



CHAPTER HOUSE LANE

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6 FEBRUARY 2018

ROBERT BRAIN AND KATE JUST

Needleman, Feminist Fan

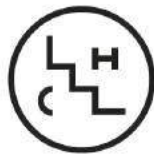
From 1 March – 28 April, Chapter House Lane presents *Needleman, Feminist Fan*, a group exhibition featuring hand embroidered and knitted works by artists Robert Brain and Kate Just.

The artworks included in *Needleman, Feminist Fan* engage subjectively with historically loaded art making techniques and gender politics; conveying the autobiography of each artist, who use thread in a way that transcends the material qualities of their craft through significant performative gestures.



Image: Robert Brain, *Mardi Gras*, 2012, pure wool, 100 x 140 cm. Image courtesy Maunsell Wickes, Sydney.

Robert Brain's prolific tapestry practice explores themes such as homoeroticism, art history and gender politics and is imbued with irreverent humour and unexpected juxtapositions. Brain has had a remarkable eight decades from his childhood in Tasmania; life in London and Europe in the 50s, 60s and 70s; a career as an anthropologist and academic; widespread travels; and life in the Blue Mountains where he now resides.



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Image: Kate Just, *Feminist Fan #15 (Claude Cahun, Self Portrait, 1927)*, 2015, hand-knitted wool and acrylic yarns, 46 x 35.5 cm. Image courtesy the artist.

Alongside *Brain*, Kate Just will present a selection of works from her *Feminist Fan* series, of over forty hand-knitted replicas of portraits of feminist artists around the globe. These artists include Sarah Lucas, Pussy Riot, Guerrilla Girls, Cindy Sherman, Lynda Benglis, Juliana Huxtable, Mithu Sen, Tracey Moffatt, Yoko Ono, Hannah Wilke and more. The title *Feminist Fan* emphasizes Just's reverence to these artists and to feminism; each carefully stitched picture constitutes a time-intensive act of devotion. Each picture is accompanied by a fan letter shared on Instagram using the hashtag #feministfan as a means of sharing feminism and extending a social discourse around the work.

Needleman, Feminist Fan brings together two artists from very different backgrounds and experiences to create new relationships between textile works. The exhibition is curated by Chapter House Lane Director, Louise Klerks. In conversation, Klerks states:

“Chapter House Lane has a strong history of initiating artistic collaborations. Over the years, we’ve worked alongside a number of organisations and artists to bring together different, often totally unexpected, people on paired projects. This methodology has become a real source of strength for the organisation that is reflected in our annual programs. Personally, I feel very optimistic about working in this way and I’ve carried some of the ideas (that have been shaped by our team) into my own independent curatorial projects.”

The exhibition *Needleman, Feminist Fan* opens to the public this March. Join the curator and exhibiting artists in conversation on Thursday 1 March from 5:30-6:00pm at Chapter House Lane, followed by opening drinks from 6:00-8:00pm.



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About the artists

Robert Brain was born in Tasmania in 1933. Robert Brain lives and works in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales. Brain's recent solo exhibitions include *Tapestry (2017)* at Maunsell Wickes, Sydney; *Robert Brain: An Autobiographical Tapestry (2016)*, a Bathurst Regional Art Gallery touring exhibition held at Bathurst Regional Art Gallery and Maitland Regional Art Gallery, 2016. In 2017-18, Brain was a finalist in the *National Self-Portrait Prize 2017* at UQ Art Museum, Queensland. He is currently represented by Maunsell Wickes Gallery, Sydney.

Kate Just (born 1974) is an established American born, Melbourne based artist known for her knitted, sculptural and pictorial work, as well as installation based, public and participatory art projects often deploying text, textiles, clothing, knitting and neon. Just holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Sculpture) from Monash University, a Master of Arts from RMIT and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Painting) from the Victorian College of the Arts where she has been a Lecturer in Art since 2005. She has exhibited extensively, both locally and internationally, including at ACCA, A.I.R. Gallery and AC Institute in New York, Gertrude Contemporary and National Gallery of Australia. See more from Kate Just on her [website](#).

Exhibition: 1 March– 28 April 2018

Artist talks: Thursday 1 March, 5:30–6:00pm

Launch: Thursday 1 March, 6–8pm

Location: Chapter House Lane, entry via Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000

Chapter House Lane is a non-profit contemporary art gallery in Melbourne. Find out more at chapterhouselane.org.au. Contact us for media enquiries, interviews or images: Louise Klerks on 0404 118105 louise@chapterhouselane.org.au

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