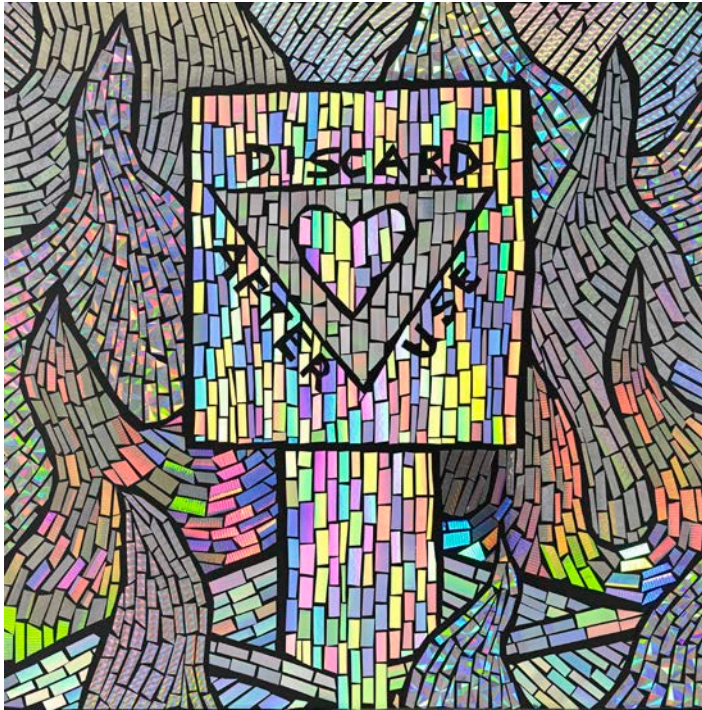


24 April 2014

## ***David McDiarmid: When This You See Remember Me***

The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia | 9 May – 31 August 2014 | Free entry



*I never saw art as being a safe thing. I know that exists but that's not something that involves me.*

David McDiarmid, 1993

The vibrant, provocative and pioneering work of leading Australian artist, designer and gay activist David McDiarmid will be presented in a retrospective exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria. Defying classification, McDiarmid's work encompasses the complex and interconnected histories of art, craft, fashion, music, sex, gay liberation and identity politics.

*David McDiarmid: When This You See Remember Me* will bring together more than 200 works, including the artist's early gay liberation work; New York graffiti and disco quilts; fashion collaborations with Linda Jackson; his pioneering *Rainbow aphorisms* and *Gothic aphorisms* digital work; material he produced as Sydney Mardi Gras Artistic Director; posters created for the AIDS Council of NSW; and,

his significant and highly influential international campaigns developed in the context of AIDS, sexual politics and safe sex in the 1990s.

Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV, said, "The NGV is pleased to be staging this retrospective of an artist whose work had enormous impact on both the gay liberation movement and the international dialogue around AIDS, and whose clear messages of liberation, equality and emancipation continue to resonate today. *David McDiarmid: When This You See Remember Me* explores the social history, as well as political and art historical context, that informed McDiarmid's work, which inspires through its courage, poetry, exuberance and cultural impact."

At once kaleidoscopic, celebratory and darkly humorous in tone, the artist's idiosyncratic, highly personal and, at times, confessional work highlights the redefinition and deconstruction of identities – "from camp to gay to queer" – drawing on the experiences of a life intensely lived in Melbourne, Sydney and New York. Charting the shifts in politics and individual and community expression that unfolded across the decades of the 1970s, 80s and 90s, this exhibition also reveals McDiarmid's artistic and grassroots political response to the impact of HIV/AIDS during the 1980s and beyond, for which he is best known internationally.

Recognising the cultural climate in which the artist worked, including the burgeoning of the gay rights movement, and a decade later, the advent of the AIDS crisis, the playful and provocative nature of McDiarmid's work was critically related to changes that were occurring throughout this time to sexual identity and politics in Australia.

Dr Sally Gray, Guest Curator, said, "McDiarmid's work speaks so eloquently of its time yet its importance and relevance endures today. *David McDiarmid: When This You See Remember Me* is the first exhibition in which the full

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# NGV NEWS

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scope of McDiarmid's creative oeuvre is on display and is the culmination of painstaking research, with the support of many of his collaborators, friends and fans."

*David McDiarmid: When This You See Remember Me* will coincide with the 20<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Conference in Melbourne in July 2014.

An extensive publication has been produced to coincide with the exhibition, involving 12 Australian and international authors as well as a number of McDiarmid's friends and collaborators. Available from the NGV Shop for RRP\$39.95.

The exhibition will be accompanied by public programs including talks, screenings, performances and panels. An opening weekend program will include the symposium *The Spirit and Spark of David McDiarmid*, with speakers including Dr Sally Gray, Guest Curator *David McDiarmid: When This You See Remember Me* and Executor of the David McDiarmid estate; Simon Maidment, Curator, Contemporary Art, NGV, and co-curator *David McDiarmid: When This You See Remember Me*; Dr Ted Gott, Senior Curator, International Art, NGV; Stephen Allkins, DJ and dance pioneer; Dr Anne Marsh, Professor, Art and Theory, Monash University; Dan Rule, writer, editor, publisher and critic; and, Dr Nikos Pantazopoulos, artist and Lecturer, RMIT University. Visit [ngv.vic.gov.au](http://ngv.vic.gov.au) for further details.

*David McDiarmid: When This You See Remember Me* will be on display at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia from 9 May to 31 August 2014. Open 10am–5pm, closed Mondays. Free entry.

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**Supported by**                      **Radio Partner**  
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**Image caption:**

**David McDiarmid**

Australian 1952–1995, worked in United States 1979–87

*Discard after use* 1990

from the *Kiss of light* series 1990–92

collage of self-adhesive holographic film on enamel paint on plywood

61.2 x 61.2 cm

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift from the Estate of David McDiarmid, 1998

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