

## Body Shots (2022), Bruno Booth Audio Description transcript

You are listening to the audio description of Bruno Booth's 4K, nine channel, nine minute video with audio called *Body Shots 2022* as part of *Interfacial Intimacies* an exhibition of photography, film, painting, installation, textile, and performance by artists who hold and express tenderly the multiple aspects of their selves through a series of portraits and anti-portraits. The exhibition has been curated by Caine Chennatt, developed by the Plimsoll Gallery and toured by Contemporary Art Tasmania.

Bruno Booth (b. 1982) has used a wheelchair for most of his life, interrupted by a short and unsuccessful career as an amateur stilt walker when he used prosthetic legs as a child. In his memory these leather and metal devices would not have been out of place on the set of some dystopian, apocalyptic epic – not in a cool and attractive *Fury Road* sort of way, more like the zombies in the original *Walking Dead*. The experience of wearing restrictive equipment left him with a dislike of tight-fitting clothing, a love of speed and a need to reach over his head in supermarkets – as a child he made the decision to use a wheelchair as his primary mode of transport – and he's never looked back (probably because he's too busy looking out for sand pits on dark footpaths). Having a disability has been a constant background hum throughout Bruno's life. Kind of like a social tinnitus – you know it's there but you try not to talk about it. It was only when he started to call himself an artist, without cringing too much, that he began to engage critically with what it meant to be categorised as disabled.

The content of the videos show candid views of the disabled body – juxtaposed with familiar landscapes and scenes. A foot that looks like no other lies on a bed of green grass, a knobby, scarred knee rests on a sandy beach gently washed by the tide. These views link across multiple screens, forming new and unusual bodies that float in space, quietly moving and unapologetic in their existence.

Quoting Booth: Disability is not a sexy adjective.

"The word itself conjures up images of hospitals, of concessions made and of thoughts of what could have been. As a child in the 90's, disability was absent from the media outside of the Paralympics and the occasional human-interest story. The closest thing disabled people had to counterculture role models were characters in cartoons. Mutants and the misfits in these animated worlds had superpowers and were loved not in spite of their differences but because of them. It can be argued that we've progressed and these days there is a much more nuanced idea of what it means to have a disability. However, the

word is still there and still evokes those same thoughts of pity, fear and unease.

“*Body Shots* seeks to address these issues by confronting the audience with the disabled body in extreme detail, forcing them to recognise the beauty created by such unique forms.

The work is an extension of the themes the artist has been developing in their practice over the last three years.

The number nine is a reference to the 9% of visual artists that identify as disabled - it is used throughout the exhibition to draw attention to this woefully low statistic.

Across our population as a whole roughly 20% of Australians identify as having some form of disability. Why is there this gap in an industry that prides itself on equity and inclusion? Where are the other 11% and why is it that disabled people are under-represented in contemporary practice?”

The nine channels or screens, 8 of which are displayed in portrait orientation, one in landscape are spread out across a horizontal wide plane, on a free-standing steel frame, in the space.

From left to right, the first screen is at ground level, in portrait, the next two, also in portrait, are arranged in an ascending step pattern side by side.

The next three, somewhat centre, and ascending also, have 2 arranged in portrait, one in landscape that is beneath the two above.

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> screens, in portrait, are on top of each other.

The ninth screen, in portrait, is positioned in the top right-hand corner of the steel frame.

A series of close ups, of Bruno's foot and knee subtly moving, and always on the edge of every shot and every screen, each video contains their foot in three different locations and environments with varying timings and duration, where the audience is able to view and experience multiple screens and images simultaneously.

Video 1- foot appears in water, in wire fence, in wet sand on a warm sunlit day.

Video 2- foot appears hovering above ocean, with bush in background, in hot, dry sand.

Video 3- foot appears in foreground to the setting sun behind, on asphalt, resting on a metal bark bench.

Video 4- foot on a colourful upholstered fabric seat, a rock with the river running by, from a height with freeway traffic running below.

Video 5- the foot appears on a riverbed rock, between the slats of a wooden crate, on the upholstered fabric seat again, with the telltale yellow aluminium bar revealing that it may be a bus, tram or train.

Video 6- the foot waves in the foreground with the bush behind, resting on the frame of a swiftly moving wheelchair, with a dawning sky in background.

Video 7- the foot appears on lush green grass, against the pavement,

Video 8- the foot resting on the rough bark of a tree, amongst an assortment of plastic toys, and against the wire fencing once again.

Video 9- the foot taps against the top crate, painted red, which is stacked on top of a blue crate, which is stacked on top of a yellow crate.

All the footage was shot on Booth's iPhone, and the audio they edited comes from different field recordings and conversations with friends and strangers.