OPEN HOUSE
3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial 2017
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ARTISTS

Sally Blake
John Brooks
GhostNets Australia
Gomeroi gaaynggal ArtsHealth Program
Trehna Hamm
Joy Ivill
Carol McGregor
Rebecca Mayo
Noongar Doll Makers
Community Arts Network
Raquel Ormella
Julia Robinson
Ema Shin
Jeanette Stok
Meredith Woolnough
INTRODUCTION

*Open House: 3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial* clearly connects us to that past, while also consolidating the gallery’s identity and engagement with its community today. Included in the exhibition are both nationally acclaimed and local textile artists, some of whom initiated the inaugural textile exhibitions in Tamworth. This third triennial is an opportunity to build on the rich cultural history and reputation established by the preceding biennials and triennials, while creating meaningful audience engagement by stimulating new conversations about who we are and where we come from.

We have drawn upon the skills, vision and abilities of a diverse Australian community, including Indigenous, multicultural and environmental artists, to create a powerful and authentic exhibition that provides a sense of broad engagement and meaning within the stories they tell. The exhibition is also about our story. Over the past four decades, the gallery has focused on developing an Australian textile collection that embraces all related art and craft forms. This nationally significant collection includes works from some of Australia’s most innovative and acclaimed textile artists, as well as from regional craftspeople. It has made an important contribution to the ongoing narrative surrounding contemporary craft practice in Australia, creating a unique record of the various techniques, styles and mediums of textile practice from a national perspective. The triennial, held every three years, showcases the best of textile art from across the country, attracting artist participation Australia-wide.

Each triennial engages a guest curator, who devises a theme-based exhibition for artists working in the textile medium. The *3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial* has been curated by Glenn Barkley using an ‘Open House’ theme. Barkley has generated an exceptional exhibition, and I thank him for both his enthusiasm and the expertise he has brought to the triennial.

An important acknowledgement goes to all the artists represented in the *3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial*. They have yielded important and necessary stories – stories that need to be told. In *Open House*, all stories are welcome. The artists also tell of their ongoing interest in the overlaying of traditional textile techniques with innovative new technologies as a means to create approaches to practice that are relevant to today.
We would like to acknowledge the contribution and support of Create NSW, the Gordon Darling Foundation and Visions of Australia in the development of this exhibition and its corresponding national tour. A special thank you goes to all my colleagues who have worked to support this exhibition: Kate Armstrong, Brian Bernays, Pamela Brown, Dianne Cole, Kay Delahunt, Eloise Newell and Victoria Renshaw.

Tamworth Regional Council’s ongoing support for the development of the Tamworth Textile Triennial, both financially and strategically, is essential. The exhibition and the National Textile Collection are written into essential planning documents for our city. Additionally, the continued dedication of the Tamworth Regional Gallery Friends plays an important role in the success of the exhibition and the purchase of new acquisitions for the development of the National Textile Collection now and into the future, thus continuing our story.

Bridget Guthrie
Director, Tamworth Regional Gallery
HISTORY OF THE EXHIBITION

Tamworth Arts and Craft Society began holding competitive art exhibitions in the late 1960s, but the main focus was on paintings, with a minor section for ‘crafts’. The first exhibition was held in the Wallamore Road Art and Craft Centre, a converted fertilizer shed. A collection of works previously acquired was hung in the Tamworth City Art Gallery for the duration of the Fibre Exhibition.

From these humble beginnings, and due to great dedication and interest from core group of artists from the Tamworth Region and beyond, it developed into a fibre exhibition with an open entry system in the 1980s to a professionally selected and curated show in the 1990s. The evolution into the current format of the triennial occurred in 2011 when it was decided to hold this exhibition every 3rd year rather than every 2nd– and the Tamworth Textile Triennial came to be.

Now in its third phase, the 3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial attracted applications from artists working in the contemporary textile art practice from every state and territory in Australia.

*Open House: 3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial* highlights the work of contemporary artists in fibre textile arts and is a ‘snapshot’ of current and future practice. This exhibition was curated by Glenn Barkley who wanted to highlight the recent global shift to the handmade, as well as the paradox that this is occurring at a time when screen time dominates our lives.

Of the current exhibition he says:

‘*Open House: 3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial* encapsulates many of these ideas and celebrates the open-ended, porous nature of textile practice today. It introduces a group of artists who have not previously exhibited in the triennial’.
EARLY STAGE ONE/STAGE 1

GhostNets Australia
Wobbygong Shark

In the Gallery:
Walk around the Wobbygong Shark. Look at all of the patterns and colours on the shark. You may even choose to lie on the floor underneath the shark so you can see the shark’s tummy.

Fill this box with drawings of patterns you can see on the shark

Ideas for activities back at school:
This artwork was made with recycled materials that washed up on the beach. They are old fishing nets, fishing lines and ropes that were polluting the ocean. Using materials found in your environment, create an animal that lives in the habitat near your home.
STAGE 2

In the Gallery:

Choose your favourite work at the Gallery today. Look at the label beside the artwork and record the following:

Artist ________________________________

Title ________________________________

Materials ________________________________

Draw the work you selected in this box
Explain what you like about this work

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Write a list of adjectives you would use to describe this work.

• __________________________  • __________________________
• __________________________  • __________________________
• __________________________  • __________________________

Ideas for activities back at school:

Using this artwork as a starting point, create an artwork of your own using similar colours, textures or materials. Use your drawing from your visit to the Gallery as inspiration. Think about the colours, patterns and shapes the artist used to make their artwork.
STAGE 3

Rebecca Mayo
A Cure For Plant Blindness

Do you have a tree house or a favourite tree that you like to spend time climbing or reading underneath?

Rebecca Mayo, the artist that made this work, loves trees.

Rebecca Mayo made this artwork by asking people to choose a tree that they love, wrap a long piece of paper around it, then use a graphite crayon to take a ‘rubbing’ of that tree. Rebecca used their rubbings to create these pieces of fabric. Each piece of fabric in this artwork represents a tree.

in the Gallery:
Observe Rebecca Mayo’s artwork.

Draw your favourite tree.
Each of the pieces in this artwork has a number. This number corresponds to a number in the small booklet that accompanies the artwork. The number tells the story of these trees and what they mean to the people who chose them.

**Answer these questions about the artwork:**

- If you could touch this artwork, what would it feel like?
- How many pieces of fabric are in this work?
- Find the shortest piece. This piece of fabric measures the circumference (measurement around the tree’s trunk). Now find the longest piece.
- Imagine the age of the largest piece. How old do you estimate this tree would be? Explain your answer

**Ideas for activities back at school:**

Choose a tree at school and use a piece of paper to make a rubbing of that tree. Compare your rubbing with your classmates’ rubbings. How are they the same? How are they different?

Measure the circumference of your tree by wrapping a piece of string around the tree’s trunk. As a class compare the measurements and order them from largest circumference to smallest circumference. Keep your tree’s identity a mystery. Can your classmates guess which tree in the playground was the tree you have studied?
Sally Blake has created this work to discuss the destruction of the Eucalyptus population in Australia. She asked friends and colleagues to collect specimens of leaves and bark from states and territories throughout Australia and using these specimens, she dyed material using an eco-dying technique. This work observes the similarities and differences between the species of Eucalyptus in various locations throughout Australia. The artist also wanted to convey a cautionary message regarding environmental change. This is what Sally Blake says about these pieces:

It is estimated that over the next 70 years, the habitats of more than 90 per cent of Australia’s gumtree species will on average be halved in size, and 16 eucalypt species are likely to become extinct due to global warming.

Sally Blake

Note each of the titles of the works. How are the colours in each of the states and territories as studied in this work, the same? How are they different?

Similarities:

Differences:
One of these works is different to the others. Observe the work *Broken Mantle*.

This work is a disintegrated version of the others. Thinking about the appearance of this artwork and what Sally Blake has said about the environment, what do you think the artist is trying to convey through this work?

Consider the use of material choices in this work. How has Blake used these materials effectively to convey her message about environmental conservation and climate change?

*Back at school:*
Research eco-dying. If you created an eco-dyed piece of fabric from the vegetation in your area, what colours might it be?
STAGE 5

Select two contrasting works in this exhibition. Record the information from the wall labels below.

Artwork one

Artist ____________________________

Title ____________________________

Materials ____________________________

Artwork two

Artist ____________________________

Title ____________________________

Materials ____________________________

Compare and contrast these works. Consider the use of materials, size, scale, subject matter and tools the artists may have used.

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Observe the exhibition design of *Open House: 3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial*. Imagine you are the curator. How would you install this exhibition? How would you organise the exhibition to engage the audience?

The *Tamworth Textile Triennial* is an exhibition that is professionally selected and curated—meaning that artists had to apply to be part of the show and create a work especially for this exhibition. Consider the exhibition and critically reflect on the selections of the artists. Choose an artist or artwork that you may not have selected, had you been the curator. Explain your choice.

Find a number of works that you can connect with a theme, it may be the use of materials, a similar colour or similar arts practice. Name the works below and explain the connection you have found.
Can you find a work that utilises signs and symbols? Identify the work, discuss the use of these symbols and the effect they have on the viewer.
STAGE 6

POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION

STRUCTURAL FRAME

What materials have been used to create the works in this exhibition?

What other uses do textiles have in our society?

What symbolic meaning does the use of textiles have? Consider its other functions, uses and properties.

What signs and symbols can you see in this exhibition? What do they convey?

This exhibition reflects current and emerging practice in the fibre textile arts. Which work has challenged you as a viewer today and why?

SUBJECTIVE FRAME

What is your first impression of this exhibition?

Do you like the exhibition?

Explain your answer.

Select a work you are immediately drawn to. Explain what you like about this work. Reflect on how it makes you feel, what it reminds you of, and your emotional response to the work.

Select one work that you would nominate as your least favourite work in the exhibition. Explain why.
CULTURAL FRAME

View Carol McGregor’s work Not a tourist, in particular the dress suspended from the ceiling.

Reflect on the work and the information on the wall label including materials used. What concept/s do you think this work is representing?

What message do you think the artist is conveying in this work?

Do you feel this is a successful work? Explain your answer.

What signs, symbols or materials have the artist used to convey this message?

STRUCTURAL FRAME

What are the primary materials used by the artists?

What processes are used?

What formal conventions are used? Reflect on perspective and composition of the works.

View Jeanette Stock’s work Inherited Borders. Write an objective description of the work as if you were describing it to somebody who is not at the exhibition and who has not seen her work. Describe the size, texture, colour, shape, subject matter and materials used.
POST MODERN FRAME

Would you consider the works in this exhibition mainstream, or is it outside the mainstream?

Explain your answer.

Can you find a work in this exhibition that uses parody, wit, or playfulness? Record the title, date of the work and materials used in this work from the wall label.

Consider the use of the materials in this exhibition. How is the medium of textile fibre used in a traditional and non traditional ways in Open House: 3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial?
3rd Tamworth Textile Triennial

Visions Tour

Curated by Glenn Barkley

TAMWORTH REGIONAL GALLERY, NSW
13 OCTOBER – 10 DECEMBER 2017

MAITLAND REGIONAL ART GALLERY, NSW
28 JULY – 14 OCTOBER 2018

COFFS HARBOUR REGIONAL GALLERY, NSW
16 NOVEMBER 2018 – 29 JANUARY 2019

ARTISAN, QUEENSLAND CRAFT & DESIGN CENTRE, QLD
23 FEB – 27 APRIL 2019

BROKEN HILL REGIONAL ART GALLERY, NSW
10 MAY – 7 JULY 2019

MURRAY BRIDGE REGIONAL GALLERY, SA
28 JULY – 8 SEPTEMBER 2019

JAMFACTORY AT SEPPELTSFIELD, SA
4 OCTOBER – 24 NOVEMBER 2019

SWAN HILL REGIONAL ART GALLERY, VIC
6 DECEMBER 2019 – 26 JANUARY 2020

ORANGE REGIONAL GALLERY, NSW
8 FEBRUARY – 22 MARCH 2020

BLUE MOUNTAINS CULTURAL CENTRE, NSW
28 MARCH – 10 MAY 2020

Eva Sten Devolved Body 2019 : Photo Oskar Clark : Property
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Tamworth Regional Gallery

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