

Hugo Michell Gallery at Jan Murphy Gallery

15 November – 03 December 2022

Following on from Jan Murphy Gallery's successful group exhibition at Hugo Michell Gallery (Adelaide) in 2021 we are excited to present a reciprocal exhibition in Brisbane.

Hugo Michell Gallery will 'take over' our walls, showcasing the work of six of their most sought after artists - Narelle Autio, Sally Bourke, Sam Gold, Lucas Grogan, Ildiko Kovacs and Justine Varga. The two galleries share a similar aesthetic and ethos and this collaboration offers the opportunity to engage with new audiences and collectors.

Narelle Autio's cinematic images captured underwater have won her widespread acclaim. Her sophisticated use of colour, light and composition create photographs that evoke the complex beauty of Australia's coastal landscape, and delicately conceal and reveal her subjects. Her work has been published extensively and exhibited throughout the world and collected in various institutions across Australia and internationally, some of which are National Gallery of Australia, National Portrait Gallery, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Monash Gallery of Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Parliament House Collection, National Gallery of Victoria and the Anne and Gordon Samstag Museum of Art.

Sally Bourke is a Newcastle-based painter whose practice incorporates a range of techniques and a rigorous approach to her day-to-day studio practice. These habitual processes are evident in her portraits which depict an image archive reconciling experiences from the past. Though abstract, Bourke's paintings are curiously recognisable, a celebration of personal encounter and memory. Bourke has exhibited extensively throughout Australia including in institutional exhibitions at QUT Art Museum (2018); Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery (2018); Newcastle University Gallery (2017); The Lock Up Art Space, Newcastle (2017) and Tamworth Regional Art Gallery (2013).

Justine Varga creates large-scale photographic works from an intimate exchange between a strip of film and the world that comes to be inscribed on it. Employing analogue techniques, sometimes using a camera and sometimes not, her exposures capture instantaneous moments or distill lengthy durational periods. Her working process complicates both the act of looking and the experience of time. The abstract photographs that result are therefore documents of transformation and remembering, being simultaneously situational and autobiographical. In 2007, Varga graduated with Honours from the National Art School in Sydney and has since won many prestigious awards, including the Olive Cotton Award for Photographic Portraiture (2017), the MCA Primavera Veolia Acquisitive Prize (2014), and the Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award (2013, 2016).

Lucas Grogan is a Newcastle based artist who uses needlepoint, installation, painting and drawing to explore themes of isolation, inclusion, and cultural collisions, through an autobiographical lens. His minimal palette lends itself to patterning, which mirrors Grogan's process within his studio, obsessively creating and crafting his highly recognisable style. Grogan has exhibited extensively across Australia internationally and his work is held in important public collections including the National Gallery of Australia, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Wesfarmers and Artbank.

Ildiko Kovacs is renowned for images that, whilst grounded in her sense of the Australian landscape, are at the same time deeply personal meditations on her life and human emotion. Alive with energy and movement, the surface of Kovacs' works are often characterised by a sensual, flowing line and glimpses of underpainting that emerge from bright washes of colour. Having exhibited since the 1980s, Ildiko is recognised as one of Australia's most sought after abstract painters. Her works have been acquired by the National Gallery of Australia, Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, National Gallery of Victoria, Bathurst Regional Gallery, as well as many other private collections.

Sam Gold is a South Australian artist living and working on Kurna Yerta (the Adelaide Plains). The pinch-style coiled sculptures and vessels for which Gold has become known, push the structural and conceptual capacity of clay. As objects, they materialise a kinship between Gold's physical body, and the clay itself. Subtle shifts in form, shape and texture – from the pressure of a thumb to the angle of the wrist – produce a somatic archive; “...your body is the only boundary for clay. You are the profile.” Gold was the recipient of the Helpmann Academy Grant and Undergraduate Award for Excellence (2019), the Helpmann Creative Investment Fund (2021), and the University of South Australia's Australian Ceramics Council Award (2018) and Merit Award for Academic Excellence (2019). Most recently Gold has been exhibited extensively throughout South Australia, and notably featured in the 2019 Australian Ceramic Triennial, Hobart, and 2021 Primavera at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.