



2pm to 5pm Saturday 27 November

Please join us for MoB Day activities including performances and hands-on workshops to celebrate:

Elhigrah: Stories from the Brisbane Sudanese Community

Elhigrah is Arabic for migration. Discover the journeys and lives of eight Sudanese households who now call Brisbane home through photography by Cassandra Mathie and a community film by David Dutton.

Isle of Refuge 13 contemporary artists challenge the notion of identity, culture and history surrounding refugees in Australia. Toured by Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW College of Fine Arts.

Feltworks – Rachel Apelt This Brisbane artist who divides her time between Mexico and Australia, combines the cultures of both countries in her diaristic textile series.

Sharing the world with you: Radio 4EB celebrates 25 Years on Air Story Hall exhibition and live broadcast

The exhibitions are on show until 6 February 2005 at

MUSEUM OF BRISBANE

Ground floor, City Hall, King George Square

10am to 5pm 7 days a week

Call Council on 3403 8888 for more information.

From: Keji Family, Stafford 2004 Cassandra Mathie Above: Yak Family, Wyman 2004 Cassandra Mathie; Chris O'Doherty (Rag Mombassa) Australian Jesus Winsborne the Best People 2002; Feltworks Rachel Apelt



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

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FELTWORKS

RACHEL APELT

An exhibition of textiles combining countries and cultures from an artist who, for the past seven years, has divided her time between Brisbane and Mexico. The show stitches together fragments of experience, memory and observations between the two countries. The rich textures of Apelt's works showcase the contrasting cultural histories of Mexico and Australia.

Join a holiday workshop with Rachel Apelt, see page 13.

WHEN

26 November - 6 February 2005

WHERE

Space 4

CATEGORY

Craft and design

Rachel Apelt, Feltworks, mixed media on felt



THEATRE FASHION MUSIC OPERA ART DANCE MOVIES THEATRE FASHION MUSIC

Two countries deeply felt and sewn together

Patrick Watson

As a material, felt is simple to pack, easy to sew and light to carry. The medium suits artist Rachel Apelt's character well. Having spent the past eight years living between Australia and Mexico, her latest exhibition, *Feltworks*, stitches together the fragments of her experiences, memories and observations from a life in two countries.

"At one stage I worked on a big community dance project in Mexico. I worked as a designer and costume maker. I had felt left over and I needed something a little bit different in terms of an art project. I wanted it to have a texture, to really speak and just be itself," she says. "I really like felt because it's such a more malleable medium in every sense of the word."

Incorporating acrylic paints and coloured felt, at a distance Apelt's 13m work appears to be a swirling series of layered amorphous images. A closer inspection, however, reveals that among the intertwined shapes and abstractions, everyday objects, including insects, leaves, buildings and nuts, are all represented. The project was completed in three stages, each of which depict moments in her life – both in Australia and abroad.

Apelt says all the images point to a piece of her memory and that the further you delve into *Feltworks*, the further the audience can chart the progression of her transient history.

"I've been living quite a nomadic life. I really enjoy that space in between cultures. I find it really creative. I'm always looking for them in Australia and in Mexico. Living overseas has stretched from delight to its downside," she explains.

In 1984 Apelt completed a Diploma of Fine Arts at Queensland College of Art and specialised



"I REALLY enjoy that space in between cultures. I find it really creative" ... Rachel Apelt. Picture: Suzanna Clarke

in painting. Since then it has been her print work that she is most known for, one of which sits in the Australian National Gallery.

"I haven't shown in Brisbane for a while. Recently, I've done a lot of ephemeral installations. It shifts to more abstracted levels. There's subterranean passages through the work," she says.

A bit like all the passages of our own elusive memories.

Luckily, she's able to recall enough to stitch them all together.

The work is a big jump from her painting days but, like her movements, Apelt says her art is always on the move, exploring new territories and, clichés aside, going where she hasn't gone before.

She says it speaks for itself. This is why she deliberately uses the brighter colours of Mexico, left the works unframed and has hung it in

one long series. Like its many stitches, she suggests the work is a thread of her own being and its various constructions and reconstructions point to her own ever-changing life plans.

Maybe to her, but it's doubtful audiences will make sense of it all. "Which do you want? The five-year or 10-year plan ... I'll just keep making art," she says.

Feltwork until February 6 at The Museum of Brisbane. Information: 3403 8888.



Rachel Apeit

aquifer Ivory Street Window

Craft Queensland is pleased to invite you to view an installation by Rachel Apeit, **aquifer**, in the Ivory Street Window, **7 - 27 June 2006**.

Exploring ideas of personal experience, process and cultural theory, **aquifer** is an installation comprising of over 700 hand stitched felt pieces.

.... "hidden and obtuse pathways, like seeping underground rivers that already exist with their own geometry but whose patterns remain hidden at the surface"

Opening: Friday 17 June 6 - 8 pm
Exhibition Dates: Tuesday 7 - Monday 27 June
24 hour viewing

Ivory Street Window
CQgallery
381 Brunswick Street
Fortitude Valley Q 4006
T 07 3215 0800
Tues - Sat 10.00 am - 4.00 pm



Rachel Apeit



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USQ Performance Centre

Music • Theatre • Exhibitions

Elephantine

A cycle of meditative works on the theme of forgiveness by RACHEL APEIT
Paintings from a space of rumination, travelling and processing which build from the ground up; from layers of embodied memory and the sensing of experience.

The question which connects these works concerns forgiveness. A curly line of inquisitiveness rustles under leaves and compost, searching for seeds and fallen fruit. Elephantine finds in this pungent and germinal space that if the fruit of forgiveness is picked too early, it remains unripe and indigestible ...
And so time is given, and space too.



University of Southern Queensland

6 - 28 JULY 2001

USQ ARTS GALLERY 9am - 5pm Mon - Fri
Official Closing by Jacqueline Murphy, Cultural Officer,
Brisbane City Council 12 noon Wednesday 25 July
ALL WELCOME



Image by Rachel Apeit

Enquiries 07 4631 1119

University of Southern Queensland West Street Toowoomba

POSTAGE
REQUIRED

01-400





MILENIO

DIARIO DE MONTERREY

FECHA: 19 Abril 2002

Enaltecerán la sabiduría DE LAS PERSONAS MAYORES

Parte del programa Noches Mágicas, del Parque Fundidora es el espectáculo *Así te verás*, con el cual se pretende un acercamiento e intercambio artístico y cultural entre las diferentes los jóvenes y las personas mayores

POR MARTHA RAMOS

Un espectáculo en el que se busca celebrar la sabiduría que da la experiencia y reconocer el talento de las personas de la tercera edad es el eje sobre el que gira el magno espectáculo *Así te verás*, que mañana a las 20:00 horas se presentará como parte del programa Noches Mágicas, del Parque Fundidora.

Este evento multidisciplinario, en el que se combina el talento de artistas mayores de diferentes disciplinas con el de niños y jóvenes es una idea de Hester Martínez, quien además está a cargo de la dirección artística escénica, mientras que Rachel Apelt funge como directora de diseño visual.

La idea original, comentó Hester Martínez, era crear un espectáculo feminista, pero como se fue integrando gente diversa al proyecto, "se tornó en un evento universal e humanitario."

"Poco a poco se fue haciendo evidente que a la gente mayor, cuando antes era considerada sabia y merecedora del mayor respeto, ahora se le hace a un lado; nos dimos cuenta

mediante jóvenes como yo profesora en la edad, como De es idea de cambio Así te ve tica enal yor posi por cada ser hum Este e Consejo comité la Secret te de Mi Otros Así te ve aspecto cana, se traliano sulita ev México una ma



EL NORTE

FECHA: 22 Abril 2002

Celebran diálogo de generaciones

Por VICENTE GUERRERO

Al final quedó una obra en la que, después de una hora y media, los abuelitos recordaron sus tiempos mozos como artistas y los jóvenes desplegaron sus habilidades de acróbatas. Pero *"Así te verás"* fue más que un espectáculo.

Para el buen número de asistentes que se dieron cita el sábado en la explanada del Horno Alto No. 1 del Parque Fundidora, la creación artística de Hester Martínez y Rachel Apelt propició la reflexión acerca de esa convivencia entre generaciones casi siempre lejana.

Sin embargo, pocos de los ahí reunidos bajo una cálida noche del sábado supieron que fue la convivencia previa, las horas de ensayo desde enero y el tras bambalinas lo que produjo el performance que incluyó una variedad de disciplinas.

La espectacularidad de la acro danza, junto a la nostalgia de la poesía, la evocación al pasado siempre presente que ofrecen las moles de acero del Parque Fundidora y la simpleza de la música se unieron en el performance.

Parecía que nada tenía secuencia en *"Así te verás"*, debido a los cambios de un género musical a otro, pero en realidad se trataba de pasar de una etapa a otra del ser humano, desde la concepción y hasta la muerte.

Las voces de María Eugenia Fuentes y María Eugenia Llamas "La Tucita" daban el paso para un cambio en la escena; la firmeza de las palabras de Federico García Lorca y Jesús Herrera Giammattei en su boca evocaron el paso del tiempo, implacable, que igual deja

ganancias y pérdidas a quien lo experimenta.

Fueron las familias enteras, quienes pese a que la visibilidad no era buena por la larga distancia entre el estrado y las butacas, recibieron el mensaje ofrecido a través de la música, danza indígena, popular, contemporánea y el *"tai chi chuan"*.

El concepto fue llevar a escena expresiones como la danza de palmas, las que todavía hacen Gaudencio Parrilla, al son de la jarana de Tomás Santiago y el violín de Genaro Santiago y combinarlas con la propuesta de Danza Contemporánea en Concierto.

No importaba si no encajaba muy bien el dancón y el tango en una misma noche, lo que se valoró era el entusiasmo general de todos.

Ahí estuvieron las voces de Delia Villarreal, cantante de ópera y la de Amada Quistiano, quienes compartieron el escenario con la expresividad en danza de Rosa María Robledo y Edel Carbonell, y el talento de Dany Daniel García en la acro danza.

Se enalteció la sabiduría de quienes pintan canas, como los miembros del grupo folclórico del Inaplen, pero también la energía de los más pequeños violinistas en ciernes de la Escuela Superior de Música y Danza de Monterrey.

Ese diálogo entre jóvenes y viejos se dio esa noche en el escenario, en una actividad que no se volverá a repetir; la tarea es que eso mismo visto a través de la expresión del arte se pueda dar en la realidad, como *"Así lo verás"* espera que alguna vez haga efectivo.

Así te verás...

Espectáculo de producción multidisciplinaria que une a talentos Tango, Acro danza, Danza indígena, Tai chi chuan, Violines, Música en vivo, Danza Contemporánea...

Dirección Artística Escénica:
Hester Martínez

Dirección Diseño Visual:
Rachel Apelt

"Un diálogo celebrando el ciclo de vida,
un lazo bondadoso entre diferentes generaciones,
deleite visual que impacta y provoca a vivir intensamente
cada etapa de la vida..."

En Colaboración con
La Compañía de Danza Contemporánea
y Otras Instituciones

Sábado 20 de Abril
20:00 hrs.
Explanada Horno Alto No. 1
(Sopladores)

Entrada libre.

Estacionamiento por Antonio L. Villarreal (Plaza Sésamo)
Costo \$10.00 la hora, \$30.00 máximo.



Así te verás...



Artist vibrantly opposed to age slav



Erin O'Dwyer

IF Rachel A needed any or passion, t Mexico shot. Four year chance more performance flight to Cui won a Mexic collaborate) proves. "It was ju synchronisation that was ang happen. It's Apelt said. - expectation went there) opened for) Apelt will Mexico later work with (I choreograph composer to Visual design costumes to costumes company. The grant \$220,000 was not her. Her friend ber and was her until she most recent January. - Suzanna Clarke

ISBANE FESTIVAL AND ACCESS ARTS PRESENT IHOS OPERA'S

THE DIVINE KISS

BY CONSTANTINE KOUKIAS

WE CANNOT WELL DO

Challenging but never boring

THE DIVINE KISS, by Constantine Leos Koukias. IHOS Experimental Music Theatre Troupe. QUT Theatre, Gardens Point until Saturday night. Reviewed by DAVID BRAY.

FESTIVAL fare is expected largely to be different, interesting, exciting. This offering, bookended in the Energex Brisbane Festival time by romantic Beethoven and majestic Mahler, is all of those things - up to a point. Just don't expect this critic to tell you what it's all about, despite all the clever words recently written and published. Certainly it is never boring.

One first-nighter was heard to observe at interval that it was better

Casack and actors Bob Williams, Michael Pini, Julie Gardner, George Prince and Daniel Anderson perform wonders in the face of some seriously attention-grabbing stage stunts.

Bowling balls and hospital beds roll across the stage, a squadron of triplanes makes several sorties, transmitting morse code, three blokes make generously flowing use of a urinal, another scene involves three lavatory pedestals, two sopranos play an incongruous game of table tennis and a blinding host of pyrotechnics brings the first half to a spectacular close.

Later, for some minutes the visual element is a big purple triangle propped on to a softer background.

Intriguingly, the lighting, by Jan Wawrzynczak, is an important part of the performance as are Rachel Apelt's costumes.

The music won't scare traditionalists. It is largely from prerecorded tapes produced from recordings of Brisbane workshops with Access Arts members.

Spotlight on performers not disabilities

By MEGAN TURNER

READ into it what you will. When 25-year-old soprano Julee-Ann Van der Boor unravels her colourful flower-strewn sari across the stage, you may see a woman laying flowers in a field or, looking deeper, you could see her actions as the metaphorical representation of an innocent deflowered.

Van der Boor delights in the deliberate ambiguity which pervades *The Divine Kiss*, an innovative new opera created by IHOS Opera and Brisbane-based Access Arts for the Energex Brisbane Festival.

"The imagery and music are both very layered so everything's open to interpretation," she said. "Everyone will see something different."

What Van der Boor and the eight other cast members don't want the audience to see is a group of "poor underprivileged people".

"We've been very careful to market it as a professional work with people in it who happen to be blind or happen to have cerebral palsy, or whatever," Van der Boor said. "If we can get through this production and an audience member says, 'did you know that soprano was blind?' and another says, 'no way!', then that would be the supreme compliment."

Artistic director Constantine Koukias explores the Christian concept of the Seven Saving Virtues by expressing them in a series of arresting visual and musical images, combining formal and experimental opera styles.

Van der Boor, who graduated from the University of Queensland with a Bachelor of Music honours degree in 1993, has sung on stage before but *The Divine Kiss* will be her first theatrical production.

The Divine Kiss opens tonight at the QUT Theatre, Gardens Point Campus, and runs until Saturday.

Arts, Pages 41, 42



SAYING it with flowers... soprano Julee-Ann Van der Boor stars in the innovative opera *The Divine Kiss*, being performed at the QUT Theatre. Picture: SUZANNA CLARKE

ex.cat.

[illegible]

Slightly askew: Rachel Apelt and her social-commentary shrine

She has created a fantasy narrative to explore salient issues and the incantation of that narrative in this exhibition. The narrative track, available in the catalogue or in text accompanying the works, is a story about a fictitious noblewoman around the world.¹

Each fact has constructed her parallel meticulously, with personalities and details to flesh it out. The Filipino Virgins, a brown-skinned virgin who appears in many images in the exhibi-

Rich: Gigante, by Karen Flores

Federico Sievert — have contributed one painting each, following Rachel's theme and narrative with their colorful paintings. Karen Flores and Christian Clark, from the Queensland Art Gallery, helped her with the text.

The whole effect is very sensual, because Karen uses the rich colours and textures so popular with Filipino art. She is an accomplished painter and can support her ideas with her technique. This is no flimsy installation but a full-blown extravaganza by a talented visual performer.

Rachel Apelt

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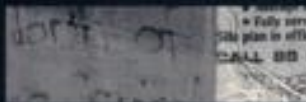
+ Migrant Community +



+ Senior Citizens +

Shifting Sights

+ Youth +



+ Indigenous Community +



many demands on local government from providing the basic services such as roads, sewerage, water and housing, to maintaining and developing a unique life style and sense of community. A community arises from an identification of a place, and a feeling of ownership and belonging. Thuringowa's community, having undergone much social and environmental change over the past 10–20 years, is in a constant state of flux. Thus it is difficult to isolate the impact of these changes on the community and assess its present identity.

The project **Shifting Sights** endeavours to profile Thuringowa by bringing to a public arena the community's sense of itself, and how it has responded to change. It focuses on four distinct groups within the current community and explores their experiences and perceptions of Thuringowa and its urbanisation.

Members of the Thuringowa Senior Citizen's group reflect on times past when the shire consisted mainly of farms, the roads were of dirt, and there was no direct water supply or sewerage system. They speak of infringing suburbia and the problems it brought, the loss of the old community, the increase in new faces and the subsequent decrease in trust; the diminishing space and the increased pace of life. Their stories, while tinged with regret, recognise the benefits brought about by urban growth such as improved access to medical care, better communication technology, and an easier life style due to modern conveniences. These benefits have coincided with approaching age and have allowed this group to maintain their independence.

Members of the migrant community speak of mixed experiences of living in Thuringowa. Some comment on the isolation not just from their homeland but also from the Thuringowa community due to barriers created by language, the disperse layout of the community, poor public transport, and lack of outside understanding of their culture and experiences. Others, however, speak of living with the best of both cultures, growing up in safety, being accepted and integrated into the community, and being able to maintain more of their traditions than would have been possible in their own country.

To primary school children living in a semi rural area of Thuringowa that is fast becoming suburbia, there have been

...we're expected to be dancers
and experts at regional cuisine, even
if we didn't do those things in our
countries of origin.



Rachel Apelt

Biographical Details

- 1964 Born Brisbane, Australia
- 1984 Completed Diploma of Arts (Painting), Queensland College of Art
- 1993 Completed Graduate Diploma in Ministry, Union Theological Institute, Sydney

Currently lives in Brisbane and lectures at the Queensland College of Art

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1990 *Rite of Passage*, MOCA Young Artists Gallery, Brisbane
- 1992 *the golden carp the golden goose*, Ipswich Regional Art Gallery
- 1994 *X*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane
- 1996-7 *Sweet, Australia*, Centre: Manda, University Art Museum, University of Queensland, Umbrella Studio, Townsville

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1994 *5 An Exotic Otherness - Crossing Brisbane Lines*, touring: Tasmania, Queensland and New South Wales
- 1995 *Out of the Void*, Queensland Art Gallery, touring: regional Queensland
- 1995-7 *Women with Attitude*, National Museum of Australia, touring: Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania

Collections

- Griffith University, Brisbane
- Ipswich Regional Gallery
- Queensland Art Gallery
- University of Southern Queensland
- Private Collections



My impression from migrant people living in Thuringowa, was that those who had settled in other areas of Australia previously and later moved to Thuringowa, had made a good life and achieved contentment. On the other hand, those who had been placed in Thuringowa through humanitarian schemes, or who had ended up there by default, were in a much harder psychic space.

The sculptural termite nests in my work, are a memory of Thuringowa from childhood. Termites eat our houses insidiously, furtively, invisibly. The house is an archetypal symbol of the Self. Most of those nests are gone now. My heaving letterbox stuck out on the termite nests is an abject expression of isolation and powerlessness.

RACHEL APELT



SWEET, SEDUCTIVE, SINISTER UNCANNY VALENTINE

By PATRICK D. FLORES

AS MONEY changes hands in the free market of commodities, love as a mode of exchange experiences heavy trading as it is made, to conquer all, so it is conquered almost totally by the trappings of romance. It's as if there's black and blue somewhere underneath the red of loving.

The Australian Center opened an exhibit on love this Valentine season. Rachel Apelt's *Sweet* is a series of installations on love and its perverse ceremonies. This work is a culmination of the Brisbane-born artist's four-month residency in the Philippines.

Apelt presents six gifts, love offerings as it were, which scan the scenes of wooing, the rituals of seduction.

Three columns of canvas boards flash seemingly random images of thorns, heart, seeds in a pod, a drop of liquid, roots, silver fork, fruit, bodice, flame, fine, seared flowers, a bigger drop of liquid, burning heart, crown, knife, coat-of-arms, heart, wounds, knife, roots. The passion of love in this scheme of pictures is consumed by rage, violence, deprivation.

We are then ushered into what Apelt calls "haute couture, for a queen of the six-legged kind": a carton crown studded with fake jewels perched on a carton breast, and feathers cascading down a stand overlain by velvet red. This first gift throws the door open to more explorations.

A heart-shaped box fashioned from fur contains yellow rubber gloves and on them red plastic crucifixes. A knotted fur material languishes on a wooden stool.

An oversized food cover cast in tulle is peppered by dolls wrapped in yellow, green and orange cellophane.

A cardboard heart box coddles paper shoes of different shapes and sizes.

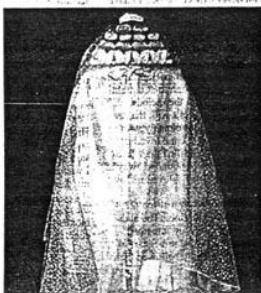
Finally, five layers of soap ensconced on a fine white cloth is veiled like a bride's face; the scent of perfume pierces the air with vanity and violation of virtue.

These gifts seem to be set up on a pedestal, either heralding themselves as sacrifice or spreading themselves out on store shelves like some merchandise ripe for the picking. Any which way, they invite the viewer to partake of a transaction.

Apelt, who is sharp and articulate, reveals that her travels around the Philippines had enhanced her "growing sense of the colonial legacy in this land." She recounts: "I began working with the metaphor of a woman trapped in a destructive relationship. From my discussions with artists, taxi drivers and people I met in the



A heartfelt of shoes



... veiled 'bride' soap ...



... only for you.

provinces, I picked up an ambivalence with which the Philippines views the colonial past and present. On the one hand, there was anger and frustration, but on the other, an unwillingness to break out of the relationship. Like a woman who is being financially and sexually abused, emotionally manipulated and whose labor is exploited, the Philippines stays in the relationship because it 'seems' normal, or because it is 'seduced' by the (false) security and benefits the relationship appears to offer."

What Apelt tries to argue here is the violence of possession and the various ways in which romance assumes the form of social tutelage. The very conventions of courtship, marriage and domestication inscribe the process of domination — and they can be properly sexualized if only because colonialism decisively intersects with the insidious legacies of patriarchy and capitalism, sustaining the traffic of bodies and money across the globe and marketing "trinkets and charms" of talismanic and erotic, because fetishizing,

value.

The presentation of gifts, therefore, is not only a feudal gesture but an enactment of market relations. Apelt, for instance, tries to "make strange" the very conditions of display through which her art is rendered visible, as if to imply that her being artist is also quite intricately within the political economy of the art world: "I decided to present a series of gifts, such as a suitor might give the woman he is pursuing — gloves, fine clothes, chocolate, lingerie and soap. These are presented in a display-window manner, in the visually cold and corporate Australia Center space. I wanted the effect to be concise and double-edged. The objects are both seductive and decorative ('sweet'), but also quite sinister."

It is significant to note that cultural exchanges like this enable artists and audiences to converse and dialogue even across languages and persuasions. Apelt's effort to understand the Philippines and its history through the idiom of her ideology and art forges an important link of struggle among people who aspire for change in these times of unerving difficulties.

The art that Apelt practices is cogent and engaged. It is able to think about social contradictions and flesh out the possible ways of transforming them. As she herself puts it, "In relation to my own praxis, I have been looking for artists who think differently, of working in the community, as distinct from working for an art-educated elite."

There is nothing sweet, of course, in this bruising paritanship, only the bitter thought that the gift of art is not given but wrested from those who, because they love wrongly, kill the romance softly and surely.



Seepage

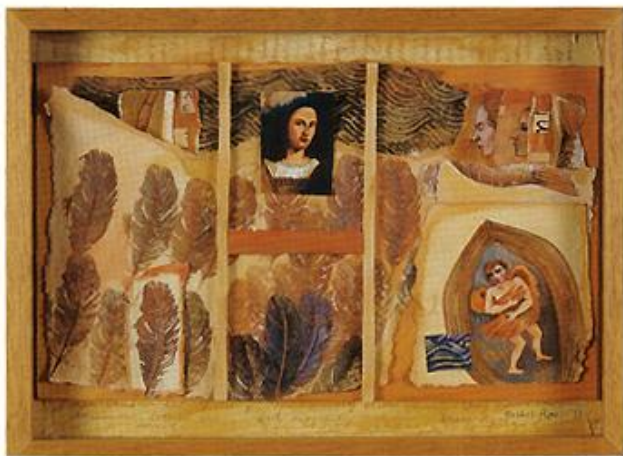
paintings by Rachel Apelt

Opening at aGOG
Saturday 16 November from 3-5pm
Continuing until 4 December

#598

inclusion: Girls Ono Gallery
1 Leachford Street Kingston, Tel: 06 295 3380 Fax: 06 341 3531
Hours: Wed-Sun Noon-5pm, Public, PMS Box 4719 Kingston ACT 2601

rachel apelt



Rachel Apeit (1964—)
A song across the waves 2
 1993
 mixed media collage
 30.7 x 42 cm

City of Ipswich Collection,
 Global Arts Link, 1993

**'the history of popular music
 is a history of borrowings and
 adaptations — this is the very
 definition of folk music'**

But there is still no Australian music in the sense that we speak of Irish, Indian or Italian music. Even our folk traditions are imported. Nor, apart from Aboriginal music, are there any unique regional or ethnic music forms. While the music scenes in different parts of Australia vary, none has yet produced a distinctive 'sound' linking individual performers into movement or tradition.

Does this mean that really there is no Australian popular music? No, but it does mean breaking down the judgmental oppositions. The relationship between commerce and authenticity is far too complex to assume that one is the opposite of the other. Take country music again. Born from the influence of American hillbilly music in the 1930s and 1940s and always a thoroughly commercial part of the entertainment industry, country music fans and performers also share strong (authentic) communal and regional identities, and country is the most popular form of music on Aboriginal radio stations.

The relationship between Australian and American music is also far too complex to be summed up in a loaded opposition. For one thing, American popular culture has been part of Australian popular culture since the nineteenth century. Australian popular music is a product, not a victim, of American popular music. Overseas influence is not the death of Australian music but the primary fact of its existence. The history of popular music is a history of borrowings and adaptations. This is the very definition of folk music, where originality is less valued than community or tradition.

But the similarities in the more commercial fields aren't often noticed: taken up into rock, rock into pop, the music shifting from black to white communities, from the United States to Britain (and Australia), discovering new styles in the process and being exported back to its place of origin as it goes global. Australian popular music has always inevitably been a matter of inflecting and modifying imported styles, but this is not the opposite of being original. If Australian popular music has been dominated by American music, this has also been a creative process of artists taking the basic forms and remaking them for their own purposes locally and internationally. There has been 'takeover' and 'makeover'.

Are we any less Australian for our wall-to-wall exposure to American (and British) music in the last four decades? The richness of Australian popular music has deepened over the very same period. In Craig McGregor's words:

Virtually all cultures are hybrids, and derivative cultures like Australia's inevitably so. What some critics regard as 'cultural colonialism' gave my generation of Australians the musics around which our lives have revolved ever since: jazz, blues, rock, soul, gospel, rhythm and blues, country and western, ragtime, American folk, funk, boogie — where would we have been without it?

'But', he adds, 'I still felt very Australian'.

Things were not always equal. For the rock performers of the 1950s and 1960s life revolved around covers of imported hits. The local scene (once strong, in the 1920s, for dance bands) was thin and unreliable.



RACHEL APELT

**MIXED-MEDIA AND
 COMMUNITY ARTIST,
 MEMBER OF AN
 ARTISTS' COLLECTIVE**

QUALIFICATIONS

I have a Diploma of Fine Art from the Queensland College of Art.

AFFILIATIONS

- Queensland Artworkers Alliance
- Inkahoots

OCCUPATION

I work at an Art Studio called Inkahoots where I am involved with graphic design, screen-printing and coordinating community arts projects. Inkahoots is a collective, and this affords great flexibility in the type of work we accept. I work predominantly as a designer, but find the other projects I engage in stimulate my personal arts practice. Collaborative work with other artists and community groups provides the opportunity to pool ideas and skills, and while this work can be difficult at times, one's perspective and skills base is always extended.

My personal arts practice explores feminist philosophy and attempts to

engage a mainstream audience. Painting and collage have featured in my exhibitions to date but a shift towards installation and mixed media is evident in my recent work. I exhibit my work regularly in artist-run spaces and public galleries. I am not represented by a commercial gallery and I have found maintaining my independence challenging and very rewarding. A positive feature of this approach is that I have control over the organisation of my exhibitions and the way in which I am presented. I value the uncompromised artist/gallery relationship where rent rather than commission is paid.

CAREER PATH

Upon completion of Year 12, I was accepted into the Queensland College of Art and enrolled in what was then a three-year Diploma of Art. However, after graduating, I stopped practising art for four years, and with some irony, I note that many of the other female graduates of my year were similarly thwarted. In the early 1980s, it seemed to me that women were discriminated against in tertiary institutions, dominated by male lecturing staff and mature-age male students, despite the fact that the majority of students were female. Our course failed to prepare us to enter the professional art world, to negotiate our way in a male-dominated field.

Our sense of disempowerment heightened as we watched our colleagues rapidly establish careers. When I turned twenty-five, I realised it was time to tackle the arts and to utilise my education and skills which had been dormant. I commenced painting and staged a solo exhibition in 1990. An exhibition space was now much more equitable with the availability of run spaces in Brisbane. My role as coordinating artist in a successful community arts project also encouraged my re-entry into the art world.

Highlights of my career have been three textile projects I have been on, two involving women from English-speaking backgrounds, and more recently, a project with women's committee of the Queensland branch of the Australian Council of Trade Unions. The projects were community building, educationally and artistically successful. They resulted in a series of sophisticated wall-hangings which have social and cultural issues.

Among various other projects, a bright moment was a five-year residency at Ipswich Girls' Grammar School in 1992. In 1993 I was awarded for Painting in the Ipswich Ormiston National Art Award, Brisbane, and in 1994, received State Arts Grant.

Living the War

*an oral history & visual arts exhibition
touring Brisbane City Council libraries*

JUNE - NOVEMBER 1995



Detail of Living the War by Rachel Apelt from Ecology, collaborative artwork by Denise Fry and Rachel Apelt, mixed media, April, 1995, Brisbane City Council commission

Oral Historians

SUE PECHAY JACKIE HUGGINS GLEN SEBASIO IDA WATSON

Visual Artists

DENISE FRY & RACHEL APELT RON HURLEY MOHINI CHANDRA & KATARINA VESTERBERG
LUCY MELVILLE & BETHA STEWART RUSSELL CRAIG & SCOTT WHITAKER



the rupture
of recall

Rachel Apelt

Opening 8th September 1995 - 6pm

Exhibition continues until 27th September



Doggett Street Studio
85 Doggett Street
Newstead • Brisbane
Queensland • 4006
Tel/Fax (07) 3252 9292

Tuesday to Saturday • 12 noon to 5pm

Sth-East Advertiser Sep 20 1995 p2

Reflections on conflicts

ARTIST Rachel Apelt's personal reflections on war provide a backdrop to the Norman Park resident's latest exhibition, *The Rupture of Recall*.

Having worked on Brisbane Remembers' Living The War project, Ms Apelt was compelled to explore contemporary issues of armed conflict through her work.

"I found that (Living The War) a very interesting project," she said. "But I couldn't help but notice the irony - that while we were celebrating victory in the Pacific, really terrible things were happening in various places around the world.

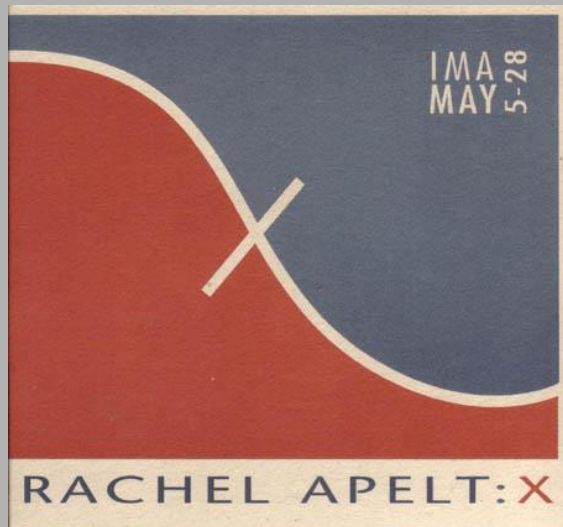
"What's happening in former Yugoslavia I find really upsetting and distressing."

Ms Apelt's paintings can be seen at Newstead's Doggett Street Studio until September 27.



● Rachel Apelt . . . personal reflection on war.

SAS4159



Rachel Apelt's X exhibition explores the western cultural experience of time.

Timely show in Valley art gallery

RACHEL Apelt's fifth solo show, *X*, is currently on at the Institute of Modern Art in the Valley.

The exhibition is the result of a project grant from Arts Queensland and features mixed media works in an installation format.

X explores the western cultural experience of time which Apelt sees as being perceived as a linear concept progressing from a beginning at A to an end at Z.

Apelt believes our culture's anticipation of the letter Z as the "end time" is dangerously self-fulfilling especially as we approach the second millennium when our own and other life forms' existence is precarious.

Through the installation, Apelt has attempted to deconstruct the negative aspects of linear time and thereby affirm other ways of experiencing time, and in turn, affirm the future.

The exhibition continues until May 28.

RACHEL APELT

Rachel Apelt was born in Brisbane in 1964. She received a Diploma of Arts from the Queensland College of Art in 1984. Since 1989, she has participated in several group and five individual exhibitions in contemporary art spaces in Brisbane including one at the Institute of Modern Art in 1994.

During this time she has also worked on several projects and residencies including one for the ACTU, Queensland, and two other residencies for the Brisbane Ethnic Music and Arts Centre. She has executed commissions for the Queensland Teachers' Union, Griffith University Faculty of Law and Ipswich Girls' Grammar School.

In 1993, Apelt received an Arts Queensland Project Grant and was awarded First Prize, Painting, in the Inaugural Ormiston College National Art Awards. She serves on the Boards of Inkahoots Inc. and the Queensland Artworkers Alliance Inc.

Apelt lives in Brisbane and works part-time at Inkahoots, a graphic design and arts studio.

COLLECTIONS

Griffith University, Brisbane

University College of Southern Queensland

Ipswich City Art Gallery



RACHEL APELT
X (Detail), 1994
Cat. no. 1

the golden carp the golden Goose



Rachel Apelt

Rachel Apelt

a float on
high seas

March 15-27



★ S P A C E
P L E N T I T U D E

a float on high seas

I developed this work as an extension of *the golden carp the golden goose* (Ipswich Regional Art Gallery, October 1992), because I was interested in the problematic aspects of portraying female nakedness. The difficulties involved in establishing a context to preclude mis-readings of the female body have long perplexed women artists. The representation of the experience of being female in a culture which undervalues 'the feminine' (a construct in itself) is particularly vulnerable to misinterpretation.

In my experience feminism, in its broadest expression, espouses humanising ideals. However, because these ideals require a shift in the dominant worldview, they are contentious. At a general level, feminism signals subversive threat. To feminists, it signals spiritual and cultural development and therefore reads as an evolutionary impulse.

A waxing and waning of feminism is acknowledged in these works in the context of historical resistance. On a regular basis the r/evolutionary challenge of feminist praxis is silenced, embraced by ideological fashions (such as post-feminism), eclipsed and depotentiated. Its liberation themes become loaded with layers of negative symbolism. Like the strange acquired significance of flowers, the true meaning of feminism's themes becomes lost under veils of association. In some instances, this is a process of generational forgetting, while in others, it involves deliberate censorship. Yet feminism is a resilient movement, and its themes, though regularly broken up, reform again in the next swell.

My appropriation of the mythic figures of the Siren and Angel questions their co-option by male fantasy. Powerful psychological references, they have been dressed up with corny associations and mass marketed. I have used them in a manner which underscores their deeper symbolism by placing them upon an evolutionary continuum. As fish and bird, they become reference points along pathways of expanding consciousness.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1995

Courier Mail

Canvassing the feminist ethos

OUT OF THE VOID: MAD AND BAD WOMEN, Art from the Collection, Queensland Art Gallery, until April 25.

WITH International Women's Day just over a week away, perhaps the spirits of Emmeline Pankhurst and other legendary "mad and bad" women will be happily hovering over the feminist art show at the Queensland Art Gallery.

Out of the Void, an exhibition of feminist art from the past 30 years, has been culled from the state gallery's permanent collection.

The catalogue seems to argue that outspoken/nonconformist women still suffer from cultural stereotyping which sees them as either mad or bad. This is useful, the curators imply, if you are currently a trendy "bad girl" fashion model or film actor — but is a problem if you are a '90s feminist artist for were one in the '70s or '80s, as your work might be ignored, whisked out only for special occasions such as this.

Come on, now. When has feminist art been neglected over the past three decades?

Far from having blighted careers, most of this galaxy of 48 Australian and international women art supernovas and rising



Art Review by Sue Smith

Apelt) have been very well treated indeed by an art world long in thrall to iconoclastic and protest art.

Nonetheless — despite the misplaced rhetoric, and the disparate quality and intentions (and in a few cases, such as Sandra Taylor's ceramic pigs, over-familiarity to regular viewers) of the work selected — this is an engaging display.

Both passionate and playful, the show presents multifaceted feminine endurance and amusing painted and printed sneers at clumsy male domination.

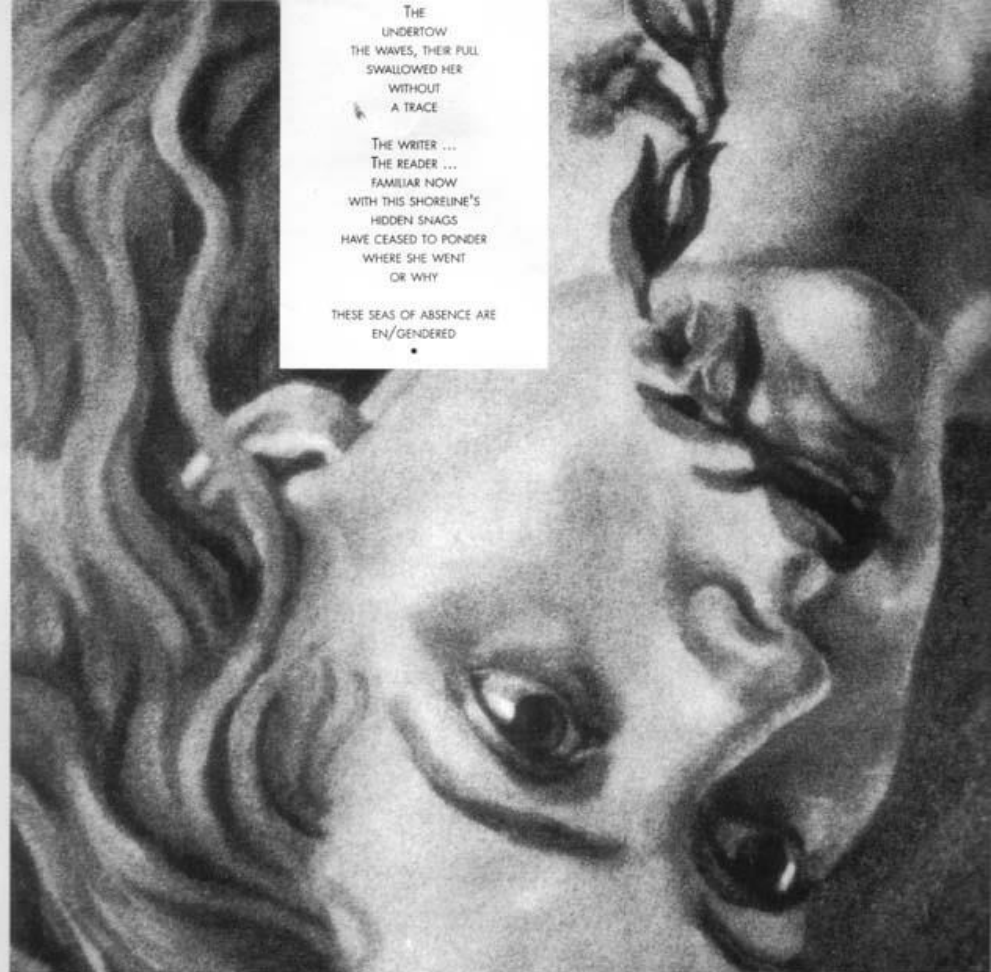
There is a particular focus on prints and posters, beginning with the earliest works from the 1960s and '70s: Barbara Hanrahan's rough-hewn woodcuts, which depict childbirth and tender relations with a candour

flowering of women's photography in the form of large-as-life, glossy make-believe tableaux. Julie Rrap, for instance, is transfixing in stunning nude self-portraits which defy woman's traditional casting in the roles of virgin/whore or as model rather than artist.

Out of the Void also ranges, less excitingly, over sculpture, jewellery, ceramics and other media. There is everything here, but not much painting which, this show suggests, is a traditional male domain that has been largely abandoned by women artists. (One exception is Marilyn Fairsky, whose distorted canvas after a Japanese erotic print provides a cleverly oblique comment on sex and power.)

Yet, if you stroll around the gallery outside the exhibition there are some very fine, non-feminist, paintings by Emily Kngwarreye, Judy Watson and Bea Maddock on view. These works have no axe to grind, but speak movingly of the land, identity and survival. Perhaps they represent the most powerful and relevant women's art of all: that which goes beyond noisy and simplistic hectoring.

RIGHT: Barbara Hanrahan's *Wedding Night*



THE
UNDERTOW
THE WAVES, THEIR PULL
SWALLOWED HER
WITHOUT
A TRACE

THE WRITER ...
THE READER ...
FAMILIAR NOW
WITH THIS SHORELINE'S
HIDDEN SNAGS
HAVE CEASED TO PONDER
WHERE SHE WENT
OR WHY

THESE SEAS OF ABSENCE ARE
EN/GENDERED

R A C H E L A P E L T

artist page



nd in Apelt showing



RACHEL Apelt with some of her works in *Afloat on the High Seas* at Space Pix

Artist strives to symbolise the female struggle

Special Feature

By Claire Barron

AWARD-winning paintings of women by Norman Park artist Rachel Apelt are the antithesis of images draped across the pages of many of today's glossy adult magazines.

Unlike Playboy and Penthouse's blatant reflection of women as sex objects, the former Queensland College of Art student strives in her art to symbolise the female struggle for equality.

Her depiction shows feminism as an evolutionary impulse gravely misunderstood by the dominant culture because "it's seen as a threat to the status quo".

But to feminists, she said, her work signalled a spiritual and cultural growth. This development is successfully displayed in her work which is considered by many as a clear visual expression of women's struggle for equality.

Her award-winning six-piece work titled "Evolution and Stasis" took out first prize at the recent Ormiston College National Art Awards.

Its depiction of mythic female figures—the siren and angel—is one the 29-year-old has successfully explored in many of her richly colored collages and paintings.

She questions male fantasy, and makes powerful psychological references to society's constant use of sexual clichés and mass marketing techniques.

Ms Apelt's March solo-exhibition, "Afloat on the High Seas", exemplified this by

showing the problematic aspects of portraying female nakedness.

This is something, she said, most heterosexual men have not, and cannot grasp.

"They misunderstand the female experience," she said. "As soon as they see a pair of breasts they have to 'sexualise' it."

"Gay men have a greater understanding of my work because they share women's experience of being marginalised by our culture."

Solo and group exhibitions to Apelt's credit include *The Rite of Passage* at the MOCA Young Artist Gallery, Women Expressing Justice at Nook's Halse Lodge; *Narrative Threads*, and *Cacophony* at McWhirter Artspace; *The Golden Carp* at the Ipswich Regional Art Gallery and State of the Portrait at the Arts Council Gallery, Brisbane.

Ms Apelt also has been the artist in residence at Ipswich Girls' Grammar School and Brisbane Ethnic Music and Arts Centre.

Her next residency is at The Trades and Labour Council.

There, she will help design a three-dimensional textile piece to celebrate the lives of three women involved in the union movement.



Norman Park artist Rachel Apelt and her work *Afloat on the High Seas* striving to symbolize the female struggle for equality.

A powerful challenge to our misogynist culture

AT the Ipswich City Council Regional Art Gallery, two powerfully painted female figures struggle to be free of the confines of their vessel-shaped frames.

Young Brisbane artist Rachel Apelt has produced her first installation in the intimate stairwell space of the Ipswich Gallery. Just as the subject of her work deals with the struggle of women for autonomy and self-definition, *The Golden Carp The Golden Goose* marks an evolutionary step in Apelt's practice.

Rachel Apelt's previous exhibitions have dealt with themes of "Flutes of Passage" where women struggle to free themselves of psychological and physical oppression. These exhibitions have been accompanied by poetic narratives written by the artist.

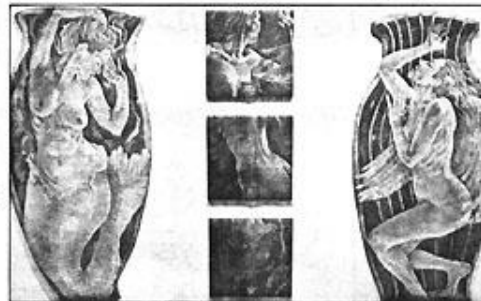
The Golden Carp The Golden Goose further develops Apelt's intermedia concerns and speaks as much of painting's own constricted

**The Golden Carp
The Golden Goose
Ipswich City Council
Regional Art Gallery
until October 31
Review by Beth Jackson**

history within the frame. The expression of creativity, symbolised by the golden carp and the golden goose, is bound up in personal, art historical and mythological narratives.

The installation is beautifully painted, dense and multi-layered in its meanings. Apelt sets up a dialogue within the space between her forms, media, symbols and text which creates a feminine web of connectedness for the viewer.

The two central figures are taken from mythology and are painted, self-consciously, in the heroic style of mannerism (best exemplified by the later works of Michelangelo). In



Installation detail from *The Golden Carp The Golden Goose*.

doing this, Apelt strikes at the origins of the modern era and the rise of the artist as (male) hero and gifted genius. The striking, rich colouration of her paintwork combine this figurative, heroic style with a feminine aestheticism reminiscent of (American) Georgia O'Keeffe's

paintings of the 1930's or Australian feminist core imagery of the 1970's.

One figure, a mermaid, is accompanied by painted text which reads "subject, cohesion, unfolding". The other figure, a siren becoming an angel, is accompanied by the painted text "entropy, fragmentation,

object". The women struggle for their own identity free of a patriarchal history which has, paradoxically, both elevated and excluded women.

On the facing side walls of the space, is the text "existential courage", two facial portraits and, hanging above them, a row of fish and a row of geese. These works seem to refer to the material world — our bodies, our practices, the egg-laying animals of the earth. Patriarchal culture and religion has delimited material life as "base matter", "uncontrolled nature", or "primitive". Western philosophy, on the other hand, has chosen to glorify a higher (masculine) spiritual realm of disembodied, rational thought.

The Golden Carp The Golden Goose is a powerfully feminist work. It presents a powerful challenge to our misogynist culture which continually displays woman as a spectacle and yet fails to represent her.



Rachel Apelt, Installation detail from *the golden carp the golden goose*, 1992. Photo: Brett Goodman.



Rachel Apelt, Installation detail from *the golden carp the golden goose*, 1992. Photo: Brett Goodman.

Images and words work through and with the steel, but never against the material, they do not seek to cover and to hide their material support, and often fade into obscurity themselves, allowing the steel to shine, to reflect a different light, a light in which spectators can only catch unfocused glimpses of their own reflections.

The metallic reflections can be thought of as suggesting not only a possible change of context, but a change of being itself. Tan's work challenges the spectator to enter into a rethinking of structure and content, but also of ground, and along with this, provokes the necessity of thinking the abyss (Ab-grund) in which reason and causality slide away. The history of modernism itself becomes a floating, surreal signifier where the signified remains uncertain, and therefore open to possibility.

GILLIAN THOMAS

RACHEL APELT: THE GOLDEN CARP THE GOLDEN GOOSE

Ipswich City Council Regional Art Gallery, Ipswich

"...the subversive position is a function of the feminine in the subconscious."

A. J. MASON 1988

A conscious subversion of issues dealing with identity is at the heart of Rachel Apelt's installation, the golden carp the golden goose. The inversions of public issues and private, coupled with the potential for the images and style used in the work to subvert the artist's intent, provide for a