

# BODIES IN DISTRESS



'Bodies in Distress' is a collaborative research project between artists and post-doctoral researchers at the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. A multifaceted project, 'Bodies in Distress' explores the possibilities for artistic and public engagement with academic research.

'Bodies in Distress' will take place during the Critical Animals Creative Research Symposium in Newcastle, NSW between Sept 27 - 30. The project consists of a number of public events (see right) held at 'The Lock Up' cultural centre.

Driving the project is the notion of 'moralized bodies'. Such bodies, historically, have functioned to enforce established norms (say through public executions). Yet moralized bodies also have a distinct capacity to disrupt the everyday, and evoke difficult and socially challenging emotions (such as the emotional turbulence felt by communities dealing with suicide).

What can be said about these bodies? What should be said? These are difficult issues. Moralized bodies draw moralized responses. Moralized responses provoke passionate disagreement. 'Bodies in Distress' presents audiences with an opportunity to enquire into the unease and power attached to bodies at the limits of society.

## EVENTS @ 'THE LOCK UP'

90 HUNTER STREET NEWCASTLE. SEPT 27 - 30 2012

### EXHIBITION

Thursday 27 Sept - Sunday 30 Sept

New work by artists Mimi Kelly and Carolyn McKay.

### PERFORMANCE OF EXECUTION BALLADS

2.30pm Saturday 29 Sept

'Execution Ballads' were an early form of news media. Details of the criminal's wrongdoing were set to popular tunes. Street vendors would sell lyric sheets to spectators, and after the execution the crowd would sing these tales of woe.

Often set in first person, the songs tell of repentant murders warning others not to emulate their deeds.

Grace Turner and James Thompson will sing excerpts from C17th execution ballads as Dr. Una McIlvenna (Centre for the History of Emotions) provides insights into the place of song in early-modern punishment.

### DISCUSSION PANEL

2.50 - 4.30pm Saturday 29 Sept

(following Performance of Execution Ballads as part of the Critical Animals symposium and This is Not Art)

Artists Carolyn McKay and Mimi Kelly will join CHE researcher Una McIlvenna to discuss punishment, sin, death, and the body from medieval to contemporary times. Panelists will also discuss working collaboratively at the intersections of art and academia.

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## EMOTIONS MAKE HISTORY