



Here Nor There was a collaboration between Melbourne lovelies Jacqui Shelton and Autumn Tansey on exhibit at Kings ARI in April this year. The exhibition moved through and explored themes of removal, relocation, readjustment, the real and the imagined and the tensions between the human body and its surroundings – a trip through the ultra-real, the surreal and spaces in between. Through their subtle mixed media installation Autumn and Jacqui took us on two very different rides.

WRITTEN BY SYLVIA MEAD

Autumn's series of photos trace her journey through 12 cycles of chemo and hint at the complex highs and lows. From Antarctica to London to her treatment chair in hospital, she opens a door into her personal experience of cancer. In a world where Facebook advertises our friends' greatest holiday snaps and records our highest highs, the gap between this shallow shiny view of the world and reality is stark, particularly for a young woman dealing with a serious illness. It seems that now, in 21st century life, reality doesn't match the airbrushed fantasy in our heads of what life should be.

Through her photos, Autumn gives us a reality check and brings us back to a more simple and honest look at real life. Remember family holidays? Full of happy memories but also staged shots in front of giant pineapples or road signs with wide fake smiles. She describes her work as trying to make sense of feelings of wanting to be somewhere else, escaping the reality of chemotherapy and using the work to help her move on or at least move somewhere.

This work highlights the depressing reality of cancer treatment, with each photo featuring Autumn and her IV drip stand as her faithful companion. The effect is confronting, haunting and somehow very lonely but also shows a depth of feeling which reflect her experience and personality. It's as if she wants to show us there's hope on the other side. Her smile in the photos shows a quiet self-assuredness

and commitment to survival which got me deep down in my heart particles.

Autumn admits her work came about when she "didn't have her shit together" but hoped that people would find hope in the grimness of her reality as she did. She says cancer isn't often the subject of art, maybe because it's still a social taboo to talk about or you're serious illness in public. These photos tackle cancer head on and make no apologies in doing so.

Alongside the personal story of illness, these photos have a philosophical element which reflects a suspension of normal measured time. Her body clock became dominated by a treatment schedule and this altered sense of time is a common theme throughout the exhibition.

Jacqui's short films are set on a constant loop and show three scenes; beach, backyard and a playground. These films have a different feel to Autumn's photos where the aim is removed observation rather than personal introspection. She has removed the human subjects from her film and laid bare all that's left over. The result is disconcerting in ways and makes us feel like a particular moment in time and space has been stretched out and disgorged. Everyone will respond differently to a swing or sea saw moving by itself or a trampoline bouncing with unseen legs; whether creepy or meditative, the films certainly mesmerize and force you to see what's left when the

human element is removed.

Jacqui's films explore human interaction with space and time, our spatial perception and the sense of being grounded we take for granted. Without removing ourselves from the world, how can we see what's really there? There is an implication of travel and the constant passage of time in the films which forces us to examine our presence in the world and our awareness of our surroundings.

These themes of dislocation, wanting to be somewhere else, relocation and manipulation of time and space come together in Jacqui and Autumn's collaborative piece – affectionately known as "the big chunker" by its creators. The big chunker is a larger than life projected image of the girls, with round holes cut out where their faces should appear. A step behind the image means we can stand behind the image, putting our faces on top of their bodies. The piece is funny and causes great amusement on opening night with many an iPhone being pulled out to take shots of men with beards perched on top of the girls' bodies. When people had finished playing with the big chunker all that was left was two bodies with no faces. Somehow all the themes of the exhibition were synthesized into those two faceless girls.

*Here Nor There picked us up, stretched us out and suspended us between moments in time*