

Dealing in and exhibiting original works by Australia's most collectable young, mid-career and senior artists



The Adjournment
Robert Dickerson



Nest
Yvette Bacina

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Robert Dickerson Exhibition at Fed Square

Dickerson Gallery is delighted to announce that it will stage an exhibition of new works by senior Australian artist, Robert Dickerson, in one of Melbourne's most important centres for the arts, Federation Square. The exhibition, from 25 August - 6 September, will showcase eight new paintings, including a brilliant legal work. Dickerson first visited the legal theme in the late 80s and early 90s. Since then, these paintings have seldom left the hands of their owners, and Dickerson rarely re-visits the theme. The paintings will be complimented by a small suite of pastels specifically drawn for this show. The exhibition will be held in a space operated by the Australian Commercial Galleries Association. It's located diagonally opposite the National Gallery of Victoria's Ian Potter Museum, within the atrium of this architecturally significant Melbourne landmark. The ACGA established the space as a means of showcasing Australian artists to a wide audience of local, national and international visitors.

Spotlight on.... VEXTA

Having played an important role in the rise of Melbourne's street art scene as Vexta, Yvette Bacina is now taking her art to those perhaps more willing to accept her practice in galleries throughout Australia. In June, Dickerson Gallery (Melbourne) will host Yvette's solo exhibition of new works. But in the midst of preparing for the show, she took a break from painting to answer a few questions from Melbourne Gallery Manager, David Hagger and newsletter editor, Cassie Hamer.

Q: You paint under the name 'Vexta' - is there any special significance to that name?

A: The name Vexta is just who I am. It's all my nicknames together. A good friend of mine use to call me "vex" when we were teenagers growing up together. Adding a "ta" or "ka" to the end of a name is a Czech tradition. I am half Czech so I'm used to my family doing that. It does give me a certain amount of anonymity in my personal life - which is nice because I'm quite a private person as well. It also allows me to create illegal street art.

Q: You are primarily known for your 'street' or public art. How did you first get involved in this scene?

A: After an extensive trip traveling across the Australian outback and South East Asia, I arrived back in Melbourne right when street art was beginning to boom. I was acutely aware of landscapes and the interplay of elements in our physical environments from these travels so the art just jumped out at me. I loved the stencil aesthetics so I started creating my own pieces; wandering the back laneways of the city late at night painting. From there I met other street artists and we started doing shows together and going out painting together. I especially enjoyed doing the empty shows - where a group of artists take over an empty/disused building, install art and hold an illegal exhibition.

Q: Are you commissioned or invited to exhibit in public spaces? Is there a particular space you would love to paint, but haven't yet?

A: Yes, I generally do more commissioned street pieces these days because my work has grown a lot in scale, making illegal pieces of the same size harder. I would love to conquer the side of a skyscraper one day and make a big beautiful piece of art - perhaps 4 or 5 stories tall. I just need someone to give me one and some paint!

Q: It could be said that the 'street art' phenomenon has been somewhat overhyped for the past five years, and you have been in high demand as a result. Are you now trying to avoid being pigeonholed into this scene as it runs its course?

A: I never want to be pigeonholed as an artist. I have definitely benefited from the street art scene and I will keep creating public artwork as long as I can. It has informed me as an artist and the streets are where I learnt my craft. But who knows what I will be doing in a few more years. I don't want to stop evolving as an artist.

NEWS IN BRIEF...

Dickerson Gallery Artists - Events and Achievements

David Frazer - finalist in the CPM print award at Tweed River Art Gallery NSW, finalist in the 2009 R & M McGivern Prize, acquisitive prize winner in the Brunswick Street Gallery Works on Paper Award, finalist in the 2nd Bangkok Triennale International Print and Drawing Exhibiton 2009 and the 2nd Guanlan International Print Biennial 2009 in Guanlan China.

Jason Cordero - highly commended in the Glover Art Prize

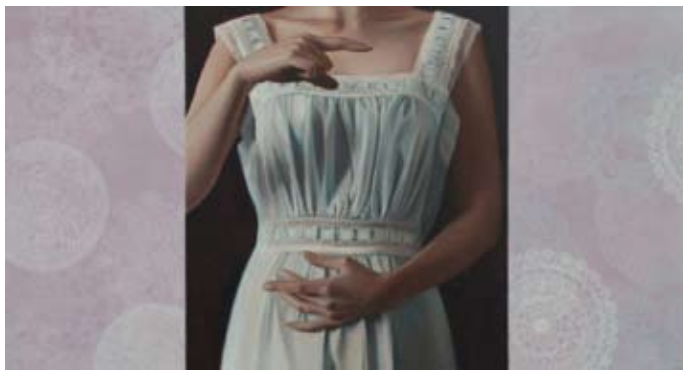
Erika Goffton - finalist in the Sunshine Coast Art Prize and the 2009 R & M McGivern Prize for painting

Ben Smith - finalist in the Sunshine Coast Art Prize and the Prometheus Visual Art Award

Samantha Everton - finalist in the Sunshine Coast Art Prize and the Prometheus Visual Arts Award. Selected through the Moran Prize to be a part of their Artists in Schools program, conducting photography workshops with primary school aged children. Selected to exhibit in the core program at the Ballarat Foto biennale in September.

Damon Kowarsky - completed residencies at Can Serrat Barcelona and Townhouse Gallery Cairo. Prints exhibited in Burnie Print Prize and 2nd Bangkok International Print Triennale Silpakom University, Thailand

Sharon Billinge - completed a one month residency at Bundanon (Arthur Boyd Trust) and two month residency at Laughing Waters in Eltham



Patience,
Erika Goffton
Finalist, Sunshine Coast Arts Prize



I should not be here
Jason Cordero
Finalist, Glover Art Prize

Collingwood Arts Precinct Walk - Free event

Join us for the next Collingwood Arts Precinct Walk to be held on 6 June, starting 12pm at Dickerson Gallery, Collingwood. The walk takes in 8 local galleries, all located within an area of 500 metres in the heart of Collingwood. Engage with the diverse range of exhibitions and discover this growing arts precinct. Find out more through www.collingwoodartsprecinct.com.au

Works by Michael Peck Now Available

A selection of paintings by artist Michael Peck are now available at Dickerson Gallery (Sydney). Peck is a painter concerned with the displacement one experiences in the ever-increasing hustle and bustle of modern life. His paintings are quiet, ominous and very nearly secretive; for they are works that tell of stories ingrained in our psyche - of guilt, grief, defiance and hope. They tap deep into the dark pool of our emotions and challenge our ideas of a wholesome belonging in a changing community. They are indeed a paradox of the quiet disquiet.



We all witness
Michael Peck



The sound of bees and helicopters
Michael Peck

Forgeries Focus Group

On Tuesday 24th February 2009, the ACGA and the University of Melbourne hosted the second public forum of interested industry members to deal with the issue of forgeries & fakes under the chair of Melbourne gallery Director, Stephen Nall. This group considered the various components of fact sheets on the subjects of:

- provenance and documentation (relating to art authentication)
- selling and purchasing art ethically; and
- an industry code of conduct on handling problematic art works.

Anyone wishing to learn more about this is invited to contact Stephen at the Melbourne Gallery

Exhibitions at Dickerson Gallery

Melbourne

Michael Mertyn: 27 May - 14 June

Manufactured landscapes

Michael Mertyn salvages objects from street refuse and building sites. The essence of his talent lies not just in the sourcing of materials but the placement of these within the field.

Mark Dober: 27 May - 14 June

Recent works

Dober's work is anchored in the experiential – a response to the physicality of being in the landscape. Hence the sweeping strokes and vibrant patches of colour and tone. The viewer is enticed to engage with the subject – as if there too, alongside the painter.

Vexta: 24 June - 12 July

Fierce creature

Having been at the forefront of Melbourne's street art scene as Vexta, Yvette Bacina is an artist very much in the 'now'. Her works speak of the current trends in popular culture and delve into the artist's reaction to living amongst the rush of a busy city. Youthful figures appear to drop from the night sky - their monochromatic bodies adorned with fluorescent feathered hands. They are at once enchanting and hard hitting.

Regan Tamanui (Ha Ha): 24 June - 12 July

Recent works

With his roots in street art, Regan Tamanui's heavily layered stencil paintings are laden with iconography of mass media figures, sport stars and criminals. These works are an amalgamation of front and back page tabloids that speak of the ubiquitous cult of the celebrity. His 'Ned Kelly' single layer stencil that blanketed the alleyways of Melbourne's CBD has led him to fame, and subsequent demand for his work has resulted in exhibitions throughout the country

Sydney

Jason Cordero: 24 June - 12 July

Flight

'The images here were places of rest on my own course of late, disparate points where I have put my head above the clouds to see for a moment something other before returning to the troubled path and facing the road ahead.'

- Jason Cordero

Nicholas Hutcheson: 19 Aug - 6 Sept

Quarry

'In the work, I think I'm exploring the line between painting with drawing, and drawing with paint: I'm enamoured of the way that drawing onto a surface makes an impression that remains even after layers are added and others worn back. I sometimes think of the work as an old fashioned school blackboard, in the sense that it is worked on, and seemingly wiped clean at the end of the day. But over time, the once pristine black turns to muted grey, revealing traces of the months of ideas, writing, information.'

- Nicholas Hutcheson



Dueling cranes
Michael Mertyn



Moonrise
Mark Dober



Uprising
Yvette Bacina



Try not to look at the sun
Jason Cordero



Granite IV (detail)
Nicholas Hutcheson



Walking between silhouettes
Michael Mertyn



Cow looking
Mark Dober



21st Century philosopher
Regan Tamanui



Not long now (detail)
Jason Cordero



Basalt I
Nicholas Hutcheson



Untitled (detail)
Yvette Bacina

Contact Us

Dickerson Gallery Sydney
34 Queen Street
Woollahra, NSW 2025

Phone
(02) 9363-3358

Fax
(02) 9362-9555

E-mail
sydney@dickersongallery.com.au

Hours
Tue-Sat 11-5:30pm
Sun 1-5:30pm

Dickerson Gallery Melbourne
44 Oxford Street,
Collingwood, VIC, 3066

Phone
(03) 9416-0031

Fax
(03) 9416-0038

E-mail
melbourne@dickersongallery.com.au

Hours
Tue-Sat 10:30-5:30pm
Sun by appointment

We're online

www.dickersongallery.com.au

Q: Confronting themes such as mortality, poverty, and immigration are apparent in your street works. Your commercial works, however, hint at these themes but appear to be full of hope. How does the nature of the environment in which a work will be seen affect your approach?

A: My early street work definitely has a strong activist element to it because the street can be a powerful place to encourage debate and thought about certain politics and issues, especially when placed in opposition to advertising and its shallow aesthetics. I didn't want to be pigeon-holed as a political artist so it was a natural progression for me to start exploring themes and stories that hopefully are as relevant today as they were 100 years ago and will be in 100 years to come. Works shown in a gallery context can be gentler because the people viewing them are already open to artistic expression. You have to be bolder on the streets. Thematically I'm interested in the way we feel about ourselves in the urban concrete jungles that we have built around ourselves, and the effects they have on our psyches. I'm also interested in ideas about our future and where we are headed, destruction and recreation, life and death. I like to work quite instinctually. Someone once told me my works are "quite beautiful but there is always an underlying sense of menace" and someone else said they were "abrasively beautiful" I thought both these descriptions were pretty apt and true of the way I feel about this world we live in.

Q: In recent works you have focused on skulls, birds, cats and the human figure. I am interested in the color palette - the use of fluorescent pinks, greens and yellows against the stark white background. Is this a direct reference to 'pop' art and/or the cyclical trends of fashion?

A: The colors are a reference to the colors of the future. Where do we have to go from here? Only into neon. The future is dark and the only way we can see there is with fluorescents. I think it is interesting that the only time you find these colors in the natural world are when plants and animals use them to signify danger, yet we consider them "futuristic".

Q: You have traveled overseas fairly extensively in the past year or so - how has this experience changed your outlook on the artwork?

A: I spent a lot of time in Paris and the Czech Republic doing research. I guess I have rediscovered things I already knew about my work and am now reinvestigating them. I have a lot of French influence in my work and it was nice to see my work in relation to the "bigger" picture. Some of the first things to inspire me were the Dada and Surrealism movements and the visceral-nature of the Theatre of the Absurd. I grew up reading a lot of eastern European fairytales before I discovered pop art. Stencils as an art form were primarily developed in Paris, so everything just made sense when I was there. Especially when looking back on what was happening here.

Q: You have a show coming up with Dickerson Gallery in Melbourne where you will exhibit a series of floating figures with various adaptations such as feathers for hands. In past works leaves and hands have become one. Can you explain this merging between objects?

A: The metamorphosis and merging comes a lot from my subconscious and transcendental states in relation to living in the city amongst so many people. Sometimes we are so alienated from everything and everyone around us and yet sometimes I feel like the tiny atomic particles keeping our bodies together could fracture at any moment and it could all merge back together again. I guess that's where the fusion comes from as well as a more overt reference to the need for humans to evolve into more considered beings who relate better to other living things on the planet.

Q: How have you found the transition from working on board to working on canvas? Have you found yourself using a paintbrush more as a result?

A: I enjoy canvas and linen much more for its softness and flexibility. While I still enjoy painting onto found objects and walls, I think I would have started using brushes more no matter what surface I was painting onto.

Q: You have hinted at exhibiting a large-scale sculpture as part of this exhibition. Are sculpture and installations mediums that you wish to explore in the future?

A: I'll be showing a nest made of found objects that I have sourced from the city streets. I love creating figurative images that have a direct reference to our reality, so the nest will be integral to the entire body of work. Sculpture and installation are definitely something I want to continue exploring.