

# CHRIS ORR

## artist CV

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Name Chris Orr  
Address 5/95 Grey St  
St Kilda VIC 3182  
Australia  
mob 0407 245 995  
email chris@chrisorr.com.au  
web chrisorr.com.au

Chris Orr was accidentally born in London to Australian parents, and is of European and Narungga decent. He grew up in Melbourne (mostly) and lives with his partner in St Kilda.

Chris studied art and design at Prahran Institute and graphic design at Swinburne in the 1980s. In 1996 he founded a graphic design practice, Beige, strongly anchored in the street art aesthetic.

Chris's first serious venture into the art world came about when a friend presented him with a plastic doll's head and challenged him to 'make art out of it'. The result was the 'Dolly' series: oversize digital manipulations baked on to canvas and paper. Melancholy and mesmerising, they contained a dark beauty.

### EXHIBITIONS

2015 'Bone Idol'  
fortyfive downstairs  
Melbourne  
2019 'Conventicle'  
fortyfive downstairs  
Melbourne

In 2014, Chris took a leap of faith, winding down his graphic design practice and devoting himself to art full time. With the purchase of a skull from a medical supplies store, the 'Bone Idol' exhibition (2015) was born. Possessing voluminous qualities similar to the plastic doll's head, the skull proved a more challenging object to navigate. The object was obsessively scanned and photographed to achieve optimum light and shade and to reveal previously unrecognised terrains, extracting as much out of it by trawling and navigating it close up, reinterpreting it in a myriad of ways. The result is a carnivalised confection of candified decay.

### ACQUISITIONS

2020 *Motherboard Portal*  
(Verde)  
Acquired by ACU Gallery

With a catastrophic loss in a bushfire in 2015, Chris took a hiatus to direct creative energy into rebuilding. He returned with what became the 'Conventicle' exhibition. Bestowing life on inanimate objects had, unsurprisingly, become a theme.

### EDUCATION

1984-5 Graphic Design  
Swinburne University  
1985-6 Art & Design  
Prahran Institute

Shown at fortyfivedownstairs in 2019 to great success, 'Conventicle' was an unorthodox assemblage of Renaissance-based Victorian engravings blanketed in everyday detritus, modern ephemera and classical stencils. Responding to the catastrophic pollution of modern life, old soft drink cans, disregarded packaging and discarded motherboards were expertly re-assembled in an exciting declamatory recitation of social archaeology. Specialised coloured acrylic box frames designed by Chris were representative of Mexican and Greek Orthodox domestic icons, which are often festooned in fluorescent and coloured electric lights.

### EMPLOYMENT

1996-2014 Creative Director  
Beige  
www.beige.com.au

In 2019, *Motherboard Calefaction* was a finalist in the Banyule Award for Works on Paper.

In 2020, *Motherboard Portal (Verde)* was acquired for the Australian Catholic University Gallery collection in Melbourne.