PHOTOGENICS: Works from the University Collection

FINE ARTS GALLERY
University of Tasmania

10 March — 3 April, 1987

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The Curator and the Art Exhibitions Committee would like to thank Meg Taylor for her assistance.
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For the second year, now, the University Exhibitions Committee has mounted an exhibition drawn from the University Collection. This year, the Curator, Frances Butterfield, has gathered together photographic works purchased during the past decade. The Fine Arts Committee has purchased photographs sporadically in that period, with works by two of the foremost photographers working in Australia in the 1970s, Geoff Parr and Marion Hardman, coming into the collection first, followed by a flurry of purchases in 1978, principally from the exhibition Views of Mount Wellington, an acquisitive exhibition mounted by the Committee in that year. However, the major body of photographic works was purchased late last year when the Fine Arts Committee was notified that it had received a major grant of $10,000.00 from the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, a grant to be spent over two years on works by Australian artists. This grant provided the Committee with an excellent opportunity to purchase a number of works by several artists whose professional careers have been established in the 1980s. It is not without interest that this latter group of artists has lived and worked in Tasmania during that period.

Of central importance to the emergence of the flourishing state of photography in Tasmania in the last decade, was the establishment of a discrete department of photography in the Tasmanian School of Art in the early 1970s, a department which was to veer away from a strictly vocationally based teaching programme (training photographers for careers, say, in advertising and fashion). The photographs by Geoff Parr and Marion Hardman give a good idea of the way in which photographic practice developed in that period; both artists tended to group works in series, but there was an emphasis, nevertheless, on the single image and in this way they were shown to be aligned, perhaps misleadingly, with the followers of Edward Weston and the F64 group. Certainly, the emphasis they both placed upon landscape subject matter seemed, at the time, to highlight the formalist aspects of the images and to make that alignment an attractive one. But, in the case of Parr, the work retained an inconsistent ironical edge characterized by the use of visual puns and an emphasis on the landscape as a photographic fact, an edge which helps to explain the link between the photographs in this collection and his more ambitious and very political photographic constructions of the 1980s. It is not without interest to note, however, that Parr's political use of photography goes back to a series on Lake Pedder in the late 1960s, and that his more recent photographic interventions in the field of 'colonial culture' emerged at the time of the Gordon-below-Franklin campaign, both rapacious examples of the way Currie consumes Nature, while claiming that this is some kind of natural order of things.

Although this exhibition tends to emphasize the qualities of the single image, particularly in these earlier works (and this is true of the photography by Forsyth and Breninger, and the four Mt Wellington works by Flaws, Jackson, Stephens and Woolley), it seems reasonable to argue that in Marion Hardman's work there was a preoccupation with the fragmented nature of the 'picture' she was describing. If we take the Bonnet Hill series, for instance, it has to be remembered that the vast majority of her photographic output into the 1980s was concentrated on this small patch of bush and, in order to get the 'picture', it became important to see each image as part of a much bigger group.

In an observation which remains of central importance to our reading of photography, Roland Barthes argued that the photographic image has the tendency to be read as a message without a code, so that we make believe that what we see in the image is the 'real thing', Nature, and not something encultured in the very act of making the photograph. Perhaps this helps to explain why Marion Hardman was so insistent about showing her photographs in largish groups: it allowed her, for instance, to present the way in which she worked around an object or within a space, and to emphasize the shifting nature of photographic vision - a direct challenge to the imagined constancy of the photograph. And this was exemplified in the exhibition she put together on site at Bonnet Hill in 1980, where she placed the photographic works next to their subjects.

This play between the subject and its photographic image, was developed ambitiously in a series called Practical Dreams, the principal motif of which was the contrived world set up in shop windows. Here was a world of fantasy photographed in such a way that the reflections in the windows became actual planes of visual information; the 'real' world intersecting with the contrived world of the tableaux.

This realisation of the splendidly surrealist qualities of photography, and its ability to carry metaphor, especially when images were grouped in constructions, now seems to have been influential. To take but one example, Ruth Frost who studied with Hardman, exploited the use of cheap plastic cameras, with their tendency to bleed light, and with their rogue lenses; with sophisticated darkroom control, this could produce images which were suggestive of dream fragments, in and out of focus. The Queenstown Series typifies Frost's concerns of the time: through careful sequencing she was able to produce a series of random images which, when pieced together, came to be suggestive of a would-be narrative, albeit a fragmented one, a narrative which has the stark and seemingly threatening qualities of a dream. More recently, Frost has been working in the complex area of photo-montage.

The University Collection also has three fine examples of the work of Kathryn Paul, an American photographer who taught at the Tasmanian School of Art in 1980-81. Compared to the muscular romanticism of, say, Ansel Adams, here we have an equally romantic but much more intimate approach to the landscape. David Stephenson has made the point about her more recent work that her introduction of the figure into the landscape, a device which has a long pedigree in American photographic history, works against the tradition insofar as it personalizes the landscape. Instead of the figure acting as a signifier of the sublime (human insignificance in the face of untrammeled Nature), in Paul's images the figure becomes a signifier of a benign landscape; indeed, it is not unusual for the figures to appear slightly comical, a sure sign of a lack of awe. The earlier works function in a similar way; they have an intimacy and sensuousness which is directly expressed and, interestingly, they function really effectively as singular images.

David Stephenson also comments on and quotes extensively that landscape tradition; his large scale panoramas and photographic constructions echo many of the concerns of the late nineteenth century explorer photographers like Church and O'Sullivan, although they are
PAT BRASSINGTON

1  *The Judges* (1985-86)
   Set of 9 gelatin silver prints on mural paper.
   (8, 435 x 350mm; 1, 200 x 485mm).
   Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

2  *The Lamb* (1985-86)
   Set of 12 gelatin silver prints on mural paper
   (each 435 x 350mm)
   Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

WARREN BRENINGER

3  *Self-Portrait As A Goat* (1975-77)
   Photographic collage with paint (511 x 377mm).
   Donated by the artist, March 1983. The work was exhibited in *Photography and Then* (Cat. No.14)
   at the University Fine Arts Gallery, September/October 1982.
GRACE COCHRANE

4 With Pop Cochrane and Baron Graceful in Sam's Paddock, 1910/1982
Pages From An Album Series, No.15 (1984)
Handcoloured past/present photographic collage (372 x 536mm).
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

5 Mum and Aunty Grace in my Garden, 1935/1982
Pages From An Album, No.16 (1984)
Handcoloured past/present photographic collage (362 x 536mm).
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

6 Grandad, Mum and the Twins at my Place, 1930/1982
Pages From An Album Series, No.17 (1984)
Handcoloured past/present photographic collage (370 x 536mm)
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

7 Mum and the Others at Blackman's Bay, 1924/1982
Pages From An Album Series, No.24 (1984)
Handcoloured past/present photographic collage (350 x 536mm).
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

8 At Home with Mum and her Scottish Collies, 1925/1982
Pages From An Album Series, No.27 (1984)
Handcoloured past/present photographic collage (338 x 542mm).
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

9 Grace Robertson Duncan at my Place, 1910/1982
Pages From An Album Series, No.31 (1984)
Handcoloured past/present photographic collage (353 x 536mm).
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

CLIFFORD FLAWS

10 Early Morning Snow (1978)
Gelatin silver print (385 x 310mm).
Donated by the artist, 1979. The work was exhibited in Views of Mount Wellington (Cat, No.27) at the University Fine Arts Gallery in March 1979.
CHRISTINE FORSYTH

11  *Mahalipuram India* (1977)  
Gelatin silver print (225 x 350mm)  
Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1978.

RUTH FROST

12  *Mountain Road, Queenstown*. Queenstown Series (1983).  
Gelatin silver print, selenium toned (280 x 377mm).  
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

13  *Dog on Mining Lease, Queenstown*. Queenstown Series (1983).  
Gelatin silver print, selenium toned (293 x 383mm).  
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

Gelatin silver print, selenium toned (370 x 370mm).  
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.
MARION HARDMAN
15  Beached Forms, Campania (1975)
    Gelatin silver print (245 x 245mm)
Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1977.
16  Ben Lomond (1974)
    Gelatin silver print (230 x 275mm)
Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1977.
17  Eulogy II (1975)
    Gelatin silver print (250 x 250mm)
Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1977.
18  Eulogy IV (1976)
    Gelatin silver print (245 x 245mm)
Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1977.
19  Eulogy VII (1977)
    Gelatin silver print (250 x 247mm)
Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1977.

PETER JACKSON
20  Sunrise (1978)
    Colour photograph (245 x 355mm)
Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1979.
The work was exhibited in Views of Mount Wellington (Cat. No.31) at the University Fine Arts Gallery in March 1979.
ANNE MacDONALD

21 The Dance (1984)
Set of 16 photographs, gelatin silver prints (each 600 x 500mm).
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

JIM MARWOOD

Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1986.

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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>The Last Post at Seymour</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Gelatin silver print (160 x 243mm)</td>
<td>University of Tasmania, 1977</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Earth Series: Artemis Slept Here</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Gelatin silver print (175 x 230mm)</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Demeter's Robe</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Gelatin silver print (180 x 180mm)</td>
<td>University of Tasmania, 1977</td>
<td>Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1977.</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Variations on a Lady-in-White Series II</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Gelatin silver print (140 x 205mm)</td>
<td>University of Tasmania, 1977</td>
<td>Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1977.</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>Tea Time in Devon</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Gelatin silver print (135 x 195mm)</td>
<td>University of Tasmania, 1977</td>
<td>Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1977.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Hugel Track Trees, Lake St. Clair</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Gelatin silver print (225 x 355mm)</td>
<td>University of Tasmania, 1981</td>
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<td>Ballroom Forest 3</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Gelatin silver print (245 x 360mm)</td>
<td>University of Tasmania, 1981</td>
<td>Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1981.</td>
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<td>Elephant Farm I</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Gelatin silver print (255 x 357mm)</td>
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KATHRYN PAUL

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DON STEPHENS

36  Mount Wellington from Forest Road, West Hobart (1978). Gelatin silver print (275 x 550mm)
Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1979. This work was exhibited in Views of Mount
Wellington (Cat. No.43) at the University Fine Art Gallery, March 1979.

DAVID STEPHENSON

37  Traveller Above Sea and City (1986)
Photographic composite, gelatin silver prints (700 x 1000mm)
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1987.

38  (Leslie) Ben Lomond (1986)
Photographic composite, gelatin silver prints (700 x 1000mm),
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1987.
PAT BRASSINGTON (b.1942 Hobart, Tasmania)

Studies: TCAE, School of Art (BA Visual Art) 1975-80; University of Tasmania (MFA) 1983-84.


Represented: Burnie Art Gallery; University of Tasmania; Devonport Art Gallery.


WARREN BRENINGER (b.1948 Melbourne, Victoria)

Studies: Melbourne State College (Higher Diploma of Secondary Arts & Crafts) 1968-71; Caulfield Institute of Technology (Diploma of Art & Design) 1975.


Represented: Melbourne State College; Phillip Morris Photographic Collection; National Gallery of Victoria; Art Gallery of South Australia; Commonwealth Art Bank; Wollongong City Art Gallery; Art Gallery of New South Wales; Australian National Gallery; Queensland Art Gallery; Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre; University of Tasmania; Alice Springs Art Foundation; Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education; Griffith University.


GRAEME WOOLLEY

39 Mountain by Moonlight (1978)

Photographic print taken from 35mm transparency (190 x 245mm).

Purchased by the University of Tasmania, 1979.

This work was exhibited in Views of Mount Wellington (Cat. No.55) at the University Fine Art Gallery, March 1979.
GRACE COCHRANE (b.1941 Waipukurau, New Zealand, Arrived Australia 1971)

Studies: B.Ed., TCAE 1977; B.A. (Fine Arts), School of Art, University of Tasmania, 1984; M.F.A., School of Art, University of Tasmania, 1986.

Grace Cochrane is currently researching and writing 'The History of the Contemporary Crafts Movement in Australia 1945-88' for the Crafts Council of Australia.


Represented: Australian National Gallery, Canberra; Tasmanian School of Art; University of Tasmania; James Nelson Textile Mill; Private Collections in Australia and New Zealand.


CLIFFORD FLAWS (b. 1908 Narrandera, NSW)

Clifford Flaws is a professional engineer, now retired, and freelance photo journalist. He is a Master Photographer and Life Member of the Tasmanian Photographic Society, and at present is a Visiting Teacher of photography at Bellerive Primary School. He has exhibited his photographs both in Australia and overseas, and has won many trophies and medallions, most notably 'The Julian Smith Portfolio' for character photography.

CHRISTINE FORSYTH (b.1949 Hobart, Tasmania)

Studies: Tasmanian School of Art 1967-69; City and Guilds Art School, London 1974-75; City of London Polytechnic (Sir John Cass School of Art) 1975-77.


Awards: Minister's Award for Excellence, Crafts Council of Tasmania 1984.

Represented: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston; University of Tasmania; Caulfield City Council; Institutional and private collections in Australia and overseas.


RUTH FROST (b.1957 Sydney, NSW)

Studies: Tasmanian School of Art, Bachelor of Fine Art, 1985; Currently enrolled in the Master of Fine Arts Programme, Centre for the Arts, University of Tasmania.


Awards: University of Tasmania Post Graduate Award, 1986/87.

Represented: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston; Devonport Art Gallery; University of Tasmania; private collections in Australia.


MARGOT HARDMAN (b.1951 Hobart, Tasmania)

Studies: TCAE, School of Art (Dip.Arts) 1973; Currently enrolled at NSW Institute of Technology (Graduate Diploma in Communications).


Represented: National Gallery of Victoria; Art Gallery of NSW; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; Burnie...
Art Gallery; High Court of Australia; Visual Arts Board Art Purchase Programme; University of Tasmania; Polaroid; Swinburne Institute, Melbourne; Rusden College; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; Phillip Morris Collection.


PETER JACKSON (b.1943 Melbourne, Victoria)

Studies: TCAE, School of Art (T,Dip,Art) 1970; University of Tasmania (Dip.Ed.) 1971. He is currently Senior Master, Art/Speech & Drama at Elizabeth College, Hobart.

Exhibitions: One-man show of paintings at Saddler’s Court, Richmond, 1972. He has participated in several group shows in Tasmania.


ANNE MacDONALD (b.1960 Launceston, Tasmania)

Studies: University of Tasmania, Tasmanian School of Art: Diploma of Visual Art 1980; Bachelor of Fine Art 1981; Master of Fine Arts 1983. Honorary Research Associate, Centre for the Arts, University of Tasmania, 1985-6.


Awards: University of Tasmania Post Graduate Award 1983; Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, Project Grant 1985-6.

Represented: Australian National Gallery, Canberra; Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board; University of Tasmania; The Contemporary Arts Trust, Brisbane.


Studies: Medical degree from Birmingham University, UK, 1958; TCAE, School of Art (BA Visual Arts) 1981.


Represented: Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery, Launceston, Tasmania; Circular Head Municipal Council, Stanley, Tasmania; Public Library, New Norfolk, Tasmania; University of Tasmania, Hobart.


GEOFF PARR (b.1933 Earlwood, NSW)

Geoff Parr is currently Director of the School of Art, Centre for the Arts, University of Tasmania.


Represented: National Gallery, Canberra; Art Gallery of South Australia; National Gallery of Victoria; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Devonport Gallery and Art Centre; Ormond College, University of Melbourne; University of Tasmania.

KATHRYN PAUL (b.1948 Kansas City, USA, in Australia 1980-81)


Kathryn Paul is currently Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Cinema and Photography, Southern Illinois University.


Represented: Australian National Gallery, Canberra; Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; University of Tasmania; Arizona State University; Northlight Gallery, Tempe; Centre for Creative Photography, University of Arizona; Houston Fine Arts Museum; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.


DON STEPHENS (b.1928 Hobart, Tasmania)

Studies: Apprentice photo-lithographer, Cox Kay Printers, 1942-46. Trained with the Mercury Newspaper in Press and Commercial Photography, 1952-55. Don Stephens is a landscape and commercial photographer, and works in that capacity for the Mercury Newspaper.

Exhibitions: Since the late 60s he has held over 10 one-man exhibitions in local venues such as the Commonwealth Bank, the Tasmanian Building Society, the AMP Building, Richmond Art Gallery, etc., and since 1982 has exhibited annually at the Royal Agricultural Society of Tasmania's annual Tasmanian National Exhibition of Photography.

Awards: Include the Casino Award for the best photograph of the Entertainment Centre, 1985.

DAVID STEPHENSON (b.1955 Washington, DC. Arrived Australia 1982).

Studies: University of Colorado (BFA, BA) 1973-79; University of New Mexico (MA, MFA) 1979-82.


Awards: Include Ford Foundation Grant, 1979; National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, 1980; Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board Grant, 1983.

Represented: Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney; ANG, Canberra; City Art Institute, Sydney; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Parliament House, Canberra; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart; University of Tasmania, Hobart; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Library of Congress, Washington, DC; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, California; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.


GRAEME WOOLLEY (b.1931 Hobart, Tasmania)

Graeme Woolley is an amateur photographer. In 1981 he was awarded the certificate 'Master of Photography' by the Tasmanian Photographic Federation Inc.

Exhibitions: Since 1970 he has exhibited regularly in National Salons throughout Australia, and has been an occasional exhibitor in International Salons in Australia and Overseas (Scotland, Wales, Channel Is., New Zealand, Hong Kong, etc.).

Awards: He has won various awards and Merit Certificates in the National Salons, and was awarded the Bronze Trophy at The Hong Kong 35mm Photography Society's Salon, 1981.