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Drawing from alternative currencies, banking archives, pop culture and contemporary art, Creative Accounting scratches below the surface of the economic system to reveal money’s enigmatic side.

Money is many things at once – an abstract rendering of value, an agent of propaganda, a decorative device. It plays a central role in all of our lives yet is often overlooked as an object of contemplation. Through money, the story of the contemporary condition can be told; Creative Accounting brings to light some of the stories that surround currency - from the history of banking in Australia to the intricacies of anti-counterfeit patterns.

Curated by Holly Williams the exhibition includes work by 12 Australian and international artists, historical objects from the Westpac archives, private collections and the Powerhouse Museum.

Creative Accounting aims to reinvigorate our engagement with money and the economic system beyond next week’s pay packet or the latest stock market crisis.

The value of paper money relies on societal agreement and trust, which raises issues of replication and counterfeit. Australian artist Andrew Hurle has an extensive body of work on the subject, playing with intricate geometric designs and the dissolution of value. Convict Love Tokens from the 1800s display the romantic side of repurposing coinage.

As a fluid exchange mechanism, there are vast differences of opinion of how the economic system does, or should, function. Exploring the inherent instability of the market economy, Melanie Gilligan’s video work personifies the global economy as a psychologically challenged, middle-aged woman undergoing therapy.

Exchange values across market economies are addressed by Sanné Mestrom through the replication of her PhD certificate on the Mexican black market; and János Sugár’s provocative graffiti Wash your dirty money with my art opens a dialogue between the forces at play in the art market and definitions of value in art, crime and social activism.

No discussion of the market economy would be complete without considering the personal, daily exchanges that take place. David Shapiro carefully painted a year’s worth of his receipts, bills and other transaction slips. Conrad Bakker humorously participates in conventional processes of sale and exchange through various eBay projects.

Creative Accounting will also host a local branch of the e-flux project Time/Bank where individuals can exchange time instead of conventional currency.

Other works include Kenzee Patterson’s monetary erection, 1USD, Mark Wagner’s intricate currency collages, Yves Marchand and Romain Meffre’s decaying bank from the The Ruins of Detroit series.

Accompanying free events: Wednesday evenings in November 6pm until the 24th. Featuring a designer, magician, forensic accountant, futurist, artist, economist and archaeologist.

The exhibition will be complemented by a reading room and publication.

Visit the exhibition blog: http://creativeaccountingexhibition.wordpress.com/

WHAT: Creative Accounting
WHERE: UTS Gallery, Level 4, 702 Harris Street, Ultimo
WHEN: Until 25 November 2011. Open Mon-Fri 12-6pm
EVENTS: Wednesdays until 24th November
MORE INFORMATION: utsgallery@uts.edu.au
www.utsgallery.uts.edu.au/gallery
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CREATIVE ACCOUNTING ACCOMPANYING FREE EVENTS ON WEDNESDAYS IN NOVEMBER:

Financial Aesthetics
2 November at 6 pm
Financial Aesthetics explores money’s role as an agent of propaganda and decorative device. Through the shifting designs and uses of money, can we explore the story of our contemporary condition? Artist, Andrew Hurle, Powerhouse Museum Design & Society curator and archeologist, Dr Paul Donnelly and design researcher and strategist, Evert Ypma discuss this and much, much more.

From Global Financial Crisis to Cosmic Accounting
9 November at 6pm
With the current world economic system re-entering free-fall, what alternative and sustainable economic future might our global society hope to forge? Join UTS banking and financial risk xpert Professor Harald Scheule for insights into the history and ongoing saga that is the Global Financial Crisis. Harald will be followed by engineer and futurist Malcolm Green who looks to energy as humanity’s hope for a radical, yet inspirational shift in how we source, use and exchange wealth – the way the universe intended.

Curator’s floortalk
16 November 1-2pm
Join Holly Williams for a tour of the works in the exhibition as she aims to reinvigorate our engagement with money and the economic system beyond next week’s pay packet or the latest stock market crisis.

Missing Money + Sleight of Hand
16 November at 6pm
Two experts from very different fields will amaze and challenge you as they hide cold, hard cash in front of your very eyes. Forensic Accountant Hera Antoniades from the UTS and acclaimed magician Adam Mada will both work magic and reveal unique tricks of financial deception.

Dollars + Cents / Show + Tell
23 November at 6pm
Do you collect money – notes, coins or maybe outdated international currencies? This event is pitched to the idiosyncratic among you, for creative types to show off, compare and covet each other’s currency collection

These entertaining and informative events accompanied by refreshments.
RSVP requested utsgallery@uts.edu.au