

SPACE & PLACE

QFP5 COMPETITION



Queensland
Centre for
Photography

Queensland Festival of Photography

A sense of place is a universal human constant linked to notions of belonging, be it in an effort to identify oneself through nationality, race, lifestyle, beliefs, family, domesticity or time. Or location, of course. Some places are so familiar to us that we can describe them in minute detail and thinking about them conjures strong memories and emotions.

And how to articulate space? Space, in an expensive, chest-beating, nation-boosting ideal of 'conquest' in the gravity-defying exploration of the great unknown? Is it reflecting upon the confines of domesticity, or the majesty of the vastness of nature? Designated public areas are often the most immediate spaces/places we experience, be it a park, beach or mountain walk. When the open spaces of any given city are enclosed by the structures of construction and progress, it should come as no surprise that many images of places considered open and free are noticeably delineated by physical and psychological human constructs.

Many people across the modern world experience public spaces within such defined, designated parameters. Some work brilliantly, such as New York's Central Park, which is possibly the most valuable tract of land on the planet; on a much more modest scale, Tuan Jie Hu Park in Beijing also functions incredibly well for the people it serves (and it has a waterpark too!) Other planned public spaces such as our own recently rebuilt King George Square are little more than awkward thoroughfares.

The success of designed public spaces depends upon appropriate composition, scale, balance and choice of materials. Artworks have similar requirements, and indeed the composition of any work of art is crucial. It is a characteristic that somehow seems magnified by the immediacy of photography: if an image doesn't possess a visual balance it is reduced to a snapshot. What rings true throughout the photographs in this exhibition is how much we live in mediated environments, from kitchens to national parks; and in the city and the bush. For a wide-open country with a small population we have a remarkable volume of geometry in our daily lives.

Space and place is an interesting and open theme to which our entrants responded with creativity aplomb. From almost 200 entries, it was impressive to see the strength, depth and variety of photographic art being created in Australia. The selection process was lengthy and we congratulate the 20 finalists in the 2014 Queensland Festival of Photography competition, and thank all entrants for their support of the QCP.

SPACE & PLACE

QFP5 Space & Place Judging Panel:

Gordon Craig
Samantha Littley
Maurice Ortega

Linda Wachtel *Untitled #1* 2013, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



David Jo Bradley *Post* 2010, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.





Katrin Koenning *Chiavari Beach Scene #1* 2013,
Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Chris Round *No Fun Today* 2011,
Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Vanessa Bertagnole #2 From *Water Tank Series* 2012, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Philip Robertson *Winter Scene* 2013, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Clockwise:

Murray Watson *Axis porcinus, Hog Deer - Wilsons Promontory National Park, VIC* 2013, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.

Dianne Wells *Untitled (Wollert)* 2011, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.

Christine Ko *Pier* 2011, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.





Kate Bernauer *Field* 2013, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.

Amy McGregor *Untitled #2* 2010, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Chris Bowes *Beacon* 2013,
Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Alithea Josaphine *Home Movies In The Kitchen* 2012,
Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.





Nikki Hopf *Tipping Point* 2013, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Jaala Alex *Untitled* 2013, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Emma Perry *Blank Billboard* 2013,
Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Beverley Veasey *Habitat #12* 2012,
Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Keith Carey *Untitled* 2013, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Mana Salsali *Prague* 2010, Inkjet print, courtesy of the artist.



Gael Newton

Senior Curator, Photography, National Gallery of Australia

.....

Where did you complete your art education and how did it lead in to a career in the arts?

Started in Sydney University Arts '69, and finished in Auckland University '72. I was in the first intake of the Power Department of Fine Art students in 1969. In second year I found I was making a lot of art at home, wondered if I should have gone to art school. So I cross credited to Elam Art School part of Auckland University as they had a BFA, while Australia only had DFA (diploma fine arts) and I thought the diploma would be useless unless you were really successful as an artist. Photography was mandatory in

first year at Elam and I liked the department staff. I knew I was a crap artist within a few weeks but loved the art school, it was as close to the Bauhaus zeitgeist as you'd get in the late 20th century.

We had to continue with art history at the university under the BFA and I got more involved with that aspect. I graduated 1974, enrolled for a Masters and practised for a bit as a photographer (hilarious failure), came to Sydney for a wedding and hoped to get a job at the new Australian Centre for Photography, never went back to NZ as old Sydney Uni people kept getting me jobs including at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in the education office. I sort of knew what a curator was but didn't know it was a career. Anne Kirker had been at the Auckland Library and let students look at the old prints one afternoon a week as I recall (it would never happen now).

Once in the door at AGNSW I knew immediately that the art museum curatorship was perfect for me, it was art history plus art works and artists. Academia didn't appeal, it didn't seem to have enough actual contact with art works or artists.

What initially interested you in photography and how did you decide to specialise in the medium?

Complete surprise, I never took any photos as a kid, and photohistory was not part of Power Dept courses, now I realise I liked it because it was representational, it was an art still with its feet in the mud of daily life, it was about stuff. And photos are just hypnotically wonderful. I am still amazed that such art and intelligence can operate under the curious conditions of camera operation whether on the run or in the studio. It defies logic.

How have you seen the evolution of Australian photography expand and shift over the past decade?

Well the biggest change was when art photographers started being exhibited alongside contemporary art and that I date quite specifically to Bernice Murphy's first *Perspecta* exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1981. There had been a division before of artists who used photography and "photographers" who were seen as nice in their own way but not serious 'contemporary art'.

Over the last decade black and white work is disappearing in contemporary work and seemingly losing a bit of a following among audiences who have only known large colour as the dominant norm in their lives since the 1990s. (One collector was quite puzzled to small and black and white 1970s photographs and wondered why the artist had done them like that instead of in colour) The big changes have been the centrality of photomedia has in contemporary art, the increased art market value of Australian vintage prints, the rise of video as a high end collectable and ditto its centrality in contemporary art after decades of being dubbed 'experimental new media' and doomed to cycle endless through at Biennales but not being bought by museums.





Queensland Centre for Photography

Cnr of Cordelia and Russell Streets, South Brisbane
PO Box 5848, West End Q 4101, Australia

+61 7 3844 1101
www.qcp.org.au
www.lucidamagazine.com
admin@qcp.org.au

Director: Maurice Ortega
Deputy Director: Camilla Birkeland
Lucida: Lynette Letic

Catalogue text: Gordon Craig
Cover image: Kelly Hussey-Smith & Alan Hill *Peter's Kitchen* 2014,
Inkjet Print, courtesy of the artists
© copyright 2014: QCP and the artists

Opening Night

Friday 28 March 5.00 – 8.00 pm

Exhibition Dates

29 March – 27 April 2014

Gallery Hours

Wednesday - Saturday 10.00 am – 5.00 pm
Sunday 11.00 am – 3.00 pm

QCP IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

Space & Place is proudly sponsored by

CameraPro



Queensland Centre for Photography acknowledges
the assistance of the Queensland Government
through Arts Queensland.



Brisbane Digital Images

