



# Broached Retreat

2014.5.24 - 2014.8.29

UCCA

Ullens Center for  
Contemporary Art  
尤伦斯当代艺术中心

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Broached Commissions, a Melbourne-based design studio, has pioneered a new approach to the applied arts and to design objects based on extensive curatorial research into overarching historical themes such as colonialism and globalization. One of their central concerns is a key question in international applied arts practice: What happens to design when it migrates?

The group's first exhibition in China takes as a starting point Australia's unique position as a mediator between European cultural traditions and its East and Southeast Asian neighbors. Far from merely a show of Australian design in China, "Broached Retreat" invites international designers to collaborate on discussions on the history of design. "Broached Retreat" features twelve pieces by eight designers. The exhibition includes works from the group's first two highly successful collections, "Broached Colonial" and "Broached East," alongside new works made for the UCCA presentation. "Broached Colonial" explores the colonial period from the Australian perspective, probing how the country's unique cultural geography and population—remote yet European, bringing together entrepreneurs, frontiersmen, and convicts—impacted the development of its nascent material culture.

"Broached East" focuses on Australia's relationship to Asia during the Australian gold rush. This period saw the beginning of mainstream consumer products and lifestyle magazines, an era of consumption that continues today. With an influx of gold rush money, Australia quickly pivoted from being a penal colony to a merchant economy. It is during this period that the arts & crafts movement throws down the challenge to champion the well and locally made over the ubiquitous, cheap, mass-produced version—another dichotomy that persists to this day and is at the heart of the industrial dilemmas that Broached focuses on.

"Broached Retreat" situates these collections within a new context: a pavilion constructed out of fabric and stone. The pavilion consists of a masculine study and a feminine boudoir. The rooms are conceived as meditative refuge, featuring works that address the question of how we experience private, interior spaces today. A few new works are being created to fit with the show's pavilion context. A day bed and stools are being made from the Dzek Max Lamb Marmoreal terrazzo stone. A giant loom containing a weaving by Susan Dimasi of MaterialByProduct and a dressing table by Chen Lu are being designed especially for the UCCA exhibition.

Broached Commissions is interested in design as a creative canon unto itself. The group explores narratives of design: how different times and cultures came to produce the

forms that they did, and how these ideas grew, shifted, and evolved when adopted by designers and artisans in different parts of the world. The group investigates not just objects, but the locally specific intentions and desires that inspired them. For each commission, core Broached designers are joined by a curator to initiate research into the human and industrial stories of a particular era in Asian-Pacific history. Working with curators and scholars, the group constructs a narrative framework to guide the design. Broached then reaches out to international designers whose interests and practice fit the project, producing concept sketches and prototypes before engaging artisans and specialists to realize the object.

"Broached Retreat" is conceived by Broached Commissions Creative Director Lou Weis. The pavilion is designed by Chen Lu. Participating designers include Broached founding members Adam Goodrum, Trent Jansen, and Charles Wilson alongside works by Keiji Ashizawa (Tokyo), Susan Dimasi (Melbourne), Max Lamb (London), Naihan Li (Beijing), Chen Lu (Sydney), and Azuma Makoto (Tokyo). The exhibition is sponsored by Asialink. Technical support is provided by The Royals.

## About Broached Commissions

Broached Commissions initiates bespoke made and limited edition design collections, each based on a different historical context. Broached gives form to historical fictions. By fusing the depth of history with contemporary design, the company creates new work that embodies a story of Australian life as one that is deeply connected to global trends. Applying a collaborative research and design process, the company enables an international dialogue about design from the Australian experience and perspective. Design ideas are adapted to local contexts when they move from country to country, from one design studio to another. Broached Commissions shows the Australian experience of this process of design migration. Broached was founded by its Creative Director Lou Weis and Vincent Aiello.



Asialink Arts actively expands opportunities for cultural exchange and aims to develop the international capability of the cultural sector based on the principles of partnership, collaboration and reciprocity. Exhibition Touring develops contemporary projects of Australian art and design for exhibition throughout the Asian region, reflecting current art practices and providing opportunities for artistic exchange and development. [www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/arts](http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/arts)

## Broached Colonial, Birdsmouth Table

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### Materials

Table legs: Marblo

Castors: brass

Tabletop: wenge and blockwood

Drawers: kangaroo skin lining

### Dimensions

83 x 267 x 128.5 cm

*Birdsmouth Table* is a highly functional and symbolic piece by Adam Goodrum. It incorporates a central tool of empire, the mast, into a beautiful jewelry-like element that punctuates the Chippendale-inspired tabletop at each of the leg standing points. The table has eight legs, each with a brass castor, and six drawers lined with kangaroo skin.



This Charles Wilson piece beautifully integrates a range of colonial period references into a traditional furniture type, the tall boy, which also has its origins in the late seventeenth century. The seven-drawer *Tall Boy* brings together a love for the makeshift agricultural structures of rural Australia, the slender lines of Biedermeier furniture and the simplicity of obelisks to create a unique object.

## Broached Colonial, Tall Boy

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### Materials

Joins and legs: handcrafted blackwood finished with French polish

### Dimensions

154.3 x 50.6 (bottom drawer) & 36.3 (top drawer) cm

## Broached Colonial, Dream Lantern

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### Materials

Light: light bulb, brass, glass

Disks: timber, glass, Marblo, brass (four separate pieces)

### Dimensions

Light: 25.8 x 7.5 x 7.5 cm

Shades:

(Brass) 42.5 cm in diameter

(Cut glass) 11.4 x 35.5 x 35.5 cm

(Timber) 4.5 x 42.5 x 42.5 cm

(Translucent Marblo) 3.2 x 35 x 35 cm

Chen Lu's *Dream Lantern* is the result of research into curiosity objects of the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, such as magic lanterns. The four decorative shades are inspired by different elements in the famous life of escaped convict Mary Bryant. The light is completely mobile and can be hung as a pendant or used as a table lantern.



## Broached Colonial, Briggs Family Tea Service

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### Materials

Slipcast porcelain, bull kelp, wallaby pelt, copper, brass

### Dimensions

George, teapot: 22.5 x 20.5 x 13 cm

Woretermoeteyenner, sugar bowl: 16 x 13.5 x 9 cm

Dolly, milk jug: 12.5 x 12.5 x 8.5 cm

John, teacup: 7 x 8.5 x 8 cm

Eliza, teacup: 7.5 x 10.5 x 8 cm

Mary, teacup: 10 x 9 x 6.5 cm



*Briggs Family Tea Service* by Trent Jansen represents the marriage of George Briggs, a free settler to Tasmania, to Woretermoeteyenner of the Pairrebeenne people, and the four children they had together. The tea service brings together the materials common for water holding to each culture: porcelain in Britain and bull kelp in Tasmania, representing the beginnings of a hybrid culture.



## Broached East, Paludarium Shigelu

**Edition of 3**  
**Materials**

Aluminium and glass

**Dimensions**  
120 x 80 x 80 cm

The floral arts of Japan made a huge impact on the Western world during the Meiji Restoration. Azuma Makoto was chosen to re-present the complex and fascinating history of the transportation of plants that was facilitated by the creation of the Wardian case, a glass enclosure for plants. *Paludarium Shigelu*, a biosphere for a single plant, is the direct successor of this nineteenth century technology.

## Broached East, Ellipse

**Edition of 50**

**Materials**

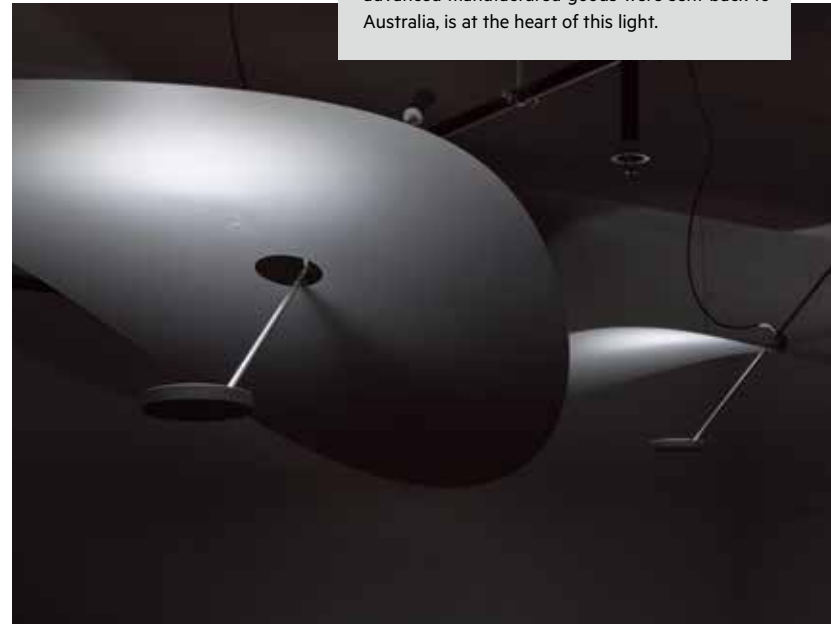
Steel and aluminium

**Dimensions**

Pendant: 180 x 80 cm

Light arm: 123.5 cm in length

*Ellipse* continues Keiji Ashizawa's poetic play with base materials, simple geometries, and the work of gravity to create a sense of movement. The extensive trade between Australia and Japan, in which raw materials were sent out to Japan, and advanced manufactured goods were sent back to Australia, is at the heart of this light.



## Broached East, Chinaman's File Rocking Chair

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**Edition of 12 plus 1 artist's proof**

**Materials**

Manchurian ash and steel

**Dimensions**

118 x 98.5 x 84 cm



*Chinaman's File* is a rocking chair designed for the roughly 16,500 Chinese gold diggers who walked from Robe in South Australia to the Victorian goldfields (480 kilometres in as little as 13 days) during the mid-nineteenth century. The rocking motion experienced by the user mimics the movement experienced by an infant slung to its mother's back. Designed by Trent Jansen, *Chinaman's File Rocking Chair* is a mechanical version of the maternal embrace.

Naihan Li has created a whisky bar for an imagined nineteenth century Chinese entrepreneur. It acts as a gateway to catharsis for a sophisticated, worldly man, isolated but thriving in the Australian frontier culture. The form is inspired by armillary spheres, astrolabes and globe bars.



## Broached East, Armillary Whisky Bar

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**Edition of 8**

**Materials**

Brass and black walnut

**Dimensions**

140 x 84 x 84 cm



## Broached East, Inside Out Cabinet

Edition of 10 plus 1 artist's proof

### Materials

Plywood, Manchurian ash, brass

### Dimensions

152.8 x 60.6 x 690.6 cm

*Inside Out Cabinet* takes the pre-modern necessity of hidden drawers and turns it into a playful centerpiece of a cabinet. Designer Adam Goodrum imagined the cabinet as an old man who had made his money on the gold fields: the calm, sophisticated, white exterior represents his public face, the colorful interior his youth and the origins of his wealth.

## Broached Retreat, Dressing Table

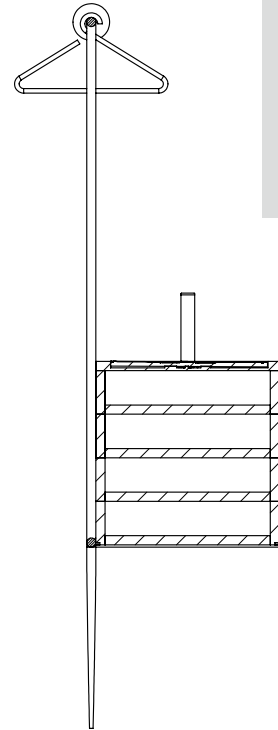
Edition of 8 plus 1 artist's proof

### Materials

Steel and timber

### Dimensions

296.5 x 40 x 40 cm



The dressing table is an almost extinct furniture typology, killed off by women entering the workforce and the homogenization of our interiors so that we all dress and work from the same facilities. The Meiji Restoration saw the explosion of Oriental exoticism as the geisha hit the popular imagination. The color palette of Asia remains somewhat fixed, even within its own cinema. Chen Lu's *Dressing Table* is based on late nineteenth century geisha dressing tables, originally designed to be knelt at on a tatami mat.



◀ Production image

## Loom: A Poetic Engagement with Reproduction # 1

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### Materials

Victorian ash, brass

### Dimensions

155 x 225 x 90 cm



For the blockbuster National Gallery of Victoria show "Melbourne Now," fashion brand MaterialByProduct and Broached Commissions teamed up to create a work that evolved over the month-long exhibition, with Susan Dimasi working on the loom. The frame, designed by Broached Commission's Trent Jansen, is a mobile set of rectangular structures that assemble as an A-frame for weaving and collapse inside each other for presentation as a singular artwork when ready to be hung on a wall.

## Marmoreal White, Terrazzo by Max Lamb for Dzek

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The terrazzo used for "Broached Retreat" is made from the Marmoreal White by Max Lamb for Dzek.

Marmoreal means "real marble" in Italian and is used to describe materials or objects that resemble marble. "Composed of four historically significant Veronese marbles, Marmoreal is a material exploration that celebrates the individual qualities of these stones while acknowledging that the sum of its parts makes for something far more compelling," explains Dzek Founder Brent Dzekciorius.

Broached was keen to work with Lamb, and the Dzek product provided the perfect opportunity to create a cold, hyper-graphic, strong presence within the masculine part of the "Broached Retreat" pavilion.



## "Broached Retreat" Pavilion

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### Designed by Chen Lu

The "Broached Retreat" pavilion was designed by Chen Lu to reflect a couple that share a life together but both require a private space of their own. No one owns either space. The woman also uses the study as the man does the 'boudoir.' Both enjoy hard and soft spaces.

The Marmoreal terrazzo is the linking mechanism, the one material that flows through the entire pavilion. The rooms are imagined as being joined by a central atrium space, all sitting within a much larger apartment. The graphical patterns that occupy the gallery walls in the atrium space is an abstract view onto surrounding high rise apartments, the inhabitants of Broached Retreat's casual and personal conversations mapped across the grid's surface.





**Hours**

Tuesday – Sunday, 10:00-19:00

Last entry at 18:30

Closed on Monday

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