

UNDER THE COVERS



DEL BALDOVISO / GEORGIA BREEDEN / EMILY BUTLER
AMANDA DIGWEED / DAVINA ELSE / RORA ELWELL / CINDY
GILES / SONIA JANE / RHI JOHNSON / ANITA MANGAKAHIA
STEPHEN SPURRIER / LINSEY WALKER / KATHRYN YATES

Under the Covers

15 November – 12 December 2019

Dunmore Gallery Toowoomba

Dr. Rhi Johnson

Under the Covers is a group exhibition that addresses artists' books in the 21st Century. The term 'artist's book' became prominent during the 1970s, and is used to describe a work that assumes, or refers to, the form of a book. That is to say, that these works are necessarily differentiated from catalogues or other books that refer to artworks that exist externally to the object, the artist's book is the resolved work in and of itself.

While derived from aspects of traditional, often codex, books, artists' books cannot be simply categorised by a set of material or aesthetic qualities, nor conceptual concerns. There are, however, certain trends that emerge, such as a sole or predominant reliance on imagery and visual communication, altered or unconventional modes of construction, and unusual or unexpected content. These works often exist as a unique state, or as a small edition.

Related in some ways to artists' books are zines, which are generally inexpensive, self-published works made in small editions, often using a photocopier. The rise of such publications historically coincided with the general public's increased accessibility to photocopiers, which afforded individuals the opportunity to circulate written and visual information without the constraints of any governing body. The resultant works often target niche markets in terms of activism, fan-fiction, art, explicit content, or anything that may be deemed unsuitable for mainstream media.

Under the Covers showcases the work of thirteen artists who practice in the fields of contemporary artists' books and zines. There are more than 60 works shown in this exhibition, and both the forms constructed and the content put forward is varied and innovative. Works such as *Chromatic Ophidian* by Sonia Jane and *From Mayhem to Mellow* by Cindy Giles engage the viewer by means of vibrant colour and unexpected form. Both works physically stretch beyond the constraints of a traditional book object, and become sculptural in their reception and handling.

Emily Butler's *Unraveling* also blurs the boundaries between book object and sculpture, with the subtle inclusion of an unraveling ball of yarn. This puts forward a sense of implied movement, and further prompts the viewer's gaze to travel back and forth over the pages. Davina Else's works *Clowning Around Vol 1-2* also introduce a subtle sculptural elements by incorporating clay faces onto the covers of the miniature book objects. These are expressive yet elusive, and seemingly androgynous. This ambiguous yet engaging quality is mirrored throughout the pages of the work, as the artist presents fragmented visual and textual elements for the viewer's reinterpretation.

Many other works in *Under the Covers* engage the viewer through various departures from the conventional book form. Anita Mangakahia's *Eco Garden* is comprised of loose pages

that are housed in a clamshell box. The pages reveal delicate tones, textures and marks that are derived from foliage and natural dyes. Some pages have cutouts, and others are printed on transparent paper, both of which encourage the viewer to engage in their own acts of ordering and layering. Also derived from elements of nature, Amanda Digweed's *Bodhi* is an exploratory children's book that is nonetheless engaging for the curious of all ages. In this work, viewers are presented with prompts to search, move, rearrange and generally engage with the elements presented or hidden within the pages. Both of these works necessitate physical engagement, and further encourage the viewer to assume a kind of active role in manipulating the elements of the works.

Linsey Walker's *I don't know where my towel is* also challenges book conventions, in content rather than form. Walker's title is ambiguous in general, but specific for certain viewers... a trait that is mirrored in the content of the work. For those who recognise the imagery, and therefore how to engage with it, the physical pages redirect the viewer to seemingly disparate digital content.

Georgia Breeden's *I'm a Goat* and Del Baldoviso's *My Week* are representative of the art zines showcased in this exhibition. Made with quirky humor, often bordering on absurdity, these works are nonetheless relatable... a tongue-in-cheek glimpse at contemporary culture.

Made from processes often associated with the production of zines, such as cutouts and collages, Rora Elwell's *Just leave me alone* is a unique state artist's book, which gives a sensitive insight into personal and collective narratives. The fragmented text and imagery puts forward cues for the viewer, who simultaneously receives insight into the artist's narrative, and forms personal links between the stimuli presented.

While representative of various contemporary bookbinding interests and concerns, this exhibition is not merely a collection of artists' books and zines, but a record of shared spaces and emerging dialogues between artists and, subsequently, the works they produce.



About the Curators



Dr. Rhi Johnson is a Toowoomba based artist and educator who works primarily in the fields of Printmaking, Artist's Books and Mixed Media art. Rhi is concerned with the critical examination of contemporary book practices, in terms of the alternate forms of construction, conceptual intent and resultant experience such objects can put forward.

She is interested in the formation of everyday narratives, and how these can be disrupted or subverted visually. Rhi investigates visual cues that can punctuate an environment, object or space of perceived meaning, and in doing so, may allude to subconscious methods of processing information.

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Stephen Spurrier has been a practicing artist for 53 years, and a printmaking lecturer for 49 years. Stephen works across a range of media including Printmaking, Painting, Sculpture and Mixed Media. He has developed a longstanding engagement with the production and technical innovation of various forms of artist's books, and continues to educate and mentor emerging book artists.

Throughout his career, Stephen has been fuelled by persistent curiosity. His works engage with cosmic reflection, anatomy, geometry, intuition and layered storytelling.

- Del Baldoviso**
My Week
Screenprinted zine
2019
- Georgia Breeden**
Her Laugh
Coptic bound book
2019
- Georgia Breeden**
Interventions
Coptic bound book
2019
- Georgia Breeden**
I'm a Goat
Zine
2019
- Emily Butler**
Unraveling
Concertina book
2019
- Emily Butler**
Tails of Rusty the Cat
Zine
2019
- Emily Butler**
Monster Jasmine
Zine
2019
- Emily Butler**
Killer Rusty
Zine
2019
- Emily Butler**
Things that make me sneeze
Zine
2019
- Emily Butler**
Things that make me sneeze #2
Digital print book
2019
- Amanda Digweed**
Bodhi
Coptic bound book
2019
- Amanda Digweed**
Plastered
Mixed media artist's book
2019
- Amanda Digweed**
Forage
Coptic bound book
2019
- Davina Else**
Birds of Paradise
Mixed media artist's book
2019
- Davina Else**
Flying fishes
Miniature book
2019
- Davina Else**
Clowning around (Vol 1)
Miniature book
2019
- Davina Else**
Clowning around (Vol 2)
Miniature book
2019
- Rora Elwell**
B is for...
Zine
2019
- Rora Elwell**
How to live
Concertina book
2019
- Rora Elwell**
All gone home
Concertina book
2019
- Rora Elwell**
Just leave me alone
Coptic bound book
2019
- Cindy Giles**
Words
Mixed media book
(timber coasters, acrylic and printed words)
2019
- Cindy Giles**
From Mayhem to Mellow
Concertina book
2019
- Cindy Giles**
Moments in Colour
Mixed media book
(sprayed calico, stitched, collage and acrylic on canvas)
2019
- Cindy Giles**
Circular Circles
Coptic bound book
2019

Cindy Giles
Everything we do matters
Altered book
2019

Sonia Jane
Dream Catcher
Circular artist's book
2019

Sonia Jane
Misprinted
Traditionally bound
artist's book
2019

Sonia Jane
Offprinted
Traditionally bound
artist's book
2019

Sonia Jane
*A Temporary Cure for
Glandular Fever*
Concertina book
2019

Sonia Jane
*The Nonsensical
Ambitions of a Tenacious
Begetter*
Coptic bound book
2019

Sonia Jane
Just Playing
Concertina book
2019

Sonia Jane
Getting to know me
Stab bound book
2019

Sonia Jane
Senses
Concertina book series (5
miniature books)
2019

Sonia Jane
Up in the Air
Stab bound book
2019

Sonia Jane
Chromatic Ophidian
Coptic bound snake book
2019

Sonia Jane
Fresh Batch
Miniature sculptural
concertina books
2019

Sonia Jane
Scribbles on Scraps
Stab bound book
2019

Sonia Jane
Anti-Social Social Club
Zine
2019

Rhi Johnson
Looking Glass
Traditionally bound
artist's book
2019

Rhi Johnson
Digestion
Coptic bound book
2019

Rhi Johnson
A Biological History
Coptic bound book
2019

Rhi Johnson
*Feed the hand that bites
you*
Concertina book
2019

Rhi Johnson
Side view
Concertina book
2019

Anita Mangakahia
Bridport Magnolia
Concertina book
2019

Anita Mangakahia
Forest Floor
Concertina book
2019

Anita Mangakahia
Intimate Detail
Traditionally bound
artist's book
2019

Anita Mangakahia
Eco Garden
Boxed book
2019

**Stephen Spurrier & John
Teschendorff**
*387 Reflections on
Boredom*
Mixed media
2012

Stephen Spurrier & Jan Davis
Vegetable Poem #1
Digital print
2001

Stephen Spurrier & Ron McBurnie
I walked with a human
Digital prints with hand set wooden type
2007

Stephen Spurrier & Catherine Parker
Pathways and Temples
Mixed media concertina book
2006

Stephen Spurrier
Strangers in the Garden
Hand finished digital prints: Boxed set of 5 books
2014

Stephen Spurrier
B is for Barcelona
Vertically unfolding concertina book
2002

Stephen Spurrier
A Very Narrow Book
Digital prints
2017

Linsey Walker
I don't know where my towel is (zine)
Zine
2019

Linsey Walker
I don't know where my towel is
Traditionally bound artist's book
2019

Linsey Walker
Boldly Go
Traditionally bound artist's book
2019

Linsey Walker
Pinkest Pink Pineapples and other Florescent Fruits of Fancy
Concertina book
2018

Rora Elwell, Davina Else & Georgia Breeden
The Threeway Book
Coptic bound book
2019

