

The Image Unbound
An Artist Books Exhibition

Curated by Christine Willcocks and Meredith Cusack

Featuring

Sabine Brosche, Dr Jan Davis, Karla Dickens, Fiona Fraser
Helle Jorgensen, Christian Morrow, Dr Glen Skein, Dr Gali Weiss

July 28 - August 9 2017
Opening Friday July 28 6PM – 8PM
28 Lawson St, Byron Bay NSW 2481

Curated by Christine Willcocks and Meredith Cusack of Byron School of Art in collaboration with the Byron Writers Festival 2017 and Lone Goat Gallery.

Byron Writers Festival and Byron School of Art are excited to announce a collaborative exhibition of Artists Books titled *The Image Unbound*. This exhibition held at the Lone Goat Gallery offers insight into the ways artists deconstruct our understanding of how books carry meaning and what actually constitutes a book.

Whilst artists have illustrated books since the 1400s, the book as an art object itself is only a fairly recent phenomenon dating back to the 1950s.

Curators Christine Willcocks and Meredith Cusack from the Byron School of Art point out that “many people are not familiar with Artist Books, yet the State Library of Queensland has a collection of 1500 works from Australia and overseas, and a number of the artist exhibiting in *The Image Unbound*, have works in that collection.

What makes Artist Books so fascinating is the way artists mesh text and imagery, or how they manipulate the form of the book itself from the fairly traditional binding to more fluid conceptual frameworks that will really challenge people’s ideas of what a book can be.”

Christine Willcocks and Meredith Cusack
Byron School of Art
2017



Co-Curator Christine Willcocks

Christine is a Director and teacher at the Byron School of Art. Christine is a well-known artist and printmaker, having won many awards both nationally and locally. Her work can be found in many collections throughout Australia including Artbank, The Print Council of Australia, Canson Australia Pty Ltd, the State Library of Victoria and Queensland as well as numerous Regional and City Galleries, Universities and Schools. Christine has four Artists Books in the Queensland State Library.

Christine has studied at Southern Cross University Lismore and Monash University in Victoria. She taught at Lismore TAFE for 13 years and is currently teaching at Southern Cross University. Trained as a printmaker, with over 20 years of experience, her work often includes cross disciplines such as drawing, painting, photography and 3D. Christine runs highly motivated workshops across Australia.

She is represented by Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, Victoria. Christine has curated numerous exhibitions and was one of the original founders of Piece Gallery, c.a.s.e. Inc, the Industrialists and the Bryon School of Art.

Co-Curator Meredith Crowe

Meredith is the coordinator of the BSA Project Space. Meredith began her studies with a BA in Modern Languages at Canberra University and the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City, before completing a social work degree in 2000. After moving to the Northern Rivers in 2003, Meredith studied Fine Arts at TAFE, continuing her studies at Southern Cross University.

Although primarily a painter she also works across multiple disciplines such as works on paper, 3D and video. Meredith has had solo exhibitions at Tweed Regional Gallery and Arts Northern Rivers and has participated in numerous selected group shows, receiving a number of awards. Her work is held in private collections in UK, Europe and Australia.

Meredith is a founding member of the Industrialists and the Byron School of Art.

Additional information about the Artist / Artist Books

Exhibiting Artist Dr Jan Davis

Using mainly drawing and printmaking, including digital printmaking Dr Jan Davis is well known for her studio investigation into landscape and place. Jan has mounted solo exhibitions regularly since the late 1980s, firstly with Niagara Galleries in Melbourne and more recently with grahame galleries + editions in Brisbane who continue to represent my work.

Jan has been included in numerous group exhibitions nationally and internationally and in 1995 her seven-volume artists book SOLOMON won the Fremantle Print prize. Jan's works are in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia and the Australian National Library, Canberra as well as in many State and Regional collections.

Jan studied printmaking at Phillip Institute in Melbourne and concluded her academic qualifications with a Master of Arts from Southern Cross University in 1995. Jan is an Adjunct Associate Professor at Southern Cross University.

Recounting Democracy, 2013

Watercolour, graphite pencil with stamping, 200x300mm, softbound red cover, stitched, with pocket in back cover containing photograph, variable edition of 5, this copy: 5/5 \$300(excluding GST)

Artist note: Recounting Democracy is a story of democracy in Australia. Small watercolour marks represent a vote for a different political party. Each 'vote' has been meticulously numbered in graphite pencil, accumulating as the reader proceeds through the 32 pages of the book, until the total number is determined for each party and translated into seats in parliament.

Each book in the edition has a slightly different outcome. As I painted 'votes' and drew numbers under them, (many thousands during the edition), I thought about the contribution to democracy that each person makes as they enter a voting booth as they enter a voting booth and mark their electoral paper with those finely sharpened, but rather short graphite pencils provided by the Australian Electoral Commission.

The right to vote is a precious thing. Tucked inside the back cover of Recounting Democracy is a photograph I took on the streets of Paris during the 2012 French Presidential Elections, a comic reminder that not everyone believes in the power of the vote.

Exhibiting Artist Karla Dickens

Karla Dickens, a Wiradjuri artist born in Sydney in 1967, began her formal training at the National Art School in Darlinghurst, Sydney in 1991, obtaining a Fine Arts Diploma in 1993 and a Bachelor in Fine Arts in 2000.

Karla is known for her use of motifs as well text, and for her beading onto painted canvasses, as well as which respond to various themes including politics, love, sex and the environment. Karla has shown in many solo and group exhibitions around Australia, including most recently at Carriageworks *The National: New Australian Art* and *Defying Empire Triennial*, 2017 at NGA.

Karla was the recipient of the Bundjalung Art Award and the People's Choice Award for her work in the "Our Spirit, Our Country" exhibition in 2006, and Her work can be found in many collections throughout Australia.

Artist note: Artist book using a series of photographs a 2011 *Home is Where the Rabbit Lives*. The Body of work was developed after receiving an Arts NSW fellowship, focusing on the community's strong love of a football team, its culture, a sense of belonging and its symbolism through the NSW landscape.

As a team the Rabbitohs embrace the working-class, underdog, and the urban Aboriginal, with the name of the team derived from the call of the rabbit vendor making his way by horse-and-cart through South Sydney streets sprucing 'Rabbit-ohs, rabbit-ohs!'.

The rabbit vendors of yesteryear were more often than not Aboriginal. Aboriginal society was and remains a prominent feature of Souths Sydney, particularly in Redfern, where it also carries an underdog status in the broader Australian society...

"The Honey and the Bunny". A love story initially told via film and a series of photographs that also appear in the film as still images. Honey (an Aboriginal drag queen Destiny) and Bunny (the Rabbitohs' Charlie Rabbit mascot) are, to say the least, an unlikely couple despite their shared fondness for fur, the colour red and big hair (well, big ears in Bunny's case)...

In the style of a poignant, queer fable, Destiny and Charlie speak to me about hope and love in the concrete jungle, and the enduring dreams of the underdog. Along with Monica Oppens exquisite handmade bound sculptural story boards and boxes the works are housed in, each artist book has an original collaged front cover and colophon.

As with a lot of my recent canvases a black net, incases the constructed collage, the net represents a dark shadow, a shadow that lingers on my personal history and the history of Australia's colonisation.

Exhibiting Artist Fiona Fraser

Fiona's practice explores the relationship between humans and their built and natural environments, and incorporates photography, printmaking, installation, artist books and performance.

Numerous field trips, and artist residencies to Maria Island National Park, Tasmania and the Cite International des Arts, Paris have been particularly influential on her work. Involved since inception, Fiona co-curates and exhibits in Osmosis annually, an exhibition by female uni graduate artists, in dialogue with the Tasmanian environment.

Her work has been exhibited and collected in Tasmania, Queensland and New Caledonia. Fiona Fraser received her Bachelor and Honours degrees in Fine Art at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University and in 2009 graduated from the Master of Art, Design + Environment at the Tasmanian School of Art, University of Tasmania.

In conjunction with her art practice, Fiona has worked in Arts Administration for the Queensland College of Art, Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart City Council, Ten Days on the Island and Salamanca Arts Centre.

Inundation (Flood Gauge), 2017 paper, gouache, ink, restored found wooden ladder, 225cm (H) x 17cm (W) x 4cm (D), Courtesy the artist \$600

Artist note: This work utilises a small 'found' ladder, stained black and polished, to form a sort of flood gauge. Hanging between the rungs of the ladder is a 'record' of each of Lismore's major floods since records began 120 years ago, floods that would've gone over the current flood levee.

Inundation (Her Flood Story), 2017 paper, graphite, gouache, thread, flood salvaged and restored chair, 86.5cm (H) x 45cm (W) x 54cm (D), Courtesy the artist POA
Purchaser note: papers used not archival

Artist note: This artist book has its pages sewn onto the seat of a found chair. The chair was salvaged from a pile of debris after Lismore's recent major flood. While its seat was a rotting sodden mess and the timber had become cracked and warped, it was still too precious to consign to the bulldozers and rubbish tip.

I have restored the chair as a symbol of resilience, and the capacity for new/renewed life, in this case as an artwork, a book chronicling the history of place and experience. The 'pages' form a petticoat that shows the extent of flooding in the 1974 and 1954 floods along the Wilson River from Eltham to Lismore.

The work refers to stories of women who have had to contend with floods, be it finding a way home through the floods after visiting the queen in Lismore in 1954, or my mother being walked home through flood waters in her ball dress in the middle of the night by my father when they were courting, or the dramas of my sister's wedding day that took place on a day of major flooding in Lismore. These stories show the determination of women who have pressed on with life despite having to contend with floods.

Exhibiting Artist Helle Jorgensen

Helle is an artist and educator whose major focus is on the investigation, collection and arrangement of materials, often using discarded, recycled or sustainably harvested materials.

With an early background in science and horticulture her practice attempts to blur the boundaries between the disciplines of Art and Science. She has a Bachelor of Science (Biology), a Diploma in Horticulture and later in life studied Fine Art at TAFE and Drawing at Julian Ashton Art School.

She has had solo shows in Sydney and Adelaide and in 2013 at the Tweed River Art Gallery. She has been in many group shows nationally and internationally, including New York, Los Angeles, Washington and London. Her work has been published in many books and international journals.

Helle recently had an artist's residency at Rockhampton Regional Gallery and in schools in Sydney, Adelaide and Stoker's Siding. She has also held popular workshops and taught at numerous public events, including Splendour in the Grass, Byron Bay. Her exhibition *A Typology of Useless Objects* was held at the BSA Project Space in March of this year.

Exhibiting Artist Christian Morrow

Christian Morrow is well known in the area as a journalist, musician and artist, exhibiting in numerous solo and group exhibitions for over 20 years, after studying at Sydney College of the Arts (COFA).

He is represented in Sydney, Bangalow and the Gold Coast and, amongst other awards, has been a finalist in the Gallipoli Art Prize twice. Christian is known for his fascination with the mystery of flight and symbols of masculinity, often gouging and cutting into his work, using text and texture as a way of branding his surfaces.

A core part of Christian's practice is journal work, and a number of these are on show for this exhibition.

Exhibiting Artist Glen Skien

Dr Glen Skien has spent the major part of his exhibiting life as a printmaker and author of objects in the Central Queensland coastal city of Mackay.

Since 1990 he has exhibited consistently throughout regional Queensland with a major survey exhibition *Palimpsest The Art of Glen Skien* touring throughout regional Australia including Icon Gallery in Melbourne.

Glen established Silent Parrot Press in Mackay, North Queensland in 2000, well known as a studio and gallery in which fine art prints were produced & exhibited, and highly regarded for its workshops & classes in printmaking techniques, book binding, box making & life drawing.

Object-Poem: Waiting for Godot, 2016, hand bound artist book.

Artist note: Copied transcripts written in reverse with black and red ink of Samuel Becket's 1949 absurdist play 'Waiting for Godot'.

Fable in Brief: Volume 1, 2016, hand bound artist book of tracings in graphite.

Artist note: The use of tracings of found images collectively bound within transparent pages was a way of creating a sense of narrative that relies on a continuum of free associations.

Object-Poem: The Yellow Book, 2015, book of dry-point etchings on printed yellow paper.

Artist note: Devoid of text this book explores the possibility of randomly chosen images and accidental surface markings to evoke narratives caught in midstream.

Exhibiting Artist Dr Gali Weiss

Dr Gali Weiss is an artist and lecturer in Creative Practice (Visual Arts) at Deakin University, Melbourne.

Her arts practice has centred on drawing installations, the artist's book, and more recently on multimedia work comprising drawing, printmaking, photomedia, and sound.

She has conducted practice-led research on notions of portraiture and diaspora, and continues to write and publish research on identity, subjectivity, material perceptions of time, and art and social/political engagement.

Gali was the facilitator of *Unfolding Projects: Afghan and Australian Artist Book Collaborations* held at Queensland State Library.

Dear Daughter Book I, 2012, Photopolymer relief on Kozo paper, BFK Rives cover, Edition of 2 & 1 artist's proof, 20 x 28cm

Dear Daughter Book II, 2012, Photopolymer intaglio on Kozo paper, BFK Rives cover, Edition of 2 & 1 artist's proof, 20 x 28cm

Dear Daughter Book III, 2012, Photopolymer relief on Kozo paper, BFK Rives cover, Edition of 2 & 1 artist's proof, 20 x 28cm

Binding: George Matoulas, Size: 20 x 28cm, courtesy the artist and State Library of Victoria & University of Melbourne (both institutions own the 2 editions, edition on show is Artist's Proof) NFS

Artist note: *Dear Daughter* is the first part of a larger project that explores handwriting as drawing; as mark-making that leaves trace of hand and gesture while at the same time evolves as a dialogue in the present. The work in this exhibition itself traces a lived moment in time left by my father's mark, his handwriting. In 1998, my father handed me his self-published memoir. He'd added a handwritten inscription on page 2, dedicating, or rather gifting, that particular copy to me. He'd also prepared a copy for my sister, and one for each of his grandchildren, each with a unique and personalised dedication. My father died in 2007 after being noncommunicative for five years with Alzheimer's disease. My work with his writing attempts to draw out a sense of presence and new meanings from the marks of his hand and thoughts.

Exhibiting Artist Sabine Brosche

When I first started getting into art and creativity I was somehow convinced I needed expensive art materials to produce something interesting. I bought more and more stuff but my creativity did not expand exponentially.

My love for nature, and my interest in sustainability has slowly led me to keep looking more and more for what can be recycled. Now I love the whole idea of creating art from almost nothing – recycling and reclaiming materials that are cheaply or even freely available.

The project *'Burned & Cut'* is entirely made from old and often damaged books that were either given to me, bought really cheaply from the local second-hand stores or were saved from the paper recycling bins.

Rummaging around in quirky second-hand stores or garage sale was part of the fun and brings back some pleasant memories from childhood. My father is an antique collector, and I grew up exploring with him people's sheds, barns, back rooms and cellars for lost treasures. Often, he brought stuff home that looked beyond repair – with lots of patience he would restore it to something amazing.

Each book I have carries its own story. Often when I look through the pages I wonder about the person to whom the book once belonged. I wonder if they are still alive and what kind of life they have lived. Reading through the book I sometimes feel some sort of connection with the owner or the author...or maybe I imagine it.

Many books have a personal handwritten dedication. One of the oldest dedications I found was dated 1866. One day I found an old book lying in the streets of Lismore, it had a very personal dedication in my own language – German – and was signed and dated 1921. The message translates more or less to:

The Meaning of life is self-realization. Death is a birth to immortality. This is my philosophy! And for me, life is a strict school within the infinity of being.
Molly, 1st Dec. 1921