

NATIONAL ACT

What's on in the Canberra art scene, March 24, 2018

By Karen Hardy

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Rebecca Selleck, *Cow/Soft Toy*, 2015 cow hide rug, found objects, steel, plaster, cotton, synthetic stuffing, rubber, planetary motor, electronics.

Photo: Supplied

Straight Outta Canberra

For as much as I always get into trouble from you, dear readers, every time I mention an exhibition outside of Canberra, here is one you shouldn't miss.

Alexander Boynes has curated a fabulous selection of works for *Straight Outta Canberra*, which will be on show at May Space, in Sydney, until April 14.

"It was once said the best thing to come out of Canberra was the Hume Highway," he says, "yet in the space of a decade the national capital has gone from being a place where residents said 'Don't tell anyone I'm from Canberra' to now saying 'Don't tell anyone ABOUT Canberra'."

He believes this is due to the city finally developing a personality, independent of what happens up at Parliament House, and the recognition of the rich cultural sector bubbling below the surface.

"Once upon a time the rite of passage for ANU School of Art graduates was to leave Canberra as soon as possible in order to 'make it'," he says.

"The irony is that internationally recognised artists who have called Canberra home - including Alison Alder, Vivienne Binns, Robert Boynes, eX de Medici, Rosalie Gascoigne, Richard Larter, Mandy Martin, Jorg Schmeisser, Ruth Waller - in part made it because they stayed."

Following in these footsteps, *Straight Outta Canberra* presents a group of ambitious emerging artists who have realised the benefits of an easygoing city that is host to every national institution under the sun. Artists include Tom Buckland, Tony Curran, Sanne Koelemij, Julian Laffan, Cat Mueller, Dionisia Salas, Rebecca Selleck and Rosalind Lemoh.

At May Space, 409b George St, Waterloo. Open Tuesday-Saturday 10am-5pm.