



200 GERTRUDE STREET

TRANSPARENCIES

RECENT PAINTINGS AND OBJECTS FROM ADELAIDE

CURATED BY TIMOTHY MORRELL

24 AUGUST - 13 SEPTEMBER 1990

THE ARTISTS

CRAIGE ANDRAE

Born 1965

Solo Exhibitions

- 1987 *Reservoir*, Contemporary Art Centre, Adelaide
1988 *Star Decor*, Club Foote Gallery, Adelaide

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1988 *Monuments*, Contemporary Art Centre, Adelaide
Adelaide Festival Fringe Exhibition, Loft Gallery, Adelaide
Acquisitions, Art Gallery of South Australia
New South Australian Sculpture, College Gallery, Adelaide

Commission

- 1989 *Wall-sculpture*, Astor Hotel, Adelaide

BRONIA IWANCZAK

Born 1964

Solo Exhibition

- 1988 *Artzone*, Adelaide

Group Exhibitions

- 1989 *Collective*, College Gallery, Adelaide
1990 *Terminal Garden*, Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide
When I first did it I felt very perverse..., College Gallery, Adelaide

Commission

- 1989 *Mural*, Astor Hotel, Adelaide

SHAUN KIRBY

Born 1958

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1986 *A version/s: Picasso's Weeping Woman*, Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide
A First Look: Philip Morris Arts Grant Purchases 1983 - 86, Drill Hall, Canberra
1987 *The First Show*, DC Art, Sydney
1988 *Rolling Towards Bethlehem*, Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide
Australian Art Post 1960, Deutscher Gertrude Street, Melbourne
The New Generation, Australian National Gallery, Canberra
1989 *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales

MICHELE LUKE

Born 1957

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1985 *Anzart/Auckland*
1987 *ARX '87*, Perth
1988 *Rolling Towards Bethlehem*, Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide
Cat's Paw Exhibition, Adelaide Festival Centre

Selected Performances

- 1985 *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales
1989 *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales
Collaborationists, Australian tour, five states
In Transit, English tour, London and southern England

BRONWYN PLATTEN

Born 1959

Solo Exhibition

- 1989 *Contemporary Art Centre*, Adelaide

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1986 *A version/s: Picasso's Weeping Woman*, Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide
1987 *NewNew*, Living Arts Centre, Adelaide
1988 *Through The Looking Glass*, Artspace, Sydney
Recent South Australian Art: New Acquisitions, Art Gallery of South Australia
The Image In Question, Experimental Art Foundation, Adelaide
1989 *Australian Perspecta*, Art Gallery of New South Wales

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T R A N S P A R E N C I E S

his exhibition combines paintings and constructions by five Adelaide artists who use the quality of transparency both as a physical characteristic and a basis for meaning in their work.

Transparencies are things we can see through. In the daily language of the art world they are the things we use for reproducing and transmitting images. They are the next best substitute for the real thing. They are invariably shinier and newer than the objects they depict, and are often more palatable to look at. They are also indispensable to the existence of glossy magazines.

Transparencies are about the business of getting messages across.

Transparencies is an exhibition of art which acknowledges the power of seductive graphics. It is pleasing, occasionally playful, in the manner of stylish magazine layout. It relishes artifice. The work is subversively cryptic by appearing perfectly clear, transparent.

Presenting imagery in layers is the most commonly used method among the artists in this exhibition. Notions of transparency are treated differently by each of them, but irony and duplicity are ideas shared by the work of all five.

Michele Luke's constructed tissue paper pieces are closest to being literally transparent, with imagery floating in a membrane of translucent acrylic-reinforced paper. Best known as a performance artist, she constructs objects which, like her performances with Richard Grayson, deal with the inadequacies of communication. *Breakfast in bed* has a male and female side, on which the thoughts of a couple are projected like slides on a screen.

Craige Andrae, Shaun Kirby and Bronwyn Platten all superimpose the imagery of their paintings by embedding pictures within pictures so the viewer is obliged to look through them.

Craige Andre creates a kind of transparency by physically slicing through his polystyrene foam paintings with the outline of overlaid imagery. The star shape he uses here is a strident graphic symbol, at odds with the ambiguities of the pictures framed by it.

The artifice of unequivocal statements is emphasized in bold by Shaun Kirby, in a painting technique which often suggests an enlarged print. His pictures have the power and internal logic of a factual declaration, but the components are separated in a way which encourages reading between the lines. *Empire Circuit* is painted on the back of clear glass, a signwriter's trick which also works as an allegorical device.

Bronwyn Platten makes pictures which sometimes take on the look of images on a tv screen. She works with the surface tension of illusionism and breaks it in places so her pictures slide in and out of focussing on the physical skin of paint. Her paintings question and undermine the authority of information we are programmed to take for granted, exposing its contradictions and complexities. *Venn Diagram* actually dissects the optical process by which coloured images are transmitted.

Bronia Iwanczak's interpretation of seeing through a picture has to do with not being taken in by it. *Death is a location...* playfully penetrates a highly offensive picture. By undercutting the crude woodblock imagery with stroboscopic test patterns it also contrasts high and low technologies, mocking our sentimental faith in both.

A willingness to please, part of visual culture generally, is part of the character of these particular objects. While examining the means of this form of persuasiveness the artists remain aware of its ends.

TIMOTHY MORRELL

LIST OF WORKS

CRAIGE ANDRAE

1 *Star Decor*

1988, three individual units, synthetic polymer paint
on polystyrene and wood
each unit 160 x 160

BRONIA IWANCZAK

2 *Death is a location: Witness*

1988, synthetic polymer paint on wood
256 x 256

SHAUN KIRBY

3 *Typologist*

1988, synthetic polymer paint on canvas
180 x 270
Courtesy Anima Gallery Adelaide

4 *Empire Circuit*

1986, enamel and synthetic polymer paint on glass
and wood, 93 x 230
Courtesy Anima Gallery Adelaide

MICHELE LUKE

5 *Breakfast in bed*

1989, in three parts, constructed tissue paper, synthetic polymer
glue, collaged prints and electric light globe
175 x 120, 175 x 50 x 50, 174 x 120

6 *Runaway*

1990, constructed tissue paper and synthetic polymer paint/glue
175 x 240

BRONWYN PLATTEN

7 *Horizontal Mirror*

1989, synthetic polymer paint on canvas with wood and rubber frame
180 x 220
Collection South Australian College of Advanced Education Adelaide

8 *Venn Diagram*

1989, synthetic polymer paint on wood
190 x 220
Courtesy Anima Gallery Adelaide

ALL MEASUREMENTS IN CENTIMETRES, H X W X D