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Green Bans Art Walk Project

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RESEARCH IMPACT STATEMENT

Research Background

The *Green Bans Art Walks* were developed as part of the Performance Space's *WALK* programme in 2011, acknowledging walking as a key tendency in recent international art practice. The *Green Bans Art Walks* project engaged with this phenomenon using the political history of the Green Bans in inner-Sydney as its geographical/cultural context.

Research Contribution

The Green Bans - actions to stop commercial development throughout the 1970s - were developed by the Builders Laborers Federation (BLF) in collaboration with local community groups. While their importance in preserving the architectural and social heritage of Sydney is widely acknowledged, access to this history has become increasingly difficult. *The Green Bans Art Walks* generated a framework in which citizens could engage with this history, 40 years on.

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[Green Bans Art Walk and Exhibition — 6 to 27 August 2011](#)



48 YEARS OF COMMUNITY AND UNION ACTION

Green Bans Art Walk and Exhibition
A collaborative project by The Cross Art Projects and BigFagPress
Walks Presented by Performance Space
Exhibitions curated by Jo Holder

6 to 27 August 2011

Green Bans Art Walk Exhibition in 2 Parts: The Cross Art Projects and The Firstdraft Depot Project Space, Sydney

Exhibiting and contributing artists: Pat Armstrong, Diego Bonetto, Josie Cavallero and Anne Kay, Michael Davies, Pat Fiske, Margaret Grafton, Jo Holder, Lucas Ihlein, Fiona MacDonald, Marion Marrison, Mini Graff, Mickie Quick, Joe Szabo. Contributing artists: Louise Anderson, Michelle Blakeney, Emma Elder and more.

Opening speakers: Jack Munday, Edmund Campion

Walk speakers: Wendy Bacon, Meredith Burgmann, Christopher Dean, Michael Davies, Jim Donovan, Michael Dysart, Joe Owens, Stacey Miers, Marilyn Fairskye, Ian Milliss and more.

Green Bans Film Night: 27 August at PCYC Woolloomooloo: speakers Pat Fiske with Jack Munday and Jim Donovan.

WALK Season: <http://www.performancespace.com.au/2011/green-bans/> or call (02) 8571 9101. *Sorry, all 5 walks booked out.*

Green Bans Website and Self-guided walks: More information and walk map download at www.greenbans.net.au

The Mundays and the Pringles and the Owens and the rank-and-file have effected one of those rare shifts in public thinking that occurs only a few times in a lifetime. Maybe they were mad hatters and larrikins — a true Australian tradition — but, by God, there's many a Sydney resident who will remember them with love.

Marion Hardman (Marrison) and Peter Manning, 'Green Bans. The Story of an Australian Phenomenon', Australian Conservation Foundation, 1975.

On the fortieth anniversary of the Green Bans, Green Bans Art Walk captures the ideals and struggle to protect the character of the inner-city areas of Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst and Kings Cross. These were the most brutal of the Green Ban struggles.

For four years Green Bans, a concept invented by the NSW Builder's Labourers Federation, inspired a nation and the world. From 1971 to 1974, thousands of builders labourers voted on over 50 requests for bans from resident groups, the National Trust and/or the Institute of Architects. Others followed around Australia. They voted for a big picture: to keep urban low cost housing and to protect the environment and heritage.

In Victoria Street after a brutal struggle, low-cost housing was lost with some heritage gain. Juanita Nielsen was murdered in mid-1975 and Mick Fowler, the other key leader, died an untimely death.

In Woolloomooloo the Labor Party promised to 'Save the 'Loo' and won Federal government in December 1972. This led to a visionary medium density workers' housing project embracing renewal and new designs.

Having a say in the city of the future created a planning system revolution, then changed institutions and laws. They set standards around the world. The state BLF leadership paid dearly. The union was de-registered and the leadership denied the right to work in their industry.

Green Bans Art Walk revives the old walkways across Woolloomooloo basin accessed from stairs in Victoria Street on the escarpment. The Walk symbolically re-unifies a beautiful area disconnected by rail and freeway structures, ugly site consolidations and looming high-rise.

Green Bans Art Walk opens up this crucial part of Sydney's history for a new generation.

We propose on-going walking routes, new signage and lighting, restoring existing and adding new Green Plaques, restoring and adding new artworks (perhaps a statue to Jack Munday) and a 'linear park' to create a peoples museum emphasising the area's residential character. Designation as a special area ensures that the planning system protects significance and character and this is passed on to future generations. We hope to help put low-cost urban housing back on top of the action list.

Each walk seeks your ideas and responses.

Thanks: The project is part of Performance Space's WALK, a season of walks, promenades, marches and strolls in and around Sydney taking place throughout 2011. XAP and BFP thank all the contributors and speakers, Green Banners past and present, The Firstdraft Depot Project Space, City of Sydney and the CFMEU (former BLF).

More information on Green Bans at www.greenbans.net.au



Diego Bonetto, 'Green Bans', digital print, 2011. After Margaret Grafton, 'Green Bans Tree', poster, 1973.



Fiona MacDonald, 'Woolloomooloo: Tom Uren, John Mulvenna, Joe Owens, Bob Pringle, Gerry Leonard, Mick Fowler, Nellie Leonard, 1975; Wall painting 19 Harmer St W'Loo, 1974', 2011. Big Fag Press.



Fiona MacDonald, 'Victoria St: Mick Fowler's Jazz Funeral, 1979; Eviction of 115 Victoria St, 1974', 2011. Big Fag Press.



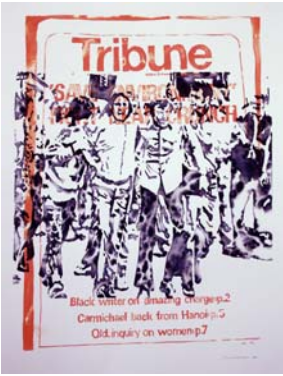
Marion Marrison, 'Rear of Victoria St from Rowena Place', 1975. Sliver gelatin print.



Marion Marrison, 'Mick Fowler', 1975. Mick joined the movement in April 1973. Sliver gelatin print.



Marion Marrison, 'Stephen St', 1975. Looking towards Brougham St from Forbes St. Sliver gelatin print.



Fiona MacDonald, 'Tribune, 29 August 1972', 2011. 86 x 50cm.



Fiona MacDonald, 'Tom Uren and Jack Mundy's Green Bans Phone Tree', 2011. 86 x 50cm.



Fiona MacDonald, 'Where the green bans were' and Jack Mundy (from Tribune), 2011. 86 x 50cm.



Fiona MacDonald, 'The Tree of Knowledge', 2011. 86 x 50cm.



Green Ban Archive 1971-1974; Jack Mundy's Phone Tree, 1973. Courtesy Trades Hall Association.



'Action Group Turns to Art', SMH, 1973 (nd). Courtesy Joe Owens deposit, Noel Butlin Archive, ANU.



'Why Green Bans', Builders Labourers Federation, 1973, authorised by Bob Pringle.



Exhibition install view, 2011



Jo Holder and Fiona MacDonald, Green Ban Archive, 1971-1974. Installation view (detail), 2011



1974 Wall: Marian Marrison, from Marion Hardman (Marrison) and Peter Manning, *Green Bans. The Story of an Australian Phenomenon*, 1975. Silver gelatin prints. Firstdraft Depot Project Space.



Living Archive: Trial Walks. Photos by Jo Holder, Jo Shi, Sung Pak. Local guides: Michelle Blakeney, Stacey Miers, Jack Mundy, Jim Donovan. Installation, 2011 Wall.



Mickie Quick, *Woolloomooloo Map*, floor work, 2011. Firstdraft Depot Project Space.



Margel Hinder, 'Aphrodite', bronze sculpture with fountain, 1981.

Opening of Denis Winston Place, Woolloomooloo by Sir Hermann David Black for Housing Commission of NSW and the Denis Winston Memorial C'tee of the Planning Research Centre, University of Sydney, October 1981.



Green Bans Art Walk Exhibition, part 2. Fiona MacDonald 'Hands Off', window work, 2011. View at The Cross Art Projects.

Podcast - [Art in the Expanded Field, Comparing 1971 & 2011](#)

Links

More Green Ban information: www.greenbans.net.au

Big Fag Press: bigfagpress.org

Green Bans Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/?q=#/event.php?eid=226524784049154>

CFMEU (Construction) former BLF, Green Bans History: <http://www.cfmeu.net.au/multiattachments/2247.html>

CFMEU Poster for 40th Anniversary of Green Bans: Download [attachment \[pdf\]](#)

Performance Space WALK project: <http://www.performancespace.com.au/2011/green-bans/>

Green Bans Art Walk, interview with Jo Holder at website: <http://www.artifacts.net.au/broadcast.html>

Art Monthly, Shoot for the head, Ian Millis 2012: [download pdf](#)

Green Bans City News, August 2011: [download pdf](#)

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