

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

IN THE GALLERIES

RACHEL COAD: FRONTIER

THE human movement at play within Rachel Coad's vastly scaled, astutely painted oils might be mistaken for that of contemporary dance or performance. The beautiful young woman who assumes the role of the painter's model is captured in various contortions and phases of vigorous physical activity. The body — rendered via intricate details and rough-hewn strokes — is taut and tense rather than graceful and deliberate. A dramatic gesture is, in fact, a frantic dive to the ground. Two of the largest works lie flat and unframed on the floor of the space. They picture a Harrier Jump Jet and Panavia Tornado GR4. Our protagonist's movements are not aesthetic or performative motions. They are survival techniques.

Tues to Sat 11am-5pm, until July 21, Gallersmith, 170-174 Abbotsford Street, North Melbourne, 9329 1860, galleriesmith.com.au

THE ANTARCTIC CONVERGENCE

IF THERE'S one quality that defines this collection of works from the world's southernmost terrain, it's that of unbridled energy. While often imagined as a silent continent, group exhibition *The Antarctic Convergence* — showing as part of the Liquid Architecture festival — is awash with sonic and visual dynamism. Curator Philip Samartzis' surround sound and video work features a circular arrangement of screens and speakers, each depicting different vantages and fragments of the natural and built Antarctic landscape, thundering waves counterpointing gales howling through an almost military-style base camp. Phil Dadson's triple-channel video work, which dominates the largest of West Space's galleries, takes the form of a forensic study of humankind's presence. The frenetic shudder of a windsock pole, the sight of scientists wandering a vast icescape and the buzz of overhead electrical wires each play off one another. David Burrows' stunning photographs depict an Antarctic landscape punctuated by brilliant orange and green mosses and seaweed draping mountainous rocks and crevices. Like much of this work, it shows the diverse palette of this supposedly colourless, soundless land.

Wed to Fri noon-6pm, Sat noon-5pm, until July 14, West Space, level 1, 225 Bourke Street, city, 9662 3297, westspace.org.au

KIM DEMUTH: INDUSTRIAL ZEN

KIM Demuth's "sculptural photography" describes empty, transitional spaces. Staircases, passageways, pedestrian tunnels and elevators characterise this new exhibition. But it's not so much the subject matter as Demuth's treatment of it that gives this series its unusual magnetism. Manipulating, warping and softening his photographs via custom-made frames and textured screens, his photographs become gestural and abstract. These may be industrial sites, but Demuth imbues them with an almost ethereal presence. It's perhaps not entirely sufficient on its own, but this series does offer some intriguing possibilities for the form.

Thurs to Sat noon-6pm, until July 28, Beam Contemporary, level 1, 30 Guildford Lane, city, 9670 4443, beamcontemporary.com.au

MARK RODDA: AUTUMN LANDSCAPES

THE playfulness that characterises Mark Rodda's landscape paintings is part of their power. His rambling, multilayered oil-on-board vistas speak of the fantastical and the surreal (painting *Valhalla* is pictured below). Tentacle vines and sugar-coated trees rise against frozen river ripples and muted jelly bean clouds; castles of precariously cobbled objects and indefinable forms tower above a blanket of valley fog. Themes of shelter and refuge circulate. Seemingly empty homes and makeshift huts pepper these scenes, providing communal sites of rest and protection from the elements. It's a joy. Where Rodda's forms and use of flat colour once felt a tad too cartoonish, the palette, variety of textures and tones that mark *Autumn Landscapes* take his work to a charming new place. While the larger paintings in this collection use vibrant fragments of colour and detail, it's the smaller, more subdued works that resonate. The soft, tonal washes and cool skies of paintings *Sparse Thicket* and *Under Grey Clouds* suggest and evoke rather than narrate.

Wed to Sat noon-6pm, until July 21, Utopian Slumps, 33 Guildford Lane, city, 9077 9918, utoplanslumps.com

DAN RULE

LAST DAYS

**ARCHIBALD PRIZE**

LAST chance to spend time in the Yarra Valley with familiar faces, as the 2012 Archibald Prize exhibition is closing tomorrow. Entries include Tim Storrier's winning self-portrait, the Packing Room Prize-winning portrait of John Wood, and Ben Quilty's captivating *Captain S after Afghanistan* (pictured).

Today and tomorrow 9.30am-5pm, TarraWarra Museum of Art, 311 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Healesville, \$8-\$10, 5957 3100, twma.com.au

THE GOLDEN DRAGON

MEN play women and women perform as men, Asians play Caucasians and Caucasians play Asians, while old play young and vice versa in this topsy-turvy look at the workings of an Asian restaurant kitchen. The humorous but confronting *The Golden Dragon*, by German playwright Roland Schimmelpfennig, reveals insights into the modern migratory world by following the lives of the restaurant employees and local residents. Last performances today.

Today 3pm and 7.30pm, Lawler Theatre, MTC, 140 Southbank Boulevard, Southbank, \$25-\$40, 8688 0800, mtc.com.au

THE MOTHER—ER WITH THE HAT

RED Stitch Actors Theatre presents American playwright Stephen Adly Guirgis' Tony Award-nominated 2011 play, *The Mother—er with the Hat*. Red Stitch's Demetrios Sirilas stars as Jackie, a New York Puerto-Rican former drug dealer out on parole, reunited with his girlfriend Veronica (Michelle Vergara Moore), and ready to go straight. But jealousies erupt when Jackie finds a stranger's hat on Veronica's bed. A gritty, potty-mouthed exploration of moral relativism. Ends today.

Today 4pm and 8pm, Red Stitch Theatre, Rear 2a Chapel Street, St Kilda, \$20-\$39. redstitch.net

