



BRIONY DOWNES

Art in the dark: Dark Mofo

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Now in its seventh year, *Dark Mofo* transforms Hobart into a red-hued spectacle of art, food and music. In addition to new *Mona* exhibitions *Mine* by Simon Denny, *Siloam*, *Gorillas in Our Midst*, and Kirsha Kaechele's *Eat the Problem*, *Dark Mofo*'s 2019 program pushes a hefty dose of visual art into the nooks and vacant spaces of Hobart's CBD.

Orbiting around the winter festival are Tony Albert's solo exhibition, *Confessions*; Andrew Hustwaite's kinetic contraptions in *Only the Penitent Shall Pass*; Patrick Hall's glass bottle installation *If They Should Accidentally Fall* at the Narryna historic house; and themed group exhibitions *The In Between* and *€mpo\$*.



Alicja Kwade, *WeltenLinie*, 2018. *Gorillas in Our Midst* exhibition, artist: Alicja Kwade. Photo credit: Mona/Jesse Hunniford. Image courtesy of the artist and Mona (Museum of Old and New Art), Hobart, Tasmania, Australia.

The most noticeable change to the visual arts line-up this year is the absence of *Dark Park*. Due to space restrictions imposed at its usual spot at Macquarie Point, *Dark Park* has been resurrected as *Dark Path*, a 4km art walk taking in Hobart's Queens Domain, the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens and the former site of Beaumaris Zoo. For *Dark Path*, several artists have embraced rugged terrain and native bushland to create site-specific works designed to be experienced under the cover of night.

Working with the site of Beaumaris Zoo, US multimedia artist Tony Oursler has created *6TH, 2019*, for *Dark Path*. Using projections coupled with elements of sound and light, Oursler engages with the site's history as the location where the last Tasmanian Tiger died in captivity by drawing attention to the dilapidated concrete animal enclosures via a series of projected visuals. Further along *Dark Path*, into the bushland of Queens Domain, Tasmanian Aboriginal artist Julie Gough has tied posters to trees to memorialise the lives of 180 Aboriginal children lost or stolen in the early years of Tasmania's colonisation.

Gough's *Dark Path* installation, titled *Missing or Dead, 2019*, is one of several new pieces commissioned for *Tense Past*, a major exhibition of the artist's work opening at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery during Dark Mofo.

In contrast to the night hike required to experience *Dark Path*, indoor immersive artworks by 11 artists spread throughout the interior of a former Forestry Tasmania building in *A Forest*. Via timed entry, viewers are invited to don protective earwear to view bodybuilder and performance artist Cassils being physically engulfed by fire and ice; hear a haunting recital of poetry in Shilpa Gupta's *For, In Your Tongue, I Cannot Fit: 100 jailed poets, 2017-2018*, and move through electroluminescent lines cast by Meagan Streader's *Slow Rinse, 2019*.

Following the 2018 Dark Mofo performance *Underneath the Bitumen the Artist*, in which he was buried beneath a road for three days, Mike Parr is once again performing – this time above ground – to further explore the theoretical implications of Kazimir Malevich's *Black Square, 1915*. Initially live streamed within the dark recesses of *The Tunnel*, a cavernous exhibition space in the Old Mercury Building, the results of Parr's performance *Towards a Black Square, 2019*, will be accessible to the public during Dark Mofo until 16 June, then painted over.

Dark Mofo's visual art program wouldn't be complete without a bit of latex and glitter, and both can be found in the contributions of Japanese artist Saeborg and Melbourne-based creative Paul Yore. A regular contributor to Tokyo's annual Great Latex Festival, Saeborg presents *Pigpen, 2016*, and *Slaughterhouse-15, 2019*, a giant kawaii farmyard populated by custom made, rubber clad characters resembling Duplo on steroids. Meanwhile, at The Black Temple Gallery, Yore has transformed the interior of a deconsecrated church with collage, gemstones and needlepoint tapestries to create a bedazzled chapel honouring love and excess in *It's all wrong but it's alright, 2019*.

Once again, Dark Mofo embraces the chill and darkness of winter, beckoning visitors to venture outside with a massive program of events brought together to challenge and delight.

Dark Mofo

Hobart

6 June – 23 June