

## HOUSEKEEPING

This is a Visual Story for the performance “Housekeeping” , by artists Red Rey and Kit Wu Bylett at White Bay Power Station. It is a part of the “Working Memory” programming by Inner West Council for the Biennale of Sydney 2026.

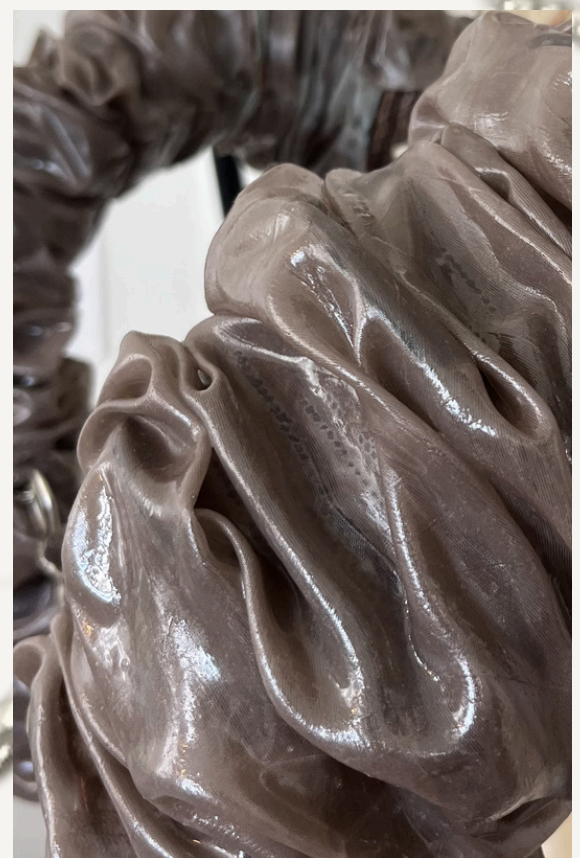
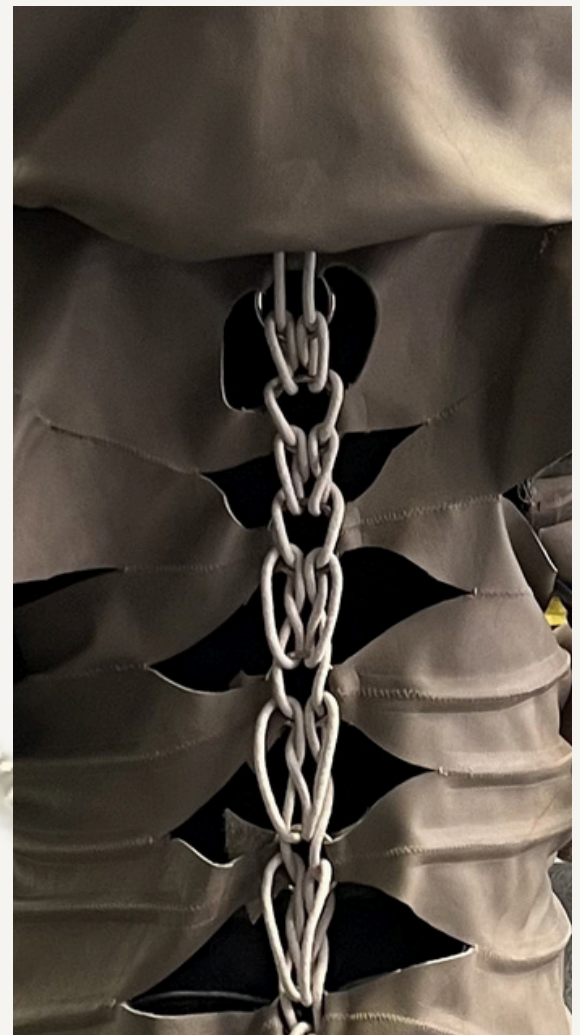
**Dates:** One performance daily on the weekend of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of April, starting at midday and ending approximately at 1:30pm each day.

**Location:** This durational performance roams throughout the Biennale of Sydney exhibition spaces of White Bay Power Station. Refer White Bay Power Station website [here](#) for recommended public transport routes and accessible parking details.

**What to expect:** One performer roams the building engaging with the architecture and gathering crowds. The performance will begin and end in the Boiler House, and will traverse the Turbine Hall and Pump House spaces, moving upstairs and downstairs. Audience can stay for as little or long and interact with the performance as much or as little as they want.

**Movement within the building:** A single lift and ramped paths are available in the building. Biennale attendants will be present alongside the performer and can assist with locating these to follow the performance.

**Sensory Sensitivities:** The performance will feature a ringing bell throughout the performance and scented hot towels towards the end of the performance. You can also speak with the staff at reception, who can provide details about the content of each exhibition.



## Detailed Description of the Performance

The performance begins with a solitary figure, the performer Red Rey, slowly entering the space. Their body is wrapped in layers of embroidered white face towels and grey-toned leather that wraps across their entire body, head to toe. The garment carries visible weight. The layers sway, gather and pull downward across the performer's frame. The performance draws upon from the invisible labour of diaspora Filipinx workers in service industries such as hospitality, domestic care, and sex work, and this costume embodies the physical burden of labour by how it is worn, moved in, and eventually shed.

The figure slowly explores the building for about an hour. They wander through the halls, including to the upper level. Later returning, again, descending down the large staircase in the largest room towards the main stage. Their pace is steady and deliberate.

While roaming the building, at intervals, the performer calls out a single word in English: "Housekeeping." The voice is unamplified. The word travels through the hall and echoes against the concrete walls. You also hear the clear metallic sound of a cowbell ringing as the performer moves.

When audience members approach, the performer gently removes a small white face towel from their costume and places it into their hands. Over time, the layers of towels gradually disappear, and the performer appears less burdened. If you run your fingers across the surface of the face towel you will feel small looped fibres that create a soft, textured pattern. Some towels have slightly rough or crisp edges where the cloth has been carefully singed. Others are embellished with small beads sewn into the fabric, creating subtle variations in texture.

As the figure re-enters the ground level of the main room, their roaming movement comes to a close. In this act, they slowly gather four buckets placed in different locations on the ground floor, transporting them one-by-one to the stage area - a final act of physical labour. Each bucket contains warm steamed face towels, scented with sampaguita - a sweet floral fragrance from a white jasmine flower, the national flower of the Philippines.

The figure removes the leather garment to reveal a final sculptural costume fitted against the performer's torso: the skull of a buffalo with large horns wrapping over their shoulders and winding around their arms. What emerges is the figure of Idiyana, a pre-colonial Filipino deity associated with labour and the carabao, or water buffalo. In Filipino culture the carabao represents endurance, strength, and the everyday work that sustains communities. In this performance the labouring body is slowly revealed as something sacred. The figure shifts from worker to deity, transforming the language of service into a ritual of power.

In this final act, audience members are invited to take the warm towels from the buckets and gently wipe the performer's arms, hands, face, and body. The action resembles cleaning, yet it unfolds as a quiet ritual of care and reverence. The roles of service are reversed, and the worker becomes the one who is tended to.

In the echoing space of White Bay Power Station, the scent of flowers, the softness of cotton towels, and the sound of voices and bells transform an everyday act of invisible labour into a moment of collective witnessing and devotion. Within a building shaped by industrial work, the performance honours the workers whose labour continues to power lives across the world.