



## ENTRANCE GALLERY

### *Life is Normal*

Paula Hunt

*Life is Normal* begins with an anecdote about misunderstandings and football stadiums, a tale where horror is juxtaposed against absurdity. This exhibition takes a story and explores the threads that stem from investigating it. Using found photographs, archived films, original video and painting installation, *Life is Normal* attempts to reflect an apparently disjointed but, at the same time, synchronized trail connecting a handful of events that occur in a variety of apparently unrelated stadiums around the world. The narration starts with the 1991 Coode Island explosion in suburban Melbourne before it satellites back to a series of events in the 1970s: the coup d'état in Chile in 1973, the 1974 World Cup in West Germany, an apparently ordinary suburban game at Arden Street Oval that is punctuated by a moment of farce, and the Kangaroos first flag in 1975.

The stadium is jumping-off point to explore social and political events, as well as personal identity within the crowd. Elias Canetti says of the stadium in *Crowds and Power*, "There is no break in the crowd which sits like this, exhibiting itself to itself...this crowd is doubly closed, to the world outside and in itself." Canetti's observation, while astute, begs the question of what happens when we look past the spectators.

The original anecdote that kick-starts 'Life is Normal' was told to me when I worked in a safety role at the MCG. I have published two books on Australian Rules football and for ten years wrote a football column for