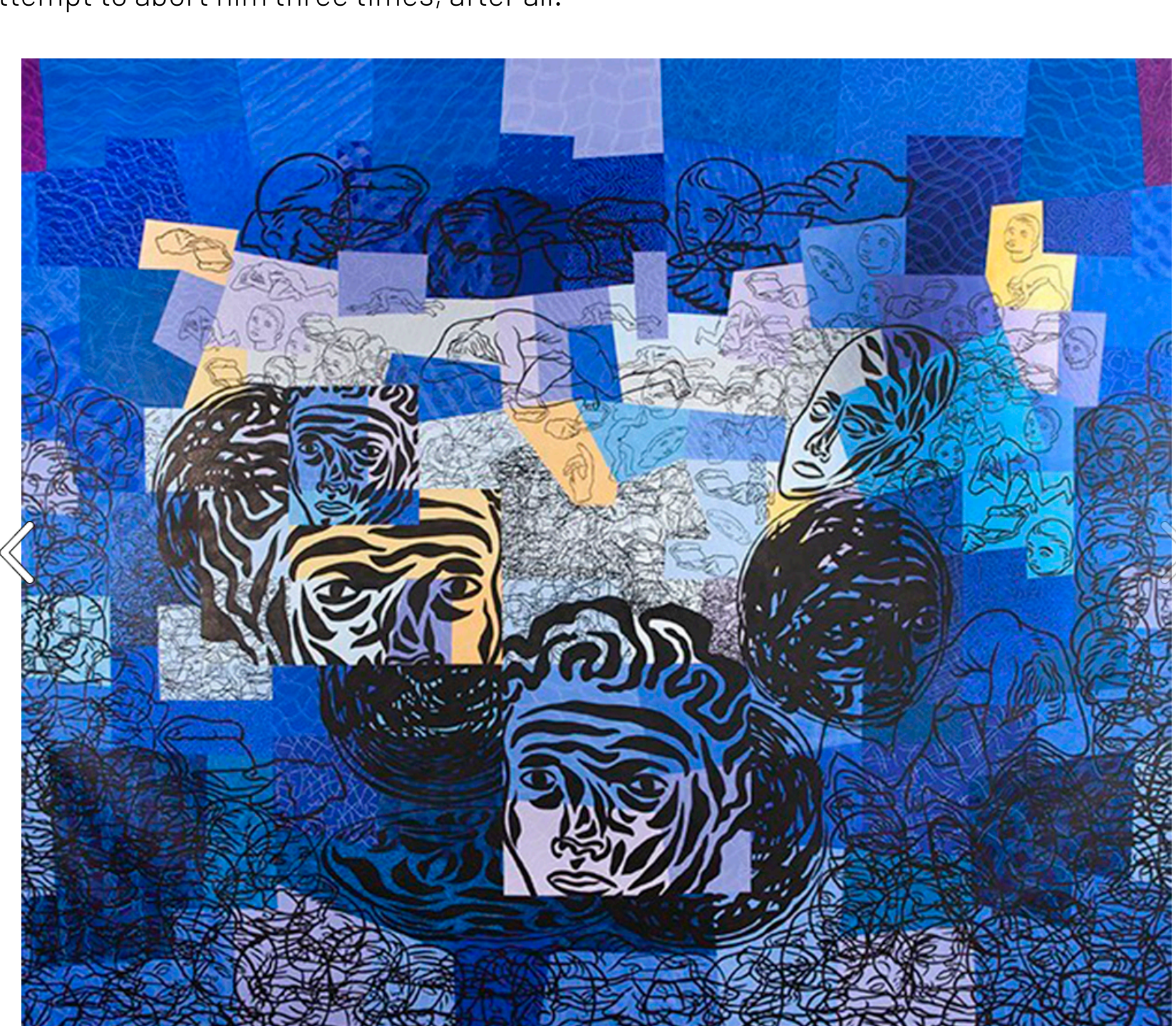
by Georgina Maddox | Published on : Aug 23, 2019



Many journeys are about escaping difficult circumstances and finding new horizons, while leaving behind old baggage. The exhibition *TarraWarra International 2019: The Tangible Trace*, evokes these journeys through unconventional and new media artworks. Curated by Anthony Fitzpatrick, the selection of artworks plays upon the metaphor of the trace to invoke sensations that can be seen, felt, experienced and even touched in our real environments through tangible fragments - natural materials, pressings, mappings, markings, journeys and gestures.

Take for instance the work by Iraqi artist Hiwa K, titled *Pre-Image (Blind as the Mother Tongue)* (2017). It follows the artist's retracing of a journey that he made when he was 25 years old. Hiwa K journeyed from Iraq to Germany, fleeing his hometown while travelling through Turkey and Greece. Once there, he began studying music with Flamenco master Paco Peña. Now living and working in Berlin, Hiwa K's works are politically-minded in their combination of oral histories, participatory structures and institutional critique. His haunting voiceover carries the viewer through the meanderings from open fields and forests to dense cities and mountainous regions - accompanied by ruminations on departures and arrivals, leaving and loss, wandering and isolation, walking and distance. In a separate room there is also object-sculptures composed of sticks and motorbike mirrors.

At the beginning, the narrator recounts an achingly sad farewell with his mother, concerned that their forced parting might be final: 'Son, if death comes, don't panic. It is just death.' He isn't surprised by her relentlessness', he explains - he survived his mother's attempt to abort him three times, after all.



Fling (Implosion)(detail from the *Implosion series*) synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 630x540 cms, 2019
Image Credit: Christel Lundberg; Courtesy of Carlos Capelán

The exhibition also includes the works of Francis Aliÿs (Belgium/Mexico), Carlos Capelán (Uruguay/Sweden), Simryn Gill (Singapore/Malaysia/Australia), Shilpa Gupta (India), Hiwa K (Iraq/Germany) and Sangeeta Sandrasegar (Australia), including newly commissioned works by Capelán, Gupta and Sandrasegar.

Gupta adeptly unravels the contested narratives of our times in this sculptural rendition, which challenges geographies and borders. As elucidated by Chaitanya Sambrani in his essay 'Shilpa Gupta: Poetry at the Borderlines' for the *TarraWarra International 2019* catalogue, Gupta's work issues gentle reminders of what fundamentally unites us as humans'. In addition, she presents *For, in your tongue, I Can Not Hide - 100 Jailed Poets* (2017-2018), an astonishing sonic installation that focuses on the words of 100 poets from around the world who have been jailed or killed for their politics or subversive writings.



Shilpa Gupta, *The markings we have made on this land have increased the distance so much*(2019), installation view 1 at TarraWarra Museum of Art
Image Credit: Courtesy of Shilpa Gupta and Galleria Continua

Francis Aliÿs video *Paradox of Praxis 5: Sometimes we dream as we live and sometimes we live as we dream*, Ciudad Juárez, Mexico (2013), is an eight-minute film. Expressing the idea of the trace as a mark of danger and residue, the artist kicks a flaming football around the night-time streets of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, one of the most dangerous cities in the world. We hear the fireball hissing in the dark as it is kicked through rubble, grimy puddles, and eerie sirens, with the underbelly of the city becoming audible and visible via the amber flames it emits.



Shilpa Gupta, *The markings we have made on this land have increased the distance so much*(2019), installation view 2 at TarraWarra Museum of Art
Image Credit: Courtesy of Shilpa Gupta and Galleria Continua

Since its establishment in 2013, the TarraWarra International series has supported a number of Australian artists, including Janet Laurence, Louise Weaver and Cyrus Tang, to exhibit their work in a global context by presenting it alongside leading contemporary artists from abroad. Each of these exhibitions has uniquely identified and meaningfully considered significant developments in contemporary art practice.



Shilpa Gupta, *The markings we have made on this land have increased the distance so much*(2019), installation view 3 at TarraWarra Museum of Art
Image Credit: Courtesy of Shilpa Gupta and Galleria Continua

(*TarraWarra International 2019: The Tangible Trace* is on till September 1, 2019, at TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, Australia.)

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