

Local artist brings Dada to the inner west in a new exhibition *From Dada to Gaga*

Marrickville artist Madam L'Ashby brings a slice of the inner west's glamorous history to life in a new exhibition opening on September 25 at the Chrissie Cotter Gallery in Camperdown.

From Dada to Gaga is a playful installation creating a subversive and humorous social critique of contemporary news and celebrity through a series of non-digital photomontage artworks.

Sponsored by Marrickville Council as part of its annual arts program, *From Dada to Gaga* takes inspiration from the iconic Australian metal mesh accessories brand Glomesh, which was produced in St Peters and Leichhardt during the 1960's and 70's.

The collection features a range of Glomesh items as well as archival information about former Glomesh production in the inner west.

Madam L'Ashby draws on the absurdist tradition of the Dadaist art movement by using scissors and glue, rather than Photoshop or paint, to express views of modern life through images presented by the mass media.

L'Ashby says *"The work contains elements at once real and imaginary, a metaphorical 'cutting up of society' and critique of the celebrity culture in which we live. My reference to Glomesh conveys absurdity and glamour at the same time, much as the 'cult of celebrity' does."*

Madam L'Ashby is the subversive alter-ego of long time Marrickville resident Suzanne Ashby who distributes her art-form yearly by snail mail and sees the dada humour in everything.

"I fell in love with Glomesh at a Myer Roselands handbag counter in 1979, when I purchased a silver wallet, the beginning of an extensive collection which was accumulated over many years from local op-shops and markets."

Originally produced by Glomesh International in Bondi, Glomesh production moved to the St Peters, May St factory in the Marrickville Local Government Area in the 1960's and 70's. Kolotex then manufactured Glomesh in George St, Leichhardt before the brand moved offshore and then disappeared in the 1980's.

While pre-loved Glomesh pieces are a staple find in vintage markets and shops, the brand relaunched in late 2013 with a contemporary line of Glomesh bags.

Madam L'Ashby also hopes the exhibition will bring *“a renewed appreciation of the glamour, beauty and versatility of Glomesh and an awareness of its connection to our local community.”*

The exhibition opens September 25 and runs to 5 October.

Ends.

From Dada to Gaga
Chrissie Cotter Gallery
Pidcock Street, Camperdown

Opening event 6pm, 25 September
25 September - 5 October 2014
Thursday – Sunday 11am – 5pm
www.madamlashby.com

For more information, images and interviews, please contact
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About Dada

Dada, a French word for 'hobbyhorse', was a post-World War One anti-art cultural movement which prized nonsense and irrationality. Dada's visual and literary artists worked in six principal cities between 1916 and 1924 – Berlin, Cologne, Hannover, Zurich, Paris and New York. The artists' work was a sarcastic and irreverent reaction to the horrors of war. While serious, Dada art as 'nonsensical to the point of whimsy' and featured multi media including assemblage, collage, photomontage and 'readymade' objects.

Artist's statement

Using scissors and glue, the art of Madam L'Ashby is both playful and political. The artist draws on the absurdist tradition of Dada-ism to create new non-digital photomontage images which reflect a subversive and humorous political and social critique of contemporary news and celebrity.

A recurring motif throughout Madam L'Ashby's work references Glomesh – the iconic Australian metal mesh used to make handbags, purses, and other glamorous items in the 60s and 70s. Each artwork is accompanied by a Glomesh piece which is represented in, or references the social commentary of the images. The intent is to convey absurdity and glamour at the same time, much as the cult of celebrity does.

