

Transparency Collective's installation and performances pieces for **Seedpod #5** demonstrated a deep consideration for the criterion involved in applying for such a grant.

All were site specific to ICU, Castlemaine and the region at large and all of the resources involved were sourced locally (from the hundreds of wine bottles used for Rockie Stone's balancing act to the giant buckets of honey that slowly spilled over Kali-Rose for the two-hour duration).

The space of ICU also informed the nature of the work. And it was possible to enter the timeline of the work at any given moment and still become deeply engaged with the performances.

The three artists had taken the time to consider all of the above whilst still conducting their own individual artistic lines of enquiry, into the ideas at hand and space itself.

The experience was a timed, tri-segmented wonderment; slow-paced, well-lit and staged, with temporality and rituality fundamental to the experience itself.

Kali-Rose's 'Ritual for Grief' was the first image or performance that struck me – seeing as though it was a centre-piece and the most illuminated upon arrival. Naked, she embedded herself in a large glass tank, while two streams of thick, gooey brown honey slowly leaked over her body. Every now and then she would languish and move into a new position, seemingly stuck by the weight and texture of the organic liquid. It was a beautiful sight. The image of her body would change as she moved and as the honey increased in volume. At times she looked like a being from a 'Body Snatchers' movie (take your pick which); or a gooey mutoid creature born from a David Cronenberg film-monster; then reminiscent of an Edward Weston photographic nude. Certainly 'the nude' was under enquiry, but the slow kinetic aspect to the performance was just as beguiling; can a body move when it is confined and stuck, like an insect to paper?

In the corner of the ICU 'bunker', in front of a brightly lit green sphere, Kieran Swann sat silently in repetition, building up some kind of sand castle on a floor-projection. It turned out to be a train at a crossing for this performance of 'City Limits'. He seemed entranced by the train; slowly, ever-so meticulously, he kept trying to catch it as it passed him in light on the floor. He always missed. He sprinkled sand on its movement as well, made shadows with his limbs, always sitting, never quite keeping up. Always missing. Swann says that this piece was a 'rumination on the changing Castlemaine context' – ie where does the city start and end? Where does the city end and the country start? The projection of the train looked beautiful resting on the grey concrete floor.

The large centre-piece that ultimately wove everything together was 'Deter-mination', by circus performer Rockie Stone. It took up most of the space of ICU, physically and in the shadows cast on the walls. She says it took 'thirty years to cultivate, train and nurture this circus-skilled artist body into its current form'; thus her artistic enquiry in Castlemaine was the local wine industry. The analogous similarity was not lost on her when entering the region: "it takes 30 years to cultivate and nurture a vine to winemaking maturity".

So she took hundreds of bottles from local vineyards, fashioned a long maze that snaked around the space (a bit like a train line), and took it upon her self to walk on the bottles. We watched as Rocky balanced on each bottle like it was a high wire. Occasionally she toppled – or a bottle did. She'd sweep up the shattered pieces, rearrange the bottles as best she could, and continue her journey.

For anyone who knows the local independent wine culture, it was the perfect metaphor. And it was a thrill to watch this tiny, lithe, muscle-bound woman miraculously walk her way across the tops of bottles, back lit and flanked by shadows.

Depending on where she was at any given time, the three performances did synch up; all within eyeshot, which made the event more spectacular.

I applaud the artists for their tenacity, grace and thoughtfulness. It was a unique experience with much to offer.

Megan Spencer 2011