



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

THE AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

109 Edward Street
Brisbane Queensland
4000 Australia

Dear Peter Alwast,

I am writing to inform you of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation's decision to include you as a participant in Project ALPHA.

Project ALPHA is a nationally significant project vital to our nation's security. It is all about protecting and safeguarding Australia's future. Approved directly by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in the wake of the 2020 Summit, Project ALPHA involves the relocation of an elite community of citizens to a dedicated site in the event of sub lunar failure (earth's incapacity to sustain human life).

Project ALPHA aims to select the brightest and best members of the Australian community as representatives of a secure future for our nation, and that is why I am writing to you.

The Australian Government is pleased to be able to offer you a place in Project ALPHA in the category of Visual Arts. Due to your eminent position within the cultural sector and the breadth of your interests as a visual artist, we have chosen you to represent Australia as a productive member of the arts community. ASIO feels that your recent success in the public eye and wide array of technical skills display particular qualities that we are hoping will galvanise a spirit of ingenuity at Project ALPHA. In these troubled times, membership of this very special community is the highest honour our nation can bestow.

The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, in conjunction with The United States Department of Homeland Security and The Ministry of State Security of the People's Republic of China, have developed Project Alpha as a precautionary measure due to a raft of concerns surrounding earth's changing climate. As stated, Project ALPHA will involve the relocation of a select community of global leaders to a stable environment in order to ensure the survival of the highest calibre representatives of the human race.

Upon your acceptance of this invitation you will be required to undergo a series of medical examinations to determine your psychological and physiological suitability for the project. This will include a general medical examination; genetic testing; fertility testing and a thorough psychological exam.

Should you choose to accept this responsibility, ASIO expects your complete confidentiality in all matters pertaining to Project ALPHA and compliance with all guidelines set out by the Project team. You will also be required to sign a legal document stating you understand and agree to your responsibilities in accordance with section 239(b) of the *National Security and Sustainability Act (Compulsory Enrolment and Recruitment Project ALPHA) 2009*.

Should you wish to discuss this offer further or seek any clarification, please contact the Department of the Attorney-General, Canberra at (02) 6250 6666 quoting reference number ALPHA-68367-27.

Kind regards,

The Honourable Robert McClelland,
Attorney-General,
Parliament house,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

Sean Barrett Antoinette J. Citizen Yavuz Erkan David Nixon

Fresh Cut 2012

23 JUNE-4 AUGUST

Our *Fresh Cut* exhibition has become a rite of passage for Queensland emerging artists. Each year we showcase four artists, either at or up to six years out of art school. IMA Director Robert Leonard picked this year's artists.

LEFT Antoinette J. Citizen *Project Alpha* 2009. RIGHT Sean Barrett *Jazzy* from *The Gathering* 2011, photograph.

IMA
Institute of
Modern Art

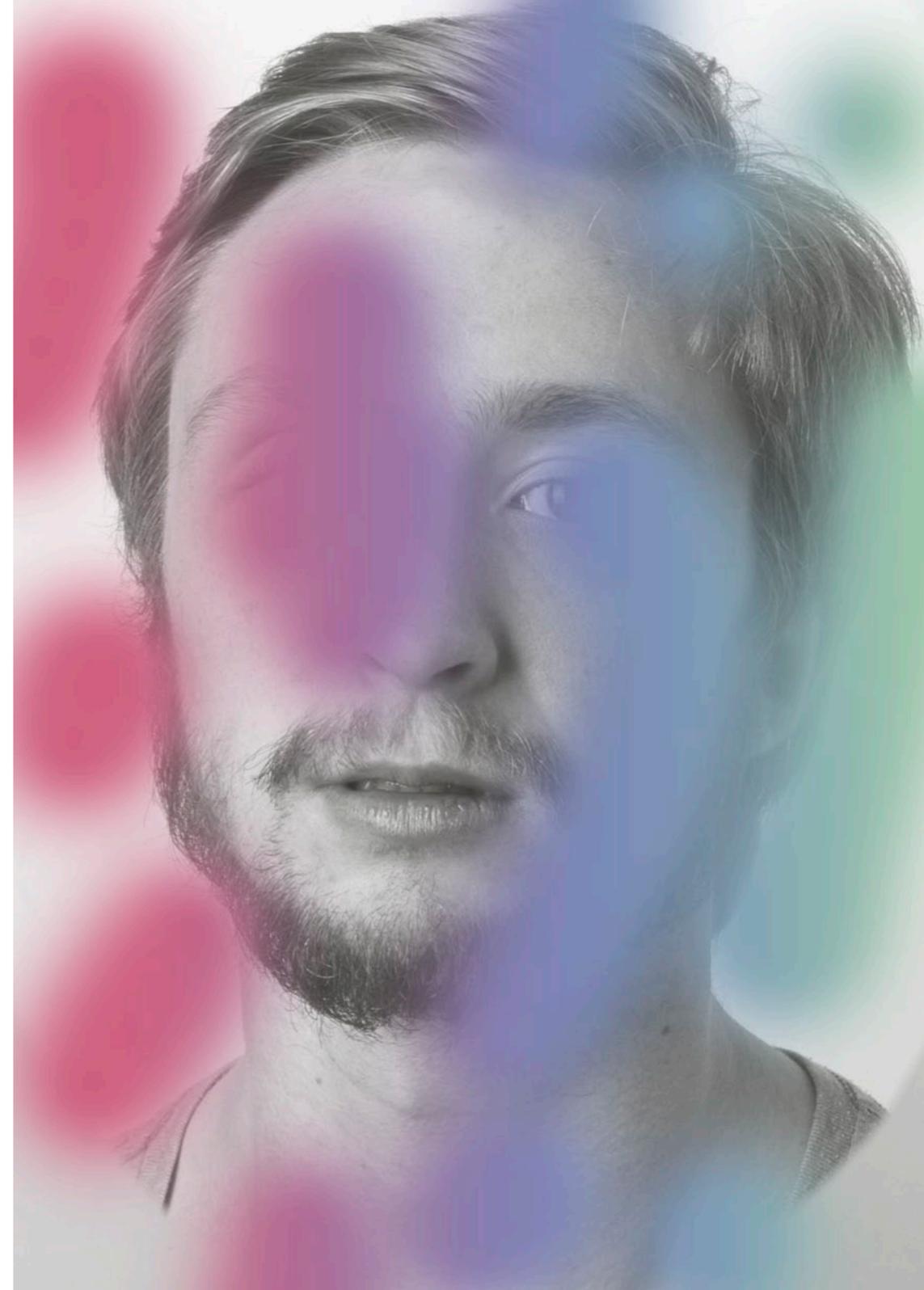
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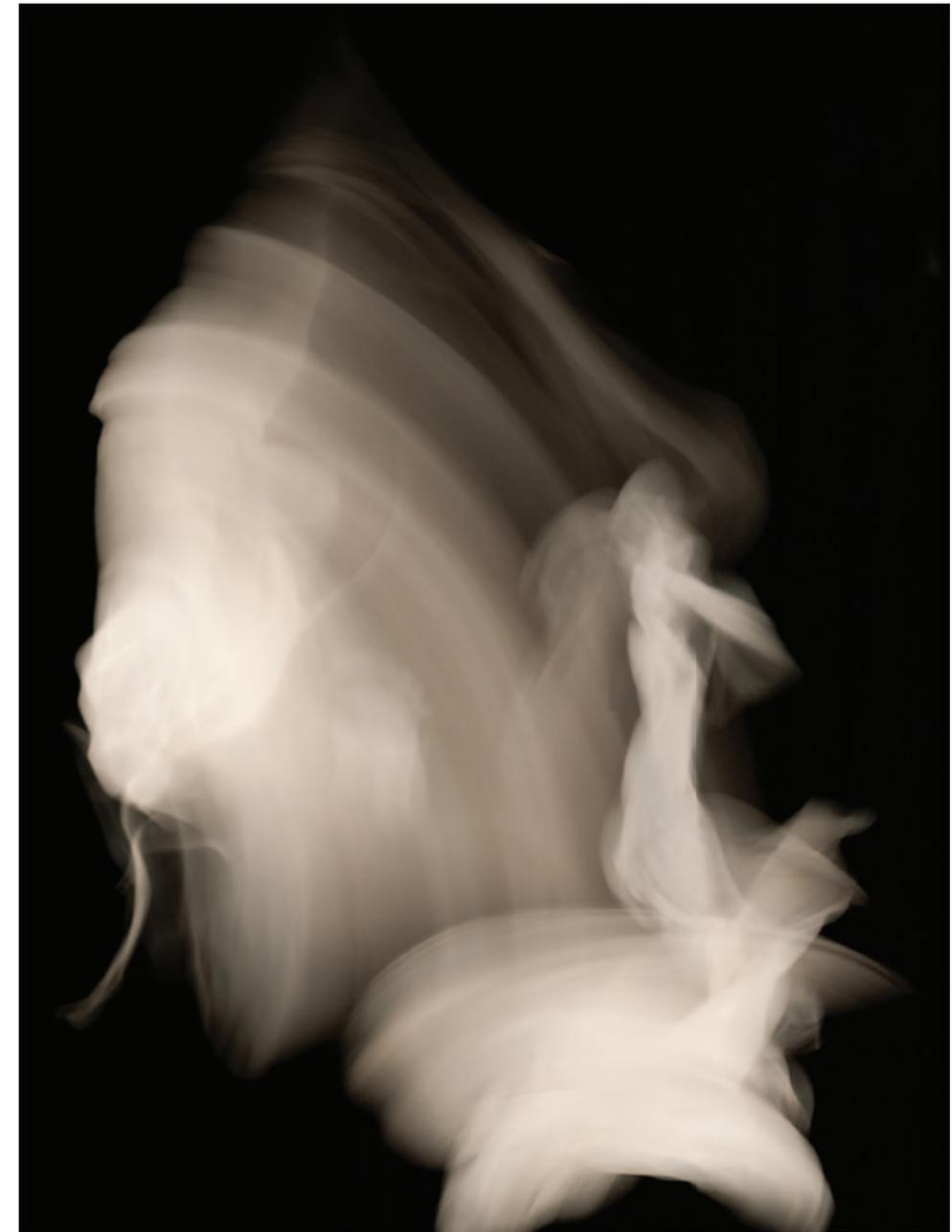
Sean Barrett started off studying commercial studio photography, but jumped ship to 'art' photography. Commercial photography compels us to buy, believe, and behave, and in his art Barrett explores and exploits its technical and aesthetic arsenal. In his installation *The Gathering*, Barrett's beautifully shot and photoshopped portraits, still lifes, and abstractions remain puzzling. They seem out of context, missing the product or point that would normally provide their *raison d'être*. The images aren't hung conventionally, but lean against walls or lie on the floor (and on one another) with a contrived sense of abandon. As much as they initially appear efficient, lucid, and pointed, Barrett's deranged images are just the opposite.

Antoinette J. Citizen is thinking about the future. Inspired by the idea that the world will end in 2012 (the end of the Mayan calendar), she programs Google Calendar to rapidly scroll forward, month-by-month, hoping to find its limit—a new unanticipated endtime. By contrast, she slows down the 1960 movie *The Time Machine*, presenting it as if it had started playing when it was first set (the year 1899) and would only finish in the distant future it imagines (the year 802,701). For *Project Alpha*, she mocked up a letter from ASIO to Peter Alwast, inviting the Brisbane artist to join the elite who will continue the species in the event of a future cataclysm. Finally, with Courtney Coombs, Citizen harassed the curators of the hip Paris art museum, the Palais de Tokyo, sending them a new proposal every fortnight, until asked to cease and desist. Optimistically, the duo proposed multiple future works that would not take place.

For his *Unorthodox Aphorisms*, **Yavuz Erkan** photographed himself enjoying odd sensual experiences: he palms a handful of jelly, sugar is spread across his back, he wears a bra cup across his face as a breathing mask, he looks down the front of his oversize pants, he blows a giant bubblegum bubble. Erkan leads by example; his brightly lit studies in polymorphous perversity instruct us in possibilities for our own pleasure. He explains: 'I invite the viewers to distance themselves from their conventional routines. These photographs are visual aphorisms targeted at the conformism of individuals who live what is considered a normal life.'

David Nixon creates abstractions from banal everyday things. In his video *Immanence*, white specks swirl about against a black background, recalling Len Lye's classic experimental film *Particles in Space*. The specks suggest snowflakes, the 'snow' of analogue TV static, and swarming fireflies. In fact, they are polystyrene bean-bag 'beans' flying through the air. This visual is accompanied by a haunting soundtrack featuring children's playground chatter, encouraging us to imagine that the luminous specks are alive. Alongside the video, Nixon's sublime abstract photographs turn out to be images of fluttering torn plastic bags.

ROBERT LEONARD



LEFT Yavuz Erkan Bubble Gum 2011, photograph. ABOVE David Nixon *Internal Sphere* 2012, photograph.