

Mark Hilton's *Collective Autonomy* was a breathtaking sequence of exquisitely detailed light boxes, whose confronting subject matter challenged us to rethink our notions of contemporary Australian culture. Each light box was executed in a traditional cultural style – Medieval fresco, ancient Persian court painting and Chinese coffin-lid carving. Despite these diverse and historical aesthetic approaches, the works allegorically grapple with unsettling socio-political events in present-day Australia. These include the notorious stabbing deaths at Melbourne's Salt Nightclub in 2003, and the alleged culture of sexual abuse in Australia's elite football teams. Considered together, the works in *Collective Autonomy* serve as a reflection, memorial, and unflinching critical investigation into some of the darker aspects of Australian culture.

Mark Hilton is a Melbourne-based artist and completed a Bachelor of Fine Art (Painting) at the Victorian College of the Arts in 1998. Selected solo exhibitions include *Fairgrounds*, Kings ARI, Melbourne 2004; *Alexandra Avenue*, 24seven, Melbourne 2004; and *Horsestance*, TCB, Melbourne 2004. His selected solo exhibitions include *Winners Are Grinners*, Meat Market, Melbourne 2006; *A portable model of...*, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart 2005; and *Address Book*, Bus Gallery; Melbourne 2005. Hilton has been the recipient of several Arts Grants from the City of Melbourne, and is the founding Director of 24seven Contemporary Art Space, Melbourne.

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