

and my roarings are poured out like the waters brings together artworks by George Kuchar, p. Walters and susu. This exhibition irreverently takes its title from the laments of Job, a biblical figure whose piety was tested through the loss of their prosperity.

Like this biblical reference, each of these artist's practices can be interpreted as a record. This appears most obviously in George Kuchar's *Weather Diary #5*, 1989, one of a series of works filmed by Kuchar in Oklahoma during the spring tornado seasons. In this low budget video diary Kuchar toys with the expected spectacle of a storm, the radio blares in the background warning us of foreboding meteorological events whilst Kuchar prophetically spouts cliché slogans of consumerism from the discomfort of "motel hell." In this diary's failure to capture an actual tornado this work acts as a document of a mundane existence in the shadow of mayhem. It is possible and potentially necessary to contextualise this in the context of an AIDS crisis, where survival and its recording became a political act.

The sculptures of susu evoke archeological records; an excavated tablet resting against the wall, an isolated and seemingly eroded relief column evoking memory of a greater structure. The semblance of longevity embedded in these works is brought about by a material practice based in translation, using techniques of digital manipulation, 3D modelling and printing to corrupt candid imagery into material objects. The somewhat cliché urge to record that comes with access to the digital seeks articulation in permanence.

Finally in the works of p. Walters the record resumes its appearance in the diary; the paper works displayed appear ripped from a visual diary whilst *Affirmations or Lotu to our Lord Leviathan*, 2023, emulates compositional strategies of illuminated manuscripts. All works employ materials and drawn gestures associated with planning and drawing, work made in the moment. Perhaps as Kuchar articulates again and again: work made "never often enough to make the darkness not so awful."

Yet also it is through Walters' work that the idea of record in these practices is complicated. In many ways the record can be seen as working in relationship to a politics of representation, as with the interpretation of Kuchar's politicising of survival. Yet these works do not document presence alone, but seek to link into the artist's role of living and making in relationship to histories. With p. Walters this can be seen in the presence of the Tuna, wrapping its way around the figure, holding the potential to represent a range of biblical references, and position the self bonded to multiple worlds, the migratory animal, the christian dichotomy of good and evil or the monstrous leviathan described by Job as 'king over all the children of Pride,' a sin reframed.

Kuchar's lethargic musings largely take place in the walls of Rontier Motel, one consonant shy of Frontier Motel. The referencing to histories of violence of the American Southwest are almost excessively obvious, children singing American classics such as *I Will Die With a Hammer in My Hand* are paired with Kuchar's satirising of the touristic consumption of indigenous identity found through postcards.

And finally like a cyclone traversing the Pacific susu's textures are corrupted from aerial and landscape views taken traveling from Taiwan to Aotearoa, plaster is mixed with water and Diatomaceous Earth deposits, picked up in Taiwan emulating global cycles of mineral exchange and movement, over geographical and economic time scales. The materials and lands of elsewhere appear alongside the self, are always there.

Although only one way into these works this interpretation seeks to position this works in relation to Sione Tuivailala Monu's *The way we were*, a practice where documentation of self is positioned in the forefront and holds the same capacity as these practices to reach into history through the act.

Owen Connors

Robert Heald Ltd
230 Leftbank
Cuba Mall
PO Box 11911
Wellington 6142
New Zealand

+64 (0) 21 107 7092
info@roberthealdgallery.com
roberthealdgallery.com

George Kuchar (1942 - 2011)

George Kuchar was an American underground film director and video artist, known for his low-fi aesthetic. Kuchar trained as a commercial artist at the School of Industrial Art, now known as the High School of Art and Design, a vocational school in New York City. He graduated in 1960 and drew weather maps for a local news show. During this period, he and his twin brother Mike Kuchar were making 8mm movies, which were showcased in the then-burgeoning underground film scene alongside films by Andy Warhol, Kenneth Anger, and Stan Brakhage. Ken Jacobs brought attention of their work to Jonas Mekas, who championed their work in the Village Voice and elsewhere.

After leaving New York City for San Francisco, Kuchar prolifically produced video diaries, the true quantity of which remains unknown. Varying in duration from five to ninety minutes, Kuchar's video diaries inflect his everyday life with familiar themes of Kuchar's oeuvre such as appetite, voluptuousness, the hilarity of bathos, campy appropriation, flatulence, the weather, urination, friendship, love, and the artificiality of cinema itself. The most well known of Kuchar's video diaries are his Weather Diary Series that chronicle Kuchar's annual pilgrimages to El Reno, Oklahoma, to observe tornadoes.

p. Walters

p. Walters is a taniwha with various ingoa & Northland iwi + hapū + Moana affiliations, based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. BFA (Hons), Elam School of Fine Arts, 2022.

Recent apocalypses include *Cruel Optimism*, Artspace Aotearoa, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, 2021; *WHAKAKIWI*, The Lightship, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, 2022, and *Motherland/Homeland*, HOEA! Gallery & Art Centre, Te Tairāwhiti Gisborne, 2023.

susu

susu 蘇子誠 is a Taiwanese (Han, Min-nan) artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.

Recent exhibitions include *Between the Gift and its Reprisal*, Artspace Aotearoa, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, 2022; *Music Video*, play_station, Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington, 2022, and *The Moon and the Pavement*, The Physics Room, Ōtautahi Christchurch, and Ashburton Art Gallery, 2022.