

Presented by

GAFFER



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Australian Contemporary Art 2009

The Rotunda, Exchange Square, Central, Hong Kong
2nd to 6th March 2009

Opening Reception: Monday 2nd March, 6.30 – 8.30pm

Guest of Honour:

Mr Les Luck, Consul-General, Australian Consulate General, Hong Kong

Special Thanks: Qantas & Austrade Hong Kong

Artists in Attendance:

Chen Ping
John McArthur
Rex Turnbull

Exhibiting Artists:

Claudia Borella	John McArthur
Chen Ping	Rex Turnbull
Matthew Curtis	Emma Walker
Agneta Ekholm	Sunny Wang
Graham Kou	Nick Wirdnam

Exhibition continues at Aberdeen from 8th March to 30 April 2009 by Appointment

Claudia Borella

(Represented by Koru)

That Borella is committed to the material of glass is evinced through the strength of the body of work coupled with the awards and recognition she has garnered in the 12 years since graduating from the Australian National University School of Art Glass Workshop. Since completing her degree with First Class Honours, Borella has been the recipient of numerous prizes and awards and has had many important working experiences, including, the 1997 Kyhoei Fujita Prize at the Young Glass '97 exhibition in Ebeltoft, Denmark; the first exchange at the Bullseye Glass Resource Centre in Portland, USA; the Bavarian State Prize/Gold Medal in Talente in Munich; and a residency in Milan working at the European Institute of Design. These successes and experiences have helped Borella generate an approach to her work that is unique and sustaining.

Borella's work is minimal and graphic in nature reflecting her background in industrial design and her abiding interest in the design field. While clear links to design methodology are evident in the construction of the works, the resultant pieces cannot simply be classified as a fusion of design and glass making discourse. This is an important point, as the realisation of Borella's work is not through directing questions of design; its method is of crafts and that of the hand made. There is no doubt that Borella creates a compelling tension between the boundaries she sets up between design and craft, but more importantly the work shows a deeper understanding of these principals and ultimately defines new ground where she articulates her own territory as a maker. That space that she has defined has produced work that is diverse in form. Her constructions are inspired by the form of the vessel and also include wall mounted works and explorations into function, such as the sushi sets. The range of working platforms and the success of the individual bodies of work underly the intelligence and understanding of Borella's practice.

Born Australia. Lives and works New Zealand.

1995 Bachelor of Fine Arts (1st Class Honours) in Glass, Canberra School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

1993 Bachelor of Industrial Design, University of Canberra, Australia

Final Year Exchange Student at the European Institute of Design, Milan, Italy

Claudia Borella's works can be found in the following permanent collections (selected):

Sir Elton John New York, USA

Toyama Institute of Glass Art, Japan

Dowse Museum, New Zealand

Merrill Lynch Corporate Collection, Australia

National Gallery of Australia Collection, Australia

Art Bank Collection, Australia

Private Collections Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Asia



Zebra Crossing – Yellow & Black
2001
Fuse Glass
47cm dia

High Resolution Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Claudia_Borella/Yellow&BlackBorella.tif

Chen Ping

(Represented by Gaffer)

It is appropriate that Ping should choose to concentrate on the human countenance in order to tease out the despair and confusion of modern times, for nothing could so perfectly convey the self-absorption of the age. These are collective Dorian Gray portraits, co-opting and taking responsibility for the decay that underlies our heedless culture of hedonism.

Ping's big, bold, blustery images are full of sharp, sometimes jarring, contrasts: for example, the complexity and energy of the subject against the unyielding blankness of its background; thick, heavy impasto immediately adjacent to wispy washes of liquid colour; perspective depth bumping up against emphatic flatness; parts of the face that are clearly delineated and help to identify the individual we are looking at (an eye, the curve of a mouth, a reflection of light on the end of a nose) which immediately collapse into chaotic (or at least seemingly-chaotic) abstraction.

Born 1962 in Shantou, China

Moved to Australia 1990

1985 BFA Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art, China

1997 BFA University of Tasmania

Chen Ping works are found in the following permanent Museum Collections

Tasmania Museum & Art Gallery, Australia

Guangzhou Museum of Art, China

Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art, China

Private collectors

USA, Switzerland, Austria, U.K, Germany, Japan, Denmark, New Zealand & Hong Kong



Dalai Lama
2008
180x150cm
Oil on canvas

High Resolution image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Chen_Ping/monksoldier.jpg

Matthew Curtis

(Represented by Gaffer)

This body of sculptural & segmented works is influenced & inspired by the architecture of organic & biological structures. The ambiguity of these forms invite journey of the imagination, perhaps it is into the structure of a diatom, or the thorax of a beetle, or into the very structure of cellular growth. These forms reflect the delve into the interior of some of the strange riches of nature.

Matthew Curtis sculptures are found in the following permanent Museum collections:

National Gallery of Australia

Ernsting Stifting, Glass Museum Germany

City Glass Museum America



Caraspace 2008
H240cm
Segments blown glass & steel base

High Resolution Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Matthew_Curtis/Caraspace.jpg



Incalmo Bowl - Aspen 2008
blown plate glass bowl, stainless steel rim
21 x 54 cm

High Resolution Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Matthew_Curtis/Aspen.jpg

Agneta Ekholm

(Represented by Koru)

Agneta Ekholm's delicate yet robust abstract paintings reference the microcosmic worlds of leaves, sticks and other detritus that she witnessed as a child, captured in the thick ice of the Scandinavian winter. By working with extremely fine layers of paint built up gradually, Ekholm creates the effect of looking through some kind of prism, where light shifts and is refracted. One gets the sense of a solid yet transparent object, and through her skillful layering she leads you through this object, into the dense yet simultaneously open space inside the picture plane. The abstract nature of Ekholm's work is very much rooted in the natural world. While as a child she was fascinated by the objects encased in frozen prisons of her native Finland, now in Australia she takes inspiration constantly from nature. Take any object and magnify it and what was once recognizable becomes pure shape and form – parts of a whole yet in possession of its own aesthetic attributes and functionality. These works are reminiscent of nature's controlled chaos in the soft, organically shaped veils of paint that interlock and overlap seemingly at random. Her compositions generally contain fields of solid colour that encase the diaphanous layers within. It is as though a small world sits in the centre of each painting, rich with shifting possibilities, while around it lies concrete solidity. One's eye may orbit around this mini universe, before being led inside of it.

Born Helsinki, Finland. Lives and works Melbourne, Australia

1994 The Swedish Art School Of Nykarleby, Finland, Bachelor of Visual Arts

1996 Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art with Honours
(Painting)

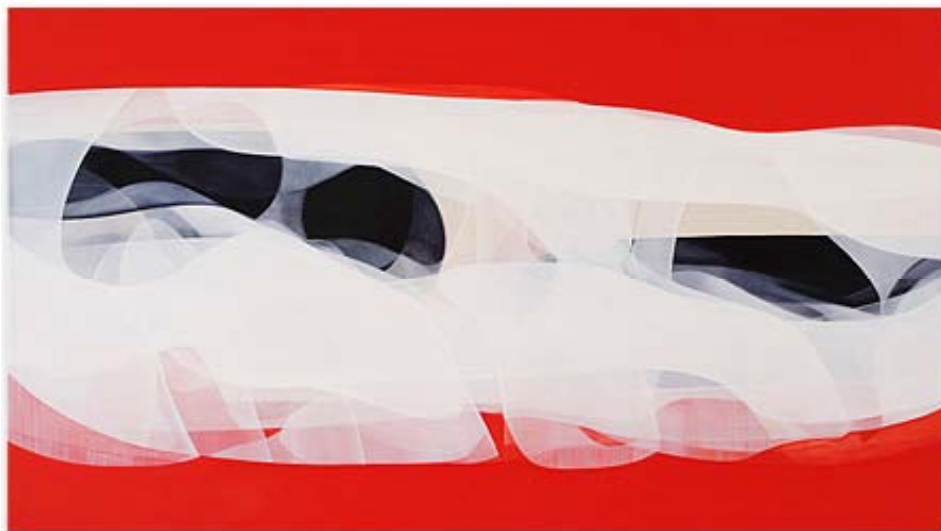
Agneta Ekholm's works can be found in the following permanent collections (selected):

Embassy of Finland, Australia

Sony Music Corporation

Google, San Fransisco, USA

Private Collections Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Asia



Changes are Envisaged
2008
Acrylic on canvas
77x137cm

High Resolution Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Agneta_Ekholm/Changes.jpg

Graham Kou

(Represented by Gaffer)

Born in China and arrived in Australian 1963.

A professional art teacher until recently, Kou continues to attract accolades as both a teacher & a practitioner. Kou is an artist respected by other artists.

Kou skill and agility as an artist has been written about widely, and has received glowing critical reviews. An abstract expressionist to his core, Kou is renowned for his majestic, colourful canvas & works on paper.

Kou trickles and splashes paint on his canvas, calligraphy strokes fervent employer of the bold & grand. Kou understanding of space & emptiness belies his sensuous control of bright colours & gestural marks

Graham Kou works are collected in the following Museum Collections (Selected)

Art Gallery of New South Wales
Art Gallery of South Australia
Art Gallery of Western Australia
Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) New York
Art Bank
National Gallery of Australia
Queensland Art Gallery
Caledonia National Gallery



Desire1
2009
Acrylic on Paper
About 50 x 50 cm

High Resolution Image available upon request.

John McArthur

(Represented by Koru)

To transit from one culture to another, from one visual language to another, is an intensely complex challenge for any artist. To make it successfully requires that the artist not only rejects their preconceived notions of their new culture's art forms, but it also demands that the artist seeks a fresh and vital visual language through which to make their new art different. Such has been the reality, for the past nine years in Hong Kong, for the Australian artist John McArthur. During this time, he has increasingly embraced his Hong Kong social and cultural experiences to make art that has served as a bridge between his Western art training in Australia and his encounters with Chinese culture, as well as making a new identity for himself as an artist.

“I have been captivated by art, for as nearly as long as I can recall. All around me I see lines, colours, shapes and textures. This has a profound effect, and I want to respond to it by making my own visual images. Art has its own language and evokes passion in different forms. My responses also take on different forms, drawing, writing and painting. I enjoy experimenting with materials and concepts.

In recent work, I also want a tactile element, so I have used mask making. It adds a sculptural element to my work. I have used it to represent a common theme in my work, which is using the Cantonese Opera painted mask.

The human body and portraits are a common subject of my art. Working with models is a source of inspiration. Trying to capture the way that a person is sitting, the expression on their face or the way they move is fascinating. My art is the way I record these observations and feelings.”

Born Australia. Lives and works Hong Kong.

John was formally trained in visual arts, majoring in painting and drawing at U.S.Q Australia. He has continued studying by attending various courses at calligraphy schools and art workshops in Hong Kong, Australia, Italy and the U.S.A.

Within Hong Kong, John is a member of a number of organisations in the artistic community. These include the "Alpha Beta Club", a western calligraphy group in Hong Kong, the "Creative Figure Studio" - a life drawing group, The Fringe Club and The Cattle Depot.



Dreams and Visions
2008
Acrylic on Paper
33 x 55 cm

High Resolution Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/John_McArthur/Dreams.jpg

Rex Turnbull

(Represented by Koru)

The paintings of Rex Turnbull entice the viewer to journey ‘through the mirror’ into other worlds where the fictive imagination of the painter meticulously constructs landscapes that are strangely familiar and yet not quite known. These landscapes are imbued with an intense stillness at counterpoint to the frenetic pace of contemporary life. This is slow art, work to quieten the mind and stimulate the imagination.

*... Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
Moves perpetually in its stillness.* T.S.Eliot

Turnbull frequently places a figure in the foreground of his paintings to be read in relation to the subject matter. He works assiduously to find the perfect combination of model and subject often preparing dozens of drawings of the model in his studio before combining the figure with the landscape. In this context his work evokes the American realist painter, Andrew Wyeth whose best-known work, *Christina’s World*, presents a figure in the foreground looking back across a field to a house set on a rise; or the Australian painter Jeffrey Smart who juxtaposes the figure against the classical geometry he employs in the construction of his works. Like Turnbull, Wyeth and Smart imply narratives that are never explained.

Turnbull’s approach to painting sits somewhere between surrealism and the more theatrical and atmospheric works of American modern realism epitomised by Edward Hopper. The landscape, and the structures Turnbull places upon it, barns, derelict shedding, dwellings and corner shops are all lovingly portrayed. Across the canvas there is a democracy of detail. The foreground, middle distance and distance are all treated with the same attention to detail that at once flattens the canvas while, paradoxically, not diminishing the illusion of depth. This approach introduces an element of the graphic, perhaps even a suggestion of the naïve that in turn contribute to the enigmatic and emotional qualities of the composition. “Having studied design I approach composition and balance in a disciplined, even analytical manner”, says Turnbull.

Born New Zealand. Lives and works Australia.

- Kelliher Award winner, Dunedin, New Zealand
- Wynne Award Finalist, Sydney, Australia
- Inducted as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts for his contribution to arts and design. The patrons of the Fellowship are HRH Queen Elizabeth and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.
- Publisher/Creative Director LINO Magazine, a Trans-Tasman arts and design publication
- Art Director, Harrods Gallery – London UK

Private Collections in USA, Greece, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the UK



Front Runner
2008
Acrylic on Canvas
152 x 51 cm

High Resolution Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Rex_Turnbull/Front_Runner.JPG

Emma Walker

(Represented by Gaffer)

Still in her mid-30s, Emma Walker is already one of Australia's most convincing and original painters. Her work is as audacious as it is poetic; the one quality leavens the other, so that just as delicate reverie sets in, you're pulled up by a less immediately seductive note, an act of painterly boldness or some other form of tough, enlivening aesthetic decision.

Walker's work gets stronger with the years, treading the sometimes overtrodden path between representation and abstraction in a way quite unlike any of her contemporaries. She orchestrates her constantly returned-to motifs – seas, inlets, rivers, headlands, skies, clouds and shadow – in ways that are constantly invigorating.

The emotions and moods of her works are conjured directly out of the processes of painting, unmediated by theory or jargon. And yet these are intelligent paintings – intelligent in their understanding of ambiguities, of space, and of colour. They are extremely sensitive to mood, at times reminiscent of the work of the American Luminists – especially Martin Johnson Heade's atmospheric subtlety and bold use of pooling blacks in paintings such as *Approaching Thunder Storm*, 1859, and *Thunder Storm on Narragansett Bay*, 1868. But Walker updates the idiom with her bold and brushy way with paint and her tremendous array of textural effects.

Her works on paper are also compelling, suggesting new possibilities of texture and scale, playing deftly with poetic links between the microscopic in nature and the distantly observed

Born 1969 Sydney Australia
2000 B.A (visual arts) National Art School, Sydney
1994 Diploma Fine Arts, National Art School, Sydney

Emma Walker is found in the following permanent collections:
Bathurst Regional Gallery
Macquarie Bank
Jackson Smith Solicitors

Private Collections Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Indonesia



Granite Fire Country
2007
130x100cm
Acrylic & oil on Linen

High Resolution Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Emma_Walker/Granite.jpg

Sunny Wang

(Represented by Koru)

Sunny Wang's glass art is manifold; sometimes it's a hollow vessel; sometimes it's a solid vessel; sometimes it's a cast vessel. It is willful, playful, and soulful, and it invites your looking, your reading (of the love of shapes), and it especially invites your reflections, in thought, and as image.

Sunny is presently a doctorate candidate in the Art School of the University of South Australia, Adelaide. Her research is based on the Buddhism philosophical concepts of 'being' and 'becoming'.

In Sunny's past works you can read the trace of her new works. The new works use two ways of glass-making — casting and hot-formed. The casting works reflect the idea of Chinese stone carving and stamp (seal) making as a record of 'being'; the hot-forming is based on brush strokes, which indicate the present-of-being, and catch the movement of making, echoing the physical gesture of Chinese calligraphy.

Born Taiwan. Lives and works Hong Kong.

2005 Candidate of Doctor of Philosophy (Visual Arts - Glass), University of South Australia

2001 Master of Visual Art - Glass, Australian National University, Australia

Sunny Wang's works can be found in the following permanent collections (selected):

Australian National University Collection, Australia

Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung Foundation, Germany

Hsinchu Municipal Glass Museum, Taiwan

National Chiao Tung University Collection, Taiwan

Tittot Glass Museum, Taiwan

Private Collections Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Asia



'As You Wish'

2008

Blown Glass, Cut, Hand Finished

20cm dia

High Resolution Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Sunny_Wang/As_You_Wish.jpg

Nick Wirdnam

(Represented by Gaffer)

Using hot Sculptured glass to create representing symbols of texture, colour, composition, symmetry, balance emotion & silence

Born 1956 England

Moving to Australia 1990

1990 Bachelor of Arts Ceramic Design Monash University Melbourne Australia

Nick Wirdnam sculptures are collected in the following permanent Museums:

National Gallery Australia

Glass Museum Niijima Japan

Queensland Art Gallery

Private collections,

Australia, UK, USA, Hong Kong, Singapore, & China



Forever Wishing

2008

L200 x H35cm

Hot sculptured glass & stainless steel

Image download:

http://www.koru-hk.com/downloads/ACA2009/Nick_Wirdnam/Forever_Wishing1.jpg

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