

EXHIBITION: 03 JULY – 1 AUGUST 2009  
Opening 6pm Thursday 2 July

## Imprint

### Kathryn Gray, Bianca Hester, Anne Kay, Teaching and Learning Cinema

Curator: Anneke Jaspers

*Imprint* brings together works by three artists and one collective to examine the relationship of documentary and archival systems to performative, ephemeral and process-based practices. Through the interplay of performance, action-research, photography, video, installation and text, the exhibition explores a series of concerns embedded in the notion of an imprint: the character of a partial or secondary trace, the effects of repetition, contiguity and succession. The relationship between primary and secondary registers forms a key thread between works.

Broadly, this is evident in an emphasis on provisional, contingent scenarios and a self-reflexive approach to various modes of spectator address. The reiteration of ideas, materials and actions is another focal point.

In turn, *Imprint* considers the significant relationship these works bear to early conceptual and post-object practices. A number of concepts that were integral to these movements in the late 1960s and 1970s resurface here as contemporary themes. These range from the possibilities of dispersed or collaborative artistic agency, to an emphasis on the work of art as a dynamic situation, remediation and repetition as transformational gestures, and the operation of documentary materials and indexical systems. To this end, *Imprint* situates re-enactment practices and dialogues within a broader range of performative and process-based strategies as an avenue to consider shared points of reference in the legacies of art history.



The Artspace Residential Studio Program is supported by the Keir Foundation. *Imprint* is supported by the Arts NSW Emerging Curator Initiative



**Bianca Hester, *implements, actions and a scoring of moments*, 2008,**  
installation detail, South Australian  
School of Art, Adelaide

43-51 Cowper Wharf Road  
Woolloomooloo NSW 2011  
Sydney Australia  
T +61 2 9356 0555  
F +61 2 9368 1705  
artspace@artspace.org.au  
www.artspace.org.au  
Office 10am-6pm, Mon-Fri  
Gallery 11am-5pm, Tues-Sun

ARTSPACE is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

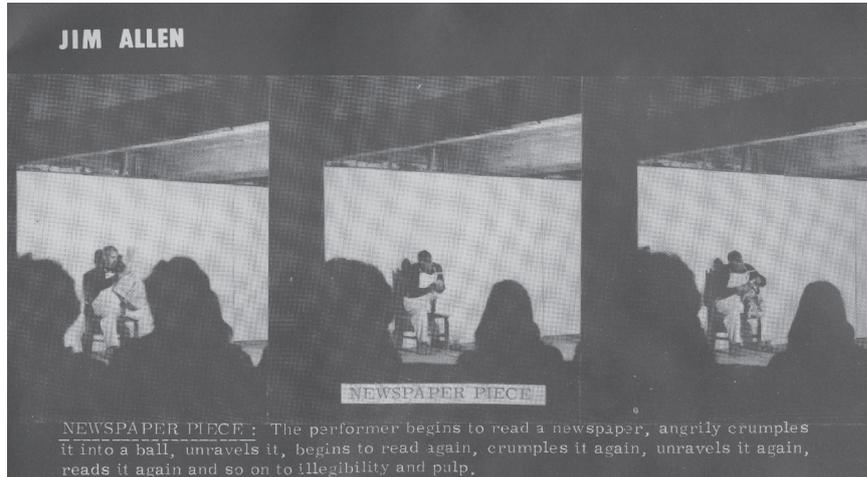
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## Jim Allen News & Poetry for Chainsaws



**Jim Allen, *Newspaper piece*, 1976,**  
performance documentation,  
Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide

In 1976 **Jim Allen** made a number of performance works in Adelaide during a period of residency at the Experimental Art Foundation, including on one night in April both *Poetry for Chainsaws* and *Newspaper*. At the time Allen was a crucial figure as artist and educator in the development of ephemeral, post-object practices in New Zealand. He subsequently spent a decade in Sydney as founding head of the School of Art at Sydney College of the Arts and was a central figure in the foundation of Artspace. More recently Allen, based again in Auckland, has been developing new work alongside occasional restagings of some of the 1970s works increasingly recognised as central in the history of experimental practice in both Australia and New Zealand. *Poetry for Chainsaws* – which consists of the artist reading Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* amongst three chainsaws left running on the gallery floor around him – was restaged in 2006 at the Michael Lett Gallery, Auckland, and in 2007 at the St Paul Street Gallery, Auckland. *Newspaper* has been repeated several times. Allen sits on an ordinary chair holding a daily newspaper in front of him leafing through the pages. With a sudden impetuousness and intense vehemence he crumples the newspaper to a paper ball. Then he unfolds it again and starts reading again, before he crumples it up again as if taken by a new outburst of rage. More and more paper shreds reel to the ground, the newspaper deteriorates more and more and in the end is all but a rag whose leftovers curl around Allen's feet.

Here Artspace exhibits filmic records of these works operating as new iterations of the original pieces, as independent works in and of themselves, and as manifestations of the potent currency of the recent past in contemporary practices located in the insistent presentness of the restaged event.

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