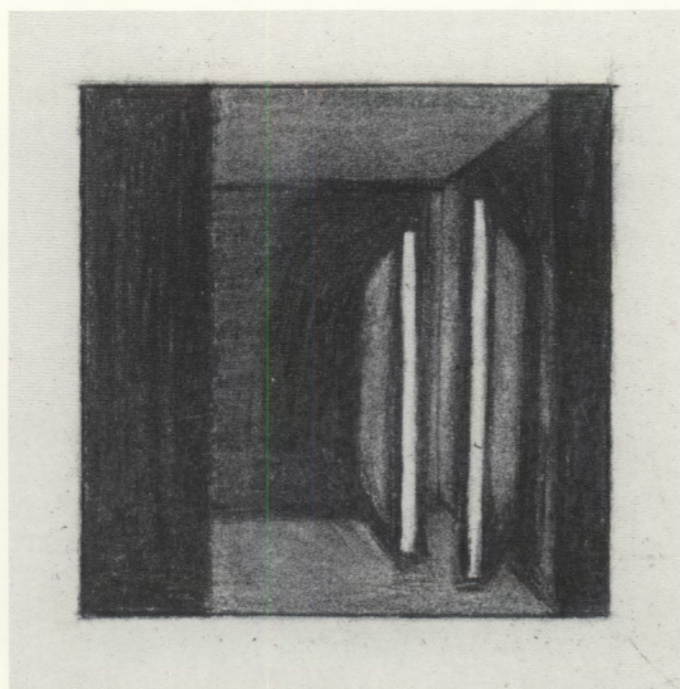

I N T E R I O R S



Gregor Bell, Geoff Kleem, Ted Riggs, Derek
Smith, Alex Wanders and Geoff Weary

Plimsoll Gallery — Centre for the Arts — Victoria Dock — Hobart

Interiors

Works By

Gregor Bell

Geoff Kleem

Ted Riggs

Derek Smith

Alex Wanders

Geoff Weary

Curated by Geoff Parr

Plimsoll Gallery, Centre for the Arts

Hunter Street, Victoria Dock Hobart

May 18 — June 10 1990

Interiors

The concept for the show is enmeshed in some strands of thought which seek to confer upon certain artefacts a presence of their own; which postulate a theory to the effect that artefacts can command a space; which accord some artefacts an ambience, a circumfusion of object to surroundings. As an exhibition then, 'Interiors' poses the questions 'can works of art exert an influence on their immediate locale? – Can we, the audience, intercept an eidolon in these rooms?'

We, as well as all the fellows of our species on this planet, surround ourselves with things. With objects from the natural world adorning window boxes and table tops and objects of manufacture filling the spaces that determine our interior environments, we are creatures imbued with an apparent and seemingly insatiable need for material company.

Interiors is an exhibition exploring the relationships that arise between viewer and object and between the object and the space in which it resides. Hence, the central interior space of the gallery is divisible into a network of distinct and separable interior components, each an environment housing work by a different artist, each representative of a different medium; painting, photography, video, ceramics, installation, sculpture.

In tribal cultures the artefact has no existence apart from some implication of a ceremonial or ritual context. Along with Michelangelo and other artists of the west, the tribal artist has always perceived the essence of the form, the core alive within the raw matter. Without this belief in the life of the material, in the vitality of the object to be worked, the ritual intention would be doomed to failure. The object would have no meaning, no purpose. The maker, the shaper engages in a dialogue with the matter to be transformed and so the finished piece serves the needs of both the artist and the spirit of the object to be realized.

To fill this role it was necessary to see the artefact as existing outside routine experience and its surface was rearranged to coincide with this requirement. In the making, characteristics of the original material were altered to serve a new purpose born in the vision of the maker. It is at this juncture between the material and the spiritual worlds, between the realms of the apparent and the perceived, that the artist assumes the role of shaman, as masterful intermediary between the common and the extraordinary.

The transformation from primary matter to an object accessing a spiritual transcendence involved a commitment to the highest quality of visual representation. The artist must do honour to the material as well as to the spirits he wishes to summon and which the object was designed to house. It should be appreciated then that these partnerships of artist and artefact, artefact and audience, were reciprocating phenomena. As artist the maker was shaped to an extent by what he or she made. As reader the audience elaborated upon the intended meaning and thereby partnered the author in enhancing the value of the object. It was by these interactions that ritual evolved to fill out the description of culture. Not only were these practices at the very root of culture, they were and are the shrines, talismans of their culture.

The positioning of the artefact within a normative environment yet existing beyond normal immediate experience is graphically illustrated in the interiors constructed by Flemish artists of the early Northern Renaissance.

Within these works, the Holy Family is convincingly viewed as the (then contemporary) residents of 15th c Tournai or Bruges; the occupants of a very domestic and very ordinary middle class interior now, by circumstance, transformed into a setting for miracles. Within the confines of this magical interior, the objects of ordinary existence are rendered with a brilliant lustre, enriched by the nature of the events that surround them. This is a world where everything mundane is seen anew, reassessed and invested with an underlying meaning and purpose, where every ordinary plant, architectural detail, carpenter's tool or piece of furniture is viewed along St. Thomas Aquinas as "corporeal metaphors of things spiritual".

In these warm comfortable and familiar environments each object is treated lovingly, with reverence and compassion. Each thing records tangible evidence of the creative force which infuses every particle of existence, and all is embraced in a divine radiance. This sanctification of the visible world has been replaced by the secularization of our material environment revealing changes not only in our perception of the object but in patronage for the artist as well. In the closing chapters of modernism, the art world itself emerged as the patron of art and thereby allowed the work to be anything and everything just so long as it resided within an art house. The room itself was placed in the position of validating the object of transforming it into art. It would be mistaken however to assume that such an art is less of a cultural indicator, less a talisman than its antecedents.

Changing patrons, changing purposes, the diversity of contemporary art practice, may not have excluded ritual nor robbed the artifact of the potential to extrude presence, to create ambience, to possess authority, to command a space. Is this the test for 'Interiors'? Does the question today concern the ability of the viewer – whose wonderment has been all but expunged by an overload of momentary marvels – to intercept the signal? Does the question concern the ability of the artist – now marginalised by a gathering host of consumer preoccupations – to go beyond an experience of the superficial? Certainly in 'Interiors' the concept underpinning the show will itself be on trial.

Acknowledgement must be made of the partnership which launched Interiors: an idea brought to fruition only with close collaboration between artists and curators. The University Art Exhibitions Committee wishes to express its gratitude to those artists who have been prepared to involve themselves in the concept and work with curators in selecting and at times making appropriate work for Interiors.

Geoff Parr

Fred Levine

Solo Exhibitions

- 1986 'Works in Tin' – Chameleon Gallery, Hobart
1986 'It's only a Scratch' – Cockatoo Gallery, Launceston

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1981 'Every Home Should have one' – Tasmanian School of Art Gallery
1983 'Chameleon Performance/Video Event' – Backspace Theatre Royal
'Salamanca Festival Exhibition' – Long Gallery, Hobart
1984 'Tower Show' – Chameleon Gallery, Hobart
'Scanlight' – National Video Makers Collective, A.C.P., Sydney
1985 'Chameleon Members Show' – Chameleon Gallery, Hobart
1987 'Fabrications' – National Touring Survey Show of Tasmanian Contemporary Art
1988 'Landfall' – Chameleon Gallery, Hobart
– Despard Street Gallery, Hobart
1989 'Tasmanian Contemporary Sculpture 1989' – Cockatoo Inc.
'Small Works' – Cockatoo Inc. and nationally touring through N.E.T.S.

Commissions

- 1984 'Cabaret Bar' – Backspace Theatre Royal
1988 Furniture – Scripsi Bookshop, Hobart
Bar Stools – Rockerfellers Cocktail Bar, Hobart
Garden Furniture – Bloomesbury Garden and Interiors, Hobart
Furniture and Fittings – Sputnik Hairdressing Salon, Hobart
1989 Extensive interior modifications – Avenue Nightclub, Hobart
Wall Panels – Warrane Technical College Cafeteria
Numerous private, domestic commissions

“The Soft Fleshy Hub of Life”

Must somehow rumble on
Station to station
Breadboard to toaster
Slippers to shower to shoes

Find a reason
To be a person
Curb your concern
Sell your sleep

Damn the drunkard
Suck the substance
Lose yourself again
Look out!

Open the book
Find your place
Live a life
Like yourself

Shake a habit
Light a fire
Get dressed
Walk the line

Call the shots
Take no shit
Fear not
Cut the noose

Take your time
Know when to run
Knot your tie
Pat the cat

Lance the boil
Cleanse the system
Fly your flag
Shift your focus

Selected Exhibitions

- 1990 'Tokyo Connection' – Heineken Village Gallery, Tokyo
'Interiors' – Plimsoll Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart
Artspace Visual Art Centre, Sydney
- 1989 'Technika' Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra, ACT
Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney
'Making Photographs' – Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 1988 'Fortune' – Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney
Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane
Experimental Art Foundation., Adelaide
- 1987 'Fortune' – George Patton Gallery, University of Melbourne, Melbourne
- 1986 'Ce Mal de la Infini' – C.A.S. Gallery, Adelaide
'Union Street' – Brisbane C.A.E. Gallery, Brisbane
'Union Street' – George Patton Gallery, University of Melbourne
untitled – Union Street Gallery, Sydney
'Suspending Belief' – Observatory Gallery, Brisbane
- 1985 'Curators Choice' – Developed Image Gallery, Adelaide
'After the Artefact' – Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney
'After the Artefact' – Newcastle Regional Gallery, Newcastle
'Killing Time' – Mori Gallery, Sydney
- 1984 'Time Present – Time Past' – Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney
Parts 1 & 2
'Lady Fairfax Photography Award' – Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 1984 'After the Artefact' – Wollongong Regional Gallery, Wollongong
'Zone XII' – Art Unit Gallery, Sydney
(untitled) – Images Gallery, Sydney
- 1983 'Photographs and Proposals for Larger Works' – Images Images Gallery, Sydney
- 1982 'Photographic Work' – Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney

title: The Work Un Made

medium: Installation, Wood, Fluoro Light
Essence

The Fears, sometimes I have moments of grandeur, when it works, when you know its right. At best. That's when I'm scared, that's when I'm frightened. One can always construct meaning for the first mark and every subsequent innuendo, but it is knowing when to stop, that point of conclusion, culmination. How to stand three pieces of wood in a corner and know ... when to walk away. To know how to stack ... three pieces of wood in a corner and walk away.

English by birth and professionally trained in English Colleges of Art, Derek Smith emigrated to Australia in 1956 and taught for sixteen years, mainly at the National Art School in Sydney.

- 1973 Founder/Director of the Royal Doulton Studio Pottery, Sydney.
- 1976 Established Blackfriars Pottery in Sydney and subsequently Blackfriars Gallery and Glebe Glass Studio.
- 1983 Moved to Tasmania where he now works at Oakwood Pottery and Gallery, Mangalore for his 1840's Georgian sandstone country house.

Awards

Esso Ceramic Prize; Lindemans Wines Prize; Potters Society Prize; Bendigo Award; Caltex Award; Gold Medal, International Competition of Contemporary Ceramics, Faenza Italy; Warringah Art Prize; Mayfair Ceramic Award; Fletcher Brownbuilt Ceramic Award of Merit; Minister's Award for Excellence (Tasmania).

Represented

Australian National Gallery; all State Public Galleries; Powerhouse Museum; Academy of Science; Faenza Museum of Ceramics, Italy; many regional galleries, local government and university collections.

Recent Solo Exhibitions

- 1986 Melbourne – Craft Centre.
- 1987 Tasmania – Handmark Gallery; Freeman Gallery, Saddlers Court Gallery, Design Centre of Tasmania
- 1988 Tasmania – Sullivans Cove Gallery
 Canberra – Beaver Gallery
 Sydney – Macquarie Galleries

Born 1960, Hobart – Lives in Hobart

Studies

1978 – 81 Bachelor of Fine Arts (Visual Arts Teaching), University of Tasmania

1987 – 88 Master of Fine Arts, University of Tasmania

Exhibitions

1981 Tasmanian School of Art Graduate Exhibition

1984 Burnie Technical College, Art Department Student Exhibition

Drawing Exhibition, Studio Gallery – Burnie

1987 Drawing: Work by students from the Tasmanian School of Art –

Centre for the Arts Gallery, University of Tasmania

1988 M.F.A. Graduate Exhibition –

Centre for the Arts Gallery, University of Tasmania

1989 'Genius Loci' Contemporary Tasmanian Painting Exhibition –

Centre for the Arts Gallery, University of Tasmania

R.M.I.T. Gallery, Melbourne

Burnie Regional Gallery, Tasmania

1990 'Unlit Voices' –

Devonport Gallery and Arts Centre, Tasmania.

Collections

University of Tasmania

Devonport Gallery and Arts Centre

Private Collections

Group Exhibitions

- 1972 National Mutual Prize, Australian National University, Canberra
- 1973 ANU Exhibition – Australian National University, Canberra
- 1974 ANU Exhibition – Australian National University, Canberra
- 1978 Graduate Exhibition – Alexander Mackie C.A.E.
- 1979 'European Dialogue', Third Biennale of Sydney – Film Section
- 1980 Sydney Film Festival Forum Screening
- 1982 'Project For the Inner West' – Mori Gallery Sydney
- 1982 'Possession Vacant' – Sydney Filmmakers Cooperative
- 1983 'The Super-8 Phenomenon' – Chauvel Cinema, Sydney
- 1983 'New Sydney Video' – Metro Television, Sydney
- 1984 'Soft Attack' – Artspace, Curator Denis Mitzi
- 'Pictures for Cities' – Roundhouse Gallery, University of NSW and
Manly Regional Gallery, Curator: Geoff Weary
- The Second Super-8 Festival – Chauvel Cinema, Sydney
- 1985 'Pictures for Cities' – Artspace
- 'Rushes' – Union Street Gallery, Curator: Ross Gibson
- 'Close Remarks' – Artspace, Curator: Gary Sangster
- ANZART Auckland Regional Gallery, New Zealand
- Fringe Arts Festival – Melbourne, Curator; John Flaus
- Perspecta Art Gallery of NSW, Film Section
- 'Super-8 Plus' – Artspace, Curator: Janet Burchill
- 'Design for Living' – Artspace, Curator: Ted Colless
- 1986 'Follow the Sun' – U.C.L.A. Film Archives, Los Angeles
- Film Arts Foundation – Cambridge Multicultural Arts Centre, Boston
- 7th Montreal International Super-8 Film Festival, Curator: Mark Titmarch
- 'Super-8 Film Forum' – Sydney Film Festival
- 'Traumraum Strasse, Berlin' – Chauvel Cinema, Sydney
- Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, Curators: Geoff Weary, Gary Warner
- 'Kino Kapers' – Australian National Gallery, Curator: Michael Desmond
- 1987 'Feeding the 1992 Field' – Chauvel Cinema, Sydney
- Curators: Geoff Weary, Gary Warner
- 'Border Crossings' – MIMA Melbourne
- 'The I.D. Show' – University of Tasmania, Hobart, Curator: Geoff Parr
- 'Fortune' – George Patton Gallery, Melbourne, Artist Curated
- Melbourne Film Festival, Melbourne, Experimental Category
- Perspecta, Art Gallery of NSW, Film Section
- 1988 'Propositions' – Artspace, Curator: Gary Sangster
- 'Fortune' – The Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney
- The Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane
- The Experimental Art Foundation Adelaide, Artist Curated

'Failure to Materialize' – Australian Centre for Photography
'Art From Another Space' – Artspace, Curator: Sally Caucaud
'Fiesa, The First Electronic Arts Symposium' – Utrecht, Holland
'The Third Australian Video Festival' – Chauvel Cinema, Sydney
'Australian Independent Film' – Institute of Contemporary Art London,
Curator: Kate Leyes

1989 Perspecta Art Gallery of NSW, Curator: Tony Bond
The Elusive Sign – AFI Cinema, Glasshouse Cinema, Melbourne
Contemporary Arts Centre, Adelaide
Fukui Video Biennale – Fukui, Japan, Curator: Sally Caucaud
Arts Electronica Video Festival – Linz, Austria, Curator: Sally Caucaud
Edinburgh Video Festival Edinburgh, Scotland, Curator: Brian Langer
Australian Video Art – New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York USA,
Curator: Sally Caucaud

Solo Exhibitions

1986 'The West/Im Westen' – Artspace
1987 'Complexity and Contradiction at the Sushi Bar' – Union Street Gallery, Sydney
1988 'Roman Portraits' (Nostalgia for the Front) – Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery
1989 'Roman Portraits' (Threshold) – Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney
'Roman Portraits' (Antiquity) – Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney
Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra.

Film and Video Production

1977 'Blue'. Super-8 Twin Projection. 30 mins
1978 'Quite a long Development' 16mm Col. Sound 20 mins
1982 'Possession Vacant' Video Col. Sound 30 mins
1982 'Pictures for Cities' Super-8 Col. Sound 12 mins
1983 'La Serra, The Evening' Super-8 Col. Sound 17mins
1984 'On-Site' Video, Col. Sound 30 mins
1984 'Young Guy, Young Gal' Super-8 Col, Sound 10mins
1985 'Venezuela' Super-8 B & W Sound 15mins
1985 'The West/Im Westen'. Super-8 Col/B&W, Sound 58mins
1986 'Orient Express' Super-8 Col, Sound 10mins
1987 'Anxiety of Influence' Video, Col, Sound 17mins
1988 'Roman Portraits' (Nostalgia For the Front) Video 10mins
1988 'Failure to Materialize' Video, Col. Sound 12 mins
1989 'Roman Portraits' (Antiquity) Col, Silent 10mins
1989 'Falling For You/Tokyo' (in collaboration with Ruby Davies)
Video, Col, Sound 3mins

Acknowledgements

The Curator and the Art Exhibition Committee would like to thank Pat Brassington, Leigh Hobba and Sean Kelly for their assistance in preparing this exhibition and the participating artists for accepting the curator's invitation.

The University Art Exhibitions Committee's programme is greatly facilitated by the assistance of The Visual Arts and Crafts Board of the Australia Council and the Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board.

Catalogue Cover Drawing – Sharyn Woods

Poster Design – Sharyn Woods

Poster Printing – Ink Pot Studios

Typesetting and Layout – Crystal Graphics

Catalogue Printing – Focal Printing

Curator – Geoff Parr

Catalogue Essay – Geoff Parr, Fred Levine

Catalogue published by the University of Tasmania, May 1990.

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ISBN No. 0-85901-457-6