

Reading the Collection



George Haynes 1938 -
Outback, South Fremantle (1983)
charcoal, 65 x 130cms, No. 55
Winner of the Festival of Perth Drawing Prize 1983

Outback

zing	banana
frizzle	palms
sizzle	he strokes
lick	awake
george	coaxes
plays with	tigers
his	hiding
willowstick	bright
staccato	making
flurry	magic
dot and	out of
dash	light
luscious	moved-on
loose and	maestro
languid	from
lash	south freo
in slipshod	his ghost
shadows	still casts
inky	its spell
blare	'con brio'
he bleaches	embroiders
lawn	heat
which isn't	bone-white
there	on black
dappled	inside
daubs	his hide
lianas	way down
make	the back

Rosalie Rebakis

Reading the Collection



William Dobell 1899 -1970
The Wine Drinkers (undated)
oil paint on masonite, 13.6 x 23cms
No. 108

The Wine Drinkers

you watched from the shadows
reading the way their bodies moved
that long slow line of intimacy
the way his crossed arms
held the weight of her so lightly
the night drawn up around them
excluding all others
the way the burred light
travelled the length of her body
curled itself in his glass
the red light of it
defining their structure

if you could take home that line
of her body, that tilted face, the cupped chin
that clean profundity of his brow
all their whispered years would find
their own way into your paint

Lesley Thomas

Reading the Collection



Karen Reys 1965 -
Aboriginal Culture 1788 - 2002 (2002)
artists book unique state, 21 x 14 x 3cms
No. 1057

the language of absence

the first page is white and luminous
the second bears a slight irritation
a tiny scar

this book is written
in an unfamiliar language
to read it one must translate
the vernacular of interferences
scratches, folds, holes torn
from the centre of pages

then a chapter
in which all the children
have disappeared suddenly
removed from the page
through jagged ruptures in paper

losing the threads of the narrative
the page is barely a fragment
hanging from binding
a blade has applied its steel to the plot
a great chunk of the story is missing

in place of a centre
a terrible cavity
disquietitude
I am learning to read
the language of absence

when the pages resume the holes
in the reading gape like broken gates
these gaps diminish
to three perforations and a middle fold
the story tattooed in increasing complexity
circles drawn in sand
poured through fingers
over laden with maps that divide
the pages into squares.

Nandi Chinna

Reading the Collection



Jill Kempson 1961 -
Saint Cloud 1926 I (2005)
oil paint on marine plywood, 36 x 43cms
No. 1163

Vanishing Point

What can it mean
to walk out of a landscape,
to unpeople it so thoroughly?
The cinders of the burnt chateau
have settled here to the side.
They have stolen all colour
and drowned the trees
in a perfect echo of themselves.
I lost the story
the day we rowed out
to find silence
spilling from the urns,
a weightlessness pulled through my arms.
I remember light through leaves,
a woman's skirt trailed in grass,
the boy holding a broken boat,
no sound coming from his open mouth.
And someone sifting through wreckage,
saying *this is what is left of the world*
something paused before catastrophe,
breathed perfectly to life.

Lucy Dougan

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Enquires to the Curator, City of Fremantle Art Collection, PO Box 891, Fremantle, WA, 6959. Tel 08 9432 9828 or www.freofoocus.com.au - follow links to Arts and Culture. Design: Brown Cow Design. Photography: Victor France.



Reading the Collection



Kathleen O'Connor 1876 - 1868
Summer morning
oil paint on canvas, 104 X 86cms, No. 218
Donated by Claude Hotchin 1958

Summer Morning

petals flicker
against iris
the sting of rays
softened by
a mute blush
caressed into cheeks

they rush around the room
bloom between brushes
paint lilt in jars
flowers drying
to pot-pourri
a mute death
caressed by sun

sniff roses
like fragments

Deanne Leber

Reading the Collection



Judy Watson 1959 -
heartspace (2005)
etching and sugar lift edition 2/40, 48 x 35cms, No. 1153
Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Stolen

grief hangs drying
like a hunted skin
over wounded country,
stolen by some fatal moon
while the sky was pricked
by careless stars.

you, belonging to the beginning,

heard its whisper
named its dreamings
wrote its law
called it mother
lived its ancient song

but you did not till the soil

now you scrape at your past
which persists in its amnesia

but if you trace the outline
of a relic, as if it holds
the answer, you will hear

the sound of separation
arising from its heartspace

Rosalie Rebakis

Reading the Collection



Joan Campbell 1925 - 97
Signpost to Somewhere (c1985)
raku fired earthenware
97 x 46cms, No. 472

Signpost to Somewhere

There are no maps for this country.
Our only clues are washed up on the beach
plastic bottles with Arabic inscriptions,
the red jelly of sea hares that suicide
beyond their reproductive missions,
the broken body of a sea bird
its sad feathers dusting the foam.

The flotsam of interrupted journeys.
Shattered hulls of boats
their hard timbers finally defeated by
the beating of waves.

Perverse winds, that deny entry visas at random
pour their strange music
through broken masts.

Journeys begin with an idea, some tools
a kind of homesickness for a better place
setting out with hope on an ocean
that couldn't care less.

Tossed overboard in a storm
to stop a ship from sinking the piano falls through
briny tempest.

Keys leap in chaotic toccata
strings howl and wail like sirens
gasping for breath as wood grain
gives way to water.

Chords encrusted with salt
groan and snap
pods of whales cast their giant shadows
over the language of drowned pianos.

Finally the pieces fall loose of each other,
drift slowly on ocean currents
lapping at shorelines,
knocking rhythms on pebbled beaches
tapping the hulls of steel ships
as they wait in crowded harbours.

Washing up on gritty beaches
where water rakes a wash board requiem
to the detritus of abandoned crossings
and the final grief of arrival.

Nandi Chinna

Reading the Collection



Marion Manifold 1954 -
(detail) *'a finely boned, beautiful face Botticelli would want to paint...'* (2001)
digital print suite edition 1/5, 56 x 41 cms, No. 1038.1-9
Winner of the Fremantle Print Award 2001

the artist as divine

the artwork

the catacomb is disturbed
and menstrual black
assaults our eyes
texture without touch
we sense non-compliance
velvet hard flat and
cold smooth flesh

an autopsy of beauty
meat on the butcher's block
each section with white glove
freed from the tissue paper's
spider web whisper
the shiny box empty like a grave

the artist

you have put yourself in the
picture
dissected your anatomy
finely boned feet and hands
more textured than a
brushstroke
belly, legs, breast
flawed human skin
perfectly craved

through plastic light
your modus operandi
hints at identity
you are all of them
you touch the myth
except your finely boned
beautiful -

the myth

she is the pleasure
of our gaze
pearl skinned naked
golden hair wrapped
she meets our eyes
with calm greeting
blown from watery birth

beached on solid earth
spring's welcome is tangible
and beauty will be covered
with respectable cornflowers
ocean depths forgotten
winds stop breathing

the poet

i reach beyond
absent hands, dirty nails
and the mind to eye line
across a white canvas
i leave behind paint smells
and pigments
and ideas of texture

the burning dust of
bits and bytes
infant pixels born of
intangible light
blown by the mind's breath
reveals the artist as divine

Vivienne Glance