



# Depot

Installations by 7 artists at the decommissioned Grenda's bus depot

Media Kit

7 - 13 April

12 noon - 6pm daily

Official opening - Sunday 6 April, 2pm

Grenda's Bus Depot

9 Foster St, Dandenong

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Images by Hilton Stone

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Robbie Rowlands

Cameron Robbins

Matt Morrow

Ben Morieson

Susan Jacobs

Campbell Drake

James Carey

Writer -

Geraldine Barlow

Photography -

Hilton Stone

# Depot

## Installations by 7 artists at the decommissioned Grenda's bus depot

Depot is an installation of contemporary artworks created by seven artists at the decommissioned Grenda's bus depot.

Depot is open for one week in April prior to the site being demolished. The artworks, which will be made on site, will respond to the industrial spaces of the historic depot and pre-empt its demolition.

The project provides an opportunity for the community to stop, look, listen and experience the spaces that have housed an iconic Dandenong business for more than 50 years.

Present and former staff and the broader community are invited to relive and honour a celebrated workspace, and in doing so witness the skills of artists transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary.

"In a world where time stops for no one, it is a rare treat when space is provided for artists to respond creatively to commemorate historically important locations. It will be great to see the site once the artists have been working there and to watch people as they experience what has been a purely functional place for 63 years, altered and then reduced to nothing. We have an enormous moral responsibility to find space in our busy world for this type of project. All too often places that define the fabric of our community are demolished physically and erased from our conscience without a moments reflection. It is not always possible to preserve and retain buildings from the past, but we can take responsibility for appropriately honouring their presence and inviting people to share in the process."

Jenny Pemberton-Webb, Project Co-ordinator and Place Manager

## Depot

Grenda's Bus Depot  
9 Foster St, Dandenong

Official opening - Sunday 6 April, 2pm

General viewing - 7 - 13 April, 12 noon - 6pm daily



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### Media Release

#### GRENDAS BUS DEPOT TO SHOWCASE ART DISPLAYS BEFORE DEMOLITION

In April 2008, seven artists will enjoy unrestricted access to the historic Grenda's bus depot in Dandenong to create temporary artworks in a final gesture to honour years of service to the community before demolition.

The works will be on public display from 7-13 April and form part of an extraordinary project of celebration, contemplation, reflection and invention.

In 1945, Mr George Grenda started a bus company in Dandenong on the site at 9 Foster Street. More than half a century later, Grenda Corporation is poised to relocate their operations to a new site south of the railway line.

Grenda's move from 9 Foster Street is immeasurably significant. They will be the first major business to relocate and embrace the opportunity of Dandenong's extraordinary \$290 million revitalisation initiative.

"In a world where it seems time stops for no one, it is a rare treat that space is provided for artists to respond creatively and commemorate historically important locations," enthuses the City of Greater Dandenong's Place Manager, Ms Jenny Pemberton-Webb.

Artists Cameron Robbins, Robbie Rowlands, Campbell Drake, Susan Jacobs, Ben Morieson, James Carey, and Matt Morrow will each respond to the site bringing their own arts practise to the space. Respected writer Geraldine Barlow will interview the artists and discuss their work and its relationship to the site. This will form the basis of a catalogue which will be available during the open days on 7-13 April. The project is being filmed by the ABC for screening on Sunday Arts program later in April.

Earlier in the year photographer Hilton Stone captured the site, the business, its work force and everyday operations. The result is a collection of photos that give rare insights into the culture of the workplace, daily rituals, the connection between staff, and the manner in which the business functions.

"We have an enormous moral responsibility to find space in our busy world for this type of project. All too often places that define the fabric of our community are demolished physically and erased from our minds without a moment's reflection. With this project we have documented the business operations prior to there being any evidence of the company moving, so future generations will be able to see what the environment was like," Jenny explains.

Late last year a series of oral histories and sound bites were recorded to capture the stories and memories associated with Grenda's at Foster Street. Interviews were undertaken with a range of staff including drivers and mechanics, office and control room staff, and management, capturing personal memories and recollections.

Some of the memories and stories will feature in a commemorative book which will be available once the site has been demolished. Photographs taken by Hilton Stone will also feature in the book together with the art installations created as a part of Depot.

The community will be invited to celebrate and reflect on Grenda's operations at Foster Street giving them the chance to farewell the site and experience the transformation of a familiar environment where artworks explore and pay tribute to a Dandenong icon.

Depot will take place between 7 to 13 April 2008, and is open daily from 12noon – 6pm for viewing by the general public.

# Depot

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### Questions & Answers

#### Why is council doing the project?

With the relocation of Grenda's (which is happening as part of the broader revitalisation of central Dandenong) an opportunity presented itself for a project that would put the spotlight on an iconic Dandenong company (established 1945) and invite the community to share and witness the change.

#### Who are we and what are we becoming?

Dandenong is broadly recognised as a hub for business and industry and this has been confirmed by the State Government's \$290 million investment in central Dandenong's redevelopment. Dandenong is poised to become a vibrant city centre that offers quality housing, employment opportunities and a diverse range of leisure and cultural pursuits.

#### What does it build on?

The relocation of Grenda's bus depot marks the first major business relocation to support the redevelopment of the city centre. The relocation signals the commencement of physical works in central Dandenong following an intense period of planning and property acquisition.

Depot builds on Dandenong's proud reputation as a regional centre for business and industry and acknowledges the important role that work and work places have in peoples' lives. It also builds on an established program of permanent public art projects, one of which recently received a commendation for design in landscape architecture from the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects Victoria (Vessels of Light). More recently, temporary public art projects have been commissioned in laneways, carparks and shop fronts.

#### What does it say about Council and VicUrban?

Council and VicUrban recognise the need to engage the community in the changes taking place in Dandenong. Central Dandenong has a long history and strong identity which is valued, and through this project recognised.

Making the space to acknowledge change, highlight workplaces, record local history and mark an important step in central Dandenong's progress, is of vital importance in this city's revitalisation.

This project goes much further than just recording a site of local value. Instead it puts a microscope on everyday life and allows the time to stop, recognise and celebrate a local institution.

#### What is unique about the project?

With a contemporary take on a site of historical importance, Depot offers a walk through experience that encourages the community to be part of history, to explore, reminisce, contemplate and farewell the site prior to it being razed.

The project started as a simple photographic documentation of the depot in 2007 and has grown into a much larger project, where artists have been invited to offer a lens to daily life and workplace culture.

(continued next page)



# Depot

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### Questions & Answers continued...

Creating contemporary artworks in a work place might seem strange in some places but in Dandenong it is an appropriate reflection of the city's identity as a place rich in business and industry.

#### What are the artists bringing to the project?

When the last removalist truck rolls out the gate and the artists take over the site, the transformation of the depot will commence. The artists will strip away elements of the building in a form of poetic deconstruction to create transitional space, before the whole site is reduced to nothing.

Physically, the artists will bring construction saws, jack hammers, steam cleaning equipment, and welders to cut, build and remodel the depot. The artists will also bring a perspective to the spaces within the depot that are visually rich and imaginative. Artists notice things that would otherwise go un-noticed, such as the sounds of the space (in this case dominated by a workshop radio), the textural effects of years of grease and grime, the worn down flooring in passageways symbolic of decades of staff movements between departments.

The artists see value in the items left behind and are able to arrange and transform them into sculptural objects of reflection and final contemplation.

In this environment it is expected that the feeling of eminent demolition and abandonment will dominate the senses. The empty spaces are a vital and orchestrated component of the overall experience - they offer the necessary 'pauses' between what the artists create.

#### Additional Project Information

Photography: Hilton Stone Photography was commissioned to document the site in early 2007.

Oral Histories: David Crofts has conducted interviews with 11 of Grenda's staff members, including Ken Grenda.

Moved by Grenda's Book : The photos and excerpts from the interviews will be the focus of a 24 page book to be published in mid 2008.

ABC Sunday Arts: ABC is documenting the project for screening on Sunday Arts in April 2008.

Catalogue: A catalogue for the Depot project will be available at the site to assist in guiding people through the installation.

Blog site: Visit [depot-installation.blogspot.com](http://depot-installation.blogspot.com) for further information and discussion opportunities.

Guest Speaker: Respected artist David H Thomas (organiser of the Falls Creek Artists Camp and museum officer in charge of the Monash University Museum of Art) will speak at the official opening on 6 April.



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### Artist Profiles

#### Robbie Rowlands

Robbie Rowlands is a Melbourne based artist who graduated from Victorian College of the Arts in 1999. He also completed a year of study at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York where he undertook his first solo exhibition entitled FOUND.

His work explores the stability we take for granted in everyday objects. The repetitious and precise incisions he places into found forms and the distortion that follows reflects the inescapable passing of time that affects everything around us.

Recent site specific installations include 26 Surf Street Merricks Beach 2007, Structure Space and Place Memorial Tower 2007 and Penthouse Mouse 2008. He is also currently working toward a solo show at Place Gallery on 22 October.

#### Cameron Robbins

Cameron's work is based on the interaction with natural forces and the elements. Over the last 20 years he has produced site-specific installations for a wide range of locations around Australia, utilizing a variety of media and techniques including kinetic sculpture, wind and solar powered mechanical systems, sound, and ocean waves.

Cameron is based in Melbourne and studied Fine Art-Sculpture at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and the Victorian College of the Arts during the eighties.

His other recent and forthcoming exhibitions/projects include:

Double Vortex - permanent installation in the foyer of CH2, the Melbourne City Council's new Green building. 2006

Sea Shanties Wave Organ - sound installation on Lorne (Vic) Pier. August 2007

Wind Drawings Test Rig - installation on Central Pier, Docklands. March - April 2008

Indoor/Outdoor - a permanent wind kinetic installation at Place Gallery, Richmond (Vic). Sept 2008

Solar System - a permanent 1:1 billion scale model of the solar system, place around Port Philip Bay. October 2008

#### Matthew Morrow

Born in Melbourne in 1970, Matthew Morrow completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Sculpture) at Victoria College (Pahran) in 1990. His solo exhibitions have included Sculpture & Prints at the George Gallery (Melbourne) in 1997, and Paintings at the Sui Generis Gallery (Melbourne) in 1999.

Matthew's awards have included the Victoria College Dean's Acquisitive Award, Art Workz sculpture (second prize) and Footscray Map Art Prize (first prize).

He also participated in a number of group exhibitions over the last 15 years, some of which are:

2007 Merricks Beach House

2005 Where Are They Now, Niagra Galleries

2000 Sculpture Survey, Gomboc Gallery, Perth

1999 Exchanging Places, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney

1995 Past its Shelf Life, Meridian Gallery, Melbourne

(Artist profiles continued next page)

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### Artist Profiles continued...

#### Ben Morieson

Ben Morieson completed a Bachelor of Fine Art at RMIT in 1988. He then spent 2 years travelling through South America, Africa and Western Europe. He has since had numerous solo exhibitions and partaken in many Group shows. He has had residencies in Barcelona (Australian Council for the Arts) and the Echigo Tsumari Triennial in Japan (Asialink). He has also been the recipient of grants from Arts Victoria and the Australia council. His work has been exhibited in China, Japan, Germany, Britain and New Zealand.

#### Susan Jacobs

Susan Jacobs' practise has a strong basis in drawing which consistently informs spatial construction and object making, as processes that reference each other and often converge. Combining organic and manufactured materials in natural and built environments, her work is characterised by an exploration and subversion of the inherent character and primary function of selected materials and chosen sites.

Susan completed Postgraduate study at the Victorian College of The Arts in 1999 and has practised consistently since 2000. Her work has been exhibited at Ocular Lab Inc., The Narrows Contemporary Art, Conical Inc., Monash University Faculty Gallery, Seventh Gallery, West Space, Kangaroo Ground War Memorial and in several pre-demolition sites.

#### Campbell Drake

Campbell Drake was born in 1978 in Melbourne and currently lives and works in Melbourne as a practising architect, artist and lecturer. Drake's interest in the familiar unfamiliar, the glitch and the second glance has led to a series of projects ranging from Architecture and Interiors to Installations which place vernacular objects and spaces at the centre of our attention yet create a disquieting slippage from what we formally knew or from what we supposed they ought to be.

Most often working in collaboration with Artist and Designer James Carey, their recent projects include; Stanley St 'Data Landscape' 2008, 'The Final Curtain' 26 Surf St, 2007 and 'The Blundell House' 2005.

Drake was awarded the Interior Designer Award for Excellence 2007, a finalist for 'the Great Indoors' Netherlands 2007 and Runner Up in the Idea Awards 2006. Drake continues to practise under the name of Chameleon Architecture and teaches in the Architecture and Design Faculty at RMIT University.

#### James Carey

James Carey was born in Melbourne in 1977 and attended Monash University and RMIT Melbourne before pursuing a career as a designer and fine artist. His paintings explore the concept of lived experience and by working spontaneously and utilising a range of mediums, he constructs multi-layered, textured environments easily likened to the complexities of contemporary life. His paintings have been shown worldwide and are held in many private and public collections.

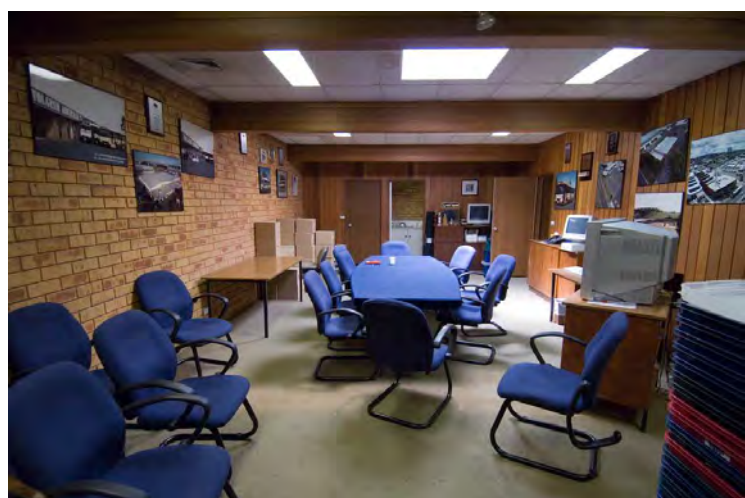
His more recent work has focused on the blurring of architecture, design and art. Whilst working on a more urban scale - using houses and buildings as the canvas - he investigates the idea of giving a new or different reading to a certain environment. He was involved in the 'Surf St House' project and along with Campbell Drake; their project 'Blundell House' won an award at the Shanghai Biennale 2007.

Along with the 'Depot' project in March 2008, James is also involved in '2020?' - an intervention at the North Melbourne Meat Market as part of the Next Wave Festival in May.

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Selection of images by Hilton Stone



# Depot

Installations by 7 artists at the decommissioned Grenda's bus depot

Selection of images by Hilton Stone continued...



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Promotional Flier



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decommissioned Grenda's bus depot.

**7 - 13 April 2008**

**12 noon - 6pm daily**

official opening Sunday 6 April at 2pm

[depot-installation.blogspot.com](http://depot-installation.blogspot.com)

**Grenda's Bus Depot**  
**9 Foster St Dandenong**

Writer - Geraldine Barlow

**James Carey**  
**Campbell Drake**  
**Susan Jacobs**  
**Ben Morieson**  
**Matt Morrow**  
**Cameron Robbins**  
**Robbie Rowlands**

Photography - Hilton Stone

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## Invitation

# Depot

You are invited to an exhibition of  
site-specific artworks at the  
Grenda's decommissioned bus depot.

**Opening**  
**2pm Sunday 6 April 2008**

RSVP  
by 1 April [jpembe@cgd.vic.gov.au](mailto:jpembe@cgd.vic.gov.au) or 9239 5134

**Grenda's Bus Depot**  
**9 Foster St Dandenong**  
**(Cnr Sword Street)**  
Melways 91A B7

**General viewing**  
**Monday 7 - Sunday 13 April 2008**  
**Daily 12noon - 6pm**  
[depot-installation.blogspot.com](http://depot-installation.blogspot.com)

Writer - Geraldine Barlow

Photography - Hilton Stone

### Artists -

Robbie Rowlands  
Cameron Robbins  
Matt Morrow  
Ben Morieson  
Susan Jacobs  
Campbell Drake  
James Carey

### Writer -

Geraldine Barlow

### Photography -

Hilton Stone

### Guest speaker

David H Thomas -

David has been a practising artist for  
over 25 years, and together with Peter  
Bennetts founded the Falls Creek Artist  
Camp in 2005.

David curates exhibitions, and  
manages the art collection at the  
Monash University Museum of Art.