

PALAS[®]

Alexandra Peters, *The Graven Image*, 11th April – 6th June 2026

Alexandra Peters' expanded painting practice operates in the charged space between gesture and system. Incorporating painting, print, sculpture, and assemblage, Peters' work takes the form of spatial installations that interrogate the structural conditions that underpin painting. Rather than treating the canvas as neutral, Peters examines the frameworks that organise, contain, and translate painting itself – its surfaces, supports, and the devices through which marks circulate and acquire meaning.

Central to her practice is a tension between manual impulse and mechanical reproduction. Many works begin with a simple, almost provisional gesture – a mark produced by hand. Yet this gesture is rarely allowed to remain singular. Instead, it enters a chain of translation, where it is scanned, enlarged, silkscreened, and transferred onto industrial materials such as vinyl. Each stage introduces a subtle displacement that gradually shifts the gesture away from its point of origin. The mark becomes a unit circulating through processes of reproduction. This repeated translation forms the basis of what Peters describes as an 'after action work'. Rather than presenting the moment of creation itself, the work dwells in its aftermath. Mechanical processes attempt to suspend the gesture in time, yet each act of preservation also transforms it. The gesture enters infrastructure, detached from its author, circulating through systems that govern rather than embody expression. Instead of remaining an expressive trace, the mark begins to resemble a 'value-added node': a unit extracted from its origin and reinserted into wider systems of circulation.¹

This cool detachment mimics bureaucratic aesthetics: the veneer of hospitality displaced by the slipperiness of the surfaces and materials play a crucial role in this dynamic. Peters frequently replaces the traditionally permeable canvas with industrial polymer vinyl, a surface whose non-porous character resists absorption and tactile intimacy. Peters' paintings occupy a state of latency: suspended between presence and withdrawal, neither fully fixed nor entirely in flux. Vinyl's clinical sheen invites the possibility of touch while withholding it.

While Peters' paintings question the surface of the canvas, her installations extend this interrogation into the surrounding space. Industrial ready-made elements – pipes, canisters, trolleys, and filing cabinets – appear as logistical infrastructures that organise flows of matter and bodies. They evoke systems designed for mobility, containment, filtration, and preservation, structuring the movement of materials, resources, and bodies within modern logistical networks. Pipes often trace pathways through the gallery, redirecting circulation and framing sightlines. What appears as a neutral element of installation begins to suggest a deeper system of organisation in which movement is guided, monitored, and constrained.²

Peters' installations resonate with what Marek Poliks and Roberto Alonso Trillo describe as 'exocapitalism': an economic logic in which value is increasingly extracted not from production alone, but from the translation and management of relations. In such systems, complexity is folded, compressed, and rendered addressable through infrastructural mechanisms. Peters' repeated gestures, reproduced surfaces, and logistical objects echo this process. What begins as an expressive mark becomes an operational element within a wider field – circulating, reprocessed, and detached from its origin.³

Peters' installations function less as discrete artworks than as systems that stage their own conditions of appearance. Painting becomes one component within a broader environment where surfaces and logistical objects interact. The exhibition space itself becomes part of the work's operational field. Through spatial orchestration, Peters exposes the frameworks through which gestures, objects, and bodies are translated into legible forms – forms that can be managed, circulated, and extracted from.

Presented as an expanded iteration of her earlier exhibition at Warrnambool Art Gallery, *The Graven Image* offers a deeper exploration of Peters' evolving practice. Painting is neither purely object nor image. It becomes a field in which gesture, reproduction, and infrastructure intersect, inviting viewers to reconsider how the act of painting persists within, and against, the complex systems that organise contemporary life. Rather than abandoning the medium, Peters repositions it, using its surfaces and supports as tools for probing the conditions that govern how images, materials, and marks circulate.

¹ "Value-added node" is a concept used by Marek Poliks and Roberto Alonso Trillo to describe points within economic systems where relations are translated into operational units from which value can be extracted. See Marek Poliks and Roberto Alonso Trillo, *Exocapitalism: economies with absolutely no limits* (Berlin: Becoming Press, 2025).

² See Micky Schubert, "The Graven Image," in *The Graven Image*, exhibition catalogue (Warrnambool: Warrnambool Art Gallery, 2025).

³ See Marek Poliks and Roberto Alonso Trillo, *Exocapitalism: economies with absolutely no limits* (Berlin: Becoming Press, 2025), on logistical infrastructures and the translation of relations into extractive systems.

1. Double Blind, 2026

Acrylic, pigment and water-based ink with screenprint medium and paste on vinyl
120 x 400 cm (2-panels, each 120 x 200 cm)

2. Foreign Line Extraction V (Overture), 2025

Acrylic, vinyl, polyurethane 'open cell' foam, ductile iron, pine, steel, enamel
27 x 460 x 38 cm

3. Polity (Latent State), 2025

Acrylic with screen-print medium and paste on leatherette, pine, steel, enamel
100 x 700 x 120 cm

4. Common Seal, 2025

Acrylic, pigment and water-based ink with screenprint
medium and paste on leatherette, pine, steel, enamel
150 x 75 cm

5. Grapes of Wrath, 2026

Acrylic, pigment and water-based ink with screen-print medium and paste on vinyl
180 x 260 cm (2-panels, each 180 x 130 cm)

6. Polity (Mid-State), 2025

Acrylic, pigment and water-based ink with screenprint medium and paste on leatherette, ductile iron, pine, steel, enamel
132 x 155 x 155 cm

7. Polity (Mid-State) II, 2026

Acrylic, pigment and water-based ink with screenprint medium and paste on leatherette, ductile iron, pine, steel, enamel
132 x 165 x 165 cm

