

# THE WORLD IN PAINTING

An Asialink/  
Heide Museum  
of Modern Art  
touring exhibition



Heide  
Museum of  
Modern Art  
*Heide*

I am delighted to be invited to write the foreword to *The world in painting*, an exhibition created in partnership between Asialink and Heide Museum of Modern Art.

This is the second occasion on which the Gordon Darling Foundation has assisted Asialink in its remarkably successful series of touring exhibitions to Asian countries.

Each Asialink exhibition strengthens the cultural links between Australia and Asia. Featuring works by contemporary Australian artists, *The world in painting* will tour through Asia before returning to Australia for a national tour supported by NETS Victoria. To further an Asian-Australian dialogue, at Heide additional works by artists from the tour cities in Asia will be incorporated. The Gordon Darling Foundation is pleased to provide the principal sponsorship for this publication, which presents the artists' works and their ideas.

It has been a steadfast objective of the Gordon Darling Foundation to assist cultural activities between Australia and Asia. The Foundation has adopted a two-faceted approach with the intention of supporting projects that promote Australian audiences' appreciation of Asian art and also projects which develop Asian audiences for Australian art. It is encouraging to see the increasing frequency, and indeed success, of such undertakings.

The Gordon Darling Foundation believes that *The world in painting* will add to this growing record of achievement and extends every good wish to the artists, Asialink and Heide Museum of Modern Art for a most successful exhibition.

**L Gordon Darling**

*The painter's vision is not a view upon the outside, a merely physical-optical relation with the world. The world no longer stands before him through representation; rather it is the painter to whom the things of the world give birth by a sort of concentration or coming-to-itself of the visible ... It is a spectacle of something only by being a spectacle of nothing, by breaking the skin of things to show how things become things, how the world becomes a world.*

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind' (1962), p. 65.<sup>1</sup>

In the west as in the east, painting like sculpture, is a tradition reaching back over a thousand years, a device employed by religious, state and private patrons, and hence often perceived as a most conventional art form. Having been an essential component of pre-modern and modern culture, how then does painting manage to retain its contemporary relevance and freshness?

Conditions have helped painting survive the threat posed by photography and the demise that art critics diagnosed in the late 1980s.<sup>2</sup> Painting has become less elite and a more familiar art form in general, it continues to be taught in schools and studios, is ever attractive to collectors, and is consistently present in museums and galleries that have been purpose-built for its optimal display. Boosted by conditions that assist its commercial sustainability, painting has also been invigorated by participating in the cultural cross-fertilisation that has occurred around the globe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A feature of modernism has been its differently paced and nuanced development across nations and cultures. Shifts in cultural thinking and forms have both local and international significance, as is evident for instance in the appearance of western, metropolitan art in remote Australian Aboriginal communities, beginning with the paintings of Albert Namatjira from the mid-1930s, and subsequently in the images produced by Indigenous men in Papunya, Northern Territory, Australia, in 1972.<sup>3</sup> In Australia, the encouragement to work with new materials offered a voice and purpose to Indigenous artists. Elsewhere cultural change occurred differently, instigated by shifts in wealth, loosening of government restrictions, opening borders, travel and through other conduits that bought new ideas in contact with the domestic culture.

Today, painting can mean something very different to paint and pigment on canvas; definitions are multifold and increasingly plural. *The world of painting* embraces both the painter's vision and the forms in which these ideas are manifest, as well as the resulting experience for the viewer. As Marcel

Duchamp acknowledged in the 1950s:

*All in all, the creative act is not performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his contribution to the creative act.*<sup>4</sup>

Whatever is bought forth for the viewer reflects the artist's unique project, whether that may comprise a perspective from the interior realm of the imagination or reflections on the surrounding environment in the widest sense, from positions of social, spiritual, intellectual or emotional relationships. Recognising this diversity *The world in painting* celebrates the freshness artists bring to a now venerable medium. In Australia, contemporary art can be said to emanate from two distinctive ways of being in the world: very broadly a city-based, western existence that includes artists trained at art school, and Australian Indigenous artists living in desert or non-urban communities and who have generally received no formal art training. While these precepts inform artmaking, the art of all eight Australian artists included in this exhibition emanates from the rich diversity of life in a postcolonial situation, a paradigm which is equal in importance to specific geographical, cultural or personal contexts.

Boxer Milner Tjampitjin and Nancy Naninurra Napanangka, Indigenous artists and senior members of the remote Balgo community in Western Australia, think of their abstract paintings as narratives conveying a reality that is based in spiritual or mythological stories. They paint their country, which comprises not only the physical land connected to their ancestors and the stories of those lives but also the laws and knowledge associated with each place, and for which Boxer Milner and Nancy Naninurra have been made specific custodians. Each painting offers only a small perspective on an epic understanding of the detailed history and significance of an ever-mobile landscape.

Boxer Milner consistently uses a stylised key pattern to convey pictorially and symbolically the physical and mythological character of areas of Sturt Creek (or *Purkitji*, the title of many works). Each painting suggests a different aspect of this river course over the seasons, and it is apparent from Milner's use of a range of intense colours and varied compositions that his paintings are personally inflected; they are in no way documentary.

In contrast to Milner's joyous sensations of colour, a minimal expressionism defines the work of Nancy Naninurra, in which fields of white paint float over coloured backgrounds. The region south of Balgo in the Great Sandy Desert is important women's country and the women of the Napanangka skin group share its custodianship. A prized feature of this area are the soakwaters, Minna Minna,

which also give the area its name and appear as coloured areas in Naninurra's paintings. Both Naninurra and Milner have led innovations toward more abstract styles of painting in their community, contributing to the development of a visual language that supports the transfer of knowledge.

James Morrison's paintings, such as *Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday* (2002), offer a window onto a different world, one that can only be imagined. In these impossible realms, seasons and times of day coexist and creatures, plants and geographies from different continents, climate zones and latitudes thrive in harmony. Each panel offers a unique chapter in a pictorial narrative. When they appear, humans also have the hallmarks of different historical periods and cultures and appear to yet have an impact on Morrison's biologically diverse utopia. Whether enjoyed for their lush beauty, or considered as a message of loss or a representation of a realm of uncanny otherness, Morrison's panoramas invite audiences to envisage an alternative way of being on or thinking about the earth.

Painting under a pseudonym that stands for 'everyman', John Citizen's simplistic and colourful graphic aesthetic offers a catalogue of variations on the western world's heartland or dark 'interior'—the living room. An ironic comment on the impact of 'lifestyle' homeware fashions and retailing power, in *Interior (Grey Couch)* and *Interior (Orange Chair)* (2007) the soothing aesthetics of the designer showroom is surprisingly absent, replaced with settings in discordant palettes incorporating paintings by Gordon Bennett, and devoid of the messiness and homeliness of habitation. It is only the look that matters. Surface appearance is prioritised, an emphasis which incorporates a continual process of cultural appropriation and ensures distraction from the distasteful aspects of contemporary social, cultural and political realities. Citizen's works resonate with a commitment to the practical and philosophical intricacies of art making as both a position and as a comment on the commodification and dismantling of cultural and psychological landscapes.

*Responses to an immigration request from one hundred and ninety-four governments* (2006–7) is for Raafat Ishak one part of a larger speculation on the nature of government, states, institutions and concepts such as home and citizen. Taking a number of forms, these projects arise from Ishak's empathy for subjects and the experiences that are defined by a person's status when placed in categories such as Indigenous, settler, immigrant or refugee. As an immigrant to a settler nation in a continent where the Indigenous people have lost much of their land and culture, with a large immigrant population and annual intake

of refugees, Ishak ironically asks to be accepted as a stranger elsewhere, in order to find people with whom he can share a common ground and an 'understanding of why we are here and what we are doing.'

The panels represent the replies and non-responses to Ishak's letter requesting permanent immigration sent to 194 countries. Each country is identified through an existing form of abstraction—the national flag—a form that can only fail to symbolise complex histories and social and cultural psyches, even before the colours are drained by Ishak. An excerpt from the reply sent by the embassy or consulate is written over the respective country's flag in a stylised Arabic script. In an intricate speculation on displacement, and one in which Ishak states his intention is to 'envisage a world where the inherent meanings of communication are based on equal forms of exchange.' Attitudes toward difference and the community of citizenship remain open to interpretation.

Sourcing her subject matter from a deeply personal world, Amanda Davies renews the tradition in painting of elevating the everyday to content for art. Her paintings far extend this legacy, however, in exploring the operation of painting and its relationship to other forms of image making today. Davies' work focuses on the personal and contains elements of self-portraiture, while being experiments with the possibilities of painting in reverse on plastic, and speculations on the nature and affect of images as synthetic surfaces. Painting for Davies is the bridge between external reality and the inner world, a means to consider 'what sustains us'. The sitter often appears as central but at times she is absent, replaced by her surroundings. Details are set in abstract fields of colour, an oceanic flux, with fore and background comprised of concrete material that also offers a subjective language of memory, emotion and expression.

*All Day I've built a lifetime* (2006) and *This painting is a home and I've got nowhere else to go* (2006)—the titles of Diena Georgetti's paintings evoke the unique relationship she develops with each work. Although their scale and compositions may be reminiscent of certain aspects of modernist art, the inspiration for Georgetti's painting is much broader. Her innovative forms reflect conversations with art history, modernist architecture, interior décor and design and many other interests that intersect with daily life. Beyond formal pleasure, Georgetti's paintings are finished only when they have survived a process of proving they are ready to take something out into the world: *I continue testing it like this until it proves to indeed be construction made of every activity, design, thought and object of the situation.*<sup>5</sup>

Having abandoned painting some years ago, Elizabeth Newman works in a different way to the other Australian artists in *The world in painting*, but with a desire to extend the intimacy promised by painting beyond the visual into conceptual and psychological provocations. Newman's materials may range from fabrics, painted ceramics, found signs, domestic furniture, clothing and plants to printed works, and her exhibitions often include works by other artists. Central to her practice is a *questioning of painting*, her works encourage us to ask: in what other experiences might we find painting? What are the qualities and potential of painting? How and what sort of experience take place between object, image and the viewer? Newman's works create new platforms for engaging relations between artist and audience today.

*The legacy of Merleau-Ponty is that painting is subject-making, subjectivising, consciousness-creating... Or to put it more precisely, subject and world emerge as a complex and contingent set of correspondences, as a lived interrelatedness in process.*<sup>6</sup>

For these and other artists, painting has not exhausted its potential. Artists are unafraid to challenge the weight of its history in a time when digital media are rewriting the past and creating the present anew. Writing on Chinese artist Chen Wenbo, Chen Tong iterates the importance of content and ideas for the longevity of this art media, '... if one were to seek out a place in the interstices of history and memory or morality and individualism, a place where one could be comfortable... I think painting remains more secure than we might imagine. Painting can allow us to believe that there are still profound things left to unearth.'<sup>7</sup> After all, painting was never about merely mirroring reality.

### Zara Stanhope

1. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', in *Phenomenology of Perception*. Routledge, London, 1962 p. 65.
2. This critical perspective has been well documented. See for example Yves-Alain Bois, 'Painting: The Sack of Mourning', in *Endgame: Reference and Simulation in Recent Painting and Sculpture*, MIT and The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, 1986, pp. 29–50.
3. In 1971–72 school teacher Geoffrey Bardon worked to achieve a professional painting enterprise with senior men of the numerous Western Desert groups living at the remote government settlement of Papunya. After inventing a secular painting language based on ceremonial sand and body painting, many of the founding artists subsequently became well-known names in Indigenous art from desert areas, and their creative forms have become a widespread visual language. Art making, and painting in particular, has become a means of retaining a living culture, which was subsumed in colonisation, for Australian Indigenous people, who represent less than 2% of Australia's total population but include as many artists as in the remainder of the population. See Susan McCulloch, *Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1999, pp 15–47.
4. Marcel Duchamp, *The Creative Act*, 1957, quoted by Yukio Fujimoto in *Pages in the wind, a reader*, texts chosen by the artists of the 52nd International Art Exhibition, Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia, 2007, p. 32.
5. From Diena Georgetti, 'The Humanity of Abstract painting' in Linda Michael (ed.), *21st Century Modern: 2006 Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2006, p. 32.
6. Alison Rowley and Griselda Pollock, 'Painting in a 'Hybrid Moment'', in Jonathan Harris (ed.), *Critical Perspectives on Contemporary Painting, Hybridity, Hegemony, Historicism*, Tate Liverpool Forum, Liverpool University Press and Tate Liverpool, vol. 6, 2003, p. 65.
7. Chen Tong, 'Chen Wenbo: To Imagine Through Painting', (trans. Robert Bernell) in Wu Hung (ed.), *Chinese Art at the Crossroads: Between Past and Future, Between East and West*, New Art Media and the Institute of International Visual Arts, London, 2001, p. 309.

**John Citizen**  
*Interior (Grey Couch)*  
8 Jan 2007  
synthetic polymer paint  
on canvas  
137.0 x 137.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

*Interior (Orange Chair)*  
8 Jan 2007  
synthetic polymer paint  
on canvas  
137.0 x 137.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

**Amanda Davies**  
*anadyne* 2006  
enamel on plastic on canvas  
122.0 x 112.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Bett Gallery, Hobart

*extreme physical conditions  
are present here* 2007  
enamel on plastic on canvas  
113.0 x 107.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Bett Gallery, Hobart

**Diana Georgetti**  
*All day I've built a lifetime*  
2006  
synthetic polymer paint  
on composition board  
65.5 x 56.5 cm  
Heide Museum of  
Modern Art, Melbourne  
Purchased through the  
Heide Foundation with  
the assistance of Sophia  
Pavlovski-Ross and  
Philip Ross 2007

*This painting is a home,  
and I've got nowhere  
else to go* 2006  
synthetic polymer paint  
on composition board  
59.5 x 54.5 cm  
Kleimeyer/Stuart  
Collection, Melbourne  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Darren Knight  
Gallery, Sydney

**Raafat Ishak**  
*Responses to an immigration  
request from one hundred  
and ninety-four governments*  
(detail Thailand, Philippines,  
Vietnam and surrounding  
countries) 2006–7  
oil and gesso on  
composition board  
8 panels, from a series  
of 194 panels  
30.0 x 21.0 cm each  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

**Boxer Milner Tjampitjin**  
*Rainstorms and rainbows  
at Oolaign, Sturt Creek* 2000  
synthetic polymer paint  
on linen  
180.0 x 120.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
and The Gabrielle Pizzi  
Collection, Melbourne

*Purkitji* 2006  
synthetic polymer paint  
on Belgian linen  
120.0 x 80.0 cm  
Private Collection, Sydney  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi,  
Melbourne

*Purkitji* 2007  
synthetic polymer paint  
on Belgian linen  
100.0 x 75.0 cm  
Private Collection, Melbourne  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Gallery Gabrielle  
Pizzi, Melbourne

**James Morrison**  
*Elizabeth* 2004  
oil on canvas, 3 panels  
100.0 x 300.0 cm (overall)  
Private collection, Melbourne  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

*Sunday, Monday, Tuesday,  
Wednesday, Thursday,  
Friday* 2002  
oil on canvas, 6 panels  
31.0 x 216.0 cm (overall)  
Private Collection, Sydney  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Darren Knight  
Gallery, Sydney

**Nancy Naninurra**  
**Napanangka**  
*Minna Minna* 2004  
synthetic polymer paint  
on Belgian linen  
150.0 x 100.0 cm  
Private Collection, Melbourne  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi,  
Melbourne

*Untitled* 2004  
synthetic polymer paint  
on linen  
150.0 x 75.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi,  
Melbourne

**Elizabeth Newman**  
*Untitled* 2002  
wool blanket, cotton  
160.0 x 110.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Neon Parc, Melbourne

*Untitled* 2004  
incised fabric  
222.0 x 162.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Neon Parc, Melbourne

*Untitled* 2004  
incised fabric  
210.0 x 157.0 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Neon Parc, Melbourne

*Untitled (freedom)* 2004  
water-based paint on  
ceramic jug  
30.0 x 13.0 (diam.) cm  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Neon Parc, Melbourne

John Citizen is an abstraction of the Australian 'Mr Average', the Australian 'Everyman'. John Citizen is a work in progress whose identity must remain fluid. This allows me to follow other streams of thought in my practice, and serves as a counterpoint to Gordon Bennett, his 'other', and yet we are one and the same. When Gordon Bennett is labelled an 'Aboriginal artist' he is 'othered' as an Aborigine and all the preconceptions that entails. John Citizen lets me take my Australian citizenship and cultural upbringing back from the netherworld of the imagined 'other'.

In this series of works, John Citizen is making art about modernism and interior design. His paintings reflect objectiveness, canvassing imagery from the public domain, such as stylish and opulent images from interior design magazines and 'lifestyle' designer catalogues. Colour and line are important elements in this Interior series, which depicts the values of contemporary western society.

John Citizen gives Gordon Bennett a chance at other perspectives, like a third space for dialogue between the dualities of self and other, in which there are many possibilities. Currently, John Citizen is preoccupied with furniture and home décor, and doesn't show much interest in any overt dialogue with Gordon Bennett.

Born Monto, Queensland 1955, lives and works in Brisbane, Australia  
1988 Bachelor of Arts (Fine Arts), Queensland College of Art, Brisbane

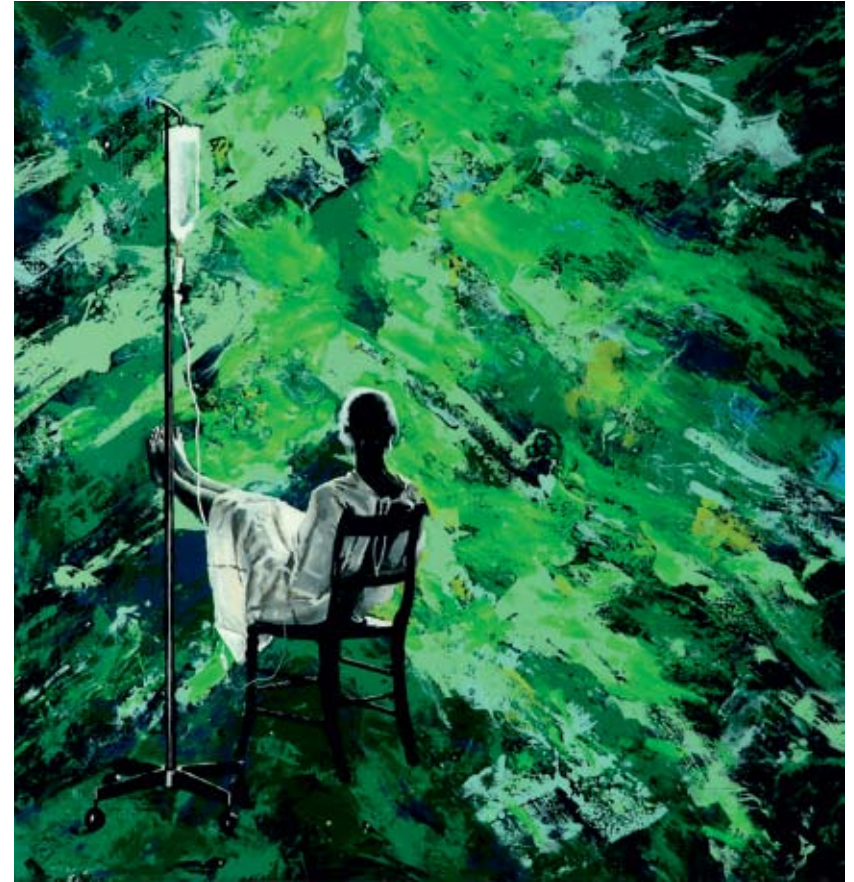
Since the late 1980s, Gordon Bennett's work has been recognised for his powerful perspectives on the postcolonial experience, particularly in an Australian context. The psychogeography of Australian settlers, enlightenment attitudes and their twentieth century legacy in art and culture, the undefinability of text and many other current ideas and issues can be identified in the imagery and address of his works. A range of pre-existing styles and motifs provide a ready made vocabulary and the imagery of other artists provides a critical filter or, in the instance of Jean-Michel Basquiat, is offered in homage. Given to painting in series, over the past four years Bennett's practice has contained two streams. The first comprises an ongoing series of abstract paintings by Gordon Bennett in which linear brush marks float on dense colour fields, and the second a series of domestic interior scenes painted under the nom de plume John Citizen.

Bennett's solo exhibitions include regular exhibitions with Bellas Gallery, Brisbane (1989–2006) and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne (1993–2007); *Gordon Bennett*, National Gallery of Victoria (2007) and *History and Memory in the art of Gordon Bennett*, Brisbane City Gallery, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, Arnolfini, UK and Henie Ostad, Kunststenter, Norway (1999–2000). His work is regularly presented in group exhibitions, which have included *Three Colours*, Gordon Bennett and Peter Robinson, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne and tour (2004–5); *12th Biennale of Sydney*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2000); *Kwangju Biennale 2000*, Korea (2000); *Shanghai Biennale*, China (2000); *The Third Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (1999); *Art-Worlds in Dialogue*, Ludwig Museum, Germany (1999); *In Place (Out of Time)*; *Contemporary Art in Australia*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Oxford, UK (1997); *TransCulture*, Palazzo Giustinian Lolin, Venice Biennale, (1995); *Aratjara: Art of the First Australians*, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein Westfalen, Germany and Hayward Gallery, London (1993); *9th Biennale of Sydney: the Boundary Rider*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (1992) and *Paraculture*, Artists' Space, New York, USA (1990).

**John Citizen**  
*Interior (Orange Chair)*  
8 Jan 2007  
synthetic polymer paint  
on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

**John Citizen**  
*Interior (Grey Couch)*  
8 Jan 2007  
synthetic polymer paint  
on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sutton Gallery, Melbourne





I use personal experiences as a starting point and, through the process of painting, hope that I can be led to something that is unfamiliar and distant with no fixed meanings. I paint to find out what I don't know.

I'm aware of painting's ability to present the viewer with both an actual experience and a fictive experience – a semblance. I have consciously sought high contrast, saturated colours in certain paintings to attract the attention of the viewer to painting and to assist in depicting a sense of other.

PREVIOUS LEFT  
**Amanda Davies**  
*anodyne* 2006  
enamel on plastic on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Bett Gallery, Hobart

PREVIOUS RIGHT  
**Amanda Davies**  
*extreme physical conditions  
are present here* 2007  
enamel on plastic on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Bett Gallery, Hobart

Born Western Australia, lives Hobart, Tasmania, Australia  
2003 Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours), University of Tasmania, Hobart  
2002 Bachelor of Fine Art, University of Tasmania, Hobart

While Amanda Davies has a figurative practice, the compositions of her paintings are often pared back to include only the essential motifs necessary to establish the affect she requires. The medium of paint and its material qualities are equally as important as the pictorial contents of Davies' painting, her sensibility is conveyed through colour and qualities such as density and viscosity. Images and materials are carefully united in an emphasis on the synthetic nature of those materials, and forms that document strangely fluid and intangible experiences, sights and feelings.

Amanda Davies' work has predominantly been seen in Tasmania, Australia in solo exhibitions including *A brief fiction*, Bett Gallery, Hobart (2006); *sick*, Cube 2 Gallery, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra and *3 into 1: sick* Contemporary Art Services Tasmania, Hobart (2005), and *52 Transpositions*, Entrepot Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart (2001). Selected group exhibitions comprise *register: Tasmanian Artists 2006*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart (2006); *The John Glover Prize for Tasmanian Landscape Painting*, Evandale, Tasmania (2005–06); *Letitia Studio Exhibition*, Plimsoll Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart and *The City of Hobart Painting Prize*, The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart (2005); *found*, Inflight, Hobart and *Sculpture Trail*, Mountain Sculpture Festival, Hobart (2004); *Queue Here*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra and *Homestretch*, Fine Arts Gallery, University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay (2002) and *Sandcube*, Sculpture by the Sea, Albany, Western Australia (1998).

what i don't paint is more important than what i do.

in this way, i refuse my limited gesture in preference  
for one separate to me.

for me to work as a deceased architect of the 1940s,  
is somehow truer than any current nature.

to call upon that ghostly representative in the assistance  
of making a painting is an indulgence that shames me.

it is this bold manner that will make a painting unknown  
to me, a revelation instead of an illustrated full stop.

sometimes though, no matter how harshly i block the  
elemental, i give over to it because not to do so would  
make me a liar.

the demand i make in the construction of a painting  
is that i be startled, uncertain and even anxious.

Born Alice Springs 1966, lives Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Since the mid-1980s, Diena Georgetti has produced modestly-scaled paintings which have become increasingly abstract. While Georgetti's work suggests a deep interest in modernist culture, including architecture and design, her practice is stimulated by a wide spectrum of ideas and visual forms that personally interest the artist. Georgetti's output is limited, in accord with the time invested in the gestation of ideas and attention paid to each work.

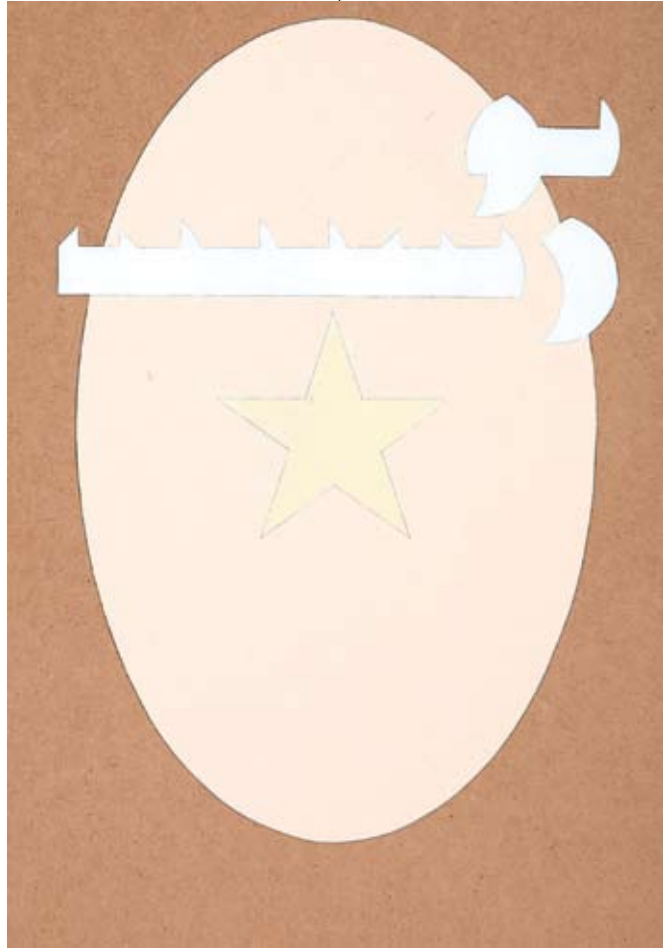
Exhibiting since the late 1980s, Georgetti has held solo exhibitions including *The Humanity of Construction Painting*, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney (2006); exhibitions at Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand (2004, 2003, 2002, 2001) and at Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney (2001, 1999, 1997, 1996); *You're Living All Over Me*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne (1998) and *The time of your miracle will soon be over*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne (1994); *The Civilisation of the Abstract*, Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide (1994); *The Dimension that comes from the centre of our skulls*, Bellas Gallery, Brisbane (1994); *Dare la Precedenza*, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne (1993) and *Rest de Kreatur*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (1989). Her work has been included in the group exhibitions *21st Century Modern: 2006 Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (2006); *Pitch Your Own Tent: Art Projects, Store 5, First Floor*, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne and *Makeover*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand (2005); *Post Contemporary Painting*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (2004); Final exhibition, First Floor, Melbourne (2002); *Painting: an arcane technology*, The Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne (2001); *Women Hold up Half the Sky*, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne (1996); *Heirloom*, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne (1996); *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (1995); *5th Australian Sculpture Triennial*, Melbourne (1993) and *9th Biennale of Sydney: the Boundary Rider*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (1992).

OVERLEAF LEFT  
**Diena Georgetti**  
*All day I've built a lifetime* 2006  
synthetic polymer paint  
on composition board  
Heide Museum of  
Modern Art, Melbourne  
Purchased through the  
Heide Foundation with the  
assistance of Sophia Pavlovski-  
Ross and Philip Ross 2007

OVERLEAF RIGHT  
**Diena Georgetti**  
*This painting is a home, and  
I've got nowhere else to go* 2006  
synthetic polymer paint  
on composition board  
Kleimeyer/Stuart Collection, Melbourne  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney







Dear Sir/ Madam

I am an Australian citizen who wishes to immigrate to ... and settle there permanently.

I was born in Cairo, Egypt in 1967 and migrated to Australia in 1982. I obtained my Australian citizenship in 1985. I have an undergraduate degree in fine arts and a post-graduate degree in architecture history and conservation practice. I have 10 years employment experience in the art conservation field and have been practicing as a visual artist for 15 years.

I have sufficient finances to settle in a new country and start a small business. I have no criminal or prison records. I speak fluent English, Arabic and French.

I plan to immigrate alone and have no known relatives or friends in ... I am able to wind up my financial and personal affairs in Australia as soon as I have been granted an immigration permit.

I hope you look favourably at this initial inquiry/request for immigration and let me know at your earliest convenience as to what steps I should be taking next.

Yours sincerely  
Raafat Ishak

PREVIOUS

**Raafat Ishak**

*Responses to an immigration request from one hundred and ninety-four governments* (detail Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam and surrounding countries) (detail) 2006–07  
oil and gesso on composition board  
8 panels, from a series of 194 panels  
Courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery, Melbourne

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

Born Cairo 1967, arrived Melbourne 1982, lives Melbourne, Australia

Raafat Ishak has consistently employed an unpretentious attitude to scale and materials, and a limited palette in his work. Paintings often make use of unprimed canvas or board for their support. Ishak's subject matter derives from a variety of interests, spanning a questioning of art's ability to register contemporary concerns to speculations based in investigating the relevance of certain legacies of modernism. Of particular concern are the meanings activated by our urban environment—specifically architecture, town planning, transport, politics and sport—in daily life. Images and projects offer ways to reflect on and question different aspects of the world, such as how experience is lived through institutions, languages and symbolism, the impact of systems of governance and conditions generated by built structures to name a few. Raafat Ishak is a founding member of Ocular Lab Inc. in Melbourne.

Raafat Ishak's most recent solo exhibitions include Sutton Gallery, Melbourne (2007 and 2006) and *Home Ground*, Ocular Lab, Melbourne and Kaliman Gallery, Sydney (2005). Previous selected solo exhibitions were *Organisation for Future Good Steps* at Conical Gallery, Melbourne (2003); *Townhouse* Gallery, Cairo, Egypt (2002); *First Floor and Lover's* Gallery, Melbourne (1999); Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide (1997) and 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne (1995). Recent group exhibitions include *Trinity Nine*, Trinity College, University of Melbourne, *21st Century Modern: 2006 Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide and *Parallel Lives: Australian Painting Today*, Tarrawarra Museum of Art Biennale, Victoria (2006); *Pitch Your Own Tent: Art Projects, Store 5, First Floor*, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne (2005); *2004—Australian Art Now*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (with Tom Nicholson) and *Octopus 5* at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne (2004); *Fieldwork*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne and *Organisations*, Parasite, Hong Kong and West Space, Melbourne (2002).

Boxer paints aspects of his country, found along the middle stretches of Purkitji (Sturt Creek), north of Balgo. Purkitji and its many inter-connecting, smaller tributaries are depicted, as well as the surrounding country.

Born Matwanangu, near Sturt Creek 1934, lives Milnga-Milgna, Western Australia  
Language: Walmajarri

The paintings by Aboriginal artist Boxer Milner are characterised by high colour geometric compositions that are rich in familial and personal connection to land and place. Milner is a community elder living in Kururrungku Community, also known as Billiluna, south of Halls Creek, Western Australia. Milner and his two brothers are custodians for this country and the mythological stories of the Sturt Creek area, and care for the country by maintaining its tribal laws. Milner's paintings depict physical and mythological aspects of the middle and upper stretches of the natural water course of Sturt Creek, such as its flooding and the consequent changes to the country, both during floods and after the water recedes. A recognisable feature in his paintings is the white water, a depiction of the 'milk water' that runs after rain has fallen on the clay soils upstream of Billiluna.

Boxer Milner has exhibited since 1990. Solo exhibitions have included *Coo-ee Aboriginal Art*, Sydney (2003) and *Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi*, Melbourne (2000).

OVERLEAF LEFT

**Boxer Milner**

*Purkitji* 2006  
synthetic polymer  
paint on Belgian linen  
Private Collection, Sydney  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Gallery Gabrielle  
Pizzi, Melbourne

OVERLEAF RIGHT

**Boxer Milner**

*Rainstorms and rainbows at Oolaign, Sturt Creek* 2000  
synthetic polymer  
paint on linen  
Courtesy of the artist  
and The Gabrielle Pizzi  
Collection, Melbourne





Elizabeth

Elizabeth was the name of my great grandmother, whose portrait hung at my mother's family home in Tasmania. Elizabeth was also the name I gave to a favorite fairy in a suite of drawings that was once above a fireplace in what had been the nursery. The drawings were by Ida Outhwaite, and every time I stayed I used to spend a lot of time looking at them and imagining their world. On the mantelpiece below the drawings was a stuffed sugar-glider mounted on a branch, its legs outstretched as if it was just about to take off. This glider had been a household pet in my mother's youth. Also on the mantle was a collection of family photos, a set of Aboriginal grinding stones and rocks full of fossils, all found on the property. My grandfather, a beloved and magical man, kept a large menagerie around the garden, nearly all in white; white peacocks, white turkeys and guinea fowls, ducks and geese, and white cats. The dogs, being kelpie working dogs, avoided the white rule. White wallabies also featured. Whenever a relative or neighbour found an albino joey in the pouch of a wallaby shot by hunters, it was given to my grandfather. In my mind, the fairy world in the drawings extended out into the garden.

PREVIOUS ABOVE

**James Morrison**  
*Elizabeth* 2004  
oil on canvas  
Private collection, Melbourne  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

PREVIOUS BELOW

**James Morrison**  
*Sunday, Monday, Tuesday,  
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday* 2002  
oil on canvas  
Private Collection, Sydney  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney

Born Papua New Guinea 1959, arrived Melbourne 1972; lives Sydney, Australia  
1996 Postgraduate Diploma in Fine Art, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne  
1979 Diploma of Fine Art, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne

James Morrison's works blend imaginary realms with the living world, and are distinguished by his vision of the potential of (an ever-diminishing) unspoilt nature. His figurative, high colour works depict animals and plants living in harmony, and suggest the epic narratives within his subject matter. In Morrison's world animal and botanical realms loom large, inviting audiences to take a beast or insect's eye view, and to imagine their way into verdant nature. In their sense of a virgin, untouched natural realm, Morrison's paintings call up the varied ways the natural world is changing, according to how individuals and communities value this wonder or resource; as a site of memory and personal experience, as exotic tourist playground, a hunter's paradise, museological or scientific subject matter, as agricultural or horticultural property, or as the basis for Indigenous law and myth to name a few.

James Morrison has shown in solo exhibitions at Silvershot, Melbourne (2005); Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney (2004, 2002, 2000, 1998); Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne and Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London (2002); talk artists' initiative, Melbourne (1999, 1997) and at Stop 22 Gallery, Melbourne (1998). Selected group exhibitions include Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney (2003); *Minim-art*, talk artists' initiative, Melbourne and *Talk Artists' Initiative*, Hanover Gallery, Liverpool, UK (1999); *Florabunda*, Melbourne Festival, Melbourne (1997); *ANZ Visual Arts Fellowship Award*, Melbourne (1996); *Gardening Fracks*, Actual and Fictional Artists' Space, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne and *Self Portraits*, George Paton Gallery, University of Melbourne, Melbourne (1995).

Nancy Naninurra has painted some country is known as Minna Minna, named for the tjurrnu (soakwaters) that feature in her paintings. This country is important women's country, and women of the Nungurrayi and Napanangka skin groups dance for this country.

Born 1933, lives Wirrimanu (Balgo), Western Australia  
Walpiri

Nancy Naninurra is a Kukatja woman who grew up in the area between Nyirripi, Kintore and Lappi Lappi, and was transported with her family to Mount Doreen Farm, near Yuendumu, when she was around 20 years old. She spent much of her early life travelling as a consequence of the movement of Indigenous people into communities, living on cattle stations at Granites and Gordon Downs, later moving to the community at Balgo. Naninurra and her two sisters are responsible for song cycles belonging to their country. Naninurra commenced her active painting career in the 1970s and became a key figure in the early Balgo women's painting movement. Nancy Naninurra's paintings employ the dot style that has been associated with Central Desert Indigenous painting in Australia since the 1970s. Naninurra's paintings are connected with the land and pass on knowledge by depicting womens' ceremonies, and have become increasingly abstract and minimal in form over her career, until they now comprise an oeuvre of stunning contemporary abstraction.

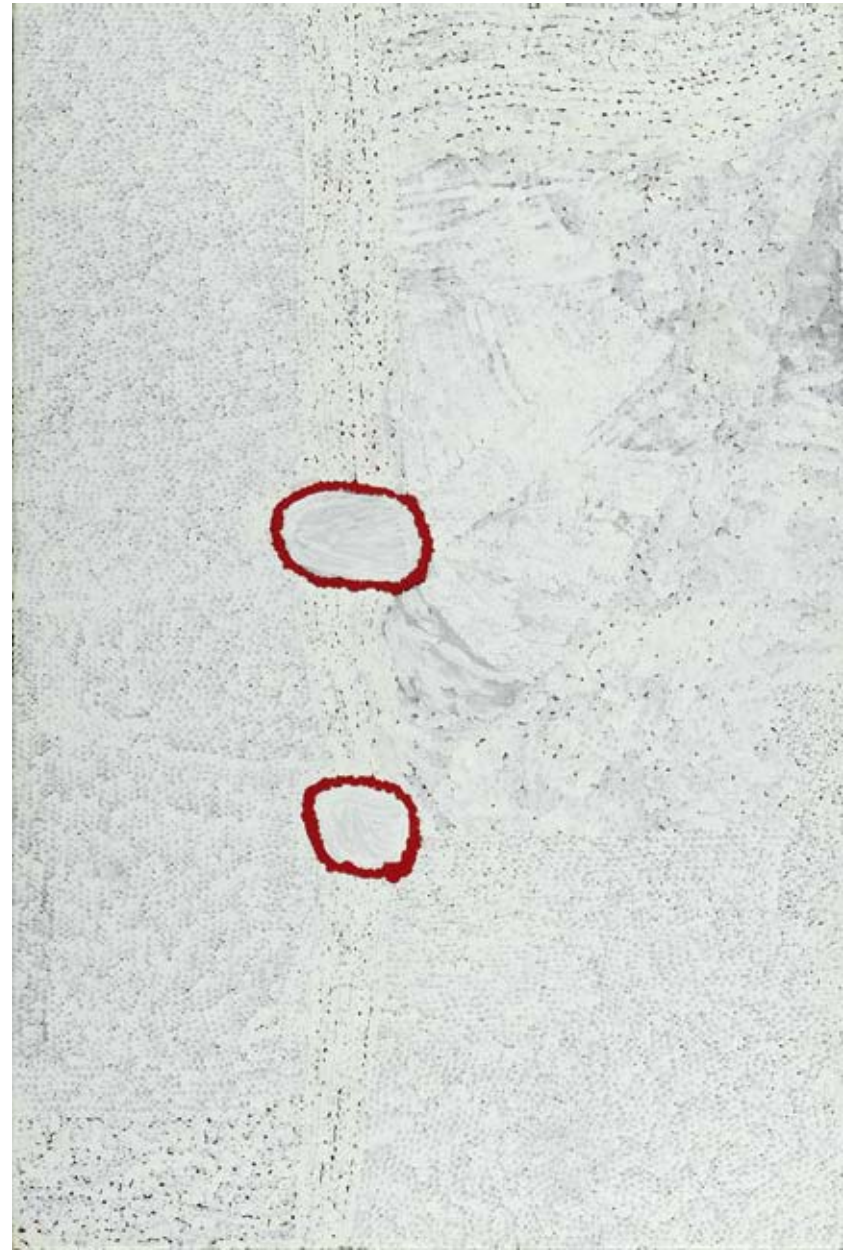
Selected group exhibitions that have included Naninurra's work include *Land of Dreamings*, Australia Centre, Berlin, Germany (2002); *Beyond Wings*, Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide and *Balgo Works*, Staedtische Gallery, Wolfsburg, Germany (2001); *Desert Mob '99*, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs (1999); *Dreamings*, Vlaams-Europeesch Conferentiecentrum, Brussels, Belgium (1998); *Aboriginal Desert Women's Law*, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Ballarat, Victoria (1994); *Art from the Great Sandy Desert*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth (1986).

OVERLEAF LEFT

**Nancy Naninurra Napanangka**  
*Untitled* 2004  
synthetic polymer paint on linen  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Gallery Gabrielle  
Pizzi, Melbourne

OVERLEAF RIGHT

**Nancy Naninurra Napanangka**  
*Minna Minna* 2004  
synthetic polymer  
paint on Belgian linen  
Private Collection, Melbourne  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Gallery Gabrielle  
Pizzi, Melbourne





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Recently I have been working on a project that is to be a recreation of a performance work from the past. My impulse in wanting to recreate this past event sprang from a strong desire to see something that was no longer possible to see. I really just wanted to *see* this particular work that was now long gone. It then occurred to me that probably most artistic creation was motivated by this longing to *see, hear, or touch* something that was well and truly missing. In this instance the work I want to recreate comes from the period of my early childhood, the 1960s. This way the making of art becomes a solution to an impossible situation.

Prominent in these works is the presence of a cut: a literal cutting out in the surface of the material. This cut, or void is also present in the vase work, the re-painted jug. It's only by virtue of the cutting, of the articulation of a circumference, that the hole or void comes into being. Heidegger wrote about this coming into being of absence in relation to the vase, and Lacan comments upon it in his description of the prehistoric vase as the first work of art, a signifier of lack. The work of art is a way of signifying absence or lack: the necessary task of human beings.

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## PREVIOUS LEFT ABOVE

**Elizabeth Newman***Untitled* 2002

wool blanket, cotton  
 Courtesy of the artist and  
 Neon Parc, Melbourne

## PREVIOUS LEFT BELOW

**Elizabeth Newman***Untitled* 2004

*Untitled* 2004  
 incised fabric  
 installation view  
 Courtesy of the artist and  
 Neon Parc, Melbourne

## PREVIOUS RIGHT

**Elizabeth Newman***Untitled (freedom)* 2004

water-based paint  
 on ceramic jug  
 Courtesy of the artist and  
 Neon Parc, Melbourne

Born Melbourne 1962, lives Melbourne, Australia

Elizabeth Newman employs a range of media to explore painting and the affects of art making. Her practice is based in a philosophy that values art as a means to create space for contemplation—for time and silence—in opposition to the frenetic networks of the daily media and its advertising content. In this process she privileges found and domestic objects and materials over studio product and often includes other artists' or non-artists' works in her projects. Her objects, including fabric paintings, ceramics and clothes, are altered by Newman to introduce certain bodily scales and evoke an enquiring sensibility, as well as to introduce a sense of comfort and familiarity to institutional spaces.

Newman's selected solo exhibitions include *Elizabeth Newman*, Neon Parc and *The unprecedented dark light of the new letters*, Ocular Lab, Melbourne (2007); *Lizzy Newman*, installation project, MIR 11, Melbourne, *Lizzy Newman*, TCB, Melbourne and *Lizzy Newman*, Starkwhite, Auckland, New Zealand (2005); *SOUL...*, CLUBSproject, Melbourne (2004); *The Text Paintings*, David Pestorius Gallery, Brisbane (1997); *On Genre*, with Maria Cruz, Artspace, Sydney and Deakin University Gallery, Geelong (1992–93) and *work*, City Gallery, Melbourne (1990). Recent group exhibitions have included *Taking Care of Business*, TCB, Melbourne (2007); *21st Century Modern: 2006 Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide and *Imagine... the creativity shaping our culture*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne (2006); *Salvage*, CLUBSproject, Melbourne, *Selekta*, West Space, Melbourne and *Reach Out*, Dudespace, Melbourne (with Mick Douglas, Lena Douglas, Rachel Douglas), (2005); *New Social Commentaries*, Warmambool Art Gallery and *Penetralia: Art & Psychoanalysis in Melbourne, 1940–2004*, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne (2004); *Monochromes*, University Art Museum, University of Queensland, Brisbane (2000); *avant-gardism for children*, University Art Museum, University of Queensland, and Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne (1999); *Everybody Knows*, Open Space, Spazio d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan (1998); *Geometric Painting in Australia 1941–1997*, University Art Museum, University of Queensland (1997); *In Five Words or Less*, Museum of Modern Art at Heide, Melbourne (1995); *Australian Perspectives*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (1993) and *Art With Text*, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne (1990).