

IF YOU COULD
HOW WOULD
YOU WRITE
YOURSELF
INTO THE
CANON OF
WESTERN
ART HISTORY?

PREFACE
MAURA REILLY PhD

The mainstream canon of art history is a narrative structured by the exclusion and/or subordination of those outside the established norm. It is a narrative that perpetuates, as Griselda Pollock argues, “a selective tradition which normalizes, as the *only* modernism, a particular and gendered set of practices.” Within this hermetically-sealed system, “modern art” is presented as a synchronic, linear progression of “isms” in which one (heterosexual, white) male “genius” from Europe or the USA influences another, younger version who inevitably must trump or subvert the previous “master,” thereby producing an avant-garde progression. Women, artists of color, and those who are not from Europe or North America—in other words, all Other artists—are rarely encountered.

The realization that western art historical canons are a problematic concept is not new. As early as 1971, in her landmark essay, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?” Linda Nochlin cautioned women about getting into a no-win situation trying to name female Michelangelos or Picassos. “There are no women equivalents for Rembrandt, Delacroix or Cézanne, Picasso or Matisse,” she argued, “any more than there are black American equivalents of the same.” The problem, she argued, lies not in our hormones, as women, nor by extension is it in the color of our skin (if

one happens to be non-white)—but in *our institutions and our education*. Thus, the question of equality, she argued, devolves around the very nature of institutional structures themselves and the white masculine prerogative they assume as ‘natural.’ It is precisely this ideological stronghold over women and non-white persons that has kept them from succeeding historically. Moreover, if “greatness,” as Nochlin argues, “has been defined since antiquity as white, Western, privileged, and, above all, male,” then how are we to re-define it to include non-whites, non-westerners, the under-privileged, and women—which is to say, all Other artists? In other words, if the problem lies in our institutions, at a *systemic level*, then what can we do? To paraphrase Audre Lorde, “Can the master’s tools ever dismantle the master’s house”? If so, how?

If the canon of art history is a hegemony—which I think we can all agree that it is—then, in the words of Griselda Pollock, how can we *‘difference it’*? Which counter-hegemonic strategies can we employ to ensure that more voices are included, rather than the chosen, elite few? What can each of us do—as arts professionals—to offer a more just and fair representation of global artistic production? Should we be aiming to abolish the canons altogether, arguing that all cultural artifacts have significance—in other words, should

our goal be a totalizing critique of canonicity itself? Should we be examining global art history, querying the canon’s Euro-American-centrism, and exploring other paradigms for re-conceptualizing canonicity? Should we be creating new, alternate canons—or reimagining old ones?

Instead of the traditional canon’s monologue of sameness, why not a presentation of modernism as multi-vocal, global, diachronic? As artist Cheryl Donegan has urged, “Modernism should not be seen as Biblical; it should be seen as Talmudic.” Instead of a synchronic, static, linear narrative, why not follow a more Talmudic, Wikipedia-like approach that would enable innumerable voices to comment, debate, and shape tradition? Or, finally, why not ask women artists who have been excluded to re-imagine the traditional canon by writing themselves into it? Such is the case with this exhibition. To me, this seems an effective curatorial strategy insofar as it grants the artists agency. In other words, instead of an unproductive critique of the canon, this exhibition explores its possibilities. Such insurrectionist initiatives can function to level hierarchies, challenge assumptions, counter erasure, promote the margins over the center, and the minority over the majority. In the end, such curatorial “strategies of resistance” provoke intelligent debate and disseminate *new knowledge*, which, in the end, offers up signs of hope and affirmation.

Maura Reilly PhD
Arts Writer and Curatorial Activist

CURATOR ESSAY: ANNEMARIE MURLAND PhD

There is more than one way to be a feminist, or as Caroline McHugh would say 'a womanist', in contemporary art and society. As a practicing artist and independent curator, I was interested in how one might crack open the Canon of Western Arts' hegemony and douse the flames of white male privilege with a sprinkle of humour, purity, wisdom and 'good art'. In an attempt to 'infiltrate' the natural historiography of Western arts' monoculture¹, I invited a group of everyday women artists to respond to the following question: "*If you could write yourself into the Canon of Western Art – how would that look and how would that sound?*"

The Reimagining the Canon initiative adopts a 'poly-glocal' vision of art by women artists, from home and abroad, to illustrate the power of relationships and how connectivity can humanise the Canon. Moreover, our primary focus is to address the imbalance of representation of 'everyday' women artists across contemporary art spaces and institutions today.² The idea of how to cultivate personal stories into praxis was an important aspect of my role as a curator, including how these stories took shape in their material production and how they were perceived and received was of equal importance. I firmly believe in the

value of the individual story and if artists are to impact upon one of the last bastions of white, male supremacy – art institutions – public and private – we need to educate the viewer to look towards and beyond the periphery of the art establishment.

A gender inspired lens frames this inaugural exhibition that celebrates women artists' contribution to art and exhibition practices. The group consists of mainly mid-career and established artists from major and regional cities around Australia, England, Ireland, and Scotland. A fierce belief in making 'good art' was the shared common thread that united us. Through a process of praxis and collaboration between artist and curator, alongside a great deal of satire and metaphor, the artists contemplated how they might reinscribe the 'master narratives' of Western Art's History with their own stories.³

An interdisciplinary and cross border approach to practice meant that the group's identity was inclusive of professional practicing artists – the artist as performer, historian, writer and academic. As a cohort, the group offers a range of subject matter and media in their various acts of doing that illustrates self-expression, and at the same time, contributes

to the creation of a heterogeneous cultural life. Although well known within their respective zones of demarcation – studio space, home space, marketplace, institutional space – these artists are largely anonymous in the greater art world. Under looked, overlooked, from the margins and living in the shadows might be common analogies used to locate the 'other' in art and life, however, this group firmly rejects this notion. Instead, the thematic conditions that surround the purpose and function of the group are simple: everyone's story matters and needs to be told.

As such, the personal is political and, in this instance, is communicated through a process-material interdependence resulting in a variety of visual outcomes.

Underpinning the exhibition's curatorial premise is the idea that art, as a knowledge building tool, has the capacity to break down cultural and institutional barriers, strengthen community relationships and transform the public perception of the agency female artists. A variety of speculative and experimental, formal and representational works of art, all of which are reflective of the exhibition's vision, is expressed via the production and distribution of works via transmedia platforms.⁴

Feminist art history and the legacy of activist and curator Lucy Lippard's approach to curating, where low -budget, peer-to-peer philanthropy between artist and curator, and an absolute belief in that 'we collectively belong' on the inside and not out, was a driving force in developing a curatorial strategy.⁵

As a collective, the group brings 'the everyday' into the identity politics that surround the Canon of Western Art and its nemesis, 'feminist art', today. Indeed, these women artists celebrate their 'Queendom' not because of their engendered body, but in spite of it. A rich variety of praxis, technique, process and a range of visual strategies expose their gaze, touch and individual ways of expressing their being in the world.

Annemarie Murland PhD
Curator, Reimagining the Canon

1 Maura Reilly, "Making Trouble: A Tribute to Linda Nochlin," *Artlines: A Publication of Women's Caucus for Art*, Summer Edition, 2018, accessed 11 September 2019, http://www.maurareilly.com/pdf/essays/Reilly_Making_Trouble.pdf

2 Maura Reilly, "*global feminisms: NEW DIRECTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART*," ed. Maura Reilly and Linda Nochlin [Brooklyn Museum], London, New York, Merrell Publishers, 2007, 22.

3 Maura Reilly, "Taking the Measure of Sexism: Facts, Figures and Fixes," *Artnews*, June 2015, 46, accessed 11 September 2019, http://www.maurareilly.com/pdf/essays/Reilly_ArtNews.pdf

4 Elke Krasny, "Curatorial Materialism. A Feminist Perspective on Independent and Co-Dependent Curating," *OnCurating*, Issue 29, May 2016, accessed 11 September 2019, <http://www.on-curating.org/issue-29-reader/curatorial-materialism-a-feminist-perspective-on-independent-and-co-dependent-curating.html#.XXYv45IzbFY>.

5 Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" *Women, art and power: and other essays*, chap. 7, p145, accessed 11 September 2019, <https://library.newcastle.edu.au/articles/2999301.35816/1.PDF>.

REIMAGINING THE CANON EMERITUS PROFESSOR PATRICIA HOFFIE

Throughout history, 'feminism' has taken seed in a range of contested sites. The very history of its growth into what is described as a 'movement' provides fractious grounds for debate. And although the clean, neat historical definitions of 'first, second and third waves of feminism' offer a framework for observing and analysing the development of a political, cultural or economic movement with precise aims to establishing equal rights and legal protection for women, opinions about the parameters of these stages are legion.

Rooted in challenges to the association of power and privilege associated with gender, the term has metamorphosed according to the 'task at hand' within each of the economic, social, fiscal and cultural parameters into which it has aimed critical insight. The ensuing fluidity that has come to characterise its forms and approaches and practices has rendered it deliciously uncompromising, mercurially fascinating and infuriatingly difficult to contain within a single term. Over the decades those who claim to have been informed by feminist ideals and approaches have moved in and out of love with attempts to contain the category definitively. Understandings of the term are legion, with critical rebuttals of decisive interpretations emerging from both within and beyond its ranks.

Currently, the term has come to be closely associated with the 'me too' movement, with its fresh demands for redress of inequalities, abuse and opaque controls of power. As

such, the term feminism has been closely connected with structural and institutional overhauls that have often resulted in highly visible and volubly reported instances of trials and litigation, and with challenges to authority that are often necessarily strident and energetically active.

But as these developments unfold under the public scrutiny of social media, other currents of feminist informed activities trickle along beneath the blinding glare of the public media spotlight, in projects that are powerfully nurturing, sustaining and challenging.

This exhibition, *Reimagining the Canon*, is one such project. It's the initiative of Dr. Annemarie Murland, a Newcastle-based artist and academic. If her deep commitment to supporting and sustaining local practice is in full evidence in this exhibition, so too is the breadth and depth of her international experience. The exhibition speaks of both 'here', and 'out there', and of the connections of affiliations, shared concerns and friendships that traverse distance and demographics and differences of approach.

Murland claims her ideas for the exhibition come from an abiding awareness of what she defines as the 'lack of representation of women in the arts'. Her response has been to invite nineteen women artists from both major and regional cities in Australia, England, Ireland, and Scotland to contribute their work to the show. But beyond

their categorization by gender, the selection process for inclusion is palpably, perhaps subconsciously, evasive. A glance on their Insta-site reveals a group of works that are accomplished, subtle and rich with material understanding. But as the curator states, and as individual artists affirm, none of the works included have emerged as a result of aims to respond to the parameters of any iterations of feminism through content, specific material choices, or aesthetics.

The title of the exhibition, then, seems to harbour a playful irony: if the artists included declare that feminism is 'a given and not a necessarily important 'ism' in their everyday approach to practice', then what claims can an exhibition composed of works assembled through tangential subjective connections and affiliations make as a format that challenges viewers to 're-imagine the canon'? Instead of presenting the works as a cogently argued synthesis of a curatorial overview, Murland encourages the audience to consider the exhibition as an example of expressive and material diversity. Rather than collectivise the works into a prevailing point-of-view, the curator expresses her relish of the strong individual voices of each of the artists she has chosen. Similarly, she celebrates the diverse roles of these artists, many of whom are academics, researchers, educators while simultaneously operating as professional visual artists.

The curator's will towards diversity and inclusiveness has also extended to genres and material choices – subject

matter ranges from representation through abstraction to portraiture and still life painting. Formats include installation and performance art; environmental and land art. The categorisation of traditional art forms of painting, drawing, printmaking and sculpture is challenged by the inclusion of fibre textiles, video and a range of traditional and contemporary photographic practices.

A strong sense of inquisitiveness runs like a current through the works in this show; there's a subdued playfulness; a willingness to take on the risks that wandering with no specific destination in mind entertains. Rather than any sense of challenge, or a sense of conscious defiance at existing categorisations or omissions, there's a sense of a grouping of gentle invitations that the viewer might, like each of the artists and the curator herself, spend some time to simply be absorbed in the deeply satisfying experiences of 'considering the stuff-ness of things'; of being led, through the work of each of the artists, to enter a state of curiosity and wonder about the material and metaphorical richness of the world we share.

And that, in its own way, is a whispering challenge to re-imagine ways of valuing experience-in-the-world that canons and categories can never measure.

Pat Hoffie (AM)
Artist, writer and Emeritus Professor at Griffith University

KNOW MY NAME

Women artists have been instrumental in shaping Australian culture for more than 60,000 years and unsurprisingly, they have not always received the recognition or acknowledgement they deserve.

In May 2019, the National Gallery of Australia launched *Know My Name*, a major initiative that celebrates the work of women artists. The initiative was developed following research into the National Gallery's own collection which revealed that only 25% of the Australian art collection is by women artists. Throughout 2020, the *Know My Name* project will deliver an interconnected and multi-disciplinary program including exhibitions, commissions, creative collaborations and partnerships that speak to the heart of our mission: to lead a national cultural agenda.

The National Gallery is building on the significant work being done to address gender equity issues in the arts including The CoUNTess Report and the Sheila Foundation in Australia, and international initiatives such as the social media campaign #5womenartists by the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington D.C. Now more than ever, audiences are eager to learn from the scholarship and

work of exhibitions such as *Reimagining the Canon* and we congratulate Dr Annemarie Murland for her curatorship and the launch of this show.

Globally and locally, there is finally some acknowledgement that diverse voices and contributions to history and culture, including those of women, have been largely omitted from sanctioned archives and knowledge sources. We celebrate the artists in this exhibition and thank you for adding your voices and work to the rich and expansive fabric of Australian culture.

Alison Wright
Assistant Director
National Gallery of Australia

Belinda STREET
Good Fortune 2019 (detail)
Charcoal on paper
Dimensions variable
Photo by Joerg Lehmann



Bell is a Scottish artist, trained at the Glasgow School of Art and Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art. She has exhibited widely both in the UK and internationally and has been a Director of Craft Scotland, a Specialist Adviser with the Scottish Arts Council and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. In 2018, she completed a practice based PhD at the University of the West of Scotland, which explored the ways that creative practice informs our understanding of ageing, specifically, the interstice between sensory knowing within the creative process and how we navigate the later stages in life.

Working primarily with silk, cotton and paper, Bell finds that their intrinsically expressive qualities allow her to respond to an evolving subjective awareness of 'being in the world'. This new work, *Cocoon*, created for *Re-Imagining the Canon*, explores the idiosyncrasies of identity of an older woman artist navigating an unfolding path. With this work, she suggests that over time, there is a fragmentation of former ways of thinking, as they become obsolete, noting that within this slow process of undetected disintegration, small spaces emerge. It is here that the metamorphosis is revealed.



Alison F BELL
Cocoon, 2019
Mixed fibres, Shibori, resist dyeing technique
7 x 15cm (approx)

Chris Byrnes was born in Newcastle Australia into a large family of seven children. Her mother instilled a love of reading as a means of understanding the world along with the joy and necessity of making things.

While juggling family, working and art life Chris studied part-time completing a Bachelor of Fine Art Honours in 2010 at The University of Newcastle and a Master of Fine Art (MFA) at the National Art School in Sydney in 2017. Her MFA *Circles of Light: an Investigation of the Photographic Medium and a Chance Encounter* focused on a prinal, handmade, low-technology photographic experience. In the last two years Chris has been a finalist in the Julia Margaret Cameron awards for international female photographers and her work has been shown within Australia, Hawaii, New York, Saint Gilles Croix de Vie – France, Barcelona and the United Kingdom. While considering the initial question posed for this exhibition Chris responds to the notion of living 'she' in a broken landscape maintaining her commitment to the exploration of the photographic medium.

Without light we cannot exist

Without light I have no image

Without an image I cannot exist

I love photography

Chris BYRNES
I don't know / was broken / if you photographed me unbroken Part II 2019 (detail)
Set of six silver gelatin photographs, sepia and gold toning and acrylic emulsion
Each photograph 12 x 10 cm





- A: Anthroposols, Art-science, Ancestors
- B: Birdsong, Becoming, Being-in, B-horizons, Bedrock
- C: Cameras, Curiosity, Coal, Collaborations
- D: Digging deeper, Deep time
- E: Entropy, Exhale, Extraction, Erosion, Earth Breathing
- F: Fieldwork, Fossils, Findings, Foot steps
- G: Graphite, Gesso, Grasslands
- H: History both deep and shallow
- I: Ink, Imagination
- J: Joy
- K: Kangaroos and respect
- L: Land, Land-scape, Listening, Lumens
- M: Mines, Memory, Mycorrhiza
- N: Nature-culture, New beginnings
- O: Overburden, Opencut, Old ways
- P: Permian pasts, Paths, Paint, Papers
- Q: Space for thinking
- R: Rhythms of walking, Rehabilitation
- S: Storytelling, Soils, Stratigraphy, Solastalgia, Stone softening
- T: Terraforming, Topsoil, Trees
- U: Understandings, Unexpected intra-actions
- V: Voices, Voids, Vegetation
- W: Wayfinding, Words, Weeping
- X, Y and Z: Axes for installations

Chance and the unpredictable underscores Sarah Edmondson's art practice.

What might be considered a failure one moment is reinterpreted into something positive the next. Her diverse practice includes the use of happenstance of found text, unintended events of the technological glitch, printmaking processes, the use of random number generators for placement, and the laborious process of needlepoint tapestry, rethinking pixelation using the underlying grid of the canvas.

This has been explored in several exhibitions, including *According to Chance* at Galerie Pompon, Sydney (2018) which was installed with the help of a random number generator and *Reminiscentia*, Watt Space Gallery, Newcastle (2014) that explored the chance event of neurological disorders through the use of text and childhood photos.

Edmondson was awarded the 2018 Brunswick Street Gallery Small Works Art Prize and has been a finalist in numerous awards including Skills: National Still Life Award (2017), receiving a judges' commendation. Her work is held in the collection of Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, and private collections in Australia and overseas.

Edmondson graduate with a Master of Fine Art from the National Art School, Sydney in 2018, and holds a Bachelor of Fine Art (Distinction), from The University of Newcastle (2014).

Sarah EDMONDSON
Effect 2019
Wool, nylon and faux fur on canvas
17 x 15cm
Photo by Ian Hobbs





HELEN HOBCKROFT

Being a female artist is sometimes like looking into a mirror and seeing no reflection. We work, we live creative lives, yet somehow we always end up being – in general – albrushed out of art history. Of course, we are allowed some historical roles: muse, artist's mother, long-suffering wife, lover, colleague, teacher, friend. But by and large, the starring roles are reserved for other people. The other day I went to see *Avengers: Endgame*, the latest Hollywood blockbuster, with my daughter and some of her friends. While watching the final credits, I noticed that it wasn't until we got to costume design that a female name popped up. There are a myriad of reasons for this exclusion from public life, from public recognition, and both external and internal factors play their part.

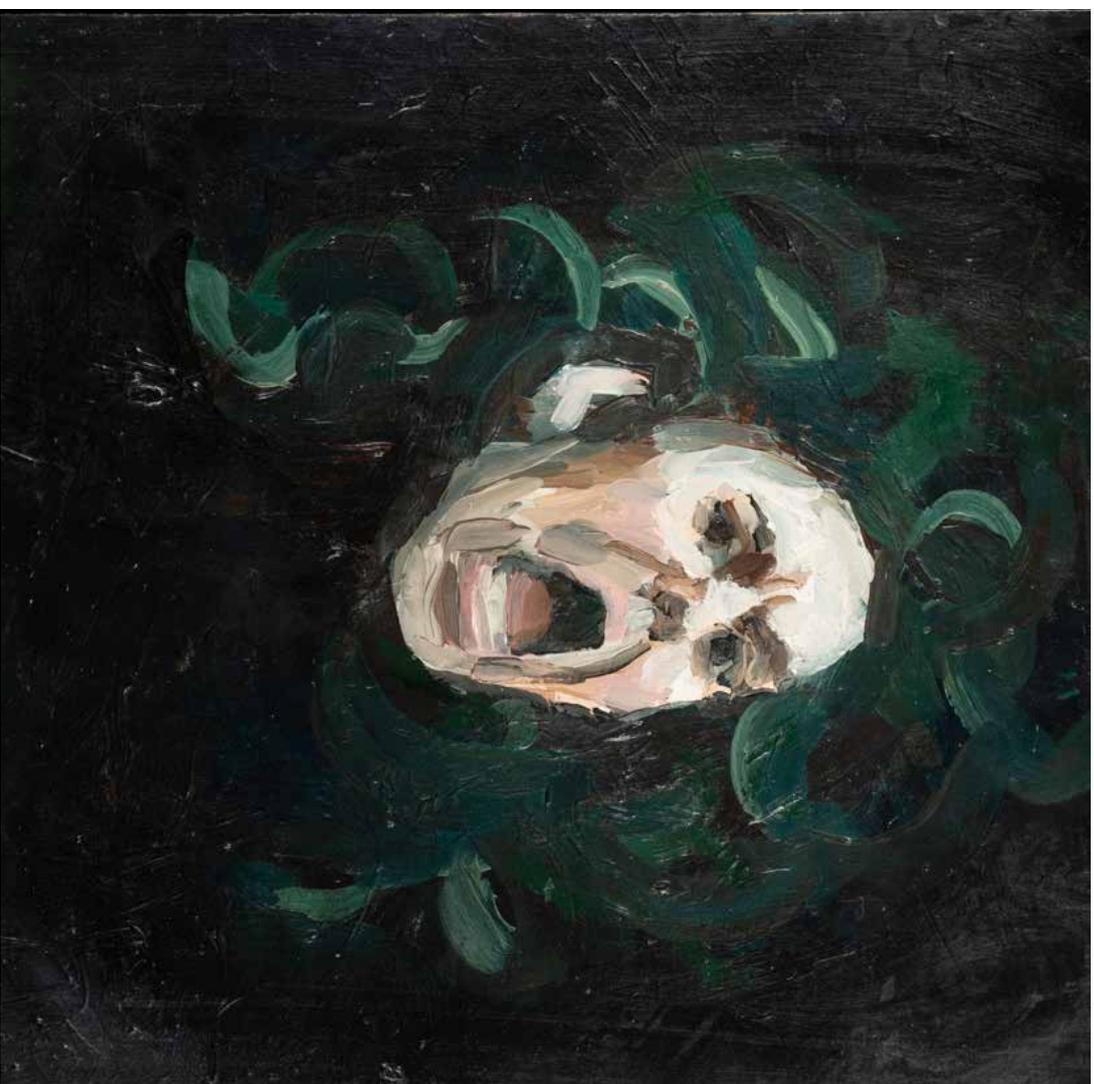
I've chosen to make the way female artists tend to splinter their available time, and the myriad of competing priorities and distractions they face – chiefly domestic - the focus of my performance for this exhibition. It's part of a series of artworks in which I give voice to women, whether they are historical figures, culture icons, artists and creatives. For example, in 2017 I spent a year dressed as Marie Antoinette for a piece of performance art titled *My Year as a Fairy Tale*. More recently, I performed a poem eulogising Channthy Kak, lead singer of the Cambodian Space Project.

Helen HOBCKROFT
My Year as a Fairy Tale 2018 (detail)
Digital image
Dimensions variable
Photo by Uzz Wackenzie

Originally from the UK Milne now lives and works in Newcastle, NSW.

Before leaving the UK Milne exhibited regularly with the Royal West of England Academy and on moving to Newcastle in 2013 won the Singleton Portrait Prize. In the last six years she has been hung twice in the Wynne Prize as well as being a Finalist in the Fleurieu, Kilgour and Tattersall Prizes amongst others and in 2018 her work featured in the book *A Painted Landscape* by Amber Creswell-Bell. Milne has work in the collections of Bathurst and Maitland Regional Art Galleries and is currently represented by the King Street Gallery on William in Sydney.

'I am a painter who works *alla prima* in oil on board. I paint with a focus on light and once I have established an idea I put all my intellectual capacity into the translation of what I see and feel onto the board. The theme of this exhibition is one close to my heart and I tried to condense my personal experience relating to this into the painting. Caravaggio was my first love as a young painter, the power and light in his work and the tortured nature of his subject matter made a good starting point for a work about frustration.'



Annemarie Murland is a Scottish artist who creates large abstract works that speak of felt experience through the physical and material properties of painting, experimental drawing, sculpture or in some instances, the lens of the camera and video screen.

Born in Glasgow, Scotland, 1962 she migrated to Australia in 1991, when she commenced her studies at The University of Newcastle, NSW. She received the University and Faculty medal for her honour's degree (2006) and completed a Doctor of Philosophy, Fine Arts degree (2009). Since then she has gone on to teach, lecture and present her work for exhibition both nationally, and internationally in Rome, Dublin and Glasgow. She currently lives in Newcastle and is the course coordinator of the Visual Arts, Foundation Studies Program, University of Newcastle.

Murland has chosen painting as installation for this exhibition with a work titled, *Homage: Interior Scroll*. This image is an expression of how the artist thinks, feels and communicates her memories of growing up in a largely sectarian part of Glasgow. An important aspect of the artist's practice is that it prioritizes material experience over language, an irony that is played out on the picture plane. Ambiguity is a feature and is illustrated in the decidedly feminine aesthetic where fluffy pink and white forms float atop homespun graffiti, etched into the translucent white muslin support. A discordant use of traditional and experimental painting materials blend to deliver the viewer a mind-body experience.



Annemarie MURLAND
Homage: Interior Scroll 2019 (detail)
Mixed media on muslin and stretcher
150 x 130cm
Photo by Joerg Lehmann

Dan Nelson is a painter whose work is abstract yet strongly connected to the physicality of the Australian landscape.

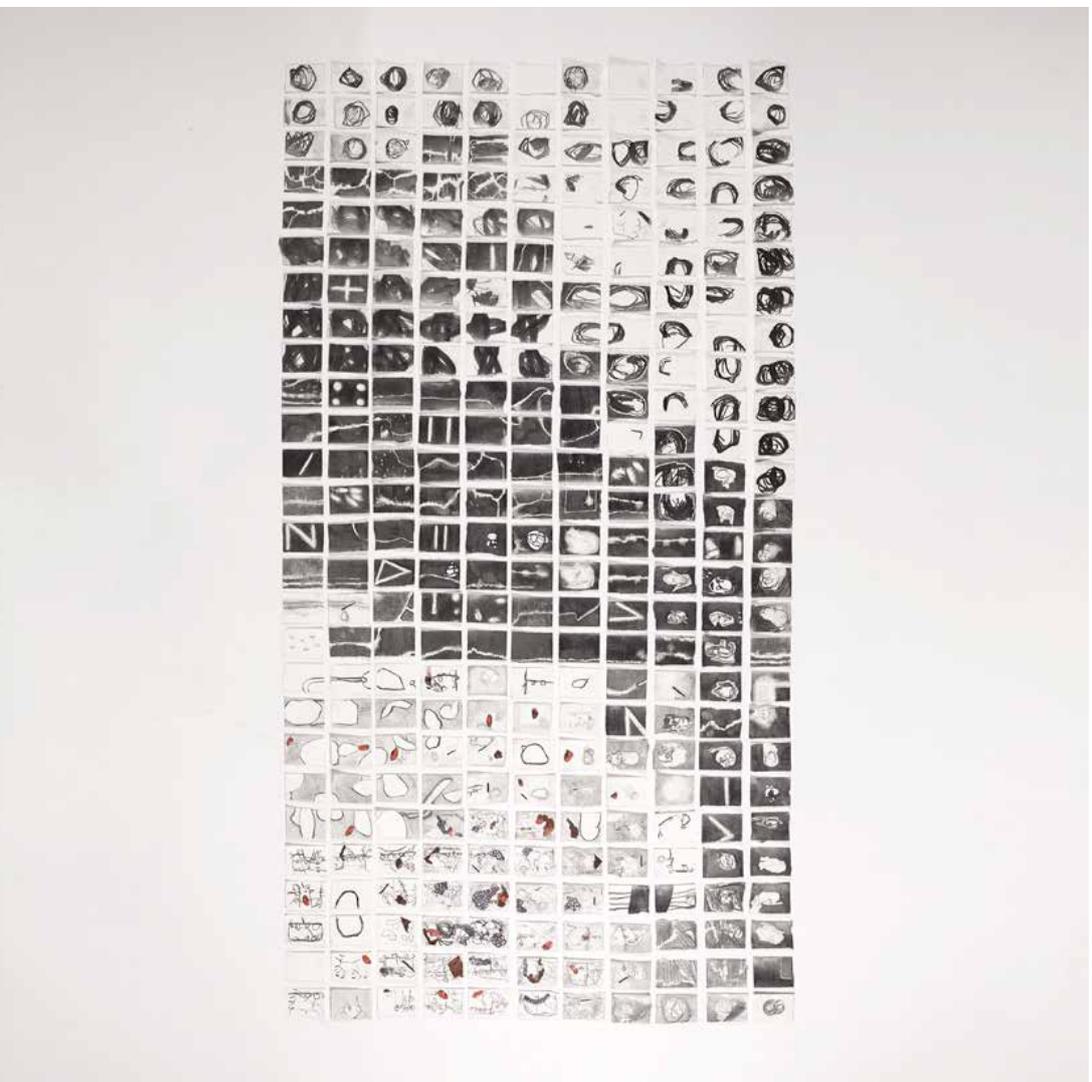
Seeking and finding a sense of place is at the heart of her practice, and it is with this intention that she has approached *Reimagining the Canon*. In considering how she would insert herself into western art history, Dan has created a set of circular, lens-like paintings that refer to her search for a way in.

A solution she offers fellow wayfinders is to honour and draw inspiration from women artists. Her paintings for this exhibition sprang from a deep admiration for the work of Australian painter Elisabeth Cummings.

During a visit to Elisabeth's home studio in Wedderburn, Dan was given a list of the restricted palette of colours Elisabeth likes to use. Correlating the idea of restriction with the history of women in art, she challenged herself to use these limited combinations. Women create impactful art, despite imposed constraints.

A 1960s aesthetic of psychedelia permeates these works, with a nod to the era of second-wave feminism, but it goes further. The term psychedelic is from Ancient Greek, *psyche* (soul) and *déjour* (to make visible, to reveal). In reimagining our place, in refocusing our lens, isn't that what we most desire: to become visible and be seen for who we really are?





Lucy O'Donnell's current work deals with miscarriage and loss after experiencing multiple *non-viable* pregnancies. Reframing experiences of miscarriage by acknowledging the speculative parallels to maternal, corporeal and philosophical speculations of drawing. Physical and physiological grief is uncomfortable for our culture and a term known as the Secret Club positions women like her.

For *Crack Open the Canon* she utilises the experiences, uncertainties and losses of miscarriage to re-open the secret club for all. Building on recent works that interrogate the maternal, she considers the partly present mother, where the matrixial becoming of both mother subjects change. Her drawings are often associated as sites of potential, accepting the unknown and inherently possibilizing. These drawings however are worked through failure, narrating the in-between of pregnancy without birth. The repetitive rhythms inherent within a grid set a systematic structure that delineates certainty and inevitability, where nuanced associations to cells, bodies, spaces and landscapes are united in photographic work of the partly present mother. The taboos that persistently dull experiences of miscarriage leave women and their partners grieving in limbo. Without acknowledgment we become silent, blind and unequipped, fostering a culture that is unsure and subsequently insensitive. The perpetuation of this pattern undermines the provisional needs for women's health and well-being.

Dr Lucy O'Donnell is Senior Lecturer of Fine Art at York St John University, Fellow of the Ballinglen Arts Foundation & the Higher Education Academy.

Based on intensely personal events, my interest lies in the philosophical premise of the fragile human condition and the attempt for us as human beings to overcome feelings of fragility and insignificance. The importance and relevance of existence is considered on a personal level, not only from a woman migrant's point of view in one place or another, but also in an existential sense. The aim of my studio practice is to communicate the metaphysical notion of human existential significance or lack thereof and to translate this into three-dimensional form. The colour orange is a recurring throwback to my Dutch heritage.

Marika Osmotherly was born in the Netherlands and in 1994 she migrated to Australia, settling in Newcastle, NSW. After taking time out to raise her two daughters, she commenced her undergraduate studies in Fine Art at The University of Newcastle in 2001. Her practice consists of abstracted figurative sculpture and during her postgraduate studies she started to develop an interest in philosophy, with particular focus on phenomenology and the sublime as elements of her expression of existential angst. Marika finished her Master of Philosophy in 2013 and was employed as a casual academic at The University of Newcastle in the discipline of sculpture from 2009 -2013.

She exhibits both nationally and internationally.





**KIERA
O'TOOLE**

Kiera O'Toole is an independent visual artist and researcher based in The Model Arts Gallery studios in Sligo, Ireland. O'Toole completed a MPhil (Research, Fine Art) The University of Newcastle, Australia, 2013 and a BA (Fine Art) Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland in 2000. O'Toole's practice is rooted in drawing as a means to examine the perceptual and aesthetic experience of drawing both inside and outside the gallery space. O'Toole's drawing practice makes connections between the aesthetic experience of the drawing and the site. Her practice is realised through studio and site-specific drawing, digital media, installation, sculpture, photography.

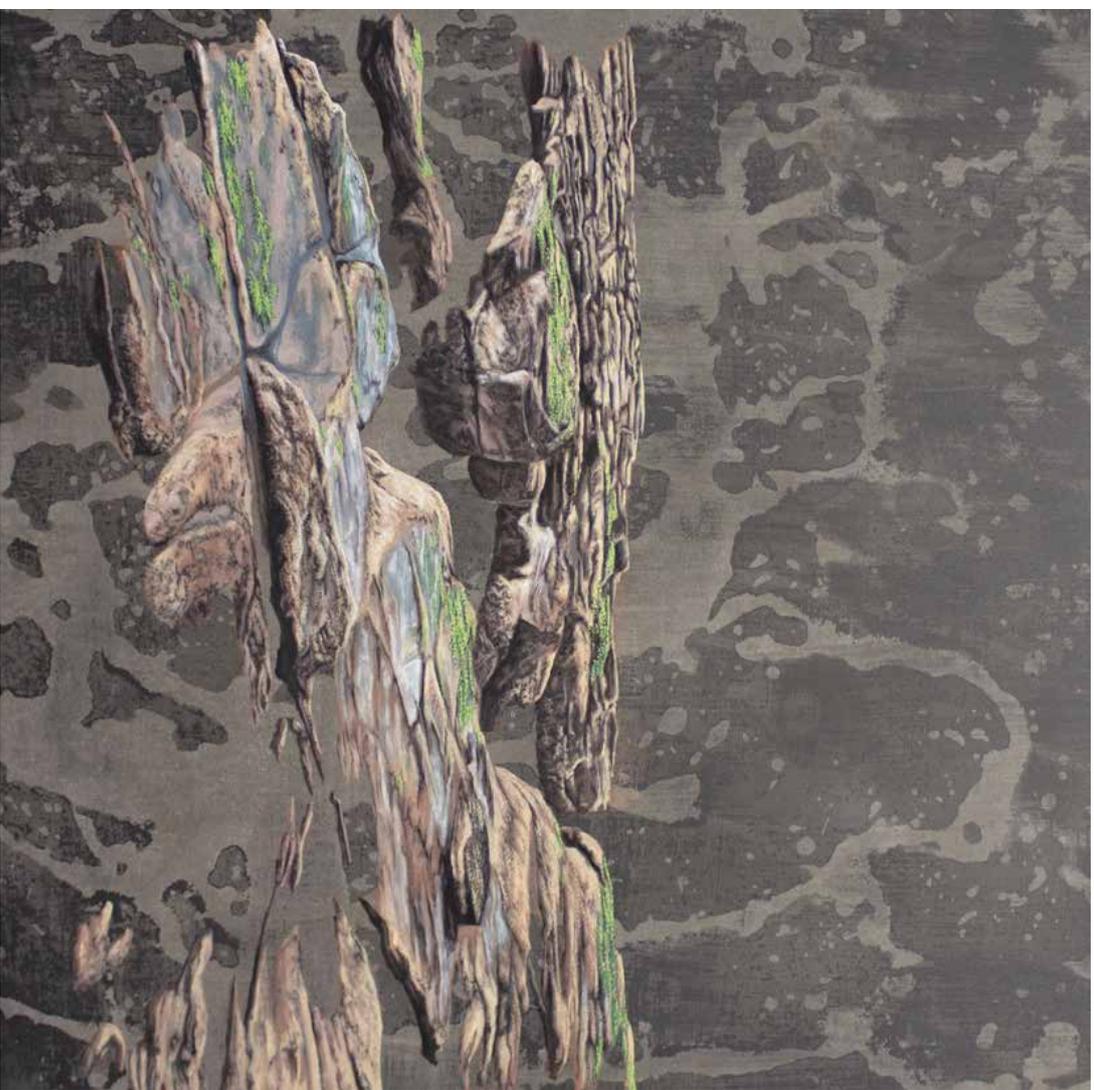
O'Toole is a finalist for Project Anywhere Global Exhibition curated by Parsons Fine Arts, New York and the University of Melbourne. O'Toole will present her work at the Project Anywhere biennial conference at Parsons, NY in 2020 which forms a book chapter edited by Douglas, S and Lowry, S. O'Toole's practice includes residences, presentations and writing including upcoming book chapter titled 'Drawing from the Non-Place' published by Cambridge Scholars, 2019. O'Toole is a co-founder of *Drawing deCentred* which is a professional artist-led and all Ireland collective that considers contemporary drawing as a practice, idea and methodology.

Kiera O'TOOLE
'Wonder Stones', OPW Office of Public Wonder 2019
Video installation

Alessia Sakoff is an environmental artist based in Newcastle, Australia. After completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts at The University of Newcastle, she is now represented by Flinders Street Gallery in Sydney. Primarily focusing on works on paper, her recent landscape paintings have drawn from experiences in both Australian and international natural environments.

Tensions between representation and abstraction, order and chaos are at play in her landscapes as she highlights the strength and beauty of nature and its relationship with humanity. Working outside of the studio space, ideas of the sublime are a constant theme across her paintings as a celebration of the unpredictable and uncontrollable forces of nature.

Sakoff's contemporary landscapes have been regularly exhibited in local and regional galleries and are represented in public and private collections across NSW. Featuring in many art prize exhibitions across her career, her recent achievements include winner of the Newcastle Emerging Artist Prize 2018 for the Works on Paper Prize and twice winner of the People's Choice Award, as well as runner up for the Brenda Clouten Memorial Travelling Scholarship Prize for Young Achievers in Visual Arts.





Good Fortune explores identity and the complexities of being an artist who is a mother. Your art practice can be fractured and often merges into your family life. Once a landscape drawing, this work was then divided into four to represent my partner, our two children and myself - a whole which is split, as your time is when raising a family. Folded, morphed into a children's game with large parts now hidden and reoriented, leaving only the abstract marks. Fractured, different to how it began, but I believe more beautiful.

Street has been a professional practicing artist for over 20 years. A visual arts graduate of the University of Newcastle, with Honours in Fine Arts at the College of Fine Arts (UNSW), Street has held 18 solo exhibitions and been involved in more than 50 group exhibitions. The artist is twice winner of the Mosman Youth Art Prize and was awarded a full scholarship to the prestigious Julian Ashton Art School in Sydney. She has been a finalist in a number of art prizes including the Paddington Art Prize, Gosford Art Prize, Muswellbrook Art Prize, Callen Art Award, Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing, the Fleurieu Food and Wine Art Prize and the Warringah Art Prize.

Belinda STREET
Good Fortune 2019 (detail)
Charcoal on paper
Dimensions variable
Photo by Joerg Lehmann

For me art begins when words fall silent.

Born Sydney. Bachelor of Arts (Visual Art) '83. Lecturer The University of Newcastle 1994 - 97. Teacher Newcastle Art School since 1986.

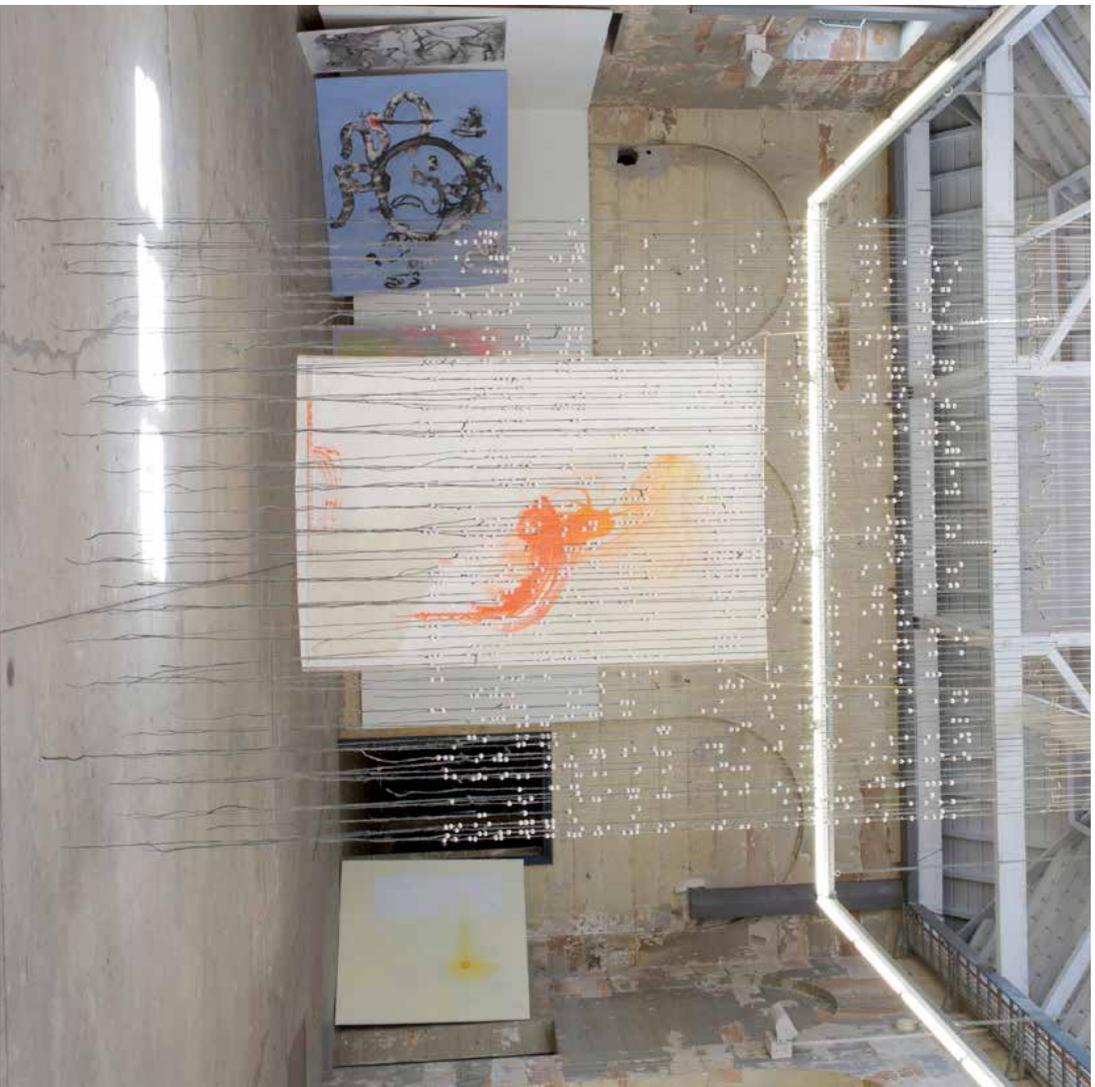
Over 21 solo exhibitions in Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne, Maitland, Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Dubai.

Over 100 group exhibitions since 1988 - Sydney, Melbourne, Newcastle, Maitland, Etham, Port Stephens, Wieliczka Poland, Dubai, Morpeth, Adelaide, Cowra, Manning River, Cessnock, Muswellbrook, China and Campbelltown. Travelling exhibition curated by Tony Bond Art Gallery of NSW.

Over 17 awards, prizes and scholarships and is represented in the collections of Warrnambool Art Gallery, Maitland City Art Gallery, The University of Newcastle, Muswellbrook Regional Gallery, Campbelltown City Art Gallery, Newcastle Art Gallery, Artbank, Newcastle City Council, AMP Collection, Mosman Regional Gallery and other private collections in Australia, Hong Kong, Dubai, Singapore, England and Poland.

Selected Publications: Reproduced in Newcastle Morning Herald, Women Artists of Australia, Australian Weekend, New Art Eight by Neville Drury, Images 2 by Neville Drury, SMH, Images 3 Neville Drury, Australian Contemporary Painting edited by Jingzhe Li Shanghai People's Fine Art Publishing Press and numerous published catalogues.





ELIA VINVYNN

Elia Vinyvynn completed a Masters degree in painting at Sydney College of the Arts in 2018. Working most often on large scale abstract paintings of 2m x 3m, Elia's practice converses with historical and contemporary painting - "my paintings result from intuitive and constructed processes - a conscious and unconscious play of things I have filtered".

Elia recently won the painting section of the Newcastle Emerging Artist Prize with a work titled *Filters*.

She is also part of a painting collective called SOOP with Suzy Faiz and Kate Scholtes with whom she has exhibited since 2013.

Elia has shown in many group shows including Mori Gallery, Verge, George Paton in Melbourne and recently had a solo show with the Waiting Room Project in Macquarie Street.

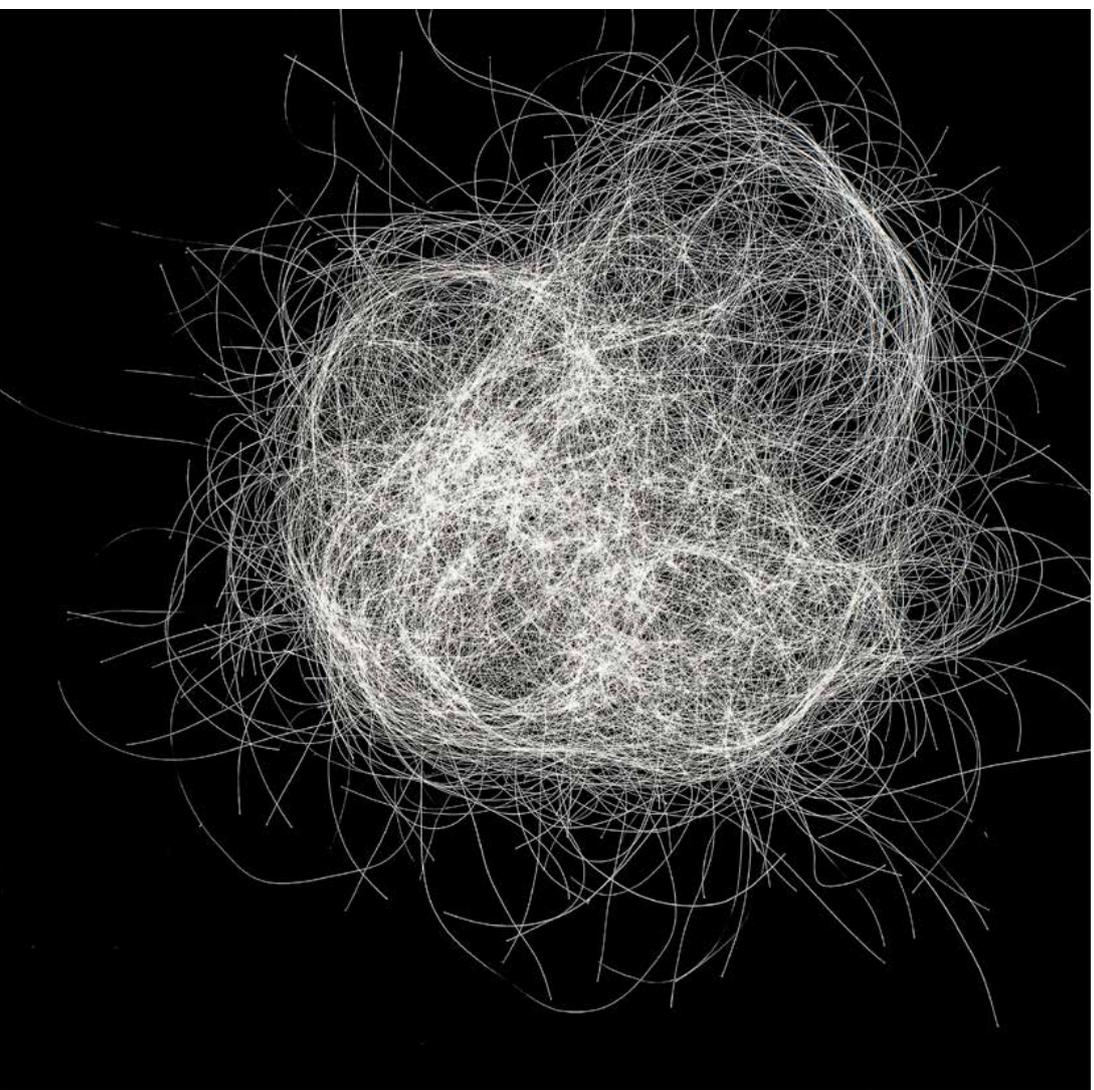
During her MFA studies she won several scholarships allowing her to undertake study in Spain. She currently resides in Newcastle and has a studio at Newcastle Art Space.

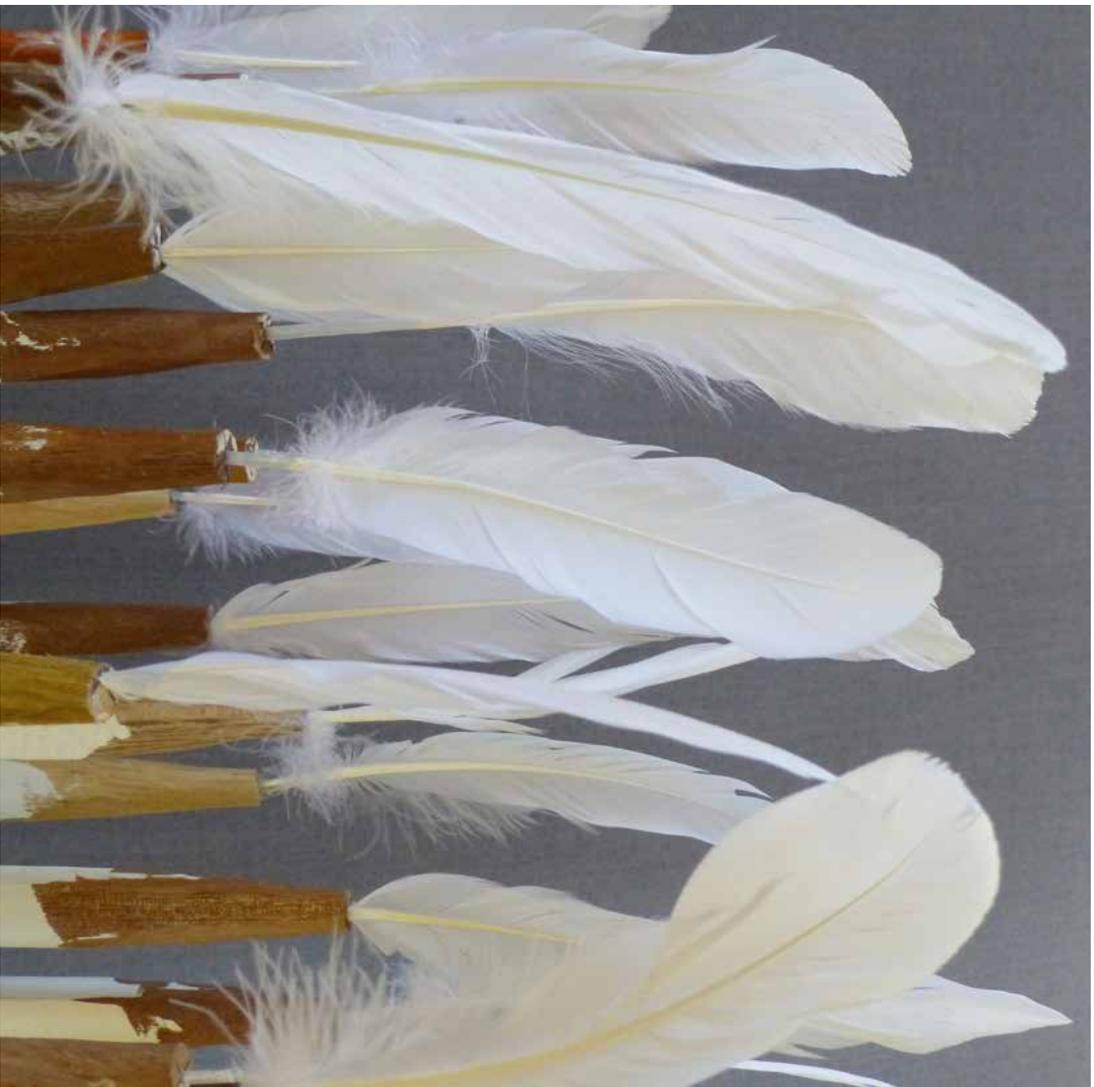
Elia VINVYNN
Filters 2019
Oil on canvas
200 x 300cm

Clare Weeks is a Photomedia artist working primarily in digital and performance video art. She is an Associate Lecturer in photomedia at the University of Newcastle (UoN) and previously also taught at the Newcastle Art School (Hunter Street TAFE).

She is currently undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy (Fine Art) Postgraduate Degree at The University of Newcastle where the topic of her research is narrative explorations of Multiple Sclerosis, theatre and the medicalised self. In 2011 she was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis and since this time has documented through visual, text and oral means, the artist's experience of living with disease. Using her own body as the site of transgression, her aim is to make visual the un-seen experience of living with chronic illness. As a practicing artist, she has created photographic, video and installation work and has shown in solo and group exhibitions Australia wide.

My work is of the body. It is about and from the body, my body. Every day I gather and collect my hair and it is stored in jars. Through documentation and visual interpretation practices I make work with it in an attempt to reclaim what is considered loss and to create my own narrative.





PATRICIA WILSON-ADAMS

Patricia Wilson-Adams was raised on an isolated sheep property in the New England region of NSW and it is this environment that informs her work. She attended the National Art School, Sydney and gained an MFA from the College of Fine Art, University of New South Wales. She studied etching at Atelier 17 in Paris and has also worked as an artist-in-residence in many parts of the world.

She taught printmaking, drawing and textile sculpture at The University of Newcastle. She has exhibited both prints and sculpture in major galleries culminating with a survey exhibition, *stain me with the intensity of black*, at the Newcastle Art Gallery in 2018.

Her work focuses on cultural landscapes, land usage and environmental issues. She works in sculpture, installation, print media and letterpress.

Working in a Post Minimalist mode, or what Lucy Lippard describes as “eccentric abstraction”, one explores this area in the knowledge that women artists bring a warmth, a purist authenticity and a persistence to the practice.

Here the work is experiential, recognising that nature is the progenitor and the site of my being – also of my losses. These works stand as markers of loss and objects against which one is able to physically measure one’s own stature. An immersive position has been taken as Heidegger suggests we do – “being in and of the world”.

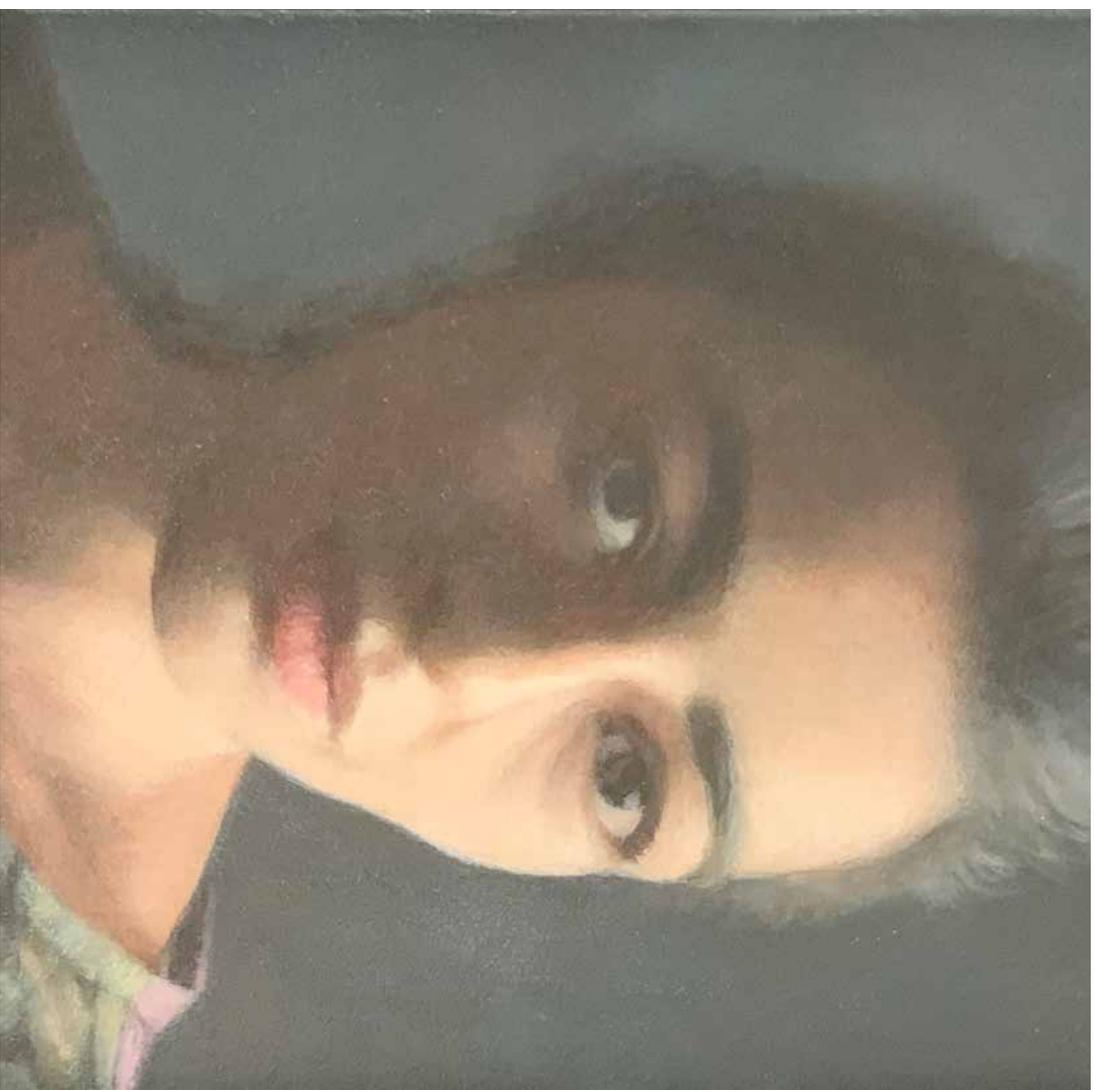
It is said that to die is to cast no shadow

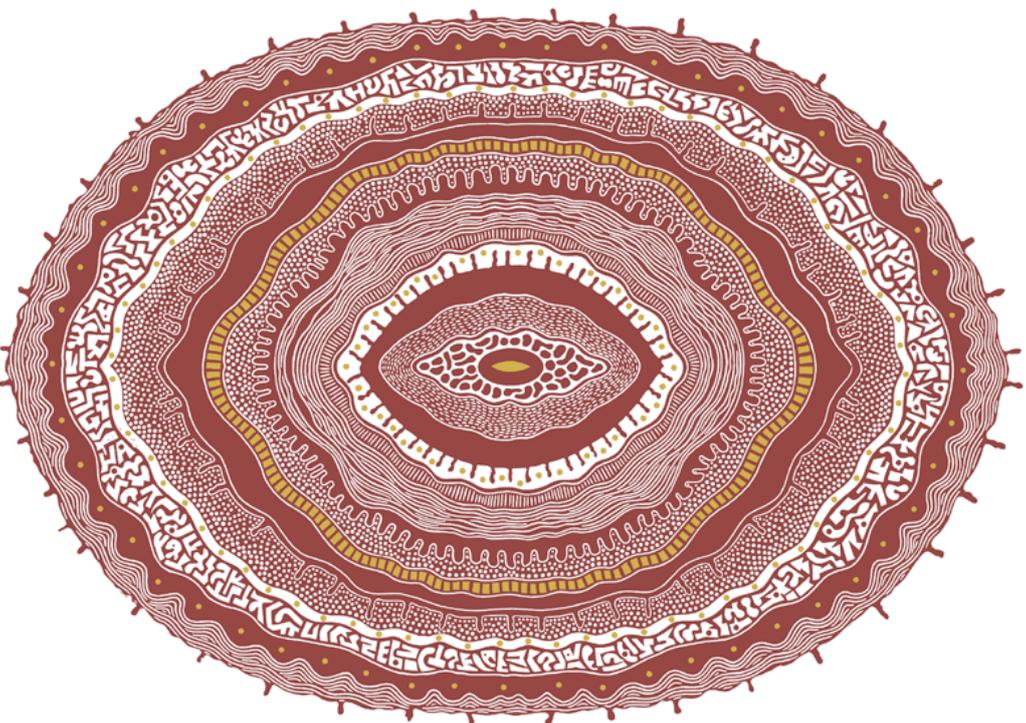
Patricia WILSON-ADAMS
Casting no shadow 2019 (detail)
Wood, concrete and feathers
Approx. 240cm x variable

Lee Zaunders's professional art practice has mounted the walls of institutions, churches and galleries throughout her career as a painter of people, places and things. She began in Taree under the tutelage of Scottish portrait artist, Alan Sutherland. It was here that she first experienced the nuances of drawing from life and the discipline of oil painting. She completed an undergraduate and postgraduate degree in Fine Art at The University of Newcastle where she later taught. She also represented the university in her second hometown Athens, where, in 2010 she presented a paper that was the result of research for her Master of Philosophy degree and which focused on her 'research of painting practices both past and present.'

A primary focus of the artist's oeuvre is blending art historical narratives, methods and techniques alongside her 'joy of painting from life and *en plein air*'. Zaunders's subject matter is found in her observations of the quotidian and aspects of daily life that are then rendered with deft skill and accuracy. However, it is in painting the female form, and in particular, her portraits where one experiences notions of the transcendental where a self-reflexive female gaze entices the viewer, asking them to ponder - 'what does it mean to be a woman'? Regardless of age, time, culture or demographic the artist delivers the viewer a real 'painting' experience from the perspective of a woman.

Lee ZAUNDERS
Evening Light (July) detail
Acrylic on Archival board
8.5 x 12.5 cm





Vera Zulumovski is a printmaker who is drawn to the infinitely fluid, fractal lushness of pattern: to Zulumovski pattern is powerful. Her highly embellished linocuts are carved into images which focus on autobiography, often recording events with unrestrained candour.

Zulumovski has exhibited widely and established a national reputation. She has held 17 solo exhibitions and her work is held in numerous prominent public collections including over a dozen in the National Gallery of Australia, where her linocuts have also been part of major works on paper survey exhibitions.

She has won several commissions, prizes and awards, including the Fremantle Print Award, Walkorn Manning Art Prize, Sutherland Shire Biennial Art Prize and the Works on Paper category of the Muswellbrook Art Prize. She has also been awarded a residency at the Australia Council Studio in Barcelona and recently participated in a month long residency at Hill End. Zulumovski has also recently taken part in the paper section of the Sydney Contemporary Art Fair and had her work included in the Bilbao Works on Paper Fair in Spain.

Vera ZULUMOVSKI
No Two are Same - Number 1 2019
Hand Coloured linocut
98 x 70cm



reimaginingthecanon

Reimagining the Canon

Female artists from here, there and everywhere crack open the canon at their inaugural exhibition 23 October - 17 November 2019

