

Human experience and connection permeates the work of Susan Hawkins, from the nature of each material she uses, to the role they have played in her own personal life. *Make of Me* explores these connections through sculptural assemblages created from cultural debris - objects once integral to communication, which now, due to the rapid development of technology, have become obsolete. Hawkins aims to honour these past connections by enabling them to create relationships of their own. *Make of Me* is a mapping of interwoven personal histories, creating new connections through repurposing and anthropomorphising items that were, at one point, integral to daily life.

The nature of communication is constantly changing and evolving. The invention of technology to 'enhance' our ability to communicate brought a physical element to human correspondence. We influence this development, from the personal histories created online and through the evolution of devices created for the purpose of communication. Culture itself transforms these objects by either rendering them obsolete or repurposing them, as we see with the work in *Make of Me*. Our inability to physically see the personal histories imbued in these objects juxtaposes our innate understanding of the role they played in daily life. By mimicking the nature of connectivity today - 'regramming, reblogging,' etc, Hawkins aims to present a physical history of collected social and personal relations. Creating a 'profile' unique to the individual histories of each component, similar to how we portray ourselves online.

Today, experience is collected in the intangible space of the internet, mirroring the historical nature of each item selected by Hawkins. By employing New Materialism's emphasis on the preceding histories of an object and Hawkins questions how these objects effect the audience's interpretation in response to familiar imagery. Assembling parts of old telecommunication devices and household elements - items all innately tied to social intercourse. Kitchen chairs bear witness to an ongoing ritual of not only meals but *conversations* shared. Tyres enable us to move from place to place, closing the physical distance between people and place. Much like the nature of her day-to-day existence, moving continually between Brisbane and Melbourne, Hawkins is reliant on all of these technologies, past or present. Adding another layer of physicality to connection. Sourcing many items from her family's business installing telecom infrastructure, she sought to give each a new life and value. By paying respect to history and highlighting the contemporary tendency to recycle without consideration or appreciation for where things came from. This exhibition is a conversation between past, present and future and the invisible essence that permeates history.

Hawkins' sculptures themselves are quite anthropomorphic, almost as if they are as eager to connect as we are. Artworks both physically move and imply movement with bodily forms and implied limbs draped across one another. Hawkins recognises that communication is enabled by a connection between human **and** object. We rely on these objects to communicate, each is as integral as the other within this process. Yet by assembling objects imbued with histories of human interaction, Hawkins finally gives them the autonomy to create conversations of their own. Portraying the desire we as artists, humans and even as objects have to connect with one another, to share our past experience and tell our story.

By bringing the ephemeral into materiality, Hawkins highlights the distance generated by advancing technology. Ironically, in an attempt to bring us closer it has pushed us physically further apart. We communicate through recycled imagery and sharing information via the internet. Followers and likes are a form of validation, affirming our position and connectedness in the world despite dwindling face to face interaction. Is the ability to revisit and/or possess legible *evidence* of our correspondence why we turn to technology to communicate and connect with one another? We, like these works are longing to form meaningful connections - the echoing sound of "I want you so bad" playing within this exhibition, haunts our interaction. We feel lost in our own desire. Rendering ourselves, as well as these objects, obsolete in search of an intangible connection. One that cannot be emulated or replaced by technology despite our seemingly endless attempts to do so. This exhibition highlights that maybe, the debris created from this longing is more interesting than the desire itself.