

Holmes à Court Gallery, in partnership with the Centre of Human Rights Education, Curtin University, presents:

Crossing Borders and Seeking Asylum in Australia: Where the hell are we? And where are we going?



Clyde McGill, *The Border Crosser (Excerpt)*, 2011, mixed media on linen, 220 x 320 cm

Holmes à Court Gallery has a history of presenting speakers' days on various topics, providing forums for the discussion and dispersal of ideas.

This year, in partnership with the Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University, we are organising a Speakers Day on Saturday, 5th May. This will be held at our new premises at 10 Douglas Street, West Perth within the exhibition *The Border Crossers: Clyde McGill*.

In 2007 Clyde McGill began looking at borderlands as they relate to people who come by boat. He focussed first on the fate of a young Indonesian fisherman who tragically died on a boat detained in Darwin Harbour. This exhibition contains his story within a much broader narrative of the refugee who comes by boat -

What are the borderlands? Who determines them and why? Who may cross? Who may not? Who does deliberately cross the borders? Where are they from? Why are they leaving? What are their hopes? What is their journey? What do they bring with them? Are they welcomed or turned back? Do they just disappear? Who cares? Who doesn't?

We hope this Speakers Day will address the following – what is the global situation with regard to refugees? what are the experiences of people who seek asylum in Australia?

what are the responses of governments?

what are the responses of civil society?

where do we go from here?

We have invited a range of speakers including people from a refugee background, and others in contact with people who remain in detention both here in Australia and offshore.

PROGRAMME

Saturday 5th May 2018

- 9.30** Check in and morning tea
- 9.55** Welcome by Janet Holmes à Court AC
Welcome to Country by Professor Simon Forrest
Introduction by Sharon Tassicker
- 10.10** Dr Clyde McGill
The artist's view of this tragedy – the origins and influences
- 10.40** Associate Professor Caroline Fleay
Where the hell are we and how did we get here?
- 11.10** Leg stretch and bathroom break
- 11.20** Panel discussion on seeking asylum
'Starting from zero again' – experiences of living on a temporary visa in WA
- 12.10** Session wrap up and discussion
- 12.30** Lunch
(optional exhibition tour with Clyde McGill)
- 1.30** Panel discussion with Associate Professor Mary Anne Kenny and guests
UN and Australian policy responses
- 2.15** Judyth Watson
A view of Yongah Hill; what the hell are we doing?
- 2.45** Afternoon tea
- 3.15** Michelle Bui
'We will never settle for anything less than freedom. Only freedom.' Resistance in Manus, Nauru and Australia.
- 3.45** Mehdi Vakili
The whistle has been blown. What next?
- 4.15** Session wrap up and discussion
- 4.30** Drinks and canapes

Date:	5 th May 2018
Time:	9.30am – 4.30pm
Venue:	Holmes à Court Gallery @ no.10 10 Douglas Street, West Perth
Cost:	\$55 (by EFT payment) <i>(Includes morning and afternoon tea, lunch and sundowner)</i>
Bookings:	hacgallery@heytesbury.com.au
Payment:	BSB. 086 492 Account. 86 197 8625 Reference. BC05 + surname

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Michelle Bui

Michelle Bui has been involved in the Refugee Rights Action Network (RRAN) WA since 2011. Through her engagement in activism she has worked closely with people seeking asylum both in detention and the community. She regularly visits people detained at the Yongah Hill Immigration Detention Centre and maintains contact with people incarcerated on Manus Island and Nauru.

Associate Professor Caroline Fleay

Caroline Fleay is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University, where she teaches human rights and conducts research into the experiences of people seeking asylum in Australia. Caroline is a Board Member of the Refugee Council of Australia and continues to liaise with WA, national and regional refugee support organisations and activists to campaign on the rights of people seeking asylum.

Associate Professor Mary Anne Kenny

Mary Anne Kenny is an Associate Professor at the School of Law at Murdoch University, Perth Western Australia. She teaches and researches in the area of human rights, refugee and immigration law. Associate Professor Kenny is an adjunct of the Centre for Human Rights Education at Curtin University. She is a member of the Australian Government's Minister of Immigration's Advisory Council on Asylum Seekers and Detention (MCASD).

Dr Clyde McGill

Clyde McGill has a BA(Honours) in Visual Art from Curtin University and a PhD from RMIT. He is a Fullbright Scholar (2008), spent a year (2009-2010) as a Visiting Scholar at Parsons School of Fine Art in New York, has been an Artist in Residence at the Holmes à Court Gallery and Fremantle Arts Centre. His works are held in the National Gallery of Australia and other significant collections. Clyde is a trans-disciplinary visual artist working across performance, print, drawing, sound, painting, video, photography, artist books and text whose interests include place, politics, the guest, national borders and citizenship. He lives and works in Fremantle.

Mehdi Vakili

Mehdi Vakili is an Iranian political blogger and social media activist. He fled Iran in 2012 and arrived to Australia by boat to seek asylum. He was first sent to Nauru, then to a site of immigration detention in Australia, before finally being released into the community. He now lives in Perth and continues his activism around the right to seek asylum as well as about the ongoing situation under the Islamic regime in Iran.

Judyth Watson

Judyth Watson was, in 2000, a co-founder of CARAD, Centre for Asylum seekers Refugees And Detainees and later a board member and secretary of the Refugee Council of Australia. She has continued a commitment to people seeking or granted our protection and has a wide range of experiences in advocacy and support for them. She visited at both Perth and Jandakot centres before the Yongah Hill centre was opened. CARAD set up a programme to visit, support and advocate for men there, in which she participated for over 3 years. Judyth is a former nurse and a former State MP.