

**Blueprint**

Picture Start

**Sue Pedley + Virginia Hilyard**  
**curated by Helen Grace**

Saturday 29 October to Sunday 13 November 2016

Opening Friday 28 October 6-8pm

Artist/curator's talk Sunday 13 November, 3 to 5pm



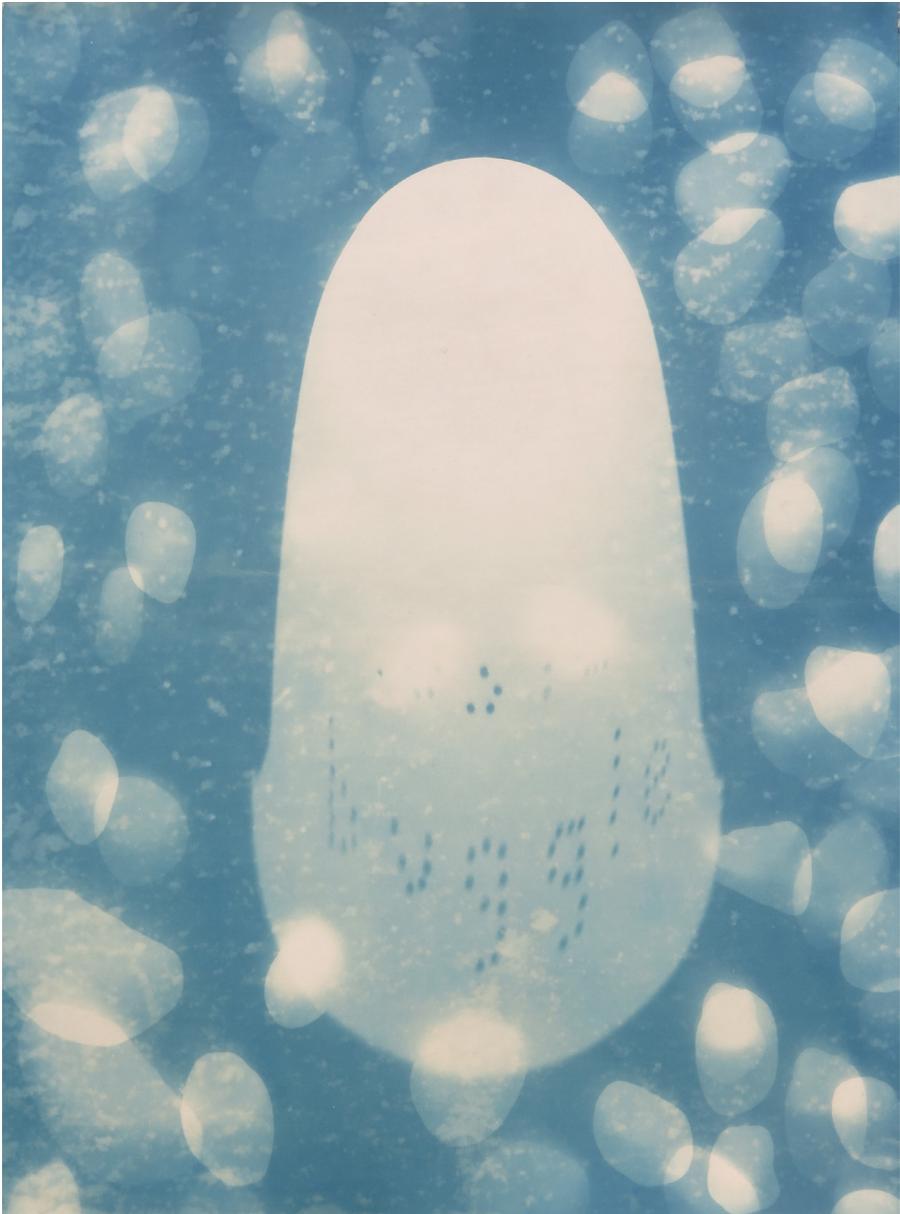
Virginia Hilyard



Sue Pedley

Sue Pedley and Virginia Hilyard frequently collaborate but this exhibition *Blue Print/Picture Start* takes us back to their individual practices. More importantly it explores the beginnings of the technical image itself, in the threshold space of its emergence. In this work, both artists explore what we could call 'the analogue digital' in a direct use of digits (fingers) in this thoroughly hands-on media archeology.

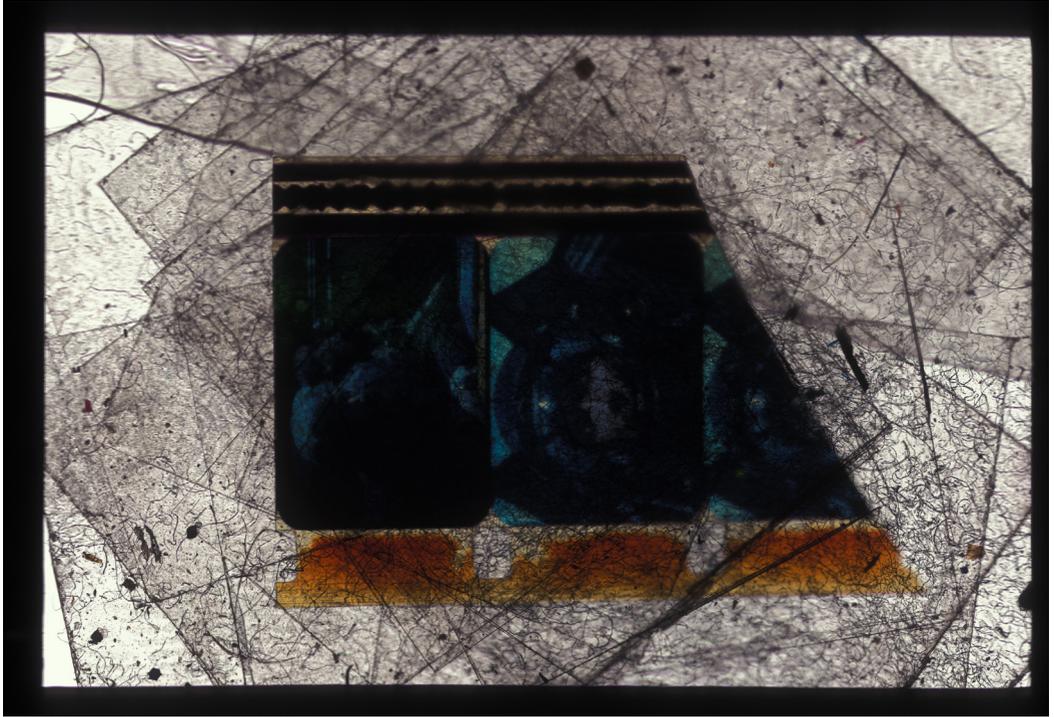
Pedley's 'Blueprint' evokes not only a history of the photographic image, but also a history of technical drawing, in the projective sketches of architects' and surveyors' plan-making. The blue intensity of the cyanotype has its origins in the long development of colour and in this case, the 1704 appearance of Prussian Blue – the first modern synthetically-produced colour, arriving as an accident of experiment. Wait a few years and along comes photography and the cyanotype, developed in Sir John Herschel's chemical experiments and appearing for the first time in 1842 in Anna Atkins' photograms. The molecular structures, aerial topographies and patterns seen under a microscope that are suggested in this series of Pedley's cyanotypes directly reference this history, adding to it, painting lines on the surface. The images in their fugitive quality evoke the ephemeral image, suggestive of another Herschel 'siderotype': the 'breath print', a mixture of ferro-tartaric acid and silver nitrate. After exposure, no image appeared until someone came along and breathed on the print and the moisture of breath oxidized the iron, activating the latent image.



This activation of the image by the body is registered in an 'animate' sequence of Pedley's cyanotypes. The outline of hands and outstretched arms bring the body directly into the work, as shadow of the artist's presence, moving around the composition, like an action painter. Words etched through a plastic bucket 'sing' the words of the Beatles' Blue Jay Way, with the punched out quality of a pianola roll, adding another media technological layer and aural experience. The 'bird song' here was originally inspired by Sunday Reed's love of The Beatles - part of the Heide 'soundtrack'.

Virginia Hilyard returns us to the materiality of cinema and precisely to the logic of montage: to the splice, that very intersection of frames combining one scene and another and the process of holding them together. By focusing on and enlarging this moment, the material base of the image appears in its luminous translucency as abstract composition. It is only in the stillness of these images of time frozen that an otherwise invisible picture is able to appear in the diversity of random components and contents. This abstraction of the cinematic image at the degree-zero point of movement brings us face to face with the underlying chemical nature of filmic processes, less visible now in the even more abstract nanoscopic structures of digital image-making. What Hilyard's images capture in its essence is the pure potential of movement, that moment when the image is animated in the juxtaposition of frames moving. It is a metaphor too of the beginning of life itself in the recombinant form of cells sharing parts of each other to form a new organism. This is foregrounded in the title, *Picture Start*, words that appear on film leader in their insistent modernist command.





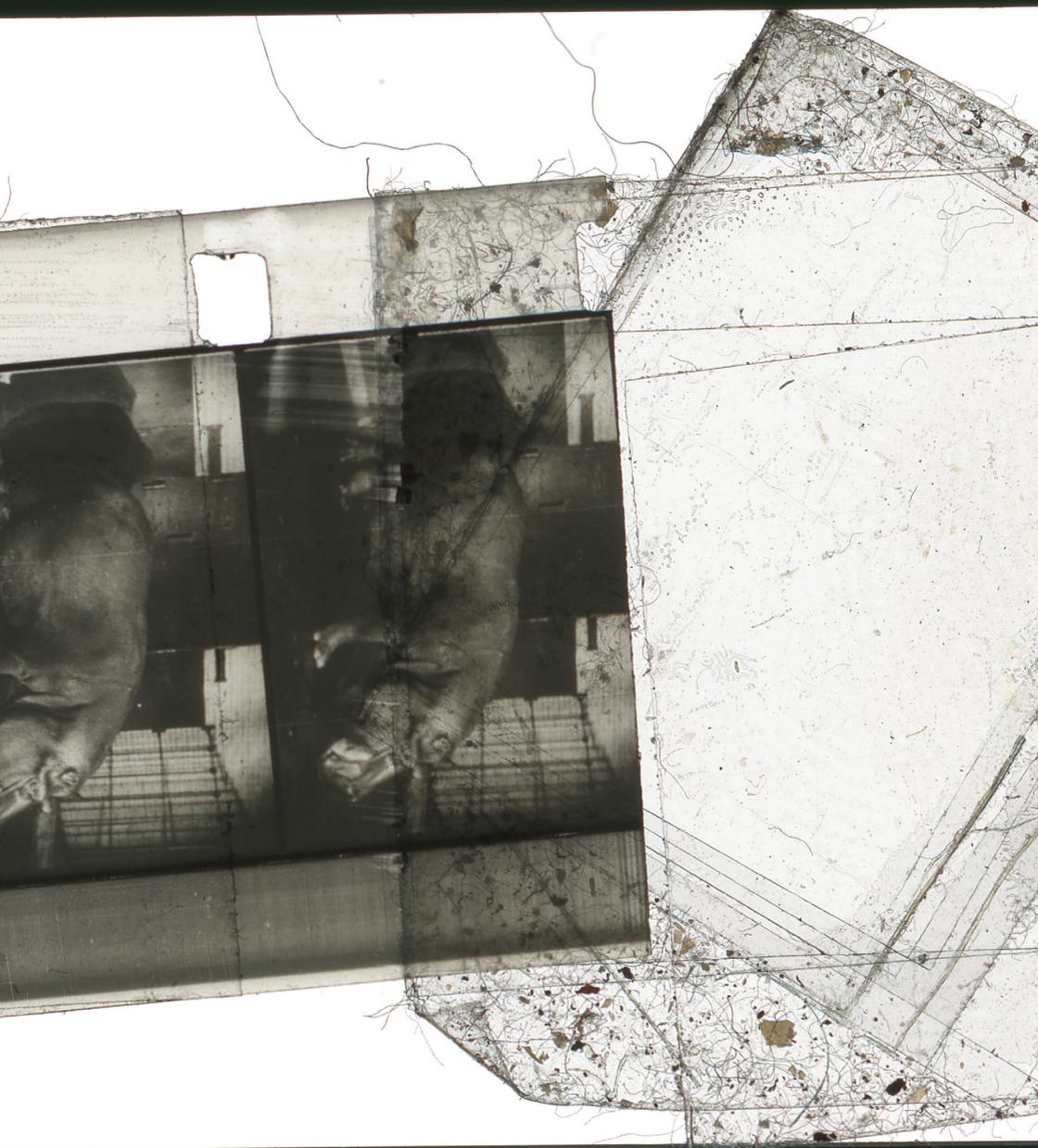
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Here, Hilyard both isolates the point of intersection of film frames and simultaneously activates the combination of elements that lies at the heart of cinematic form, capturing the kinetic energy of cinematic movement in the persistence of vision. The aural atmosphere of the recomposition echoes the visual principle of calling forth the fugitive, invisible image, using the amplified resonance of an unheard sound. The source here is the high tension wires of an Icelandic location, remixed to transform these outtakes of overlooked image moments.

Both bodies of work occupy the 'picture start' point, when the image emerges in its very materiality and finds form. Both bodies of work have a regenerative/ recombinant quality, re-using materials to produce new life forms, or in this case, we might perhaps say, movement-images.







## ARTICULATE *UPSTAIRS*

497 Parramatta Road, Leichhardt, 2040. Open Friday, Saturday, Sunday 11am-5pm

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- 1 Virginia Hilyard – Detail from Dust Data, found 16mm film, 2016
- 2 Sue Pedley – Detail from Blueprint, cyanotype and gouache, 2006
- 3 Sue Pedley – Blueprint, cyanotype, 75 x 56 cm, 2006
- 4 Virginia Hilyard – Detail from Picture Start, found 16mm film, 2016
- 5 Virginia Hilyard – Detail from Dust Data, found 16mm film, 2016
- 6 Sue Pedley – Blueprint, cyanotype, 9 panels each 23 x 17.5 cm, 2006
- 7 Sue Pedley – Blueprint, cyanotype and gouache, 75 x 56 cm, 2016
- 8 Virginia Hilyard – Detail from Dust Data, found 16mm film, 2016