



Questioning long-held traditions of printmaking, guest curators and artists Therese Kenyon & Patricia Wilson-Adams have invited nine artists to join them in exploring the very nature of printmaking. They seek to push the boundaries of the medium and fly free from conventions.

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THERESE KENYON BEN RAK OLGA SANKEY
HEATHER SHIMMEN GLEN SKIEN
SANDRA WINKWORTH LINDA SWINFIELD
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First published in 2020
by Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG)
PO Box 220, Maitland NSW, 2320
mrag.org.au

to accompany the exhibition

**LET ALL THE BIRDS FLY:
THE HYBRID PRINT**

Exhibition dates
**8 FEBRUARY
– 3 MAY 2020**

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Catalogue proudly printed in Australia
by WHO Printing, Newcastle
ISBN: 978-0-6487348-2-6

Maitland Regional Art Gallery
is a proud service of Maitland City
Council and is supported by the NSW
Government through Create NSW.

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LET
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: THE
HYBRID
PRINT



LET ALL THE BIRDS FLY

: THE HYBRID PRINT

IF MAN LOST THE BIRDS OF THE SKY,
THE POETS WOULD INVENT NEW BIRDS.
SI EL HOMBRE PERDIERA LOS PÁJAROS DEL AIRE,
LOS POETAS INVENTARÍAN NUEVOS PÁJAROS.

*Dulce María Loynaz*¹

Invention and an overwhelming sense of freedom was at the very core of our invitation to this exceptional group of artists. We asked them to question the very parameters of the printmaking canon and to take issue with the many default settings that formulate the craft of printmaking. We asked that they consider privileging the content of their work and its relationship to other interests above notions of perfection, taste and/or style and to place themselves where they could be more readily described as being a “print + maker”.

In *Let all the birds fly: the hybrid print* we can see the work of artists who have explored the furthest reaches of making prints. The eleven artists in this exhibition have all been steeped in, and have a deep understanding of printmaking and its associated demands for technical excellence. Here it is refreshing to see these artists stepping away from the strictures of technical perfection, exact reproduction and the need to edition assiduously. It is as if a wonderful freedom and exuberance has sprung from the walls invading those spaces usually inhabited by the gallery audience.

Hybridity implies a joining, a coming together or a mixing of genres being a term co-opted from the biological sciences. It has now become a useful term for describing a wide range of theoretical and academic ideas particularly in the Social Sciences and Post-Colonial studies. Homi K Bhabha, the Harvard based cultural theorist, describes hybridity as being “that in-between space” which he calls “The Third Space” where we are placed at the “cutting edge of translation”. He contends that this facilitates new cultural forms leading to new cultural meanings² which provide a perfect platform for examining the complexities of a globalised but often fractured world.

It has been within this framework that the artists shown in this exhibition have met the challenges of working in these speculative spaces pointing us towards new ways of examining the print.

Here one can see that hybridity is not necessarily an equal equation and it might be difficult at times to discern where the lines have been drawn between these melded practices. But in each case the original matrix, whether it be a silk screen, an intaglio plate or a digital file, has been maintained so that in theory each print work shown here could be made again and again from that “motherboard”³ - reproducibility, multiples and repetition being keys to defining what a print is.

Traditionally prints have been transferred from the matrix to a substrate and in almost all cases we are familiar with this being paper, and only paper. One of the features of our post Post Modernist climate is a return to considering the qualities of materials with artists now interested in the very materiality of their materials for their own sake. The artists in this exhibition are also equally concerned with how the materials they are using

are offering new possibilities adding depth to their expression and allowing for hitherto unknown fusions – if one can think it then one can attempt to make it a reality. I suspect that in many cases the road, to what appears here to be a seamless success, is littered with some spectacular failures, but as a result we have courageous artists utilising a wide range of non-traditional materials such as plaster, canvas, steel, plastics and perforated metals taking us well beyond any notion of the traditional print.

It is now about 35 years since the ground breaking exhibition *Print as Object* curated by Bill Meyer, the then president of the Print Council of Australia, toured the country astounding audiences everywhere. At the time Meyer thought it a rather Utopian and optimistic endeavour proposing a plurality but definitely not a novelty. He saw himself as a catalyst not wanting to dictate a philosophy but rather creating “a forum ... to elicit thoughtful individual responses”.⁴

He selected 24 artists to show who “played a significant role in the discovery of the vision.”⁵ Little did Meyer know that this ground breaking exhibition would lead to a lasting legacy.

It was not long afterwards that tertiary art education moved into the university sector and we saw the rise of electives such as the *Print as Object* or similar, offered in Fine Art courses all over the country influencing many of our artists.

In many respects this exhibition honours this prescient example and we are privileged to witness the particular voices of our artists, poets all, who have indeed released their imaginations and extended their practice allowing us to understand new visions of the world around us. Dulce María Loynaz’s lovely poem ends by saying:

If man lost the poets, he would continue to hold dominion over the world, but he would not hear, even if they sang every day, the songs of the birds.

PATRICIA WILSON-ADAMS

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Dulce María Loynaz *Poem CXIX* in *Absolute Solitude* translated from the Spanish by James O'Connor Archipelego Books, Brooklyn 2016
- ² J. Rutherford *The Third Space* an interview with Homi K Bhabha in *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference* Lawrence and Wishart, London 1990 pp. 207 - 221
- ³ I am indebted to Ben Rak for making me aware that the term “matrix” has many feminine connotations.
- ⁴ Bill Meyer *Print as Object Concepts, Works, Documentation* Print Council of Australia, Melbourne 1985
- ⁵ Ibid



LET ALL THE BIRDS FLY

: THE
HYBRID
PRINT

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ALISON ALDER

REMEMBER ME, 2019

screen print on paper, aluminium,
plastic, steel, 120 × 80 × 50cm
machine design and construction:
Paul Cockram. (above, detail)

Remember Me is a work that celebrates the printed image and the press as an active participant in the uncovering, sharing, distribution and generation of knowledge through labour, print technology and art. *Remember Me*, an ode to the analogue print, praises the achievements of women, whose legacies may otherwise have been lost to the record.



FROM MCMILLAN'S INVENTORY: ONE GERMAN FROCK, 2011

digital print, Ed of 5, 108 × 88cm
(above right)

FROM MCMILLAN'S INVENTORY: TWO PEA-JACKETS, 2011

digital print, Ed of 5, 120 × 80cm
(above left)

FROM MCMILLAN'S INVENTORY: A NEW BROWN CLOAK, 2011

digital print, Ed of 5, 110 × 88cm

FROM MCMILLAN'S INVENTORY: SOME WOMEN'S APPAREL, 2011

digital print, Ed of 5, 103 × 88cm

FROM MCMILLAN'S INVENTORY: MOLESKIN TROUSERS, 2011

digital print, Ed of 5, 103 × 84cm

MCMILLAN'S WAISTCOAT, 2011

digital print, Ed of 5, 103 × 84cm



JAN DAVIS

Finding over thirty European items in an Aboriginal camp in the 1840s, explorer Angus McMillan concluded that a woman he observed 'looking back at him' as the occupants fled, was a captive European. I reflected on this scant evidence of her existence, the outrage the story encouraged, and the license it provided for terrible violence against Aboriginal people in Gippsland. I took ink and brush to paper, then folded and stitched my drawings and pressed them through a scanner to provide the print matrix for these vestiges of an unfinished story. The truth of the sighting was never established.



JAN HOGAN

THE REVEAL: HINSBY BEACH, 2019

woodblock print with sumi ink and black pigment on Kozo with woodblock matrix, 350 × 350 × 350cm, (above and detail, cover detail)

***The Reveal: Hinsby Beach* explores the entanglement of nature and culture in understanding intricacies of place. The cycles of tide, weathering and geological formations glimpsed on the beach echo in the cycles of cutting, inking and printing. The ebb and flow of the tide echoes the ebb and flow of printmaking. The wood matrix and prints behave in response to environmental conditions and are developed from the patterns and energies discovered in place. Peeling the printed paper fresh from the matrix is a magical moment when the agency of matter, process and intent combine and reveal themselves for the first time.**

GODDESS OF THE HOOP PINE, SEVILLE, 2019

collage of digital prints on Somerset velvet paper, 187 × 42cm

RECOMPOSED: BEIGAO, 2019

collage of digital prints on Somerset velvet paper with screenprint and charcoal pencil, 142 × 42cm, (above left)

RECOMPOSED: CATCHMENT, 2016-2019

three panels, ink, pochoir stencils, photostencils on mulberry paper laid onto stretched canvas panels, 61 × 242 × 4cm

RECOMPOSED: ANDALUSIA, 2019,

collage of digital prints on Somerset velvet paper with screenprint, pastel and watercolour, 100 × 120cm, (above right)

THERESE KENYON

These works adopt Asian scroll formats alongside Western modular systems to build possible narratives. Using iPhonography of my ink paintings, that no longer exist in any other form than a low-resolution photo, I consider the notion of hybridity between abstraction and ornamentation. Through the melding of print-based technology, photography and ink wash drawings I layered Kozo papers onto canvas. More recently I have played with an Epson digital colour printer to create a dialogue between abstraction, pattern and painterliness. Beginning an image with a digital print, then repeating, mirroring and re-composing I have made new compositions on Somerset velvet paper.

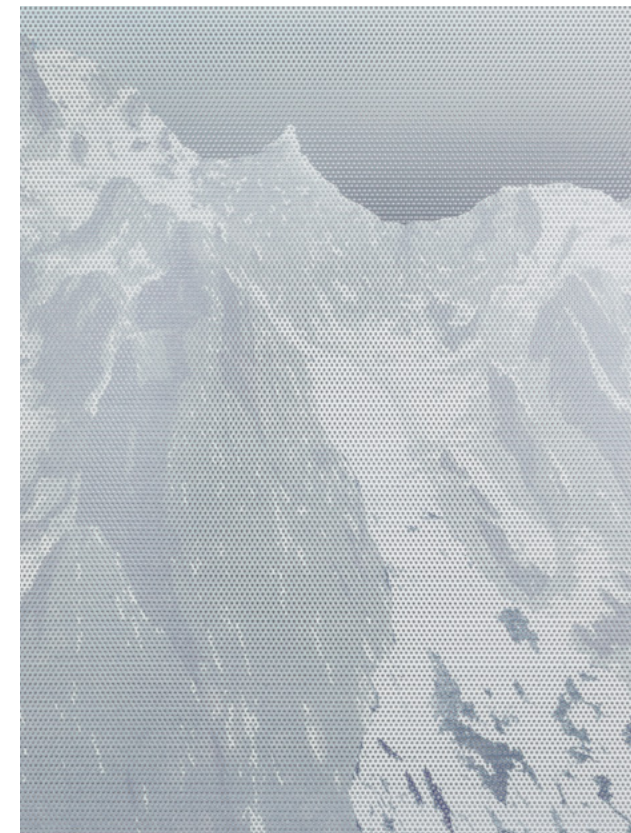
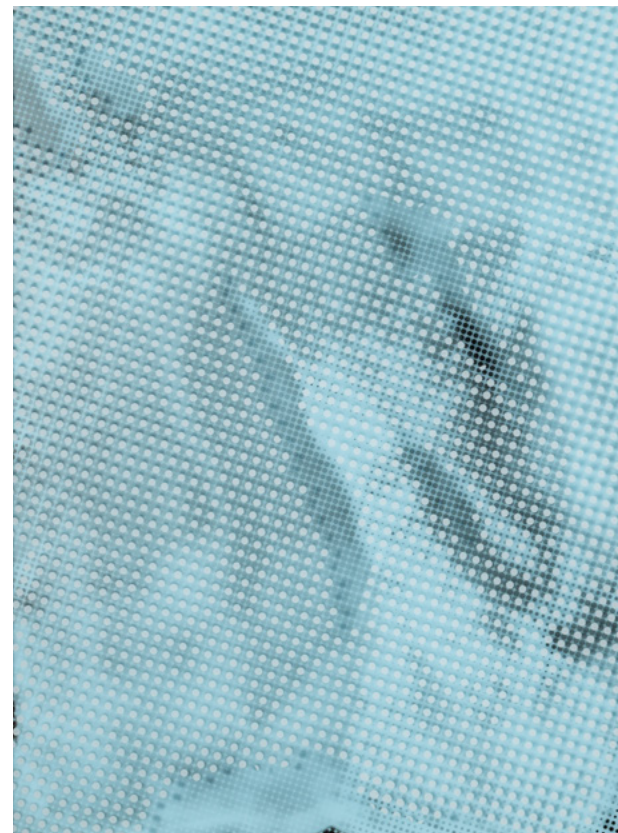


BEN RAK

SCRATCHES #2, 2016

acrylic and silk screen on board, 78 panels, 25 × 20 cm each (above, detail)

Scratches #2 is part of an effort to examine authenticity, otherness and contemporary identity politics using abstract forms and the art-making process. I begin by sourcing foul-bitten scratches from etching plates. These scratches are an unintentional by-product of the etching process but are often (ironically) valorised by viewers as the truly authentic marks of the artist. I then repeat the marks in combination with different geometric forms, attempting to create a dialogue between organic and mechanical elements – original and reproduced. To what lengths must the artist go to displace the origin of the marks in order to successfully ‘pass’ the print as an original?



HEARTLINE #1, #2, #4, #6, 2019

digital print on paper and glass, 36 × 27cm each

STRONG MOTION 2, 2019

digital print on steel, acrylic and polypropylene 54.5 × 90cm (back cover, detail)

STRONG MOTION 3, 2019

digital print on steel, acrylic and polypropylene, 54.5 × 90cm (above, detail)

ORACLE I, 2019

engraved marble, digital print on acrylic, 30.5 × 75.5cm

OLGA SANKEY

My take on the idea of the hybrid print relates to the choice of substrate which allows a printed work to transition from its traditional 2D format to a 3D form of expression. A colour print usually involves the overprinting of individual colours to create the final chromatic image. In these hybrid prints the images have been created by printing coloured layers onto such substrates as clear acrylic, semi-transparent polypropylene and perforated steel, as well as paper, thus allowing these layers to remain physically separate, whilst also able to be read as integrated when viewed head on.



SUSPENDED ANIMA
- MARSUPIAL, 2011

SUSPENDED ANIMA
- OMNIVORE, 2011

SUSPENDED ANIMA
- BIRD SONG, 2011

SUSPENDED ANIMA
- INSECTIVORED, 2012

movable artist's books, materials
include solvent transfer on paper,
linocut on paper, pins on paper,
dimensions variable, (above, detail)

HEATHER SHIMMEN

My work is eclectic in nature and often incorporates traditional processes such as linocut and a diversity of both conventional and unconventional media. These works are realised as oversized suspended artist's books, combining pop-up elements and manifesting as a collection of strange hanging critters or 'animas'. As an avid collector I play with combinations of both the human and animal/ insect world discovered in all manner of places from perhaps the library or sometimes the real creature is discovered under a log in a bush setting. I like to think that these creatures, although preposterous, are not entirely benign.



FOTO-METAFISICA: THE ARCHIVE AS OBJECT POEM, 2019, I-II

photogravure, photographic transfer,
collage and hand bound books,
dimensions variable, (above)

GLEN SKIEN

The function of poetic logic in *Foto-Metafisica: The Archive as Object* is made available in the linking of the unnamed photographic image with the hand-bound book, in an attempt to reinforce the poetic's capacity to dissolve any singular interpretation of history. Like Bachelard's dictum of being moved by the vast museum of insignificant things, the works support a conviction that the archive — like the corners of intimate spaces — is constantly exposed to the arrest of poetic interpretations. That is the chests of drawers, the cabinets, and the corners of history provide a symbol of solitude for the imagination. And, like a small casket being opened, history transmits a dimension of intimacy that allows the imagination to wander and unconsciously recapture the lost-in-thought existence of the most insignificant stories.



SANDRA WINKWORTH

IN THE GARDEN, I GIVE TO YOU THE PALACES OF MONTEZUMA, 2019

monoprint, watercolour, found printed matter and street detritus, dimensions variable, (above, detail)

On walks I pick up detritus covered by the printed word and images once hustling and bustling for our attention. Accumulating over time, I layer a blend of these household discards and daily junkmail in their honest forms, from random finds to playful explorations mixing with the handmade, becoming a translation through varying states, from the studio and reflecting the natural world. Some elements fall away and some are replaced. Through an organic push and pull, tending to each element I prune and foster, rearrange, holding moments — bits of the everyday stuff are gathered up to become a home garden of sorts.

LINDA SWINFIELD

The beginning point for Linda Swinfield's works *Bush Blocks*, *Industrial Blocks* and *A page from Sidney's Album* was a visit to Wallerawang Power Station whilst researching her Uncle Sidney's life story.

Here printmaking is a process of storytelling and research incorporating history, place and memory. This deeply felt attachment to the subject, plus the making, dictates the materials chosen, the processes used and the surfaces which receive the print.

A certain hybridity is at the core of her art practice which is manifold and is currently shifting through narrative, incorporating analog photography, drawing and painting into the layers of her print process. Often industrial processes are used to cut up and complete the work.

A PAGE FROM SIDNEY'S ALBUM, 2019

silk screen, acrylic paint on galvanised steel
each panel 60 × 60cm, (right, detail, inside cover detail)

INDUSTRIAL BLOCKS, 2019

silk screen, acrylic paint on galvanised steel
dimensions variable, (below)

BUSH BLOCKS, 2019

silk screen, acrylic paint on galvanised steel
dimensions variable, (below)





PATRICIA WILSON-ADAMS

LOSS: WITHOUT AND WITHOUT, 2019/2020

intaglio embossing on plaster,
chalk, bowl and soluble paper
dimensions variable
(above and detail)

*...for all who have no one to recall their names
and no one to sing the psalms.*

Loss is a work almost without printmaking, a work without colour, a work intended to mark a boundary between compliance and the breaking of codes — between sculpture and printmaking, which takes me to a hybridity that is not exactly an equal mix.

We have lost so many of this earth's wonders and like the bleaching of a reef, loss seems to be the very whitest of shadows that moves with us everywhere, seemingly ephemeral but a reality — we find its depths hard to grasp.