Our objective as Accidentally Annie Street Space (AASS) is to curate emerging artists into off-site contexts to create new dialogues, and to encourage experimental or ephemeral practices in non-white-cube settings. In the past we have exhibited in our suburban Queenslander rental property. However for the last two years we have been experimenting with guerilla curatorial strategies; holding exhibitions in old motels and train station baggage lockers. For our most recent exhibition Knock, AASS escorted around thirty people to an executive suite of the Brisbane Mirvac Sebel hotel. To create an entirely independent action, this process was intentionally undertaken without prior negotiation with the Sebel staff. Two local artists, Sebastian Moody and Brooke Ferguson, were invited to make works in response to the context of the hotel room. Their contributions activated a memorable one-night only environment akin to an exclusive hip hop single launch-cum-after-party-cum-gallery opening.

Clusters of people congregated in the lobby to await their Annie Street representative who then escorted them, via lift, to the exhibition suite. Once in the company of key-card privileges, attendees were able to reach the twelfth floor, stepping past an empty room service tray left by another guest before reaching their destination. Within the large hotel room, the kitchen space acted as a temporary bar, serving an abundance of champagne and beer to the guests scattered about the room, some leaning outside on the balcony, others resting on couches. Once outside, one could take in the city lights facing Brisbane’s Queen Street mall and to the left, Southbank’s Ferris wheel. A hip-hop tune played along with amateur vocals: ‘…I’ve been up and down the East coast, Surry Hills to New Farm …’, part of Sebastian Moody’s remix of popular hip-hop song Marvin’s Room by Drake. Moody also tampered with the hotel lighting that tinted the site in a purple haze. As a participant in this environment, one was initiated into artists’ gangster re-appropriations. Viewers may have felt privileged or displaced in this decadent ‘other’ culture.

Brooke Ferguson had separated her work from Moody’s purple haze, situating her objects more privately on top of the bathroom sink. When entering the compact space it was apparent that the usual motel soaps had been replaced by larger Australian Savol ones. On closer inspection, it became evident that the soap had been inscribed with titles from Australia soap operas: Home and Away, Neighbours and Number 96 written in text; a self-evident pun. The soap placed next to the sink was inevitably used and the Neighbours soap ended up being taken from the shower.

The site of the luxurious motel lent itself to Moody’s explorations of ‘spiritual capitalism’ while the mundane bathroom gave Ferguson’s quotidian materials a pseudo-domestic context.

Knock, by Sebastian Moody and Brooke Ferguson, took place 8 June 2012 at The Sebel Suite Mirvac Hotel, Albert Street, Brisbane. Brisbane’s Accidentally Annie Street Space is run by Erika Scott, Elizabeth Willing, Stephen Russell, Louise Bennett and Tess Maunder. www.accidentallyanniestspace.com

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