



BEHIND THE  
BANANA CURTAIN





## "BEHIND THE BANANA CURTAIN"

"Behind the Banana Curtain" is a show of work by five artists, Nora Anson, Jim Brodie, Joe Furlonger, Robert Mercer and David Paulson. The first four artists are living and working in Brisbane and David Paulson is currently a candidate for the Master of Fine Arts Degree at the University of Tasmania.

When these artists were invited to show their work it was stipulated that they be works on paper. This was the result of the sometimes apparent and, we believe, incorrect assumption that works on paper are not 'real art'. Drawings have been considered in the past a stepping stone to bigger and better things. Print-making and photography have had a long and bitter struggle to be accepted as art, and paintings on paper have created great debate in regard to their categorisation - 'paintings' or 'drawings'. Not only have these activities been underrated but also the support on which they are executed.

Paper is a common material which has always been readily available and widely used and has become relatively 'valueless' due to this over-exposure. There are many kinds of paper with individual characteristics suitable for very particular uses. As Jim Brodie says:

"Since I produce nothing but works on paper whether prints, drawings or paintings, it is my entire artistic endeavour. Why paper? It is an enjoyable adaptable support which lends itself to mixed media and is portable."

Whilst David Paulson comments:

"I work on/with paper basically because it is readily available (in various states) but mainly because it responds to my will. Other than its aesthetic or intrinsic value, paper is a perfect support for a great many mediums and approaches which belie its comparatively economical value."

Robert Mercer, whose major area of expression is photography, also works extensively with drawings. Like Brodie, Mercer works exclusively on paper. Joe Furlonger, Nora Anson and David Paulson all work on canvas as well, but their works on paper are as important as those executed on canvas or board. The strength and lasting quality of paper are two of the attractions for these and other artists.

These five artists work figuratively and all employ an expressive and bold use of colour. An artist is influenced by his or her surroundings whether consciously or unconsciously, and the strong light in Queensland is at least partly responsible for the vivid use of colour seen in the work of many artists throughout the state.

Jim Brodie, who is a Canadian, lived in Brisbane for a year from 1978-1979. While in Brisbane the colours he used in his work changed dramatically. The works he had executed in Canada seemed faded in comparison. He returned to Canada for three years and has

now migrated back to Brisbane. Again, when comparing the work he did in Canada in those three years and the work he has produced in his year in Brisbane, there is an increased intensity and variation in the colours he uses.

Joe Furlonger and David Paulson both make extensive use of rich colour and the play between those colours is a major strength of their work. Furlonger is influenced by Jon Molvig who was one of the first generation of expressionist painters in Queensland during the sixties. Molvig's 'Guru' quality and the strength of his work has given him the reputation of being one of the most powerful influences on Queensland art and artists to date.

Nora Anson's two drawings 'Conversations with Lucrezia Panciatichi' 1 and 2, display vibrant hues and the influence of the distinctive 'Queensland colour'.

Asking these five artists from Brisbane to show their work in Hobart, is an attempt to combat many criticisms based on ignorance. Provincialism and parochialism, are not valid criteria for evaluating the visual arts.

There must be a breakdown of provincial attitudes, a dissipation of class structures within 'art society' and a willingness to look seriously at art and its problems. This is the only way Australian art will develop a strength which will be recognised nationally and internationally.

In mounting this exhibition we are hoping to present to the public the laudable qualities of these artists and of work on paper. Hopefully it will not be seen as a token gesture due to its lack of proportion. Ideally, it should be accepted as an effort to inform the community, (general and artistic), of the need for greater interaction, co-operation and support for and of each other; that is, accepting the cultural and geographical differences of our various environs and the effect of those differences on the work produced within. To do this without creating segregation and further 'art hierarchies' is the aim of this exhibition.

Miriam Bartolini





#### NORA-ANNE ANSON

Born: Belgium 1948.  
Currently living and working in Brisbane.

#### Studied

Painting — National Art School, Paris  
Printmaking — S.W. Hayter, Atelier 17, Paris  
Paul Franck Graphic Workshop  
Frans Masereel Lithographic Centre, Belgium

Works in Etching and Lithography

#### Individual Exhibitions

- 1972 Paintings — Fondation Belge Biermans Laporte, Paris  
International House of Cite Universitaire, Paris
- 1975 Macquarie Galleries, Sydney (etchings, drawings)
- 1976 Victor Mace Gallery, Brisbane (etchings, drawings, monoprints, lithographs)
- 1978 Victor Mace Gallery, Brisbane (etchings, drawings, monoprints, lithographs)
- 1978 Macquarie Galleries, Sydney (etchings, drawings)
- 1981 Queensland College of Art Gallery

#### Group Exhibitions

- 1975 Collector's Choice (Von Bertouch, Newcastle)
- 1976 Macquarie Galleries
- 1978 Print Council of Australia Exhibition
- 1979 Brisbane City Hall
- 1979 Fifteen Australian Printmakers, Queensland Arts Council
- 1980 Awarded Drawing Prize, Texas, Queensland
- 1980 Printmaking Prize, Stanthorpe, Queensland

#### Collections

Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris  
Plantin and Moretus Cabinet Des Estampes, Antwerp  
Frans Masereel Centre  
Belgian State Collection  
City Hall, Brisbane  
Gold Coast City Gallery, Queensland

#### Bibliography

'Art and Australia' Volume 12, Number 2, 1975  
Print Council of Australia: Directory of Australian Printmakers, 1982, 'Model 1', 1979, Lithograph (15), 65 x 41cm, black and white

#### STATEMENT

*I enjoy the freedom and the power that dreams sometimes can give me momentarily. But a person has no control over what or when to dream. An artist has that control — and freedom to confront time, memory, future, past.*

*For me a painting, (picture), has to offer something more powerful than the mere recording of surrounding or the skill of producing intricate patterns. There is the old magical language in the "making of a picture", a power that will never disappear, an involvement that will fascinate artists to produce these two-dimensional pictures — in a world of passing fashions the same magical power that made man paint on cave walls long before "civilisation began".*



#### JIM BRODIE

Born: March 17, 1946, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada  
Currently living and working in Brisbane

#### Studied:

Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada,  
Bachelor of Fine Arts  
School of Visual Arts, Sheridan College, Oakville, Ontario, Canada, Post Graduate Year  
Central Washington State University, Ellensburg, Washington, U.S.A., Master of Arts

#### Individual Exhibitions

- 1970 Prints and Drawings: Simon Frazer University, Barnaby, B.C. Canada
- 1971 Prints and Drawings: Main Gallery, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- 1972 Prints: Richview Library: Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
Powell Gallery, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada  
Quebec Love: Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- 1974 Prints and Drawings: Powell Gallery, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- 1975 Drawings: Mount Royal College Gallery, Ellensburg, Washington, U.S.A.
- 1976 Rat Free Alberta: C.W.S.H. Gallery, Ellensburg, Washington, U.S.A.
- 1977 Prints: The Queensland College of Art, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia  
Prints and Drawings: Otoce Gallery, Ellensburg, Washington, U.S.A.  
Paper Work I: The University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- 1978 Prints: R.M.I.T. Gallery, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
- 1979 Paper Work II: Confederation Art Centre, Charlottown, P.E.I. Canada  
Indians: The Public Gallery, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada  
Prints and Drawings: The Queensland College of Art, Brisbane, Qld.
- 1981 Prints and Drawings: The Powell Gallery, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- 1982 Recent Work: Gallery Pascal, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- 1983 Works on Paper: The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

#### Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1971- Has participated in over 100 group exhibitions in Austral/Asia, Europe and North America
- 1973, 75 The Yugoslavian Biennale
- 1974 Polish Biennale
- 1974, 76 Italian Biennale
- 1976, 77 German Biennale
- 1978 Tel Aviv Art Fair
- 1981 Realism Structure and Illusion
- 1980, 81 The Cleveland (UK) Drawing Biennale
- 1982 The Fremantle Print Annual

#### Permanent Collections

Alberta Art Foundation  
Alberta College of Art  
Art Bank (Canada Council)  
Art Gallery of Hamilton  
Art Gallery of Ontario  
Bell Table Arts Centre  
California College of Arts and Crafts

Central Washington State University  
City of Hamilton  
Cleveland State University  
Concordia University  
Confederation Art Centre  
Energy Conservation Board  
Government of Alberta  
Grant McEwan College  
Guarranty Trust  
National Gallery of Canada  
Open Studio Archives  
Queensland College of Art  
Rancho Realty  
Shell Resources (Canada)  
Temple University  
Turner Realty  
Visa International  
West Winds Gallery  
The Zucker Foundation

#### STATEMENT

*I have always preferred the northern european, rather than the mediterranean approach to the visual arts. The latter assumes that, 'man is the sum of all things', and that the world is explicable in terms of acute rational observation. The former assumes that man is not the sum of all things and that our observation is inherently imperfect or that the inexplicable is the rationale. Essentially the artist functions in terms of an absolute faith in his world view. In my case my world view assumes not everything can be observed and assimilated intellectually; there is always the element of the unexplained or the irrational.*

*Consider the following, Australians participate in a young, western european society which inhabits the oldest landscape on earth, a society which is hedonistic, secular, and an anomaly even in european terms: one language, one culture, one country, one continent. Such a society may be said to be in a state of flux, of coming to terms with itself, its immediate physical locale, and its geographical isolation from its european and American models. Australia is the lucky country, but perhaps the following should be borne in mind:*

*"Progressivist historians do not write much about the losers in history because belief in progress often implies the base assumption that to lose is to have failed to grasp the evolving truth. But the losers existed and they are well worth reading, now that we see what kind of society the winners have made."*

*George Grant: 'Technology and Empire'*



#### JOE FURLONGER

Born: Cairns, North Queensland, 1952.  
Currently living and working in Brisbane.

#### Studied

- 1973-76 Associate Diploma Fine Art, Brisbane College of Art
- 1976-78 Diploma of Fine Art, Alexander Mackie C.A.E.



### Individual Exhibitions

1982 Community Arts Centre, Brisbane

### Group Exhibitions

- 1976 "Brisbane Painters Show", Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane  
1978 Sydney Gallery Group Show, Paddington, Sydney  
1979 Sydney Gallery Group Show, Paddington, Sydney  
1979 Visual Arts Board Grant for Painters  
1982 "Roar Studios", Fitzroy, Melbourne

### Collections

Innisfail City Council  
Maryborough Purchase  
Gold Coast City Council

### STATEMENT

*I have been working towards a personal calligraphy to depict human relations through formal modification of an image, (the distorted figure). This is an attempt to restore sympathy in a dialogue with the viewer, using simple devices such as a shallow pictorial space, continually repeated poses and frontality.*

Brushmark/drawing is my vehicle of expression because of the immediacy; however I have been unable to (nor want to), eliminate 'image' in this process. In my paintings I endeavour to retain unpredictability through drawing in a fluid oil medium.

*In Europe in 1980-1981 I saw many key shows of neo-expressionist paintings describing the re-emergence of the figure, and was very impressed but I see my influences being based on local artists such as Ian Fairweather and Jon Molvig and the strong figurative influence Brisbane has always retained.*



### ROBERT MERCER

Born: 1949 in North Ireland and migrated to Melbourne in 1959

### Studied

1969-70 Fine Art — Preston Technical School  
1971-72 Diploma in Art and Design — Prahan College of Advanced Education

Currently living and working in Brisbane

### Exhibitions

- 1981 'Independent Artists', AMP Building, Melbourne  
1982 'Independent Artists', AMP Building, Melbourne  
1982 'A Photographer's Choice', Ray Hughes Gallery and Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education  
1983 'Group Show' (Drawing), Noosa Art Gallery and Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education

### Represented

- 1982 Pederson Drawing Prize, Queensland Art Gallery  
1982 Lady Fairfax Photographic Prize, New South Wales Art Gallery



### DAVID PAULSON

Born: December 2nd, 1944, Leeds, England

### Studied

Diploma Fine Art, East Sydney Technical College  
Taught Primary, Secondary Art  
Taught Adult Education Art  
Taught Painting/Drawing BC of Art  
Taught numerous workshops and seminars for Queensland Arts Council  
Currently working towards the Master of Fine Arts Degree, Tasmanian School of Art, University of Tasmania

### STATEMENT

*My work is basically the result of my concern for the human condition (the self) my preoccupation with psychological and philosophical attitudes which influence 'our' existence. I make images, sometimes rhetorical, sometimes anecdotal, through which I try to crystallise the ironies of everyday life — perhaps cynical and not without humour, but always I hope I externalise my own anxieties intelligently.*

### LIST OF WORKS

#### Nora-Anne Anson

1. *Conversations with Lucrezia Panciatichi 1*  
Drawing — gouache and pastel crayons  
71cm x 110cm
2. *Conversations with Lucrezia Panciatichi 2*  
Drawing — gouache and pastel crayons  
71cm x 110cm

#### Jim Brodie

3. *Flinders Street Station*  
Etching and screenprint

4. *Going Troppo 2*  
Screenprint  
75cm x 52.5cm
5. *Some Girls Triptych*  
Screenprint  
38cm x 35.5cm (individual)  
38cm x 106.5cm (overall)

#### Joe Furlonger

6. *Three Head Studies*  
Oil on paper  
98cm x 64cm
7. Oil on paper  
98cm x 64cm
8. 84cm x 57cm

#### Robert Mercer

9. *Circus*, Brisbane 1982  
Black and white photography  
29cm x 42cm

10. *Swimmers*, Parsley Bay, 1982  
Black and white photography  
29cm x 42cm
11. *Sideshow*, Brisbane 1981  
Black and white photography  
29cm x 42cm
12. *Baths - St. Kilda Beach*, Melbourne 1982  
Black and white photography  
29cm x 42cm

#### David Paulson

13. *Drawing 1*  
Mixed Media  
75cm x 100cm
14. *Drawing 2*  
Mixed Media  
75cm x 100cm
15. *Drawing 3*  
Mixed Media  
75cm x 100cm

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