

Repair | Replace

LUCY BARKER, RA BULL, GARY DEIRMENDJIAN, JANE GILLINGS, GARY GREGG, ALICE XU.

20 August – 13 September 2025

GARY DEIRMENDJIAN: - THE AESTHETICS OF NIL INTENT

Artist's statement

some years ago when working with stone, i began to find deeper satisfaction in asking the material to chip or split, as opposed to dominating it in a heavy-handed manner, with power tools and such. i began to feel this as a notion of true collaboration ... a dialogue between medium and maker, between intent and allowance.

there has ever since been a gradual and demonstrable shift in my work towards the appreciation of the moment, of actuality, of chance, the incidental, of happenstance and impermanence. such notions are now welcome guests that intervene as they please, enticing, motivating and helping shape my thoughts and what i do.

turning to this exhibition then ... i have along the way been developing a broad collection of 'arrived' at objects. 'made' things that have over time been transformed through the friction of direct and unconscious human interaction. essentially, arriving at an end state, deep in the periphery of focused attention. marked, shaped, formed, toned and scarred incidentally, these are uncontrived propositions whose very own palimpsest, is proof positive of the story of their arrival. no conscious consideration, decision or aesthetic judgment whatsoever has been invested in their becoming. as such they exude a certain look and feel of authenticity, that i term THE AESTHETICS of NIL INTENT [TAONI]. pure nuggets of truth, is just how i've come to see them. a strange thing for a maker to confess, that the incidental is an infinitely more interesting and truthful shaper than they.

it is perhaps a radical proposition to claim these objects as my 'work'. that is however, precisely what i must be resolute enough to do. each item has been noticed for harbouring a certain value as appreciated through the filters of TAONI, then salvaged [in some instances at significant cost and effort] and stored, to then being featured as individual works.

gary deirmendjian



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1. rod & stella, my goodness, 2015

purpose built mobile painting palette; used for over 45 years by Rod & Stella, scenographic artists; gifted upon retirement.

2. unwhite, 2020

salvaged from Kellett Lane; Kings Cross.

3. incrementally so, 2023

Table top.

4. shield, 2023

foldable saw horse; salvaged from parked trailer loaded for dumping; Rozelle

7. white crush

steel car panel, salvage from median strip; Broadway; Victoria Park.

8. yellow crush

steel vessel, salvage from median strip; Hume Highway; Ashfield.

9. tin man scroll; 2024

a roofer in Dunblane Street in Camperdown was trimming roofing sheets and throwing the trimmings into the skip as he generated them. startled at the extraordinariness of these unconscious creations, i asked for the one he had just made. entirely surprised at my interest, he said "sure" ...

12. let's bench, 2023

decommissioned work bench; Sculpture Studios; National Art School.

13. roman cut – I & ii, 2017

cut from pavement carpet; Japanese Restaurant; Rome.

16. on notice, 2023

Decommissioned notice board, Sydney University.

17. as they fell yarranable – GLC field, 2011

muselet, salvaged New Year's day 2011; Yarranabbe Park; Darling Point.

18. 'oh christmann, your layers - i, ii, iii'; 2013

this stool top was salvaged from Gunter Christmann's studio, soon after he passed away. he used the stool as a prop to sit stretched canvases on while painting as they leant against the wall.

i was quite taken by the incidental painting that had emerged over time right under Gunter's nose. this, while his attention entirely absorbed by what would've been

taking shape on the various canvases. it was clear that he had stretched some scrap canvas over the stool top. having initially assumed he had done so to protect the stool, i removed the canvas to find yet another stretched canvas beneath, also extensively and unintentionally painted. i in turn removed this layer to then discover the plywood stool top, which likewise was stunningly soiled ...

19. tommy & vito – vito & tommy, 2008-2013

coffee group tapper; Latteria [café]; each formed over 2.5 years; Darlinghurst.

20. zeus 42; 2024

the sandals belonged to a dear friend and fellow artist, Will Style. he had purchased them from Balmain some 10 years earlier. having questioned his own taste in the purchase, he had left them untouched until he hit a perfect storm of personal trauma and financial difficulties. with all other shoes worn out, he forcibly turned to the still new sandals. he wore daily for a year. oddly, he now loved them, because he found them far more comfortable than he had imagined, but more so that in their becoming, they were a direct chronicle of his year of pain.

aware of my TAONI project, he kindly offered them up ...

21. paolo's pouch; 2025

Paolo larossi is a colleague at National Art School where i teach, and someone who has a keen sense of objects 'becoming' through use, be they cars, buildings or wearables. this is a mobile holster that he had acquired sometime in the late 90's. having survived multiple phones, it had hung from his belt slowly 'becoming' through daily use. some time ago, i had asked him if when the time came that he decided it had done all it could for him, whether he would consider giving it to me. one day very recently, he did just that ...

33. wendy 10/10, 2024

used silk screen discarded by artist.