Impressions of Distance

A study of women printmakers practising in regional Australia 1993-2003

By
Dimity Phillips
Submitted in partial fulfilment of a Doctor of Philosophy
at the Australian National University
July 2005
I certify that this thesis is a result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis in whole or in part has not been submitted for an award, including a higher degree, to any other university or institution.

Dimity Anne Phillips

Signed

Date 6/7/2005
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Sasha Grishin, for his support and advice during the development of this thesis. I also extend my gratitude to my advisors Anne Kirker, Hendrick Kolenberg, Robyn Maxwell and Andrew Montana for their advice and kind words. Professor Bernard Smith was a wonderful source of insight into the significance of regional art development, and his encouragement and advice at the beginning of my research was very influential on the perspective that was taken.

This thesis could not have been written without the many artists, curators and teachers who spoke to me during the course of my research. Their generosity of spirit gave me great insight into the essence of why printmaking in Australia is so vigorous. This thesis is a symbol of their tenacity in the face of hardship and their talent in turning situations into their advantage. The regional women printmakers I met revealed the artworld is composed of individuals, not institutions.

I am indebted to my colleagues at the Australian National University, particularly Dr. Bryony Wakefield, Diana Kostyrko, Jim Berryman and Dr. Shireen Huda. They provided valuable insight into complex areas of art historiography and the even darker areas of sustained thesis writing.

My sincere gratitude to my family for their continued support, particularly my parents.

This thesis is dedicated to Christine, Mahomed, Ruqiyah, Hanif and Nasim Patel. They have had as much influence over the thesis as the artists themselves through constantly reminding me that creativity can be an activity best undertaken within a nurturing environment. It would have been impossible to finish the thesis without their generous support and immeasurable kindness.
Abstract

Australian women printmakers have traditionally been positioned on the periphery of a centralised patriarchal artworld. Until recently, printmaking in regional Australia was limited to techniques that did not rely on expensive equipment and materials, and therefore tended to be dominated by relief and silk-screen techniques. Over the last decade regional Australia has developed the infrastructure necessary for the production of printmaking of all techniques. Art institutions, such as public galleries, art schools and patronage organisations, have devolved into regional Australia. Art created in regional areas (ie: outside of inner Melbourne and Sydney) use the techniques and facilities provided by art institutions to represent their own specific practices through travelling exhibitions, print exchanges, postgraduate education, workshops with master printmakers and Internet printmaking communities. A pedagogic gestalt was accompanied by increased access to materials, equipment and market, enabled by improved communications technology and transport infrastructure and encouraged by an expansion of visual and cultural forms of literacy in regional Australia. The resulting conceptual and material support has led to a multiplication of printmaking techniques and philosophies, ranging from traditional editions to single state prints and digital insurgency. The economic/gender/media-based definitions informing analysis of prints and printmaking practice are inadequate to assess this development.

The representatives or agents of arts institutions – including arts officers, curators, art historians and critics – are now accessible to printmakers as never before. The combination of these two factors has enabled printmakers to access the knowledge to create high quality prints as well as the techniques necessary to work within the contemporary Australian art industry. This knowledge provides them with the tools to exert control not only over how their work is produced and what markets they can develop, but also how it is perceived by local and national audiences. The practice of contemporary women printmakers is situated within a tradition that predominantly groups them as representatives of themes of marginal community identity, represented by a hagiographic methodology that emphasises the political and economic ‘difference’ of women artists, deriving from their
'external' position to traditional art institutions. Consequently, the role of contemporary women printmakers in representing themselves and stimulating a new perception of art production that predominantly occurs outside of Australian art institutions has remained unacknowledged in broader discourse that still negotiates 'frontiers'. The substantial rise of women printmakers practising in regional Australia over the last decade questions the relevance of this perspective.

The practice of contemporary regional women printmakers is marked by an intersection of personal choice independent of institutional guidance with the cultivated conceptions of cultural place encouraged by 'distinctions' of art practice. The forms of printmaking practice presented in this thesis (1993-2003) reveal an increased capacity of women printmakers in regional Australia to control the dynamics of both their practice and representation through renegotiating individual relationships with arts institutions. Ultimately, 'legitimacy' as a factor influencing the realities of printmaking production is not formulated by definition, but in self-perception and self-motivation.
Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ...................................................................................................................................................... i

Abstract ......................................................................................................................................................................... ii

List of Plates .................................................................................................................................................................. vii

Introduction

Regions of Practice: Contemporary Women Printmakers................................................................. 1
Institutional frameworks ................................................................................................................................. 6
Definitions of contemporary regional printmaking practice ...................................................................... 9
"I'm not trying to define regional – you are!": The role of naming in charting contemporary printmaking practice ......................................................................................................................................... 16
Thesis Structure ...................................................................................................................................................... 19
Conclusion ................................................................................................................................................................. 23

Chapter One

Approaching contemporary Australian regional women printmakers: The influence of historical and contemporary discourses ........................................................................................................................................ 24
The representation of regional women printmakers in twentieth-century Australian art literature ................. 28
The culture industry and the place of the print .................................................................................................. 39
Conclusion ................................................................................................................................................................. 46

Chapter Two

Pedagogic institutions and contemporary regional women printmakers .................................................... 49
The decentralisation of printmaking education, 1993-2003: An overview ......................................................... 52
Pedagogy and patronage: Prints and regional women printmakers in Cinderella collections .............................. 59
Pedagogic printmaking institutions and the 'creative economy' ..................................................................... 63
Conclusion ................................................................................................................................................................. 69

Chapter Three

Prints and regional women printmakers in public ............................................................................................. 71
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Four</th>
<th>Cultivating new fields of regional printmaking practice</th>
<th>101</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contemporary printmaking communities</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark-making: New printmaking techniques in regional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emerging regional printmaking markets</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Five</th>
<th>Women printmakers and contemporary art institutions</th>
<th>132</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expanding institutions and renegotiating concepts of regional practice</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary principles of place: The portraits of Barbie Kjar</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;...as though on the edge of memory&quot;: Searching for Place in the prints of Judy Watson</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Six</th>
<th>Women printmakers claiming independence of practice..</th>
<th>179</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A shed of their own: Independent forms of printmaking as a mode of practice</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural frameworks in the practice of Helen Geier</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surface incidents: Translating place in the prints of Sue Pickering</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Chapter Seven | Allied States: Situating practice within contemporary regional | 213 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional women printmakers forging alliances between institutional</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and domestic forms of practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM: Marion Myth and Marion Manifold</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconventional tastes: Purity and danger in the prints of Liz Deckers</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I: Universities offering printmaking courses in 2003, by State</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix II: TAFEs offering printmaking courses and modules in 2004,</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix III: Key educational reviews, reports and policies, 1985-</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix IV: Key cultural policies, policy reviews and reports, 1993-</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix V: NSW TAFE printmaking units and modules 1990-2004</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix VI: Curriculum vitae of selected printmakers</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Plates

Plate 1  Victoria Reynolds, *Lifeboat*, open-bite etching, nd, 36 x 26 cm. Image reproduction courtesy of Main Street Gallery, Hahndorf, South Australia.


Plate 6  Sue Pickering, etching proofs, Ferntree Printmakers Workshop, Ferntree, Tasmania, 2002. Photograph taken by the author with the permission of the artist.


Plate 15 Helen Wright, *Clever Girl*, lithograph, ed. 1/3, 1986, 64.8 x 79.4 cm. Collection of the National Gallery of Australia.

Plate 16 Helen Wright, *My ship sails for me*, colour lithograph, 1987, 56.4 x 75.2 cm. Collection of the National Gallery of Australia.


Plate 19 Guiseppe Arcimboldo, *Summer*, oil on canvas, 1563, 67 x 50.8 cm. Gemaldegalerie Kunsthistorisches Museum, Germany.

Plate 20 Anon., *Air*, n.d., 74.4 x 56 cm. Private collection, Basel.


Plate 25 Meret Oppenheim, *Object*, fur covered cup, saucer and spoon, 1936, 7.3 cm.
cm high, cup 10.9 cm diameter, saucer 23.7 cm, spoon 20.2 cm long.
Museum of Modern Art, Germany.

**Plate 26** Barbie Kjar, charcoal study for a portrait (left) and photocopy (right), Hobart, 2002. Photograph taken by author with the permission of the artist.


**Plate 32** Judy Watson, *Wurreka*, etched zinc wall, 1999, 518 cm at highest point and 349 cm at lowest point x 50 metres in length. Museum of Victoria.


**Plate 37** Helen Geier, *Perspective and Chance Connections 4A*, photo-etching and silkscreen, sewn and folded 3-D prints, ed. 2/5, 1994, 78 x 58 cm. Image reproduced from Sasha Grishin, *Helen Geier: Different Fields of

Plate 38 Carrington Bowles, *All Draughtsmen's Assistant or Drawing Made Easy*, London: Sayer and Bennett, 1770.


Plate 45 Jenny Clapson, sketchbooks and solarplate prints, 2002. Photograph taken by the author with the permission of the artist.


Plate 47 Marion Manifold, *a finely boned, beautiful face Botticelli would want to paint...*, boxed set of digital prints, 2001, dimensions unknown. Fremantle City Art Collection.


Plate 52 Liz Deckers, *Mother Tongue III, V and III*, ink and chocolate stencil prints on Palmolive soap, 2002, dimensions variable. Collection of the

Introduction

Plate 1

Victoria Reynolds, Lifeboat,
open-bite etching, nd, 36 x 26 cm.
Regions of Practice: Contemporary Australian Women Printmakers

The printer is a chameleon, technician and creative interpreter, having a personal artistic vocabulary and understanding the value of his or her craft.¹

It was once a truth nationally acknowledged that a woman printmaker with a promising career must be in want of an urban artworld.² Australian printmaking for much of the twentieth century has operated within a paradigm of exclusive practice supervised and critiqued by centralised art institutions. Art institutions such as art galleries, art schools, and public funding bodies have presented regional women printmakers as existing on the periphery of the artworld based in Melbourne and Sydney.³ Of necessity, the majority of printmakers relied on these institutions for education, equipment, material, market and community. This dependence instigated a set of values that were implicitly associated with concepts of centre and periphery. Knowledge of women’s printmaking practice was limited to those printmakers who were integrated into a centralised artworld. These were generally printmaking staff employed in art schools, universities or commercial printmaking workshops or who had the market presence to sustain private workshops for personal use. Although printmaking was only a minor part of the Australian artworld, it appeared to function within a supportive yet


2 This line is a paraphrase of the opening line of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice (Jane Austin, Pride and Prejudice, 1813, edited by Vivian Jones, London: Penguin, 1996, p. 1). The term 'artworld' was developed by Arthur Danto to describe the methods with which art discourses employ a series of art 'authorities' to influence the way the spectator engages with art (Arthur Coleman Danto, The Philosophical Disenfranction of Art, New York: Columbia University Press, 1986). George Dickie explored the concept of the artworld as central to the legitimacy of an institutional definition of art (George Dickie, Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974; George Dickie, Art Circle: A Theory of Art, Chicago: Spectrum Press, 1997.). Howard Becker’s sociological examination (Howard Saul Becker, Art Worlds, Berkeley: University Of California Press, 1982) approaches artworlds as collective activities emerging from the shared conventions of an artworld system reliant on an institutional framework that distinguishes areas of high and low economic and symbolic value. This thesis is most influenced by Becker’s use of the term. The artworld system can have different characteristics, shaped by the institutional frameworks of different regions. The use of the term in this thesis therefore refers to different artworlds that reflect different areas of artistic production yet belong to the same overarching artworld system.

3 Melbourne and Sydney have dominated the Australian artworld in the twentieth century. Australia's oldest and most consistently successful art galleries, art markets and art schools have been based in these two cities. Both national and international artists, critics, exhibitions and patrons have used Melbourne and Sydney as centralised locations from which they can effectively reach a concentrated audience. Although in the past several decades there have been increasing opportunities to establish successful art institutions and artistic practices outside of Melbourne and Sydney, the two cities retain their identity as 'centres' of the Australian artworld. It is against this concept of 'centre' that the concept of 'periphery' in relation to regional Australian art has developed.
confined network of patriarchal art institutions. There was not a great deal of space for regional women's printmaking as an independent area of art production within this finite section of the cultural industry.⁴

Printmakers who worked in regional Australia prior to the 1980s and 1990s were acknowledged by this artworld through their affiliation with urban institutions or markets. It was accepted that there were other regional printmaking practices that the artworld was unfamiliar with. These practices, however, were assumed to be unprofessional, as a professional printmaking career relied on the patronage of centralised institutions. Regional women printmakers who chose to remain regional had a diminished value attributed to their prints, their practice and their identity as committed artists. Their knowledge of the value of their own craft was secondary to the belief that cultural legitimacy relied on institutional consecration, a process wherein an artwork is accepted by art galleries, critics and the art market as possessing qualities ensuring it a place within an established hierarchy of value. This belief is still active today and has asserted considerable influence over the equity and prejudice associated with contemporary regional women's printmaking.

Regional printmaking is perceived as being marked by isolation from resources, markets and a supportive community of like-minded artists. On the surface, it would appear that regional printmaking is bereft of the features that have attracted printmakers to the centralised printmaking networks that have developed in Melbourne and Sydney. These features include access to university and professional print workshops, congress and collaboration with other printmakers on a regular basis, and the ability to attend a wide range of art exhibitions while taking advantage of an open marketplace to develop a receptive audience for their own work. However, while regional printmaking does evince the struggle printmakers face without the resources of Melbourne and Sydney, it also reveals itself to be an area of artistic practice with many unique approaches, techniques and audiences that are often unrelated to issues presented by geographic distance.

The printmaking practices of women printmakers working in regional Australia provide an opportunity to study a range of features of printmaking that have emerged

⁴ The concept of the culture industry was first formulated in the 1940s by Marxist theorists Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (See: Theodor Adorno, The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture, edited with an introduction by J.M. Bernstein London; New York: Routledge, 1990), and is now used by contemporary cultural policy to define a distinct field that develops national identity and cultural capital.
strongly in recent years. The purpose of such a study is not to pursue aspects of difference from urban printmaking practices, but to examine how contemporary Australian printmaking is changing as it incorporates new approaches and methodologies. Regional printmaking has not been examined within Australia art discourse, and therefore a focus on this area, removed from the more well-known urban printmaking cultures, highlights the diversity of contemporary printmaking and the opportunities to printmakers without constant referral two the established art historical methodologies encouraged by the art institutions of Melbourne and Sydney. A certain freedom can therefore be gained, in particular by employing a research strategy that incorporates a strong sociological grounding to the study of contemporary art production. Women printmakers practising in regional Australia have many factors that influence their ability to learn, create and pursue printmaking, either professionally or as a amateur interest. An approach strongly influenced by sociology highlights women printmakers in regional Australia are presented with issues and advantages that are often specific to their geographic and cultural location, while at other times remain independent from these contextual influences. Many of the issues they face are different from those dealt with by male printmakers (both urban and regional). A comparative analysis of these differences, however, would be counterproductive to the primary aim of this thesis to employ a range of approaches to allow appreciation of the diversity of a specific area of Australian art practice without becoming entrenched in discourses of gender, cultural difference, art history or institutional authority. The fact that neither regional printmakers nor women printmakers have a strong presence within Australian art discourse provides an open field for such an investigation, as there are no pre-existing cultural frameworks that these practitioners sit comfortably within.

This thesis explores the development of regional women's printmaking in the period 1993-2003. The study has a specific focus on the deliberate choices made by regional women printmakers to direct or negotiate their position in the artworld, and thus the form and the value of their practice. In the last decade there has been a radical shift in the way Australian art institutions interact with different regions of art production. Decentralisation of institutions and institutional representatives has raised the artworld's knowledge of regional printmaking practice to the point where the values implied by their 'peripheral' status have been reassessed. A variety of degree and course structures

---

5 A survey of the annual reports of the Australia Council for the Arts over a twenty-year period and of state arts departments over a period of ten years revealed a strong devolution of art institutions and the growth of State and Territory responsibility for local and regional cultural development. There have been several significant surveys and research initiatives addressing the development of cultural infrastructure and potential policy. These are listed in Appendix II.
encourage flexible models of learning, allowing the development of printmaking education that can be adjusted to suit individual lifestyles and which facilitates the transfer between vocational and tertiary education. Universities, galleries and arts representative bodies have established support strategies, communities and facilities for regional artists. Devolution of cultural patronage in the form of art prizes, scholarships, residencies, touring exhibition schemes and national and international exchange programs enable artists to establish successful careers in regional Australia. Women are no longer isolated from art markets or visual art education. Pedagogic and patronage institutions have provided regional artists with the capacity to negotiate the position of their practice within the contemporary artworld and thus have significant influence over the perceived value of their work. However, the success of devolution and the dissolution of 'centres' and 'peripheries' is in many respects due to the actions of individual artists.

Printmaking is an area of art practice that has rapidly responded to the devolution of cultural governance and institutions. Many different forms of practice have emerged, often sustained through affiliations with institutions and taking advantage of new relationships and new markets. Yet while the devolution of infrastructure has received significant critical review, there is little literature that discusses the socio-political and practical consequences of this area of cultural development on individual art practices, such as printmaking. A central objective of this thesis is to address this lack with specific reference to contemporary regional women printmakers. It uses a sample base of printmakers who consciously take advantage of the changing function of contemporary art institutions in order to enhance their printmaking practice. It proposes an approach to women printmakers and regional printmaking practice that is not based on the application of binary divisions of symbolic and economic values – a perspective traditionally applied to the examination of art practice outside Melbourne and Sydney. Existing approaches to Australian printmaking do not recognise shifts in institutional cultural governance on a broad scale while analysing the effects on specific individuals in all areas of the artworld. This introduction explores the art institutional frameworks that influence the production of Australian art. It establishes the definitions employed in this thesis and the methodology that informed the research and structure of the thesis. This is then followed by a methodological overview and chapter outlines.
Institutional frameworks

Michel Foucault describes processes of institutional power as substantiated by discursive forms of power that govern the discussion of things or objects. Discursive patterns subsumed in governance strategies present a sense of continuity

...determining that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass ... [They] are grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations, maintained or blurred in accordance with specific regularities ... [establishing] that we are difference, that our reason is the difference of discourses, our history is the history of difference, our selves the difference of masks. 6

The differences that order the Australian art industry are influenced by the exposure of art within urban centres and the areas of society or the institutions that they are affiliated with. In the case of contemporary printmaking, the methodology for differentiating modes of practice at a national level is informed by two primary sources: first, statistical data gathered by the Australian Bureau of Statistic, and second, the printmakers that have the patronage of major art institutions. The Australian Bureau of Statistic's data on printmakers in Australia is not reflective of contemporary practice either. It presents an assessment of contemporary printmaking practice that indicates many of the innate prejudices established by art institutions that distinguish between 'professional' and 'hobby' practice. 7 The numbers of printmakers in Australia that are presented by these studies therefore also rely on a presupposition of strong relationships between printmakers and art institutions in order to assess what is professional practice and what is 'hobby' practice. The second source of data on contemporary printmakers active in Australia requires a survey of artists who have received financial support from cultural funding organisations, have won a nationally-recognised award or prize, are the subject of published articles or reviews, are represented by art dealers or are collected and exhibited by public art galleries. An assessment of contemporary printmaking using this

---

7 The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reports a relatively stable population of printmakers, ranging from 36,700 in 1993 to 37,100 in 2001, with an equal division of male and female practitioners (Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Work in Selected Culture/Leisure Industries, ABS 6281.0," ABS, 1997; Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Work in Selected Culture/Leisure Industries, ABS 6281.0," ABS, 2001; Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Work in Selected Culture/Leisure Industries, ABS 6281.0," ABS, 1993. Persons living in remote and sparsely settled regions of Australia are excluded from this data (with the exception of the Northern Territory, where persons involved in cultural activities account for approximately 20% of the population), as they only have a minor impact on aggregate estimates (Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Work in Selected Culture/Leisure Industries, ABS 6281.0," ABS, 2001, p. 25). The Print Council of Australia (PCA), Australian printmaking's peak representative body) and the National Gallery of Australia together reveal a significant rise in women printmakers working at a professional level and provide listings that are perhaps more reflective than the ABS data. The PCA, for example, reported a consistent increase of women printmakers from 33.9% in 1976, to 48.8% in 1982, to 56.3% in 1988 (Franz Kempf, Contemporary Australian Printmakers, Melbourne: Landsdowne, 1976; Print Council of Australia, Directory of Australian Printmakers, Melbourne: Print Council of Australia, 1978; Print Council of Australia, Directory '88, Melbourne: Print Council of Australia, 1988).
method, however, can only present knowledge on the number of printmakers and the type of printmaking of printmakers whose work is closely associated to the activities of art institutions. Printmakers working in remote or regional areas or who choose not to engage with art institutions are therefore not always represented.

This thesis cannot offer an alternative methodology to gather information with greater accuracy on the numbers of printmaking currently active in Australia. It does seek, however, to make an important distinction between the economic basis which separates ‘hobbyist’ and ‘professional’ printmakers through the declared income they make from their art, and the conceptual associations these terms have and how this may effect a way a printmaker views their practice. This concept is explored with greater depth throughout the thesis, but is raised here to emphasise the point that no terminology that attempts to describe art practices can be disengaged from entrenched concepts of value. Statistical evidence may give us a broad numerical overview, but because of complexity tells us extremely little about why, how and where printmakers work, how printmaking knowledge moves throughout the country through formal and informal networks, or even what kinds of prints are being produced.

The categorisation of printmakers in this manner indicates their apparent dependence on acceptance within an institutional artworld as indicative of professional practice. This in turn implies that the prints of ‘professional’ printmakers possess a higher quality than those of the regional artists who dominate the ‘hobby’ category. However, regional women’s printmaking practice reaches far beyond simple binary equations of centre and periphery. Boundaries between different forms of practice in Australia provide a framework in which regional and urban may be perceived as ontologically different—as opposing effects of the same power relations. Regional women printmakers examined throughout this thesis rarely feel a sense of isolation from artistic communities. They have developed many alternative avenues of conceptual, technical, and material support. The relationships printmakers form with art institutions blur the boundaries between ‘professional’ and ‘hobby’ practice, as through affiliation with regional and urban artworld establishments a wide range of printmaking techniques and practices are legitimated.

Pierre Bourdieu's study of taste and cultural value in different societies allows an investigation of art not only from the perspective of institutions, but also from the stance of individual agents. Bourdieu proposes that the power plays that occur in cultural production are not antagonistic processes of similarity and difference, but are ordered through a series of specific hierarchies oriented towards symbolic and economic capital. The underlying power plays that locate individuals and institutions within the artworld are most apparent by their actions in what Bourdieu refers to as the Field of Cultural Production.\(^9\) The distinction of one area of culture from another occurs at the intersection of these two forms of capital, which can be used to inform 'high' or 'low' forms of art. This is the process of the art industry, a sector of the culture industry that produces different values for different areas of art. A methodological framework informed by Bourdieu's study of taste and cultural governance provides this thesis with a perspective of the ways individual artists position themselves and their practice within the artworld.

As in any industry, institutions compete for dominance over cultural resources by establishing interrelationships of values and practices. In art, these values are made in accordance with varying levels of art arranged in terms of perceived value between 'high art' and popular culture. This process of distinction is created by acts of symbolic violence. Each field establishes positive and negative areas where the capital that can be gained by individuals or organizations can be assessed in accordance with economic and symbolic capital. Bourdieu uses the concepts of the field to emphasise that social life contains innate conflcits, even though institutions can evoke ideological consensus.\(^10\) The hierarchies of art and art practice thus established are the product of constant conflict between different media, institutions and audiences. Individuals strategically orient their position to try to attain a positive position in multiple fields. An individual or institution maintaining a position within the positive end of the Field of Cultural Production, for example, may also possess a parallel position in the positive area of the Field of Economic Production. Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital emphasises the

---


dynamics of cultural and market power in capitalist societies by, as described by David Swartz, "calling attention to the subtle and pervasive ways in which language, knowledge, and cultural style shape interactions." One of the particular strengths of the field as a concept, therefore, is that it covers weakly institutionalised areas of cultural practice, where unclear boundaries between cultural practices can be evaluated and ordered.

When institutions shift their method of interacting with culture, such as has occurred with the devolution of art galleries, art schools and patronage systems, studying art from the perspective of urban institutions is inefficient. Bourdieu's approach allows an examination of the way the symbolic values associated with culture develop according to their cultural and social environment. The values that have developed in relation to regional printmaking are different in each area according to the density of art institutions, the level of art education available and established markets. The variety of regional practices needs to be examined without distilling the study into an examination of the relationships that exist between printmakers and institutions. Many women printmakers, for example, practice in isolated or community networks that only occasionally engage with art institutions that have a function to represent regional art to the centres of Melbourne and Sydney.

The following overview notes some of the methods through which regional printmaking practice has been defined in this thesis. These definitions reveal that the subjective interpretation of artistic identity developed by regional women printmakers is as influential in defining their practice as it is in defining their place within an established cultural network of institutional relationships.

**Definitions of contemporary regional printmaking practice**

Despite the existence of several key contemporary printmaking representative groups, knowledge of women's printmaking has for the most part been based on institutional collections or workshops. The landmass of Australia, the large distances

---

12 The three representative associations currently active are the Print Council of Australia, the Sydney Printmakers and the Printmakers Association of Western Australia.
13 A significant exception to this rule is indigenous printmaking, where communities such as Yirrkala and Melville Island have a high proportion of women printmakers. During this time period covered
between different population centres, and the different cultural climates that have
developed in each region of Australia makes any cohesive investigation impossible. Art
institutions and the disciplines of knowledge they produce act as guiding principles, as a
compass for different forms of practice to be legitimated or to encourage a sense of
companionship. Prize catalogues, art magazines, touring exhibitions, exhibition
catalogues, exchange projects and word of mouth indicate a rich culture of printmaking,
but constitute neither a cohesive profile nor articulate the factors that have shaped the
development of these areas of practice. They only intimate the capacity of individual
women to manage their printmaking without reliance on art institutions for support,
representation and legitimation.

This thesis has thus taken an open approach to prints, printmakers and
printmaking. The definition of a print employed is that of the print as an image that had
been created through the transference of an image through a matrix (of whatever form).
The choices informing this transference are a critical factor in the printmaking process,
and occur through the printmaker’s conception and acknowledgement of the possibilities
that may evolve during the process of inking, compression and the acceptance or
rejection of the ink by the print carrier. This definition takes into account the fact that
for many printmakers the process of printmaking requires an element of surrender on the
artist’s part.

Self-definition of artistic identity also emerges from the printmaking process.
The definition of a woman printmaker employed in this thesis reflects public awareness
of printmaking: in the popular mind, a women printmaker is an artist who uses prints as
her major form of expression. Increasingly, public knowledge of prints and printmakers
occurs through the definition of prints, printmaking and printmakers written in
catalogues, articles or conveyed through personal discussion with the audience and the
printmaker. As these are transmitted through the printmakers themselves (through
writing, interviews, public talks or conversations), audiences receive definitions that
approach the process as being as much a conceptual act as a physical one. As explained
by one printmaker:

I use many different art materials when making my work, but I
approach them as a printmaker. I think in layers and imprints. Even
my paintings I conceive in a printmakerly way.15

by this thesis, two printmakers at Melville Island passed away, and in respect their names will not be
mentioned in this thesis.
14This definition includes digital printmaking, which many printmakers consider to possess a matrix
composed of binary code or as a series of digital signals in a constant state of flux.
15Helen Geier, interview with the author, Braidwood, New South Wales, 10 September 2001.
Definitions of prints, printmakers and regional practice therefore remain fluid throughout this thesis. Analysis of regional printmaking in Australia could not be conducted without extensive analysis of the forms of institutionally based support and education. These influence printmakers' opportunity to practise, their access to facilities and, most importantly, assist in developing a capacity that leads to the innovation and entrepreneurial approach that has stimulated the rapid increase in women printmakers in regional Australia. The methodological technique used to circumvent bias involves tracing power structures and processes through a two-fold approach of grounded sociological investigation set in counterpoint to visual analysis. This is particularly important in articulating the features that differentiate between regional and urban printmaking practices.

The printmakers practise in regional and urban universities, in regional printmaking communities, within private studios or within the home. The thesis began with a broad interpretation of 'regional'. There is a significant body of discourse associated with regional art production, yet none that addresses the range of issues and art industry affiliations that contemporary printmakers utilise. Although printmakers are influenced by the availability of materials and technology, proximity to the support of markets and cultural communities has an overt effect on regional printmaking practice. A range of affiliations can be developed with local, national and international art audiences, institutions and printmakers to overcome the issues accompanying regional practice. One of the most important features of regional printmaking reported by printmakers is a sense of conceptual support developed among printmakers, regardless of their location. Those who felt that their work received a positive response from their peers indicated that they felt part of an expansive community of art practitioners, many

---

of whom experienced the same issues and could offer advice. Regional practice and regional identity are composites of practical and personal factors specific to regions, often evolving from a sense of distance from the cultural communities developed in Melbourne and Sydney. The term ‘regional’ as employed in this thesis therefore refers to areas outside of the traditional printmaking centres of Melbourne and Sydney, and to the degrees of access that inform printmakers’ interpretations of, or relationships to, the ‘centre’.

A sense of regional position differs in each town, city, state and territory. The sense of regional practice in Queensland and northern New South Wales, for example, indicates a deliberate cultivation of printmaking communities. While providing access to equipment and materials, one of the most important features of these communities is their provision of conceptual support to other printmakers, allowing the influence of the community to move beyond the site of the workshop to serve expansive regional areas. This may take the form of print exchanges, pedagogic communities or Internet discussion groups. Printmakers working in isolated rural areas (such as Kununurra and Mt Isa) can therefore feel as much a part of a community of printmakers as those located in Brisbane, Townsville or Toowoomba. Other regions, however, experience an acute awareness of distance that exacerbate the differences between institutional and non-institutional traditions. This cultural tension is particularly apparent in Western Australia and South Australia. In these states, printmakers who have been trained in art schools and printmakers taught through alternative methods tend to move in different artworld circles. A significant factor of regional location is the lack of open access facilities in the key printmaking regions surrounding Perth and Adelaide.

Regional identity, however, occupies a different conceptual position, and is an influential element in the development of ‘regions’ of printmaking activity. Tasmania, for example, has a strong history of printmaking. The support structures in place (both private and institutional) have encouraged the development of a high population of printmakers in both historic and urban areas. Historically, printmakers in Hobart have dealt with issues of distance affecting technical, market and cultural aspects of printmaking practice. These factors are closely associated with the separation of the

---

17 Contemporary printmaking Internet discussion lists are a critically important element of this sense of community, as evidenced by Print Australia: Print Australia, Print Australia [Josephine Severn, 2004, last updated [cited 12 December 2004]; available from http://www.acay.com.au/~severn.
state from the mainland. Hobart has been conceptualised by both mainland Australians and by Tasmanians themselves as being a distinct region marked by its distance from the central arts cultures of Melbourne and Sydney. Hobart's art culture has cultivated this sense of distance as an important factor in its regional identity.\textsuperscript{19} It has deliberately held itself aloof from concepts of 'regionalism' as a negative cultural concept, instead focusing on regional strengths that have assisted in stimulating a singular body of artistic practice. A similar case can be made for the Northern Territory. Its geographical distance from the other cities in Australia compounds the recent and idiosyncratic nature of the Territory's cultural infrastructure. The printmaking cultures that have emerged (both indigenous and non-indigenous) are both regionally unique and internationally renowned.

Canberra is an unusual regional city. It is close to Sydney, so the majority of printmakers who live in and around the Australian Capital Territory have regular access to the art and market resources that Sydney provides. The Australian Capital Territory also has a regionally focused gallery (the Canberra Museum and Art Gallery), the National Gallery of Australia, the Australian National University School of Art, Megalo Open Access Inc. print workshop and numerous commercial galleries and private workshops. Although Canberra is a strong support base for printmaking in the region, the printmaking practice is characterised by private and domestic workshops located in regional areas. The strong support for printmaking in the region has developed with the support of the above institutions, and printmakers who work outside of these structures often have gained experience from attending the workshops, exhibitions and courses they have offered over the years.

Relationships with regional organizations also inform regional identity. The Sandhurst region of Victoria has a strong history of women printmakers, with a close relationship with the Castlemaine Historic Museum and Art Gallery. Nonetheless, each printmaker in the Sandhurst region participating in this relationship considers her practice as private and independent, while feeling part of local print culture. This sense is evident among regional cohorts of printmakers who conceptualise themselves as a group or a community. Many possess workshops that provide basic facilities as well as access to equipment, display and even financial support. The formal or informal character of the group is not a critical factor in either their form or function, but a sense of community often is. A survey was undertaken of several printmaking communities

\textsuperscript{19}This is particularly apparent in the Ten Days on the Island Festival (2001 and 2003) and the 2001 A Flourishing Ecology printmaking festival.
and regional workshops. While not all communities responded, survey data received revealed that the primary role of contemporary groups is to provide conceptual support, pedagogic and exhibition opportunities. This attitude was confirmed by visiting several workshops and through contact with individuals involved in printmaking groups and private and commercial workshops. The membership of these groups involves a high number of women, with the majority of them over forty years of age and possessing printmaking experience of over fifteen years.

A study of public outreach programs produced by key regional art galleries with an interest in prints indicates that over the last decade galleries have enhanced their pedagogic role. Professional development courses and seminars have assisted regional artists to gain increased public profiles, controlling their own market presence and cultivating group exhibitions and exchange projects, often with the support of the gallery. Of particular note is an increased emphasis over the last decade on teaching regional artists professional skills. Exhibition programs reflect a positive response from printmakers to this role. A survey of a decade of printmaking exhibitions curated and toured by regional galleries (sourced from Imprint) reveals an increase in exhibitions profiling women printmakers. The listings of exhibitions by state in each edition of Imprint are not comprehensive, as the magazine's intention is to provide information on a range of exhibitions that hold particular interest for their target audience. Workshops and information sessions associated with these exhibitions may also be advertised.

The exhibitions and events advertised, recommended and reviewed in the pages of Imprint over the period 1993-2003 reflect a growing trend for regional galleries to initiate or collaborate in patronage and support activities for printmakers. Many of these exhibitions and events have obtained financial assistance from both Government funding agencies and from local business. The role of the regional gallery in advocating regional artists thus reaches beyond the traditional role of showcasing the artwork itself to supplying artists with the professional skills required to navigate the contemporary artworld. On one level the teaching role of the gallery is fairly traditional: teaching artists, in this case printmakers, the techniques necessary to obtain federal and local

---

20 Respondents were: The Access Lithography Workshop, the Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, the Fern Tree Printmakers and the Southern Highland Printmakers.
21 Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, Piece Gallery (Mullumbimby, NSW), Main Street Editions and Diane Longley Studios in South Australia, Fern Tree Printmakers (Tasmania) and Megalo Open Access (Australian Capital Territory).
22 These workshops were: the Australian Print Workshop, Port Jackson Press, Criterion Press, the Printmakers Association of Western Australia, Lyre Bird Press, Umbrella Studios, Printworks, PCL, Griffith Studios, Hazellhurst Workshop and the Newcastle Printmakers Association.
patronage, to advertise their work, and to incorporate the elements of professional presentation expected in the printmaking market has particular value for the older generations of printmakers who have begun their artistic practice later in life and have often not participated in tertiary study. Print prizes over the past decade also indicate the active role galleries play in supporting innovative printmaking, their increased role in educating regional audiences about the print, and the enhanced ability of regional galleries to obtain corporate support to facilitate projects.

The shift in the patronage of regional galleries over the last decade, however, goes beyond a function of legitimatising an artist or artform through the advocacy of exhibition or collection. The involvement of regional galleries in the expansion of technique skills and development of community involvement in an artform directly reflects a national shift in the governance of art, which in turn is reflective of attempts to federally govern culture – to both expand cultural and creative opportunity, but also in an attempt to establish quantifiable meaning through the increased knowledge of the qualitative and quantitative values these ‘creative cultures’. Regional galleries therefore also serve an important role in cultural governance. Through grant applications and as a requirement of their own funding, galleries constantly provide peak cultural governance organisations with data on arts and cultural activities in their region. This information, when combined with data obtained from other sources (such as studies on the education sector, community health and the national census, to name but a few), has the potential to ‘map’ culture.

Strategic cultural mapping seeks to establish the key characteristics of a region, providing a picture of cultural development composed of quantifiable sectors that interlink to form a comprehensive overview. Such an overview highlights areas of similarity and difference, yet requires a standard set of values upon which cultural activity can be assessed. When overlaid on a geographical map, these areas of similarity and difference can resonate with features of the landscape: urban areas or large regional cities with a high number of facilities propagate networks of cultural activity which draw upon an established system of resources, markets and audiences. Although mapping similarity and difference over a geographic area initially appears to be an adequate method of assessing cultural development, as a methodology it relies heavily on institutional sources of information. Regional printmakers, however, often practice ‘off

---

23 It is important to note that while many regional galleries in Australia are part of local government, there are many private galleries. Nonetheless, these galleries must also seek funding for projects and exhibitions, and therefore remain an important source of data on regional cultural development.
the radar', as many of the resources they use for support are outside the regional gallery – one gallery can only provide a certain amount of support for a region. The increased pedagogic role of galleries, TAFEs and regional universities has imparted a level of professionalism to regional arts practice that has brought it in line with urban arts practice. However, the limited funding and educational opportunities available to artists in regional Australia and an art market which remains fundamentally based in Melbourne and Sydney requires regional artists to seek – or develop – alternative methods of practising, exhibiting and selling their work.

The relationships regional women printmakers form with both institutional and non-institutional arts support reveal the different ways they can negotiate the contemporary artworld. They can be actively involved or actively independent, or they can develop relationships with peak arts organisations that are based on alliances to promote specific interests. They can use institutional resources while remaining either ambivalent to the pursuit of interconnected systems of legitimacy or despite experiencing trepidation over an ultimate lack of control over the values given to their work, and the lack of choice once these values are given. It is important to recognise that although access to resources and forms of support are important, it is the manner in which regional women printmakers approach these resources (and the mindset that informs their approach) that can provide information not available through statistical data or institutional records. Therefore, central to a study of regional women's printmaking is an appreciation of the different systems of naming that influence both their practice and their self-perception as artists.

"I'm not trying to define regional—you are!" The role of naming in charting contemporary printmaking practice

Initial research for this thesis was directed by a need to establish a sense of the distribution of printmakers and the support structures that they use. It took the form of a survey examination of print collections in state and regional public art galleries, libraries and university collections. Subscription to the mailing lists of approximately two hundred public and commercial art galleries and art centres throughout Australia enabled the identification of the galleries and dealers with a specific interest in contemporary prints. Further research was then conducted into their methods of collection and representation. Contemporary print forums were examined by non-participant
observation of discussions on Internet discussion lists and attendance at symposia. Contact was made with peak industry groups, such as the Print Council of Australia, the Women’s Art Network, the Craft Council and Public Galleries Associations. Gallery directors and curators, academics, dealers and printmakers provided details on regional practices. Through their advocacy, a significant number of printmakers made contact, expressing an interest in the thesis project or suggesting other printmakers, groups and organization of potential value to the thesis research. Over the period 2001-2003, the prints and practices of over two hundred women printmakers were thus closely examined on many different levels.

It became apparent that defining regional printmaking practice according to the experience of women printmakers or their place within Australian printmaking discourse only replicated the techniques that positioned women’s printmaking as a ‘marginal’ art practice within a history dominated by urban painting. Traditionally, art history explores women’s experiences through narratives. It focuses on ‘experiences’ that allude to an intimacy of experience that implies equal relevance to other approaches, but are restricted to a particular point in space and time, needing to be accessed by ‘independent’ strategies for analysis. Institutional perspectives tend to collate women into groups, such as ‘regional’, ‘political’, ‘community’ or according to technique or time period (such as ‘relief printmakers’ or ‘the printmakers of the 1920s and 1930s’). Women themselves, however, refer to their practice in a number of alternate ways. Their interpretation of ‘regional’ often takes on a political dimension, referring to the cultural place these artists occupy as well as their geographic position. It can be used to emphasise the distance of regional printmaking from urban environments, which can in turn be interpreted as either possessing an isolating or liberating effect. The term ‘community’ can be interpreted by the printmakers within them as providing a supportive network, yet by urban-based critics as invoking an insularity of practice that could adversely affect the quality of the work produced within this environment.

These terms all approach the characteristics of regional printmaking as being informed by the printmakers as united into a group entity. Taking on or being given a

24 The two Internet discussion lists were Print Australia and Australian Museums Online, managed by AMOL (http://amol.org.au, last accessed 24 March 2005). Symposia on Australian printmaking attended were Latrobe University, “Why Make Prints?” (Bendigo, 2002), National Gallery of Australia, Prints in the Australasian Region (Canberra, 2001) and Placemade (Canberra, 2004). Attendance at the Impact International Print Symposium (Cape Town, 2003) confirmed that many of the contemporary issues affecting regional Australian printmaking are also apparent in other countries.

25 These were the Public Galleries Association of Victoria, the Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales and the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland.
group identity has a cultural significance that goes far beyond a simple naming technique. The use of language to create a specific area of art production that has its own words and terms to describe its characteristics and processes is part of a system of dispersion expressing relations of power, not meaning, that Edward Said describes as "structures of feeling." Generally employed by institutions to negotiate different fields of knowledge, these language structures orient the individual and her experiences within cultural networks of value. These structures of location and geographical reference are nurtured within "the cultural languages of literature, history, or ethnography", carefully "plotted across several individual works that are not otherwise connected to one another or to an official ideology of 'empire'". In this context, knowledge is a product of value exchange. It interconnects institutions through the affinities between the concepts they employ, exerting the legitimacy of one interpretation (or 'structure of feeling') over another. Thus, the struggle for order and control reflecting geographical and historically embedded perceptions of centre and periphery is projected on gendered, cultural and social bodies. Individual senses of place are oriented to view themselves in relation to these polarities. Any attempts to establish difference or distinction occur within this structure as individuals seek to find new forms of relationships in a system of dispersion that only changes their relationship to either centre or periphery.

The success of such actions lies in what Said believes to be the "internalisation of norms used in cultural discourse," a process in which individuals accept cultural rules and standards by unconsciously incorporating them into 'histories' that are informed by the authoritarian tenets of contemporary government and personal experience. An integral component of this internalisation is the creation of spatial and conceptual affinities between narrative, language and geography. Said argues that hegemony no longer occurs in the forms of "a directly imposed regime of conformity", but - borrowing from Fredric Jameson's description of postmodernism - in different systems of pressures and constraints "by which the whole cultural corpus retains its essentially imperial identity and its direction." The concept of regionalism, for example, can never simply refer to specific experience or places in time, as it expands on a concept of regionalism that stems from colonial discourse established two centuries ago. The factors of lifestyle, access to resources and symbolic value that are specific to women's

27 Ibid.
28 Said's aim in *Orientalism* is to "show the dependence of what appeared to be detached and apolitical cultural disciplines upon a quite sordid history of imperialist ideology and colonist practice." Ibid., p. 47.
29 Ibid., p. 392.
printmaking cannot be examined through existing methodologies that try to incorporate it into a pre-existing history. The naming processes that are applied to their work by critics in academic institutions are often treated with suspicion. However, many of the same values are internalised by the printmakers themselves. Their own interpretation of their work as 'marginal' or existing in opposition to urban printmaking informs how their practices develop to in many cases provide a conscious alternative that possesses an equal artistic and cultural value to urban traditions.

**Thesis structure**

The initial chapters of this thesis examine the development of Australian printmaking in relation to education, galleries, government patronage and established and emerging art markets. The discussion makes particular reference to the cultivation of different forms of symbolic capital that affect women, prints and audiences and the institutions with which they interact. The second part of the thesis uses case studies to critique the contemporary practice by women printmakers in regional areas of Australia. Three chapters examine loose groupings of practices conducted by contemporary women printmakers in areas often considered to be of a 'regional' character, focusing in detail on two main case studies in each.

Chapter one examines the influence on contemporary practice of the traditional role of printmakers as closely affiliated with institutions. The discussion presented by this chapter is conducted through a literature review of twentieth-century printmaking literature. The concept of centre and periphery and of marginality as a characteristic of regional and women's printmaking presented by this is then explored. The sources for these ideas are traced by using theories of cultural governance that are explored in the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault and feminist and postcolonial cultural and art theorists. The concept of the field of cultural production developed by Bourdieu is then used to establish an approach to regional women's printmaking that does not attempt to assess it from the hierarchical perspective of art galleries or art academies. Instead, this chapter provides a methodology for the study of contemporary regional women printmakers that begins this investigation by examining the choices that these printmakers make and the way these choices are informed by the area of the art industry with which they engage.
Chapters two and three focus on art institutions with close involvement in contemporary printmaking. Chapter two examines the development of regional printmaking education, focusing on the role of university art schools and vocational education of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions. It also addresses the ability for pedagogic art institutions to patronise the work of printmakers who are not employed by the university by collecting and exhibiting their work. The strategies used by art schools and TAFEs to facilitate professional development and support cultural development parallel the priorities of contemporary cultural policy. Universities, TAFEs, major public galleries and government arts administrators have collaborated to streamline artistic training and practice in order to emphasise the increased professional status of artists. This development has affected printmakers in regional and urban areas of Australia. Class structures, residencies, the artistic profile of the teachers and the success of students are activities that cultivate symbolic and economic forms of capital.

Chapter three contains a survey of the shifting role of regional galleries in supporting and nurturing printmaking practice. This overview focuses on regional galleries with substantial printmaking collections, galleries at the centre of significant printmaking communities and the galleries that maintain constant support even without the financial means to purchase works. These two chapters establish the networks with which regional women printmakers interact. It focuses on the ability to choose what relationships with individuals, galleries or patrons will serve their practice best.

Chapter four addresses alternative methods of printmaking education, examining the influence of communities and open access workshops in maintaining regional practice. Emerging printmaking markets are explored, particularly in reference to the increased viewer education, the capacity of artists to market their own work, and the breakdown of boundaries between printmaking media which create a freer approach to printmaking from uninitiated viewers. This chapter provides an overview of the new range of places and practices that are used by women printmakers in Australia, and it forms the groundwork for alternate ways of looking at practice that focuses more on the capacity of women to practice than on trying to position them within institutional categories. The final section of the chapter explores the consequences of these developments on the capacity of printmakers to define their own methodologies and terms of practice, and to establish different forms of value in relation to their work.

Chapters five, six and seven contain the in-depth case studies of women practising in a range of geographical locations, utilizing different resources and working in different media. These chapters examine the complexity of regional women's
printmaking practice, taking into account the layering of institutional and domestic influences on their practice. The analysis focuses on three defining characteristics that are not defined by objective or subjective categories, but by the nature of the relationships that women printmakers in regional Australia have forged with institutional governance. These three levels are institutional, independent and allied, depending on the types of relationships the printmakers choose to form with specific art institutions to facilitate their practice. They do not seek to distinguish areas of inclusion or exclusion, but rather the emergence of capacity and choice. They contain overviews that describe different kinds of regional printmaking practice, and draw out the similarities between them. These similarities are not premised on technical, market or institutional features of their practice, but on similarities between the attitudes of women—the approaches they take to their practice that reveal specific trends in printmaking development in regional Australia. These case studies take the form of stand-alone essays, a stylistic decision made to enhance the independence of each printmaker’s experience and the insufficiency of any one institutional perspective (including the academic traditions implicit in this thesis) to adequately represent printmakers or their work by cultivating categories of art production.

Chapter five focuses on printmakers whose practice is situated in conjunction with art institutions: Judy Watson and Susan Pickering. These printmakers undertake forms of printmaking practice that emphasise the use of major institutional bodies to support their practice. A critical factor is that while this may invest their practice with a certain symbolic value, these printmakers also reciprocally enhance the value of the institution. As art institutions must increasingly justify their expenses in terms of cultural product, alliances can be made between printmakers and institutions to support one another. Printmakers involved with institutions have considerable control over their practice, benefiting from childcare, part-time or flexible hours, insurance, a low-toxicity environment, and national and international industry relationships. However, there are also many printmakers who find that involvement with art institutions imposes many constraints on their practice in terms of time and access, leaving them feeling isolated, restricted in the production of their own work and sometimes part of “boys’ club” atelier mentality.

Printmakers who find that they are reliant on institutional resources or who cannot find success within the confines of an institutional artworld may possess the resources to leave and establish independent forms of printmaking practice. Chapter six explores the increased occurrence of this form of practice through the work of Helen
Geier and Sue Pickering. While in many ways the printmakers utilising independent modes of printmaking appear to be continuing a tradition of artists working in their own studios, in many ways the contemporary form is a direct result of the current artworld. Contemporary independent women printmakers over the period 1993–2003 are using networks and associations established by the major institutional bodies moulding the contemporary Australian art world and using them to their own ends. Establishing their own workshops and studios at their regional homes, they have access to the facilities, writers, dealers and funding that they would have had in a major city. The most important element, however, is that these women perceive their prints to be largely independent of institutional governance or processes of consecration. While engaging in institutional processes, they also develop their public profile using the resources available to them. This form of practice allows the work of printmakers and printmaking groups to develop on their own terms with the recognition and acceptance of local, national and international art authorities. The prints and practices explored in this chapter contradict larger cultural narratives of the struggle of printmakers and regional artists, and instead explore the ability of printmakers to establish their own technical, aesthetic and economic terms of reference in order to continue their practice, but to maintain the integrity of the aspects they consider most important to them.

Chapter seven explores this concept further, introducing an approach that is not predicated on the dualist parameters of inclusion or exclusion, but rather looks for the alliances that individual printmakers form with many different institutions and individuals. Areas of dependence and independence affect the practice of these women, who represent the majority of women printmakers in Australia. Fundamental to this ‘grouping’, however, is the fact that there is a profound capacity to make choices about their practice and the direction in which they take it—choosing market, audience, forms of practice and media according to their own priorities. This is explored through case studies of the practice of Liz Deckers and Marion Manifold. Printmakers now have a choice of the different organizations and industries that will best support their printmaking. In this modality, personal satisfaction is as relevant as the ability to reform cultural and social identities. This is an area of practice that contains the most variety, as printmakers involved often do not seek the symbolic values established by central arts authorities, defining themselves according to their practice, not by the cultural industry category that is allocated to the artform with which they work.
Conclusion

This thesis examines many of the core issues that have an effect on the regional women printmakers explored in this thesis. It does not intend to identify the theoretical source of cultural change, or to examine the development of the Australian creative industries and cultural governance, as these have already been examined in many eminent studies. Its focus is how ideas of difference have developed from being a tool of dominance to a tool actively used by individual artists and individual printmaking cultures to ensure that they have an active position within the contemporary artworld. In order to appreciate the conscious and unconscious choices made by contemporary artists, it is necessary to identify the ways in which concepts of difference have changed, and which of these have the most impact on women's printmaking.

Regional women printmakers are in possession of a wide range of opportunities to establish legitimate positions for themselves within the Australian artworld. Now they are in want of a methodology that has the potential to recognise the significance of the choices that they make to enhance their practice. Women have to balance personal and career responsibilities and obligations. As a result, many may be required to develop their practice beyond the public eye, and often outside of the areas of Australian art addressed by institutional critical review. This thesis is an attempt to go some way towards an approach that addresses women's printmaking in regional Australia as possessing equal value to urban printmaking. This legitimacy is articulated through the choices women printmakers have made in response to personal experience, not artworld order.

---

30 See Appendix I.
Chapter One

Plate 2
Approaching contemporary Australian regional women printmakers: The influence of historical and contemporary art discourses

One cannot speak of anything at any time; it is not easy to say something new; it is not enough for us to open our eyes, to pay attention, to be aware, for new objects suddenly to light up and emerge out of the ground.¹

Traditional approaches to Australian printmaking are often based on a framework of comparative analysis. They debate the social and academic significance of women printmakers within a binary perspective composed of centres and peripheries. There are distinct limitations to the application of this framework to the examination of emerging contemporary printmaking practice. The concept of women artists as achieving a position in a patriarchal artworld through personal and professional struggle is only applicable to the examination of a distinct range of historical practices, such as women printmakers of the 1920s and 1930s and the political poster collectives of the 1970s and 1980s. Similarly, the concept presented by many forms of art literature of the woman printmaker working in isolation or consciously ‘against the grain’ of institutions is a false construction. Simply by achieving the notice of the institutions that publish art literature, the printmaker is already no longer isolated. Although they may be presented as ‘mavericks’ or ‘battlers’, the Australian colloquial identity that is bestowed upon them is recognition that, although their practice may be situated in regional Australia, their artistic practice has been incorporated into a centralised artworld. Regional women printmakers have therefore traditionally been those artists who have already established successful professional careers in an urban environment and retired to the country, or those who have the financial security to maintain a private and independent practice without dependence on the art market.

In the last decade, however, the Australian cultural industry has expanded into all areas of regional Australia. Women printmakers no longer wait on the sidelines for institutions to invite them in. Instead, they are actively engaged with all aspects of the

contemporary artworld. Their role is not that of a marginal entity, but as one of the critical areas of contemporary art production that is changing the way institutions and individuals interact within the Australian cultural industry. Women have traditionally occupied an external place to the patriarchal institutions of the Western artworld. This outside position was not successfully contested until the 1970s, when feminist art histories repositioned women within dominant art discourses. Since then, the techniques that were used to exclude artistic practices from a centralised system of ‘high art’ values have gradually eroded. Foremost among the techniques of institutional domination was the idea of difference. During the last twenty years, feminist and postcolonial discourses have investigated systems of alterity imposed on different art practices – such as indigenous art, regional art and art by women, migrants and indigenous practitioners. The function of feminist and postcolonial discourse is to provide legitimacy for artistic practice lying outside the patriarchal, Eurocentric norm of Western art history. Yet by defining one area of art practice as distinct from another, emphasis can often be placed upon difference as a value in itself. It can become a concept used by art institutions to consecrate an alternative art practice, style or medium by incorporating it into the ‘centre’ in an act of provisional inclusion.

However, place and gender no longer exert the influence they once did on how art and artists are approached. Instead, there is a critical need within contemporary Australian art discourses for an approach to art production that appreciates difference yet does not define artistic practice or artists on the basis of this difference. Women printmakers have developed a range of techniques through which they engage with art institutions. Many of these involve directly collaborating with art galleries, writers, critics and historians to create a new perspective on printmaking practice and regional artistic identity. These relationships may not extend far beyond the geographic location of their development. Nonetheless, they occur throughout Australian in increasing numbers. Each creates new audiences, new awareness of the print and inspires more women to consider printmaking as an artform to explore.

The intricacy of the relationships that occur between women printmakers and art institutions can be easily overwhelmed by an emphasis on the struggle for legitimacy that they encounter as ‘outsiders’ or ‘others’ on a cultural ‘periphery’. The nature of the print is such that it encourages the subversion of distance. Impressions can be made with virtually
any material. Printmakers without academic training or professional equipment can still make prints of high quality that question the validity of the distinction between the quality of prints created in urban workshops and prints created in regional workshops. The transportability of the print extends the ability of printmakers to communicate over large distances and increases the affordability of exhibitions. A wider audience base thus encourages larger editions of prints, expanding the capacity of artists to make a profit from their work. Printmakers travel almost as easily as their prints. As printmaking has expanded into many areas of regional Australia, printmakers from urban workshops regularly travel to regional workshops (private, community and art school) to give classes and work within different workshop environments. The role of the institutional workshop and the urban art gallery as the dominant sites of Australian printmaking has thus diminished. Printmakers are able to move throughout a wide array of different workshops, exhibiting spaces, markets and collaborative environments.

The literature tracing the development of Australian printmaking has moved with them. Urban institutions no longer dominate the production of printmaking discourses. Instead, there are many publications emerging from regional Australia from a range of institutional, community and private sources. The alternative space for artistic production that is represented by regional cultural development is outside of the traditions that distinguish and legitimate art practices in terms of inclusion and exclusion, centre and periphery. Although this may liberate many areas of artistic production, there is not a framework that allows analysis of the art, artists and art movements surfacing in the contemporary cultural environment. Regional artistic practices, such as those of women printmakers, are examined with the discursive tools established by an Australian art history that is dominated by the paintings of male artists practising in Melbourne and Sydney.

The first part of this chapter presents a literature review of critical histories or reviews of women's printmaking and regional women's printmaking. It takes the premise that there is an acute need for a methodology for the examination of contemporary women's printmaking in regional Australia that is not based on an oppositional framework, but that the literature on regional women's printmaking needs to assert its equal cultural value to urban practices without neglecting to address the unique elements of its production. The second half of this chapter outlines the methodology this thesis uses to identify traditions of
marginalisation, how they are interpreted by women and the way in which regional women printmakers use this knowledge to create interstitial sites of practice that emphasise opportunity and innovation rather than restriction and struggle.

The representation of regional women printmakers in twentieth-century Australian art literature

To date there has been no specific study focusing on women printmakers practising in regional Australia. One of the more obvious reasons for this lack of scholarship is that until recently most Australian printmaking has been conducted within urban environments. As a technically demanding, expensive medium appealing to a relatively elitist market, printmaking has long occupied a specific niche within the Australian artworld. This niche is characterised by two major modalities of printmaking practice: the restricted printmaking practices that are considered to be ‘fine art’, and the unrestricted work of printmakers acting outside institutions (sometimes referred to as ‘hobbyist’, ‘commercial’ or ‘community’ printmaking). ‘Fine art’ prints are generally limited edition prints in intaglio and lithographic techniques. Their market is generally a small yet committed print-literate audience and their place within the artworld is supported by educational and collecting art institutions. Knowledge of historical and contemporary women’s printmaking is set against an urban backdrop of the workshops, societies, art schools and galleries that have traditionally provided representation for urban and regional printmakers in the Australian artworld. Although women printmakers are not actively ignored in art literature, a continued emphasis since the 1970s by curators and art historians on the sociopolitical significance of women’s printmaking often serves to emphasise women’s printmaking as an area marked by political and social difference. Despite raising awareness of the methods by which women printmakers were isolated or separated from more mainstream printmaking practices, their struggle to be an accepted equal part of the Australian artworld becomes a valuable signifier.

2 'Commercial' printmaking occurs in two forms in Australia. The most obvious is the mass-produced product of businesses using processes, such as screen-printing and lithography. The other form of practice that the term can refer to is the work of individuals who print for financial gain and in doing so do not observe the techniques that are intended to emphasise the print as a ‘multiple original’ artwork, such as editioning and printing on quality paper. It is the latter interpretation that is most commonly referred to in this thesis.
in its own right. The women printmakers represented in Australian art literature have a tendency to be valued as much for their difference as they are for their work.

Women printmakers in Australia are also well-known for their use of techniques such as relief and silkscreen printmaking. These media require less training, equipment and often less production time than intaglio and lithography prints. The affordability of relief and silkscreen printmaking can facilitate large editions that can reach audiences outside of traditional restricted 'fine art'-educated audiences. Despite this reach, the market for art outside centralised dealers and galleries can be transitory, marked by opportunistic purchases rather than the continuous patronage of private or institutional collectors. Until recently there were few professional print workshops in regional Australia capable of producing 'fine art' prints. Women printmakers predominantly worked with relief and silkscreen, often inconsistently, and were less likely to be included in the collections of public galleries. As galleries (particularly urban galleries) are the key producers of printmaking literature, the artistic production of regional women printmakers has little presence within Australian art history.

Until recently, the key site for the development of artistic techniques, markets and discourse has been the cities, predominantly Melbourne and Sydney. Therefore, regardless of the urban, suburban or regional origin of women printmakers, much urban-based arts discourse demonstrates little awareness of the differences that between regional and urban printmaking practices. Printmakers themselves did not appear to distinguish between urban and regional forms of practice – often working closely together and sharing shows, equipment and knowledge. However, the decentralisation of art institutions has changed the relationship between women printmakers and cities. Over the past decade the range of literature on women’s printmaking directly reflects a diversification of audiences, markets and methods of production and display. Nonetheless, a large gap still exists in contemporary knowledge of the differences between the practices of urban and regional women printmakers.

Urban printmaking is well documented and the techniques and processes described are transferable between different urban environments. Much of the literature on regional printmaking is discussed in relation to its geographic context and printed for a local
audience. It is often difficult for it to establish an artworld presence for printmakers beyond its geographic environment. When the many different catalogues, articles, reviews and ephemeral exhibition notes that address women printmakers are gathered together, the result is a body of knowledge in which regional women printmakers throughout Australia are represented as a body of disparate practices. The individual artists may have their gender and non-urban location in common, but the range of techniques, markets and degrees of professionalism which inform their practice make regional printmaking appear to be a fragmented area of art production isolated from mainstream printmaking and the centralised artworld. This view is taken from the perspective of the art institution and informed by the art institution’s traditional function as critic and consecrator of the art object and the artist. It is art institutions that are the major exhibitors and collectors of historical and contemporary prints. It is also art institutions that present these prints to the public within a critical and art historical framework. As these institutions developed within urban environments, the frameworks within which they placed prints reflected the predominantly urban orientation of Australian art production. Therefore, while the growth of regional printmaking has been recognised by many major public collecting institutions, it is implicitly contrasted to urban printmaking when the institution applies the same critical perspectives to these two very different areas of art production. A perspective based on centralised values will always perceive a decentralised practice as disparate and destabilised.

There are many alternative approaches to women printmakers and their practice that are available to the study of contemporary regional women printmakers. These have developed through studies of women’s printmaking that are hinged on certain sociological or political factors. There are several advantages to examining regional women’s printmaking from a socio-political perspective. These approaches establish a feminist perspective that presents women printmakers as an important alternate history among dominant (male and painting-oriented) art histories. They also adopt many of the strategies developed in contemporary discourses to explore the concept of regionalism and its influence on Australian art. Central to the approaches taken by these discursive approaches is the recognition of patterns established by art institutions in the past. In the case of

---

3 This development is discussed in detail in chapter three.

4 A considerable body of literature on regional art has emerged over the past two decades. These range from texts that focus on the evolution of art cultures outside of Melbourne and Sydney to discursive
Australian printmaking, women’s practice has often been perceived as evolving through a series of relationships with groups or communities. These groups are identified as possessing two differentiating characteristics: their involvement in or isolation from art institutions. Because of women’s historical exclusion from art history, both historical and contemporary art discourses define much of the success or failure of women’s artistic practice by their ability to act from the margins – the margins of society, of patriarchal institutions, of the art market, of technique and of the Western art world. The historical significance of Australian women’s printmaking is traditionally examined through the study of cultural movements, not site-specific development. It is important to acknowledge the way this approach distinguished women’s printmaking from the rest of the artworld, because the principles of categorisation are still apparent in the contemporary approaches taken to regional women printmakers.

Two dominant approaches to women printmakers have been established within Australian art history. The first engages with the practice of women printmakers by examining their place within the Australian artworld as mediated through their relationships with powerful individuals and male patrons (including their husbands). This approach was established in the early and mid-twentieth century, as will be discussed shortly. The second perspective views women printmakers as individuals or groups that challenge convention, forging alternative markets, practices and discourses. This approach positions women (and their experiences) in an alternative space within an artworld that is not dominated by patriarchal institutions. As nearly all art literature in Australia is produced, supported or published by institutions or institutional agents (such as academics, critics, curators and dealers), this ‘alternative space’ is in reality a part of the institutional framework that underlies the artworld. It creates a distinctive position for women printmakers, yet does this by placing them in opposition to the established norms of the artworld. They thus risk creating a new marginal position for regional women printmakers by proclaiming them as the...
opposite of the art practices already established within the art industry. A cyclical process of relating women printmakers to either centres or peripheries is therefore a dominant feature of their presence within Australian art literature.

Women’s printmaking is closely associated with two periods of rapid and high profile development in which they challenged existing notions of aesthetics and art production: the 1920s-1930s and the 1970s-1980s. The 1920s-1930s was a period of economic and creative freedom for women printmakers. Many women were actively involved in contemporary art societies and established a strong presence in the artworld with relief printmaking, developing a new vocabulary for the Australian print with linocuts and woodcuts. In the 1970s-1980s, women printmakers were active proponents of printmaking’s political potential as a non-elitist artform. They were involved in social and political movements and community cultural development projects that taught printmaking to a wide range of people who needed an artistic and cultural voice.

Despite the high public awareness of these movements, women printmakers have not been adequately addressed by mainstream Australian art history. The first reference to women printmakers in an art historical overview occurred in the 1930s. In texts of the 1930s-1970s, women printmakers of the 1920s and 1930s are the only printmakers to be included in art historical overviews with acknowledgement of their role as printmakers as well as painters. They are approached in relation to their participation within an influential group, with scant discussion of their influence on the development of Australian

---


6 William Moore, The Story of Australian Art: From the Earliest Known Art of the Continent to the Art of to-Day, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1934.
Modernism. Prominent periods of printmaking activity in the second half of the twentieth century, however, are not discussed. Nor is the emergence of regional printmaking or the active role that printmaking has in contemporary urban and regional Australian art culture. From the late nineteenth century to the 1970s, the main source of writing and critique of women printmakers was contained in newspaper reviews, art journals and independent publications. Yet these are also predominantly urban and institutionally oriented in nature. These histories present a pattern of artistic development in Australia that is centred on Melbourne and Sydney. Women’s printmaking as an area of art production therefore did not have its own specific place within art history until the mid-1970s.

The first attempt to establish a specific discursive place for printmaking within Australian art historiography was Franz Kempf’s Contemporary Australian Printmakers, the first monographic text on printmaking. The text reflects the concentration of printmaking activity and markets in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, and the role of women printmakers within the artworld of the 1970s. Kempf’s text also contains the notes from the

---


9 An exception is *Manuscripts*, which provides evidence of women printmakers from both regional and urban environments who were actively engaged in the contemporary art scene in the 1930s. Printed for The Book Nook in the regional town of Geelong, the magazine included prints by Dorrit Black, Ailsa Lee Brown, Margaret Preston, Klytie Slater, Ethel Spowers, Eveline Syme, Christian Waller and Marjorie Wood.

10 Kempf, *Contemporary Australian Printmakers*, p. 120.
inaugural meeting of the Print Council of Australia (PCA). Following closely after the success of the national touring exhibition Australian Print Survey 1963/64, Kempf’s text and the creation of the PCA are evidence of Australian printmaking’s attempt to establish its own influential position within the national and international artworld. The PCA was a particularly important aspect of this area of development. It produced regular exhibitions of established, emerging and student printmakers. Many of these toured, broadening the exposure of printmakers who worked within urban workshops and art schools. The PCA also began Imprint, the first magazine to promote Australian printmaking. The organisation and its magazine developed close relationships with collecting and educational institutions, producing exhibitions that encountered a wide range of institutional and non-institutional printmaking practices. The catalogues for these exhibitions were central to the development of a literature specifically focusing on Australian printmaking.

Catalogues have remained the most consistent and influential source of contemporary printmaking discourse and historiography in Australia. The majority of these were produced by collecting institutions, usually public galleries. These catalogues published new historical research and aesthetic analysis, complementing the galleries’ print collections. Curators of major collections wrote key texts that presented the same critical and art historical research that characterised collection development under their direction. Nicholas Draffin’s Australian woodcuts and linocuts of the 1920s and 1930s, published in 1976, was one of the first to explore the significance of women and relief printmaking in

---

early twentieth-century Australian art. Draffin was the Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW) between 1972 and 1991. Under the guidance of Draffin, the print collection at the AGNSW developed a strong collection of prints of the 1920s and 1930s, on which Draffin draws for his text. Important catalogues were also produced by regional public galleries. The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery’s Outlines of Australian Printmaking demonstrates the capability of regional collections to be historically comprehensive and supportive of local printmaking production while possessing works of national significance.

Exhibition catalogues focusing on the significant involvement of women printmakers in contemporary art movements emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period collecting institutions recognised the popular appeal of the works of poster collectives. Many women were involved in poster collectives or groups that worked in workshops situated in sheds and domestic rooms. Poster collectives, such as Acme Ink in Canberra and Another Planet Posters, Bloody Good Graphix and Jill Posters in Melbourne, extracted the print from the exclusive ideologies of connoisseur collections and fine art atelier traditions by using screen-printing to produce un-editioned posters. The posters focused on political themes of gender and race and were disseminated on the street walls of suburban Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Gradually, their very popularity transformed these posters from emblems of free speech to collectable items. This transformation attracted the attention of collectors and state galleries. By the beginning of the 1980s, the newly established National Gallery of Australia began to include political posters in their


collection. Public galleries conceived the significance of non-institutional printmaking practices as representative of revolutionary social action.16 Ironically, examples of these prints were archived within institutional collections, entailing a transformation of their social and artistic value into the passive symbolic capital of a historical document. Thus key texts emerging from this period are exhibition catalogues that focus on the ability of twentieth century women printmakers to provide alternative aesthetic and cultural approaches to Australian art – particularly perspectives that challenge institutional authority.17 With these catalogues the galleries claimed that they not only collected works of traditional aesthetic values but also those possessing contemporary socio-political significance.

Research produced by public galleries in the 1990s has continued to explore printmaking practices that efface the concept of marginal practice. Curators Roger Butler and Betty Churcher’s My Head is a Map: a decade of Australian prints is one of several catalogues that examine the increased ability of Australian printmakers in the 1980s and early 1990s to overcome the cultural and geographic forms of distance between indigenous, regional and urban printmaking.18 These texts do not, however, discuss the factors that led to this increase nor the shifting geographical distribution of their practice. As galleries reflect contemporary art development, the literature produced by them shifts focus as the field of printmaking is loosened from the moorings of conventional art historical categorisation. For example, the traditional separation of printmaking from other art media has decreased significantly as shown by contemporary collecting practices and the way


prints are presented to the public. Influence of a sense of regional ‘place’ on printmaking is also explored in the print symposia hosted by the National Gallery of Australia. These display a changing focus of institutions from patronage by collecting to include actively stimulating further knowledge. Regional galleries have produced the most important literature of contemporary printmaking, revealing that important collections of prints are not only in urban institutions. These texts add to existing histories of the print by showing that the influence of individual printmakers and printmaking institutions has for many decades extended prints and practices into regional Australia without diminishing the quality of the work.

It is not only galleries that produce literature on women printmakers. Academic and critic Sasha Grishin published Contemporary Australian Printmakers in 1994, the first major text that traced an in-depth history of Australian printmaking and its relationship to the wider artworld. Grishin’s approach highlights the importance of collecting and pedagogic institutions to the development of twentieth-century Australian printmaking. Much of the text explores the collaborative relationships that can be formed between art schools, art galleries and art dealers. Regional women printmakers do not feature strongly in this history. This absence may reflect a low population of regional printmakers at the time of publication, but may also indicate a lack of institutional knowledge of this area of printmaking development. Grishin’s second major text on printmaking was published in 1997. Australian Printmaking in the 1990s presents many different areas of technical, aesthetic and market development that have altered the nature of Australian printmaking production. However, again there is no specific discussion of women printmakers in regional Australia. The catalogues of regional galleries and their print collections remain the source of the most detailed insight into regional printmaking. However, these rarely

discriminate between urban and regional sites of practice. As they are largely composed of ephemeral material on a wide variety of printmaking practices, gallery texts, publications and exhibition notes do not constitute a body of literature on regional women's printmaking. Neither contemporary monographs nor the literature produced by galleries therefore present regional women's printmaking as a distinct area of contemporary art production.

When art institutions do not dominate the production of literature there is a wide diversity of approaches to printmaking, and a consequent appearance of flourishing production – both in site and material. Although this diversification has not yet produced a body of knowledge on women printmakers in regional Australia, it does provide a wide range of information that can be gathered together to indicate this is a strong and vital area of printmaking production that largely exists outside institutional patronage, knowledge and control. This thesis gathers much of this information together, drawing on individual publications, catalogues produced by artists, communities and regional galleries, reviews in newspapers, the contents of Imprint and the newsletters of community printmaking groups.24

As cultural institutions have decentralised the movement of display and education of printmaking into regional Australia has produced wide array of practices and literature. Regional women printmakers now often produce their own catalogues, commissioning critics and historians to write the text and cultural patronage institutions to sponsor the production of the exhibition and the catalogue. This is reflective of their changed relationships with art institutions. Regional galleries provide a venue, assist them in marketing their work, and provide a forum for community discussion. Regional art schools teach professional standards of printmaking practice, and the active careers of many printmaking lecturers demonstrate how to balance urban and regional profiles within the Australian artworld. Each region produced unique forms of printmaking practice that can now remain unique while collaborating with agents within the art industry. The oppositional framework that informed the printmaking literature of much of the twentieth century is no longer applicable in the contemporary cultural environment. French anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu’s studies of the Field of Cultural Production provides a methodology for the

24 Newsletters examined are for the community groups Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, the Printmakers Association of Western Australia, Printworks, Megalo Open Access Inc., Northern Impressions and the South Australian Printmaking Association.
examination of regional women’s printmaking by positioning it between the polarities of high/low art, fine/commercial art and urban/regional that occur within a network of cultural ‘fields’. The following discussion explores the place of printmaking practice within the contemporary cultural industry and the way traditional perceptions of marginal practice have shifted to incorporate concepts of the margins as sites of liberation from traditional art hierarchies.

The cultural industry and the place of the print

Central to the methodology of this thesis is the work of French cultural anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu. The model of cultural production that Bourdieu presents is of particular value for a study of Australian printmaking because it allows an examination of how art objects, practices, institutions, critics, markets, artists and audiences move through a series of hierarchical affiliations. The key to Bourdieu’s study is that these affiliations are not the products of overt governance, but are capable of being mutually beneficial. This allows the examination of the choices that artists make, why they make them and what cultural and social environments encourage these choices. Critical to this examination is not how the art industry interprets the practice of women printmakers, but how women printmakers perceive their relationship with the art industry. The art industry in Australia is less a cohesive system of institutions that dominate all facets of production than an integration of structural and ideological features that have gained an accepted authority from Australian artists and audiences. A brief overview of the nature of institutional governance as it influences regional printmaking is therefore necessary in order to understand not only how art institutional networks function, but how they have changed.

A Foucauldian perspective of institutional governance argues that disciplinary forces govern the way individuals function within a society. These forces may be consciously or unconsciously adapted by individuals. Regardless, Foucault’s studies on the dynamics of power reveal that the tools that inform negotiation between individuals and their

---

environment are established by cultural and social institutions. These institutions are not necessarily identifiable organisations, but are the standards, traditions and social practices that underlie the formation of any culture – its aesthetic tastes, social orders and moral values. Foucault argues that institutions are the key authoritarian structures through which power obtains its legitimately dominant forms. This is power as a tool of governance. It drains power towards a centralised structure and then redistributes it in a carefully ordered way. In the case of art institutions, art practices are interpreted in terms of the tastes, hierarchies and social orders that inform that culture. The centralised power of art institutions is the driving force behind the sense of legitimacy attained by prints and printmakers affiliated with collecting and pedagogic cultural institutions and the sense of exclusion felt by those practices and artists who are not included in institutional collections or activities. The threat of exclusion enhances the power of the art institution that uses an oppositional framework to enforce its system of order.

The art practices that have been excluded by this centralised order have in recent decades been the focus of postcolonial discourses. The centrifugal force of power relations inculcates a dualist perception of power predicated on a dominance of centre over periphery. Postcolonial theories examine the peripheries as sites of conflict and rebellion that oppose the order of centralised institutional forms of governance and domination. Those who are situated on the margins of a dominant culture are encouraged to interpret their cultural identity as 'peripheral'. Deconstructivist feminists, such as Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak, present a theoretical stance informed by Derridean concepts of framing and the forms of difference they impose. Integrated into society, she argues, is a network of legitimated forms of difference. In the concept of difference, Spivak questions the efficacy of contestative action by speakers. By positioning themselves in relation to an institutional

---

framework, they are participating in a system that relays narratives between centres and peripheries.27

Art practices that are positioned on the margins of a culture are constantly reminded that they are external to the artworld ‘centre’ that is composed of patronage and pedagogic institutions. Printmaking is an art medium that traditionally engages in “shuttle diplomacy”, working closely with institutions to ensure that the practice is not neglected by the mainstream art industry. Regional women printmakers continue this process. Their involvement with centralised art institutions often results in an emphasis of the differences they encounter in their practice. These differences can illustrate the strengths and uniqueness of regional printmaking, but they do so by positioning themselves in opposition to the place occupied by traditional printmaking practices within institutional frameworks.

By being defined in this contestative manner women printmakers are given a political presence within the discourses of dominant art institutions. Yet they can only achieve this power by remaining external and separated from the processes of centralised printmaking while reinforcing its power. As Foucauldian scholar Lois McNay states:

In short, the other is not always a marginal figure; rather its construction as such is always central, in a mundane way, to the maintenance of a hegemonic system of norms. 28

The ability of regional women’s printmaking to shift the way institutions engage with printmaking cannot be pursued within a purely postcolonial framework. However, some of the concepts from this area of cultural discourse are valuable in the way that they inform how the tools to adopt or subvert a marginal identity are accessible to artists practising on the ‘margin’. This is an area that Spivak focuses on in her examination of the way concepts of gender, ethnicity and marginalisation are established by education and become long-term and collective.29 It is also through education that regional women


printmakers give themselves the authority to narrate their position within society. The gradual integration of this narrative into the mainstream art industry has become increasingly evident in recent years. The role of printmaking education in the development of regional printmaking reveals the shifting priorities and networks of art institutions. Contemporary cultural governance demonstrates a heterogeneity that subdues the oppositional relationships that are so strongly apparent in the work of Foucault and postcolonial discourses. The nature of the culture industry today is best examined from the perspective of the institution and the marginal individual simultaneously. Bourdieu’s work on the field of cultural production provides the tools for this examination.

In Bourdieu’s study, the centre of the culture industry is governed by a wide variety of agents who are given their power by the political, cultural and social institutions that dominate culture. Bourdieu’s articulation of cultural power has many similarities to Michel Foucault’s concept of heterogeneous, discursive power as providing a means to observe the shifts in institutional priorities that govern the discussion of things or objects. For Foucault, heterogeneous power is “something that circulates,” distributed through complex social networks and ordered disciplines of knowledge acting reciprocally with those it influences. Bourdieu’s approach also takes this focus. However, his central theory is that the structures that order social settings are influenced by institutions through a complex array of networks, associations and competing parties who strive for many different forms of power – intellectual, economic and cultural. This network is termed the ‘field’. There are fields that govern the order of different areas of society. For example, the field of economic production addresses the way restricted and unrestricted markets interrelate to create alternative market areas, each emphasising the specific value of the other. In the field of cultural production, cultural producers, audiences and patronage organizations conduct a series of strategic relationships with different fields, such as the economic field, the educational field, the political field and the cultural field. These relationships aim at producing symbolic and economic forms of capital. It is the difference between these two

31 Swartz, Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu, p. 117.
forms of capital that is particularly important for the study of contemporary regional women printmakers.

Symbolic capital is the value or authority given to cultural processes or works of art that cannot be reduced to economic capital. It examines the work of art in accordance with established traditions, cultural and social values and market structures, and is affirmed by connoisseurs who recognise, measure and consecrate the value of the symbolic capital. In the case of the practice of contemporary regional women printmakers, symbolic value is a concept of legitimacy formulated and maintained by galleries, art schools, critics and commercial dealers as they attribute a 'high art' or 'low art' status of printmaking media and practices. The 'high art' value is attributed to prints that reflect the tenets of originality, artistic genius, restricted production and high technical quality – concepts that are critical in maintaining the hierarchy of the artworld. The antithesis of 'high art' is 'low art', a value that is projected onto prints associated (or perceived to be associated) with craft practices, non-specific art and craft markets, low-level or non-institutional education, ignorance of editioning processes and prints of poor quality. The 'high art' qualities of prints collected or represented by art institutions are consistently emphasised when focused upon in exhibitions or research. Other types of printmaking may not be presented as a unique artwork, with the symbolic authority that an art object possesses. If a print is not represented within this artistic ideology, it is relegated to the role of an education tool. This role becomes its identity within the context of the art museum – it may provide sociological and political information on a printmaking genre or technique, but in so doing forfeits its independent value as a unique art object. The danger presented by a binary system of valuation is that the simplicity of discriminating between one accepted form of printmaking and all others can have significant influence beyond the confines of the institution itself. Institutions can therefore direct the kinds of value associated with different kinds of print and printmaking practice as the symbolic capital contained in the concepts of 'high' and 'low' art allow them to create similar distinctions between different art practices.

The acceptance of these values by printmakers and their audiences occurs because they correspond to a pre-established set of the value systems that have been integrated into

each individual's perception of the social worlds that they are part of. Bourdieu refers to this set of preconceptions as habitus. In his concept of habitus, Bourdieu argues that the cultural field is successful in its ability to define and organise individuals and organizations through securing the agreement of individuals, even when it reproduces forms of difference against their best interests. Habitus is composed of a series of transposable dispositions in a system of practices and representation that order and govern culture without overtly obeying rules, acting through the individual as 'second nature,' directing choices and governing taste. Bourdieu's model provides a model of heterogeneous social processes that highlight the movement of power throughout society. The power established by cultural institutions is subtly maintained through cultural conventions, individual socialisation and education. Habitus of printmakers therefore shifts in response to the way exhibiting and pedagogic institutions reinterpret the print.

The habitus of an artist is reflected in her work. Established approaches to women printmakers intertwine critical analysis of their work with narratives of the artists within their contemporary artworld and the way they perceive this place. It could be argued that examining the biography of the artist compromises the work as an independent art object. It can lead to identifying gender as an innate element of the work itself. A printmaker who is a single mother working in a rural environment may receive many unique influences on the conception, production and dissemination of her work. While this may inform many aspects of her practice, it cannot be assumed that the artist ever intended her work to be interpreted in relation to the context of its production. Relating the features of production with the meaning of a work as a matter of course establishes the work and the artist within an area of the artworld where things such as gender, class and region have their own value. In the eyes of the institutions that establish these values, the aesthetic and sociological values of the work and its production unite to create a specific cultural product. Separating the two so that the artwork and its creation can be examined without one dictating the interpretation of the other is necessary in order to study the nature of regional women's printmaking and its

35 This is particularly apparent in the catalogues published for small regional exhibitions. This is discussed in further detail in chapter three.
equal quality to urban printmaking, which is examined as an exclusive art object not requiring validation beyond itself.

The way to achieve this is by focusing on the values which women printmakers themselves attribute to their work and practice. Much of the art production that appears to occur outside institutional frameworks takes on an identity of marginality. However, by approaching these areas of practice as sites of possibility instead of exclusion, Bourdieu’s concept of habitus can provide a perspective that draws out the concepts of place and legitimacy that inform the choices made and practices pursued by contemporary regional women printmakers. In a postmodern environment, there can be no ‘marginal’ groups. Printmakers who work in regional Australia, however, often feel as if they are on the margins of a centralised artworld, distanced from its discourses, its sense of community and exposure to national and international art. While not discrediting this perception of distance, it is more useful to conceptualise this space as liminal, rather than marginal.36 As a liminal space there is more opportunity for the analysis of how regional women printmakers negotiate issues posed by geography, material and institutional tradition than an approach that concentrates on the disadvantages that face art practice on the ‘margins’.

A sense of capacity is developed through the habitus of women printmakers in all areas of Australia, underpinning their methods of advocating their prints, locating printmaking practice and assessing its relevance. Specific factors affect the practice of women printmakers, such as having and caring for children, the restricted market, part-time practice, or the level of family and community support. Contemporary practice, however, has shifted to suit different environments, using positioning techniques to establish links to both institutional and individual interpretations of place. The choices made by women printmakers in regional Australia reveal that the development of symbolic forms of capital that suit the issues of practice specific to regional printmaking is central to the examination of emerging areas of contemporary art practice. New printmaking practices contain new

symbolic values. Printmaking occurring outside urban printmaking traditions has opened a liminal space of creation and change.

Many elements of this area of practice are closely interlinked with institutional arts governance, yet much of it is also independent. There are different symbolic values that are connected with both these elements of regional practice. Traditional symbolic values of 'fine art' and institutional affiliation develop with regional printmakers relationships with art institutions. New symbolic values are available to printmakers who work independently of institutions as well. One form of symbolic capital is attainable by printmakers who deliberately attempt to subvert the dominance of a centralised artworld through a political stance. Another form of symbolic capital is available to printmakers whose regional position leaves them dissociated from institutional systems, giving them a kind of uncompromised and individual artistic identity. Regional printmakers have a liminal place within the artworld that allows them to combine these different forms of symbolic capital. By doing so they are able influence the position of their work within the cultural industry without relying on 'recognition' and legitimation of their practice by a centralised artworld.

Conclusion

The perspective of women's printmaking proposed by this chapter is that any examination needs to reflect the changing nature of contemporary art institutions as incorporative and adaptable, not exclusive and rigid. The contemporary construct of the institution is a mixture of lived non-institutional experience and the symbolic values that derive from the ideals of art institutions filtered through the centuries. One of the critical means by which institutions can ensure the continued legitimacy of diverse printmaking practices is by expanding their own ability to consecrate art and art production. Implicit in the devolution of the cultural authority of art institutions is a commensurate shift of the concept of 'professionalism' from meaning the possession of specialist skills to being a signifier of a consecrated position within the art industry. Ergo, a professional artist is not necessarily one who practices full-time or makes her living by her art, but one who has been accepted into the area of the field of cultural production dominated by institutions. This
does not mean that there are a greater number of artists considered to be professional, but it
does mean that, with the increase of institutional activities in regional Australia, more artists
have a chance of being involved with universities, and thus a greater chance of achieving
professional status. They therefore experience more encouragement to continue practising
and a greater acceptance of the legitimacy of their work.

This adaptive approach is also used within institutions themselves to overcome the
effects of economic rationalism and to meet with the requirements of government to produce
cultural capital in the form of fine art and community cultural development, as both of these
are perceived to inform national identity and social wellbeing. Bourdieu's belief that the
habitus of individuals informs how they interpret their place within society is valuable for a
study of contemporary women printmakers as it allows an examination of the choices made
by those who wish to maintain a printmaking practice in regional Australia. The
relationships they form with institutions can only in themselves demonstrate how
printmakers can access different institutional processes, what value systems they can link
into and the limitations and restrictions that they experience in these relationships.
However, it cannot provide evidence of why they make the decision to affiliate themselves
with different art institutions. Some printmakers work with institutions that are closely
associated with all areas of their practice, such as art schools. Others only use art
institutions as a source of funding for short-term projects, and, while some choose to pursue
high calibre patronage from institutions such as the Australia Council, others choose to tap
regional resources, such as the local council. These decisions are not simply made
according to what is available, or according to the quality of the work. The institution can
only assist those who make themselves known to it. Rather, regional printmakers make the
decision to work with art institutions in order to create certain forms of capital that will
assist the ongoing nature of the practice.

The values women printmakers associate with their work, however, owe a
considerable debt to the forms of symbolic capital established by art institutions.
Printmakers have for years received strong impressions of what constitutes high and low
forms of printmaking in Australia. Urban workshop practices have received significantly
more academic and curatorial interest that the activities of isolated individuals
experimenting with new printmaking techniques. Although the facility is now established
for women to engage in a wide range of different and high quality forms of professional printmaking practice in regional Australia, regional women printmakers often perceive the value of their work or practice in accordance to the concepts of centre and periphery established in existing literature, exhibitions and oral histories. These concepts may affect the legitimacy women feel they have to approach art institutions. The printmakers who still feel this sense of inhibition and those who have rebelled against it have been taught these values through a system of cultural education that derives from all areas of culture. The expansion of art education offering courses on printmaking and on the art industry have provided regional women printmakers with the tools to form their own sense of legitimacy within the contemporary art industry. The following chapter discusses this process through an examination of regional university art schools, regional vocational education and the patronage exercised by pedagogic institutions in the forms of university art collections.
Chapter Two

Plate 3
Olga Sankey, Dapple #1, 2002,
digital print
Art education functions as an integral feature of the cultural industry. Its role is not only to sustain artistic traditions, but also to productively function as part of the creative industries by teaching students how to contribute to the cultural economy as active practitioners. There is a trend towards diverse and flexible forms of printmaking education in all tertiary education. For printmaking education this has taken the form of a growing appearance of general overview courses that survey printmaking techniques. These courses are accessible to a wide range of students, do not require a great deal of preparatory training and are often able to be taught by a small number of staff. The impact of economic rationalisation on printmaking courses has affected all pedagogic institutions by reducing staff, materials and equipment. However, the alternative approaches pedagogic workshops have developed in response to these changes have led to both institutions producing unique and innovative printmaking practices. The differences that once distinguished the depth and quality of the printmaking education offered by university and TAFE printmaking courses has thus decreased. Despite this, visual arts education in universities and vocational education has continued to be conceptualised as representing polarities of cultural quality and significance. This chapter discusses the dissolution of the traditional binary opposition between university and vocational arts education. It addresses some of the advantages and disadvantages affecting regional women printmakers that result from this redistribution of printmaking pedagogy. The tools these forms of education give to a wide range of regional printmakers allows printmakers working in a wide range of different practices to have the skill to recognise and engage with the areas of the artworld that offer the most benefit to their practice.

In this study, statistics that reveal a rise in the number of women enrolled in tertiary printmaking courses are used where available. However, numbers obtained of rises and falls in students numbers, broken down into gender, can only serve as general indicators, as the statistics gathered by the Department of Education, Science and Training and the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveal broad trends, and are rarely broken down into specific areas of study. For example, statistics show that the number of women involved in visual arts education has grown significantly in the last decade, but these numbers do not distinguish between regional and urban institutions. Nor do the numbers

1 See Appendix III.
distinguish between different areas of art education and in some cases do not even refer to visual art as a distinct category. The number of universities offering printmaking in regional Australia, however, provides an indication of the opportunities that are now provided to areas traditionally isolated from the formal artistic training and institutional networks offered by urban art schools.

The higher number of women enrolling in printmaking courses is in keeping with the higher numbers of women enrolling in tertiary Humanities and arts courses generally, and does not indicate that there is a shift disadvantageous to male printmakers. However, the shift in the structural and conceptual place of tertiary printmaking education that has occurred during the last decade has had a specific impact on regional women printmakers. A more flexible delivery of courses appeals to women who have to fit education around existing responsibilities in their lives. Tertiary printmaking courses attract regional women printmakers for a range of reasons, and geographical accessibility may not be the primary factor that influences enrolment choices. Statistical analysis may indicate changing course structures and enrolment patterns, but an investigation of the experience of teachers, students, artists and curators elicits a more balanced perspective of contemporary shifts in printmaking pedagogy.

In 2003 there were twenty-eight universities and art schools offering degrees in printmaking at thirty-eight campuses throughout Australia, which is an increase of nine from 1990. Only eight of these campuses are in the traditional printmaking centres of Melbourne and Sydney, and nine in the State or Territory capitals of Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Darwin, Hobart and Perth. The remaining twenty-one tertiary printmaking courses are located in regional universities. The expansion of formal printmaking education into regional Australia over the past decade is also evident in the vocational education sector. Fifty-eight Technical and Further Education (TAFE) facilities currently offer courses in printmaking. The binary opposition that has traditionally existing between university and vocational arts education has decreased during the last

---

2 There are six universities who have offered new printmaking courses since 1993 (these courses have been offered at eight campuses). Two existing universities have expanded to provide printmaking at new campuses: the University of Tasmania offering printmaking at its Launceston campus and Deakin University offering printmaking at its Warrnambool campus. While there has been a general increase of printmaking courses throughout Australia, three courses have been withdrawn. See Appendix II.

3 For example, in New South Wales alone there has been an increase of twenty to twenty-seven TAFE institutes offering printmaking as a course or as a component of a visual arts course. The increase of printmaking courses in the vocational education sector noted here does not include the printmaking classes offered by Continuing Adult Education (CAE).
decade.\(^4\) TAFEs have traditionally serviced regional areas and have offered course structures that have been responsive to the needs of their clients (the students). These courses have generally been shorter overviews of techniques that students are able to continue after leaving the course. The printmaking education offered has consequently tended to be that of low-technology techniques and materials that can be adapted to suit domestic printmaking activity. The devolution of universities into regional Australia, however, has led to academic and vocational institutions working side by side within similar cultural environments. The consequence of this development on regional women’s printmaking has been significant.

This chapter therefore discusses the impact of decentralised printmaking education by examining it on two thematic levels. First, an overview of contemporary printmaking education at universities and vocational institutions reveals how reduction of staff, courses and equipment are counteracted by the collaborative relationships formed between institutions and individuals. Second, the dissolution of the distinction between different traditions of printmaking education is explored in terms of its significance for individual printmakers whose practice is closely affiliated with regional pedagogic institutions. The methods pedagogic institutions use to meet the needs of new regional populations leads to a wider range of skill levels and a new accessibility of prints to regional artists and audiences. The next section of this chapter discusses the university art collections as an educational tool that also bridges regional and urban professional printmaking practices. The final discussion presented argues that an emphasis on collaboration that printmakers are both taught and exposed to in art schools and through university patrons encourage them to replicate them in their practice once they graduate, reducing the chance that they will be isolated from beneficial art networks.

The decentralisation of printmaking education, 1993-2003: An overview

Regional universities offer education in both traditional and new printmaking techniques. For example, the Southern Cross University, the University of Southern

Queensland, Curtin University and James Cook University each offer the same traditional techniques (lithography, intaglio, screen-printing and relief) as urban printmaking courses. Regional printmaking courses also teach techniques that have become popular in recent years, such as digital, monotype and solarplate printmaking. In addition, students studying printmaking are also able to take courses on book arts, paper casting and papermaking.\(^5\) In response to the multidisciplinary environment that is beginning to characterise contemporary art schools, several institutions have renamed their printmaking departments. For example, the printmaking department at the Australian National University (ANU) School of Art is named Printmedia and the University of Newcastle has dissolved the boundaries between media in courses such as “Studies in 2D” and “Studies in 3D” and subjects such as “Print as Object” and “Paper as Form”. The change in name enables the course to incorporate photographic and digital techniques into a workshop environment of matrices, transference of images and layered impressions.

In this manner the university printmaking workshop responds to the changing cultural environment by incorporating new and traditional printmaking techniques into an interdisciplinary pedagogic framework. The structure of printmaking courses has also shifted in response to the contemporary cultural industry. Universities compete for funding and to do this they need extended research programs that encourage original research that will also promote the university. In the last decade many universities have extended their fine art degrees from Diplomas and Bachelors of Fine Art to include Masters and Doctorates, many of these featuring printmaking as a major. In 1994, seven universities with printmaking courses offered postgraduate programs.\(^6\) By 2003, nineteen universities offered studio-based Masters of Arts and fourteen offered Doctors of Philosophy by Research. These postgraduate courses reflect the strong symbolic value associated with research and development in the visual arts. The university benefits from the production of a body of original research, while being able to promote itself as a key site of patronage and creation within the artworld. Postgraduate degrees also have a valuable pedagogic purpose for undergraduate students. As the postgraduate...
student usually works within the printmaking workshop, undergraduate students are exposed to the processes involved in a long-term artistic project.

Of greater significance for this thesis is the fact that more than half of these postgraduate degrees are offered by regional universities.\(^7\) Three of the nine printmakers studied in detail in this thesis have completed postgraduate printmaking degrees in regional universities.\(^8\) These printmakers developed highly refined printmaking techniques and a strong theoretical grounding for their work, bridging the distance between artist as producer and academic as critic. Postgraduate degrees have allowed these printmakers to have access to equipment, materials and the time necessary to produce a large body of work. These degrees allow printmakers to ‘emerge’ into the artworld while still within art school. They graduate with a strong style, a body of work and a high symbolic value attributed to their work because of its development within one of the key consecrating art institutions. Once the postgraduate student has graduated the university gains a further reflected glory should the artist find success within the art market. While reflective of broad pedagogic and cultural trends, course structures do not in themselves provide insight into the influence and function of regional art schools in the expansion of women’s printmaking practice. Rather, the influence of these institutions on the rapid development of regional women’s printmaking is most apparent in two areas that have altered significantly over the last decade: staff employment and student enrolment.

Printmaking staff has been dramatically reduced in many university art schools throughout Australia. By looking at the staffing levels of two university art schools over the last decade, it is possible to see the impact of these staff reductions. In 1994 the art department in the University of Tasmania had seventy-three casual and full-time staff. The ANU School of Art had one hundred and sixty-five. In 2003 this number had dropped to fifty and one hundred respectively,\(^9\) with eleven and twenty-three of these listed as casual staff.\(^{10}\) In the visual arts a drop in staffing levels not only signifies a reduction in range of courses, but also a decrease in technical staff. Without technical staff, art school printmaking workshops may have to reduce the range of printmaking techniques they teach – lithography, for example, is a medium that requires a

\(^7\) See Appendix I.
\(^8\) Marion Manifold completed a Doctor of Philosophy at Deakin University, Warrnambool, Victoria in 2001, Jill O’Sullivan completed a Masters in Fine Art at James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland in 2004 and Sue Pickering completed a Master in Fine Art in 1994 at the Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart.
considerable commitment of staff time and cannot be taught adequately with a single lecturer. A greater workload for the remaining teachers leaves art schools with little choice but to generalise their course offerings.

For Deakin University, Warrnambool, the decreased teaching hours and subsequent limited subject offerings led to a decline of the printmaking course over several years.\textsuperscript{11} The printmaking course closed without fanfare in 2004. A decrease in staff can result in art schools combining their courses into interdisciplinary subjects, such as those offered by the University of Newcastle. One of the most significant effects of staff reduction is that remaining printmaking staff build a variety of often-unconventional industry relationships in order to maintain the quality of their department’s courses. Universities must respond to cultural environment, providing skills and connections that will assist students in getting a place in the arts industry. This shift from a traditional ‘fine art’ to a more industry responsive model may have many problems but also entails benefits to university and students. The University of Newcastle comments that:

\begin{quote}
For Printmaking [the decrease in course range] has meant that we find it difficult to have a student with a really in depth knowledge of one technique. However, our electives are exciting to teach and offer wonderful opportunities to engage with special projects or other areas of the school – this was not really a feature of the old structure.\textsuperscript{12}
\end{quote}

The adapted courses are able to address the needs of an increasingly diverse range of students who attend university art schools. Many of these may have decided to take printmaking in university after completing a vocational printmaking course. Women are more likely than men to undertake award courses and enabling courses.\textsuperscript{13} The increased provision of vocational courses that are recognized by university institutions, in addition to the increased proximity of vocational and university printmaking workshops in regional Australia, provide an important point of transference for regional printmakers between TAFEs and university art schools. Yet many printmaking courses have developed a flexible approach to pedagogy that emphasises collaboration with other printmaking institutions. As will be discussed in detail in the next section of the chapter, the limitations represented by economic restrictions and regional geography are overcome through strategic associations with regional art galleries, other art schools and with local printmaking communities, including TAFEs.

\textsuperscript{11} Marion Manifold, interview with the author, Camperdown, Victoria, 20 September 2003.
\textsuperscript{12} Patricia Wilson-Adams, survey response, April 2004.
\textsuperscript{13} Higher Education at the crossroads, Table 3.
The central feature of these collaborations is the relationships that form between individual printmakers that can subvert issues of distance and bureaucracy.

Printmaking courses in TAFE institutions reflect many of the same economic restrictions and creative opportunities as university art schools. However, the large numbers of TAFEs distributed throughout Australia mean that these factors are not as overt as they are in university printmaking departments. The expansion of the number of TAFE courses (as indicated by the increase of 27 to 75 in New South Wales, listed in Appendix VIII) indicates that printmaking is not in a severe decline in the TAFE sector, despite the reduction in subjects offered in many TAFE institutions. The printmaking courses offered in New South Wales, Tasmania and South Australia indicate that intaglio and relief are the most common printmaking techniques provided by vocational training institutions. Several other techniques, such as lithography and artists books, are also offered by TAFE printmaking workshops. It is the ability of contemporary TAFEs to provide the same printmaking techniques as many universities that make these institutions capable of producing printmakers who enter tertiary education or the arts industry with professional skills. While they may provide important access to traditional printmaking skills, vocational educational institutions also offer distinctive forms of printmaking education. In their primary goal to provide flexible and industry-oriented models of pedagogy they can provide courses in recent techniques, such as digital printmedia. However, TAFEs must also be directly responsive to their cultural and economic environment, streamlining their provision of service to suit the region within which they operate. This may mean that although they offer new and traditional printmaking techniques these may not necessarily be provided in technique-specific courses.

The basic role of TAFEs is to provide up-to-date industry skills. They must satisfactorily fulfil the requirements of numerous stakeholders, yet because they are independent businesses they must also respond quickly to the directives of economic rationalism. Factors such as student demand and satisfaction, industry reaction, completion rates and graduate employment all influence the nature of a TAFE printmaking course. As a consequence of this responsibility TAFEs provide a less

14 TAFE Tasmania offers lithography at its Hobart and Devonport campuses, until 2002 Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE offered lithography, the Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE has four different courses on book arts and artists books at its Townsville campus and the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE until recently offered lithography as part of its general printmaking subject.
15 For examples, see Appendix V.
stable environment for visual arts education than universities. However, despite the uncertainty this may engender, there are many advantages that make many TAFE institutes unique providers of regional printmaking education. For example, their courses are responsive to their surrounding economic and cultural environment. The Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE’s book arts courses, for example, reflect the strong interest in artists books fostered in Townsville. In this community Lyre Bird Press, the James Cook University Printmaking Department and individual printmakers throughout the community (including the TAFE teachers, Cheryl Wilson and Donna Foley) collaborate often on artists book and printmaking projects. As an “efficient” college, the visual arts course at the Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE took full advantage of a creative environment that encouraged inter-institutional and interdisciplinary collaboration. The TAFE therefore plays an important role in contributing to the local cultural industry.

TAFE printmaking courses can develop an awareness of printmaking techniques to individuals who previously were unaware of its existence or had no access to it. The Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE’s printmaking course, under Patrick Petein, created a culture of lithography which had not previously existed. Students without previous training quickly exhibited a commitment to the medium. The course structure was flexible enough to respond to this interest by increasing the time spent on the lithographic technique within a general printmaking course. A significant aspect of this scenario was that the majority of students were over forty, with several in their sixties. Many were undertaking printmaking education for the first time, typical of the many women who take advantage of the time at their disposal after their children have left home or they have retired from farming and moved into town. The age group of 30-49 years is where much of the expansion of regional women’s printmaking begins. Those with children still at home can fit the course around their family obligations and others can take the course without the financial commitment required by universities. They are free to choose if they will continue the course into committed private practice or move on to a university course.

Collaboration between different pedagogic institutions has resulted in education precincts and vocational courses recognised by universities, encouraging vocational

---

17 Patrick Petein, interview with the artist, Toowoomba, New South Wales, 9 October 2002.
18 Ibid.
19 Students commencing enabling courses and non-award courses were in the 30-49 age bracket. Commonwealth Government of Australia, Students 2003: selected higher education statistics, p. 16, Table 2.
students to go on to study at university. The higher number of women than men undertaking courses in the Creative Arts, together with the fact that close to forty per cent of TAFE graduates live outside of capital cities indicates that women are more likely than men to enrol in regional printmaking courses. The accessibility of pedagogic institutions in regional Australia increases the likelihood of a regional population of tertiary educated printmakers. Younger students are likely to relocate their practice during the early stages of their career, and are often encouraged to do so by their teachers. However, the mature age of many of the printmakers who undertake creative arts courses indicates that there is an increase of students who have settled lives in regional Australia. These printmakers are more likely to remain within the region once they have completed the course.

The role of pedagogic institutions in regional Australia is an important element of the continued practice of these printmakers. Regional universities and TAFEs may attract different kinds of students, with factors such as the time available to the student for study, the expected outcomes of their study and the artistic cultures with which they may feel an affinity all influencing the decision to participate in either system of tertiary education. This separation is now breaking down. On a more obvious level, it is because of the structure of the tertiary education system is changing, particularly evident in increased opportunities for transference between vocational and tertiary education. The collaborations between the institutions and the community also educate audiences about prints. Regional universities and TAFEs regularly exhibit the work of their students, encouraging a local market and developing standards of professionalism in art marketing and display in regional Australia.

It has already been noted that shifts in numbers and government priorities have led to changes in way teach and function with local and broader community. However, an often-overlooked feature of universities and their relationship with the arts is the university art collection. These are essentially investment collections, yet they collect more that just financial value, serving to represent the university’s role in mentoring cultural and creative development. An important site of patronage for regional

20 The Academy of the Arts at Inveresk hosted TAFE Tasmania and the University of Tasmania’s Art, Craft & Design programs in 2002, “sharing ideas, resources and skills between Institute and university staff” (Higher Education at the crossroads, p. 13).

21 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Selected Higher Education Statistics, 1993. There were 57,896 students enrolled in the Creative Arts in 2003, an increase of 5.3% on 2002. (Summary of student numbers, 2002 and 2003, Higher Education at the crossroads, Table (i)).

22 Higher Education at the Crossroads, p. 4.

23 Annette Ogden, interview with the author, Brisbane, Queensland, 11 October 2002; Stephen Spurrier, interview with the author, Toowoomba, Queensland, 10 October 2002.
printmakers is the university art collection. These collections have developed along different lines than public art gallery collections, emphasising different priorities and different forms of symbolic capital. As such, an examination of university collections with strength in collecting prints highlights that different institutional collecting cultures reflect different regional areas and pedagogic cultures.

Pedagogy and patronage: Prints and regional women printmakers in Cinderella collections

University art collections (known as Cinderella collections) combine museological and pedagogic perspectives, constructing prints as part of an environment of learning and communication. The collecting, exhibition and patronage activities of university art collections testify to this function. There are fifty-one Australian universities with collections of art, eleven of which possess substantial collections of Australian prints.24 Each Cinderella collection is shaped by the cultural histories of the regions they occupy. One of the major ways that printmakers benefit from inclusion within a university art collection is through the collection’s ability to sustain the prints within an active social space. In the context of the university, in public corridors and private offices, these prints extend into the space surrounding them. Ian McLean notes university art collections “do not just collect art; they contribute to the production of cultural knowledge and influence the ways in which we imagine our community and ourselves.”25 He believes that they can reflect art’s “important role in the economic, the social and the cultural wealth of their community.”26 A Cinderella collection moves throughout the university and “inhabits, almost in an organic manner, many of the public spaces of campus life.”27

Cinderella collections therefore respond directly to their cultural environment. Griffith ARTWORKS, which manages the Griffith University Art Collection, believes their collection to be “about contemporary life and art: cutting-edge practice loaded with

24 These are the Australian National University, Charles Sturt University, Edith Cowen University, Flinders University, Griffith University, Melbourne University, Northern Territory University, Queensland University of Technology, University of New South Wales, University of Tasmania, and University of Wollongong. A “substantial collection of Australian prints” is defined as collections that possess more than 300 prints by Australian artists.
25 Ian McLean, in Art and Place: Collecting Contemporary Art at Northern Territory University, Darwin: Northern Territory University, 1999, p. 7.
ideas, theoretically-based, often daring in concept and realisation, always innovative, challenging, and forever young."\textsuperscript{28} Notable examples of university art collection that demonstrate this relationship are Griffith ARTWORK’s collection of the works of the poster collectives Lucifoil Posters and Inkahoots, Sydney University’s Tin Sheds collection of the works of the Earthworks Poster Collective, and Wollongong University’s works from Redback Graphix. Others collections, however, reveal conservative collections dominated by prints developed within Melbourne and Sydney institutions, with limited representation of women or local printmakers. McLean notes in relation to the development of the Northern Territory University Art Collection that such conservative views can result in a lack of representation of an important yet emerging area of art production, such as the work of women artists.\textsuperscript{29}

University art collections are responsive to the teaching priorities of the institution. The art collections of universities with visual arts courses utilise the collection as a teaching tool, including works that assist practical as well as conceptual knowledge of contemporary Australian printmaking. In addition to collecting prints that challenge conventional definitions of the print, such as Emmerson’s \textit{Gui Nan Feng} (Phantom South Wind) (a sculptural installation with lithographic prints, dimensions unknown, 1994), collections may also include printmaking plates, such as Cressida Campbell’s hand-painted woodcut matrix, \textit{Through the windscreen} (hand-painted woodcut, 49 x 61cm, University of New South Wales, 1986) in the University of New South Wales’ art collection. The Monash University Art Collection also illustrates a close relationship between the collecting and patronage practices of the institution and its pedagogic function. The collection represents a significant number of emerging and established contemporary Australian artists. One such artist is Newcastle-based printmaker Neil Emmerson, who undertook printmaking residency in Monash University’s Faculty of Art & Design in 2003. The inclusion of prints by printmakers involved in visual arts residencies allows the collection to promote the university’s value as an active and diverse pedagogic environment. The printmaker-in-residence program is valuable because it places students in close proximity to a working professional printmaker. As Emmerson comments of his residency: “Students … have the


opportunity to observe me at work and attend structured classes, where I can project my ideas about developing a practice and demonstrate techniques I use in my work.\(^{30}\)

Art historian, Ian McLean, states that one of the key issues facing regional university collections is the compromise between cultivating the symbolic value associated with traditional art collections and the institution's duty to the development of regional artists and audiences. Cinderella collections must reflect their cultural environment, emphasising what is unique about their cultural and geographic location without representing its art production as acting on the periphery of a centralised artworld. McLean argues:

> More isolated from the centre [than major state collections], they at the same time serve it. Their art collections, for example, often consist of work by artists from far-off centres that are held up as exemplars to follow. Rather than being sites of cultural production and contestation, their collections are viewed as a valuable resource which add what is absent locally. The intention may be well meaning, but the result often alienates local artists.\(^{31}\)

Whereas once Cinderella collections were displayed in spaces that were “often an expedient conversion of unused studios,”\(^{32}\) many universities now have galleries in which to display their collection.

During the 1990s many universities suffered funding cuts and in many cases had to suspend the acquisition of works for the art collection.\(^{33}\) The University of Tasmania’s collection provides evidence of the impact of such reductions on the institution’s ability to support printmakers (often graduates of the school) and reflect the role of the institution within the local and national cultural environment. Until the mid-1990s, the university was a strong supporter of women printmakers in the state. The collection purchased contemporary works by Tasmanian printmakers such as Denise Campbell, Filomena Coppola, Betsy Gamble, Barbie Kjar and Helen Wright, with donations by Dallas Richardson, Geraldine O'Reilly, Joanne Wild and Helen Wright. These purchases and donations demonstrate a relationship of mutual support between the


\(^{31}\) McLean in *Art and Place*, p. 7.


University of Tasmania collection and individual women printmakers. The collection revealed the development of printmaking in all regions of Tasmania, reflecting its rich printmaking culture. A reduction in acquisition funding has meant that there has been very little acquisition activity in the last several years, with most contemporary works donated to the collection. As it cannot be used as a major area for the accumulation of cultural capital for the university, the collection is left without the necessary reputation to stimulate the funding for further development.

Regional university collections provide an important alternative to exhibiting in commercial or major public collections. For individual artists, acquisition by Cinderella collections is gratifying. Their work acquires a symbolic value that also augments their professional standing, incorporating them into an institutional community. A brief examination of the Australian National University (ANU) Art Collection explores the influence of these collections on contemporary women printmakers. The ANU collection is one of the most significant university collections in the country. A particular strength is its involvement with the rich printmaking culture in the region, particularly the printmaking activities associated with the ANU School of Art. The ANU Drill Hall Gallery’s exhibition *The Print, The Press, The Artist and The Printer* explores this relationship. The exhibition provided an overview of the development of print workshops in the Australian Capital Territory. The prints exhibited were from printmaking workshops in the region (such as Criterion Press, Studio One and Theo Tremblay Editions). By emphasising the collaborative relationships formed in workshop environments between artists, printmakers and printers, this exhibition implied that the ANU was a central element of printmaking in the Canberra region. From this position within the regional printmaking culture, the ANU Art Collection has collected a large number of prints. This collection shows a high number of women printmakers, many of whom have worked closely with the ANU and the ANU School of Art.

The high population of women printmakers in the region is indicated in the major catalogue of the collection published in 1997 and the 2004 catalogue of recent

---

34 The collection also has strong holdings of women printmakers from other states.
35 Rosanna Cameron, 10 December 2002; University of Tasmania, *The Fine Art Collection at the University of Tasmania: An inventory*, Hobart: University of Tasmania, 2001.
36 The collection has approximately 370 prints.
acquisitions. Included among these are printmakers who have worked, trained or collaborated with the printmaking and artists book studios of the ANU School of Art, including Fiona Foley and Helen Geier. School of Art staff and graduates in the collection also reflect the diversity of printmaking in the region. Frances Rhodes is a graduate from the Graphic Investigation Workshop at the ANU School of Arts in 1981. G. W. Bot’s linocut print, *Regeneration*, and the recent commission of Anne Ferguson’s sculptural print *Life’s shadows* (glass screen print on glass, two components, 5.8 x 3.5 x 1.9 m each, Peter Baume Building, ANU Art Collection, 2004, (Plate 4)) are further evidence of the university’s patronage of local contemporary women printmakers.

University art collections demonstrate two key areas of importance for printmaking: community and education. These collections can strongly reflect their immediate cultural environment, holding examples of printmaking practices that are unique to the region and illustrate the role of the university as a patron of local artistic communities. Prints held in university collections are also often made by artists who have learnt or taught at the university, reflecting the role of the institution as a pedagogic facility. Regional pedagogic institutions are often at the centre of a dynamic and creative community. They have the ability to directly reflect many of the key characteristics of these communities, while revealing the role the university has played as both a pedagogic centre and a major patron for the arts in the region, and an important element of regional arts development.

**Pedagogic printmaking institutions and the ‘creative economy’**

The decentralisation of university art schools into regional Australia has increased the capacity of regional printmakers to train in and pursue professional printmaking practice. The role of the educational institution in supporting this development is central to the development of sustained printmaking cultures in regional Australia. More importantly, however, it is the impact that it has on how women perceive their practice that has the most long-term effects. Regional women printmakers practice in a liminal space that constantly shifts in and out of institutional frameworks. The ability to collaborate with a range of different areas of the artworld is vital to

---

regional art practice, and it is through the training and support they receive from the institution that these techniques are often established. The following discussion examines in more detail how printmaking pedagogy reaches beyond the institution itself to develop innovative approaches to weather the shifting priorities of economic or cultural governance.

In 1987 a major reform of the higher education sector was set in motion by the Commonwealth Government’s White Paper, *Higher Education: A Policy Statement*. The policy aimed to streamline the education sector by developing flexible modes of education that were responsive to social, cultural and economic environments. From the late 1980s to the mid-1990s gradual amalgamations turned centres for Continuing Adult Education (CAE), TAFEs and small universities into larger pedagogic institutions that serviced large urban and regional areas. The amalgamations initiated a dramatic decrease in the number of staff in art schools, despite the increase in students numbers contained within large visual arts programmes. Another major change to the Australian art industry came in 1994 with the development of Australia’s first cultural policy, *Creative Nation*. The policy explores the potential of all areas of cultural industry to create forms of cultural capital that would in turn cultivate forms of national identity, areas of cultural tourism and a sense of creative capacity. The principles of this policy have informed the concept of the ‘creative industries’ that underlies the governance of contemporary art production. The concept of the creative industries shares many similarities with Bourdieu’s concept of the field of cultural production. Different institutions and agents compete for symbolic capital within a range of cultural networks that are managed by art institutions. These institutions are art galleries, art schools, local and regional councils, the art market and government patronage agencies.

---

40 For a listing of the reviews that led to the Commonwealth Government’s 1987 White Paper, *Higher Education: A Policy Statement*, see Appendix IV.
41 *Higher Education at the Crossroads*, p. 63.
42 See Appendix II for the amalgamations that resulted in the contemporary institutions providing printmaking courses.
45 For a listing of the reviews that informed Creative Nation, see Appendix V.
Plate 4

Anne Ferguson, *Life's shadows*, glass screenprint on glass, two components, 2004, 580 x 350 x 190 cm, Peter Baume Building, Australian National University, Canberra. ANU Art Collection.
Regional printmaking education acts within these institutional networks. As they have decentralised, the collaborations between individuals and agents of the creative industries have influenced the character of institutional governance of the arts in the region. The following discussion focuses on the aspects of these relationships in printmaking pedagogy that particularly affect women printmakers.

Access to quality education and the skills to negotiate the ‘creative economy’ are central to both vocational and university visual arts courses. Most courses offer subjects on industry practice, teaching students how to maintain standards of professionalism and how to develop symbolic forms of capital that will improve their position within the artworld. The most important influence on emerging printmakers, however, is often the example of professional practice that is presented to them by their teachers. Printmaking teachers and lecturers often attempt to communicate the features of printmaking that drew them to the medium: for example, the political and aesthetic qualities of the print, the satisfaction in mastering difficult printmaking techniques or the democratic ability of the print to overcome social and cultural boundaries. Teachers who are practicing printmakers with an artworld profile also set a strong example to students.

One of the key features of printmaking education is the emphasis that is placed on approaching printmaking practice with pragmatism. Printmaking teachers encourage their students to approach institutional frameworks as scaffolding for their practice, rather than depending on them to consecrate the quality and legitimacy of their prints. Collaborations in the region enhance the cultural value of that region and fulfil the university’s obligation to regional cultural development. Collaboration with urban institutions also provides the university or TAFE with symbolic capital derived from participating with the traditional models of printmaking education that once dominated Australian printmaking and still contain significant value today. The following is a brief discussion of some of the most significant of these projects, which are chosen for the opportunities they provide women printmakers to negotiate the artworld.

The skills institutional pedagogy provides to this effect do not fundamentally differ between vocational and university forms of education, particularly as the printmakers who teach move freely between regional and urban cultural environments. For example, prominent printmakers such as Jan Davis, Kaye Green, Basil Hall, Jan Hogan, Nigel Lendon, Jennifer Marshall, Victoria Reynolds, Stephen Spurrier, Theo Tremblay, Paul Uhlmann and Normana Wight trained in major art schools, yet decided to work in regional universities. Each interpreted their idea of professional practice and
printmaking traditions in their own way, exploring the media without insularity to encourage the adaptation of material, resources and support that is often needed in regional environments. Tremblay, Lendon, Uhlmann and Wight, for example, have been important figures in the emergence of indigenous printmaking. Jan Davis trained at the Philip Institute of Technology in Melbourne. In her position as Professor at the University of the Southern Cross in Lismore in New South Wales she has been integral to the development of printmaking in the Northern Rivers district, supporting local artist initiatives, being involved in many regional print projects and encouraging a strong development in the area of digital printmaking and artists books.¹

The artworld influence and experience of vocational printmaking teachers is not significantly different from that of university printmaking teachers. Well-known printmakers such as Caroline Canty, Jazmina Cininas, Bela Kotai, Denise Campbell, Katy Thamo, Kathryn Orton, Cheryl Wilson, Michael Baartz, Anne Lord and Wim de Voss have all provided a range of vocational and non-institutional teaching. For these artists there is little isolation associated with their external position from an institutional structure. Instead, they demonstrate that it is possible to participate in an innovative and diverse community of individuals regardless of the regional location of their practice. There are three key methods pedagogic institutions use to enhance their industry relationships and advance printmaking knowledge. These are residencies, workshops and conferences, and they also illustrate the importance of interpersonal relationships in the development of successful regional printmaking practices.

Residencies are an important method through which specialist knowledge can be brought into a department that does not have the staff or the money to provide it. Lithography presents a particularly good example. Lithographers who do not have lithography equipment themselves or cannot afford to print full-time can apply for residencies in many universities. The advantage for the institution is that it is seen to be patronising the arts and students are provided with specialist knowledge without the cost of a full-time lithography course. Perhaps the most important feature of this practice is that it sustains tertiary lithography within a university sector that could easily phase it out, deferring its education and practice to the private sector and thus out of the reach of many printmakers. The printmakers who are involved in residencies (in lithography or other techniques) display a particular approach to printmaking that is not about personal gain. They can be conceptualised as taking the same sort of path as a journeyman. By

¹ Many of these projects are discussed in chapter three.
working with a wide range of different artists they build up their knowledge of their craft, which they in turn pass on. For example, Judy Watson has visited James Cook University (JCU) for residencies and to teach workshops over a seven-year period. The style of Watson’s lithographic technique incorporates an ink wash technique taught to her by Kaye Green, her undergraduate teacher at the Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education. Green was trained at the University of Tasmania and later completed a Masters degree at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.2 The distance that is often perceived as separating regional Australian printmaking from the great traditions of restricted printmaking knowledge governed by European or American ateliers is thus collapsed by the passage of this technique through different printmakers.

Other collaborative ventures extend the reach of printmakers beyond the university and over multiple institutional and non-institutional fields. Prizes and awards provide a forum for the display student talent and the ability of the institution to attract corporate or private sponsorship. Digital exchange projects, such as Partners in Print and the L’Estampe bookmark project, have enabled interaction between independent and university printmakers.3 Other projects emphasise the subversion of geographic and cultural distance. Exchange projects between national and international art schools,4 conferences and symposia5 provide an opportunity to expand and redefine the field.

2 Green learnt honed her lithography skills at the Tamarind Lithography Workshop, Albuquerque, with Garo Antreasian. Green was a technical assistant at the workshop in 1979-1981 while completing her Masters of Arts at the University of New Mexico. Kaye Green, interview with the author, Hobart, Tasmania, December 2002.

3 For example: the international bookmark exchange organised by Belgian printmaking site, estampe.be (www.estampe.be), Exchange Partners in Print Media (http://www.pnp.org.au) and many privately run exchanges.

4 Several international print exchanges over the past decade have been: the 1994-1995 Five School Exchange Portfolio, convened by The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (an exchange between The University of Florida, Gainesville; Wester Virginia University; University of Wollongong; Indiana University and Purdue University Indianapolis (Herron School of Art)); the American, Australian and New Zealand Exchange Exhibition, 1997-1999, organised by American artist Bill Whorrall. Examples of residencies that have established ongoing relationships between printmakers and institutions include: the University of Tasmania’s Rosalind McCullough Paris Studio residency, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology’s exchange agreement with Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art in the People’s Republic of China or the Scottish residencies funded by the Scottish Arts Council and shared between University of Tasmania, Hobart, and the Canberra School of Art (this exchange lasted for eight years through a series of short residencies).

5 Recent examples are COFA at the University of NSW’s 2001 Contemporary Print Symposium, New Technologies and the Print and the Public Domain, the Why Make Prints in 2002, shown in collaboration with a symposia organised by La Trobe University and the 2003 9th Sydney Art on Paper Fair (known as the International Works on Paper Fair until 2001), which was accompanied by a symposium at the UNSW College of Fine Arts, co-presented by the Museums & Galleries Foundation of NSW, and Tim Smith et al., “Getting into Prints: A Symposium on Aboriginal Printmaking” Darwin: Association of Northern and Central Australian Aboriginal Artists in association with the School of Fine Arts Northern Territory University, 1993.
The goal of these programs and networks of affiliation is to establish pathways of communication that can continue independent of the art institution, exploring new methods and methodologies of printmaking. By increasing a regional presence of printmaking, the pedagogic influence of regional art schools can also influence regional audiences. An educated print audience has created a heightened awareness of printmaking emerging in all regions of Australia. Printmakers and audiences have more opportunity to create alternate forms of communication or market without negotiating urban artworlds first.

Conclusion:

The choices printmakers make in contemporary regional education is often based on an understanding of the art industry that has been developed as part of their art education. Art schools provide not only a site for learning technical skills and traditions, but also establish associations with other printmakers. Printmakers learn within the art school workshop that the art industry is not something driven and controlled by art institutions. It is a network of individuals who often work together to create new areas of meaning, to develop different artistic language and, importantly, to continue traditions of printmaking knowledge and technique. The printmakers who graduate from regional pedagogic institutions and continue to practice in regional Australia often maintain these networks while perhaps benefiting from the patronage of the university art collection.

Printmaker and Monash University lecturer, Euan Heng expressed a concern in the mid-1990s that:

(if art is) too self-referential and enclosed, art education invents an artificial, cosy aesthetic called 'printmaking', a type of self-conscious, mannered mark making matrix that we can hang these art clichés on. The medium has to be allied to whatever communicative strategies are appropriate.6

Printmaking and collaboration have always produced what Australian Print Workshop director Anne Virgo describes as an awareness that "the place where our prints are produced will always be secondary to the people we meet, the partnerships we develop and the prints we produce."7 The pedagogic role of regional art schools therefore plays an important role in this process. Regions of practice are not informed by geography,

but by the individuals. A critically defining feature of pedagogic institutions and the individuals within them is the collaboration that makes regional printmaking education places of possibility and opportunity. The printmakers that these institutions produce are able to function within the contemporary artworld by forming advantageous affiliations with art institutions. Institutions do not dominate the place of regional women printmakers in the artworld because these women so often approach their printmaking practice with pragmatism. Their education has taught them the skills to negotiate time, materials and professional art industry relationships. The decentralisation of printmaking education has encouraged printmakers, teachers and educational institutions to become innovative in their approach to the medium, the way it is taught, and its potential position within the ‘creative economy’. Regional university art collections have become important sites where regional printmakers can achieve the symbolic value of inclusion in an institutional collection, while the collections also show the university’s interest in developing its role as patron of the art.

The symbolic value of printmakers for art educational institutions lies not just in their ability to attract students and the collaborative interest of other art institutions, but also in printmaking staff’s research output. In contemporary pedagogic arts institutions, research and creativity are assessable components of the institution’s contribution to the creative capital of the Australian art industry. The places where prints are made, and the people and partnerships that contribute to printmaking practice – emphasised by Anne Virgo above – are not simply congregations of like-minded people within a supportive environment. As arts institutions decentralise into regional Australia they are sites where increased opportunities are available to a wide range of practitioners. Yet they are also sites where institutional patronage can run the risk of inhibiting printmaking practice by the demands it places on practitioners to produce the creative capital the institution requires, not least among which is an attempt to categorise and define printmaking as an aesthetic and a professional set of skills with a definable, finite position within the Australian art industry. The following chapter explores the changing dynamics of this position through the role of public galleries in supporting and promoting printmaking in regional Australia, with a particular emphasis on the practices of women printmakers.
Chapter Three

Plate 5
Prints and regional women printmakers in public galleries

In the culture industry, art institutions present themselves as the producers and archivists of professional knowledge. Each institution has a different arena of expertise: galleries, universities and art schools all combine to create a coalition of professional critique that has direct effects on the position of art and artists within contemporary culture. Printmakers who create affiliations with regional public galleries need to be aware that in the art industry innate discourses of difference underlie principles of collecting that distinguish between communities, printmakers, master printers, workshops, ateliers and artists. The more inclusive the collection, the greater the gallery’s (and thus the artworld’s) power to define printmaking practices and the position they occupy within the culture industry. These institutions are generally the dominant site of education for the public of the value and place of prints. In addition, they have a tangible impact on the economic position of printmakers through the consecratory processes they conduct, which allow many printmakers access into a restricted world of grants, commissions and markets. Printmakers and audiences must carefully negotiate these formal and informal artworld contracts. Thus, while proposing a culture of collecting emphasising the equal relevance of all printmaking practice, public collecting institutions maintain exhibition programs that represent the politics of difference encouraged by cultural policy.

Public art galleries are actively involved in the development of regional printmaking cultures. There is an increased ability for individual printmakers to approach institutions without relying on a representative agent, such as a commercial gallery, curator or critic. This chapter examines several urban and regional public galleries that collect and represent regional women printmakers, primarily discussed in reference to traditional and new forms of collection development. The difference between the exhibition and collection priorities of regional and major galleries is elaborated, revealing the ability of smaller print collections to showcase the idiosyncrasies of localised printmaking cultures while larger collections can provide broader surveys of artistic development in the field of printmaking. The role of the gallery as a consecrating entity is also examined, with particular reference to the patronage relationship that may be formed between women printmakers and collecting institutions. Print collections in contemporary public galleries still possess a legitimating function, presenting printmakers to the artworld through exhibitions, catalogues and collections that emphasise the relationship between the printmaker’s work and the existing prints owned by the gallery. However, regional galleries function on a more active level,
working closely with artistic communities, providing support and guidance. The relationship between regional galleries and regional printmakers reveals that both parties are equally capable of initiating projects, using the strengths and talents found in each other in relationships that have their basis more in collaboration than in patronage. The contrast between regional and urban galleries that support printmaking is not based on their geographical location, but rather on the way they approach or are approached by printmakers. The relationships that public galleries form with contemporary Australian women printmakers illustrates this point.

Women printmakers and major public galleries

Contemporary collecting institutions represent prints within a context of competing symbolic values, seeking forms of capital that will create a sustainable position for them within the art industry. Major public art galleries have been important in establishing a place for women printmakers within the art industry. However, the majority of these collecting institutions have developed collections with either a historical or geographic focus, and the women represented are therefore predominantly those who are active within these historical periods and geographic locations. Nor do the collections of contemporary prints developed by major state galleries necessarily represent the range of regional printmaking practice that exists in the state. The collections follow the priorities of their own collection development policies first, often leaving the collection of contemporary art production to regional galleries. The major public art collections in Australia therefore represent a variety of collecting practices that may not accurately reflect the development of printmaking in Australia, but do reflect the shifting function of the major art gallery within the contemporary cultural environment. A survey of some of collections of major galleries with a focus on regional printmaking illustrates some of the key differences between collections and the regional cultures of printmaking they represent.

The Art Gallery of South Australia has a policy to “identify and hold art-historically important works of art of aesthetic excellence and of regional significance.”¹ Its collections emphasise a history of regional printmaking development, evident in the work of S.T.Gill, Udo Sellbach, Karen Schepers, Brian Seidel, Barbara Hanrahan, Pam Debenham and Diane

The profile of printmaking presented by the gallery parallels the public presence of printmaking in Adelaide.\(^2\) State collections in Tasmania and Victoria benefit from the complementary cultural guidance exercised by regional galleries, enabling different collections to target different areas of cultural development and build strong relationships with patrons and local artists. In comparison, the Art Gallery of South Australia’s print collection is the main representative collection of Australian prints in the region. As the only public institution in the region with a significant collection of prints, the low number of regional prints acquired by the gallery in the last decade is thrown into relief. Although works of local women printmakers Barbara Hanrahan, Olga Sankey and Elizabeth Gertsakis have entered the collection in the last decade, approximately half of the average ten prints acquired each year are by women printmakers, and most of these are by interstate printmakers.

The Canberra Museum and Art Gallery (CMAG) is a gallery that is situated within a densely populated printmaking community. It has a collection that focuses on the printmaking of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and its surrounding regions, providing a valuable counterbalance to the breadth of the National Gallery of Australia’s collection of contemporary Australian prints, also situated in Canberra. Regular exhibitions highlight the strong printmaking activity in the ACT. Many of these exhibitions have drawn on the gallery’s collection, and therefore represent a strong institutional influence of printmaking in the region. The collection represents individuals as well as the archives of print workshops Studio One Inc. and Megalo Open Access Inc., enabling the gallery to act in the style of both a state and a regional gallery. However, the gallery’s association with the Canberra School of Art and Studio One Inc. illustrate the same sense of a community of printmakers that is evident in the printmaking activity associated with Megalo Open Access Prints. The focus on printmaking in the Territory as possessing unique qualities expressing the cultural character of the region is similar to the way prints and printmakers are collected and acquired by TMAG. CMAG is distinct from other State or Territory public galleries because while it fulfils a regional responsibility in providing opportunities for display and marketing, many of the works, exhibitions and public functions it holds are conducted in close conjunction with the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) or with the ANU School of Art. As a consequence, a print shown at CMAG is not only likely to receive a higher

---


\(^3\) For example, the exhibitions of prints produced by the gallery on Australian printmaking during the last decade have included *Ann Newmarch: The personal is Political* (1997) and *Modern Australian Women: Paintings and Prints 1925–1945* (2000), but the majority of print exhibitions focused on the gallery’s European collection. Prior to the 1990s there were regular exhibition of South Australian printmakers.
symbolic value than one shown in a geographically distant State or Territory gallery, but is also being displayed to a highly print-literate audience.

Part of the responsibility for an increased level of public print literacy throughout the country lies with the National Gallery of Australia’s (NGA) advocacy of Australian printmaking - a feature of its cultural practice which has influenced knowledge of printmaking throughout the nation. Although possessing a nationally representative collection, the National Gallery of Australia’s collection of women’s prints and the relationships it has formulated with women printmakers throughout Australia is in fact an atypical example of institutional collecting practice. The collection of Australian Prints, Posters and Illustrated Books at the NGA, under the direction of Roger Butler, has acted as a national repository for printmaking in the Australasian region since its establishment in 1982. The specific aim of the gallery is to “collect Australian paintings and sculptures to contribute to the display of the full history and cultural diversity of Australian art.” The gallery’s agenda for prints follows a principle to “collect Australian art comprehensively in the following media, not only for display but also for research and reference: prints (including posters and illustrated books); drawings (including watercolours, pastels, collages and sketchbooks); and photographs (including artists’ videos and films)” with an emphasis on these latter art media holding a different symbolic role than the former. However, this acquisition policy also places them in the unusual position of being able to invest considerable time and money in developing an in-depth collection of many areas of Australian printmaking previously sparsely represented in public institutions. The collection has a strong representation of women printmakers: from Margaret Preston, Ethel Spowers and Jessie Traill as representatives of the 1920s to 1940s, the alternative print workshops for the 1970s and 1980s, to contemporary indigenous and Asian-Pacific prints.

The collection was established with strong research ethic, and an aim to fulfil an inclusive representative function that includes the collection of young and emerging Australian artists.

4 The department officially changed its name from the Department of Australian Prints and Drawings to the Department of Australian Art and the Art of the Australasian Region in 1997. In 1994 collection comprised of some 24,000 items. Butler's control over collection development was augmented by a one million dollar donation by Gordon Darling (AO CMG) to establish the Gordon Darling Australasian Print Fund in 1988, the interest of which has facilitated significant control over the choice of prints to be acquired leading to a clear collection development.


6 Anne Gray, "Truly National," in Building the Collection, ed. Green, Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2003, p. 103. The National Gallery deliberately chose not to collect works that were already well represented by other public institutions.
as well as established printmakers.\textsuperscript{7} It provides a chronology of women’s printmaking and the development of printmaking in regional Australia of both indigenous and non-indigenous printmaking.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the collection (one that is rarely fully disclosed in gallery exhibitions or publications) is the scale of the gallery’s acquisition of prints from regions of practice traditionally considered to be external to centralised professionalism of the field of restricted production. Contemporary acquisitions include printmakers from major commercial workshops as well as small regional community workshops, high profile painter/printmakers and regional printmakers with a low artworld profile. Of particular significance to many printmakers is the fact that Butler contacts them himself. Butler’s ethos to provide a collection representative of the central and remote areas of the Asia Pacific region (even if many of these prints are never shown in exhibitions) means that the collection includes works by many printmakers that do not have a significant artworld profile, and come from practices that many may consider to be ‘hobbyist’ in nature.\textsuperscript{8} The diversity of the collection, however, lends itself to thematic exploration.

Through the collection, the National Gallery of Australia emerges as a powerful institution that can have a very real influence on printmakers and their practice. The print is purchased as an art object, yet when it is incorporated into the collection it becomes part of an archive that preserves strong socio-political as well as art historical themes. The positioning of a print within a collection is necessarily impelled by any innate feature of the print itself, such as its technique, genre or context of production. The discursive framework the gallery employs when associating a print with other artworks or with history, culture or geography extends the gallery’s authority as an arbiter of culture, affecting symbolic and economic value associated with prints throughout the Australian art industry. The NGA is critical to the acquisition of professional status for many printmakers working in regional Australia, and its particular focus on women printmakers enhances this prospect. The

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., p. 100. The National Gallery of Australia’s print collection consciously collects the works of first and second generation Australians, indigenous printmakers, and regional printmakers. Ibid., p. 103. The contemporary collection is over 23,000 printed works, including the 2002 purchase of the APW archive. Part of this research ethic was establishing accessibility to the collection. In 1999 the Australian Prints online site was established, containing news of contemporary printmaking, listings of workshops, galleries and schools and access to the gallery’s detailed database of prints in the Australasian region. The collection is complemented by an extensive library that includes artists’ files on a large proportion of the Australian printmakers in the collection. Inaugural Director of the gallery in 1982, James Mollison used the British Museum as an example to establish works on paper as a backbone to the collection, enhancing the research function of the gallery. Ibid., p. 100.

\textsuperscript{8} For example, the gallery purchased two solarplate prints by Kangaroo Island printmaker, Jenny Clapson, in 2002, enhancing her belief that she could maintain a professional practice by managing sales and public profile of her work herself, without depending on commercial galleries. Jenny Clapson, interview with the author, Kangaroo Island, 20 November 2002.
professional artistic identity that has become a key factor in the education and recognition of the status of members of the art industry situates them in relation to different audiences and historical discourses. Professional printmakers are perceived to engage closely with the academic systems of Australian art institutions. They are thus accepted into a restricted group of cultural producers with a high economic and symbolic value. For example, purchases of works by established, high profile printmakers such as Bea Maddock, Judy Watson and Anne Ferran augment the gallery’s collection, and reflect the value given to these printmakers by other collecting institutions, private collectors, commercial dealers and art prizes.\(^9\)

The inclusion of works by printmakers such as Pamela Griffith and Jenny Clapson in the NGA’s print collection reflects its function as a repository of Australian printmaking. Griffith is the director of Griffith Studio and Graphic Workshop, and has printed editions for printmakers such as Tony Coleing, Frank Gould, Rew Hanks, Salvatore Zofrea and Alisa Morgan. The gallery received the archives of the Griffith Studio and Graphic Workshop in the mid-1990s as a gift of Professor Ross Griffith, which included prints by the above artists as well as Pamela Griffith’s own prints from the 1970s to the mid-1990s.\(^10\) Two of Clapson’s solarplate etchings were acquired in 2002.\(^11\) The significance of both artists’ works to the collection is not only their aesthetic merit, but also how their prints serve as evidence of the different printmaking cultures practised by individual printmakers.

This process predominantly occurs through two forms of capital: the cultural capital that is gained from cultural exploration and creativity (producing social capital such as good will and community solidarity), and the development of professional standards of visual art and craft that are streamlined throughout Australia. In comparison, the social capital of community art development appears to embrace many levels of artistic practice in consecrated cultural cohesion. Certain features can serve to create identities of cultural place and value that emerge from the categorisation processes of the museum and a social sense of group solidarity. Printmakers can thus be co-opted into a system that identifies the print according to medium, process and place of production. This process also nominates the printmaker as ‘regional’, ‘urban’, ‘community’ or ‘woman’, signifying their relationship with established discourses, not the realities of the physical processes of printmaking.

\(^9\) Such as Anne Ferran, *You are here*, offset print concertina book, 12 x 192 cm, 2000, National Gallery of Australia.


Although the National Gallery of Australia is not the only major collection to use this approach, it is perhaps the most pervasive in its influence, partly due to the long involvement of Senior Curator Roger Butler in this field and his determination to present a unified front. Recent purchases in 2002–2003 have included contemporary prints by regional women printmakers such as Clapson, Barbie Kjar, Anne Lord and Helen Wright, establishing the gallery as one of the most supportive and responsive institutions in the region. Butler has carefully cultivated relationships with printmakers and printmaking workshops throughout Australia, positioning himself (and the National Gallery of Australia) as a site of institutional authority that has formed proximity to practice, giving a sense of immediacy and expansiveness that is not replicated by any other collection. The objective of the inclusiveness pursued by Butler betrays a tension between the nature of institutional power to establish exclusive forms of authority and the necessity of a national collection to reflect cultural diversity. Through what artist David Watt describes as “the consolidation of alienated individuals into coherent social groups, operating on democratic principles in a world dominated by entrenched power structures”, this process can have direct consequences on how printmakers perceive their cultural location. Forms of cultural location, particularly those inherent in group identities, can impact on the self-esteem of printmakers. The NGA’s national influence makes this aspect of its cultural function particularly significant in the development of contemporary women’s printmaking.

Many studies have addressed the function of public galleries in establishing social and academic values for art. The relationship between individual artists and galleries is less often examined, with the exception of high profile artists who are presented as working closely in a collaborative manner with galleries that ‘witness’ their work and biography. Emerging artists or artists with low public profiles are less likely to be represented by exhibitions or gallery-produced texts than artists with an already established reputation.


13 David Watt quoted in Deborah Stevenson, Art and Organisation: Making Australian Cultural Policy, St Lucia: UQP, 2000, p. 56.

14 There is a large body of research on museological processes in the postmodern world. Contemporary development is difficult to assess because of the range of bequests, gifts, agreements, grants and funds that influence acquisitions. Diane Waite published an interesting listing of prints annually acquired by major public collections, largely restricted to prints produced from the 1960s onwards. The listings were broken down into purchase, gifts, portfolios, set and artists books. The compilations did not reveal anything specific, and did not indicate gallery directions, as there are too many variables—such as deals made between printmakers and curators, or between dealers or collectors and the gallery. There was no particular gender trend, and the discrepancy between male and female printmakers at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1996 was more indicative of a particular year, than an institutional bias. Dianne Waite, "Australia in Print: Prints in Public Collections," Imprint, 32, no. 3, 1997, pp. 14-15; Dianne Waite, "Australia in Print: Recent Acquisitions of Contemporary Australian Prints," Imprint, 31, no. 3, 1996, pp. 15-16.
However, the influence of the collecting practices of each successive era on individual printmakers and on the public awareness of broader printmaking trends is an important feature of large institutional collections. The manner in which the individual interacts with large public collecting institutions—both as audience and as artist—has a significant impact on printmakers' perception of themselves as legitimate artists, and establishes the codes of conduct through which they interact with artworld institutions. These relationships can also be conceptualised by artists and curators as taking the form of a personal affiliation.

Approaching the influence of printmaking collection practices at the level of the individual printmaker reveals the unique characteristics of different galleries and their cultivation of different forms of printmaking in their region. The following discussion surveys the methods with which several major public galleries have encouraged or documented regional women printmakers.

The acquisition of work by a major state collection indicates acceptance or recognition by specialists employed within the institution, establishing a place both nationally and regionally for the printmaker. Although many works are located in archives (from which many may never be removed) the acceptance into an institutional community represents significant symbolic value. The relationship that individual printmakers develop with these major collections is often independent from this process. Yet printmakers, influenced by the morphological nature of printmaking, rarely ascribe a set of definitive values to their practice. They rarely discriminate between process and product; the print as art object within the gallery is often a cultural entity disarticulated from the features of its production that do not enhance the symbolic values given to it. The print for the printmaker is the result of an act of creation. Printmakers do not necessarily assess the value of their work in accordance with market prices, public taste or collection acquisition, as these are interrelated fields acting within the same field of restricted production, developing the same discursive values. Each printmaker formulates their own values in association with their prints and their practice. For some, inclusion in printmaking collections for many printmakers is a pinnacle of achievement. For others, while providing stature that will benefit many areas of their production, their integration into a large collection of an institution—particularly one that can be used to serve a particular ideological stance—causes them to regard the process with suspicion. Unless all printmakers accept the legitimating processes provided by collecting art institutions, the ability of the institution to establish a 'place' for different kinds of printmaking on a map of cultural practice in limited.
The influence of the collecting practices of large art institutions on printmaking development in a region can be perhaps be more adequately assessed not by examining the kinds of symbolic capital granted to printmakers, but by looking at the range of opportunities available to printmakers to have their work associated with galleries, their collections and their influence. The kinds of projects that galleries participate in, the manner of display of the works collected, their participation in regional cultural events, and the willingness of regional printmakers to donate work or enter into acquisition arrangements with the gallery not only reflect the symbolic capital available to printmakers, but also to kinds of capital that are being actively pursued. This information may more accurately reflect the forms of value that have the greatest influence on printmaking practice, not just their representation by art institutions. Smaller collections, which generally have collection parameters with a confined geographic, cultural and historical focus, can provide examples for this approach.

Without the necessity of representing national art trends, smaller state collections are able to develop a more immediate relationship with regional printmaking culture. The Queensland Art Gallery and the Art Gallery of Western Australia service extensive geographic areas where cultural activity is disparate and not necessarily institutionally affiliated. Their role emphasises both education and exposure; their focus on regional art nurtures regional identity while their role as patron and archive seeks to subvert their distance from major areas of cultural development. Their collections emphasise major works emerging from both urban and regional sites, finding a balance between gender and geography. During the past decade the Queensland Art Gallery has purchased prints by printmakers from other states, including Nyukana Baker, Pat Brassington, Denise Green, Marine Ky, Sharon O’Phee, Sally Smart and Kim Westcott. In the last ten years there have been several significant purchases of the works of Queensland or Queensland-born artists working with prints. The prints of Jenuarrie, Teresa Jordan, Sally L’Estrange, Tracey Moffat, Nyuwara Tapaya, Judy Watson and Normana Wight indicate the gallery’s awareness of new approaches to printmaking that challenge political and cultural devices that locate individuals within racial, gendered and geographic spaces. The collection has also accepted donations of contemporary works (post-1992) by the poster collective Inkahoots, and by individual artists. As a whole, the collection represents an important period of social, political and artistic development of printmaking in Queensland.

15 The “Family” portfolio incorporated many prints by emerging Queensland printmakers into the collection: Naomi Coutts, Liza Enger, Jessica Firouz-Abadi, Kathleen Heal, Louise Newcomb, Elizabeth Stewart, Louise Taylor and Donna Tibbits.
16 The Queensland Art Gallery collection includes prints by Queensland printmakers Rachel Apelt, Susi Blackwell and Robyn McDonald.
Each state gallery approaches the representation of printmaking in their region differently. The Art Gallery of Western Australia, for example, has collected only a limited number of prints by regional artists in its Australian Art collection, including the works of significant Western Australian artists, such as Leslie Duxbury. The Fremantle Art Centre and the Fremantle City Council are the dominant public institutions for print patronage and collection in the state. The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, however, has a focused regional role, and has developed a strong collection of prints by indigenous artists over the past decade. The different forms of print collecting practised by major public art galleries is more evident in the smaller scale of the collections of these galleries than in the larger collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of the Victoria and the Art Gallery of New South Wales. The limited number of regional contemporary prints collected by the Art Gallery of Western Australia is not indicative of a lack of interest in the prints of Western Australia, but an acknowledgement that the collecting and patronage activities of the Fremantle City Council fulfils this role in the region. The Australian prints held in the Queensland Art Gallery and the Northern Territory Museum and Art Gallery demonstrate how a consistent focus on a specific geographic area allows for a nuanced and detailed collection reflecting the technical development and cultural role of printmaking in these regions.

These print collections serve an important pedagogic as well as archival function. As discussed in chapter one, texts produced by galleries are integral to the positioning of prints within the Australian artworld. Many of these texts take the form of collection overviews, acting as "testimony to the great and substantive traditions of Australian printmaking." 18 Exhibitions form a critical part of this education process, and through the types of works chosen for regular exhibition the public receives a perception of which printmaking activity is accorded the most value within Australian culture. Although the galleries discussed above may collect a wide range of prints and printmaking genres, the works in the collection most regularly exhibited are those with national reputations that also represent strengths of the gallery's overall collection. The Queensland Art Gallery, for example, produces print exhibitions that offer a perspective of regional practice with an

17 Gifts of contemporary works are not a significant aspect of the Queensland Art Gallery's acquisition of local women printmakers. Those works donated include prints by Catherine Beadnell, Theresa Jordan, Robyn McDonald, Edite Vidins and Judy Watson.
emphasis on printmaking in the Asia Pacific region, indigenous printmaking, and photoprintmaking technology.  

The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) has a strong collection of prints that has a predominantly European focus. Their collection of Australian prints has a focus on Melbourne printmakers, such as Mike Parr, Ruth Johnson, George Baldessin and Jessie Traill. The curator of Prints at the National Gallery of Victoria, Kirsty Grant, attributes the NGV’s sustained disengagement with regional area of printmaking to the increased institutionalisation of the Australian artworld. The increased number of printmakers and printmaking activity is counterbalanced by an increase in institutional agents representing and discussing contemporary printmaking throughout urban and regional areas of Australia. Grant describes that:

While institutional acquisitions in the 1990s may appear to be less frequent and all-encompassing than in past years, there are many more galleries and museums (national, state, regional, university, and so forth) consolidating their historical collections and, in conjunction with corporations and private individuals, actively collecting contemporary art.

Regional public art galleries, private galleries or regional art dealers or arts and craft businesses are the key agents that facilitate the entrance of regional women printmakers into the artworld. The limited representation of regional printmaking in many of the major collections, however, cannot be assumed to be indicative of a perceived lack of legitimacy of regional printmaking on the part of state, territory or national gallery. Although the artworld is composed of closely interlinked networks, thus does not necessarily mean that all artists must pass through the system of dealers, critics, art historians, curators and funding agencies that traditionally play a significant role in consecrating an art object. As has been discussed, many major galleries actively seek out regional printmakers, correspond with them and purchase their work without the advocacy of an art dealer or another agent of an art institution. A limited representation of women printmakers in a major collection may instead reflect the gallery’s collection policy, the difficulty of emerging regional printmakers to obtain the notice of curators in urban areas, or awareness that other galleries

---


21 Ibid.
in the region provide what may be perceived as adequate representation of this area of art practice. Regional galleries may be able to take more risks in collecting regional art than major public institutions. By comparing how different regional public art galleries represent regional women printmakers, it is possible to see how the more personal relationships individuals form with these institutions lead to the presentation of innovative and sustained printmaking practices.

Consecration and collaboration: regional galleries and women printmakers

Regional galleries function along the same institutional guidelines that structure urban art institutions. As they work with the same forms of symbolic capital established in the rest of the art world, regional galleries have the dual purpose of sustaining the power structures of a centralised artworld while maintaining an intimate relationship with regional printmakers. By the end of June 2000 there were 2,049 museum/gallery establishments in Australia, of which 249 were art galleries.22 The collections examined in this thesis are not chosen on the basis of size or their inclusion of major printmakers, but are rather selected for their ability to reflect the importance of certain galleries and collecting practices for regional women printmakers. The regional galleries with the most significant print collections are the Geelong Art Gallery, the Ballarat Art Gallery, the Castlemaine Historic Museum and Art Gallery, the Fremantle Art Centre, the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, the New England Regional Art Gallery, the Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, the Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery, the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, the Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery and the Warrnambool Art Gallery. There is strong evidence of women printmakers themselves initiating exhibitions and projects with regional art galleries in the past decade. By gaining the necessary institutional and financial support to undertake these projects, women printmakers have a greater independence to work beyond the borders of their region than ever before. It is impossible to gather sufficient data to conduct a comparative analysis between the number of male and female printmakers represented in public collections. The way women printmakers are supported by and use the resources of public galleries, particularly regional public galleries, provides important information on features of their practice – something that the examination of their representation in a collection alone could never reveal.

Regional galleries implicitly challenge traditional hierarchies of value by presenting an equal approach to regional and urban, established and part-time artists, fulfilling their obligation to “be all things to all people.” In this sense, the geographic basis of regional galleries can provide an expansive field of vision of contemporary women’s printmaking. However, galleries that regularly acquire and display prints do not do so primarily as part of an ethos to represent all art with equity. Rather, their role is to highlight the connections between past and present regional development, as well as emphasise the national and international quality of the work of artists in the region. This process of consecration enhances both their own and artists’ industry position. A high quotient of symbolic value is developed that combines community cultural development and restricted high art values. It is possible to explore the importance of regional galleries to develop contemporary regional women’s printmaking by examining how galleries interpret their cultural obligations and create alternative systems of symbolic value. The discussion in this section of the chapter occurs at three basic levels: it focuses first on the support of regional women printmakers in the collections and exhibition programs of regional galleries, secondly on contemporary collaborations between women printmakers and regional art galleries and thirdly on the significance for regional practice and markets of these collaborations.

The regional gallery has an important role not as a site for institutional authority, but as a cultural facilitator. This is particularly evident in the collection development strategies. The print collections of regional galleries directly reflect the role the gallery perceives itself as having in a regional community. They vary widely between galleries, influenced by boards of directors, funding allocation, regional environment and State and Federal policy for the type of art institution they are and their perceived purpose. Each regional gallery mentioned above has developed its print collection in different ways. The acquisition budget each possesses provide them with the means to develop their existing collections, building upon what themes, artists and techniques they already represent in addition to incorporating new examples of regional printmaking into the collection, in keeping with their role as a regional patron. The key to the development of print collections in regional galleries, however, is most strongly influenced in three main ways. The first is the collection development that is strongly influenced by bequests or trusts. These collections are often idiosyncratic (marked by the character of an initial collector), and represent a confined period in time, style or media. These collections can exert a significant influence on later print collection practice. A second major method of acquiring works is through print commissions. The third area of collection is the most publicly recognised.

The print prize has been a valuable tool for regional art galleries to build their collection and enhance their role as a patron of the arts. Such collections can encompass a broad range of printmaking styles, and depending on the nature of the prize can lead to a collection that is either eclectic, widely representative of medium, style or period, or presents a challenge to conventional collection practice. Each of these factors influences the diverse and dynamic nature of regional printmaking collections in public galleries.

The collection development of prints is an important feature of the diversity and historical depth of the collections of regional galleries. Bequests and trusts help establish a direction for a collection. For example, the Albury Art Gallery’s Daniel collection (the bequest of Howard and Judith Daniel) includes 17th and 18th century etchings and engravings by European artists, early 20th century European prints by artists such as Renoir, Chagall and Manet. Through the bequest the gallery also has fifth edition of Goya’s Los Caprichos etchings. At the Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery the Lionel Lindsay Art and Library Collection created by Mr Bill Bolton is a valuable reflection of Lindsay’s work. The recent addition of the Irene Amos bequest has established a strong collection of prints from the 1970s and 1980s. The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery has the Lindsay collection, acquired through the Mary Lindsay Bequest, and a strong collection of Melbourne printmakers of the 1960s, acquired through the M. V. Anderson Bequest. The Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery’s print collection derives much of its diversity from the Christensen Collection of prints from 1942–62 and the Herbst Collection of 400 international posters. Although these collections often hold strong examples of women printmakers, they do not have a strong representation of women printmakers specifically as they predominantly reflect the tastes of the private collector.

The idiosyncrasies of art collectors have provided many regional galleries with some of the most important collections or examples of printmaking in the country, denying

---


the concept of regions as sites of peripheral culture. Alan McCulloch, former Director of
the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, pointed out that it is “the destiny of all regional
galleries that their character grows out of art gifts of all kinds”. Wagga Wagga Regional
Art Gallery purchased the print collection of collector Margaret Carnegie in 1980, creating
a print collection of prints of the 1960s and 1970s of national significance. Tate Adams
advised the gallery in the development of its collection of prints, and the print collection at
Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery was substantially enhanced by Arthur Boyd’s gift
of drawings and prints in 1960 in celebration of a life-long friendship with the McCulloch
brothers. The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery has nurtured a rich relationship
with Bea Maddock. The gallery has supported Maddock with the purchase of many of her
works, and in return over recent years Maddock has donated many prints, drawings and
artists books. The similarity between commissions and established private collections is
that a recognised authority within the artworld has selected the prints. Upon the acquisition
of the Margaret Carnegie print collection, Tate Adams acted as an advisor to the collection
to ensure that prints purchased during this period complemented the existing collection.
Adams lived in Melbourne, had run a successful gallery and print workshop and was a key
authority on Australian printmaking of the period. The gallery profited from his experience
and his connection with printmakers, and the Wagga Wagga collection became a dynamic
contemporary collection.

However, using centralised authorities to establish a collection in this manner means
that much of the symbolic capital associated with the gallery is located in its ability to
negate its regional position, not in its ability to represent urban and regional printmaking as
being of equal value. These print collections do not always direct the gallery’s
contemporary collecting practices nor do they necessarily have a policy to support
printmakers in their region. The Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery has a strong
collection of prints by women, but most of these come from the Margaret Carnegie
collection. Subsequent acquisitions of prints continue the orientation of the collection to
established urban artists. The collection that Carnegie developed, however, was urban
based because there was no other option when she developed it in the 1960s. It was quite
avant-garde, reflecting contemporary techniques, themes and politics. As a regional

27 Alan McCulloch, *Mornington Peninsula Art Centre 10th Anniversary Exhibition, 12th December 1979*,
Mornington Peninsula: Mornington Peninsula Art Centre, 1979, p. 3.
3; Sasha Grishin, *Australian Identities in Printmaking: The Australian Print Collection of Wagga Wagga Regional
Art Gallery Wagga Wagga, N.S.W.: Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery, 2000, p. 11.
29 McCulloch, *Mornington Peninsula Art Centre 10th Anniversary Exhibition*, p. 3.
collection, the WWRAG print collection is significant in its representation of a key period of development in Australian printmaking, particularly women’s prints of the 1980s.

Its representation of regional printmaking, however, is conservative. Prints acquired over the last decade are predominantly works by urban printmakers. Regional printmakers, even those already in the collection, such as G. W. Bot, have not been continued. Local printmakers, such as digital printmaker Katie Alleva, have not been acquired, although she has had an exhibition on her work. Indigenous printmaker Treanah Hamm, alternatively, trained in printmaking in Wagga Wagga at the Charles Sturt University and was acquired by the gallery. The collection of regional printmakers is difficult to assess from gallery annual reports or catalogues. The factors lying behind the scene are often not apparent — the gallery may have a limited budget, or there may pressure placed on gallery staff by local council to purchase particular types of work. Galleries may find that using a prize to expand their collection provides them with more freedom and also closer connections with authorities within the artworld. This is an area that has been particularly utilised by galleries for the collection of prints.

A second major method of acquiring works is through commissions. The Print Council of Australia’s Member’s Print Commission has been an important aspect of the democratic inclusion of Australian printmakers in both state and regional collections, and is one of the key methods through which many regional galleries develop their collections. The commission has played a central role in the entry of prints by Australian printmakers into regional collections. Although occurring annually since 1967, regional, university and state collections have purchased Member’s Print Commission prints. The purpose of the commission is to allow the purchase of limited editions at modest prices. Many regional galleries have thus received prints by many women printmakers throughout Australia, including Olga Sankey, Victoria Reynolds, G. W. Bot, Ruth Faebet and Susan Pickering. These prints form the centre of many regional galleries’ contemporary print collections, such as Tweed River Regional Art Gallery and Lismore Art Gallery in New South Wales, Devonport Regional Art Gallery in Tasmania, and the Pinnacles Art Gallery in Queensland.

The third and most prominent area of collection development is the printmaking prize. Corporate and government patronage of prizes creates the opportunity to bring works into the collection that may be too expensive to buy individually. A printmaking prize contains certain forms of symbolic capital of its own, such as the prestige of winning a prize

won by important artists in the past, the reputation that can follow after involvement in a prize (including reviews, artist’s talks, an extended relationship with the gallery and possibly involvement in judging the following year’s prize). Relationships can be forged with key individuals within the industry and participation in the prize exhibition allows emerging printmakers to exhibit with some of the best printmakers in the country. There are a wide range of prizes, each emphasising a different aspect of the media, providing opportunities to create affiliations with different areas of the art industry and different opportunities to create market and public profiles. It is possible that a smaller printmaking prize of lower value (such as a local art prize or a Rotary Club award) may have more significance for the practice of a regional printmaker than a wealthy printmaking prize whose priorities lie elsewhere. A brief discussion of three prizes of particular consequence to the practice of contemporary regional women printmakers reveals that they provide galleries, communities and individuals in regional Australia many opportunities to challenge printmaking traditions and promote regional creativity.

One of the major print prizes in Australia that has consistently adapted to its cultural environment is the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery's National Works on Paper (NWOP) prize. The prize is part of The Spring Festival of Drawing and The Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre Prints Acquisitive, exhibitions initiated by the gallery in 1973 and held on alternate years. The exhibitions provided many opportunities for a wide range of printmakers.

New talents emerge from them not only from the young who are thereby encouraged, but also the middle ground artists and old artists who might not perhaps have otherwise achieved their due recognition.

The works on paper collection reflects the strong acquisition of women printmakers from throughout Australia, reaching back to the early 1970s. In 1998 the collection, described


32 NWOP incorporated an acquisitive prize of up to $5,000 and $15,000 acquisition funds for emerging artists up to the age of thirty-five, patroned by the Beleura-The Tallis Foundation, established in 1999.

33 McCulloch, Mornington Peninsula Art Centre 10th Anniversary Exhibition, 12th December 1979, p. 3.

34 The collection contains prints by G. W. Bot, Judith Chambers, Ludmilla Christoff, Victoria Clutterbuck, Pam Debenham, Leslie Duxbury, Barbara Hanrahan, Angela Komives, Jan Palethorpe, Olga Sankey and Patricia Wilson-Adams.
by Hendrik Kolenberg as “already remarkable for its focus and history,” was augmented by
the reformation of the prize into the larger National Works on Paper Prize in 1998.\textsuperscript{35} The
shift in focus of the exhibition to works on paper rather than prints reflects the decreasing
distinction that exists in most galleries between prints and other works on paper. Many of
the works selected for exhibition or purchase in the prize serve to enhance the focus of the
collection, reflecting the initial role of the exhibition/prize to “focus natural attention on the
importance of the graphic arts of drawing and print-making.”\textsuperscript{36} Lindsay Dunbar’s \textit{Scape I
(the harder it rains, the less you hear the rain drops)} is a subtle print that reinterprets the
immediacy and multiplicity attainable through screenprint in a process of replication that
critic Ted Gott describes as “[lending] printmaking the physicality and impact of
paintings.”\textsuperscript{37} The prize also encourages the entry of prints that demonstrate innovation and
circumvent traditional boundaries between art media. Sally Smart’s \textit{Femme silhouette (Da, Da)
(1999-2000, synthetic polymer paint on felt paper)} is an example of a work on paper
that challenges the traditional form of a print, painting or drawing. As a valuable method of
expanding the collection, the prize also develops strong industry support for emerging and
established printmakers.

The Shell Fremantle Print Award (SFPA), on the other hand, has encouraged
national involvement, and most accurately reflects the range of printmaking activity in
contemporary Australia. Established in 1975 as the Fremantle Print Award, the competition
became SFPA in 1996 in recognition of the crucial support of The Shell Company of
Australia Limited since the prize’s inception.\textsuperscript{38} One of the critical roles that the SFPA
fulfils in the contemporary Australian print world is to be inclusive of all regions, all
printmakers and any print media:

Over recent years Fremantle Art Centre has [introduced] a
number of specialist categories designed to encourage wider
representation. These categories, which may have once been
considered to be marginal, for example Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander prints, digital images and Artist books, have now

Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, 1999, np. NWOP was launched in 1998 to celebrate 25 years of the
Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery mounting major exhibitions in this area of art (Andrea May,
Regional Gallery, 1998). The aims of the prize are discussed in detail in Rodney James, "National Work’s

\textsuperscript{36} McCulloch, \textit{Mornington Peninsula Art Centre 10th Anniversary Exhibition}, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{37} James, "National Work’s on Paper", np. Lindsay Dunbar, \textit{Scape I (the harder it rains, the less you hear
the rain drops)}, 2001, multiple applied screenprint.

\textsuperscript{38} Thelma John, "Introduction: From Mixed Media to Multi Media," in \textit{The 21st Annual Shell Fremantle Print
been collapsed as they take out the major prize without any special consideration.\textsuperscript{39}

The SFPA encourages prints made in both traditional and non-traditional processes, bringing together intaglio, relief, digital prints and artists books by printmakers in both urban and regional areas of Australia, providing a forum for both western and indigenous printmaking.\textsuperscript{40} There can also emerge an ongoing relationship between the printmaker and the gallery. Judges are curators, critics, artists, printmakers and academics, coming from all areas of the industry; the prints involved in the prize are free in their interpretation of a print and how they may engage with an audience in the most direct fashion.

Beyond the traditional forms of print collection, a regional gallery has many opportunities to possess a unique collection. Commissions can allow collections to obtain works that are produced by recognised urban and regional artists, and thus keep their collection contemporary. Bequests and gifts can provide the collection with an historical relevance in the community, as well as allowing them to continue developing the collection when money for acquisitions is restricted. The gifts given to art galleries are often of the works of local printmakers. By being accepted into the institution they are consecrated, and the artist gains the possibility of a broader market while the collector has his taste validated. Art prizes provide a wide profile for both the gallery and the artists who win.

Each of these areas of collection development reflects the changing role of the regional art institution in actively encouraging regional art production without perpetuating the concept of legitimacy from the centre. They are a critical component of the contemporary art industry. Importantly for this study, the collection development of printmaking in regional galleries also directly reflects the rising profile of printmaking within the art industry, and the increased ability of printmakers to participate in the opportunities provided by exhibitions, print prizes and direct access to prints in the collection. The increased number of women benefiting from this development indicates that this area of art practice only required the facilities to flourish in regional Australia.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Poppy van Oorde-Grainer, 2002, digital print, dimensions variable.
Regional galleries, prints and the culture industry

In recent years, the Australian art industry’s response to globalisation has been to implement a streamlined system of cultural governance throughout Australia. This has facilitated the harvest of many different forms of cultural development, increasing awareness of the diversity of Australian art cultures and turning this knowledge into a coherent form of national identity. Regional galleries play a critical role in establishing networks of evaluative, promotional and strategic cultural development. A key rationale for their role in the art industry is to bridge governance at Federal and local levels, a response to Creative Nation’s statement that: “What is distinctively Australian about our culture is under assault from homogenised international mass culture.” As advocated by the 2001 Myer review of the arts and culture industry, this capital “is part of our national social capital, the webs of relationships and collaborations that underpin our national cultural, social and economic wellbeing.” To this end, cultural and social forms of capital have established identifiable forms of culture: community cultural projects, individual visual artists, dance, music, the art cultures of Melbourne and Sydney and regional cultures.

Regional galleries with print collections approach prints in two principle ways, each with a purpose to enhance the gallery’s position within the art industry. The first approach to prints is to ensure the successful and sustained production of printmaking in the region. The gallery forms a hub for a regional culture, within which an identifiable printmaking community is a strong source of social capital. The second approach focuses on stimulating capital. Regional galleries have the potential to provide economic support for printmakers through acquisition or providing a venue for the exhibition and sale of their work. The most important form of capital, however, is symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is generated for the gallery by their role in patronising established and emerging printmakers and in being recognised by other industry authorities as they do so. Printmakers cultivate symbolic

---


capital through their affiliation with regional galleries. Although this may occur on many levels – with small group exhibitions producing less capital than travelling exhibitions, and local group projects earning less than postgraduate exhibitions – all symbolic capital has a place within the art industry. Whether it is part of the development of regional community identity for a wide audience or the production of exclusive artistic identity to be promoted to an elite market, the support regional galleries give to regional women printmakers is in their exhibitions, collaborations and public programs rather than in their collection development.

One of the key strategies is Community Cultural Development. This area of governance funding enables “communities [to take] control of their cultural direction and development.”43 It provides opportunities to create environments or “eco-systems”44 possessing the creativity, inclusiveness, empowerment and trust that compose social capital. Following are four examples of how regional printmakers have used the resources provided by regional galleries to further develop their practice. The first discussion focuses on galleries with large collections and reputations in Australian printmaking, many of which have been discussed in the previous section of this chapter. The printmaking exhibitions of galleries with small collections are then addressed, revealing how regional exhibitions develop a distinct collaborative tenor to overcome the limitations posed by their collections in order to respond to printmaking in their immediate cultural environment. Collaborations between individuals, galleries and educational institutions are important in developing cultural capital for all parties involved. The third style of representation is discussed in reference to the opportunities collaboration with galleries can provide to printmakers in the way that they assist them to maintain control over the presence of their practice within the contemporary artworld. Finally, touring exhibitions are highlighted as an important means of disseminating awareness of regional printmaking throughout the country.

Many regional galleries with major print collections evince a similar approach to their role in the cultural community, a role particularly influenced by their relationship with other art institutions in the region. The Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery (PTRAG) in Townsville, Queensland, has a rich history of local artistic production, drawing on the history of the region as an artists’ retreat, and the more recent development of a vigorous local printmaking culture. The printmaking culture in Townsville is composed of the close relationships between individuals working within the James Cook University, Lyre Bird

44 Ibid., p. 22.
Press, the Barrier Reef TAFE, Flying Arts Inc., PTRAG and the Pinnacles Art Gallery at Thurwingowa. PTRAG has a strong emphasis on prints, artists books and women artists in the region. Fremanntle Art Centre, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, MacQuarie City Art Gallery, Pinnacles Art Gallery and Tweed River Regional Art Gallery are all galleries that provide access for regional audiences to printmaking through their exhibitions, classes, publications and residencies.

The Fremantle Art Centre (FAC) directs its printmaking focus to the Shell Fremantle Print Award (SFPA) and the rich printmaking culture fostered by Curtin University and the Edith Cowen University, providing a cultural perspective unrepresented at the Art Gallery of Western Australia. The Fremantle City Council manages the FAC and has a large print collection principally developed through the acquisitive prizes of the SFPA. The FAC tends to concentrate on contemporary production, rather than exhibitions from the collection. In the last several years, for example, solo exhibitions of printmakers from throughout Australia have included New South Wales printmakers Jan Fieldsend and Helen Geier (with Indian artist Kanchan Chander), Victorian artists Jazmina Cininas and Terry Matassoni, Western Australian printmakers Clive Barstowe, Susanna Castleden, Harry Hummerston, Nicola Kaye and Simona Piscioneri, Katy Thamo and Paul Trinidad. In conjunction with these exhibitions, the art centre also hosts floor talks by academics, artists, curators and dealers. The exhibitions and public programs offered by the gallery are often focused on the artists and printmakers who have been invited to judge the SFPA.

Corporate funding is also important in the development of facilities that enhance their role as a cultural centre. Private funding has been an important resource for galleries, not only by establishing art prizes but also through funding renovations to the gallery to create works on paper galleries. Government funding initiatives undertaken during the last decade have allowed many regional art galleries to be more influential on both a

---

45 Important exhibitions involving local print culture in the last decade have been: Plenty: Women artists of Townsville (1996) and Shifting (1997), Wink – women and ink (2001), both featuring established and emerging women artists.

national and local scale. While many regional galleries already have nationally important collections, funding strategies such as the Federal Federation Fund and the New South Wales Government’s State of the Arts strategy aim to augment them.\textsuperscript{47} The Federation Fund allocated twelve million dollars to Victoria, who used much of it to enhance their regional galleries, with sixteen galleries receiving up to two million dollars each, including Bendigo Art Gallery, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Geelong Art Gallery and Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery.\textsuperscript{48}

The funding not only allowed galleries to expand their physical infrastructure, it also enabled regional galleries to develop their local influence.\textsuperscript{49} As part of increased funding to regional galleries throughout Australia, many of those closely involved with contemporary printmaking have developed new gallery spaces suitable for the display of prints. The Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery moved into new premises with a works on paper gallery in 1999, and the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery moved into a new gallery with larger exhibition spaces in 1990. The Castlemaine Historic Museum and Art Gallery, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, the Bendigo Art Gallery’s undertook renovations that included the provision of works on paper galleries in 2000, 2000-2003 and 2001, respectively. These new works on paper galleries allow prints, drawing and watercolours (as well as other fragile and ephemeral art media) to be displayed for longer periods, and to maintain a more consistent presence in gallery exhibition programs. The Castlemaine Historic Museum and Art Gallery was the first gallery to build a conservation studio within the gallery, leading to the preservation of many of the gallery’s prints, as well as an expansion of knowledge of works on paper collections in the area through conservator and curator Kirsten McKay’s private conservation commissions.\textsuperscript{50}

Galleries without significant printmaking collections and without substantial prizes reflect printmaking activity in the region in a more immediate manner, emphasising the gallery’s role not as a collecting or consecrating institution, but as part of an active contemporary culture. The Pinnacles Art Gallery (PAC) is a gallery that serves a wide

\textsuperscript{47} In 2000 the Commonwealth Government established the one billion dollar Federation Fund, distributed by state and territory governments. Under the Carr Government, a significant proportion of funds from the cultural grants program is allocated specifically for regional arts initiatives in New South Wales (for example, $4.7 million out of $16 million cultural grants program in 1998). (Ben Holgate, "Politicians Recognise Performance of Regional Arts," \textit{The Australian}, 10 November 1998.)


\textsuperscript{50} Kirsten McKay, interview with the author, Castlemaine, Victoria, 13 December 2002; Peter Perry, interview with the author, Castlemaine, Victoria, 13 December 2002.
audience, but does so in a complementary role to the Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery (PTRAG) exhibits well-known local printmakers, such as Jo Lankester, Ann Lord, Ron McBurnie and Tate Adams. Exhibitions held at the PAC tend to exhibit the work of JCU graduates and local printmakers. Recent exhibitions of note have included Ron McBurnie's *Drive Ins* and Jill O'Sullivan's Masters graduate exhibition *Dajarra: Interpretations of rural identity.*

Group exhibitions are also an important strategy used by the gallery to fulfil its multicultural and community access responsibilities. In 2002 indigenous artists from Thuringowa/Townsville, Rockhampton, Cairns and Kubin Village in the Torres Strait exhibited a range of works (including prints) in *Maiem Sewngapa Algeda to the Torres Strait.* The project *Compact Prints,* organised in the same year, involved 75 printmakers around the country. Each submitted two prints from same edition measuring 12 x 12cm. These were then burnt to compact disc, published in small catalogue and sent to all participating members. A further community outreach strategy is printmaking education, which also involves local printmakers and reflects the region's strong awareness of printmaking.

Lismore Regional Art Gallery receives limited funding for projects, yet is at the centre of an extremely active art culture and uses collaborative relationships with local individuals and institutions to fulfil its cultural obligations. Lismore has a strong printmaking course at the Southern Cross University and a printmaking community with a high proportion of women. As a consequence, there is a strong emphasis on women printmakers in the gallery's exhibition program. In combination with print portfolios and the Print Council of Australia's Member Prints, the prints by these women in the gallery form a print collection highlighting both traditional and contemporary prints. Although the print collection is small, donations from printmakers like Ruth Faeber, Jenny Kitchener and Jan Davis, in addition to the PCA Members Prints, provide the gallery with works reflecting contemporary diversity. The key role of the gallery in support of regional printmaking is not its collecting activity, however, but its active involvement in contemporary art production.

---


52 Visiting arts practitioners giving printmaking classes (predominantly in relief) for adults and for children have included John Firth Smith, Rebekah Butler, Jill O'Sullivan and Margaret Robertson. Works from the workshop are often exhibited in the gallery some months later. These projects do not commonly result in print acquisitions for the gallery, but are nonetheless important in sustaining printmaking activity in the region.

In recent years the gallery has instigated several projects and held exhibitions representing independent and university printmakers. Southern Cross University staff Jan Davis and Leonie Lane and TAFE lecturer Jenny Kitchener have exhibited in Collective Knowledge (1998), Panorama: Jan Davis, Digital Prints and Drawings and Feedback Phenomenon: Leonie Lane (2003), A Perfect Fit: Liz Decker (2003). TAFE staff have also been exhibited, with Jenny Kitchener and Robyn Sweeney in Recent Work: TAFE Arts Teachers (2000). The gallery's involvement in printmaking in the region is demonstrated in exhibitions such as SCAN (1996), a twelve month collaborative project between the gallery and Southern Cross University,^{54} Printlink: Fifty Years of Printmaking from the Gallery's Permanent Collection (2000), Chen Chuan: Contemporary Chinese Woodblock Prints: An Exhibition of Woodcuts Evolved through a Cultural Exchange between Lismore City Council and Shandong Province in Northeastern China (2000),^{55} and the Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah's Crosscurrents: A Print Exchange between Australia and Vietnam (2003).^{56} In 2001 the gallery also organised E-folio, a portfolio of prints by printmakers in the region, including the works of Jan Davis, Leonie Lane, Christine Porter and Christine Wilcox. Regional galleries are thus able to display the diversity of current practice by responding to community interest and artistic practice. Exhibitions such as those discussed above evince that the role of the gallery as a display venue can incorporate direct forms of patronage that challenge the conventional relationship between artist as supplicant and gallery as authority. In these collaborative ventures, the gallery's role as patron has an equal symbolic value to that developed by the artists who demonstrate the breadth of their institution's creative research. A focal point of these collaborative ventures, therefore, is the pedagogic potential of these exhibitions. They not only represented the involvement of both institutions in national and international contemporary printmaking, but also present this knowledge to a wide public. These exhibitions play a critical role in enhancing print education in the region, fostering new markets and new methods of working around the limitation posed by geographic position and private practice.^{57}

^{54} Artists involved were Jan Davis, Kim Maciuk, Shelagh Morgan, Rilka Oakly and John Smith.
^{56} This exhibition included prints by regional printmakers Darren Bryant, Jenny Kitchener, Nadia Kliendanz, Mark Lindbergh, Rochelle Summerfield and Christine Willcocks.
^{57} In addition to an active program of talks by local artists and lecturers, Lismore Regional Art Gallery has shown many exhibitions organised and curated by individual artists, such as: Lismore Regional Art Gallery, Cahoots: Mary Dorothy and Rochelle Summerfield Lismore: Lismore Regional Art Gallery, 1999; Lismore Regional Art Gallery, From the Same Source: Colour Etchings from Six Female Printmakers from Regional Queensland and New South Wales Lismore: Lismore Regional Art Gallery, 2001; Lismore Regional Art Gallery and Christine Potter, 10 Years, 100 Paintings Lismore: Lismore Regional Art Gallery, 2002.
A third area of regional printmaking development utilised with increasing regularity by regional galleries is the touring exhibition. Touring exhibitions, many stimulated by regional galleries, negate the historical construct of women artists as marginal identities. Exhibitions from major state galleries, regional galleries or local pedagogic institutions have toured exhibitions of national and international printmakers around Australia with the assistance of funding schemes such as Visions Australia and the National Exhibition Touring Scheme. Exhibitions that have toured regional Australia produced by State galleries have included *My Head is a Map* and *Modern Australian Women: Paintings and Print 1925-1945*.\(^{58}\) The number and range of touring exhibitions produced and toured by regional galleries has risen during the last decade, displacing the dominance of major galleries on the form and content of regional exhibitions. Recent regional exhibitions that have toured Australia, for example, have included Ron McBumie, *A Rake's Progress*, Juli Hass, *Interior Din* and James Cook University and Lyre Bird Press, *Lyre Bird Press*, celebrating twenty-one years of the press. Diverse, vigorous and regular print exhibitions are important to the development of regional print-literate audiences. They assist in the cultivation of new regional markets for prints and in establishing supportive contexts for local printmaking courses, communities and exhibitions.

The exhibitions with the greatest bearing on a study of the practice of contemporary women printmakers in regional Australia, however, are those emerging from collaborations between women printmakers who generally practise independently of each other. It is in these exhibitions that the relationships become more collaborative rather than a means to cultivate cultural capital. For example, Christine Ballinger and Noosa Regional Gallery curated and toured *Paper as Object* (2002), an exhibition that crossed geographic and media boundaries by presenting the printed, sculpted and fibre works of Italian, Japanese, Scottish, German and indigenous and non-indigenous Australian artists.\(^{59}\) Some touring exhibitions are limited to local audiences. *Six by Six* is an annual touring exhibition of six Illawarra women printmakers who first came together in 1985.\(^{60}\) The exhibitions are designed to motivate the printmakers and maintain their collaborative relationship. *From the Same*


\(^{59}\) Artists involved included Mary Dorahy, Catherine K, Wendy McGrath, Adele Outteridge, Jacki Parry and Helen Sanderson. Sponsorship for the exhibition and the artworks included Arts Queensland, The Australian Pulp and Paper Institute, B & D Bookbinders, Cotton Australia, Edwards Dunlop Paper, Spicers Paper and VISY.

\(^{60}\) The members of *Six by Six* are Kathryn Orton, Steffanie Hoy, Audrey Bernays, Olwen Evans Wilson, Judy Weeks and Anne Ferguson.
Source: Colour Etchings from Six Female Printmakers from Regional Queensland and New South Wales, an exhibition organised by women printmakers from regional New South Wales and Queensland who met at the McGregor Summer School, has a similar agenda. By organising exhibitions the printmakers remain in creative contact and can also utilise the resources of the Regional Arts Fund and the patronage of regional galleries to dissolve cultural 'margins'.

These exhibitions represent a compression of distance between individuals and art institutions in regional Australia that enable more intimate relationships and more professional opportunities. Printmakers can now choose the nature of their relationship with public galleries and other art institutions. Not all printmakers require the gallery to assist in developing a national professional profile. For many printmakers, public acknowledgement of their practice is as important as market sales—a sense of belonging in an accepting community context. Printmakers in Southern Highlands feel they are supported by Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, particularly through the collaborative atmosphere of group shows and by the personal relationships they have formed with the gallery director, Jennifer Lamb. Others, however, feel that the gallery's assistance is limited by its low profile in the area and that group shows in fact only provided a minimal benefit in an artworld with a centrist bias.61 This relationship extends to galleries providing more material support for printmakers in their region. The Hazlehurst Regional Art Gallery, for example, has facilities for visiting printmakers and residencies, a vital factor in providing support in a period where open access workshops are in severe decline.

For many contemporary women printmakers, the regional gallery serves more as a resource than as a site of legitimation. It can facilitate many forms of printmaking practice that do not necessarily represent the dualist values of the artworld structures of capital. It is common for individual artists to show work and be promoted as individuals, rather than predominantly within the themed and concept exhibitions popular ten years ago, distinct artists' voices evidencing diversity of practice and addressing political, social and economic issues on regional and personal levels.62 The regional gallery can integrate local artists into the broader printmaking community, and cultivate cultures of printmaking whose significance extends beyond their region of location. The inclusion of the print within major collections and the discourses they produce therefore often serves to enhance the identity of the cultural institution as reflective of 'regions' of practice at the expense of the

disparate heterogeneity of contemporary prints, printmakers or practices. Yet collections are also vital in the expansion of new audiences and new spaces within which printmaking can be engaged. International exchanges and touring exhibitions present opportunities to reinterpret ‘regional’ as something distinct from Australian space, moving into an international space with the intention of forming artistic exchange, to bring “deeper consciousness to the social and intercultural impact of art,” and in the process explore “differences, similarities and plurality of meaning between one culture and another.”

Rather than asserting their control of knowledge about art, contemporary galleries often highlight the complexity and compromise that mark the relationship between major print collections and the practice of contemporary women printmakers.

Conclusion

By the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, the rise of regional infrastructure, the devolution of centralised governance, the increase of both regional markets and training have meant that regional pedagogic institutions work closely with printmakers who do not define themselves, their practice or their institutional affiliations in terms of a paradigm of centralised consecration. Enhanced flexibility and delivery methods for printmaking education and representation have meant that both galleries and audiences can adapt to changes in printmaking media, resulting in a more diverse array of printmaking practices. The area in which this is most apparent is in the increase of resources supporting women’s printmaking practice. Printmakers in regional Australia are aware of the different services that regional galleries offer to regional artists. Galleries can support them by developing small regional exhibitions, touring exhibitions or by purchasing their work through prizes, commissions or through acquisition from the artist themselves. They therefore represent a significant patron for printmakers who are not engaged in urban art markets.

The personal relationships that can develop between printmakers and curators in regional galleries have a more profound influence on regional printmaking production than simply providing a place for printmakers within the art industry. Because of the direct nature of the relationships printmakers can form with art galleries, printmakers develop a capacity to represent themselves within the art industry. The basis for this is a changed attitude towards their sense of isolation from the galleries, schools and markets of Sydney.

63 Samporn Redboon, "Preface," in 6 X 6, Brisbane; Melbourne; Bangkok: Queensland Art Gallery; Asialink; Silpakorn University of Art, 1993.
and Melbourne. Regional galleries provide a different network for them to participate in, but the regional art networks and urban art networks are informed by the same institutional principles. As regional art galleries work more closely to the cultural aims of urban arts industries, the contemporary Australian culture industry has broken down the division of value that once formed the basis of concepts of centre and periphery. Prints collected by a regional gallery that already possesses a collection of national significance are accorded the same value as the prints collected by major state galleries. In many ways, the value is higher as it intersects more areas of the art industry. For example, printmakers who are collected by the Art Gallery of South Australia are incorporated into an important collection and receive significant artistic and cultural status. A print purchased by the Geelong Art Gallery also becomes part of a printmaking collection of national importance. However, as the Geelong Art Gallery has more print exhibitions that focus on contemporary prints, there is more opportunity for the printmakers to receive public interest, a rise in market profile and the interest of the strong academic printmaking community of the Geelong and Melbourne region. The increased number of women printmakers represented in regional collections is therefore more reflective of increased opportunities for all printmakers on an equal basis, automatically adjusting the gender bias elicited by earlier arts patronage activities that favoured the work of urban artists with full-time practices or those who worked in stable workshops and were represented by a limited pool of critics, dealers and collectors.

As discussed, many of the regional exhibitions curated and/or toured by regional galleries have presented methods of printmaking that reinterpret the nature of the print and of printmaking. The variety of techniques apparent in regional Australian printmaking exhibitions illustrates an area of artistic development that is particularly pronounced in regional Australia. The techniques are often marked by chance events – the heat of the sun on a momentarily neglected print, the scale necessary to transport prints to other states to take advantage of markets there or the processes used to overcome the expense or toxicity of materials. The following chapter examines some of the idiosyncrasies of regional practice. It explores not only how these have led to a rise in regional women printmakers successfully practising in regional Australia, but also to myriad approaches to the print that rearticulate its presence within the artworld.
Chapter Four

Plate 6
Sue Pickering, etching proofs, Ferntree Printmakers Workshop,
Ferntree, Tasmania, 2002.
Cultivating new fields of regional printmaking practice

Regional printmaking was once characterised by two main forms of printmaking: the isolated individual and the community group. These two modes of printmaking shared a similar peripheral position to the centralised art industry. Regional printmakers had practices that were marked by a constant struggle to access equipment, materials and markets. They also sought to gain acceptance from an urban cultural network that had very little in common with the factors that influenced regional printmaking production. Many new fields of cultural practice have developed in regional Australia over the past decade. Art institutions have decentralised – formal education and art galleries have raised the awareness of prints in regional areas and the profile of regional prints in the urban artworld. Regional art galleries and cultural ‘precincts’ provide the infrastructure necessary to integrate disparate arts cultures into an arts industry capable of producing globally relevant forms of cultural capital.

Regional printmaking has taken full advantage of the opportunities provided by the decentralisation of the art industry. Printmakers can work as part of communities that are formed by individuals and workshops from both regional and urban areas. Individuals can work without having to rely on the facilities provided by an art school or community workshop. Instead, printmakers can maintain a private form of practice without being isolated. Many who choose this path also create a value associated with their prints that has little similarity to those which propel the artworld. A range of different forms of capital emerge from regional printmaking practices: community, social, political and artistic themes combine to create forms of symbolic or economic capital that allows printmakers to choose not only how they practise, but how they incorporate their practice into their immediate community or the wider artworld. This chapter explores how the communities which were once formed for the purpose of providing equipment as well as company have evolved to being abstract sites for innovative printmaking practices. For the printmakers who form these communities the concept of centre and periphery has little currency.
This chapter begins with a discussion of several of the main forms of printmaking community that characterise the regional landscape of Australian printmaking. The way that printmakers who work within communities reflect the many different choices of practice available to contemporary printmakers is evident in the community, political or technical ethos that informs printmaking communities. The different kinds of women printmakers that are involved in these communities reveal that gender is no basis for a category of art production. Instead, one of the key features of contemporary regional printmaking is the new approaches to mark-making that have emerged. The second section of this chapter examines how the expansion of technology, education and artistic support into regional Australia has created a context for the evolution of new printmaking techniques. Women printmakers are particularly active in this area of printmaking development. Domestic and regional landscapes exert a profound influence on how printmakers use their materials. The prints that are created, however, have profound implications for concepts of the print or the exclusivity of printmaking, extending the relevance of these techniques far beyond the regional site of their production. The ability to reinterpret mark-making is also applied to the creation of printmaking markets. Many of these markets provide an alternative to selling to either a ‘fine art’ audience or a ‘tourist’ audience. These practices have led to a redefinition of the regional practice of contemporary women printmakers that is explored in detail in chapters five, six and seven.

**Contemporary printmaking communities**

Non-institutional workshops are largely the initiatives of committed individuals. Workshops throughout Australia increasingly incorporate alternative forms of access and education to counterbalance the limitations of institutional education. Regional communities often have highly skilled members or an invited practitioner giving classes. Open access to facilities allows printmakers to practise these skills in a supportive and supervised context. They are important sites for women printmakers, as workshop pedagogy allows access to different types of workshop mentalities, styles of teaching, technical skills and independence to suit a wide variety of lifestyles, finances and approaches. The commitment of these women is such that many communities that were
originally formed in response to technical necessity have now become important sites for printmaking education in regional areas. They take advantage of the interest of Federal arts governance in creating cultural capital to not only extend the economic potential for printmaking in the region, but also to provide printmakers with a sense of belonging to a large, responsive artworld.

This pursuit of cultural capital was integrated into the Australian arts industry in the early 1990s by the Creative Nation policy. The dual purpose of cultural capital to generate economic and symbolic wealth was one of the central features of this policy:

This cultural policy is also an economic policy. Culture creates wealth ... Culture adds value, it makes it an essential contribution to innovation, marketing and design. It is a badge of our industry. The level of creativity substantially determines our ability to adapt to new economic imperatives. It is a valuable export in itself and an essential accompaniment to the export of other commodities. It attracts tourists and students. It is essential to our economic success.¹

One of the most effective strategies to turn regional artistic creativity into this kind of cultural capital is supporting art communities. Communities not only assist artists in accessing the materials necessary for their practice, but it also create social capital – a sense of social cohesion that adds to the cultural identity of the region and prevents individuals from feeling isolated.

There are three basic models of contemporary regional printmaking communities.²

The first is the community that is created in response to a sense of isolation from urban art communities. The printmaking group Northern Impressions in Townsville illustrates one such group, which cultivated a similar network in response to their distance from the printmaking communities of Melbourne and Sydney and the need for a forum to address contemporary printmaking in the region. The second type of community is the group that establishes itself with a clear goal of independence from the values, if not the processes, of the art industry. The example of the Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah (CPM) in

north coast New South Wales is used to demonstrate the strong ethos invoked by these
groups to ensure the conceptual and practical integrity of their workshop within an artwork
with strong commercial values. The third model discussed is the community that is formed
by a cohort of printmakers who come together to establish greater access to equipment,
material and conceptual support. These printmakers often pursue independent careers and
cultivate relationships with individuals within art institutions to promote their practice
within the wider art industry. This practice may be examined in reference to communities in
different states of Australia.

Northern Impressions, established in 1992 by Ron McBurnie, lecturer in
printmaking at James Cook University, and Cheryl Wilson, lecturer of printmaking and
artists books at the Barrier Reef TAFE is an example of the first model of printmaking
community. It was a printmaking community composed of printmakers who work both
within and independent of local art institutions. In the first edition of the group’s self-titled
newsletter, McBurnie relates the process leading to the development of Northern
Impressions, stating:

For a number of years I have considered and discussed with other
printmakers the possibility of North Queensland printmakers
coming together for workshops and lecturers or to discuss
...programs or topics specifically related to printmaking.3

The newsletter and group was established to “redress the matter of the lack of
communication … that Northern artists have with each other and within their community.”4
In order to provide opportunities for collaboration, Northern Impressions instigated a
printmaking culture that introduced new members and approaches into an arena of
individuals who themselves were involved with a diverse array of institutional traditions.
Each edition of the newsletter was enclosed within a dustcover bearing an original print by
an invited printmaker from the group. Covers produced during the group’s three-year
existence include prints by Katrina Rehorn, Anneke Silver, Margaret Wilson, Dean
Campbell, Gregg Nowell and Tate Adams. Northern Impressions brought together

Queensland printmakers, 28 November 1992, np.
4 Over its three-year existence, Northern Impressions’ newsletter provided information about workshops,
local and interstate printmaking events and workshops and talks provided by visiting artists.
institutionally and non-institutionally situated printmakers from within the region and interstate. The inclusive environment the group provided was informed by the nineteenth-century Royal Society of Painters and Etchers and its aim to emphasise the equal validity of printmaking as an art form, despite its rejection by the Royal Academy. In the spirit of mutual support and pedagogy, the group organised workshops, interviewed eminent printmakers, critiqued exhibitions and editioned collector prints, with many of these projects undertaken in partnership with the James Cook University.

The second model of community as a place of learning and support is evident in the practice of the Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah (CPM). Established in 1989, the group built its first studio at a disused pig farm in Condon. From the humble beginnings of "a pit toilet and the handle press that you had to wind up", it moved to its current premises in an old petrol station outside Murwillumbah in 1993. One of the founding members was printmaker Michael Baartz, who teaches drawing, printmaking and professional practice at the North Coast Institute of TAFE in Murwillumbah, and who encouraged students, many of whom were undertaking art training for the first time as a part-time activity, to transfer their artistic exploration into printmaking at community workshops. Classes of intaglio, screenprint and relief are a regular component of the CPM schedule, emphasising the autographic mark, pragmatic approaches and a strong ethos of cultural and political independence. The community has had a significant impact on the presence of printmaking in the region, developing the support of audiences, businesses and institutions. Printmakers feel a great sense of support that extends beyond the actual facilities of the community workshop. As one printmaker explained, "having been more in Lismore [at the University of the Southern Cross print workshop] than here, I really miss the sense of community that's in this studio in particular." Another has benefited from the ability of the community network to facilitate independence of practice:

I used to go up [to CPM] once or twice a week and just print, because they had a good press and really lovely people and all. But it was hard because I had two little children. I had a tiny press and I just kept working really small, just to stay at home. And then I had the opportunity to buy a bigger press, which takes a full

5 McBurnie, "Old Etchers Club Inspires New Group."
6 Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author, Murwillumbah, New South Wales, 6 October 2002.
7 Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author.
8 Liz Deckers in Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author.
sheet of paper, through the CPM newsletter. ... I haven't been involved [with the community] in two years, but I used to read it religiously.⁹

The community's newsletter is a key factor in the success of CPM, enabling it to advertise its services and requirements, disseminate technical and polemical material and extend its support to printmakers unable to regularly visit the workshop. Additional pieces of equipment and material coming from the second-hand market are also advertised in the newsletter. The community newsletter contains exhibitions and workshop details, reviews, articles from art and print journals (national and international) and regional debate between members throughout the state. It also includes quotes reflecting the group's ethos, such as: "It's a task of artists and poets and novelists to work from positions outside the horizons of political acceptability."¹⁰ The group firmly establishes itself as politically divorced from the artworld. Representing the group's aims are the words of one the community's longest-involved members, Kim Townsend:

Creative imagination is not as rare a gift as most people think. It is born with us. What is rare is the will power to fight against convention, to push aside the endlessly derogatory exclamations of friends, relatives, neighbours, critics of all kinds, who will tell you with the greatest certainty that you are wasting your time.¹¹

CPM remains aloof from most institutions, but takes an active role in the prize tradition started by the Print Council of Australia. It established its own prize in 1991, which became a national prize in 1992. The prize, with judges such as Roger Butler, Anne Kirker and Ron McBurnie, has been won over the past decade by G. W Bot, Jan Davis, Janette Hanrahan, Rilka Oakly, Simona Piscioneri, Judy Watson and Clara Wubugwuwuk. Not only does the prize provide the group with a national profile, it also provides the opportunity to enter a collection that has a strong representation of women printmakers.¹² The group membership extends throughout New South Wales,¹³ emphasising an imperative to "stay flexible in their thinking in order to retain spontaneity and creative 'nowness' in

⁹ Melissa Wright, interview with the author, Brunswick Heads, New South Wales, 3 October 2002.
¹⁰ Alex Miller, quoted in Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah newsletter, 5, 1994, np.
¹² In 2001, the Tweed River Regional Art Gallery had a collection of fifty prints, twenty-one by women.
¹³ Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author.
CPM is a tropistic group of individuals, aspiring not to inclusion by the 'centre', but to establishing a practice that remains independent of the trends of governance and market that have caused the demise of many printmaking workshops before them.

The third model of community practice provides support for printmakers who are without resources after graduating from their print courses or from the closure of courses the region. It is the most prominent form of printmaking community as it allows a fluctuation of membership and can adapt to fluctuation in funding. Such groups include the Southern Highland Printmakers Association (Mittagong), the Fern Tree Printmakers (Fern Tree, Tasmania), the Newcastle Printmakers, Main Street Editions (Hahndorf), Umbrella Studios (Townsville) and Printworks (Hobart). In these groups, printmakers who have not undergone formal training can develop skills and resources as well as establish a place for themselves within the local cultural community and a national (or international) printmaking community through participation in exhibitions, exchanges and workshops.

Many of these exhibitions are held in smaller regional art galleries, often in foyer exhibitions. Although these imply that low symbolic value is attributed to the work, regular exhibition still reflects a cultural dynamic, encouraging local sales and community support. CPM, the Newcastle Printmakers, Fern Tree Printmakers, and the Southern Highland Printmakers Association regularly exhibit in foyer and café galleries at the local regional art galleries. These exhibitions may not always stimulate a high number of sales, but they do cultivate local support and a sense of inclusion in the artworld. For many printmakers this produces a symbolic capital associated with their work that has a far greater personal value than any economic profit acquired.

---

15 The Newcastle Printmakers Workshop Inc., Adamstown (est. 1979), is the longest running printmakers workshop in Australia, has regular exhibitions at the Lake Macquarie Regional Art Gallery and the Maitland City Art Gallery as well as the Newcastle Regional Art Gallery.
16 Umbrella Studios established a press as part of its studio space in 2004, and provides access and classes.
17 Adele Boag, interview with the author, Hahndorf, Adelaide Hills, South Australia, 2 November 2002; Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author; Susan Pickering, interview with the author, Fern Tree, Hobart, 4 December 2002; survey submissions from Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, Fern Tree Printmakers and Southern Highland Printmakers, December 2001.
18 These have been the Maitland City Art Gallery in New South Wales, the Devonport Regional Art Gallery in Tasmania, the Tweed River Regional Art Gallery in New South Wales and the Goulburn Regional Art Gallery.
19 Southern Highlands Printmakers Association, survey submissions.
Another aspect of this model of community occurs with the formation of temporary
groups for printmaking projects. Postal and digital projects cultivate a strong sense of
community and ongoing support. For example, the Internet discussion list PrintAustralia
includes printmakers from all areas who engage in debate, exchange information regarding
technique and exchange works. The list connects members to a wide range of resources and
equips them with the skills and connections to extend their practice outside specific
geographic or institutional sites. Exchange projects also emerge from temporary
communities formed for the purpose of collaboration. Stephen Spurrier’s collaboration with
the Tableland Printmakers Association in the Atherton Tablelands, North Queensland, for
example, was a result of exchanging objects, images and ideas for over a year. It
culminated in an exhibition at the Cairns Regional Gallery, BLAH BLAH assemBLAHage
(1996), that illuminated what could occur when interpretation over time and distance create
condensed passages of experience.

The importance of printmaking communities extends beyond the provision of
technical equipment, access to markets and support to conceptual development. These
communities are also expansive by nature. By overcoming boundaries between different
printmaking communities and regions they endeavour not to take an exclusive approach to
practice and encourage the individuals they encounter to do the same. Many of the women
interviewed for this thesis began printmaking later in life: some after retiring, some after
their children have left home and some after leaving rural farms due to drought. Regional
printmakers have to adapt to a wide range of physical, social and emotional environments.
Techniques must have the flexibility to shift with rapid changes in markets, cultural tastes,
gallery staff and policy, economic stability and personal commitment. It is often assumed
that regional communities, because of their expansive inclusion of printmakers of all levels,
produce work of consistently low quality. The growth of forums and symposia is one of the
critical factors changing the profile of Australian printmaking, particularly as increasingly
regional women printmaking are attending institutional, community or informal groups of
printmakers.

20 For information on PrintAustralia, see PrintAustralia, www.severn.acav.com.au, [accessed 10 February 2005].
21 Artists involved were Catherine Jacoby, Val Keenan, Michael Larkin, Rob Mian, Adele Smout, Vivienne Spooner and Melissa Waters.
A further prominent feature of regional printmaking communities is a philosophy of individual motivation. The improved roads of communication between individuals and communities throughout the art industry have encouraged many printmakers to adopt this philosophy in their private practice. Many are aware that their practice may be seen as a hobby activity and consciously seek to separate their artistic practice from local tradition. During the last decade, an increased number of women choose to act with some degree of independence from the dynamics of regional art community groups or cultures. As one printmaker described, the benefits of community can also be part of its detraction: “I think it’s very much a community spirit thing. At times – sometimes it gets a bit consuming, because you just want to come in and you actually hope no one’s here.”

Printmaking can create independence in both personal and social life: the role of the wife, mother and community member can be redefined by artistic activity. A brief exploration of how women printmakers in regional areas approach printmaking outside institutional and community contexts reveals the importance of domestic sites not as external, isolated producers of ‘craft’, but as adaptive, inventive and capable of high artistic quality printmaking. A review of the development of the contemporary print market during the last decade reveals that both printmakers and audiences are exploring new ways of encouraging the purchase and collection of prints, many resulting from the public profiles cultivated by printmakers themselves. The dynamic of the print market is moving away from dominant metropolitan-based commercial art dealers, and towards individual relationships between printmaker, dealer and audience. The increased capacity of women to work separately from the facilities, finances and values of art institutions has led to a significant increase in the number and range of communities supporting printmaking development in regional Australia. The increased range of both institutional and non-institutional resources available to printmakers has encouraged a proliferation of new techniques interpretations. The following discussion focuses on the influence that these emergent forms of printmaking have in creating equity and independence in regional women’s printmaking practice.

22 Kim Townsend in Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author.
Mark making: New printmaking techniques in regional Australia

Prints produced by women printmakers in regional Australia are often intimately connected with their personal life. The techniques and the materials and techniques used in the printmaking practice often reflect domestic events—moving house, the growth of children or the pain of the departure or death of a family member. The intimacy and sophistication of these prints is not only influenced by regional women’s increased access to education, but also their enhanced ability to create properly equipped domestic studios.

Ownership of a press is particularly important to regional women printmakers, as often there are no open access facilities in their area. Companies such as Enjay Presses and Melbourne Etching Supplies are the principal suppliers of print material and deliver their presses throughout Australia. However, there is a growth of small businesses selling custom-made presses. The following section explores the traditional and alternative techniques printmakers used to practise in regional Australia. It does not focus on the provision of equipment in regional Australia, but examines the ways printmakers adapt their practice to their surroundings. Nor does this examination seek to establish an overview of changing market relationships between urban and regional printmaking cultures. Instead, a discussion of contemporary regional print markets is predominantly taken from the point of view of printmakers who are in a position to choose markets most complementary to their practice.

Regional printmaking often depends on the quality and quantity of accessible equipment and material. Printmakers who have purchased new presses do so in a number of ways: through personal savings, bank loans, government grants or the proceeds of prizes or the sale of their work. The growth of regional printmaking communities and their networks has also cultivated a market for second hand printmaking equipment that has increased in popularity within the last decade. Often the presses made by regional mechanics and engineers may be adequate. Toowoomba printmaker, Sharon O’Phee, had a hydraulic press built by her father, a retired engineer, from which she produces high quality prints. Melissa Wright, of Lennox Heads, describes how she purchased a press through the CPM newsletter from an independent agent:

---

23 Evidence of these providers is available in community newsletters and Internet discussion lists, such as PrintAustralia.
24 Many of these presses are advertised in printmaking newsletters or online discussion lists.
25 Sharon O’Phee, interview with the author, Toowoomba, Queensland, 11 October 2002.
It was a guy—a kind of an engineer, and he had bought an old press from tender from the local Southern Cross Uni, and he had fixed it all up and redone the bearings and redone the beds and redone all this stuff. And then he sold it to me for dirt-cheap.  

The opportunity to purchase presses from individuals (often mechanics or engineers) is reported by printmakers in other states. Yet the danger of purchasing privately made presses is that these presses often have problems with their pressure, gears and beds.

Printmaking undertaken in domestic environments must often accommodate the other functions of the space. Printmakers may have presses of good quality that deteriorate in studios that are open to the weather rather than in a stable atmosphere. The press of Kangaroo Island printmaker Jenny Clapson, for example, is pitted by fly spots. The press used by Nimmitabel printmaker Jackie Garring is too large to fit in the house and too heavy to move, and has consequently taken residence on the front porch of her farmhouse. Printmaking presses are usually situated in home studios established in sheds, back rooms or under houses. The storage of prints is problematic, with mapping drawers tucked away into spare rooms, linen cupboards, and the covered verandas of Queenslander-style houses. Small studio spaces may require a range of different materials and small pieces of equipment being stored throughout the house and sheds. In many studios rollers and inks share bench space with mechanical tools and paints, presses cohabit with the car in the garage, children’s bicycles lean against drying racks, and printmakers such as Fatima Killeen in Canberra and Jo Lankester in Townsville describe constructing collographs on the lounge room floor while their children play nearby. Domestic printmaking may also require tolerance from the printmaker’s family. This support is an important factor: for many printmakers sustained practice needs the support of immediate family and community to establish its foundations.

The order established in printmaking in a domestic context is very different from that found in open access, art schools or commercial workshops. Domestic printmaking arrangements incorporate family spaces and activities. Families accept them as part of the household and the printmaking is often enriched by this. Domestic studios require

---

26 Melissa Wright, interview with the author, Brunswick Heads, New South Wales, 3 October 2002.
27 Fatima Killeen, interview with the author, Canberra, ACT, 28 August 2002; Jo Lankester, interview with the author, Townsville, Queensland, 20 October 2002.
considerable alteration to the domestic environment and often stimulate ingenious approaches to the creation or substitution of vital equipment. Clapson’s partner, John Ayliffe, built an exposure box for her solarplate printmaking and established a framing business in the corner of the studio to streamline the process of preparing prints for sale. Unusual occupational health and safety issues are associated with domestic print studios. Some printmakers report that their rural studios can be a haven for snakes, spiders and mice in summer. People who work under houses report long periods of stooped printing. Others work in converted sheds that are sweltering in summer and freezing in winter, with a range of adverse effects due to inks, paper and fumes. However, just as equipment can be adapted, so can the environment of the studio. In Queensland, houses are often raised so that space can be freed below for a studio. A range of alternative print carriers and matrices can be gathered from the house should paper run low, with printmakers using rice paper, wettex, junk mail, newspaper and vegetable skins to expand their exploration of printmaking. Technical necessity is thus not necessarily a creative constraint, but can also be an avenue to liberating the contexts and methods of printmaking.

While an increased capacity to establish an equipped private studio has paralleled the increase in regional printmaking education, there has still emerged an issue of isolation that has considerable influence on women printmakers’ ability to maintain ongoing use of their studio. Many women undertake short courses in printmaking (often in areas a substantial distance from their home), but they often return to their studio without resources to call upon when they encounter difficulty with techniques or processes. Phone calls can provide advice for many problems, but are only successful to a certain degree. An alternative method of pedagogy that has played an important role in the development of regional women printmakers is mentorship. Mentorship is part of an established culture of press sharing that has involved both individual printmakers and institutional workshops throughout the twentieth century. Contemporary examples share many similarities with traditional forms of press sharing, providing a supportive context for young printmakers. As Rew Hanks stated in 1981: “Young printmakers tend to develop very slowly because of the many complex technical hurdles they have to overcome.” In regional Australia, the

---

28 Anne Lord, interview with the author, Townsville, Queensland, 22 October 2002.
expansion of equipment has created a parallel expansion of press-sharing opportunities. Many of these occur in concert with a mentor relationship for printmakers who have undergone printmaking education but lack the network, facilities and support to continue to develop their practice in a focused manner.

Press sharing relationships active in regional Australia occur in a diverse array of contractual-style relationships. One style of relationship aims to reduce the strain on individual printmakers with private presses and enable them to produce large editions in relatively short periods of time by hiring local printmakers to assist them. For example, Lismore Christine Porter occasionally hires students from the Southern Cross University or local printmakers to allow the rapid and professional completion of large editions in a weekend for exhibition and sale, with three people inking, wiping and printing. In return, they have access to her studio and press for their own work. In other areas where there are no open access presses, the personal relationships between individuals can stimulate informal press-sharing and teaching, which over time can evolve into a collaborative relationship. Alison Bartlett has had her practice fostered by O'Phee, and has thus been encouraged to take an open approach from the start to remain flexible and without complete dependence on equipment.

The postgraduate period particularly impacts on the development of printmakers with a sense of place within the art world, and their relationship with other printmakers. The challenges many regional printmakers confront—professional, financial and personal—have always been a central element of post-graduation experience, often informing the identity and processes of the mature artist. As noted by printmaker and teacher, Rita Hall, the difficulties that students are confronted with enable them to “break out of the institutional mould.” She believes:

---

30 Christine Porter, interview with the author, Lismore, New South Wales, 2 October 2002.
31 Ibid.
32 Alison Bartlett, interview with the author, Toowoomba, Queensland, 9 October 2002.
They have been so influenced by their teachers and their judgement that they need to not only make necessary mistakes themselves, but also develop an independent critical judgement.  

The period after printmakers leave pedagogic institutions can be the most uncertain in their careers. More experienced printmakers are faced with an equal uncertainty when the workshops and communities they are associated with close down. As will be discussed in detail in the following case study chapters, women printmakers employ a wide range of techniques that can be adapted as their family, social and economic circumstances change. The age of the printmaker does not appear to have a significant impact on their ability to establish a printmaking practice or a market.

The prints produced by women printmakers in regional Australia are often innovative in their approaches to the medium, and sometime they depict techniques that developed accidentally. Some have direct links with the immediate environment, such as Seligman’s corrugated iron prints (such as *Untitled*, etched, 2002 (Plate 7)), which developed when etched dampened paper was left draped over a water tank in high summer as Seligman ran to answer the telephone. Necessity and a willingness to experiment have led to many conceptual alliances between different art mediums. This interdisciplinary approach to the print is particularly apparent in prints that combine domestic materials and traditional printmaking techniques, such as is evident in the work of Lismore printmaker Liz Deckers, who is discussed later in this chapter. Other areas of innovation involve printmakers beginning the print in one medium and translating it into another, an approach that was part of Clapson’s use of solarplate.

---

33 Rita Hall, interview with the author, Adelaide Hills, South Australia, 2 November 2002.
34 Helen Seligman, interview with the author, Castlemaine, Victoria, 15 December 2002.
Plate 7

Collection of the artist.
Another example of the process of uniting artistic techniques is in the work of artist Victoria Cooper of Toowoomba in New South Wales. Cooper produces digital prints that begin as digital photographs. The prints transcribe physical landscapes into digital environments, thereby suspending them from classification or generalisation. Cliff Story, Gorge Story and Hillside Story (digital prints on scrolled paper, 2002, 40 x 250 cm (Plate 8)), are part of a set of five scrolled prints entitled Five Stories from the Gorge. Kinetic and instinctive, they map the landscape through memory as well as through technology. Cooper’s personal construction of the landscape is overlaid with other methods of charting different aspects of nature. She explores the environmental landscape, highlighting issues of conservation. At the same time, Cooper depicts a postcolonial landscape which displays an acute awareness of the disjuncture that can exist between the landscape itself and Western techniques of understanding, classifying and naming it. Employing a combination of old and new technology, her prints attempt to overcome the limitations of physical perception.1 They create an expanded sense of space in which through digital manipulation Cooper can ‘grow’ a subjective landscape, ordered by her own perception of place and science.2 These prints also stimulate awareness that the definition of a print or a photograph is not fixed.

In Five Stories From the Gorge, Cooper presents five different techniques used by art and science to transcribe the landscape. They began as digital photographs and scans informed by Cooper’s research into the optical processes of the camera obscura. Cooper composes the image on the computer and then prints them onto long, two-and-a-half metre scrolls. The final prints are quite different from the image in its digital state. They have adopted the fibrous texture of the paper and gained an organic presence. The precision of the image, landscapes that shift as they are observed, is disrupted by the contours of the paper, the curve of the scroll once hung and the movement of the air surrounding it. Just as the work queries the authority of different methods of mapping of the landscape, the processes that produced these works similarly question the relevance of distinctions between art practices, and the cultural environments they reference. Like many printmakers in regional areas, in her desire to explore different perceptions of place Cooper has created

Plate 8
new approaches to printmaking practice. Her work conveys a sense of layered space and of altered states that are integral to the aesthetics of printmaking.\(^1\)

Cooper does not wish to affiliate herself with any particular art practice, preferring to refer to herself as “a maker of images”.\(^2\) In 2002 *Five Stories from the Gorge* was acquired the Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery in the Toowoomba Biennial Acquisitive Art Award. The director of the gallery, Dianne Baker, could not decide whether it should be categorised as a print or a photograph, although instinct compelled her to perceive it as possessing the palimpsest layering and ink quality of a print.\(^3\) The authority of Cooper’s work does not lie in her identity as a printmaker, a photographer, a teacher, recipient of a Master’s degree or a regional woman artist.\(^4\) Cooper’s images exist in a digital environment, suspended out of space and time. Once they are printed, a range of different factors comes into play—the characteristics of different printers, different papers, or, if projected onto a screen the level of lighting in a room or the angle from which it is viewed. It could be argued that the element of chance involved in this process is part of the enigmatic quality of printmaking. Chance encounters between different subjective experiences occur when the prints are suspended in a digital environment: eternally in a process of transference, there is no final print, no different states and no editioning process.

These prints do not fit easily into any clear area of the art market. Regional women printmakers target a wide range of audiences. They sell their work to tourists, urban audiences, universities, local patrons or to State collecting institutions. Many send their prints to urban art dealers or commercial galleries in other states, taking advantage of the lightness of the unframed print. Others cultivate a regional audience by inviting them into their studio and educating them about what a print is. New areas of market have developed

---

\(^1\) Phillips, “Regions of Practice”.
\(^2\) Victoria Cooper, interview with the author, Toowoomba, Queensland, 13 October, 2002.
\(^3\) Dianne Baker, interview with the author, Toowoomba, Queensland, 11 October 2002.
\(^4\) Cooper works in Toowoomba, teaching at the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE, and has recently completed a Graduate Diploma of Fine Arts at Monash University, undertaking this course by correspondence.
commensurately with new methods of mark-making. The following section of this chapter explores some of the markets that regional women printmakers have cultivated since 1993, in often regardless of the hierarchies that structure the traditional print markets evinced by the commercial print galleries in Melbourne and Sydney.

Emerging regional printmaking markets

The decentralisation of art education, collection and exhibition has influenced printmaking markets in two basic ways. The first is the capacity of artists to cultivate particular markets to suit their work. This involves consciously situating themselves in relation to the values of centralised art markets without locating themselves on a symbolic or economic periphery. The second is the increase in the economic and geographic diversity of print cognizant audiences. Cultural development in regional Australia has given regional audiences the skill to recognise printmaking techniques and the different traditions from which they emerge. There has thus been a significant expansion of the markets within which regional women can sell their prints—some of which are traditional markets overseen by commercial galleries, and others that are controlled by the printmakers themselves. Women now have the choice of which markets they wish to develop: markets catering to private collectors and inclusion in public collections or corporate collections, or markets in their immediate environment that can produce more immediate sales by evading the exclusivity of restricted markets. As printmaking techniques and audiences have expanded, so has the market.

5 The specific influence of corporate collections on print markets for regional women printmakers is limited, and therefore largely falls beyond the scope of this thesis. Useful commentaries on the influence of corporate collections on the contemporary printmaking market in Australia can be found in Caroline Durre, "The Economy of Printmaking: Culture & Commodity. Part One," Imprint, 29, no. 1, 1994, p. 5-6.
Markets that create an economic value for the work of women printmakers also establish a symbolic place for them within the cultural industry. A consistent history of this process is visible in urban commercial galleries, which have presented women printmakers as reflective of socio-cultural developments as much as aesthetic content. Many major galleries have an involvement with prints to some degree, where there is a culture of profitable artists subsidising artists with a weaker market presence. In some galleries, it is the more profitable works in other media that subsidise prints by the same artists. Several artists have expressed frustration that their prints are often kept in back rooms, unlike their paintings or other works on paper, considered of higher value because of the symbolic value attributed to the exclusive autographic mark.

Contemporary commercial art galleries that deal exclusively with prints are not accessible to regional printmakers in all states. Some States or Territories have many galleries that regularly sell prints. In Canberra, for example, there are currently four commercial galleries that regularly exhibit printmakers from the region. Galleries in Adelaide offer a similar representation of printmakers, marketing them most successfully when they are sold with other art works. Adele Boag Galleries in Adelaide, until late 2004 known as Main Street Galleries (Hahndorf), represents major and emerging South Australian printmakers. The gallery reflects the high proportion of women printmakers in the region, and includes the work of Janet Ayliffe, Rita Hall and Margie Sheppard. The local emphasis is counteracted by the inclusion of printmakers from interstate (such as

---


8 Beaver Gallery, Chapman Gallery, Helen Maxwell Gallery and Megalo Open Access Gallery.

9 Main Street Galleries was a print dedicated gallery in Hahndorf, South Australia. In 2004 the gallery moved to Adelaide and became Adele Boag Gallery, widening its representation of art to include paintings.
Fiona Omenyo, Rosella Namock from Fitzroy Crossing in Far North Queensland and Melissa Smith from Tasmania). Yet the presence of prints within the contemporary market is rapidly shifting as paintings become more affordable, and the traditional values associated with limited editions of prints are undermined by printmaking techniques that are single impressions or capable of unlimited editions. Director of Main Street Gallery, Adele Boag, perceives the gallery role as one of community support and pedagogy as well as market representation, extending beyond the local and national region.

Printmakers do not necessarily choose print-specific galleries to ensure sales of their work, instead cultivating markets that are responsive to their needs as practising artists, not simply as agents striving for symbolic or economic forms of value within the art industry. The approach taken by the commercial gallery is an important factor in their decision. Urban galleries offer access to a wider market than is available in regional Australia, but they tend to concentrate on urban printmakers. The director of Christine Abrahams Gallery in Melbourne, Guy Abrahams, comments that while the gallery represents several printmakers, they generally have their own presses or work in collaboration with master printmakers such as Chrysalis, the Australian Print Workshop or John Loane. He cites a lack of education as being one of the reasons his clients prefer painting rather than printmaking, as well as the more obvious influence of the higher market and social value paintings possess. Paul Greenaway, director of Greenaway Gallery in Adelaide, also refers to the suspicion clientele have for the value of the print, commenting that they do not like large editions. Australian Galleries Works on Paper director, Stuart Purves, however, believes that one of the driving factors of the print market that he has encountered regularly from buyers of prints is that it does not matter what the medium is, as long as there is something about the work that captures the viewer. Works on paper have the ability to do this just as well as painting, and their affordability makes them very appealing to a large proportion of art buyers.

10 Guy Abrahams, correspondence with the author, 14 December 2004.
12 Stuart Purves, telephone interview with the author, 14 March 2005.
The accessibility of printmaking workshops affects the prints that are represented by commercial galleries. Regional commercial galleries regularly display prints in small editions under thirty prints. Editions are expensive in time and money to produce, and often do not sell completely, leaving artists and dealers to deal with the question of storage. Commercial galleries no longer hold full editions of prints in their storerooms, with many instead opting to hold prints of editions that printmakers then print to order. As one critic comments:

> The world of printmaking is ultimately market-driven, and understandably so. An edition can be a large investment for a studio ... and so only artists with a proven record for their work are generally invited.\(^{13}\)

The practice also means that printmakers must be able to access a press to produce the print when requested or have the room in their studio or house to store a completed edition in archival conditions. Editions and expensive printmaking techniques that have a strong market presence are often produced by commercial workshops. The Australian Print Workshop and Port Jackson Press give printmakers and artists the opportunity to work with master printers through a series of residencies, commissions and awards. They have an influential position within the art market, cultivating symbolic and economic capital through commissions and the patronage of major collectors, organizations or cultural institutions. They have a strong presence in the contemporary market through sales from the in-house gallery, an Internet site, national and international exhibitions and through the sales of prints of individual artists in commercial galleries throughout the country.\(^{14}\) By these strategies, workshops establish a market presence within traditional markets for groups or individuals.


The lack of communication between dealers and printmakers has contributed to a culture of distrust. The treatment of their work by galleries has caused some printmakers to seek markets elsewhere or to change their primary media in response to market tastes. Damaged prints are a common problem for regional artists, who use the transportability of the print to capture markets in other states, but may experience significant damage to their work as a result. The distance that separates many printmakers from their markets encourages many to create new markets closer to home, where they can exert more control over how their works are cared for and presented to potential audiences. This movement away from established art dealers was noted in the 2002 Commonwealth Government of Australia Myer report on the Visual Arts Industry: “Despite the range of agency arrangements observable within the contemporary visual art and craft sector, the most common manner in which artistic works are sold is by the artist directly to the public.” Many printmakers sell directly from their workshops. A particular area for potential growth, however, is the art fair.

Within the last ten years, an art fair devoted to works on paper has been developed. The most important festival of art on paper is in South East Asia, initially known as the International Master Print Fair, the fair was established in 1989 by dealer Akky van Ogtrop and Joseph Lebovic. Both major and minor commercial art galleries participate, exhibiting national and international prints and works on paper. Individual printmakers have been able to independently represent their work, such as Jenny Clapson and Christine Porter. One commentator on the fair, Stephen Vincent, believes that Art Fairs create an atmosphere in which people feel more able to approach dealers to discuss their work, whereas other have

---


described the Melbourne Art Fair as: “One huge shed full of new ideas”.18 The art fairs encourage an independence of both printmakers and audience, where no assumption of a certain level of education about the value of art is required. The fair includes demonstrations, talks and tours, and is an important site for discourse.19 An audience that has been educated in what makes a print a unique art object is more likely to purchase. Artists also have the opportunity to develop a connection with an audience that has the potential to develop into a long-term patronage/collecting relationship. Art fairs, as artist Helen Elliot comments, are “expert at shrinking distances”.20 Festivals such as the 1998 *A Flourishing Ecology: A Festival of Prints and Printmaking* in Tasmania created a unity of voices and a strong regional presence, emphasising the solidarity of Tasmanian printmaking as well as its equal status with Melbourne printmaking.

Printmaker and watercolourist, Christine Porter, has taken a professional approach to her practice, actively seeking out commissions for her watercolours, transferring her prints and watercolours onto greeting cards and attending art fairs, where she sells large editions of prints to a targeted market. Porter perceives her art practice with an eye to its potential as a business, and consequently has been successful in being fully self-supporting. Since 1998, she has attended cotton industry conferences and fairs in Australia and America where she demonstrated printmaking on a small press, printing an edition of multiplate colour etchings of cotton plants. Porter is concerned, however, that her status as an artist is compromised by going “directly to the market”. But through this process, Porter has developed a specific audience for her work:

> It’s about giving people the information so that they know ...
> [and] can identify [an edition]. I tell them about the plate mark and they can now say, “Oh, that’s a big edition for an etching.” So,
it's like giving them all this information. More than just, "This is a picture for you to hang on your wall." Because when they were going to America they were just coming back with posters. ... So it feels really weird and for ages I didn't tell anyone about it down here because the industry is renowned for being ideologically unsound and I felt a bit weird about identifying my client base.21

This is a culture that Diana Klaosen has commented gives:

...individuals more confidence to instigate projects such as small solo shows, installations and 'art in public places' events ... There is a kind of increased inventiveness, a sort of lateral thinking that was not in evidence before. Many cafes, restaurants, independent bookstores and similar small businesses are keen to show or sponsor visual art ...22

The lack of representation by commercial galleries is not the sole reason for this shift in market practices. While cafés and framing shops may facilitate a directness that engages in a market that genuinely wants the work, not a status symbol, it does not ensure a market presence for the printmaker within the central art world. There are many printmakers that do not seek to be represented by a commercial gallery. Prints are increasingly sold to regional audiences from the printmaker's home studio. This domestic environment decreases the distance between audience and print. The printmaker talks the audience through the meaning and processes of the print. The absence of a dealer removes the print from a fine art investment context and allows the buyer to conceptualise the transition of the print from studio to their own domestic environment with ease. Although this form of market does not raise the printmaker's profile in the national print market, it provides more

21 Christine Porter, interview with the author, Lismore, New South Wales, 2-3 October, 2002.
immediate remuneration for the print, enabling the creation and selling of more to a known market.

Cultural tourism has become an important feature of regional art practice; expanding cultural knowledge has informed the growth of many different print markets. Pierre Bourdieu posits that the competence to assess the value of art is based on cultural knowledge that individuals have been exposed to, and the way that they intersect other systems of knowledge that compose habitus. His statement that “a work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded” illustrates why different capacities to read art may be translated into an ability to access levels of restricted and unrestricted art. As individuals now have increased access to art objects and multiple levels of cultural pedagogy, their ability to develop appropriate “cultural competencies” or “codes” has also expanded. Cultural development and the reach of cultural tourism initiatives in the last decade have encouraged regional Australia printmakers to take advantage of all potential market areas. They have cultivated many different markets, a significant proportion of which are largely independent of local or state institutional structures and the value systems these uphold. Broadening contemporary printmaking markets has affected both male and female printmakers, yet there are some features of these markets that appear to have particular significance for women printmakers. As many women printmakers work within a domestic environment, the opportunities to use the home as a market as well as a site of production separates the necessity of these printmakers to operate within the codes developed by the institutional artworld. Domestic markets and regional markets evince close affiliations with handcrafts and art objects that are attractive to tourists or audiences that would not perceive themselves as art collectors. The professionalism of the prints being sold by women printmakers to such audiences raises both the quality and the breadth of the regional market for prints. Women printmakers therefore have a greatly increased capacity to consciously target the markets that will benefit their practice the most. In addition, as rural markets develop to incorporate the changing artists and audiences of regional Australia, they leave behind the

low symbolic value traditionally associated with art markets outside Melbourne and Sydney, particularly those that sell art and craft, most of which is produced by women.

Conclusion

Increased access to printmaking education and equipment has resulted in a range of printmakers taking advantage of the art infrastructure in regional Australia, often adapting it to best support their practice. Therefore, although institutional art networks have spread their influence, artists are increasingly choosing how they will engage with them. For many printmakers, it is not access to equipment or education that is important, but the support that can be gained in an environment that supports and encourages opportunity and exploration. Community environments can occur through a range of community and individual relationships. In these regional spaces, printmakers can take time off working (either in visual arts or non-visual arts related employment) to practise, have children, or to do both.\textsuperscript{24} The choices to work at home, retreat or raise a family are not limited to women printmakers—many male printmakers have made the same decision, and are confronted with many of the same issues. The domestic sphere cannot, therefore, be seen as a binary opposite to institutional printmaking practice.

Contrary to the negative conception of domestic printmaking as rife with technical challenges carried out in isolation, printmakers have used domestic print workshops as centres for exploration and innovation. They invite other artists in to share skills, workshop problems and work on collaborative projects. They run short classes to underwrite the costs of their own practice; they frame and send their works to galleries all over Australia. They have the choice to shift their investigations, the techniques used and the amount of work

\textsuperscript{24} Approximately 60\% of women interviewed for this thesis have had to work around having children at some stage in their career.
undertaken each day to suit their lifestyle without losing studio rent. For many women printmakers, the domestic workshop is not a place of limited resources and detached practice, but a genderless, expansive non-institutional space—a shed of their own.

Three dominant approaches to printmaking practice in regional Australia have emerged. These are not formed by external factors, but by individual perception, as this has more effect on the kinds of practice undertaken. There are printmakers who work within institutions such as art schools, galleries, or in their own studios, but who consider themselves to be part of a community centring on traditional Australian printmaking institutions and the approach to practice that they advocate. Other printmakers engage with the support structures provided by art institutions, using them to full advantage, but deliberately keeping their practice uncommitted to hierarchical values. These printmakers have a practice that is independent, financially and culturally, leaving them free to make decisions regarding the direction of their practice without concern about market, equipment or time. A third, emerging mode of printmaking practice is that of the printmaker who makes alliances with diverse areas of the artworld. This is an area of practice where many printmakers have integrated their printmaking practice into their lifestyle, drawing on relationships with printmaking workshops, regional galleries or independent printmakers with their own presses, to continue their practice. In this area of printmaking there is a large range of different approaches to technique, value and community. Printmakers draw strength from their associations, but they are also reliant on them. The practice of printmakers who form alliances always contains risk of their support structures going, often leading to the cessation of their practice.

The following three chapters are predominantly composed of case studies, and provide an analysis of some the main features of these areas of practice. They provide overviews and individual essays addressing the development of particular printmaker’s practices. The aim is to remain as flexible as possible, and not to exert strong definitions of forms of practice, but rather to draw out similarities between different kinds of practice while emphasising the features that have most influenced the approaches of the printmakers.
to printmaking. Emerging from these studies is the recognition that printmaking is a medium that does not fit easily within orders of knowledge or capital. Printmakers with strong institutional affiliations have the advantages for working within established facilities and networks of artists, critics, dealers, collectors and curators. However, they regularly venture beyond the art institutions (such as an art school, workshop or residency) to work on new projects that have no formal associations with a recognised art institution. Nonetheless, these printmakers predominantly work closely with recognisable art institutions and employ their forms of symbolic value readily to their art and practice.

Although the governance of the art industry has very real effects on women printmakers, the means are now available for them to adjust to their geographical and cultural surroundings and develop new forms of practice. There are many printmakers whose practice emphasises a desire to remain independent of any obligation to practice within an art institution, to be free of as many economic or symbolic restrictions on their practice as possible. These printmakers are not completely independent – they do not operate in a void, and use galleries, art funding, art education and art collections as important resources. However, they approach these resources on their own terms. Women printmakers with an independence of practice cultivate the position of their practice within the artworld in such a way that they do not depend on the artworld for legitimacy. Should a printmaking course close, a collection change its acquisition priorities or the market for printmaking or in a particular region fail, these printmakers can continue to practice without these events having a strong impact. ‘Independent’ printmakers essentially practices outside institutional networks, interacting with them only to strengthen their private artistic practice. The third feature of regional women’s printmaking that became evident during the research for this thesis was the printmaking practices of women who largely depend on art schools, galleries, government funding, art magazines, exhibitions and access to teachers, workshops and critics as important influences even though their practice is private. These printmakers do not have secure affiliations with the art institutions that provide the services and equipment they need to continue practising in a stable manner. They are the most likely to consistently remain under-represented by regional and urban art galleries, and also may cease active printmaking with changes in their support networks. These changes may be as
major as the closure of an art course, or as minor as a local supplier stopping shipment of particular inks or stocks of paper.

The case studies in the following three chapters explore these three characteristics of practice. They do not seek to establish new categories of printmaking, but rather illustrate how an open sociologically-grounded methodology can reveal where the realities of contemporary printmaking practice and the symbolic values of the artworld intersect. These intersecting sites are particularly evident in regional Australia and in the practices of women printmakers as they have largely remained unexplored within Australian art discourse. Their particular value for a survey of an emergent area of contemporary art practice is that they have survived without the dualist abridgment that can emerge from comparison with other recognised printmaking practices on the basis of training, medium, genre, political or cultural affiliation or geographic isolation. To highlight these intersections, the case studies are written as independent pieces, highlighting the integrity of the printmaker’s practice.
Chapter Five

Plate 9

Amanda Allerding, *Flag for the individual #5*, Etching, 2001, dimensions unknown.
Women printmakers and contemporary art institutions

Many printmakers consciously situate their practice within institutional networks. These networks – existing between art schools, galleries, patronage bodies, government and universities – often provide the money, equipment, public profile and intellectual community required to sustain long-term practice. Working in close affiliation with art institutions can also influence the confidence of individual regional women printmakers. They have access to the networks that have been established in urban centres and are being extended to regional contexts. For printmakers who live in remote or geographically distant places, a sense of access to these networks plays an important role in establishing a sense of belonging to a community of printmakers. The sense of community is an important element of printmaking. It is generally within a workshop context that printmakers gain their training, and working in close proximity to other printmakers creates a sense of camaraderie and provides a source of support or advice. One of the most important features of regional printmaking practice is that regional art institutions (particularly art schools) serve as the basis of many of these printmaking communities, acting as a support centre for printmakers, graduates and students. The printmakers themselves work hard to sustain the institutional print workshop as well. Without the commitment of individuals both within and external to the university, many printmaking workshops would close. As money for equipment, staff and material is restricted for many university printmaking departments, it is through collaboration with other printmakers that they maintain the quality and range of their teaching. Grants, residencies and exhibitions also provide printmakers with financial or technical support. They are often used by printmakers who work closely with workshops or individuals and then often pass the knowledge gained from that experience on to others. Printmakers who use institutional resources reassert themselves as part of a broader community that defines itself according to the print, the act of creation and a sense of community that extends beyond the institution itself.

This chapter contains two studies of printmakers who have chosen to create close affiliations with cultural institutions. It begins with a general overview of some of the key features of institutionally-oriented practice and then presents extended case studies of Barbie Kjar and Judy Watson. For these artists, the decision to work closely with institutions was primarily taken for the purpose of maintaining a consistency in the practical, symbolic and economic status of their practice. By forming affiliations with a wide range of individuals and agencies, women printmakers utilise institutions to create work that not only provides alternative approaches to traditional printmaking, but also challenge the legitimacy of
institutional control over the value attributed to prints and printmakers. Printmakers working within institutional environments can thus use them as a tool, not an established authority to which they are committed or obligated. The printmakers discussed in this chapter demonstrate how the decentralisation of printmaking allows regional women to enter active relationships with art institutions in which they have the ability to negotiate the parameters of this relationship.

**Expanding institutions and renegotiated concepts of regional practice**

Contemporary institutions provide access and support for artistic investigation. However, they are also guided and moderated in this process by the actions and choices of those who act within them. While institutions influence many material aspects of printmaking practice in regional Australia, it is the actions of printmakers acting within them that expand the institution into supportive communities. Art institutions were once integral to artists who wished to balance their career between regional and urban environments. Regional printmakers were represented in urban artworlds by institutional representatives, such as art dealers, curators and critics. The nature of the relationship between regional printmakers and the contemporary art industry, however, now promotes regional cultural activity to regional as well as urban audiences. Their function is not to simply represent or collect printmaking, but to be actively involved in the development of techniques, styles and subcultures of print. The prevailing relationship between institutions and individual printmakers is now one of collaboration.

The pedagogic role of decentralised art schools and galleries has a significant impact on the way printmakers perceive their place in the world. While involvement with an art school, public collection or a funding body may raise the profile of an individual printmaker, it may also lead to dependence on institutional resources not only for economic support, but also for professional legitimacy and personal self-esteem. Once the values advocated by a particular institution are naturalised, those values then inform the subsequent processes and industry affiliations pursued by the printmaker. Printmakers who work in close proximity to institutions release much control over their artwork and art practice. Many institutional relationships require artists to arrange their practice around the requirements of the institution. For example, teachers in art schools and TAFEs often sacrifice the time needed to make their own work, spending it instead on the bureaucratic duties of a large institution. Printmakers involved in postgraduate studies may be required to alter their working practices in response to the requirements of an "exegetical framework". Others who participate in
residencies and workshops with art schools and galleries are affected by uncertain funding, with the effect that planning printmaking practice further than six months ahead is difficult.

Nonetheless, maintaining affiliations with institutional resources, such as university workshops (particularly through employment by the university or further study), provides continued access to equipment and artworld affiliations. This may, however, cultivate a dependence on the university for continued support in order for the printmaker to continue in a particular practice, such as lithography. The printmakers discussed in this chapter are aware of these risks. Jo Lankester, who worked part-time with the James Cook University and as a printer for Lyre Bird Press for some years, says one of the advantages of working in a university is the ability to access their equipment. Yet despite her freedom of access to both facilities and community, Lankester also notes that this relationship has distinct disadvantages, such as the fact that her studio use is restricted to university holidays. As a result, Lankester's practice became part-time, and was eventually conceptualised by her as less 'serious':

I was retraining out at the university in the central basin and I have access to their presses. But when the students are working I ... can't really take their time. So over the Christmas break I go in there and print and play.¹

The shift in Lankester's perception of her practice was stimulated by the contrast of her past and present cultural environments. Her earlier printmaking practice was based in Melbourne, where she trained at the Victorian College of the Arts. In her final year (1994), Lankester was awarded the Canson National Student Print Award. This award consisted of a two-week residency at the Australian Print Workshop, where she produced a series of prints, the artists' proofs of which went into a print archive that could be accessed by individuals, institutions or corporations wishing to purchase work. She was subsequently commissioned to produce a series of prints for the Crown Towers Hotel in Melbourne. In 1996, she returned to the Australian Print Workshop, working with master printer, Martin King, producing offset lithographic prints from the original collographic prints.² These prints now hang in Executive Suites of the Crown Towers. Lankester thus had achieved a strong position for an emerging artist within the Melbourne print world and many professional opportunities were open to her.

¹ Jo Lankester, interview with the author, Townsville, Queensland, 20 October 2002.
² These included: Jo Lankester, Homestead Gorge I, 1996, offset lithograph, artists' proof, 1/3, Crown Casino Hotel (Printers: Jo Lankester and Martin King, APW) and Jo Lankester, Mutawintji at Dusk II, 1996, offset lithograph, artists' proof, 1/3, Crown Towers Hotel (Printers: Jo Lankester and Martin King, APW). (Plates 13 & 14)
Plate 10


Plate 11

Lankester’s decision to move to Townsville in North Queensland in 1998 created significant changes to her practice. The move from Melbourne to Townsville, however, did not negatively impact on her place within the artworld. Instead, in many ways it enhanced her opportunities for professional development and artistic collaboration. After her move to Townsville Lankester was employed as a lecturer at James Cook University, taught workshops in printmaking techniques at Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery and was Artist in Residence in two secondary schools. From 1999-2001 she was self-employed as a professional printer for printmakers Ron McBurnie, James Brown, Ray Crooke and Lyre Bird Press. Several of her commissions as a printer and technician were conducted through Jo Lankester Limited Edition Print Studio (1999-2001). Although being based in Townsville may mean that there are fewer artists for whom she can print than is she remained in Melbourne, it is her responsibilities as an artist who works full-time and has two young children, not her regional environment, that has the most resonant effect on her practice. These responsibilities have made her printmaking rather sporadic. The time spent on her work is therefore more valuable to her and she has developed collographic techniques that will allow her to work on plates in the presence of the children. Lankester’s description of her practice as ‘play’ is therefore an acknowledgement of the privileged status of the time taken to practice and of the freedom to improvise that may not be available while working full-time as a printmaker or in a fully-equipped printmaking workshop.

In Townsville, she has greater access to the environment, and her prints demonstrate her close proximity to “dynamic tones in soils and light play and so forth . . . [I would go] drawing and it’s so hot, and I’d end up so hot I’d see red . . . [I wanted] to capture not just what it looked like, but how it felt.” 3 This directness informs works such as the Wulguru series (Jo Lankester, 2002, collograph with ochre rubbing on Arches paper (Plate 12). Although her location in Townsville has necessitated a separation from the print markets of Melbourne, there is a greater freedom in Lankester’s practice. She has become an integral part of an art community strongly motivated by a range of art institutional networks. Lankester has developed strong relationships with regional art institutions of far north Queensland while continuing the relationships she established in Melbourne, through print prizes, exchange projects, exhibitions and attendance at symposia. 4 Lankester’s relationship with printmaking institutions has altered according to her regional environment, but not diminished.

3 Lankester, interview with the author.
4 Lankester is Exhibitions/Collections Officer at the Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery, worked as a teacher at the James Cook University (1999-2002), as a printer with Lyre Bird Press (2000-2001) and established Jo Lankester Editions in 1999.
Plate 12

Many printmakers are compelled to practice at home because their university commitments are such that they must work on their prints part-time. Women printmakers often divide their printmaking into a series of stages that accommodate their lifestyle. As printmaking lecturer at the South Australian School of Art, Olga Sankey, describes:

The thing that I found really suited me [about printmaking] (and I started thinking maybe that’s why a lot of women do it) is that you can break your jobs up. With painting you just can’t say, “I’ll do it on a weekday morning and I’ll come back to it Sunday afternoon.” With printmaking you can really break the jobs down. Once you’ve got your idea, you can say, “Okay, I’ll prepare this bit. That’ll take Sunday afternoon.”

The difference between the after-hours practice of printmakers who are employed in art schools and those who are not is that while both struggle with time, the value of the work of the art school printmaker is consecrated by her position within the institution. While lecturer-printmakers may have additional burdens, such as teaching and administration responsibilities, that inhibit their ability to create work, they benefit from the economic stability that the art school can provide them. Even though printmakers may only be working part-time, their legitimacy as artists is recognised through their position within the institution. Many printmakers who work within or attempt to gain entrance into an institutional context such as an art school, a commercial workshop or a residency are driven by economic forces. If the printmaker was in another position, working part-time on their prints might be interpreted as unprofessional practice. A position within an art institution therefore lends printmakers a form of symbolic capital they might not otherwise have access to if they were employed in another job.

Women printmakers who locate their printmaking within institutional networks develop distinct methods of interacting with art institutions. Judy Watson and Barbie Kjar have cultivated artistic practices that evince their choice to pursue the symbolic capital offered by art institutions. These practices allow both artists to use institutional affiliations to exert control over their position within the art world. By working within a field governed by important art bodies, Watson and Kjar each influence the shifting role of the contemporary culture industry by integrating the voices of women and the validity of alternative forms of practice into dominant discourses. The regional location of printmakers who work closely with institutions is negated by the expansive cultural spaces that institutions act within. As they work closely with the resources and facilities provided art institutions, their practices also serve as examples of the how women printmakers can exert significant influence over the position of the practice within the artworld. By pursuing

---

5 Olga Sankey, interview with the author, Adelaide, South Australia, 4 November 2002.
grants they can establish workshops or undertake residencies wherever they like. Increased numbers of commercial dealers who represent prints allow them to cultivate a range of different audiences and markets. A strong institutional grounding in their practice also provides them with work within the industry – as a teacher, for example – so that printmakers with strong institutional affiliations do not have to rely on a consistently supportive market or successful arts funding to continue to practice. For women, institutional affiliations can provide a stable practice that they can incorporate into family obligations, as well as providing with a sense of legitimacy that women printmakers have traditionally had difficulty achieving within the Australian art industry.

Elementary Principles of Place: The portraits of Barbie Kjar

Tasmanian printmaker, Barbie Kjar, presents portraits of the everyday that seek a deeper truth, a unity of parts, absorbing contemporary cultural philosophies and artistic influences. Portraits portray perspectives of the world as viewed by the eye of the individual. The artist sees form, line and shade, the sitters see their social position and the way they are perceived by others and the viewer sees an unknown individual who evokes the presence of other individuals depicted in portraits through millennia. All these perspectives are entangled, presenting diverse worldviews, philosophies and histories. They create portraits of place. Kjar uses the fluidity of ink and light to create prints where the image appears suspended above the paper, creating moments of luminescence, a passage between different worlds. In this passage the prints explore the transition between self, image and artist that occurs when the portrait is engaged. The further Kjar takes her investigation of portraiture, the more acute her investigation of instituted ways of seeing, and the sense of place that is associated with this. Strongly influenced by her physical environment, Kjar’s experience of printmaking in Hobart has encouraged an approach to practice and artistic identity that uses the concept of region as a reflection of personal perspectives of place. She then attempts to transcend the instituted cultural order that informs how individuals locate themselves in cultural space. Kjar’s prints draw upon “myths which are universal, archetypal stories relevant to all cultures and times.” In this section Kjar’s development of this theme is discussed over three successive stages, each with a particular style of relationship consciously formed with cultural institutions that endorse her practice.

---

By focusing on individuals, often drawing portraits of them for a period of up to six month or a year, Kjar's prints are about "exploring ideas of individual vision as well as probing what it is like to be human, to be alive, to have a spirit and body and to be at different stages in life." As Kjar's career as a full-time artist has developed, she has deliberately situated her work within a context where she accumulates the economic and cultural capital necessary to ensure a professional status of practice. Her works are predominantly displayed, viewed, critiqued and sold within a milieu where the iconography of her prints plays an active role. She uses the idiom of an institutional art audience to extend her investigation of the purpose and power of the portrait further. Barbie Kjar's printmaking thus takes as its primary investigation a subtle exploration of distance and difference. This occurs through captured moments of transition between individual experience and institutional methods of transcribing the individual in place as a way of exploring broader cultural themes. These themes are explored differently at different stages of her career, reflecting her increased access to support and symbolic capital within the Australian art world. They often develop during periods when Kjar works closely with various printmaking workshops and art institutions in California, Canberra, Hobart, Melbourne and Spain. It is through the transition of these themes to Kjar's own studios in Hobart that they become fully realised in portraits and vignettes.

The traditional place of Hobart as 'regional' compared to the art 'centres' of Melbourne or Sydney does not restrict Kjar's ability to accumulate cultural capital. Nonetheless, the physical environment of Tasmania is integral to her printmaking practice. Her prints contain a sense of light and space that is a feature of the Tasmanian environment, particularly in Hobart at the base of Mt Wellington. The mountain captures clouds and shafts of light, causing the weather pattern of Hobart to change rapidly and light density to alter and shift one's perception of the surrounding space. Kjar's prints contain this slightly surreal, transcendent quality of light. Yet they also draw on the institutions of Western art – the role of the portrait, colonial identifying narratives, symbolism and surrealism – that both reflect and subvert the aesthetics and values upheld by art institutions. It is the transference of Kjar's practice between different geographic regions that informs its combination of intimacy and universality. Kjar has adroitly developed a range of relationships with different art institutions without making overt reference to the location of her practice in Tasmania. Her work stimulates a sense of suspended place that resonates beyond geography, encompassing personal narratives and the subconscious memories of multiple cultures. The palimpsest, transcendent aspect of Kjar's prints has been developed over an eighteen-year period in which she has concentrated on the poetics of distance itself. She has deliberately

---

used grants, workshops, exhibitions, prizes and projects to support her examination of place on the social psyche. Kjar began to use the relationships that exist between different art institutions to the advantage of her own practice at an early stage in her career. By positioning herself within inter-institutional networks she can access a practical, economic and symbolic framework that allows her to exert considerable control over the direction of her practice and the methods through which it is interpreted. Kjar’s position inside an institutional framework allowed her to see the concepts of the ‘other’ that authorise Western cultural identity.

The first major stage of Kjar’s development as a printmaker in closely affiliated with establishing a balance between institutional and private workshop practices. Kjar was awarded a residency at the Kala Print Workshop, Berkeley, California, in 1988, the year after she graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Tasmania. At the workshop she worked with artists and printmakers from around the world and developed an interest in discreet yet nuanced graphic portraits. The experience initiated a new approach to the portrait, away from what University of Tasmania printmaking lecturer, Rod Ewins, describes as the strange, performative characters in her earlier etchings, “full of activity and portent”. While at the workshop Kjar investigated the potential of sugar-lift aquatint in creating fluid, loose portraits. The flowing graphic line was to become a strong feature of her subsequent prints. In the two years after arriving back to Hobart, Kjar had three solo exhibitions in Hobart that reflected her investigation of this perception of the portrait. Rod Ewins notes a “deflation” in the work produced immediately after arriving home from San Francisco, which he attributed to Hobart’s inability to “match San Francisco’s cosmopolitan energy.” While this may be so, the sense of distance and the perception of self in space stimulated by the transfer from a bustling American workshop to her private studio and part-time teaching at the School of Art appear to have been important in informing her later practice. Kjar’s work of this period employs a density of line and ink to achieve an expressive, illuminating effect. The sweeping quality of Kjar’s application of sugarlift aquatint creates an interpretative space, and it is in this amorphous space that she began her investigation of the cultural and subjective formation of identity as shadow and light playing upon the bodies of individuals.

---

8 Barbie Kjar, interview with the author, Hobart, Tasmania, 4 December 2002.
11 Ewins, Rod, “Character through Portrait Etchings.”
12 Ibid.
13 Kjar, interview with the author. Kjar has worked intermittently as a part-time teacher of Printmaking and Drawing at the Tasmanian School of Art in Hobart. University of Tasmania, Annual Report, for the years 1994-2003.
In 1991–1992, the Australia Council gave Kjar a project grant to undertake a residency at the International Print Studio in Barcelona. While in Spain, Kjar explored the influence of Spanish portraiture and the physical environment on her work. She particularly focused on an approach to portraiture that used minimal attributes to evoke a deeper, universal state of mind while using local features such as light. This was a period in which Kjar produced numerous drypoint colour etchings that revealed intense relationships between herself and her environment. *Bull with Tropical Fruit* (drypoint coloured etching, 19 x 50cm, 1992, A/P (Plate 13)) is a response to a visit to Arenys de Mar, near Barcelona. The Spanish residency was a critical point in Kjar’s career. Her prints began to express the ability of line and light to transfer traditions and experiences across vast distances. She combines the light and colour of Spain with that of Tasmania, the bull becomes prominent and the figures in her prints have the almond-shaped eyes found in many traditional Spanish portraits. Through reference to different cultural institutions of articulating the self in abstract and figurative portraits, Kjar’s practice achieves universality and a sense of freedom of choice in the techniques and location of her practice. Other prints produced during and after Kjar’s Spanish travels contrast natural and social forms with different traditions of portraiture evident in the vocabulary of her work, opening up a space that Tasmanian poet, Dame Margaret Scott, described as:

...linked by a whole spreading network of subtle connections. The people in the portraits, though strikingly individual, are also acts playing out roles, stylish mocking wearers of dead-pan masks, archetypes ... Eyes and fish lie under the feet of the long-lost thylacine, riot over bulls then, roll in a dish, balance on a clown’s skull, becoming, with every turn and shift of shape, stranger and more luminous in their meanings. In the end it is clear that these meanings are fashioned by a single gifted individual from a full life, a fecund wit, a quirky imagination and a loving, energetic engagement with her art.

The period after her return to Hobart marks the second major phase of Kjar’s practice in which she begins to investigate multiple perspectives in portraits that distil the conceptual approaches that first emerged in San Francisco and later developed in Spain. A particular feature of this period of practice is Kjar’s collaboration with many national art institutions. Kjar’s work did not evidence a sense of disjuncture deriving from the contrast

---

14 Scott, *Every turn and shift of shape.*
15 Scott, *Every turn and shift of shape.*
16 During the period between 1991-1993, Kjar exhibited with a range of Australian artists in exhibitions at Dick Bett Gallery in Hobart, the Fremantle Print Prize Exhibition in Western Australia, the Alice Prize Exhibition in Alice Springs, Gallery Two in Launceston and the Entrepot Gallery at the Centre for the Arts at the University of Tasmania, Launceston. Kjar also participated in a group exhibition curated by Kevin Todd called the Antarctica Fax Exhibition, which had an implicit aim of overcoming and exploring concepts of distance.
Plate 13

Barbie Kjar, *Bull with Tropical Fruit*, etching, ed. 4/15, 1992, 38.2 x 56 cm.
between international and regional facilities, environments and traditions that many artists feel once they return to Australia from an international workshop. Rather, she began developing her own somewhat surreal landscapes, featuring local individuals, iconography and environmental features. Kjar was involved in many projects that emerged from a collaborative atmosphere, working on group exhibitions and public projects,17 addressing themes of the environment and regional culture in cross-disciplinary explorations.18 This use of collaboration investigates the influence of interpretation and experience on individual relationships, and presents a technique used successfully by Kjar across a range of disciplines. The short text written by Scott quoted above is not simply an exhibition catalogue text, but an analogue to the exhibition *Every Turn and Shift of Shape*. The dramatic edge gradually moved beneath the surface, and tension and drama of line evoked its presence from the surface of prints that became increasingly an examination of evocative and indeterminate forms of identity. These works are complex, with schools of symbols swimming over the surface. *Rowing through a sea of eyes* (drypoint etching on paper, 1994, 59.5 x 77cm (plate mark)) puns with the title, depicting strange, transparent elliptical forms accompanying travelling individuals. *Rowing through a sea of fish* (drypoint etching on paper, 1994, 55 x 88cm (plate mark)) also contains a perverse humour as well as erotic undertone. In both works the ink possesses a looser quality than previous prints, and begins to have an interpretative influence of its own. They provoke a series of independent collaborations between artist, sitter, viewer, and market. Composed of the narratives of place provided by many different voices, these prints access universal themes of journeys and passage that allowed them to transfer between the general public and the consecrated sensibilities of fine art patronage.

In 1994, for exhibitions such as *Nautical Journeys* at the newly-established aGOG in Canberra, *New Prints*, Christine Abrahams Gallery in Melbourne and *Water Suite* at Dick Bett Gallery in Hobart, Kjar’s works combine symbolism with the influence of her studio at the docks.20 Universal themes of travelling appeal to a wide range of audiences, and the location of Kjar’s practice is irrelevant in her public profile. Although informed by her

---

17 For example: the Billboard Project conducted June, 1994 was a collaborative work evolving from Kjar’s conversations with three migrant women about their experience of moving to Tasmania. Each of these women made linocuts for the billboard, which took the shape of a big wooden ship, installed in front of the Health and Community Services Union in North Hobart. The linocuts were covered with acrylic to withstand weather. The purpose of the commission, also awarded to Milan Milojevic, was to celebrate the contribution of migrants to the state’s economy and culture. (Andersch, Monika, “The Migrants Who Made Us: Art Brings It Home,” *The Mercury*, 9 June 1994, 9.)

18 In addition to the *Antarctica Fax Exhibition* (1993), Kjar participated in *Artists for Mt Wellington* (1994), *Chameleon: A Decade* (1995), *Figure & Ground* (curated by Dick Bett in 1995), *Dualism* (1995), *Tapestry* (a collaboration with textiles artist Sarah Lindsay) and the *Poets and Painters Exhibition* at the Salamanca Writer’s Festival (1996).

19 Scott, *Every turn and shift of shape*.

Tasmanian context, Kjar's relationships with commercial and public art galleries and prizes formed during this period established her position within the institutional Australian artworld. The consequence of this inclusion in the art industry was to cultivate supportive networks of artists, dealers and others involved in the cultural industry. In the following years, an increase in exhibitions revealed Kjar to be an emerging printmaker of some interest.21 At the same time, however, her practice challenges conventions of printmaking through her technique and her ability to participate closely with Australian art institutions without shifting her practice to Melbourne or Sydney. Kjar's continued practice in Tasmania leaves her closely associated with a strong artistic community with whom she consistently collaborates. These collaborations inform the narrative framework evident in many of her prints. They extend the prints' fields of reference beyond Kjar, her cultural context, the state, the country and even beyond the traditions of printmaking and portraiture that she accesses.

By the mid-1990s Kjar had more capacity to concentrate on her practice, having obtained her own press, reducing her teaching to part-time and established a successful market presence.22 A combination of all these factors allowed Kjar to maintain an equal relationship with both individuals and art institutions. This balance is important because her primary impulse as an artist is to capture the moments when signs and symbols that guide the way individuals are perceived and perceive themselves are exposed. Tasmanian writer and curator, David Hansen, describes Kjar's works as tapping into... states of nund: attitudes, aspirations, ecstasies and terrors that the artist has experiences, imagined or identified with. Their attitudes are certainly not rigidly conventionalised; they do not employ a universally understood vocabulary of rhetorical gestures such as those of medieval art or Renaissance theatre or television advertising. They do not have a fixed meaning.23

Instead, Kjar's prints encapsulate a liminal, performative space, which Hansen describes as "a sense of deja vu. They are somehow instantly recognisable."24 Yet it is through the medium of water, the fluidity and shifting quality explored in the earlier works of schools of fish and eyes that Kjar's prints make the transition between the symbolic languages of artistic and social institutions and private experience. Water as a liberating force as well as one facilitating liminal passage is emphasised in Diver with fruit (drypoint etching, 1995 (Plate 14)). Sea anemones fall like water droplets from the hands of a diver. The saturation

---

21 See Appendix VI for Kjar's CV.
22 By this stage in her career, Kjar was represented by Australian Galleries in Sydney, Australian Girls Own Gallery (aGOG) in Canberra, Christine Abrahams Gallery in Melbourne, Dick Bett Gallery in Hobart and Grahame Galleries in Brisbane.
24 Ibid., p. 4.
Plate 14

Barbie Kjar, *Diver with Fruit*, drypoint etching, 1995, dimensions unknown.
of the paper with ink and the velvety depth of the drypoint entwine the diver. The school of fish swimming on/in her belly is the gaze of society beginning to mediate her physical form.

The flow of styles that ride the currents of Kjar’s work provide a space of possibilities where the influences of artists and institutions flicker and dart. In Tasmania, the social role of printmaking is explored by printmakers such as Ray Arnold, the body as a beautiful yet often cultural object is explored in Pat Brassington’s photography, notions of passage and transformation in Milan Milojevic’s prints, and passage as a symbolic rite in the lithographs of Helen Wright. The vessels in Wright’s *Clever girl* (lithograph, 1986, 64.8x79.4 cm, 1/3, National Gallery of Australia (Plate 15)) and *My ship sails for me* (colour lithograph, 1987, 56.4x75.2 cm, National Gallery of Australia (Plate 16)) play with symbolic concepts of passage. The imaginative creatures complied in Milojevic’s *Index of Possibilities* (series of digital prints, 2002-2004, dimensions variable (Plate 17)) reveal how the strange and familiar can be used to create a new and expansive lexicon to describe one’s place in and experience of the world. The symbolic visual languages used by these artists are similar to that used by Kjar to explore space and time as interpreted through corporeal and visceral experience. In Kjar’s prints of the late-1990s and the early-2000s, the influence of the work of mainland Australian printmakers resonates with the surface of Kjar’s prints: the intricate patterning has the detail of Deborah Klein, the conflict between the domestic and the political in Barbara Hanrahan’s relief prints and maintains a staged effect similar to that used by Vera Zulumovski. All these are melded with thick, porous drypoint lines inspired by George Baldessin.25 The awareness of the sitter as an enigmatic figure characterised by light found in the works of David Hockney, Pieter Breughel the Elder and Jan Vermeer are also echoed in her simplicity of observation. Kjar consciously places her prints within a context where the audience is art literate and recognise several of these stylistic references.

Kjar’s exploration of portraiture, identity and cultural/natural environments takes a consciously theoretical approach during the third major phase of her practice. This stage is marked by relationships with art institutions, as Kjar took advantage of an increasingly decentralised art industry to decrease the distance between the centralised printmaking traditions of Melbourne and Sydney and the regionally distinct printmaking culture in Tasmania. The workshop contexts and the collaborative ventures apparent in the periods discussed above are revisited in practice that reveals Kjar’s ability to control the method and direction of her printmaking while drawing on multiple levels of institutional support. In

Plate 15
Helen Wright, *Clever Girl*, lithograph, ed. 1/3, 1986, 64.8 x 79.4 cm. Collection of the National Gallery of Australia.

Plate 16
Helen Wright, *My ship sails for me*, colour lithograph, 1987, 56.4 x 75.2 cm. Collection of the National Gallery of Australia.
Plate 17

2002 Kjar completed a Masters degree at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The thesis produced a series of works inspired by the 16th-century Italian artist, Giuseppe Arcimboldo. Using Arcimboldo as a point of departure, Kjar embarks on an intense exploration of the significance of vision and metamorphosis on cultural perceptions of place. In her prints Spring, Winter and Summer (from Four seasons (homage to Arcimboldo) 2000, drypoint, edition of 25, 33 x 25.5 cm (Plate 18)), Kjar translates onto the body of a young woman the conflict that occurs when the governance of a dominant institution infiltrates the way an individual is perceived as a social object, and what impact this has on their self-perception. Inspired by Arcimboldo’s Summer (oil on canvas, 1563, 66.7 x 50.4 (Plate 19)) and Air (oil on canvas, undated, 74.4 x 56 cm (Plate 20)), Kjar’s prints of the same titles reinterpret them in terms of a contemporary female’s physical and social adolescence (Barbie Kjar, I even flew a little, drypoint, 2001, 89 x 75.5 cm (Plate 21)). In the first print she blooms and is full of potential. In the second, she is imbued with the same elemental spirit as Arcimboldo’s Air. Arcimboldo’s figure is composed of different breeds of birds, their wings curved to form the cheek. The transience of life is evident even while the image immortalises human individuals by asserting their participation within a larger, seemingly eternal cycle of the earth and elements.

These prints are portraits of the individual psyche, capturing elemental moments of time and experience that negate distance and geography. In these prints the variety of institutional influences shaping the content and cultural reception of Kjar’s prints crystallise, creating intimate, mature works that critique the contemporary cultural significance of the portrait. I even flew a little is an exhilarating print. The drypoint lines bleed slightly at the edges, mimicking the softness and movement of feathers. The simplicity of the bird’s shapes imbues further vitality, appearing to move over the surface of the woman, on the verge of taking flight. The rich blue implies that this transcendent liberation has already taken place, adding a luminous mysticism to the print. Yet there are slight scars to the surface of the print. Kjar’s printmaking process allows the plate to bear witness to the physicality of the printmaking process; she uses the dents and scratches to give a sense of gravity to the print. The fluidity of the ink over the surface of the plate reflects a process of inking where the ink is allowed to interact with the paper in a relatively free manner. Yet the print also displays stillness, as if the potential of flight is inscribed upon the body but smothered by the same process.

The print Tattoo (drypoint etching on paper, 2000, 90x80 cm, edition of 5) pursues this concept through a more overt critique of the socialisation processes that encourage liberation and individuality while at the same time establishing the rules that govern this development and the form it should take. The figure of the young woman that blossoms,
Plate 18
Barbie Kjar, *Spring, Winter* and *Summer*, from *Four seasons (homage to Arcimboldo)*, drypoint etchings, ed. of 25, 2000, 33 x 25.5 cm.

Plate 19
Guiseppe Arcimboldo, *Summer*, oil on canvas, 1563, 67 x 50.8 cm.
Gemaldegalerie Kunsthistorisches Museum, Germany
Plate 20
Anon., *Air*, n.d., 74.4 x 56 cm. Private collection, Basel.

Plate 21
Barbie Kjar, *I even flew a little*, drypoint etching, 2001, 89 x 75.5 cm.
fades and revives in *Spring* is trapped within static social patterning in *Tattoo*. Arcimboldo’s *The Seasons* and *The Elements* create a parallel between the natural universe and the political and spiritual governance of the Hapsburg Holy Roman Empire.¹ Kjar’s prints incorporate the elements and nature into her prints as a counterpoint to social rules that not only seek to modify how people behave, but also how they create individual identities. The Renaissance attempt to harness universal power through cultural order provides Kjar with a framework in which she can examine how a similar process is used in contemporary cultures that create a sense of unity and identity through social rules and mores.

Although Kjar’s prints provide a commentary on the influence of society on the construction of identity and place of individuals, the most important element of her work is the internalisation of the governing social/cultural gaze. The rules of conduct that inform individuals of their place in society or culture are efficient because they are maintained by habitus, tested and modified according to the perceived gaze of others. *Reflejo* (drypoint etching on paper, 2000, 90x80 cm, edition of 25 (Plate 22)) illustrates Kjar’s investigation of Jacques Lacan’s theories of the gaze. The object of the portrait is not the figure in the print, but the viewer, who measures himself or herself against the reflected gaze in the mirror. Kjar’s obvious reference to gaze discourses (such as those of Lacan and Julia Kristeva) counteracts the apparent individuality represented in traditions of portraiture. She does this by deliberately emphasising the rigidity of the rules behind these traditions and uses the physicality of the print to assist her in this endeavour. Kjar incorporates the physical construction of the print and its context as matrices between individuals and cultural governance. The viewer in the art gallery reads the works in a certain way. If displayed in a high profile commercial gallery, such as Australian Galleries Works on Paper, the print contains a high symbolic value deriving from its position in this gallery and its position within the history of portraiture.

The symbolic and economic values of these prints collaborate to create a strong position for Kjar’s prints within the restricted fine art market. Drypoint prints can only be printed in small editions, and Kjar’s unconventional use of ink results in prints that vary significantly in their appearance. However, the prices of the prints remain affordable in comparison to painting. Print within the edition may be purchased by different people, and thus the same image – with subtle changes in the plate tone, the density of the graven lines and the texture of the image – remains part of a greater whole, even as individual prints

Plate 22

within an edition shift and turn in response to their physical environment and the subjective
gaze of the viewer. The extensive art historical vocabulary Kjar employs in her prints enhances
the tension that exists between the print as a multiple and the print as an original. Her portraits
of recognisable individuals evoke a simultaneous awareness of other individuals, other places
and histories. The light is recognised as that of Tasmania, Spain or France; the figure is that of
a friend, a reflection, a work of art or an imagined Renaissance woman. Kjar uses the language
of art institutions to counteract other institutional languages, involving the gaze of viewer in this
process.

In Kjar’s portraits there is a nexus of institutional and non-institutional influences
specific to her own experience as an artist. They are informed by Kjar’s identity as a student, an
artist and a member of local, national and international artistic communities, by art history, and
by her understanding of art history. Each portrait is also independent – suspended and
intertwined with the viewer’s own experience of seeing and being seen. Delinear (drypoint
etching on paper, edition of 25, 2001, 90x74 cm, (Plate 23)) navigates individuality and identity.
This quest is informed by Kjar’s own awareness of the distance between Tasmania and the
Australian mainland, of herself to Spain and of thought to action. The patterning that appears to
be simultaneously on the surface and in the background of the print alludes to thumbprints of
identity and Cartesian mapping. The edges of the lines blur, tattooing the paper, acting like
water lines or as archaeological echoes of the oceans that once separated landmasses and
cultures. Faintly superimposed on the model’s body, the charting of place and identity are
determined within a space that suspends time and movement. It is the ideal of individuality
encouraged by democracy, fashion and culture, yet the result is a portrait without details. In Fur
(drypoint etching on paper, 2000, 90x80 cm, edition of 25 (Plate 24)), however, the map is
flooded: pools of ink erase the lines of physical and social inscription and create fluid states.
The print has a visual tactility, existing without physical touch, but nonetheless contains a sense
of possibility, of sexuality un-anatomised, like the fur teacup of Merit Oppenheim (Meret
Oppenheim, Le Déjeuner en Fourrure (Breakfast in Fur/Fur Teacup), fur lined teacup, 1936
(Plate 25)). The viewer discovers himself or herself behind the ‘fur’, and a similar process of
discovery lies behind the map.

Kjar’s practice over the last decade has cultivated a position within the Australian
artworld that recognises the debt her prints have to influential national and international artists
and printmakers. The art galleries, collections, grants and projects with which she has been
increasingly involved have allowed her the ability to continually refine her work. Kjar’s
contemporary prints contain distilled explorations of individuals, and her prints have become
larger and printed in smaller editions. There have been significant price increases
Plate 23

Plate 24

Plate 25
Meret Oppenheim, *Object*, fur covered cup, saucer and spoon, 1936, 7.3 cm high, cup 10.9 cm diameter, saucer 23.7 cm, spoon 20.2 cm long. Museum of Modern Art, Germany.
for Kjar’s prints over years. Kjar’s practice, predominantly in works on paper, has usually been in small editions. The larger prints redefine traditional concepts of the limited edition, as the ink use on each places them more in the category of monoprints. The cost of making them, and the reduced number, has moved the dominant market for her works away from local collectors and into the collections of institutions and major private and corporate buyers.

In her prints, Kjar uses institutions as a resource for tools, support and language. The perspective of the viewer also assists in determining the print’s value and position within the art industry. This concept is playfully explored in Coin (drypoint on copper disc, 2000), a portrait engraved onto the surface of one side of a large bronze sculptural coin, with a fan engraved on the other. The print/sculpture explores the role of the portrait in asserting authority, the print in exchanging information and the coin in creating systems of value over great distances. The heavy bronze negates the versatility and transportability of traditional prints and coins. It is displayed on a plinth, and as a bronze sculpture belongs to a high art tradition. It is an unconventional print that creates a new value for itself through both referencing and responding to a restricted art market.

Coin possesses many qualities that could define it as a sculpture. However, the engraving process used to create the image is the same process as Kjar uses to create her prints. The engraved image is not intended to be transferred by ink onto a paper surface, yet nonetheless it acts as a matrix between the role of Kjar’s prints as art objects and as commodities. Coin is inextricably tied with Kjar’s interpretation of the print as an art object that can communicate and exist in multiple physical and conceptual contexts. As her series of portraits indicates, images are reused in works that challenge their previous forms and subjects. This transformation is ongoing. It is unpredictable, as Kjar allows the medium to exert considerable influence on the final form of the image. In the works on paper, it is the fluidity of the ink that escapes the engraved line, softens the harshness of the actions that made them, and shifts the pressure of the printing process from being a moment of confinement and force to a moment of possibility and depth. Coin may sit in a gallery as a finished piece, but it is part of the continuum of Kjar’s printmaking practice. It is a passive object for the moment, but has the potential to be reused and changed at any moment. Kjar’s printmakerly approach to the bronze image encourages the viewer to transfer the experience of viewing Kjar’s prints on paper across to these sculptural forms, approaching them within the same conceptual framework.

Kjar’s ongoing preoccupation with concepts of passage in forming personal and cultural identities is explored through a post-structuralist theoretical perspective and informed by the

---

2 In 1992 the price for a coloured drypoint etching on paper, 91 x 78cm, unframed print was $595.00. In 2001 the price had risen to $1450 for a drypoint on paper, 89 x 75.5cm, unframed print.
psychoanalytic investigation of identity and meaning found in the work of Lacan and Luce Irigaray. Speaking on Derrida’s claim that meaning in language is a product of relations of difference, critical theorist Chris Weedon argues that for Derrida:

... there can be no fixed signifieds (concepts), and signifiers (sound or written images), which have identity only in their difference from one another, and are subject to an endless process of deferral ... always located in a discursive context and the temporary fixing of meaning in a specific reading of a signifier depends on this discursive context.²

With a mental flick, the bronze coin can be spun, uniting the two images of either side—melding the fan and the face in a blur of flirtation. The woman in the image is a signifier of social manners, the accoutrement of an ordered society—like the fan, she is a piece of clothing, an item of commerce and fashion. By extension, the temporality of the sign is counteracted by the physical and cultural weight of the bronze sculpture, raised on its plinth in the gallery space, an item of a restricted market of fine art that similarly can reduce the unidentified woman depicted to a series of signs and symbolic values.

Small marks chase each other over the surface of Kjar’s prints, creating subtle dynamics that draw the eye away from the main subject: the print subverts its own authority in a Derridean process of free-play. The perspective from the outside, the layers of the skin imprinted with social expectation jostling with physical desire, to the elemental-ultimately sensuous but desexualised. Within this space social rules are lifted, fluid and elemental. While Kjar uses overt reference to a range of different art traditions, she uses the authority of art institutions to detach her work from specific regional locations or cultural contexts. As a woman artist, she uses institutions for their resources and then critiques the dominance of institutional authority by rearticulating it in a manner that mocks the systems of order and control they attempt to establish. In her physical practice, Kjar uses institutions to cultivate the symbolic and economic capital that give her the capacity of choice in all areas of her practice, from the kinds of market she wishes to cultivate to the low-profile collaborative projects she may wish to participate in.

The various stages that she takes her work through attests to the different traditions, techniques and translations which are tangible in the final product. A final example, El Semblante (coloured drypoint etching on paper, edition of 25, 2002, 97x74 cm (Plate 27)), illustrates this transition between states of being and interpretation. The initial charcoal

Plate 26

Barbie Kjar, charcoal study for a portrait (left) and photocopy (right), Hobart, 2002.

Plate 27

sketch was enlarged on a photocopier, then the pages are joined to make a larger image (Plate 26). The image was then engraved with power tools onto the plate, creating deep groves for the ink that when printed mimic the softness of the charcoal drawing, despite the harsh process of their creation. The final print is luminous. In a recent exhibition, Kjar displayed the drawings and the prints together, where their similarities and differences were exposed. As shown with the copper coin print, Kjar's drawings, plates and prints all collaborate in the final product, but they are conceived as independent pieces. They inter-relate and subvert the authority of traditional institutional distinctions between media, while using the gallery to consecrate this subversion.

Kjar's involvement with the institutions that compose the Australian art culture has established a series of passages between individuals, countries and traditions that is not dominated by the cultural values that define them. Her use of institutional resources has allowed Kjar to practise where she wants with the techniques that she wants. The cultural history of Hobart as a regional centre has no bearing on her prints other than in assisting a determination not to be defined by place. Kjar, as a printmaker in a regional area of Australia, takes advantage of the decentralised artworld to establish herself within art institutional structures that will support her work, but not dictate it.

"...as though on the edge of memory": Searching for place in the prints of Judy Watson

Judy Watson is an indigenous artist from the Waanyi clan of north-west Queensland. She was born in 1959 at Mundubbera, Queensland, and grew up in Brisbane. Watson's rich artistic practice marries traditional perspectives and processes from both indigenous and non-indigenous cultures, using painting and printmaking techniques received through formal and informal training with both indigenous and non-indigenous artists. From these, she has developed many alternate methods of addressing diverse cultural histories. These usually occur through intensely personal interactions with the land and environment. Taking an indigenous perspective, Watson's works examine the role of the landscape in informing identity as well as bearing witness to the memories, abuses and confusions that have been inscribed on its surface as generations of human experience pass over it. Her paintings reveal secret pasts, fluctuating with buried memories and a profound sense of rediscovery. The lithographic and intaglio prints she creates also participate in this search, deliberately accessing specific forms of discourse.

---

4 Barbie Kjar, Miraglos/Miracles, at Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne, from 15/02/05 until 12/03/05.
associated with Western traditions of printmaking and then subverting them. Watson thus uses printmaking to create sites of learning that have influence beyond her own investigations of cultural place. This case study examines Watson’s printmaking practice in relation to the art institutions that she accesses to facilitate the directions she wants to take her practice. She works closely with art schools, galleries and institutional agents such as critics, curators and writers to develop a particular cultural identity. As an Aboriginal woman artist, she uses institutional resources to make her own voice part of the institutional artworld rather than speaking from the periphery.

Watson’s artistic profile has developed, particularly during the last decade, within an art world trying to negotiate new dialogues with the Australian cultural environment. Her art practice emerges from a successful fusion of perspectives that highlight both presence and absence in the cultural landscape. From 1988 Watson has learnt about her heritage by researching the matrilineal indigenous side of her family history. Since then, her work has been an exploration of indigenous spirituality and the landscape. Her research has taken her into different cultures (and their institutions) to investigate the place of the history of indigenous Australians within memory, culture and museums. In this context, Watson also utilises her role as an artist as one of significant political influence.

Watson’s inclusion with Emily Kame Kngwarreye and Yvonne Koolmatrie in Australia’s representative exhibition at the 1997 Venice Biennale, fluent, consolidated her identity as one of the most influential indigenous artists in Australia. Her influence was presented in the Biennale as indicative of Australia’s inclusive cultural environment. In his foreword to the catalogue, the Director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales commented:

The extraordinary aesthetic achievements of Indigenous Australians have represented something of a phenomenon in Australian art over the last two decades. Their work, various as it is, presents an abiding sense of self assuredness that stems from the strength of its connection to the land. The art of Indigenous Australians is an expression of the inextricable link between self and place from which stems its powerful cultural identity.

This exhibition emphasised the hand of the artists, their marks evident in the paint, the weaving, the texture and smell of the exhibition. Watson’s representation in this exhibition focused on her paintings, which evoked the cultural influences on her artistic education. On an international stage, Australia used this opportunity to display its appreciation and inclusion of

---


indigenous art. The work of these artists was employed to demonstrate "a fine example of the ways in which an ancient past can not only inform, but be the impetus for contemporary artistic concerns."  

Contemporary indigenous art occupies a position of significant influence in the contemporary art world. One of the most important aspects lies not in the recognition of their relationship to the land, but in the position of indigenous artists within art institutions as an active political and cultural presence. The exhibition revealed the effect that Watson, Kngwarreye and Koolmatrie have had on the conceptual development of contemporary Australian artistic identity. The works of these artists evoke cultural memories and palimpsest experiences. The impact of indigenous art on the actual production of Australian art is not mentioned, but their influence is recognised in terms of concepts of cultural identity. There is not an equal emphasis on the integral role of indigenous artists who actively work within contemporary art institutions. Indigenous artists using traditional and non-traditional techniques have powerful influence on contemporary Australian art by working within and manipulating the values and meanings esteemed by art institutions to create new visual languages and cultural codes.

This is an important, though rarely acknowledged, aspect of Watson's printmaking practice. Watson's practice takes an intimate approach, searching for the truth in shadowy forms and the memories that cast them. It reveals that there are many new printmaking residencies, prizes, commissions, collections and market that are not about protecting or withholding knowledge, nor about claiming authority. This fact is particularly heightened by the increased opportunities indigenous artists have to access printmaking as both a practical system of producing art and as a fundamentally democratic medium. This character of Watson's artistic practice was initially developed through her early art training at a series of art schools in regional Australia. Watson's collaborations with contemporary art institutions enhance her practice by disregarding distinctions between art media and traditional Western values.

This approach is evident in Watson's integration of symbolic references to alternative histories, both positive and negative, into an exploration of self as informed and reflected in the landscape. While her paintings have greater prominence than her printmaking, Watson's prints reveal an approach that unites a visceral awareness of multiple histories with the discourses that have created them. Although often described as an 'urban aboriginal', Watson does not sit

---

8 Ibid.
9 Watson undertook a Diploma of Creative Arts, Darling Downs Institute of Adult Education, Toowoomba (1977-1979), Bachelor of Fine Arts, University of Tasmania (1980-1982) and a Graduate Diploma in Visual
easily within this category. It is used within the field of cultural production to distinguish between indigenous artists working in regional towns, usually as part of their community. The term 'urban aboriginal' is used in reference to printmakers who principally live in urban environments. Its contemporary use implies concepts of cultural distance and enforced social dislocation. Nick Waterlow believes that orienting Watson’s practice to established modes of art making does not allow a full appreciation of the complex interweaving of place and history in her work.

Judy Watson’s work appears to differ from that of much urban Aboriginal practice as she now carries within, her homecoming, which will emerge with renewed effect no matter where she may be and from a method of making not so dissimilar to that of tribal Aboriginal painting.10

Categorising Watson as an ‘urban aboriginal’ thus allows the art institutions that represent her work access to a rich field of political symbolic capital for their role in this reconciliation process. These categories are part of disciplinary discourses of value and place. Watson’s work crosses and recreates different traditions of indigenous and non-indigenous visual art and representation. When Watson is approached as an ‘urban aboriginal’, it emphasises the political content of her work. While this political aspect is important, a perception of Watson as located within a certain geographical context disconnects her from her aboriginal heritage. She becomes representative within the artworld of the stolen relationships between generations of indigenous people that haunt Australian history. As a critical aspect of contemporary Australian culture, emphasis on Watson’s ‘urban aboriginality’ does not give her political strength but places her within a space where she is never allowed to fully reconnect with her heritage. Her identity is used as a signifier of this distance, indicating awareness of the wrongs wrought in the past (and the present) and a desire to redress them.

The danger in this use of symbolic power is that it can restrict audience perceptions of contemporary indigenous art by urban artists to the political arena. Artists such as Gordon Bennett, Fiona Foley, Banduk Marika, Treahna Hamm, Fiona Omeenyo and Rosella Namok are aboriginal artists that work in printmaking who have a public presence that has been politicised by art institutions and their representatives in the media. The prints of these artists are not intended to be approached principally as political statements, but often focus on the artist’s personal explorations of place. Focusing on the political significance of these artists, however, emphasises the artworld identity of the printmaker, which is interlinked with the cultural and economic value of contemporary Aboriginal art. What prevents these artists from becoming signifiers of the contemporary cultural preoccupation with Aboriginal rights rather than active

---

agents within the art industry is their vocal involvement in the way they are presented by art institutions. They are interviewed, quoted in catalogues and articles or write their own essays and statements to accompany their work.11 The political identity given to them and their work once it enters major art institutions is thus counterbalanced by the voice of the artist, which cannot be directed. By undergoing training at art school or working closely with artists who are familiar with the workings of the industry (such as Yvonne Boag, who taught at the Lockhart River Aboriginal Community), these artists can apply their knowledge of how institutions work to exert some control over the manner in which they are represented.

One of the integral features of the indigenous voice within the institution is that it articulates individual presence in contrast to the emphasis on indigenous groups that has dominated the history of aboriginal representation in public collections. Watson’s printmaking has developed this balanced relationship over the past two decades. The influence of her academic training and a deeper, indigenous artistic heritage come together in prints created in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Her prints of this period convey abstract landscapes with passages of ink wash evoking past rainfalls. In prints such as Dust Storm (lithograph on paper, 1989, 3/12 (Plate 28)), Watson integrates the horizontal line of western landscape with a womb-like vertical shape, using the delicate watermarks and the presence of the lithographic stone to evoke both the physical and spiritual landscapes influencing her work. The motif is repeated in Sacred Ground (lithograph on paper, 1989, 3/12 (Plate 29)). The dark ink of the elliptical shape floats disembodied above the horizon line in a sky that possesses the same spiral as Vincent Van Gogh’s Starry Night.12 Yet it also saturates the paper, the density providing a depth to the shape that dominates the print, a wound in a fragile landscape.

11 For examples see catalogues of Watson’s work (such as Fluent; Mia and Morgan, Going home to country; Timothy Morrell and Asialink, Australia: Familiar and strange: Contemporary Australian art, Carlton: Asialink Centre of the University of Melbourne, 1996; Museum of Victoria, Information Sheet; Judy Watson, Groundwork, frames of reference: Aspects of feminism and art, Sydney: Artspace Visual Arts Centre, 1991; Judy Watson, Victoria Lynn et al., Judy Watson, Epernay, France: Moët & Chandon, 1996.)
12 Vincent Van Gogh, The Starry Night, 1889, oil on canvas, 73.7 x 92.1 cm, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.
Plate 28
Judy Watson, *Dust storm*, lithograph on paper, ed.6/11, 1989, 16.4 x 24.6 cm.
National Gallery of Australia.

Plate 29
Judy Watson, *Sacred Ground*, lithograph, ed. 3/12, 1989, 27 x 32 cm.
National Gallery of Australia.
The silences that Watson captures in the seemingly empty spaces of her prints, the tension between ink and paper that leave residual tidal marks, are part of the subtle process with which she seeks to amplify the voices of her heritage. Although Watson's prints are saturated surfaces—conveying archaeological, sedimentary layers that have eddied under the pressure of the press—they also resonate with absence. The viewer cannot share with Watson the importance of her return in 1990 to her traditional lands in north-west Queensland with her mother and her grandmother. The printmaking process layers past neglect and ignorance with contemporary awareness, allowing a kind of abstract access to the personal history of the print. The prints produced in the period following this journey display a focus on the reconciliation between the body and the landscape, and attempt to overcome time past and distance. Watson practice in this period would involve “…seeing the country through my grandmother’s eyes learning about bush foods going back to the city and making work.”13 The viewer can, however, understand the significance of Watson’s work within the contemporary cultural climate. Her use of institutional facilities, such as the media, major exhibitions and catalogues, and the high symbolic value projected on her work by the art market, art education and art museums, amplifies the meaning of Watson’s work. These prints contain a subtle awareness of layered distance, an intermingling of cultural influences that never completely reconcile with each other, but bleed into one another—never knowing where one stops and the other starts—while remaining eternally separate at a basic spiritual level.

The accrual of symbolic and economic capital that is part of the institutional affiliations of Watson’s practice are a means to an end, providing the forum in which her prints can expand to encompass broader cultural spaces without being compromised by academic hierarchies. Watson describes the experience: “I looked at the ground and became slow with time”.14 This sense of suspended discovery and loss is evident in works where she transfers the experience of women into another postcolonial country. Watson created women be strong, (lithograph with chine collé, 1994 (Plate 30)), while an artist in residence in Bhopal, India. It also contains an earthiness that derives from the lithographic process itself and the context in which made. During the period that she worked with them, she observed that the workshops in Bhopal had limited printmaking material supplies. Lithographers worked without “suitable printing paper”, sand was used for graining the lithographic stones and the inks used were primarily for commercial application and contained too many driers.15

14 Watson, Groundwork.
Plate 30

Judy Watson, *women be strong*, lithograph with chine collé, 1994, dimensions unknown.
The print also reflects the innate political content of Watson’s work, “whether in terms of Aboriginal land rights, indigenous identity, environmental issues or feminism.”16 Art historian, Hannah Fink, describes the print as possessing an uncharacteristic “overtly political nature.”

The influence of different cultures, techniques and materials combine in a print that uses political awareness and local material to connect it both earth and place.

The personal significance of Watson’s experience in India is apparent in women be strong. She approaches the cultural environment at Bhopal as she approaches the Australian landscape, articulated by diverse cultural experiences unified by a chance occurrence at a specific moment in time. The print was inspired by the chance fall of a flower into the courtyard where Watson was working. It explores the role of women in participating in the cultural construction of the landscape as both a right and a responsibility.17 The hands allude to the silent witness and passage of narrative that has existed fundamentally separate from institutional art networks in the form of hand-made tools. This in turn plays on the concept of the ‘hand of the artist’, a particularly rich concept in the history of fine art lithography. The delicacy of the chine collé Japanese paper is impressed onto the paper carrier acts in aesthetic counterpoint to the fluidity of the lithographic print. Conceptually, this print continues Watson’s exploration of lithography as a method of transferring an understanding of place by stone, forming a link to the stencils of the past, and cementing them into place through the introduction of an alien medium. It alludes to the hidden place of women in colonial history, women’s experience being a silent witness that continues through passage from mother to child—a generational presence in the landscape.

The print bears witness to Watson’s conscious engagement with Western art institutions. She is participating in cross-cultural exchange facilitated by art governance bodies, she is engaging with critical theories of postcolonial identity and the role of women, particularly the resonance between the impact of these theories on addressing the place of women in the postcolonial environments of India and Australia. One of the critical aspects of Watson’s work is that the gently layered histories impressed into the surface of the paper are interspersed with both political and personal narratives. They offer provocative perspectives on past histories, a sense of past and place that are faintly seen, knowledge that is “as though on the edge of memory.”18 Watson’s prints reveal the effects of knowledge being hidden, taken away or lost. Her practice is oriented on overcoming this loss, forming new methods of accessing the past.

17 Galarrwuy Yunupingu, Chairman of the Northern Land Council, describes as the demonstration of “our continuing link with our country and the rights and responsibilities we have to it. Furthermore, we paint to show the rest of the world that we own this country, and that the land owns us.” Yunupingu quoted in Hannah Fink, Victoria Lynn et al., “From the ground up,” Hannah Fink, Green Point: Moet & Chandon, 1996, p.26.
There is a powerful postcolonial awareness in these works of culpability: of the actions of authoritative power, colonial aggression and of remorse for inherited actions. Although Watson’s works intimately address indigenous presence in the landscape, they also provide non-indigenous viewers with an opportunity to approach the landscape as evidence of this sense of disconnectedness. The political subtexts of Watson’s prints aim to simultaneously enhance and negate the forms of difference and fragmentation that occur when institutional perspectives are enforced upon a culture.

Whether they are part of a portfolio, archived in a collection or hung on gallery walls, her prints involve their surroundings in this process. The spaces in which her prints are viewed are both physical and conceptual. Australian art institutions have actively advocated multiple avenues of cultural redress in which indigenous art is represented as an integral aspect of Australian artistic development. Indigenous artists engage with cultural governance through a range of different funding bodies, some of which are part of general cultural infrastructure, and others that exclusively deal with the affairs of indigenous and Torres Strait Islander culture. The political significance of the negotiation between Western and indigenous cultural values interpreted, adapted and measured in this process imbues cultural action with a political presence. The process integrates the two into a stronger diverse Australian culture while it simultaneously explores and nurtures concepts of cultural division. This combination is a characteristic of the cultural dyskinesia that occurs when the critique and classification conducted by academics, galleries and institutions encounters the “often imperceptible spiritual connectedness between indigenous people and their country.”19 This approach, while respectful, places indigenous practice within an arena of différence—of deferral—from artworlds dominated by European models of evaluation. Disconnected from the mainstream, secret and respected, différence is interpreted as difference, creating degrees of cultural separation that allow art institutions to represent and dominate the public presence of indigenous artists. The cultural independence and equality often referred to as evidence of contemporary efforts to bring indigenous art ‘in from the margins’ of the cultural industry uses the tools traditionally employed within Western discourse to encounter the ‘other’ by emphasising their alterity.

Exhibitions of Watson’s work actively interrogate these concepts of difference and différence. There are several different forms of artistic identity that Watson represents in these exhibitions, the two most dominant being her role as a contemporary Australian female artist and as an indigenous artist. Watson’s paintings are unframed canvases with edges that are indefinite, fraying and extending into surrounding space. Her prints are consciously indeterminate in other areas: in their political nature (as discussed above), in their process, and

---

18 Judy Watson quoted in Museum of Victoria, Information sheet.
19 Perkins, “Fluent,” p.11.
in the cultural areas of art that they negotiate. Watson’s printmaking participates in an arena of Australian art that subverts established structures, crossing the boundaries between indigenous art and museums and art market. The prints utilise principles of image-making and the dissemination of experience that are not exclusive to Western tradition, but have in fact been used for centuries in stencil, ochre and stone. Displayed on the walls of galleries, these works consciously emphasise the dislocation of their cultural practice, alluding to the issues of categorisation that occur once indigenous art engages with Western cultural paradigms of distinction and originality. Her prints are sold at a range of commercial galleries as well as online.21

Watson uses the structures and systems of art institutions to integrate an indigenous voice into many avenues of art education in a way that resonates with both indigenous and non-indigenous experience. In production, display and sale, Watson’s prints advocate a democracy of interpretation accepting of collaboration, different concepts of space, and a fluid negotiation between active and passive memory. Exhibitions such as the Rockhampton Art Gallery’s, Women in Print, 2002, explore the “new visibility of the woman artist”.22 The exhibition focused on the contemporary practice of printmakers Diana Davidson, Julie Kearney, Michele Kershaw and Belinda McGrath, with Watson and Margaret M. Wilson included as artists who also used printmaking as a major medium.23 Many other contemporary exhibitions emphasise changing concepts of peripheries, the enhanced profile of women artists and the increased role of printmaking as a medium negotiating subjective and objective interpretations of place. Many of these emphasise Watson’s Aboriginality.24 Much critique of Watson’s work has been written in the form of catalogue essays, reviews and monographic essays.25 The most important aspect of these exhibitions, however, is Watson’s own involvement in the discourse they produce. She often participates in interviews, artists’ talks at the gallery and at nearby art schools, or writes prose to accompany the work in the exhibition or the catalogue. In this manner her voice becomes an integral part of public perception of the work, informing critique and extending the works’ reference beyond the gallery walls. Watson’s relationship with institutions, however, is

---

20 Such as Mori Gallery and Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative, Sydney, Helen Maxwell Gallery, Canberra, Grahame Galleries + Editions and Milburn Gallery, Brisbane, Baudion Ledon, Paris and Austral Gallery – Australian Contemporary Art, St Louis, USA.
21 Watson’s works are also available for sale through the Print Council of Australia, the Australian Print Workshop and are also available online at Aboriginal Art Print network.
23 Ibid.
25 See Appendix VI.
not simply the result of developing her artistic career within urban centres. Nor is it reliant on access to materials, a specific market, or the connections with other artists and galleries formed through her education. It is her interpretation of Aboriginality that the viewer receives, not the institutions.'

Watson's art is symptomatic of contemporary indigenous art's critical role in educating the general public to acknowledge place as emerging from heritage and emotion, not governance and naming. By referring to her as an 'urban Aboriginal', galleries and academics posit a specific artworld significance for Watson and her art—one that is politically engaging and represents a sense of being disengaged from cultural heritage. Although it is an important element of her cultural identity, this affiliation with geographic and cultural place may restrict interpretation of the broader themes in her work. Rather than present this sense of place as part of an oppositional framework, Watson's work, particularly her printmaking, demonstrates a subtle subversion of Western categories of value. Watson's subtle play on cultural modes of identity and misrepresentation is recognised by Tjalaminu Mia and Sally Morgan in an article in *Art and Australia*, where they describe that:

> Although Watson's art displays her personal connectedness to culture and country, it also reflects other facets of Aboriginality, chiefly the Indigenous struggle with stereotypes about art and cultural representation.\(^{26}\)

Mia and Morgan note that this is particularly apparent in Watson's early works and in her installations.\(^{27}\)

The integration of concepts of regionality into identifying stereotypes is similarly challenged by Watson's portrayal of cultural place as open to a wide range of personal interpretations. She uses different modes of practice to undermine the relevance of these institutional structures, and is actively involved in the way her work is presented to the public—particularly through her prose, which is an important part of her contemporary exhibitions. She also plays an important role in preserving lithographic techniques in both regional and urban Australia. Watson's perspective on lithography practice could perhaps be traced to the influence of Kaye Green, her lecturer at Monash, who in turn trained at the Tamarind Institute of Lithography. Green strongly believes in printmaking as a powerfully educative and culturally expansive process, emphasising the belief that "...lithography is the most perfect collaborative medium because the artistic aspect and the technical are so separated."\(^{28}\) The technical demands and the unpredictable effects of printmaking symbolise the two worlds Watson negotiates in her practice. The processes of stencil used millennia ago and lithography

---

\(^{26}\) Mia, "Going home to country", p. 540.

\(^{27}\) Ibid.

\(^{28}\) Kaye Green, Interview with the author, Hobart, Tasmania, 3 December 2002.
used in the present imbed the same fragments of ochre and stone into the skin, require the same physical involvement translating individual touch into an autonomous image. She describes that appeal of the medium:

What I love about the medium of lithography are the washes, quality of drawing and mark-making and the physicality it offers. I change the drawing through the rolling up/proofing stage, enriching it, pushing it back, deleting, playing with shadows. ... This process feeds my other work on canvas and paper, while more direct, these are still a case of floating, finding and dissolving.29

The meeting ground provided by Watson’s work and her teaching role enable intuitive approaches to relationships to the landscape as a matrix for both indigenous and non-indigenous audiences and students. Watson teaches both traditional and improvisational printmaking techniques at art schools throughout the country.30 She has been involved in the printmaking workshops at James Cook University in Townsville through residencies and workshops.31 Women, all of whom have an approach to institutional printmaking that is informed by disparate past experiences, usually dominate these workshops. The value of these workshops was not simply for the technical or aesthetic information conveyed, but a sense of shared experience. Jill O’Sullivan, a printmaker from Townsville, describes that at one of these workshops attending printmakers were filled with a sense of capability and invention, not a little influenced by Watson “dancing on boards in order to make a print.”32 This is a different form of learning. Watson’s exploration of place within alternative cultural contexts highlights her facility to

...not only learn from the ground up—to feel the power of the land under your feet that resonates through your body connecting you to your country—but also to feel and acknowledge the pride and empowerment of cultural reclamation.33

These different methods of learning cultural heritage and artistic process complement the residency programs at art schools and public galleries and workshops. Through these projects, Watson can teach students and artists principles of indigenous art and skills in lithography that art institutions cannot afford to teach in a full-time capacity. Her involvement in art institutions in this manner allows her to continue her engagement in both cultural traditions without it impacting on the time needed for the creation of her own work.

30 Watson lectured at the Townsville College of TAFE and tutored at the Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education. She has also assisted indigenous artists in accessing art facilities. (Roger Butler, Landscapes in set and series.)
31 Ann Lord, interview with the author, Townsville, Queensland, 22 October 2002.
32 Jill O’Sullivan, Interview with the author, Townsville, Queensland, 22 October 2002.
33 Watson quoted in Mia, “Going home to country”, p. 540.
Further collaborations with many different institutions express this approach to both her prints and her practice. The collection of Indigenous remains by some museums is addressed in works such as *Our Skin in Your Collection, Our bones in your collection, Our hair in your collection* and *Museum Piece* (etching, 1998 (Plate 31)). These multiplate colour etchings, printed at the Australian Print Workshop, are powerful examinations of a fragmented culture and the dislocation that imperialism creates. Her investigation into how art can provide a way of reclaiming the past was extended into a commission from the Museum of Victoria to creation of a wall of etchings. This was a collaborative project between Watson, the Australian Print Workshop, the Museum of Victoria and the Wemba Wemba people of south-east Victoria.

The wall is part of the structure of Wurreka, the entrance to Bunjilka, the Aboriginal Centre at Melbourne Museum (Plate 32). Watson gathered stories, researched and drew objects from the Museum collection to provide an equal voice; “wurreka” means ‘to speak’ in the Wemba Wemba language of north-west Victoria.

Watson has described the process of creating the wall as “an ongoing conversation” about the survival, resilience, resistance and strength of generations of indigenous people and their culture. She reinterprets the print itself: the wall is made of etched zinc plates, turning the museum itself into the matrix, the viewer into the carrier. Interpretation of the work is intended to be fluid, not fixed in place, a metaphorical conception of cultural and physical place that is informed by multiple cultures. Watson describes Wurreka wall as “a filmic experience—as you walk along its length you animate the panels causing a blurring of movement and a connection between the images.” Watson’s narrative authority is an intentionally subdued voice among the many that search past and present for an ungoverned sense of place. Creating new areas of discourse that blur culturally-employed distinctions, Watson’s pursuit of printmaking enhances its role in Australia as a democratic medium, open to chance encounters, discovering and exploiting new spaces to create the unexpected multiple times with integral acceptance of differences. Her work unifies the cultural position of both European and indigenous traditions of printmaking. Contemporary art institutions are working to support shifting visual cultures.

---

34 Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, *Off shore: On site: International indigenous artists’ camp and exhibition*, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, 1997, p.19. For example, Watson has worked in public outreach projects such as the Casula Powerhouse’s Artists’ Camp in 1994 and 1997. She collaborated with Jim Logan and Michelle Tau Tau in *Off Shore: On Site* and engaged artists in participate in a collaborative work, *Healing*.


36 Museum of Victoria, *Information sheet*.

37 The concept evolved through consultation with member of Victoria’s aboriginal community who visited the project as it developed. *Ibid*.

38 Watson quoted in *Ibid*. 

174
Plate 31
Private collection.
Judy Watson, *Wurreka*, etched zinc wall, 1999, 518 cm at highest point and 349 cm at lowest point x 50 metres in length. Museum of Victoria
Conclusion

Kjar and Watson use a range of printmaking techniques and relationships with institutions to control the physical aspects of their practice as well as their identity within the artworld. Artists may therefore participate in a network of values in order to facilitate their practice. Consciously, they allow their works to act as a sign for institutional systems of value and evaluation. Kjar uses regional codes to reflect a global preoccupation with place, and the consequences of institutional authority when contrasted against the features of nature. Her work focuses on transcending geography and tradition by accessing the elemental. Although she participates within the art market, her practice is evidence that the traditional values of the original and of the concepts of centre and periphery are giving way to a greater concern with new concerns regarding the cultural transcription of place. Her references are broad: symbolist, surrealist, Dutch, Spanish, feminist, Australian and Tasmanian. Each of the printmakers discussed in this chapter work within the institutional arena not because they are obliged to, but because it avails them to opportunities to expand their practice. Contemporary institutions are not physical entities, but a series of collaborative and inter-personal relationships that extend far beyond the boundaries of tradition or industry.

The complexity of Watson’s relationships with institutions, and one of the reasons why her works are so resonant, is because they subtly incorporate challenging shifts in perception that challenge dualist constructions of cultural identity and the function of art. Her practice is marked by regular participation in collaborative relationships, seeking new methods of exploring the interaction of different cultural histories. Watson’s history of collaborative printmaking impels a renegotiation of categories in association with art. Concepts such as urban or regional artist as bearing on the content and production of art are becoming increasingly redundant, for both indigenous and non-indigenous artists. In this way, Watson’s prints are politically powerful because of their evasion of ‘rules’ and perspectives that govern the institutional perspectives on contemporary art. Her practice does not seek to negotiate centres and peripheries, but rather explores the silence of individual indigenous voices within these institutions. Watson’s printmaking practice takes a pedagogic approach. She attempts to bridge the gaps that exist between different cultures and different institutionalised identities.
The following chapter examines printmakers who were once involved in institutional relationships, but have undergone a significant shift in both their professional and personal lives that require a different relationship with the art industry. The printmakers in this group premise an independent approach to their practice. They do not reject institutional resources that can assist printmaking, but take an approach to their practice that places emphasis on printmaking that exists as an independent entity from the values and systems of the art industry. Whereas Kjar and Watson consciously position themselves in close affiliation with art institutions, the printmakers discussed in chapter six do not require the symbolic values or even the economic values contained in the art industry to conduct a legitimate printmaking practice of a high standard.
Chapter Six

Plate 33

Women printmakers claiming independence of practice

Independence in relation to contemporary printmaking is most effectively employed as a concept, not an economic status. Although economic stability plays an important role in sustainable printmaking practice, the decision to continue working in regional environments is often one that relies on the resolve to operate without reliance on institutional or social support. Regional women printmakers take advantage of a wide range of opportunities to sustain their practice. Independent printmakers construct their own networks of association with art galleries, art schools and state and private patronage organisations. It is important for many printmakers to maintain an independence from being defined by their economical or symbolic status within the art industry. Rather, many printmakers prefer that in the public eye they are identified by their art. The practical factors of art production and the affiliations they form with art institutions should serve to enhance exposure and critical knowledge of their artwork, instead of being used to categorise it within a specific art network.

Printmakers whose practice is marked by a conscious desire to be independent from an institutional structure seek to establish a practice that is shaped according to their own values yet is not rejected by the artworld. The key orientation of their practice is not an institutional source of funding, a context, a particular market, a collection, or a strategy to promote their work. To this end, many printmakers carefully choose institutions that they believe will provide opportunities to practice or exhibit in the manner they prefer – but remain in control of as many elements in this relationship as they are able. This differs from the previous category, as Watson and Kjar predominantly worked within institutional contexts (art schools, galleries and with institutional funding). The printmakers explored in this category do not. They participate with in art markets and use the resources provided of art institutions, but they hold possessively to a concept of independence – supporting this approach to their practice with as much economic independence as possible. If the support of art institutions becomes unavailable, these printmakers do not rely on them to continue to practice. In addition, they develop new systems of creating and viewing their work that strengthen their position outside of centralised art industries.

The primary purpose of independent printmaking is the capacity it gives printmakers to control how factors of private life, cultural governance, time or market
affect the realities of printmaking practice. Independent printmaking is a characteristic of practices which have developed in regional Australia during the last decade. Printmakers can overcome the issues presented by the difficulties of entering urban art markets, accessing grants that are administered by urban cultural institutions and the potential of being defined by the regional site of their practice by creating successful alternative methods of professional practice. It is a form of printmaking that is increasingly employed by regional women printmakers, where printmakers who have young children, are mature-age graduates from vocational education or who have formed group workshops to facilitate access to equipment may develop prints that are independent from the regional location of their production. Slowly, a culture of printmaking practice that is propelled by choices that occur independently of the symbolic and economic values of the artworld has emerged throughout regional Australia.

Two of the most distinctive characteristics of this area of practice are the unconventional techniques and markets that are developed. Another feature of considerable significance is that many areas of regional art production require printmakers to take advantage of a wide range of institutional and non-institutional art networks. Because they do not develop a reliance on any one form of artistic support (such as the local public gallery, the council or a local commercial patron) many printmakers are unaware that this control over the financial or conceptual support of their work represents a significant independence from the artworld applying one particular form of value to their work. Prints that have been created with the support of the Australia Council, for example, receive a much higher cultural value within the Australian artworld than prints created through the patronage of the Lismore City Council. Printmakers who receive patronage from a range of businesses, organisations and individuals and are exhibited in cafes, galleries, art schools and group touring exhibitions intersect such a variety of symbolic values that they cannot easily be positioned as belonging to one area of art production (such as the restricted field of cultural production) or another (such as the unrestricted field of cultural production). The economic benefits emerging from this range of affiliations may be varied, but it also tends to be regular and sustained. Independent printmaking practice requires a considerable amount of work on the part of the artist, and a strong knowledge of the way the art industry works. The printmakers involved in this style of practice therefore tend to be aware of the ways in which they are different or isolated from a centralised art industry and make decisions to overcome these differences accordingly.
The decentralised art industry takes on different characteristics in each region of Australia. In some areas, such as north coast New South Wales, a dense growth of art schools, galleries, markets and pedagogy has flourished within a supportive society that accepts these changes as part of an alternative liberal lifestyle. Other areas, such as central east and south coast Victoria, have quietly developed strong, sustainable relationships with regional art galleries, and expanded the potential for small community and pedagogic initiatives. These printmakers have developed a market awareness of individual printmakers who demonstrate a commitment to the regional environment yet possess a reputation as artists that reaches beyond the boundaries of the state. Independence does not simply demonstrate an ability to relocate a professional urban practice into a regional retreat. The range of practices and techniques that emerge indicate that artists and art practices that were previously marginalised are now exploiting a new interpretation of independence that engage with both urban and regional art industries. The examples of regional women printmakers demonstrate that even the smallest areas of independence can have great effect.

The first section of this chapter presents an overview of some of the key characteristics of independent printmaking undertaken by regional women printmakers. These printmakers expand their practice in new and traditional ways, often using the support from pre-existing and developing institutional networks. The two main case studies address Helen Geier from Braidwood in central New South Wales, and Sue Pickering, from Fern Tree in Tasmania. Helen Geier’s prints reflect an artistic practice that is independent, but not divorced from either urban or regional artistic environments. Geier consciously uses her cultural-historical position as a female artist as a counterpoint to work that emphasises truth over governed values of beauty and order. Susan Pickering uses printmaking to suspend moments of translation. Moving between community and institutional contexts, in the passage itself the print refers to a moment that is ultimately without context. Both printmakers approach their practice with an emphasis on the importance of creation, not on the importance of reception within the art industry. An examination of the choices printmakers make to attain independent practice reveals much about the influence of region on their work without compromising the quality of their work or the professionalism of their practice.
A Shed of Their Own: Independent printmaking as a contemporary mode of practice

Contemporary printmakers who maintain an independence of practice do so through the development of individual relationships and innovative approaches. They use a myriad of resources to establish access to the equipment, material and the time required to create plates, prints and editions. Hence, the relationships they cultivate with institutional and non-institutional artists, academics and audiences result in a printmaking practice that can choose the economic and symbolic values with which they affiliate their practice. The result is a practice that maintains control over the material and symbolic qualities of their printmaking without risking isolation from cultural networks or communities. This area of practice is one of increasing appeal for printmakers in regional areas, and one that many printmakers may utilise at some time in their career. The capacity for choice offered by independent printmaking is particularly appealing for women who have children or wish to shift the parameters of their practice within the art industry to accommodate altered directions in their art. Importantly, independence in printmaking practice—even if only used for a short time—has a significant impact in the way printmakers perceive their position within the artworld. It encourages an adventurous approach that is particularly apparent in the prints of women in regional Australia.

Printmakers with reputations forged in urban centres have a particular ability to redirect their practice to take on a regional focus. Such printmakers may have a high level of symbolic capital established through the collection of their work by major galleries, the sale of the work by prestigious commercial galleries or prizes or grants that they had been awarded. These printmakers may thus have the artistic status and perhaps even the economic stability, so they can afford the risk of acting outside central industry without isolation from centralised art networks. Printmakers such as Helen Geier and Yvonne Boag have worked closely with institutions throughout their careers. During the last decade, however, they have directed their practice into a range of non-institutional areas, often within regional Australia. Geier discusses the influence of systems of perspective on the way an artist's work develops or is perceived and uses the distance from major art institutions that informs much regional practice to develop a freedom from institutional artistic traditions. Boag has worked closely with universities and workshops throughout Australia, spending extensive periods of time working with indigenous printmaking communities. Boag was responsible for establishing the Lockhart River Region printmaking workshops in far north Queensland, leading to
national and international attention for the printmaking from this region.¹ The decision these printmakers made to move to regional Australia was in part to gain control over the contexts and traditions that affect their practice, but also to provide support for artists in regional Australia who are often unable to access the exhibitions or pedagogic services of printmakers of their calibre. Geier funded a touring exhibition that travelled around regional Australia to audiences that would not have been exposed to it when it was shown in urban commercial galleries.² Boag used her connections with regional and urban art networks to provide awareness of Lockhardt River printmaking while also providing them with professional printmaking equipment and techniques.

Thus a key feature of independent printmaking is the printmakers who choose to leave institutional environments in order to practice with more freedom. As evident in the discussion of printmaking markets contained in chapter four, knowledge about prints has increased in regional Australia. For many printmakers regional commercial galleries present a good way of making money by producing editions of prints at a reasonable price, particularly visible in areas popular with tourists. Melissa Wright of Rileys Hill, New South Wales, has extensive experience with commercial galleries in America, New Zealand and Australia, as curator, dealer and as a printmaker. She has had considerable success in selling her prints in Sydney and Melbourne, as well as in numerous smaller galleries on the northern New South Wales coast. A successful sales record has led to Wright purchasing a press and her practice is now fully self-supporting. Maintaining a domestic studio means that she does not waste time travelling and has more time to practice while being at home with her children, where she predominantly uses non-toxic printmaking techniques, such as drypoint on perspex, which deliver large editions.³

Women printmakers have a greater capacity to establish their own spaces in which to work in regional Australia. One printmaker explained:

I do make my living from my work. I don’t want to do anything else, but that. That’s all I want to do—and raise my kids and the family and have it all. ...[If] I was back in the city, I’d probably do much edgier work. I’d probably do things that are a little more—probably a little more confronting and all. But this really suits me here. I feel quite comfortable and quite honest. And I love being alone. ... It’s a half-hour away [from town], so people don’t drop in very often. ... I’m usually by myself and just work. I love it.⁴

² This aspect of Geier’s artistic practice is discussed in a case study later in the chapter.
³ The average edition size is between 60 and 100.

184
The ability to establish the facilities to pursue printmaking according to your own interests and motivations is seen increasingly in regional Australia. For women that have always exhibited this determination in their practice, the process has developed over many years to counteract issues of access affecting their capacity to produce prints in a healthy or economically viable environment.

Informal communities are a vital feature of regional printmaking, one that takes a traditional approach and subverts it. The key feature of these communities is the creation of a supportive network of printmakers within a particular region of printmakers who practise individually. Art production is often a full-time occupation for these printmakers: they exhibit their works at a range of local businesses, regional galleries or with urban commercial dealers, they have their own presses and support their practice through a wide variety of means. They have shared exhibitions and support each other in their practice, often within a wider close-knit creative community. One such printmaking community is evident in South Australia. The Royal South Australian Society of Arts’ 1996 exhibition, *Survey Exhibition of Contemporary South Australian Printmakers* was critical in bringing together fifty-six South Australian printmakers in a show that exhibition instigator and coordinator, Rita Hall, hoped would “become a starting point for a new era in South Australian printmaking both for the artists who work here and for the audience who appreciate their art.” The Royal South Australian Society of Arts (RSASA) has a long history of exhibiting South Australian printmakers since its beginning in 1856. Its most recent exhibition prior to the 1997 survey took place in 1982 with *South Australian Printmakers*. Since the Art Gallery of South Australia’s *Graven Images in the promised land: A history of printmaking in South Australia 1836–1981* and the RSASA’s *South Australian Printmakers* survey, there has been little opportunity for South Australian printmakers to display their works together in a united forum. The exhibition reflects Hall’s intention to provide “a survey of contemporary South Australian printmakers rather than of South Australian prints,” with the emphasis being on printmakers’ “practical interest in printmaking as a medium for creating artworks.”

---

4 Melissa Wright, interview with the author.
6 Stephanie Schrapel, “Printmakers at the RSASA 1856-1996,” in *Survey Exhibition of Contemporary South Australian Printmakers*, np.
8 Olga Sankey, interview with the author, Adelaide, South Australia, 4 November 2002.
The survey brought together printmakers such as Elizabeth Abbott, Alexander Ian Arcus, Judith Bruton, Liz French, Christine McCormack and Olga Sankey who produced linocuts, collographs, monoprints, digital prints, paperworks, and sewn prints that reinterpreted and challenged traditional approaches to printmaking. The prints revealed a wide array of techniques that did not depend on costly equipment or materials. Janie Barrett's untitled linocut was made by using the floor and a heavy garden roller to produce a print on calico (*Untitled*, 1996, linocut on calico, dimensions unknown (Plate 34)). Helen Kavanagh used a small mangle to print woodcut monoprints as it does not restrict the length of the print, unlike the standard Enjay etching press bed (*Untitled*, 1996, woodcut monoprint, dimensions unknown (Plate 35)). Phillipa McMahon refers to her practice as using the freedom of relief prints to expand on the "process of play [that] leads to no conclusion and can be walked away from at any point."

The diversity of works provides an opportunity to see South Australian printmaking by women as independent, not neglected or isolated. The decline of the South Australian Print Workshop in 1999 caused many printmakers to find new ways to conduct their practice. The low national profile of many of the printmakers involved, however, demonstrates that independence can come at the price of disarticulation from the community identity formation so strongly evidenced in South Australian printmaking histories that centre on the South Australian School of Art.

These practices all exhibit the ability of the printmakers to choose what style of practice best suits the work they want to produce, the audiences they want to reach and the ideas they want to explore. On the whole, this does not necessitate a rejection of art institutions. Independent printmaking does not require printmaker’s to place themselves in opposition to the institutions that dominate the art industry. But it does involve decisions that recognise the potential to work outside these institutions, their networks and the urban areas where most of them are positioned. It also reveals that regional printmakers are capable of maintaining active printmaking practices without depending on institutions for support or exposure. The values produced by their work are therefore more closely informed by their regional influences and personal experiences, rather than by a system of hierarchy and categorisation exerted by critics, dealers and galleries in

10 Helen Kavanagh, "Helen Kavanagh," in *Survey exhibition of Contemporary South Australian Printmakers*, np.
Plate 34

Janie Barrett, Untitled print for Survey Exhibition of Contemporary South Australian Printmakers, linocut on calico, 1996, dimensions unknown.

Plate 35

Helen Kavanagh, Untitled print for Survey Exhibition of Contemporary South Australian Printmakers, woodcut monoprint, 1996, dimensions unknown.
urban centres. The following two case studies explore two contemporary practices that are independent from the symbolic and economic control of art institutions by utilising the resources that they provide on their own terms.

Cultural frameworks and the practice of Helen Geier: "...wherein the Principles of that Art are rendered familiar"¹²:

In this union, through the image, of a pure but short-lived subjectivity and a reality which will not necessarily reach its final constitution, the (poet) finds a field for countless experiments; he profits by observations that can be exact because they are simple, because they "have no consequences", as is the case with scientific thought, which is always related thought. The image, in its simplicity, has no need of scholarship.

The imagination does not want to end in a diagram.¹³

In 1999, Helen Geier, a painter and printmaker living in Braidwood, New South Wales, collaborated with Dr Sasha Grishin, art historian and critic, to produce a retrospective touring exhibition of her work from 1972 to 1999.¹⁴ The survey exhibition, entitled Helen Geier: Different Fields of Vision, and its catalogue were principally funded by Geier.¹⁵ It illustrated a career that has combined subjective investigations of primordial emotion with an intellectual critique of Western concepts of beauty. One of the works of this exhibition, Perspective and Chance Connections IA (photo-etching and silkscreen, sewn and folded 3-D prints, 1994, 78 x 58 cm each, edition of 5 (Plate 36)), is a series of photo-etched and silkscreen prints, each sewn and folded in a three-dimensional print, which formed the centre of this exhibition. The print also reveals much about Geier’s positioning of her practice within a codified environment. Each print poses a different series of questions about Western models of harmony and beauty integral to traditional concepts of the artist and the way her practice is valued. This image provides a template for the investigation of self in space that has driven Geier’s printmaking practice, a process integrally connected to broader concerns of independent artistic identity. Beginning with Perspectives and Chance Connections, this study

¹² Carrington Bowles, All Draughtsmen's Assistant or Drawing Made Easy. London: Sayer and Bennett, 1770, frontispiece.
¹⁴ In 2003 Sasha Grishin was awarded a Professorship in Art History at the Australian National University.
¹⁵ Helen Geier, interview with the author, Braidwood, New South Wales, September 2001.
Plate 36

Helen Geier, *Perspective and Chance Connections*, photo-etching and silkscreen, sewn and folded 3-D prints, ed. of 5, 1994, 78 x 58 cm each.

Plate 37

Helen Geier, *Perspective and Chance Connections 4A*, photo-etching and silkscreen, sewn and folded 3-D prints, ed. 2/5, 1994, 78 x 58 cm.
examines Geier’s deconstruction of the cultural spaces of art and women’s experience. Geier’s constant dissection and reintegration of visual codes establishes an analytic perspective independent of the contexts of the prints’ production. This study follows a practice that uses all resources available, yet does not compromise on its essential motivation.

*Perspectives and Games of Chance* developed from Geier’s chance discovery of Carrington Bowles’ eighteenth century book, *On the Origins of Perspective* (see, for example, Carrington Bowles, *All Draughtsmen’s Assistant or Drawing Made Easy*. London: Sayer and Bennett, 1770, frontispiece (Plate 38)). This text encouraged her to explore the rules it presented for viewing, creating and replicating ideals of architectural harmony and proportion within a new context. *Perspectives and Games of Chance* 4A (photo-etching and silkscreen, sewn and folded 3-D print, 1994, 78 x 58cms (Plate 37)) is one work from an intense period of activity from 1992 to 1999. In this print Geier explores competing cultural discourses. The print attempts to give these discourses physical form. A photo-etching of a perspectival exercise from Carrington Bowles’ treatise is extended into competing two-dimensional fields of screenprinted grids. These grids in turn act as the guide for three-dimensional studies of cubes, the scientific certainty of which is countered by their indecisive edges. Layered studies of grids positioned in the corners and centre of the print contrast the depth illustrated by single point perspective exercises of internal and external sites. The objectivity of this system is further challenged by the penetration of a tacking stitch, which mimics the rules of perspective noted by Bowles. Despite their apparent fragility, Geier’s prints threaten to implode the visual formula, causing the gridded paper to buckle and fold in on itself. The disjuncture of two-dimensional and three-dimensional qualities opens fissures between these discourses into which the viewer is drawn. The subjective response of the viewer questions the relevance of institutionally mandated systems of transcribing place.

Chance encounters between different cultural frameworks have the potential to reveal the nature of cultural constructions of space as well as the possibilities for reinterpretation that exist in the spaces in-between these frameworks. Geier believes that they create “moments of translation and collaboration between mind and body.” To facilitate this investigation, Geier goes beyond contemporary analysis of mind/body dualism that often positions the body as a site of conflict. She traces the development of the concept of perspective back to its genesis in the work of René Descartes. The

---

16 Ibid.
Plate 38

Carrington Bowles, *All Draughtsmen's Assistant or Drawing Made Easy*, London: Sayer and Bennett, 1770.
concept was developed by Descartes in the seventeenth century, who employed it in the service of a new theory of natural science.\textsuperscript{17} Descartes was fighting for a single explanation for all the variations that exist in physical reality,\textsuperscript{18} and his theories were eventually published in \textit{Meditation on the First Principles of Philosophy}, from which the theory of mind over matter was fully expressed with a central belief in the divine origin of both.\textsuperscript{19}

The influence of Cartesian dualism has influenced scientific and philosophical thought in the centuries since, affecting medicine, culture and psychology. Returning to Descartes' basic principles renders the subjective and cultural perspectival systems that inform Geier's work and her practice apparent. By examining the development of science to order the universe and position individuals within this order, we can discern the influence of institutions on how individuals perceive themselves. It is this point of consciousness, before it is instituted with meaning and value, that Geier's work traces when she explores the formation of social systems of perspective. She also examines the specific influence of art in positioning individual subjects within cultural hierarchies of symbolic value. In art, it is part of the ordering established by the French Academy of Art in the seventeenth century, under director Charles le Brun (1619-1690). The Academy's division of art into established categories, which imposed a decreasing order of aesthetic value to invention, proportion, colour, expression and composition,\textsuperscript{20} sought to create a system of values that could allow artists to recognize and transcribe the eternal forms of the universe perceptible through the mind, but not the senses. This integration of the principles of Plato's philosophy of the \textit{Ideas} into the concept of the artist established the role of art as an authority in an ordered universe. The inherent ideology that made art part of the institutional authority of contemporary Western

\textsuperscript{17} Descartes' \textit{Discourse on Method}, 1637 was one of four treatises published under a general title, to be read as an introduction to the other three, providing reasoning or problem-solving techniques that were then applied in three 'Essays': \textit{Dioptrics, Meteors} and \textit{Geometry}. (Tom Sorrell, "Introduction," in Rene Descartes, \textit{A discourse on method: Meditations on the first principles of philosophy}, ed. Tom Sorrel, London; Melbourne: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1986, p. vii.)

\textsuperscript{18} Ib id., p. xi.

\textsuperscript{19} Rene Descartes, \textit{A discourse on method: Meditations on the first principles of philosophy}, ed. Tom Sorrel, London; Melbourne: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1986, p. 199. Sorrel notes that although Descartes developed this "view of physical explanation" later than Galileo, it was most likely an independent development, published later, once he saw what happened to Galileo. In a context where science and the institutional authority of the Roman Catholic Church fought over the 'true' relationship of nature to the universe, Descartes' hypothesis was equally dangerous. Descartes' \textit{Principles} was finally published in 1644 after he had carefully gained permission from the Church for his scientific ideas. Sorrell, "Introduction," p. x.

culture, informs many of the systems of genealogy and value evident in art discourse today. These rules have been incorporated into perspective, and provided order.

Perspective in Geier’s work is not an ordered series of inherited rules, but a constantly evolving series of chance encounters that facilitate momentary transcendence from physical reality and the institutions that attempt to circumscribe it. The symbolic function of perspective explored in Geier’s prints is an important element of its contemporary presence. It has a key role in assisting us to understand the spaces we occupy, and where we are positioned within them. The science of perspective influences how individuals position themselves within both cultural and corporeal environments.

Panofsky explains:

Perspective subjects the artistic phenomenon to stable and even mathematically exact rules, but on the other hand, makes that phenomenon contingent upon human beings, indeed upon the individual; for these rules refer to the psychological and physical conditions of the visual impression, and the way they take effect is determined by the freely chosen position of the subjective ‘point of view’. Thus the history of perspective may be understood with equal justice as a triumph of the distancing and objectifying sense of the real, and as a triumph of the distance-denying human struggle for control; it is as much a consolidation and systematisation of the external world, as an extension of the domain of the self. 21

Mathematical and spiritually powerful, Geier’s prints introduce examples of the chance encounters that inform how individuals situate themselves within the universe. By directly linking the individual to divine systems of reason, she bypasses the authorities that situate individuals within cultural constructs of space and meaning, by highlighting their fragility and the translucency of their layering when cultures attempt to use them to establish an authority of place. Perspective is therefore something Geier uses to structure her prints and provide the means to achieve a distinction from the institutional rules embedded within them. She does this by claiming awareness of their presence and then defying their gravity through reinterpreting them with the subjectivity of interior, emotional experience. In doing so, her prints cause the logic of scientific perspective to share the same relevance as the craft techniques incorporated into the work.

The contrast between different systems of perspective employed within this series, however, heightens the existence of the sites of symbolic capital an artist is

expected to pursue as an agent of the institutional artworld. Grishin uses these prints as evidence of Geier’s technical and conceptual sophistication in her printmaking, situating them at the centre of the exhibition’s narrative of artistic development. It is one of the prints that most clearly demonstrates the importance of intellectual control in her practice. Geier’s uses her work to challenge institutional order by contrasting it with the elements of chance that are ironically such an integral part of the printmaking process. By referring to multiple sites of authority, Geier can consciously use chance as an integral component of her artistic practice. Chance becomes a way of creating a stitch in time, allowing past and present systems of referencing self in space to highlight how these different systems coalesce and collide constantly. In the discontinuities and synergies this process creates, Geier sites free will: using chance encounters to enable the aesthetic decisions that open indefinite places in which interpretation is richest.

Interspersed throughout Grishin’s catalogue essay for Different Fields of Vision are free-floating quotations from Erwin Panofsky’s text, Perspective as a Symbolic Form. One such citation is from Panofsky’s discussion of the impact of perspective on the Renaissance, wherein perspective allowed bodies to “expand plastically and move gesturally” while at the same time dissolving in the painterly light that “spreads out in space”. Grishin employs Panofsky’s text in a familiar technique used by art critics to establish Geier’s relationship with a critical discourse and to document the ideas she inherits. Yet he also uses Panofsky’s theories of transcendent perspective to emphasise that Geier’s investigation is fundamentally independent of established and rigid theoretical frameworks. Instead, he highlights Geier’s use of theory as a framework to highlight the free play that occurs in her prints and the way they emerge directly from Geier’s experiences. The fundamental purpose of Grishin’s catalogue essay is not to consecrate Geier’s practice within the hierarchical discussions of the Australian art industry but to establish a link between Geier’s experiences and how they inform her attempt to create valid new systems of cultural and artistic perspective.

The intention of this technique is to subtly convey the authority of Geier’s work without an overt emphasis on the critic’s role in this process. The audience is encouraged to be aware of the techniques of legitimation used in the framing devices employed by the gallery. By being cognizant of the frames, catalogues, critique and formal and aesthetic rules, they can take independent approaches to work and exhibitions. With this freedom from the directive processes of art institutions, the

opportunity is created to recognize similar codes that construct everyday life. Audiences are thus free to use these codes to deconstruct the way they have been trained to read art, and instead engage in open interpretation. Geier’s perspective becomes a new model book, and attains its own authority.

Descartes’ dualism of mind and body, in this context, became integrated into the development of perspective as a way of positioning the body within universal order as well as within physical space. Geier’s use of perspective highlights the unequal relationship that occurs once perspective is employed to serve institutional ideologies: universal order is used to authorise the dualities implicit in cultural codes that polarise mind and body, male and female, centre and periphery. Geier’s prints contrast these systems of perspective and institutional order with ‘found objects’—such as thread, wrapping paper, electoral maps or eighteenth century painting guides—and in doing so disrupt the coherence and authority by reintroducing them into non-institutional (frequently domestic) spheres. By incorporating ‘found objects’, Geier can also introduce other perspectives and other relationships between body and space. In her work of the 1990s, Geier’s prints reassert that “all bodies are composed of parts”, and within the principle of duality all references have equal validity.23

Geier consciously positions herself within the framework provided by three institutional perspectives (mathematical, subconscious and art historical), and then challenges these by interjecting the subjective experiences that have informed the production of the prints. She places a deliberate emphasis on different modes of physical art production in influencing the way individuals interpret the codes incorporated into artworks. Geier provides a space where, even if on a subconscious level, viewers recognise all visual and institutional techniques and choose the degree to which they will accept or reject them. In an industry where artists, audiences and artworks are cultural commodities, Geier’s prints describe places where the authority of the work thus lies in chance connections between viewer and print, written on the body of their individual experiences. The work of the last decade is part of a practice that seeks independence from institutional structuring devices. Geier employs multiple perspectives (and their cultural histories) in order to achieve a symbolic form where serendipity has as much influence as institutional training. She states: “The total body of my work I consider a portrait of myself. It’s a history of what I’ve been thinking.

23 In a letter of 1638, Descartes argued that as opposed to the “other countless hypotheses” his hypothesis was “that all bodies are composed of parts.” (Sorrel, “Introduction,” p. xi.)
Thought patterns—a portrait of my thought patterns. This investigation began many years ago, and it is Geier’s past experience that has given her the tools to avoid exclusion from artworld by acting outside its perspectives on order and value. These can be seen through three stages of Geier’s practice: her period in England, her urban practice and her regional practice.

Social and cultural constructions of perspective and place had a significant influence on Geier’s work from early in her artistic career. She trained at the National Art School and the Alexander Mackie Teacher’s College in Sydney in the early 1970s. Australia (and Sydney) possessed a small artworld, one replete with the sense of its physical and cultural distance from Europe. This distance was reduced somewhat when Geier followed the traditional postgraduate path of young Australian artists to travel to England for further education. In 1973, she received a Certificate of Post Graduate Studies at St Martin’s School of Art in London. In London Geier was exposed to a sophisticated art world of challenging aesthetic critique and Marxist political awareness. For women artists, this cultural climate stimulated new perspectives of how gender is constructed by social forces. British Pop Art provided a supportive environment for feminist concerns emerging during this period.

Although Geier was not overtly interested in gender politics in the early stages of her career, she was nonetheless learning the principles of printmaking in an environment that was still emerging from patriarchy and where the elitist cultural role of art was being actively challenged. Geier was developing her skills as a maker of art in a context where being an ‘artist’ had a political power of its own. Part of this power lay in the ability to clearly recognise the cultural processes that influence both artistic identity and practice. Many British theorists were providing an alternative critique on perspective as a multi-layered complex entity informed by politics, gender, class and tradition. One of the most influential was John Berger, who commented that in modern society: “We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves”. He extends this concept beyond the reference to the physical world to encounter the tangible effects of underlying ideologies:

24 Geier, interview with the author. Thought Patterns was the title of Geier’s 2001 body of work exhibited at Mary Place Gallery, Sydney, July.
25 See Appendix VI.
26 Grishin, Different Fields of Vision, p. 6.
28 Geier, interview with the author.
29 Berger, Ways of Seeing, p. 9.
Yet when an image is presented as a work of art, the way people look at it is affected by a whole series of learnt assumptions about art. Assumptions concerning: Beauty, Truth, Genius, Civilization, Form, Status, Taste, etc. Many of these assumptions no longer accord with the world as it is. The past is never there waiting to be discovered, to be recognized for exactly what it is. History always constitutes a relation between a present and its past.\textsuperscript{30}

Accompanying this power was an expectation that this new perspective, together with new technology, would allow a generation of women artists to redress the subordinate position of women in art and claim an equality of practice. Academic art and advertising create a demanding training ground where political and social concepts of place are intricately layered. Geier's training and experiences in England established an ability to see beyond cultural dualities to a more palimpsest interpretation of cultural space.

This training was particularly beneficial on her return to Australia in 1974, where she arrived, as noted by Grishin, "as possibly the most accomplished photo-lithographer in the country."\textsuperscript{31} She was employed by Prahran Art School, where she worked with Roger Kemp, whose approach to art incorporated a richly textured philosophical approach that emphasised an intersection of art, music and science. His was a metaphysical investigation of man's place within a harmonic, ordered universe,\textsuperscript{32} resonating with a subjective approach that Geier noted as being reflective of "a particularly Australian perspective."\textsuperscript{33} Her prints of this period continue themes she explored in England, yet these are often overlaid with a sense of claustrophobia. In \textit{Botanical Gardens, Gates I} (photo-lithograph, 1976, multi-colour on watercolour paper, 76 x 53 cm) a view of the Royal Melbourne Botanical Gardens is sought through one of the wrought iron gates. This print shows a garden of imported and native plants that thrive with their own idiosyncrasies within a supportive yet ultimately controlled environment. The stylised curlicues of the iron tendrils make the evocative path curving into the garden behind it all the more inviting because of its forbidden status. At the same time, the gate emphasises the two-dimensional surface of the print, contrasting perspectives, and making both gate and garden deceptive and inaccessible. In this print, the constructed environment echoes many traditions of women's artistic practice. The sinuous twist of the gates resonate with the domesticated nature of Aesthetic period art and craft that was popular among women at the turn of the nineteenth century—the

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 11.
\textsuperscript{31} Grishin, \textit{Different Fields of Vision}, p. 12.
evidence of which surrounded Geier in Melbourne. It perhaps also alludes to the restrictions on her practice presented by her two young children.

At first the move to appeared to be detrimental to her artistic practice. It required Geier to significantly adapt her practice and she felt that life had presented her with a fait accompli: “I never wanted to live in the country . . . But I fell in love with the local grocer.”34 From 1981–1994, Geier taught at Canberra School of Art as Senior Lecturer in Foundation studies.35 Although the intensity of her involvement in the markets of Melbourne and Sydney appears to have decreased during this period, she became part of a larger community of printmakers exhibiting and participating in projects.36 After her departure from the School of Art, Geier’s practice maintained a balance between urban and country practice. She and husband Jeremy Campbell-Davis kept a studio apartment in Sydney.37 Without reliance on a centralised artworld Geier’s perspective shifted to an examination of the underlying cultural structures and orders that govern the individual within physical and cultural space. As in Melbourne, Geier’s practice had to adapt to teaching and family commitments. In February 1991 she was successfully operated on for a brain tumour,38 and her investigation into vision underwent a significant shift in focus. While she recovered, Geier and Campbell-Davis built a fully equipped studio for painting and printmaking.

Peter Haynes was later to describe the importance of the garden for Geier’s practice as enabling the artist to “initiate a dialogue between organic and geometric abstraction, between growth and stasis.”39 The construction of a garden was a vital aspect of Geier’s sense of herself in relation to both her work and her rural landscape. She now had the opportunity and the environment to focus solely on her work, which took a very intimate focus. Geier drew on her domestic environment, its difference from urban practice and the growth of a tumour that affected her vision, perspective and balance.40 Kaye’s Garden (oil/wax, mixed media on linen, 2001, 210 x 150 cm) is a testament to these factors. The print is an exploration of layered and complex modes of vision, inviting the gaze yet not supplying a directive perspectival framework. The

34 Geier, interview with the author.
35 In the late 1970s her marriage to Patrick Geier dissolved, and in 1981 she married Jeremy Campbell-Davis and moved to his property Braidwood, 85 km north-east of Canberra. (Grishin, Different Fields of Vision, p. 24.) During the 1980s, Geier principally concentrated on painting.
36 See Geier’s curriculum vitae in Appendix VI.
37 Geier, interview with the author.
40 Grishin, Different Fields of Vision; Peter Haynes, Dissolving View.
stitching binding the paper together unites the disparate elements of the print with a reassuring security, layering the work as an expression of the printmakerly approach that informs all her work.\footnote{Geier, interview with the author.}

The essential dualities that integrate different visual traditions within the one form establish a state of play that democratises Geier’s prints. She states that she likes to “chase dualities”\footnote{Ibid.}, using them to explore external influences on her definition of herself and her practice. Geier successfully interacts with art institutions at a variety of levels. Aware of the dualities that construct the artworld, she has established a democratic place for herself within the Field of Cultural Production where she is neither subordinate nor passive. Geier’s position is not what Bourdieu would describe as that of the ‘disinterested artist’\footnote{Bourdieu, Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, pp. 239-40, 41.}: she serves her own interests in a quest to disengage from a field of ‘antipathies’ and ‘sympathies’. Her relationship with individual critics, curators, printers and artists has provided her with the ability to collaborate on projects that have the ability to expand her own horizons, but which have not left her obligated or dependent on the institutions for patronage.\footnote{Geier has worked with Studio One with master printer Basil Hall, the Australian Print Workshop with master printer Martin King and the ANU School of Art Book Workshop with master printer Dianne Fogwell. She has been artist-in-residence at the Artist’s Books and Editioning Workshop at the ANU School of Art. In 1999, Geier was made a Visiting Fellow of the ANU School of Art. For further detail and information of prizes Geier has won, see Appendix VI.} While she can access a wide range of grants to facilitate these collaborations, her intention is not to enhance her professional status but to develop her work within a space uncompromised by institutional perspectives of value. The importance of Geier’s 2001 Different Fields of Vision exhibition is not that it is a comprehensive survey or that (contrary to the established method of developing symbolic capital) it is an exhibition organised and significantly financed by the artist herself. It is that the exhibition continues to expand the print beyond institutional tradition. The exhibition’s tour through regional Australia cultivated new audiences that had not had much exposure to her work. Its intellectual complexity and technical range appealed to an audience that has grown increasingly sophisticated over the past decade. Although the exhibition catalogue may be viewed by some to be a ‘vanity’ publication, it evinces Geier’s success in using conventional techniques to create symbolic capital while remaining in control of this process, and in opening a traditionally restricted art historical discourses to a wide audience.
The exhibition toured in India with the assistance of the Australian Embassy in 2001. Geier’s relationship with India has been long-standing. Since 1999 she has been closely involved with several artists and art schools in India.45 These collaborations contrasted different cultural conditions or perspectives, establishing an evocative cross-cultural political discourse. These perspectives are also influential in the close artistic collaborations that have taken place between Geier and Indian artist Kanchan Chander. Geier met Chander in 2000 during the Different Fields of Vision exhibition at Lalit Kala, New Delhi. The two women shared the same approaches to unconventional painting formats and their personal and professional lives also shared many similarities.46 Geier sponsored Chander to come to Australia for a residency in her studio in Braidwood in 2001 in order to work on a project exploring their “commonality of experience as women.”47 Over ten days the two artists created a series of works, using fragments from each other’s cultures integrated within a kind of cultural suspension provided by Geier’s studio. These exchanges encouraged a sense of serendipity across cultures, using different traditional aesthetics and crafts to impel a reconceptualisation of place, particularly of women’s place. Neither artist participated in an exclusive printmaking aesthetic, but rather conceptualised their work as composed of layers of culture, technique and influence.

Geier blurs the boundaries between institutional and independent modes of practice to attain an artistic practice that does not owe allegiance to either modality of printmaking activity. Geier’s independence may come at considerable financial expense, but it allows her to control her public profile and ‘artistic identity’, and work in the manner which best befits her practice. Her prints, her method of practice and her techniques of display and education create clarity of vision, where multiple cultural, aesthetic and physical frameworks provide multiple points of entry. Using chance to overcome “…the distortion of human sense-experience, and the distortion of the scholastic apparatus of forms, qualities, natures and substances”,48 Geier attempts to unite these parts to show the independent systems of perspective, with all their uncertainty and possibilities.

45 Geier has conducted lectures, studio workshops, exhibitions and exchange projects. See Appendix VI.
46 Geier, interview with the author.
47 Ibid.
Surface Incidents: Translating place in the prints of Susanne Pickering

Over the past seven years, Tasmanian printmaker Susan Pickering has carefully constructed a practice that does not rely upon institutional establishments for equipment, critique or professional development. During her career as a printmaker, she has cultivated advantageous relationships with many individuals and institutions within the artworld. The influences and practical concerns informing her practice are a mixture of institutional training and personal obligations. Pickering’s printmaking is predominantly conducted outside institutional environments. Consequently, work and family commitments intervene with printmaking practice. Instead of impacting on her practice in a negative manner, these obligations frame a printmaking practice that is conducted in spates of intense production. The time periods that separate these periods of production allow ideas to ferment and mature. Pickering’s practice reflects her maturity as an artist. As a musician, a mother of young children and a printmaker she has learnt to be flexible with her time. Her approach to artistic production does not commit her to a single cultural community, artistic technique or system of values. The affiliations she has formed with local and national art communities reflect this versatility. Pickering approaches her prints as independent products of an independent practice, occupying non-specific cultural and geographical space. In this manner, both Pickering’s practice and her prints extend beyond an understanding of spatial experience as constructed or mediated by dualities. This case study explores this aspect of her practice through works produced during the last five years as it has moved from the context of the art school to a private workshop.

Pickering’s prints present a view of the world that approaches languages and systems of meaning as surface incidents above an endless space where possible interpretations of thought, music, science and faith are an eternal current underlying all human thought and interaction. Occasionally this current breaks the surface patina of language, art and music. Pickering’s prints allow a glimpse of the possibility of a universal form of interpretation, one which focuses on the space in between thought, spoken and transcribed languages and skirts on the periphery of consciousness. Moments where we are most aware of this peripheral view is when we encounter music or art with which we feel a particular connection. In these elements of art there is the potential to see the harmony of the universe. The spaces between notes, lines and dots invoke a similar kind of harmony. Pickering employs a technique of layered lines that resonate between light and dark in an attempt to recapture this resonance, and to thereby reflect this peripheral vision of universal interpretation. This space for interpretation
also provides a middle ground for institutional languages and subjective experience. *Fluent* (etching, 1994, dimensions unknown (Plate 39)) is a work made at the Tasmania School of Art as part of Pickering's Masters degree. Informed by Pickering’s study of music theory, the print translates in both musical and aesthetic terms the moments of passage that compose art. Dark and light form a rhythmic counterpoint to each other. The print absorbs the markings of the plate through the independent character of the ink as it seeps into the surface of the paper. The process serves as an analogue to Pickering’s practice as a printmaker and a musician.

Pickering trained as a cellist at the Tasmanian Conservatory of Music, achieving a Diploma of Music. In 1991 she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts (with First Class Honours) in the School of Visual and Performing Arts, the University of Tasmania, Hobart, majoring in Printmaking. At the art school she encountered an approach to printmaking that advocated an intimacy between individual and the plate, combined with sensitivity to the natural environment. The teaching staff was composed of dynamic individuals who had a strong technical approach to printmaking as well as being committed to the ethical obligation of the artist to expand the potential of human communication. Rodney Ewins, Raymond Arnold and Milan Milojevic are influential printmakers with strong national and international reputations. These artists are deeply involved in Tasmania’s cultural community and pursue an artistic production that does not discriminate between institutional and non-institutional forms of artistic practice. As Arnold describes it, set “against a backdrop of dramatic landscape, my life and my work has become diverse and ‘seamless’”.⁴⁹ The fine detailed etching process prominent in Arnold’s intaglio prints create surfaces that resonate with intricate patterning. Milan Milojevic’s digital prints convey a similar attention to surface aesthetics: they integrate an investigation of place informed by personal history and the subversion of place implicit in digital printmaking’s divergent ability to exist in both physical and digital states. These printmakers use prints to capture transitions between perception and experience, constantly developing new approaches to expand personal investigation, not cultural capital.

In 1992, Pickering began a Masters of Fine Arts degree at the University of Tasmania, in which she explored the nature of hermeneutics, “the translations itself more

Plate 39


Plate 40

than music, and the way that different words, different languages don’t quite translate.” 50

With full-time access to the School of Art printmaking studio and a Commonwealth Postgraduate Course Award, she conducted an exegetical thesis on the nature of translation, which first influenced her in music, became an investigation into “looking at the spaces between words ... the kind of space that poetry occupies or that music occupies.”51 This exegesis was composed of a series of intaglio works inspired by particular pieces of music.

In combination with the facilities provided by the Fern Tree Printmakers, Pickering’s career as an artist has developed to the point where she can engage with a variety of institutional grants, markets and discourses without having to change the regional site of her practice or the way she manages the time spent on printmaking. The independence of her practice from the values and priorities of the mainstream art industry also gives Pickering the metaphoric and literal space to continue her investigation into the concept of translation in art. By distilling elements of visual and aural translation to a series of resonating tonalities, Pickering removes her prints from their context, allowing them an existence isolated and independent from cultural affiliations. She examines the process of translation itself, and the way that different words and different languages cannot translate without distortion—nothing can maintain its original form.52

A sense of tempo and harmonics infiltrate these prints, expanding the possibilities of their interpretation. Pickering deliberately exploits a postmodern aesthetic to stimulate and subvert the ways of reading that have been integrated into contemporary visual culture. The contemporary viewer’s eye is trained to make sense of fragments, to appreciate their disparity and then position these minutiae into larger established narratives. This style of viewing flickers across the surface of the image. When black and white are used in a reductive palette, the viewers’ heightened sensitivity to tonal variation are impressed with an acute awareness of the sense of absence evoked in the dense passages of ink and the richness of untouched paper. In this moment of interpretation, the only truly definable entity is the resonance occurring between the print and the viewer’s psychological response:

[T]he little bits in between were like looking between words or language. Words are a pinpoint in a continuum of meaning. It’s that little bit there and that little bit there, and languages might be

50 Sue Pickering, interview with the author, Fern Tree, Tasmania, 4 December 2002.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
there or there or somewhere else, underneath it. In a way it's the specifically abstract bits, or the non-representational little bits between animals or plants, and making something quite abstract out of them. Something that is enormously representational, that its actual purpose is to represent something. So it's kind of doing the opposite to what's already there. 53

In examining the translation occurring between language and the senses, Pickering opened the space existing between order as represented by language and subjective experience, exploring it as a dynamic place sustained by cultural memory and physical response. This is a focus that she has consistently refined from this period onwards. In prints such as Fluent a swift elemental passage flickers before the eyes, delicately playing across the surface of memory. Aquatints like Scatter and Overtone dissolve and recreate themselves, shifting before the eyes (Scatter, aquatint, 2004, 50 x 120 cm, edition of 35; Susan Pickering, Overtone, aquatint, 2004, 50 x 120 cm, edition of 35 (Plate 41 & 42)). The longer these prints are observed, the less they are a static art object and the more they resonate with the viewer's subjectivity. Without overt reference to physical form, Pickering's etchings engage in a subconscious space where fragmented memories of place, experience and sense unite to create a hermeneutic space that is harmonic—both part of and separate from the technical lexis used to create (and describe) the image. Pickering goes beyond language to a purely interpretative space. 53

From Pickering's earliest printmaking practice, she has engaged in an approach to distance that is a discernible characteristic of much Tasmanian art. Unlike Geier, Pickering learnt and practices printmaking within a community that appears to emphasise overcoming traditional boundaries. A quality of suspended time is inherent in the prints of many Tasmanian printmakers and resonates with a sense of absence—exploring undetermined spaces that are not necessarily indicative of loss, but layered with many possible interpretations of place and identity informing the future, present and past. This sense has been described by one writer as part of an idiosyncratically Tasmanian approach to art, where:

...the pragmatic and the romantic bump against each other as a matter of routine. Despite the homogenising effect of the communications revolution, and the local confidence brought about by the devolution of authority from the traditional centres, there is still a sense of being adrift—of being suspended between the hot red continent and the cold white one. There is a sense of absence in much of the work produced in Tasmania, a sense of isolation and a tendency towards introspection. Historical, social

53 Ibid.
Plate 42

Plate 43
and geographical factors intersect at these latitudes with the mystical, the spiritual and the melancholic.\textsuperscript{54}

A further sense of expansive space is also apparent in the way Tasmania artists interact with art and cultural institutions. Arts Tasmania provides occasional funds for equipment, courses and travel interstate, predominantly on the grounds that these will assist printmakers to attain a successful place in the art industry. However, projects such as the Wilderness Residency, funded by Arts Tasmania and Parks and Wildlife Services, have a principal focus of combining the cultural capital associated with promoting the Tasmanian environment with the capital of supporting local artists. The program has the advantage of promoting Tasmanian artistic practice beyond the restricted fine art field represented by the Tasmanian School of Art and the Bett Gallery in Hobart.\textsuperscript{55} Such short-term projects have a high return for artists who are unable to commit to extensive residencies either in Australia or overseas. The opportunities provided by programs such as the Wilderness residency program have also supported women printmakers who conduct non-institutional forms of printmaking in Tasmania. The program offers residencies at Cradle Mountain, Lake St Clair, Sandy Cape, Eddystone Light, Maria Island and Highfield House at Stanley. Printmakers awarded the residency include Jenny Burnett, Kaye Green, Dorothy Maniero, Veronica Steane and Susan Pickering.

Pickering’s printmaking practice was dependent on the institution due to the technical demands of etching. By 1994, Pickering found herself in the same situation as many printmakers emerging from art schools after postgraduate education. In an article describing the plight of printmaking for printmakers who had recently graduated, Pickering comments that the withdrawal is sudden and very likely to cause printmakers to change their approach to the production of their prints.

Then it happens. You’re out the other end. The university handbook doesn’t reveal any more courses that you want to tack onto your list of qualifications, and anyway, there is an insidious feeling of embarrassment at the increasing inappropriateness of being dubbed a perpetual student. It’s definitely time for some independent initiative. But what, where, and how? There is currently no community access to printmaking facilities in Hobart,

\textsuperscript{54} John McQueenie quoted in Helen Ennis, \textit{42 South}, Hobart; Wanganui: Chameleon, CAS; The Sargeant Gallery, 1991, np.
\textsuperscript{55} The Bett Gallery was established by Dick Bett, a commercial art dealer has been closely involved in both the production and patronage of Tasmanian printmaking for many years Bett has acted as the co-ordinator of Chameleon Printworks (1984-1986). He has also cultivated important alternative markets to help support Tasmania’s rich population of printmakers through the cultivation of cooperative art buying groups. The Bett Gallery received a grant of $10,797 in 2001 to assist in developing this market (Arts Tasmania, \textit{Arts grants and loans program}, Hobart: Arts Tasmania, 2001, np).
and [my] preferred medium is etching. Furthermore, I have developed the habit of making large etchings.\textsuperscript{56}

For Pickering to continue printmaking after graduation, it was necessary for her to find a way of sustaining a cohesive practice without the threat of the withdrawal of support from government or a waning of interest by individual artists. Pickering wrote in the mid-1990s that:

\begin{quote}
With the demise of Chameleon [open access print workshop], and the indeterminate status of "Printworks" [open access print workshop], there is a glaring need for an open printmaking studio in this very isolated environment of Hobart; somewhere for the annual average of ten to fifteen graduates from the printmaking department of the Tasmanian School of Art to carry on using skills they have acquired at considerable effort both on their part, and on the part of their teachers.\textsuperscript{57}
\end{quote}

These printmakers wanted a place to practice that did not rely on institutional patronage that might be withdrawn in later years. The choices of ways to continue her practice were limited—either she had to purchase a press of her own, continue her relationship with the university in the form of occasional classes or as a technical assistant (a traditional method of continuing access to an art school’s equipment), or practice in a limited manner from home. Another way that this could be achieved was through working with other printmakers in a similar situation. She and several other graduates from the Tasmanian School of Art combined resources to create an independent, stable site for their continuing practice, forming the Fern Tree Printmakers in 1994 not as a community group, but as an independent workshop.

Fern Tree Printmakers began when Veronica Stearne and Susan Pickering established a printmaking studio in a converted space under Stearne’s house in Fern Tree in Tasmania. The two women equipped the studio with second-hand counters, benches, lockers and archive drawers.\textsuperscript{58} Installing printmaking equipment in the studio was a slow and expensive process. A commission was made for a custom-made set of plastic sinks for the use of ferric chloride in what was to be a low-toxicity workshop and a gas-fired etching hotplate was made by a friend of Pickering’s.\textsuperscript{59} Initially the workshop used a small etching press owned by one of the members of the group until they were successful in gaining an Australia Council grant for the purchase of a large press.\textsuperscript{60} Fern Tree Printmakers has a central pragmatic belief that “individual studios are both

\begin{footnotesize}
\end{footnotes}
\begin{footnotes}{57} Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
\begin{footnotes}{58} Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
\begin{footnotes}{59} Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
\begin{footnotes}{60} Ibid. Pickering, interview with the author.
\end{footnotes}
\end{footnotesize}
expensive and isolating [and it seemed] a very sensible idea to pool resources and share equipment and artistic stimulation..."61 By the time the group was officially established in 1995, it included Rosalind Burgess, Burnett, Lola Burrows, Betsy Gamble, Pickering, Bette Roberts, Steane and Karen Wood.

Although the cost of equipment was one of the initial reasons for establishing the group62 it was the provision of an intimate, private space in which to work that sustained the group’s momentum. The group overcame any sense of isolation, and although maintaining its independence required significant commitments in time and resources from the women involved. Pickering commented that it was “also very liberating, [and] that’s been the strength of this, actually, because it’s given us a focus and something to keep going – [it has given us] short term goals.”63 The early stages of the workshop involved a more conscious sense of group practice, and the group produced books of their works and held group exhibitions, which reflected an ethos of community and difference.64 With time the group has matured, however, the individual women have become less structured in their use of the studio, and their involvement with the Fern Tree Printmakers has been adapted to their individual lifestyles.65

In Pickering’s case, time is a vital element for the production of her prints, one that the studio can fulfil. Prints made in the studio of the Fern Tree Printmakers are smaller in scale, but they have lost none of the technical virtuosity or conceptual refinement of her earlier prints. Pickering is a meticulous technician who requires a significant amount of time in the studio to produce her subtly toned prints. On many levels her practice continues the mentality of focusing on small, intimate details until a resolution is achieved, a process similar to that of a fine art printmaking studio or rehearsing a piece of music. While the university provided more opportunity for sustained concentration, the Fern Tree Printmakers workshop is a site where prints are usually made in bursts of activity over an extended period of time—a process where the influence of the time separating these hours plays a significant role. Skirting the earthly and the sublime, her prints unite a kind of transcendent mysticism with mathematical process. By being able to respond to the demands of her practice without becoming

---

63 Pickering, interview with the author.
64 Ibid. Named Duodecimo after the technique of creating a book by folding a sheet of paper into twelve, the exhibition represented an approach to a printmaking “collective” that was a “balance of unity and variety, in technique, subject matter and style.” (Diana Klaosen, “Duodecimo: Prints by the Fern Tree Printmakers,” Imprint, vol. 30, no. 2, 1995, pp. 16-17.) Other group exhibitions are listed in Pickering’s Curriculum Vitae, Appendix VI.
65 Pickering, interview with the author.
dependent on institutional support, Pickering’s practice itself can transcend the technical and conceptual issues of centre and periphery traditionally associated with regional practice.

Although the group exhibitions provide a significant local presence, Pickering has found that involvement with the interstate art market as an independent printmaker more difficult than she imagined it would be: “Some galleries don’t pay or take a long time to pay. You come out of art school not knowing this.” 66 A particular element of difficulty apparent in Pickering’s post-institutional practice is maintaining the confidence to consistently enter work into competitions, an important forum in which emerging artists can promote their work. She explains:

The first thing that you do is send them off to the competitions and get rejections or acceptances—just learn to get a thick skin, too, but it’s very difficult. But really, to get your work out there when you live in a region, you have to travel, basically. You can’t just go it by telephone. You actually have to meet the people. Just gradually over the years it’s been fortunate that little by little I think people get to know your name know about your work. The fact that you’ve heard about Fern Tree printmakers is just that we’ve been out there slightly, promoting ourselves. 67

In 1999 Pickering was awarded a number of awards and commissions, including the Goddard Sapin-Jaloustre Scholarship and Print Council of Australia Member Print Commission. The first allowed Pickering to further develop technical skills, and the latter raised her public profile.

Pickering in many ways works within the tradition of the artist printmaker, but does so within non-traditional environments, allowing her the capacity to transfer between contexts without altering the independent nature of her practice. Pickering’s access to the Fern Tree Printmakers studio, for example, has in the last several years been organised around the demands of early motherhood, an aspect of practice that has translated into a conceptual investigation of time and space. Since 2001 Pickering has had one solo and three group exhibitions with Port Jackson Press in Armadale in Victoria, which in addition to being a professional print workshop has one of the leading commercial galleries devoted to the print. She has also had group exhibitions in commercial and public galleries throughout Tasmania. 68 Her consistent involvement in prizes has exposed her work in many areas of mainland Australia and has led to the

66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
68 See Appendix VI.
inclusion of her work in many major print collections.\textsuperscript{69} In 2004, Pickering’s prints have been in exhibitions such as \textit{Images of Tasmania} at the Long Gallery, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart, \textit{Interpreting 2004} at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, \textit{From a Constructed Tasmanian World} at Port Jackson Press and \textit{Sequence: the tenth anniversary exhibition of the Fern Tree Printmakers}, curated by Milan Milojevic at the Carnegie Gallery in Hobart. Although each exhibition has represented the strong regional flavour of Tasmania and \textit{Sequence} presented Pickering as a member of a strongly identifiable group, Pickering’s work is presented within an independent interpretative space. The regional location of her practice is never alluded to as restricted or exclusive in nature. Her prints are situated outside any regionalist conceptions of space.

In both production and interpretation, rather than leading to isolation a regional location can in fact lead to greater involvement in a wider art community. Sue Pickering’s printmaking is independent not only because she has full control over her ability to produce prints, but also because she does not allow the political or institutional influences affecting her regional location to have any impact on her prints.

Conclusion

Institutional freedom means that printmakers can cross cultural divides and form their own productive relationships with other structures. Geier’s practice reveals that this is an area of the contemporary artworld that in fact emerged from art institutions themselves. Pickering’s practice reveals that in many communities the potential already exists for printmakers to act outside regional institutions without exclusion from the art industry. The practice of these artists reveals that the body is not reducible to the space it inhabits, nor is it defined by the spaces it is perceived as occupying. By positioning their practice at these boundaries and articulating new forms of practice, these artists gain independence without the opposition of rigid dualities favoured by many art discourses of independence.

These printmakers not only create new avenues of practice, but also new ways of educating others, new forms of knowledge and community, and new conceptions of the self. The basic premise of the practice, whether community or individual, is

\textsuperscript{69} See Appendix VI.
independent: should institutional support be taken away, the printmaking practice will not disappear, nor will the work itself becoming of any less quality. Helen Geier and Susan Pickering have established very different kinds of independent practice. They draw on their training and the resources around them to create a practice that cannot be substantially influenced by external factors. They are not isolated, nor do they wish to practice without any collaboration with art schools, galleries or dealers. In a context where arts governance has emphasised the need for artists to take responsibility for the production and the promotion of their own practice, these artists provide evidence for the different ways in which this can be exploited. Their practice also bear witness to the risks that are involved: not the threat of being disconnected from a wider printmaking culture, but the risks revealed when practice is integrated into the printmaker’s personal life, and the changes to their identity and function as a printmaker that this impels. The following chapter examines the decisions that must be made when printmakers do not have the opportunity to achieve a position within, or an independence from, institutional art structures.
Chapter Seven

Plate 43
Allied States: Situating practice within contemporary regional cultures

Throughout regional Australia, women printmakers form alliances with a wide range of different cultural resources to meet material costs or to access education or supportive markets. These affiliations are particularly valuable for women who practice on a part-time basis, many of whom cannot justify the commitment of time and money required to maintain a fully equipped studio. Two groups of printmakers have a particularly high probability of stopping their printmaking: women with young children and older women (particularly those over fifty) who have recently completed training as mature-age students. These groups are unlikely to relocate their practice or travel large distances to find a more supportive network. Many printmakers are faced with no option but to form alliances with art or educational institutions in the hope that these alliances will assist them in maintaining their practice. There is always a risk that should these alliances dissolve, printmakers may have to rebuild their position within regional, and possibly national, printmaking networks.

One of the prominent characteristics of regional women printmakers is that they often form groups. By forming alliances they may develop a wide range of markets and friendships vital to their continued practice. However, it is important to approach allied printmaking through the actions of the printmaker, not the identity provided by their geographic or cultural position. Alliances or collaborations with other printmakers or with galleries or art schools, community or professional workshops encourage invention and improvisation. Regional printmakers who use alliances as a dominant feature of their practice often have few other choices available to them. Women printmakers whose practice strongly features alliances with institutional or private patrons or support structures are at significant risk if these supports cease. Alliances can be advantageous, but may also be temporary or unstable as the printmakers lifestyle may change, the cultural environment of the region may shift or cultural governance alters its strategies for supporting regional arts.

Chapters two and three discussed communities of printmakers that work in close proximity to art institutions, particularly art school workshops. Chapter three explored how communities provide printmakers with a regional voice and an alternative form of education. Chapter four’s focus on the contemporary presence of regional women printmakers in the Australian artworld approached them through their practice, without
judging these processes in accordance with traditional values, but the emergence of new values. The printmakers discussed in this chapter cover a wide range of practice. Many of the printmakers do not practice within an institutional context because they cannot afford their own presses. Their continued practice relies on the relationships they form with other printmakers or community workshops. The new alliances that printmakers forge may well lead to them establishing independent forms of practice to avoid finding themselves once more in a position they may not be able to control. Others may take advantage of the increased range of post-graduate courses offered by art schools in an attempt to re-establish security and a conventional position within the artworld. Most, however, will shift their alliances to new areas of support and adapt their practice accordingly. Printmakers who undertake these three options will always encounter adversity and risk in their practice, but generally they are informed risks undertaken by choice.

Many of the alliances formed by regional women printmakers replicate the supportive context and sense of community they experienced in art school. In art school alliances provided a supportive framework for the students. These were formed with fellow students, artists-in-residence, their teachers and the critics, dealers and curators they were introduced to or exposed to. After graduation many printmakers seek to continue or reform this conceptual and technical support base, and alliances based on similar principles of technical necessity and friendship between individual printmakers and private workshops are formed. The relationship has a further advantage of ensuring a continuity of traditional workshop practices through an apprenticeship system of training and consecration in the art industry. While independent printmakers consciously avoid relationships with the art industry in which they assume a subordinate position, allied printmakers are willing to enter into close collaborative relationships with art institutions. This decision is often made with a full awareness that the consequences of this relationship may result in a lack of control over the industry position or value of their practice. Therefore although allied printmakers may experience many of the advantages experienced by institutional printmakers, their reliance on the facilities and industry affiliations provided by art institutions involves a high risk of neglect or dominance within institutional hierarchies.

This chapter discusses some of the ways contemporary regional women printmakers access institutional and non-institutional resources to achieved sustained printmaking practice. Printmakers are able to direct their practice into alliances that overcome impediments of geographic or cultural isolation. Forming collaborative relationships with art institutions assists many printmakers to develop an industry profile, expanding their symbolic capital. Regional markets can be cultivated through alliances with local
businesses, possibly resulting in an increase of the symbolic and economic capital of both parties. Contemporary regional women printmakers can develop audiences that have an intimate knowledge of their art and an understanding of the issues that may be associated with its production. This choice allows them to create prints in contexts where their practice is not considered in relation to others' structures of value and creates more open relationships between institutions, markets and audiences. Alliances may often make them vulnerable to acts of symbolic violence that may attribute a diminished value to their status as regional women artists. Nonetheless, allied forms of printmaking give women printmakers the opportunity to exercise significant control over how their work is produced, distributed and received by the choices they make in their everyday practice. The initial focus of the chapter explores the methods women printmakers have utilised to redress neglect by forming advantageous alliances with local, state and national art institutions. An overview and two case studies addressing the practice of Marion Manifold (Campbelltown, Victoria) and Liz Deckers (Mullumbimby) illustrate the capacity of contemporary regional printmakers to exercise a choice not to depend on institutional structures, but to be democratically allied.

Regional women forging alliances between institutional and domestic practices

Accepting that institutional support is inherently unstable, increasingly women are deciding to choose what risks they take with their practice. Press sharing, private lessons, small groups, art collecting societies and exchanges are all features of contemporary regional allied methodologies. The dependencies formed in allied relationships are not solely based on material access. Alliances with art institutions can be an essential element in establishing the symbolic capital that assists the development of self-esteem, providing printmakers with a sense of being legitimate members of the arts community. The sense of place that emerges from these alliances does not emphasise the various ‘dependencies’ that are part of many women's regional printmaking practice. Rather, they emphasise the democratic potential of alliances to encourage the development of individual printmaking practice in a wide range of regional contexts. A sense of place develops when individuals compose an identity for themselves that reflects their cultural and geographic surroundings. Social institutions and cultural histories inform the landscape they draw upon; these in turn are interpreted through subjective experiences, such as interpersonal relationships, subjective identities and childhood memories.
It is this sense of place that has convinced regional women printmakers of the legitimacy of the challenge that their practice presents to accepted taxonomies of printmaking. While traditional printmaking emphasises the necessity of acquiring symbolic value from art institutions, contemporary regional printmaking uses this sense of place as an alternate source of symbolic capital. The significance of this shift in cultural authority is two-fold. First, it displaces the power of art 'centres', positioning the ability to create symbolic capital within the reach of regional communities and individuals: the evaluation of art can therefore often take place without institutional mediation. Second, the responsiveness of printmaking to its physical and conceptual environment has encouraged women printmakers to explore materials, techniques and themes that establish an understanding of place based on dualities of value and meaning. These approaches concentrate on the equal relevance of local and national art production, and do not seek to discriminate between them by imposing a position of alterity on one form of practice to enhance the perceived value of the other. The following discussion examines the alliances regional women printmakers utilise to provide the necessary forms of financial and cultural support, and the sense of place that marks their work.

There are many printmakers who do not wish to be associated with an institutionally-based community, preferring instead to participate in informal groups of individuals. In these contexts, peer support can evolve without commitment to the 'identity' of a group or a regional site. One successful strategy is to create a temporary community identity in which to cultivate and capitalise on a wide range of individual and institutional alliances, as evident in the Six by Six groups of regional women printmakers discussed in chapter two. In forming a temporary community identity, the printmakers also have the opportunity to access funding for exhibitions and provide a strong sense of regional cultural identity that can reflect the cultural representation aims of regional galleries. Such alliances allow printmakers to experiment with new techniques. Rochelle Summerfield, a printmaker in Ocean Shores in New South Wales, is a member of a loose alliance of printmakers who call themselves 'Push'. In 2002 they participated in an exchange project entitled Pushy. The show derived its name from the group of artists and printmakers that came together to “push our practices collectively out into the community in a series of group shows.”1 The group consists of core members lyndall adams, Mary Dorahy and Rochelle Summerfield and other invited artists from the Northern New South

---

Wales region. Together they have created works and exhibitions that indicate their key motivating premise of mutual support and independent artistic exploration:

While connected by a shared commitment to creative arts practice the collaborative process has a different meaning for each member. The consequent disintegration of any authorial stability has resulted in a cacophonous conversation between collaborators that is likely and indeed anticipated to continue for some time.²

The value of collaboration for these artists occurs on several levels. First their exhibitions (touring to Grafton and Coffs Harbour in NSW, and Brisbane and the Gold Coast in Queensland, in 1998–99, and exhibiting in the Tin Sheds Gallery at the University of Sydney in 2002) build what the artists term “a collaborative structure of installation strategies.”³ This collaboration provides a context wherein the identity of the group is subordinate to the synergies existing between the conceptual and material concerns each artist experienced in their individual art practice.⁴ The second important feature is that maintaining independent voices in their creative alliances with art institutions and each other is integral to the ethos of the group. Once their capacity to construct a legitimate space for their work within the art industry was confirmed, the group extended the collaborative process “beyond the final outcomes of artwork in a gallery space, to a collaboration of ideas and support.”⁵ This perception of self in space is the third advantage of the collaborative relationship:

Not daunted by distance we collaborated across regional areas. Our aim was to develop artworks that talk to each other and communicate a sense of collaboration and support despite our physical distance. ... [The 2002 exhibition, Pushy] explores a different sort of spatial collaboration: this time, over space rather than in space.⁶

The correspondence amongst the artists involved in Pushy was undertaken through electronic communication. This process democratised all art mediums within digital space: a transcendent space that not only overcame geographic boundaries, but also facilitated seamless, unhierarchic interdisciplinary alliances.

The ability to control the production and display of their prints encourages many women involved in informal communities to consolidate into a more permanent arrangement. In addition to providing access to a range of materials out of the financial reach of many printmakers, regional printmaking communities also condense the skills,

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
⁵ Ibid.
⁶ Ibid.
resources and connections of individual printmakers into a context where they can be utilised by many. Summerfield’s printmaking practice and professional reputation has enough success to make her regional location an insignificant boundary to the cultivation of an artistic career. Nonetheless, the factor with the most impact on her ability to practice is economic. Although Summerfield is a core member of Push—exhilarated by the opportunities and freedom that the alliance represents—the techniques she employs in her work often require the use of equipment she does not possess. In her prints, Summerfield uses techniques that can be used within or derive from material within the home. Many of her prints, however, are digital heat transfers, a process that requires the equipment of another printmaker in the region, Christine Wilcox. In addition, while the collaborative exhibitions provide exposure, they don’t provide a regular market. Summerfield’s sculptural prints, such as Preserve your skin (collograph, digital heat transfer and tint, book format, 2000, 24 cm diameter (Plate 44)) are difficult to sell when a market has not been cultivated to accept unconventional art-forms of a fragile nature. Archival concerns have been raised by prospective buyers of the print, indicating a regional awareness of prints as fine art objects. Despite the artist interpreting the print as something that ages with its environment, the art audience who buys Summerfield’s prints and the audience that visit the conceptually challenging group exhibitions are quite separate. Therefore the exposure provided by the group affiliation does not assist Summerfield in developing a sustained market for her work. She must therefore form additional affiliations that can fulfil this need.

Summerfield worked with a group of other women who were experiencing similar difficulties establishing a presence within the local cultural environment. The difficulties confronted in everyday practice, such as creating a market, exhibiting regularly and accessing equipment, were eventually resolved when Summerfield and four other women artists established Piece Gallery and Workshop (Piece) in Mullumbimby in 2001. The workshop and gallery is in a small building in the centre of the town. Local festivals, such as the Mt Chinogen festival, provide the opportunity for the gallery workshop to support a wide array of local artists. They have established themselves as a professional yet not exclusive gallery, pitched to a wide audience. In 2003, Piece was expanded to include the

---

7 Rochelle Summerfield, interview with the author, 6 October 2002.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 The other women involved were Sue Davidson, Susanna Pohlen, Robyn Sweeney and Christine Wilkcocoks.
11 Summerfield, interview with the author.
Plate 44

Contemporary Art Space and Education (C.A.S.E.). C.A.S.E. is a non-profit organization that financially supports and operates the Piece, and acts as a contemporary arts resource centre for the region. Although functioning without institutional patronage, most of the artists are professional teachers who have at times been involved with the Southern Cross University and regional TAFEs. The group invites artists and printmakers from these institutions to open exhibitions or provide special classes, such as Mike Parr’s classes offered in 2005. C.A.S.E. uses alliances with individuals and institutions to maintain an active presence within the artworld that they are able to control.

Alliances of this form overcome isolation by enabling printmakers to develop cultural capital through asserting a strong, sustained presence within the regional art industry. Very few of these artists perceive their practice as peripheral to those undertaken within capital cities. For many their ability to practice to the same degree of professionalism they would have had in an urban environment is based on the technique that they use. Jenny Clapson is a printmaker who successfully uses her printmaking to provide a regular income for her family. The solarplate printmaking technique which she began to use several years ago has liberated her practice. The process allows her to blend different artistic processes to create a wide range of images. Clapson directly exposes her gouaches onto plates and then prints them without the plate degrading easily during the printing process. She can also reproduce sketches into vignettes or groupings of studies, producing in large editions works that evoke the tradition of the artists’ autographic mark (sketchbooks and solarplate prints, taken in the artists’ studio, Kangaroo Island, 2002 (Plate 45)). Clapson produces large editions (between 80–100 prints), yet rarely completes an edition within a short period of time. Solarplate is an unstable medium and deteriorates quite quickly, cracking with exposure to temperature fluctuation and age. If that occurs with a plate from an unfinished edition, Clapson re-exposed the original drawing to produce a new plate. The purity of the edition is not always an affordable conceit in regional Australia, where equipment is expensive and hard to access, and audiences are limited. Clapson’s approach to the edition follows conventions in labelling a print, but challenges these conventions in the production of the print. The values of these conventions do little to assist the sale or the industry position of Clapson’s prints, and therefore she does not feel obliged to follow them when there are lucrative markets elsewhere.

Clapson now finds that by managing her own market and public profile she is able to achieve a more professional practice. Many unpleasant experiences with commercial

12 At this point printmaker Liz Deckers also joined the group.
13 Jenny Clapson, interview with the author, Kangaroo Island, South Australia, November, 2002.
dealers have encouraged Clapson to take control of all aspects of her practice. Sales of her work on Kangaroo Island derive predominantly from works sold in the foyer of the aquarium her family runs on Kingscote wharf, appealing to an audience already receptive to Clapson's environmental ethos. In the local art and craft shop Clapson’s prints must compete with the prices asked for the colour photocopies of pastels produced by other Kangaroo Island artists. Unlike the work of other artists that are displayed in the shop who produce images of flora and fauna, Clapson investigates personal narratives of herself within her immediate environment, prints such as *Tightrope Walker* (*Tightrope Walker*, solarplate etching, 2002 (Plate 46)). In this print there is an acute awareness of the precarious existence of a woman printmaker having to find a compromise between multiple cultural environments. Solarplate printmaking attracts a similar stigma as screenprinting for its ability to be used to produce large editions of cheap prints, particularly targeting tourist markets. However, Clapson’s solarplate prints are competing the cheaper photocopies of pastel for the essentially tourist market on Kangaroo Island. Perhaps considered too conceptual, her work has been stacked on the floor in the corner of the shop. The transportability of prints has not assisted Clapson’s regional market development. Previous alliances with dealers in Melbourne and Sydney have resulted in poor payment reliability, poor sales, poor treatment of work and often required her to travel to the galleries herself to resolve disputes. With her husband’s frames, her prints are safer but more expensive to transport. In 2002 Roger Butler from the National Gallery of Australia purchased two of Clapson’s prints, after she had contacted him about her work. Through her active marketing of her own work, Clapson has forged a beneficial alliance with the National Gallery of Australia. When she began printmaking in the 1990s, she commented:

*When it comes to individual achievement, we become invisible. There is in the country a great deal of bitterness about the city artists who get grants to come to the country to see the landscape. We too have a vision of Australia.*

The current cultural environment has allowed Clapson to rearticulate her position as an artist on the ‘periphery’.

The examples discussed in this chapter are only a few examples of the many allied forms of printmaking that occur in regional Australia. Regional women now have the capacity to choose the manner in which they access equipment and the confidence to decide what risks will best suit or even expand their practice. The most important factors in

14 Clapson, interview with the author.
15 Ibid.
Plate 45

Plate 46
regional printmaking for many women is not access to materials or equipment, but the ability to expand the conceptual spaces their prints act within. The following two case studies explore the way that a sense of place has had a significant effect on the practice of Marion Manifold and Liz Deckers. Although factors such as equipment, finance and access to market have been critical influences, establishing a space where they feel that they can practice freely is the most important element in their practice.

**MM: Marian Myths and Marion Manifold:**

I didn’t realise for a long time what the thing was that showed behind, that dim sub-pattern, but now I am quite sure it is a woman. By daylight she is subdued, quiet. I fancy it is the pattern that keeps her so still.  

The presence of the Muse has resonated throughout Western culture, a female power that empowers men through inspiration. In this relationship her identity has been fragmented through the years by the many voices of poets and artists, and she has become a pattern to evoke to express desire, sensation and transcendence. Slippage between the characteristics of Aphrodite, Eve and the Virgin Mary occurs frequently, resonating with the concept of the Mother as nurturer, and of the Mother as reminder of mortality and of death. The relationship between the artist and the model as mother/muse is played out with delicate precision in Marion Manifold’s prints. She decodes the artistic presence of the domesticated muse, exploring the psychological places female identity occupies: domestic, sexual and layered. Manifold in this way explores the intersection between concepts of nature and culture that are inscribed on the female body by art, culture and society. From this investigation she seeks to create a separate identity from patriarchal (institutional) and feminine (domestic) environments. Ultimately, she succeeds not by highlighting difference, but by forming alliances that facilitate domestic and academic practice and access to diverse audiences within these two fields of influence. Through examining some of her prints created in 2001, this case study traces Manifold’s initial task to formulate a language that would allow her to participate in systems without being subsumed within the symbolic violence women often experience in art and art practice.

Manifold’s practice is predominantly situated at her home in Camperdown, near Warrnambool, Victoria, 165 kilometres south-west of Melbourne. The nearest regional art

---

gallery is in Warrnambool, ninety kilometres away. Both institutional and domestic environments influence her practice, as is evident in the works discussed, but the regional location of the practice has very little influence. The first series was marked by the development of a doctoral exegesis, where concepts of surrealism and the historical role of women in art were analysed for the purposes of assessment by a selection of academic examiners. In contrast, a more recent series, *Lace Trimmings*, was created after graduation, when Manifold’s academic situation was reduced to a part-time lectureship.18 Neither her regional or her domestic environment influence the professionalism of her practice or quality of her prints. Works are kept in archival conditions in mapping drawers, interleaved with acid free paper or nestled in custom made archive boxes. The press has its own room, with facilities for low-toxicity printmaking in the adjacent room. The computer equipment and printer also have their own studio, which is situated next to a study in which Manifold integrates her job as a lecturer with a practice that consistently works on prints for exhibitions, competitions and print exchanges.

The influence of her domestic environment is more adroit. Manifold lives with her husband in Wiridgil, a historic home of the Manifold family, who have lived in the area since the early nineteenth century.19 The house consists of three wings, each constructed in a different era and storing the possessions and memories of different generations of the family. Each room in the colonial country manor functions as a repository of a different era, a different generation.20 These rooms allegorically reflect Manifold’s practice. There is a strong sense of the many Manifold women who have lived in the house over 160 years – they are compressed within the house, a constant and tangible presence. Within these rooms Manifold uses technical, postal and digital techniques to compress the distance existing between the various cultural and personal spaces her work occupies.

For much of her practice Manifold’s regional position has exerted considerable influence on her access to materials and the printmaking artworld. Manifold has a practice that benefits from her position as a postgraduate student and lecturer at Deakin University Warrnambool.21 Yet outside the institution she had little access to resources. Although these factors have had significant influence on her practice and perception of herself as an artist, she has developed alliances between institutions and individuals to assert the

18 Manifold was employed by Deakin University as a lecturer in printmaking until 2003. She now teaches as a sessional staff member at the Koorie Institute, Deakin University, Geelong, and at Artspace, Camperdown.
19 Wiridgil was built by John and Peter Manifold, major landholders in the Camperdown region, in 1839.
20 Wiridgil also acts as a bed and breakfast.
21 Manifold stopped working at Deakin University in 2003.
legitimacy of her printmaking on many levels. Until 2003, Manifold was ninety kilometres away from the nearest large press (at Deakin University) and was confined to printing etchings under A4 size on a borrowed press. This lack of access in part encouraged her use of digital printmaking. Since then she has used digital printmaking to condense the distance between different traditions, practices and cultural regions. The disadvantages of regional practice have been integral in establishing Manifold’s printmaking as a strong practice that allows her to be “self-contained”:

The isolation has many disadvantages: you see too few exhibitions, mix too infrequently with other artists and mental stimulation is mainly limited to books, magazines, email. ... But there are a few advantages: lack of social contact and work opportunities allows more time for art and thinking; insularity creates a sort of obsessive, healthy productiveness that stimulates image making.22

Manifold’s practice is allied, positioned between the institutional traditions she uses and the regional area she lives within. While these alliances influence the form of her prints, the most profound consequence has been in the way that through her prints she can address past and present, urban and regional audiences and academic objectivity and subjective experience in a space that negates the authenticity of the hierarchies and traditions she addresses in her works.

One of Manifold’s major works, a finely boned, beautiful face Botticelli would want to paint... (2001, digital prints, dimensions unknown (Plate 47)), is a boxed set of digital prints that when placed together represent Sandro Botticelli’s Birth of Venus.23 The Venus is disconnected from her entourage, and presented for the delectation of the knowing gaze. She is an object of art history, of desire, of the poet’s genius, of man’s ability to control nature—to reproduce, refine and recreate within an ordered masculine world. The title of the work is taken from a line used to describe Manifold by The Melbourne Age journalist, Andrew Clark, in an article on the Western Districts of Victoria.24 In the article, Clark discusses the Manifolds’ regional heritage and the changes that have occurred in the intervening years. In this article, Manifold is part of the family’s regional presence, situated within her house, with the strongest description of her physical presence being an allusion to a cultural artefact which positions her firmly within a feminine cultural role. Manifold used this as a point of departure in the print. The conventions behind this flattery allude to

23 Sandro Botticelli, Birth of Venus, 1485-86, Tempera on canvas, 172.4 x 287.5cm, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.
Plate 47

Marion Manifold, *a finely boned, beautiful face Botticelli would want to paint*..., boxed set of digital prints, 2001, dimensions unknown. Fremantle City Art Collection.
the identity of women as intertwined with institutional art values and cultural commodities, situating them within a network of values—referring to the cultural prestige of the house itself—none of these qualities come directly from Manifold, but are conveyed through the critic. She deconstructs the meaning behind the words, and examines how these words describe herself and the feminine presence in art.

The model Manifold used for Venus is that of a real woman. The iconic and mythologic beauty represented by the Venus in art subsumes the body’s identity. No longer a body owned by culture, Manifold’s Venus opens up uncomfortable spaces where appreciation of the muse and voyeurism closely cross paths. She uses the exploration and revolt of the Surrealists to interrogate the use of the woman’s body as a site of male liberation: from sexual structures, from cultural codes, from their own sense of being defined in opposition to women. The process of digital printmaking has dissolved the body of the woman, the paint and the concept of Venus into a binary code, reconstructing them into a print that will forever be in transition: the archival quality ink used will only last for a certain number of years before fading, after which time if the image is reprinted it will be remade yet again in a different process of transference, possibly with different ink, into a different context. The Venus is fragmented in these prints, dwelling on the body of the goddess as a fulcrum to explore the relationship between beauty and desire, transcendence and death. Red ink veils the paper with silky evenness; it covers the hills and shadowy vales of the body beneath with a slick gloss.

By drawing on the underlying role that Venus plays in art, Manifold explores broader issues surrounding the representation of women’s bodies within Western culture. Within this she sites her own sense of her body in space, interpreting the forces that impel her social positioning and the consequences on her personal identity. Manifold uses well-known cultural icons of beauty which use the female body as a referent of the ideal woman positioned within a cultural framework of patriarchal connoisseurship. Manifold’s particular twist to a conceptual project that has been explored by many contemporary women artists is to represent the body as a psychological entity, representing women who occur in many different times and places. She traces the female body from the passive eroticism of Botticelli, the sublime ecstasy of form of Agostino Bellini, the sinister animism of Pre-Raphaelite sexuality, the surreal voyeurism of Hans Bellmer, René Magritte and Man Ray, the physicality of Judy Chicago and the still fairytales of Cindy Sherman. The iconography of the body throughout the western history of art has gradually reduced its focus, distilled further as an emblem of gender, rather than subvert the process by incorporating all of history into the gaze. The relationship between the duality of the body
and the duality of systems of distinction has become so integrated that the female body is a sign that is rooted in a culture saturated with images from the past and present, yet eternally separate from the physical realities of human existence.

The Venus print was part of Manifold's exhibition submitted in partial fulfilment of her doctoral thesis in 2001. The exhibition's works ranged from sculptural and photographic works to digital prints. Within the exhibition space, the female imagery of Michaelangelo and Botticelli are wedded to the sensuous abstracted female bodies imagined by Surrealists André Breton, Marcel Duchamp, and Man Ray. The fragmented female form shimmers across undulating surfaces of the paper, eroticised through abstract collage and the accompanying amorphous and omnipresent attar of roses that filled the exhibition space. ¹ Man Ray's *Peach* ² is translated into Breton's poem *Woman lies asleep ensconced in her shell*; a further metamorphosis occurs in the curled form of the woman overlayed with the shadows of Chantilly Lace, an amorphous and animistic figure without identity and a subject of the patterns playing over her body. Further scrolls hang from the wall in a series of repetitive ink-blot style images of pieces of the body, doubled to create an uncanny narrative where experience can transfer from form to form through virtue of their physical similarity. This relationship goes nowhere, ultimately subsuming itself through infertile repetition.

Manifold cites the process of the digital print "as a suitable means to repeat images—to test Freudian theories of the double—and to dissolve and pattern form...." ³ The images replicate not only images of the body familiar in art, but also private artefacts Manifold has found in her house, many of which have been inherited from past Manifold women.

This relation is accentuated by mental processes leaping from one of these characters to another—by what we should call telepathy, so that the one possesses knowledge, feelings and experience in common with the other. Or it is marked by the fact that the subject identifies himself with someone else, so that he is in doubt as to which his self is, or substitutes the extraneous self for his own. In other words, there is a doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self. ⁴

Replicated identities are nestled in a box in a finely boned, beautiful face Botticelli would want to paint..., allied with the ordered context of the exhibition space. Yet the exhibition...
space and the work within it replicate the conflict Manifold has experienced between institutional and domestic practice, and between academic, commercial and subjective interpretation of art icons. The process of doubling creates a liminal place where all these elements combine and identity is uncertain. The duality leads to confusion and emptiness falsely given meaning by layered symbols.

Liminal states are used in Manifold’s exploration of both the Surrealist’s obsession with the Fall and falling and societies interpretation of the same motif.\(^5\) The Fall represents the moment that Eve causes the loss of humanity’s innocence. Enforcing a separation between a state of beauty and an existence bound to the physical boundaries of the human form, falling replicates the moment when a state of grace is lost. Many Surrealists were transfixed with the ability of the falling to produce a liminal state where in a moment of a complete lack of control there is a return to androgynous state, the state of humanity before the separation of Adam from Eve.\(^6\) This moment involves a strange (uncanny) combination of sublime beauty. In her doctoral exegesis, Manifold describes how within this liminal space the sensuous concept of beauty as described by Edmund Burke\(^7\) interplays with Freud’s concept of beauty as a sexualised combination of ego and form. The relationship between patriarchy and women is here united through sensory and conceptual dualities, played out in a perpetual state where beauty inspires fear and awe; and the two extremes of ecstasy and terror are more effectively investigated in the signifier of the female body. The prints that compose *a finely boned, beautiful face Botticelli would want to paint...* deconstruct the female body into a series of parts that compel the eye and threaten the ego. The placement of the hands and the fluid hair that lead the eye in the original painting lose their meaning through their fragmentation. They become part of the composition of viewer’s ego, a site for the gaze. Within the sign of the woman as muse, Mother and Eve, Manifold searches for the empty space the Surrealists gravitated towards in order to reclaim it for herself, to bring it back to her physical existence.

A critical aspect in this process is Manifold’s understanding that in their attempt to transcend gender—to reclaim the liberation of beauty—patriarchal cultures suppressed women’s sexuality behind codified shields: fig leaves, gloves and hair all present a shielding of an abyss. Despite the compliment, this is what Clarke’s description does to

\(^5\) Manifold, *Return to the Mother*, p. 108
\(^7\) Burke’s description of beauty dwells on a sensuous awareness of form: “Observe that part of a beautiful woman where she is perhaps the most beautiful, about the neck and breasts; the smoothness; the softness; the easy and insensible swell; the variety of the surface,” Burke, in Manifold, *Return to the mother*, p. 105.
Manifold, fragmenting her into cultural codes of beauty, and thus innately (though not deliberately) compromising her identity. Rather than confronting the long tradition of Western art by reinstating the equality of difference, Manifold uses the Surrealists’ own technique of destabilizing gender ideologies to achieve a state of androgyne. Using a technique that is composed of fragmentations and voids, Manifold’s digital prints fulfil the Surrealist quest to Fall, to replicate the moment of loss of order signified by Man’s Fall from Grace in the Garden of Eden. By attempting to recapture the Fall, the Surrealists opened the possibility of achieving a pre-patriarchal, pre-moral state. The camera and the computer trap such Surrealist moments of interpretation. Through adopting a Surrealist process of transference, Manifold, after Rosalind Krauss, uses the camera to:

... [make it] simple: turn the body or the lens: rotate the human figure into the figure of fall. The camera automates this process, makes it mechanical. A button is pushed, and the fall is the rest.  

Within the computer these icons are in constant revolution, constantly falling in a space bereft of sense or emotion, transcribed in a binary code that is an eternal balanced progression of zeros and ones. The genetic encoding of gender in this environment creates in each print a state of androgyny, existing distinct from editioning, categorisation and the compulsion of cultural codes. The language that Manifold needs to address her own sense of difference is thus created by retrieving female identity from this environment, shaken free from the power of the male gaze.

The slippage between female crafts and academic ‘high art’ in Manifold’s art presents an androgyny of practice. The body Manifold explores is an abstract construction that does not represent a battleground, but a matrix constantly in flux. The background and fabric appear to be degrading at a molecular level within the digital environment, their tactility reduced to purely cerebral mimesis. Paradoxically, this process seems to imbue the bodies and objects with an even greater ‘reality’. Manifold thus explores, like generations of both male and female artists before her, the middle ground the body provides between institutional governance and individual experience. The images presented by Manifold can therefore participate in a process of patriarchal vision, but as their sensory presence is questionable, associated ideologies are destabilized as well. Manifold combines the Surrealists’ attempt to make an internally and externally informed sense of self in the world, with an overlay of her own idiosyncratic elements. It mimics her own conflicting identities, where the subjectivity that informs her work is an element of the consecration applied by the art market, art criticism and hierarchical art collections. Manifold unites the two in an

---

8 Manifold, *Return to the mother*, p. 35.  
9 Rosalind Krauss quoted in Manifold, *Return to the mother*, p. 137.
alliance to stop her work from being categorised according to any one discipline or tradition. The danger of the process, however, is that each alliance involves a sense of loss—of self, of control and of place.

As these images were executed as part of Manifold’s doctoral thesis, they necessarily engage in a process of assessment and categorisation. Yet these prints are positioned within a metaphoric space. This space is informed as much by personal memory of images and experience as much as by academic sources. Any cultural, intellectual or geographic attribution given to the print orientation is therefore fundamentally invalid. Manifold has deliberately situated her work at the juncture of academic and domestic environments. Manifold believes that her identity is a composite of types of women formed by Western culture’s concept of the ideal woman and the traditional role of women in the Manifold family.

Her identity as an individual woman and artist is allied to the other two. Manifold seeks an androgynous form in her practice that can enable her be all these identities simultaneously without conflict and without being coerced by ideologies of governance. Her approach, however, also informs how work is read and marketed—as a doctoral student, a prize winner, a regional woman, a contemporary artist or as someone using new approaches to the print. These are elements ultimately out of Manifold’s control, involved in a tension between her values and those of the environment that her work is placed within. The shift from the academic background is difficult. Manifold the academic takes a subordinate position to Manifold the artist, in many ways becoming the segmented woman again.

Manifold’s series, *Lace Trimmings*, a boxed set of prints, draws this investigation into the domestic environment. These prints question values of beauty and art informed by cultural structures established in a patriarchal past and often enacted on the bodies of women. A sense of whimsy and humour emerge more strongly from this series of prints, and although psychoanalytic and surrealist themes are continued, they are accessed within a space where there appears to be conciliation between Manifold and the circumstances informing her practice. *Rosa* (soft-ground etching with aquatint, beads and net, 2003 (Plate 48)), for example, reflects the lace edgings and beaded brooches Manifold found preserved in drawers in the historic homestead. *Anne* (soft-ground etching with beads, 2003 (Plate 49)) shows the sly wit with which these prints reveal more that they conceal: the decorative

beadwork and veiled netting extends beyond and penetrates the paper. Within the boxed set, they unite traditional printmaking with domestic handcraft. Unpacked, they unfold the narratives stored by generations of Manifold women. As a collection of works they present a visual Ars Memorandum—a series of mental rooms that order memory. The rooms that these prints open are not just those of the Wiridgil itself. They also evoke cultural memories of other types of memory boxes, such as the curiosity boxes of the nineteenth century and their influence on museological culture, the butterfly boxes of Breton and the keepsake constructions of Joseph Cornell. A sly sense of humour offsets the fetishism. The hats allude to hunted heads, prizes mounted on a wall, but the laces they replicate dissolved at touch once they are removed from their protective drawers. Prints such as Harriet are redolent with intricate beadwork: their netting has trawled a catch of roses. Pulled over the eyes, they provide synecdochic shields for the woman’s face—fertile, beautiful, naturally dangerous and thorned.

These prints are not passive objects of craftwork representing wives of eras past; Manifold uses the rose to infer the sexual allusion connected to the rose consistently employed by (predominantly male) poets, artists and writers. Yet it also refers to a cultivated rose by the name of Marion Manifold. The prints source their names from the other Marion Manifolds that have preceded her in the family and from contemporary women who are friends of Manifold. From these, Manifold creates palimpsest identities:

Kerry, a friend I went to school with, brought a green (her colour) beaded motif when I was buying beads. Using historically catalogued antique designs, I superimposed ideas to come up with what I thought she would wear in the 1800s. And then my imagination and intuition took over...

It is in this sense that Manifold explores a distilled sense of cultural place as inscribed not upon an actual physical body, but through a translation of this body into an abstract context. This is a cultural, symbolic body. Forms of place associated with women are found delicately interlaced into found objects of intimate apparel. Manifold invokes and recreates this absent body through constructing prints of hats for friends, combining a sense of restraint and memory that emerges from the past with the vitality of these contemporary women, and their relationship with beauty and creativity. These objects speak of the past,
but they disrupt the complacency that time instils – they are not restful objects. They resonate with Manifold’s experience as a mother, as a teacher and as a printmaker. They are explorations of difference: not between gender or governance, but the differences of interpretation that form the basis of alliances with both economic and cultural facilities to enhance a regional practice. This is evident firstly in the forms the prints themselves take, and secondly in the way these prints (and individual prints made in conjunction with her doctoral studies) have entered the public art world.

Manifold’s practice is thus situated between two worlds; intertwined domestic and institutional histories are evident in the techniques and concepts she employs, transferring them into a contemporary space where their alliance supersedes the traditional limitations of regional artistic practice. Manifold’s relationship with the Fremantle Art Centre was established when she received the second prize in 2000 and the $5000 acquisitive award in 2001 for *a finely boned, Beautiful Face Botticelli Would Want to Paint*.... In 2002 she was invited back as a judge for the competition, and in the same year exhibited *Of Essence and Lace Trimmings* and an accompanying artists’ talk. The catalogue for *Of Essence and Lace Trimmings* provided an important evidence of Manifold’s transition between artist-academic and artist-in-the-art-world. There is an interesting contrast between Manifold’s voice and the voice of the critic in the short catalogue essay and the artist statement in *Of Essence and Lace Trimmings*. Gail Watson, Victorian Creative Writer and poet, writes that Manifold herself:

...searches for an eternal feminine essence through embellished etchings, which arise from reminiscences of women in her family to contemporary friends and imaginary women—all of whom she places firmly in the Victorian age. ... [She uses] black Chantilly lace patterning, overlaid with amorphous silhouettes and trimmed with wisps of tulle, jet beads, feathers, faille, cord and covered buttons—notions redolent of Victorian mourning.

In contrast, Manifold’s artist’s statement for the exhibition reads:

Beauty expresses an ideal in my work, but underlying there is always a sinister melancholic tone ... I also employ the double, doubling or repetition and patterning in my work in a Freudian sense. It is simultaneously an assurance of immortality, but it also becomes the uncanny harbinger of death.

She employs Watson’s creative writing to provide an interpretative voice required in contemporary catalogues. Between the two essays both academic and non-academic

---

16 Manifold has two sons.
17 10 August to 7 September 2003, Fremantle Art Centre.
audiences are addressed, and Manifold’s voice is present in both personal and critical accounts.

Manifold’s role within an academy has had little impact on her public printmaking profile, which has had to be developed in other areas. Ultimately, it has been through the Print Prize that Manifold has created her most supportive alliances, and through which her work has exited its academic mould. After graduating, Manifold found that she had some difficulty in interesting commercial galleries in her work and it was often declined on the basis that she had little exhibiting experience. Typically many printmakers who have produced large projects as part of postgraduate research find their work difficult to sell piece by piece, and the artist has had little opportunity to create a history of exhibitions. Despite her alliances with other artists and institutions, becoming involved in the art market is daunting for Manifold on a number of levels. First, it requires opening her work to critique from an area of the art market that may not feel that the symbolic value of Manifold’s work can translate easily into the form that can be transformed into economic value. Secondly, Manifold’s regional location has not provided her the opportunity to become familiar with commercial galleries. Thirdly, while Manifold can control most of her practice, the acceptance of her work into the art market is outside her control. It is an alliance in which printmakers take a subordinate position. It is in this sense that Manifold feels that her regional location is marked by isolation:

The difficulty is getting the confidence to approach galleries. For me, the main thing is to keep working, continuing the dialogue I have between my inner and outer selves and the external world. ... Success is always relative. I don’t measure success by whether I get gallery representation in Melbourne. I feel ‘successful’ as long as the ideas don’t dry up. My greatest problem is that there are few employment prospects in my region...19

Manifold’s practice requires ongoing economic support, and this requires Manifold to form alliances with markets still formulating values for digital prints.

It has been through personal connections with artists in Victoria that Manifold has obtained opportunities to display her work and develop her professional profile. For example, in 2001 she was invited by Dianne Waite to participate in a group exhibition, Allure: The Feminine in Print, with Deborah Klein, Heather Shimmen and Wendy Hutchinson. The alliances that she participates in provide an expanded sense of place in which she can explore different identities and establish different modes of practice. Manifold’s practice is academically based and reflects a strong institutional history.

Manifold would possibly practise with the most ease within an institutional context, yet it has been the struggle for identity and place she has conducted that has imbued her prints with a conviction in the value of their process and the intricacy of their meaning. Like the printmakers discussed in the first section of this chapter, Manifold’s alliances are of both necessity and choice. They inform a practice that is unlikely to significantly alter its approach, even if Manifold acquires full-time institutional employment. The following case study examines the practice of Liz Deckers, whose alliances are more community and equipment oriented.

**Unconventional tastes: Purity and danger in the prints of Liz Deckers**

Elizabeth (Liz) Deckers, a printmaker practising in regional New South Wales, has over the last three years created a series of works that explore the rules of cultural normative behaviour as inscribed on the female body. Her monotype prints of chocolate, soap and dried apples compress experiences occurring over time to create an analogue of freedom and discipline, pleasure and rejection. Deckers’ prints combine the sacred and the profane as expressed in everyday objects. She presents prints that use the concept of hysteria to disrupt the boundaries and rules that order individual existence. Palatable concepts of social place are subverted in prints that require the physical involvement of the viewer to access an underlying abjection that unifies all individuals. In Deckers’ prints a feminist interrogation of cultural codes of behaviour and their influence on women’s perceived social role parallels a private quest for an independence of artistic practice. Alliances between individuals, organizations and institutions position the prints within a transitional space provided by pedagogic, community and private practice—negotiating with the dead languages that continue to circumscribe Western concepts of women. Decker accesses a liminal space to produce her works, seeking a site of practice where her printmaking processes and artistic ideas can develop.

An analysis of Deckers’ practice begins with an exploration of the forms of alliance and independence she maintains. As a regional woman printmaker, Deckers positions her body as the matrix where concepts of the woman artist, regionalism, feminism, femininity and modernity meet. Her investigation begins by questioning the authority of the rules of conduct that establish the cultural position of the female body, many of them codes of behaviour instituted in childhood. Her relationships with institutions, community groups and individuals in Northern Rivers district allow her to use feminist values to supersede
economic priorities and cultural politics in the face of her exploration of personal independence. Deckers seeks to deconstruct dualities of active/passive and artist/model cast into relief by moving beyond her maternal identity. Through her prints she discovers a transgressive state that allows her to form alliances with multiple discourses, transferring her practice between institutional, domestic and community environments. In 1997, she joined the Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah (CPM) and in 2004 completed Honours in Fine Arts at the University of the Southern Cross, Lismore. By transferring her identity from a mother with a part-time art practice to a woman beginning an artistic career, critical decisions had to be made regarding her responsibilities as a mother and her developing place as an artist.

One of the most significant influences on Deckers’ practice was the commitment of time that printmaking demanded. She found that her practice was not simply a creative outlet, but an articulation of independent identity. Deckers felt that her practice negotiated identities that were fundamentally defined by oppositions, a duality between mind and body. Certain cultural attitudes regarding her social and familial duties were challenged by her decision to enter the university sector as a mature age student. The obligations of the course required a major reconstruction of her time and role and presented a challenge to many in her life. Yet, the decision to undertake printmaking education at a tertiary level impelled a new powerful conceptualisation of herself forging a new social space where she felt that “…I had the right to study, to be both mother and student.”

During her years at the university, Deckers developed an independent sense of space that sought to transgress established boundaries between the individual and society. This space used institutional, cultural and personal sources to create a psychological perspective and a physical space where she could work without compromise. Deckers’ decision to join CPM was influenced by her need for access to equipment and to meet the demands of ongoing material underlying her practice. The university provided Deckers with theoretical and technical tools and access to a strong history of women artists challenging institutional patriarchy. Deckers’ relationship with CPM, however, provided psychological support. The combined experience of women in the group and its strong ethos of individual independence was important. Many members addressed prevailing social beliefs that certain roles should be played within domestic, social and private environments. An important aspect of many of these women’s practice is that they have become involved in printmaking at a period of transition in their life, when they are between one stage of life

and another. For them, printmaking became an integral part of this liminal passage.\footnote{Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author, Murwillumbah, New South Wales, 6 October 2002.}

Within this space, she built up associations with individual printmakers as well as with private and institutional organizations, and drew on regional and international influences to address what is ultimately a subjective articulation of place.

Two of Decker’s key bodies of work are her etchings on dried apple and her chocolate monoprints. These prints reveal Deckers’ interest in reclaiming control over the cultural languages that she feels have been inscribed upon her social identity. \emph{A is for Apple} (series of etchings on dried apple, dimensions variable, 2002 (Plates 50 & 51) contains an unsettling array of images of children, showing fragments from children’s stories depicted in an easy, fluid hand not dissimilar from the line drawings that illustrate children’s stories. These children’s tales incorporate domestic detail into didactic parables of the rewards or punishments that await ‘good’ or ‘ill’ mannered children. The projected adult life of the children lies before them as they are taught the ideological role they are to fulfil in society. The simplicity of the directive narrative is compromised by awareness that the young girl’s eventual social identity is sexually circumscribed. The adult identity seems to make its appearance too early, transforming the role-playing carried out by the girl into a didactic, sexualised motif. Her sewing and measuring is observed and directed by an anonymous adult. It is the hands of one of these adults that reach to take the girl’s hand, to lead her down a path curving into a town—a site of governed order.

The presence of this hand also introduces sexual innuendo to the print. There is humour in the allusion to measuring and the cupped skirt receiving ripe apples. Yet there is also a sense that, by conforming to social ideals, the future relationships between men and women are informed by the perceived need to fulfil cultural roles and maintain order while independent identity withers. The iconography is Victorian, uniting the moralism of children’s improvement literature with the concern for developing ‘healthy’ impulses. The reference to the role of apples in signifying both moral and physical health has a bitter humour.\footnote{Such as “An apple a day keeps the doctor away” and “The apple of my eye.”} It hints at the invasion of gender identity exercised by the institutional governance of women’s social role that the child would later be subjected to in nineteenth-century England.

Parallel to the induction of the girl into a constructed cultural role runs a theme of purity and danger. The girl is led towards a life where nature is a simulacra, translated into a safe
Plate 50
Collection of the artist.

Plate 51
Collection of the artist.
environment. The clothes she sews are printed with apples—through her socialisation the
girl can absolve her sexual inheritance from Eve by reinterpreting it within a domestic
environment. The process of defining a cultural identity of women as consisting of dualities
of good/bad and saintly/sexual does not make them subjects of a culture in their own right,
but rather as objects upon which fears of disorder are addressed and codified. While the
apples on the girl’s dress are fresh and innocent, the surface it is printed on is dissected and
preserved. The washing hangs from the line as limp, fetishised objects. The hole through
the centre of the apple slice is deliberately eroticised, turning a symbol of health and
wholesome love into something distasteful. Deckers translates the cultural role models
presented to girls and young women onto the apple, and in so doing is able to address the
body as a site of conflict.

Like Manifold, Deckers also uses the concept of the Fall to critique cultural
conventions affiliating women with a perfidious nature sourced from their connection with
the earth and nature. Women open to temptation, not only fall into sin, but the force of their
power can drag man and his intellectually ordered world with them. Deckers’ translation of
this theme takes the gendered battle against the influence of nature and replays the contest
between cultural control of women through implemented contrived ‘orders’. She focuses
on female identity as inscribed on the body, the connection between emotional response to
sensory stimuli and the cultural interpretations of these responses. Deckers reclaims control
of the narrative voice in the apple prints by exposing and bringing to the surface a blunt
summary of the underlying themes of women’s sexualised, domestic role. Images relating
to male dominance/power are reversed: the girl’s measuring tape changes from being a
domestic tool to becoming mocking symbols of clichéd male desire and social ideals of
patriarchal power. Deckers has dissected the apples herself, fragmenting their allegorical
strength—now desiccated and leathery, they have no nutritional value and carry potential
toxins in the ink of the image. The sweet smell of the apple is slightly sickly, decaying
rapidly on exposure to light, air, dampness, and the humidity of other bodies. Integrated
into real life through the domestic materials used in their creation, these monoprints peel off
encoded narratives of female ‘nature’ handed down through tradition, exposing a visceral
and powerful potential for women to create independent identities informed by both cultural
and sensory awareness.

By integrating moral taste into her investigation, the esoteric aspects of Deckers’
prints are not restricted to a purely academic audience. These prints were initially created

---

23 Summerfield, interview with the author, Murwillumbah, New South Wales, 6 October 2002.
as part of a Graduate Diploma at the Southern Cross University. Both during and since, however, audience reactions to the prints have been an important influence on Deckers’ practice. The community context of Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah is an important aspect of the prints’ ability to bridge institutional and non-institutional audiences. CPM meetings provided important forums for discussion of work in progress. Deckers’ work has been the focus of much discussion. As one member comments: “People bring in work [to the meetings] and we [discuss it, which ] shapes us as a community ... Liz brought in the chocolate thing earlier this year, and we had a discussion that went for an hour and a half...” In the last several years, Deckers has been involved with C.A.S.E., which provides a balance of academic and non-academic. Each context establishes different methods of approaching the print. The university is fully equipped and working on a folio to a deadline provides structure. At the university it is a context that emphasises the requirements of both curricula, the advice and support from an academic environment, where the prints are examined in a enclosed, private space. At Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah it is as an exploration of concepts and technique, conducted in the humidity of the community’s workshop, where the smell of the prints would have been considerably enhanced.

The transgression of boundaries between practices, techniques, materials and audience, Deckers’ prints stimulate a physical reaction from viewers, compelling and rejecting at the same time. The prints use this sense of rejection to reveal the cultural codes inscribed on the surface of the female body as social object. A key focus of her work has been the way hysteria has been used as a way to both medicalise and socialise women’s conscious or unconscious reaction to their encoded contexts. Hysteria is a theme Deckers uses to explore the loss of individual identity that can occur to women who are trying to negotiate the demands of different social roles, such as wife, mother, business woman or student. The repetition evokes the concept of the hysteric as a patriarchal tool, not as reflective of herself. The physical process of printmaking, the audience responses that assist shaping them, all serve to dissociate the concept of the hysteric away from Deckers’ own body. To gain independent identity, Deckers must take on influences of both to form a malleable, multi-referential practice. This is particularly apparent in works that have compressed symbols of purity, such as soap and lace, with symbols of decadence and the sensuous—chocolate. Her soap prints present an interesting approach, creating a mundane analogy to the transition between child (nature) and adult (culture) by using Palmolive soap as the carrier (Mother Tongue III, V and II, 2002, ink and chocolate stencil prints on

24 Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author.
25 Deckers, interview with the author.
Palmolive soap, dimensions variable; Mother Tongue VI, 2002, ink and chocolate stencil print on Palmolive soap, dimensions variable (Plate 52 & 53). In many ways these prints are more effective than the apple fables, as they directly cite the domestic sphere as a source of potential danger where the process of imprinting cultural perceptions of order/disorder can occur in the guise of nourishment and protection.

Deckers’ chocolate monotypes on lace use the voice of the hysteric to enable a process of unveiling what lies beneath cultural codes (Untitled, chocolate and Palmolive soap, mixed media, 2002, dimensions unknown (Plate 54)). Deckers uses her own body of experience as a point of reference in these prints, fragmenting her identity, peeling off layers of experience and senses. This process is transcribed in metaphorical details that eliminate the traditional distance existing between the artist, the artwork and the viewer.

The extent to which the notion of the hysteric is constructed by these codes in the first place allows Deckers’ work to escape being an insular psychoanalytic process. Her ultimate intention is to liberate the body from visual or cultural traditions that have been inscribed upon it. The chocolate monotypes use chocolate and lace to act as archetypal references to two modes of women’s sexual identity—before and after women’s liberation. Her work evokes the women tattooed with domesticity in the prints of Deborah Klein, but reach beyond this to the surrealist photographs of Man Ray and the decaying lace forms of Ray Arnold’s prints. Through contemporary advertising the lure of chocolate is cast as a marital aid or as a reward. Yet it also positions women as dangerous, prey to irrational emotional intensity and in need of external order.

Deckers contrasts concepts of the ideal artist with the ideal woman, one defined by masculine narrative of metaphysical inspiration, the other by the physicality of maternal function. She deliberately seeks to transcend any definable ‘tradition’ of art production. They are composed of materials that will degrade. Women can act outside institutional discourses and subvert traditional concepts of the print by using techniques and materials emerging from both domestic and institutional environments. Deckers’ chocolate monoprints facilitate this process by combining the aesthetic codes used in Western art’s narrative of the woman as object, as discussed earlier, with organic instability as a way of exposing the fragility of instituted order. The smell of the prints (the mixture of apple, soap and chocolate emanating from the entire installation)26 and the visual shock of what is reminiscent of flayed skin or placenta evoke reactions of rejection, stimulating a natural urge to rebel against perceived decay and transgressive tastes. In this space the binaries

26 Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author.
Plate 52


Plate 53

between reactions of hunger/nausea complement the opposition that exists between the artwork as an immaculate entity in the museum and the organic material that is decaying in the humidity of the north coast of New South Wales.

It is in the concept of the sublime that Deckers’ work is subversive, where her control of representation of herself and her work is most complete, and where established techniques of defining different forms of art making are overturned. The sublime in Deckers’ prints is to find joy and terror in a moment when there is a realisation that the subject is not reducible to the symbolic systems that construct their cultural identity. Ostensibly ‘normal’ processes of engaging in acceptable dualities (inner/outer, male/female, clean/defiled) are thus by-products of socialisation, and not fundamental elements of social self. As both an artist and as a mother, Deckers seeks to create a way of examining the impact of cultural forces on the female body without using visual techniques established by patriarchal traditions. To achieve this, she reclaims the fragmented body not as a captured depiction of reality, nor as a way of asserting her own control over what the viewer is able to see. Rather, she incorporates the audience’s physical reaction to the sight and smell of the monoprints, giving them the same presence as an installation. Using the very tools that were once used to ‘frame’ female cultural identity, Deckers creates a state of abjection.

The abject is a concept that refers to the psychological process that occurs when we engage with something that threatens to breakdown the distinctions between subject and object or between self and Other that have been culturally inscribed. This event occurs when an intense human reaction (such as horror or vomit) reasserts the primal identity that existed before the development of culture mediated the psychosexual development of the individual.27 A leading theorist on the abject body, Julia Kristeva, explores abjection as a way the “borders, positions, rules” that control female in a patriarchal social order can be subverted through disturbing “identity, system, order”.28 Idealised depictions of women as desexualised mothers (evident in archetypes like the Virgin Mary) remove women from nature, from anything reminiscent of the primal and uncontrolled.29 Birth is a reminder of mortality, of a loss of control, the antithesis of the patriarchal ideal; therefore all things related to childbirth must be negated to sustain order. Deckers uses abjection of the

28 Ibid.
29 Kristeva argues that motherhood is an integral part of patriarchal reduction of women to their maternal function. According to Kristeva, idealised womanhood is a result of the “misplaced abjection [that became] one way to account for women’s oppression and degradation within patriarchal cultures.” Ibid.
Plate 54

maternal (and, by relation, of women, femininity, and maternity) in her prints to flirt with the freedom from order that abjection can provide—to briefly reveal the chaos underlying Western civilisation and allow its rebellion to fuel an independent identity that can act without suppression by institutional values.

Deckers concentrates on the abject as a way of subverting established boundaries that interact with her work on both a social and institutional level. By using her work to create an alternative space in which to practise, Deckers’ practice can gain some independence of the influences, materials or values of cultural institutions. She can subvert the notion of the hysteric by reclaiming it, dissecting it and reconstituting it. Most importantly, by doing this, the hysteric is no longer an outsider, desperately mimicking from a marginalised state. Deckers uses the concept of the abject to make impotent the oppositions that position individuals within culture, defining them as one thing or the other. Deckers thus uses an alliances of different traditions to present something transitory. As neither her practice nor her prints are the control of the institution, they cannot be used to represent an artistic identity that is framed by inclusion or exclusion from the artworld. By participating in both, Deckers can maintain a liminal state in her practice. Her physical body also reflects her use of alliances to gain individual independence from institutional positioning. By incorporating the visceral presence of bodily experience in her prints, Deckers’ practice is eternally liminal. The materials they consist of are what she eats and what she inhales.

This integration of practice and life was a central factor in Deckers’ decision to direct her practice away from the toxic environments of poorly ventilated spaces. Her use of organic or domestic materials in her prints assists the easy transference of printmaking between multiple sites. Deckers’ prints reflect an approach to printmaking that is marked in this area of New South Wales. New technology and new access to printmaking education has led many older women to use printmaking to deconstruct the symbols that construct their social identity. Allegorical explorations of the intersection of their printmaking and their personal lives explore territory revealed by the deconstruction of boundaries, exploring the sensory, erotic and dangerous in prints that are ephemeral in nature. Rochelle Summerfield, a printmaker working in Mullumbimby has created a series of laser transfer prints that incorporate scans of fruit peels (materials found in a country kitchen) into luscious orbs that evoke memories of Pre-Raphaelite pomegranates and the lips of open figs. Robyn Saunders, of Murwillumbah, disconnects objects from their everyday roots, using them in abstract patterns of line. Most of these printmakers have had to make decisions between time spent with their family and with their printmaking. The reuse of
domestic symbols in work introduces an element of play, allowing the printmakers to lighten the reference, while they analyse the physical and psychological significance of these objects to their practice. These women printmakers use sensory experience to inform their work, positioning themselves as the subject, not the object, of the discourses surrounding them, and through this shaping their dynamic and changeable cultural, social and political identity.

The debate of nature and nurture, and of origins, subtly presented in Deckers’ prints addresses her role as an artist, as a mother and as a wife. Her focus on these ‘identities’ – once fairly uncomplicated social constructs – evinces the new, complicated presence of women within Australian art discourse. Her decision to act in association with but not within institutions has provided her with a freedom of practice and a sense of freedom in her ideas. By utilising the concept of the abject, her work reaches both academic and non-academic audiences. Her practice does not reject institutional or independent forms of practice, but she does not seek them out for the purpose of enhancing the position she gained with the artworld through her Bachelor of Visual Arts Honours degree. Instead, by forming alliances Deckers establishes a flexible position where she can decide the direction, quality and sites of her artistic practice, and control her identity as an artist. The negative and positive aspects of allied practice are strongly present in Deckers’ prints. The taste of one will always have the memory of the taste of the other, pleasure and rejection simultaneously. Within the contemporary cultural environment, there is the space for prints as objects of subjective expression while exerting a strong influence on contemporary discourse.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the various alliances that printmakers form to overcome issues regarding availability of material, education and facilities in regional Australia. It argues that through these relationships many contemporary women printmakers have established practices that are not isolated, but able to draw on a range of different cultural resources for technical, economic and conceptual support. The practice of women printmakers in regional Australia can therefore act in alliance with national art governance to redefine forms of contemporary art practice. Instead of creating dependency between audience, institutions and artists, the printmakers discussed in this chapter have found ways of adapting their practice to their environments. The restrictions to their practice often
signify a sense of isolation or hardship. Yet at the same time, the ability to print despite the limitations imposed by their environment provides them with a sense of empowerment.

Manifold’s reference to the tradition of Venus in fine art, advertising and psychology and the liberation of the digital initiates a complex dialogue between acceptance and neglect, but more importantly a place where interpretation can be free and open. The audience does not rely on institutions to interpret, and mainly this is because artists are bypassing situating their work within these contexts in order to make a living or to be involved in collaborations. Increasingly, this has also meant that there are collaborative-style relationships emerging between artists and writers. One of the key differences between Deckers and Manifold is that they use approaches informed by similar psychoanalytic texts and take them outside the control of the institution. They are not insular theoretical arguments, as despite the purpose of the artist, they are interpreted in different ways. Thus Deckers deliberately eschews traditional values associated with printmaking. She breaks technical traditions, she dirties the equipment with food products and her prints slowly disintegrate in exhibition.

Allied printmaking empowers women who, because of personal commitments, have been unable to engage in printmaking through institutions or through independent practice in the manner that has traditionally been considered to be legitimate. These women are the most rapidly increasing area of printmaking in both urban and regional Australia. They do not necessarily want to sacrifice things in their lives in order to continue their practice, but to fit it into their existing life-style. Their prints are therefore intimate, and often inaccessible to the mainstream art scene. But despite their place away from print ‘centres’, the practice of women printmakers engaged in allied relationships is the most prominent practice in Australia, and presents some of the most revolutionary approaches to art and artistic identity.
Conclusion

It has been argued in this thesis that the increase of printmaking practice by women in regional Australia is due to the devolution of arts governance from the traditional art ‘centres’ of Melbourne and Sydney and to a commensurate increase in cultural resources and arts pedagogy in rural areas. A direct consequence was that women have an unprecedented capacity to direct and control their own practice, particularly evident in the previously unexplored area of regional printmaking. However, the most significant consequence – and the central focus of this thesis – has been the forms of artistic identity and capability that characterise the practice of women printmakers throughout Australia. Women printmakers use the resources available to them to sustain and extend their practice, and to create new avenues of practice should these resources be withdrawn. This process occurs at the level of local, regional, national and international art industries. Women are prepared to take risks with their practice and to challenge the practical processes, cultural conventions and traditional relationships that define women printmakers in relation to their social and familial contexts. The development of cultural infrastructure has given the women the skills and opportunities to mount this challenge. The thesis records some of the dominant features of this process.

The printmakers discussed in this thesis each represents new areas of Australian printmaking. Contemporary women printmakers in regional Australia have developed new techniques, new forms of dissemination, new markets and new methods of forming artworld affiliations without establishing a dependence on the patronage of specific markets or organisations. They have the capacity to exert considerable control over how their practice is conducted and received by local, national and international audiences. This study has discussed the conscious affiliations that individual printmakers have made with a wide range of both institutional and non-institutional cultural resources. One of its primary goals has been to present an alternative approach for the analysis of women printmakers working in regional Australia that looks at women’s printmaking as part of a heterogeneous artworld, not as a reflection of specific categories of period and style. The examples of printmakers who have been used to illustrate this development reflect not only the rise of successful, sustained printmaking practice by women in regional Australia, but also expose the new legitimating techniques that support the rapid growth of this area of contemporary cultural development.
*Impressions of distance* represents the largest examination of women printmakers and regional institutions involved with printmaking to be undertaken in Australia. It presents a practical framework for the examination of the personal and cultural governance issues that influence the practice of regional women printmakers. The thesis employs Bourdieu’s model of the field of cultural production. This model assists in the examination of the intersection between regional printmakers and the patronage and pedagogic roles of cultural institutions, and draws specifically on Bourdieu’s analysis of the active role of symbolic and economic forms of capital in shaping and driving the field. Bourdieu’s concept of the field facilitates the analysis of cultural institutions and markets, while his concept of habitus provides the foundation for a dual examination of the external and internal factors that influence women’s regional printmaking practice. Of particular value is the capacity of Bourdieu’s model to allow the examination of both areas of cultural production without antagonism. Thus women printmakers have not been defined in contrast to male printmakers, and the regional location of women’s printmaking is conceptualised as something that influences artistic practice, but does not fundamentally isolate it from the broader artworld.

This thesis has argued that existing approaches to women printmakers developed within Australian art history encourage a focus on the struggle experienced by regional women printmakers as a central legitimating feature of their practice. Australian art historical examination of women’s printmaking has focused on the struggle of individuals to achieve the recognition of dominant cultural institutions. However, over seventy per cent of the printmakers interviewed for this thesis argue that the ‘struggle’ they experience in finding the time to practice, negotiating family commitments and meeting the cost of equipment and material are not essentially due to their regional location, but are the same factors that affect women artists universally. ‘Struggle’ as a defining paradigm has become a subdued feature of practice. The growth in grants, prizes, touring exhibitions and printmaking workshops provide many opportunities for many printmakers to have some influence on how they are positioned within the artworld. The capacity that women and regional artists now possess to modify their practice to suit their lifestyle and their environment without adversely affecting the quality of their work therefore necessitates an approach that emphasises individual experience over concepts of region- or gender-specific cluster analysis.

As stated, Bourdieu’s model is employed for its ability to focus cultural analysis simultaneously at the levels of institutional governance and at the level of the individual. This study places an emphasis on the habitus of individual printmakers, rather than on the influence of art institutions, as informing the style, method or direction of a
printmaker’s practice. Focusing on how individuals are influenced by and create their own affiliations with diverse fields and agents decreases the likelihood that they will be perceived as part of a stylistic or cultural group. It is important to recognise a distinction between printmakers as a culturally representative group and printmakers as individual artists. The former is recognised as a social phenomenon from a higher perspective (that of institutions), while the latter is less likely to be recognised by institutions, but may reveal more about the ways artists interact with the artworld at the level of practice. The examination of individual case studies, therefore, has been of practical advantage for this study.

Significantly, this approach also allows a distinction to be drawn between the studies of women printmakers of the 1930s-40s and the 1970s-80s and the study of contemporary women’s printmaking practice. This is a vital distinction, as the contexts within which contemporary women work are unique within the history of Australian art. In Australian art discourses printmaking is predominantly characterised by restricted forms of practice and enclosed communities of artists. Analyses of Australian printmakers have tended to orientate women’s printmaking practice within technical, social or political parameters— an approach first formulated in reference to the work of women printmakers of the 1930s-40s and 1970s-80s. As a consequence, their practice, their work and its value is regularly located within domestic, political and social spheres of reference. It is a useful approach for its ability to encompass both the economic and symbolic factors that impede the artistic practice of women printmakers. Yet with considerable frequency this perspective is applied for a greater ideological purpose, extending beyond an art historical analysis of the artworks and using women printmakers to represent the feminist values of a distinct socio-cultural periods of Australian history.

One of the main reasons why this approach continues to be employed in reference to women printmakers is that it unites women printmakers into an exclusive community. United, they represent a sort of sisterhood, with their own distinct political agenda, social affiliations and cultural networks. The exclusiveness of their experience protects the integrity of this ‘community’ against being absorbed and subsumed into a broader art historiography that is still dominated by patriarchal collecting and patronage institutions. This protective exclusiveness, however, creates a field of symbolic value around women printmakers that is distinct from the field of cultural production that the majority of the Australian art world operates within. The conflicts and limitations that affect their practice are easily conceptualised within a paradigm of artistic struggle, where the artist as visionary works in a context that is economically and socially hostile to their practice. The concept of struggle lifts women from their geographic or cultural
location. It does not allow a practical analysis of factors specific to their practice, such as the necessary compromise between the time required to create art and the time required by family responsibilities. By being lifted into the discursive space of the ‘artistic genius’ – a space initially forged for male artists – not only is their gender (and the relationships and obligations that accompany it) stripped away, but it is also rejected as a valid component in the legitimacy of the artwork. The gender-specific situations women printmakers manipulate to produce their prints are often the very things that make their work unique. Within the discursive space of the ‘artistic genius’ these factors are rejected in order to allow the print and the artist to fit into the pre-established framework of the institutional artworld. A false impression of the nature of contemporary women’s printmaking is thus created.

A further complication occurs when the examination of women printmakers crosses paths with the conventions that guide the study of regional art practice. Regional art practice has long been perceived in Australian art history as being closely bound to ideas of landscape, which provide a context for the discussion of topics such as ownership, isolation, transcendence and the sublime. These topics coalesce into a methodology for the examination of art and the landscape, which art historian Diane Losche describes as existing within systems of “multiple, unstable, contested sets of conventions and tropes”.¹ These are transferred into regional art discourse, and when combined with the “conventions and tropes” of established discourses on women artists, they provide multiple, unstable and contested accounts for the meaning and production of art. When employed in reference to contemporary regional women printmakers, existing approaches do not provide a particularly effective method to assess the discourses, cultural systems or the practical realities that each individual artist negotiates. For example, the control over their printmaking and its position in the artworld exerted by Liz Deckers and Marion Manifold could be easily examined from a feminist point of view, just as Helen Geier’s and Judy Watson’s management could be discussed in terms of the cultural landscapes they reference. What may also occur, however, is the replication of the different ‘types’ of printmaking with which women are commonly affiliated: regional, isolated, community, domestic and urban. The ability of these artists to adapt their technique, cultivate specific markets and exploit cultural resources indicates a need to examine their practice in reference to the processes of the culture industry in a way that conventional methods of examining the printmaker or the print do not provide.

This thesis examines numerous examples of women printmakers whose awareness of the techniques used by the artworld to discriminate between printmakers in urban and regional areas has led to their decision to establish a practice that is not dependent on, or entrenched within, the art industry. Many printmakers, including Rita Hall, Katy Thamo and Melissa Wright deliberately efface all reference to their immediate physical landscape. Others adroitly use factors such as light, material and technique that are specific to their geographic location in order to reach a transcendent field of aesthetic reference and subjective response – this is particularly apparent in the elemental works of Kaye Green, Sarah Buchlar, Barbie Kjar, Bea Maddock, Sue Pickering and Jo Lankester. Many printmakers, including Denise Campbell, Jenny Clapson, Liz Deckers, Helen Geier, Pamela Griffith and Rochelle Summerfield, have been shown to consciously position their work within a domestic location by using materials from and developing a market within the home, providing a legitimate counterpoint to a centralised and institutionally governed artworld. The examination of regional women printmakers therefore requires an approach that examines their work from a perspective outside the institutional artworld.

Therefore this thesis has approached women’s printmaking practice from the perspective of each individual. It focuses on how they conceptualise themselves as artists and what effect this has had on their prints and practice. Each individual body – each individual printmaker – experiences her practice, her work and her position within the artworld very differently, as each is influenced by a wide range of factors that are rarely duplicated. Women printmakers are thus approached not through their location in a specific cultural or social space, but through the cultural spaces and discourses they simultaneously intersect. This perspective incorporates analyses of how women printmakers as social bodies are affected by specific issues, such as illness from toxic fumes, and family commitments, how they access the equipment, education and materials and discourses of art, governance and economics. It also facilitates the examination of women as representative or symbolic bodies within cultural and political discourses. The location of women artists and printmakers, particularly women printmakers, in a borderland between dominant artistic traditions provides a way to see how the play of institutional power (an approach informed by the work of Foucault) informs how individual subjects interact with a wide range of cultural influences (an approach based on Bourdieu’s work on the field of cultural production). This cultural borderland has developed from the interstitial spaces that exist between dominant cultures and systems of institutional governance. This liminal position, explored in the work of Bhabha, Higonnet and Spivak, provides considerable freedom (although perhaps
not a wide-ranging recognition) to many individuals who are without power within an institutional culture.

The structure of this thesis has divided discussion and analysis between been one chapter introducing the literature and methodology influencing the approach taken in the thesis, followed by three contextual chapters and three case study chapters. Two essential areas of development have been targeted. The first is the decentralisation of art institutions in Australia, which has led to a change in cultural access and capacity. The second is an increased awareness within popular and academic circles of postmodernism, which has led to an acceptance of cultural authority from many different areas of society, including that from individual artists active outside of centralised art communities. These chapters explored some of the techniques cultural pedagogy has used to open the habitus of each individual to a wide range of different fields within which she can affiliate herself. Integral to this process is the enhanced capacity of audiences to appreciate prints developed through the increased pedagogic role of galleries, art communities, regional councils, universities and tertiary institutions. To date, the significance of audience development in cultivating regional art markets and cultures has not been significantly explored, and this thesis provides the first exploration of the implication it has for how artists consider themselves and their practice. The studies contained in these chapters reveal that a significant factor in the development of regional women's printmaking practice is not the increased accessibility of economic markets and academic critique, but the ability to cultivate independent markets.

The influence of postmodernism on the Australian art industry means that artists can legitimately act independently of art institutions while remaining affiliated to these structures should they desire. This is the state of the artworld that is acknowledged by Bourdieu. Women printmakers who work in regional Australia are no longer faced with the decision to choose between regional or urban areas to market their work. They cultivate audiences and different markets and adapt techniques to suit their environment. They are aware of the contemporary role of traditional values, but are also acutely aware that there are many methods to support their practice that can be employed independently of a centralised artworld. Each of these methods contains its own legitimacy. The creation of this legitimacy is explored in the case studies of chapters three, four and five. Central to these studies is the way in which contemporary women printmakers in regional Australia have adapted the media of printmaking to suit their environment. Media such as digital printmaking, solarplate etching or drypoint made by electrical tools or graven onto glass expand the possibilities of printmaking as a technical process. But the most important factor has been how printmaking techniques and the
way prints are disseminated into the world serve to reflect women's own sense of place within the community, the artworld and their psychological and physical environments. The melding of domestic objects and art tools is a particular example of this, wherein kitchen objects, dental tools, farm equipment and food are used to inform the matrix within which women work. Increasingly, the development of regional printmaking is recognised by art institutions that have also adapted to accommodate the change to established ways of representing and examining art.

Uniting the perspectives of individuals and institutions, these case studies highlight contemporary innovations in practice and the shift in how women artists understand cultural place, while still portraying continuity with earlier histories of Australian women printmakers. Three prominent methods of contemporary regional printmaking practice were examined—institutional, independent and allied. The categories were loosely defined, reflecting the flexible and dynamic nature of regional printmaking. They were distinguished by the choices made by women printmakers to moderate or direct their practice towards a particular area or field of the art industry. These are grouped into areas that practised in reference to – but were not dependent on – dominant art institutional structures.

Chapter five addressed institutional printmakers. Women printmakers who consciously utilise institutional resources as one of the key features in their printmaking practice respond to the opportunities institutions present, deliberately presenting their work and their practice in synergy with the cultural values held by those institutions: adapting to different galleries, to public and private forms of patronage, to markets. Institutional printmakers are not just those 'recognised' by critics or cultural authorities through winning prizes, entering major collections or by being represented by major art dealers. They are teachers, technical assistants, government-funded workshop managers, art dealers and writers, who disseminate knowledge about printmaking throughout the country, using institutions to increasingly dissolve the boundaries between physical and conceptual geographies of value. The increase of women in this area is not simply a response to the institutional acceptance of women impelled by gender equity policies. It is a response to the expanding role of institutions in cultural development. The capital that emerged from university institutions also provides a status to printmakers emerging from the art school that accompanies them once they have graduated. The women printmakers who are involved with or are represented by these institutions reveal that it is the relationships that are formed between individuals that have facilitated some of the most important developments in regional printmaking over the last decade. The position of women printmakers in relation to these institutions appears to have stimulated
particular developments emphasising collaboration between individual artists that utilise institutional resources, but are not defined by them.

The examples discussed in this chapter make the case that printmakers from a wide variety of backgrounds can benefit from the critique, display, education and employment opportunities that art institutions (particularly art schools) can provide. Also explored is the fact that in fostering close relationships with art institutions, many printmakers find that their practice is limited by the structural or administrative demands of these institutions. Many women printmakers have much of the time they would devote to their practice stolen by administrative obligations, others have to commit to a further degree in order to gain access to secure, safe and continuous facilities, and still others have to present themselves in the art market in a way that may present their work as 'hobbyist', 'regional' or craft-oriented. The extended exploration of the printmaking practice of indigenous artist Judy Watson and of Barbie Kjar revealed that although close involvement with art institutions is a two-edged sword, artists who are well-acquainted with the processes of the art industry have the capacity to exploit its potential benefits and avoid many of its drawbacks. These two printmakers use the critique, marketing, learning and exhibition opportunities provided by the Australian artworld to assist full-time artistic practice. By cultivating specific public profiles, the two women can form strong artistic identities. For Watson, this profile is as an indigenous artist, and for Kjar it is a reputation as an artist inheriting rich traditions of European portraiture and surrealism. Both of these artists have secured a place within the artworld where their prints are not seen as secondary to painting, and the regional location in which many of them are produced does not alter their meaning. Instead, these artists have carefully cultivated a position within the Australian artworld where their work draws simultaneously on local and universal themes.

Women printmakers working closely with institutions are not simply acting within a static, governed environment, but are part of a larger integrated system that can stimulate change and alter dynamics of power. Chapter six discussed the features of independent printmaking that distinguish, but do not divorce, this style of practice from the art industry. Independent printmaking as a category distinguished in this thesis reflects the increasing capacity of women to cultivate their own style of practice and their own market, without relying on government support. Many women are able to develop printmaking along unusual and non-traditional lines, placing their own values before those of traditional art institutions. This is a subtle area of development in Australian printmaking. The printmakers involved generally have an entrepreneurial approach, controlling the dissemination, discourse and presentation of their work, but
moulding this in accordance with established economic and symbolic forms of capital encouraged by art institutions. Printmakers such as Jenny Clapson and Helen Geier were discussed in this chapter for the manner in which they use their institutional affiliations to promote their own work. Although this approach has met with criticism by those who believe the consecration of artists' work should be conveyed independently of the promotional activities of the artists themselves, by attempting to control the way their work is presented in the artworld, these printmakers can achieve an independence from the institutional control of artistic and cultural meaning. Artists such as Denise Campbell, Sarah Buchlar and Simona Piscioneri have printmaking practices that reveal that for many printmakers independence from reliance on institutions may lead to isolation or remoteness from many areas of the Australian artworld. The practice of Geier and Pickering, however, is critical in establishing that this isolation or dissociation is a matter of choice not necessity for printmakers who wish to maintain a sense of independence.

Choice is also one of the prominent features of allied forms of printmaking practice, an area of practice that is discussed in chapter seven. The choices made by printmakers who form alliances with institutions or individuals in institutions, however, involves a higher incidence of risk and compromise than that experienced by those pursuing institutional or independent forms of practice. Allied forms of practice are particularly strong in areas that have a high incidence of group support, or a tradition of group creative activity. Regional printmaking communities have increased significantly in number, particularly in areas where there is a strong emphasis on creativity, such as the Tweed Rivers region, Far North Queensland, south-coast Victoria and south-east Tasmania. Despite the benefits of companionship and a relative ease of access to equipment provided by these communities, however, it has been shown that many of the printmakers involved in these communities use the community as a base, but conceptualise their practice as inherently independent. One of the key reasons for this sense is illustrated by the case studies of Marion Manifold and Liz Deckers, as well as many of the other printmakers discussed in this chapter. The most important form of independence for these printmakers occurs with their initial distinction of their artistic identity from their domestic identity.

The fact that many of these printmakers maintain a relationship with an art institution (usually an art school or TAFE) is not the major influence on their practice as one would imagine. The women printmakers discussed in this chapter each experienced practices that were significantly influenced by the institutions with which they were affiliated. Vocational or university printmaking courses that closed down left
printmakers without access to equipment, the income to continue practising at the level they had and without many of the connections with other areas of the Australian artworld that they cultivated as teachers or technical assistants. Those who work in other areas of the art industry, such as in galleries or community workshops, found that although they were well-connected with the national art industry, much of their time was absorbed in administrative duties.

However, printmakers are naturally wary of forming dependence on institutions. Postgraduate study, part-time positions as teachers, small business and project grants and art prizes all provide women printmakers with a higher symbolic profile within the art industry, and these in turn may impact on their economic security for a time. The critical factor in contemporary regional printmaking cultures is that these printmakers have the knowledge and the confidence to access these resources to develop a sense of themselves as legitimate printmakers. They now employ strategies of practice that take advantage of institutional recognition, but can continue very well without it. Using alternative markets, participating in cyber communities and joining urban printmakers in forums and exchange projects throughout the country, printmakers who make alliances with institutions can extend their range of practice.

A central feature of this area of practice is that many aspects of it fall outside the areas of the artworld regularly mapped by contemporary art discourse. Allied printmaking can be therefore quite difficult to recognise. The analyses presented in this chapter discussed how groups such as C.A.S.E. in Mullumbimby form alliances with individuals in other institutions to extend the opportunities of artists and audiences to be exposed to a high level of technical expertise. A critical element of such alliances also presents institutional professional artists as possessing the same cultural value as regional, non-professional artists, a shift in concept that carries over to the confidence of the regional market. The various examples of practice and self-perception provided by printmakers and artists such as Jenny Clapson, Victoria Cooper, Alison Bartlett and Sharon O’Phee reflect that in many cases there are established cultural fields with which printmakers are expected to ally themselves. These printmakers are well aware that in many ways the continuity of their practice depends on achieving certain levels of recognition – from the regional gallery, from an art dealer, from a community of printmakers or from an academic review. For many, such as Bartlett and Clapson, there is not much of a choice between working towards the recognition and support of a particular art industry and working alone, even in isolation.
What is significant about contemporary practice, however, is that it is possible to make this choice without sacrificing printmaking. This area of printmaking is marked by those who adapt techniques, institutional and individual relationships, personal identity and even the meaning of the print to accommodate their regional and domestic situation. The work of Manifold and Deckers reveals that the prints produced by regional women printmakers when faced with adversity can redefine concepts of printmaking, the print and the printmaker. These two printmakers have used exploration of the body within specific cultural spaces to subvert institutional ordering of art and space. In many ways allied forms of practice are actually sensitive indicators of cultural change and the influence of cultural development. As they are not restricted to any one area of cultural production, the different modulations of this form of practice are difficult to assess, but vitally important to recognise.

The increase in women printmakers practising in regional Australia (and their increased profile) is therefore not simply a consequence of the expansion of educational and cultural facilities, but is also a result of the increased ability of regional printmakers to create alliances with cultural networks and discourse. These three ways of looking at contemporary printmaking have the advantage of examining it within a relatively fluid paradigm, one that is not formed on the basis of governed systems of economic or symbolic capital. The discussion in this thesis of the prints of the women printmakers under examination has implied that there are certain visual themes that are prominent in contemporary regional practice. These works have revealed that there is a strong awareness of the relationship between the body and its regional context. No firm conclusions can be drawn from this theme, as it is due to a wide range of factors, ranging from the intentions of the individual, to the lifestyle choices of printmakers in areas that encourage creative activity. An important reason for this theme is the fact that as one of the central aims of the thesis is to incorporate the personal perspective of the printmaker and their orientation within social and geographic space, specific works have been focused on that reflect this topic.

For many regional women printmakers, the issues affecting regional practice do not derive from their geographic position or cultural background. Their practice constantly confronts universal issues of access to equipment and materials, access to market and equitable representation within art discourse. More confronting for many, however, are the decisions that must be made in order to balance their printmaking practice with their personal lives. Women must negotiate a space of their own to practice in. Verandas, sheds and spare rooms all act as sites of practice, but due to their domestic position they compete with other responsibilities in the home. It is on the
domestic front that many women fight their first battle to establish the legitimacy of their practice. One of the critical aspects of allied printmaking is the construction of a neutral psychological space wherein printmakers can assess the forces influencing their practice, and utilise them without compromising their identity.

Contemporary regional women printmakers are situated within a field of cultural production that is rapidly evolving, and their understanding of the value of their work and practice is often accompanied by an uncertainty of their role within the Australian artworld. A constant element emphasised in these case studies is the risk associated with many forms of women’s printmaking practice: the risk of working in isolation, of being considered ‘peripheral’ or as craft workers, the risk of economic or artistic failure, are often a feature of literature on women printmakers. Another, often more influential risk, is the destabilization of traditional roles established by social mores and domestic position. The awareness of these risks has been integrated into the habitus of the artist through the acceptance of art traditions descending from European art institutions. The knowledge of how to subvert this institutionally-oriented system to the benefit of individual practice, however, has been implemented through the decentralisation of art institutions, and the shift in the cultural role of these institutions to suit the specific environment of Australia. Australian printmaking cannot be charted by place, style, gender or ethnicity; it should be conceptualised as occurring through a range of different choices and practical modalities. The analysis of the print itself, if examined together with practice, should rest above this substructure.

Contemporary printmaking practice in regional Australia by women is an area of art practice that continues even under the most adverse circumstances, with permutations that cannot always be recognised by traditional historical or cultural mapping techniques. The voice of regional women printmakers may not be heard within broader art discourses, but this does not mean that their creative voice is weak and illegitimate. Contemporary cultural development within the period 1993-2003 has meant that not only can these printmakers gain a stronger cultural presence for their work, but that they may also find new methods of legitimately integrating them into the art industry. A particular value in the approach proposed in this thesis is that it has applications for the examination of other neglected areas of art production, such as broader regional artistic practices and the work of migrant artists. The regional women printmakers discussed in this thesis now have a place on the map – a map of individuals and diversity, not of centres and peripheries.
Appendix I

Universities offering printmaking courses in 2003 (by State)

Key:  * indicates that the course was established in or after 1993.
      † indicates that the course has ceased.
      M indicates that the institution offers Masters by Research.
      D indicates that the institution offers Doctor of Philosophy by Research.

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian National University School of Art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NEW SOUTH WALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Sturt University Armadale</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Cross University Lismore</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wollongong Wollongong</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Western Sydney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Newcastle Newcastle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NORTHERN TERRITORY
Northern Territory University - renamed Charles Darwin University in 2004
Darwin
Alice Springs Annex

QUEENSLAND
James Cook University Townsville
Queensland College of Art, Griffith University Brisbane
University of Southern Queensland Toowoomba

SOUTH AUSTRALIA
South Australian School of Art
Adelaide
Adelaide Central School of Art Pty Ltd Adelaide

TASMANIA
University of Tasmania Hobart

VICTORIA
Ballarat University Horsham Ballarat Stawell
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deakin University</td>
<td>Geelong</td>
<td>M D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warrnambool</td>
<td>✽</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latrobe University</td>
<td>Bendigo</td>
<td>M D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mildura</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td>Gippsland</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caulfield</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chisholm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clayton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>M D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Melbourne</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>✽</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria University</td>
<td>Rusden</td>
<td>✽</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curtin University</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>M D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>✽</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edith Cowen University</td>
<td>Bunbury</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mt Lawley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Western Australia</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix II

TAFEs offering printmaking courses and modules in 2004 (by State)

Key: * indicates regional campuses.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Canberra Institute of Technology
Canberra

NEW SOUTH WALES

Charles Sturt University

*Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE
Wangaratta and Shepparton

Holmesglen Institute of TAFE
Chadston

*Hunter Institute of Technology

Illawarra Institute of TAFE
*Goulburn, Moss Vale and *Wollongong West

Midland College of TAFE

*New England Institute of TAFE

New England

*North Coast Institute of TAFE
North coast, New South Wales

Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE
Hornsby and Meadowbank

*Riverina Institute of TAFE
Albury

Southern Sydney Institute of TAFE

West Coast College of TAFE
Carine

*Western Institute of TAFE
Orange

Western Sydney Institute
Kingswood and Penrith

QUEENSLAND
*Bremer Institute of TAFE
Bremer

*South West Regional College of TAFE
Bunbury

Southbank Institute of TAFE

*Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE
Toowoomba

*Tropical North Queensland TAFE
Cairns

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Adelaide Central School of Art

Adelaide Institute of TAFE

*Great Southern Institute of TAFE
Katanning

*Ongaparinga Institute of TAFE
Ongaparinga

TASMANIA

*TAFE Tasmania

Burnie and Devonport

*TAFE Tasmania
Launceston

TAFE Tasmania
Hobart

VICTORIA

*Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE
Bendigo

Box Hill Institute of TAFE
Box Hill and Melbourne

*Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE
Yallourn Campus

Chisholm Institute of TAFE
Dandenong, Frankston and Moorabbin

*East Gippsland Institute of TAFE
Bairnsdale and Sale.

*Gordon Institute of TAFE
Geelong

Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE
Greensborough and Epping

267
*South West Institute of TAFE
   Warrnambool

*Sunraysia Institute of TAFE
   Mildura, Ouyen, Robinvale and Swan Hill

*Swinburne University of Technology (TAFE)
   Healseville, Lillydale, Prahran and Wantirna

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Central TAFE
   *Fremantle and Perth

Source: *Hudson’s University Guide*, 2004; NSW TAFE, SA TAFE website, TAFE Tasmania website, Victoria TAFE website.
Appendix III

Key educational reviews, reports and policies, 1985-2003


The Dawkins Amalgamations

The Dawkins 1988 Green Paper "Strengthening Australia's schools" initiated the restructuring of schooling to emphasis maths, science and technology within a national curriculum framework to streamline the process (Doug Boughton, "Shaping the National Curriculum," p. 24). The Dawkins Green Paper consequently led to the amalgamation of art and design schools, most of which were part of the former Colleges of Art Education.
sector into the university sector, reducing overhead costs and creating a streamlined standard of art education. Further discussion can be seen in G. Harman and V. L. Meek eds., *Australian Higher Education Reconstructed?*, Edward Peter Errington, ed., *Arts Education* and Malcolm Gillies and Australian Research Council Discipline Research Strategies, *Knowing Ourselves and Others*. During the years that followed, the number of art schools was reduced, consolidating printmaking workshops and techniques. This process is documented by the Australian Institute of Art Education’s *Australian Art Education: Journal of the Institute of Art Education*. 
Appendix IV

Key cultural policy reviews, reports and policies, 1993-2003


Appendix V

New South Wales TAFE printmaking units and modules, 1990 & 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institute</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Printmaking techniques offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armadale</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Institute of Technology, East Sydney</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Statement of Attainment</td>
<td>Relief, Intaglio, Serigraphy, lithography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Institute of Technology, East Sydney</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymea</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter Institute of Technology, Hamilton</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute of TAFE, Cooma</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1990                                           |                 |                            |                               |
| 2003                                           |                 |                            |                               |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institute</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Printmaking techniques offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hunter Institute of TAFE, Hunter</td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Goulburn</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Goulburn</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Goulburn</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate III (AQF)</td>
<td>Printmaking, general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Goulburn</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Goulburn</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Basic Skills – Statement of Attainment</td>
<td>Printmaking, general</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

275
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institute of TAFE, Moss Vale</th>
<th>Printmaking</th>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>intaglio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute of TAFE, Wollongong</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute of TAFE, Goulburn</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Associate Diploma</td>
<td>Printmaking I-IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute of TAFE, Goulburn</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE, Meadowbank</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Tamworth</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Associate Diploma</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Glen Innes</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Associate Diploma</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Statement of</td>
<td>Relief, Intaglio, Serigraphy,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Goulburn</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Goulburn</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Cooma</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Cooma</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Moruya</td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Wollongong</td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Wollongong</td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Certificate III (AQF)</td>
<td>Printmaking, general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Wollongong</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra Institute, Wollongong</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution, TAFE, Hornsby</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
<td>lithography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE, Hornsby</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaforth</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Screen Printing Techniques</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Institution, Wollongong       | I (AQF)      | printmaking                           |
| Illawarra Institute, Wollongong | Fine Arts   | Certificate III (AQF)                 |
| Illawarra Institute, Wollongong | Fine Arts   | Diploma (AQF)                         |
|                               | Visual Arts  | Basic Skills – Statement of Attainment (AQF) |
|                               | Visual Arts  | Relief & intaglio printmaking          |
|                               | Visual Arts  | Relief & intaglio printmaking          |
|                               | Visual Arts  | Relief & intaglio printmaking          |

| St George New England Aboriginal Certificate Relief & intaglio | Certificate II (AQF) |

| Sydney Institute of Technology, St George | Relief & intaglio printmaking |
| New England Institute of TAFE, Armidale | Visual Arts |
| New England Institute of TAFE, Armidale | Visual Arts |
| New England Institute of TAFE, Armidale | Visual Arts |
| New England Institute of TAFE, Armidale | Visual Arts |

| Western Institute of TAFE, Forbes       | Relief & intaglio printmaking |
| Western Institute of TAFE, Dubbo         | Relief & intaglio printmaking |

| Western Institute of TAFE, Dubbo         | Relief & intaglio printmaking |
| Western Institute of TAFE, Dubbo         | Relief & intaglio printmaking |

277
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institute of TAFE, Orange</th>
<th>Art</th>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>intaglio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, Penrith</td>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Moree</td>
<td>Printmaking II, printmaking III, printmaking IV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Moree</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Moree</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Moree</td>
<td>Relief, serigraph, intaglio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Tamworth</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Tamworth</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Tamworth</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Institute of TAFE, Tamworth</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate III (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Coast Institute, Coffs Harbour</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

278
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institute, Arts II (AQF) printmaking</th>
<th>Arts</th>
<th>II (AQF)</th>
<th>Printmaking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Coast Institute, Maclean</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
<td>Printmaking I 4461EC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Coast Institute, Great Lakes</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Coast Institute, Great Lakes</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Coast Institute, Lismore</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Coast Institute, Lismore</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Institute, Meadowbank</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Institute, Meadowbank</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Institute, Hornsby</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Institute, Hornsby</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Institute, Hornsby</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Course Type</td>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td>Printmaking Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Albury</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Albury</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Albury</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate III</td>
<td>Printmaking, general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Corowa</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Coomealla</td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Certificate II</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Tumut</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Tumut</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate III</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Tumut</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Tumut</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Wagga</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Wagga</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

280
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wagga Wagga</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Wagga Wagga</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Wagga Wagga</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Campbelltown</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Campbelltown</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Ultimo</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Bathurst</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverina Institute, Bathurst</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate III (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Broken Hill</td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Broken Hill</td>
<td>Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Practices</td>
<td>Certificate III (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Broken Hill</td>
<td>Practices</td>
<td>Certificate Level (AQF)</td>
<td>Printmaking Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Broken Hill</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Basic Skills – Statement of Attainment (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Dubbo</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Dubbo</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate III (AQF)</td>
<td>Printmaking, general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Dubbo</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Nepean</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Orange</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepean Western Institute, Orange</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (AQF)</td>
<td>Relief &amp; intaglio printmaking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

282
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institute, Nepean</th>
<th>(AQF)</th>
<th>printmaking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Nepean</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma (AQF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Nepean</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate I (AQF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Institute, Nepean</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Certificate II (AQF)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix VI

Curriculum Vitae of selected printmakers

Liz Deckers

Education

2004  Southern Cross University, BA of Visual Arts with Honours
2003  Certificate IV:
       Train small groups
       Plan and promote training program
       Plan, conduct and review assessment
2002  Southern Cross University, BA of Visual Arts
1981  St. Lucas Institute of the Arts, Belgium, BA, 1 year completed
1980  Art Academy of Antwerp, Belgium, BA, 1 year completed
1979  Chicago Arts Institute, USA, Mixed Media Course
1978  St. Lucas Institute of the Arts, Belgium, High School Diploma

Solo Exhibitions

2003  A Perfect Fit, Regional Gallery, Lismore

Group Exhibitions

2005  Print Night and Inaugural Print Day, Grafton Regional Gallery, Grafton
       Sample 2, Next Gallery, Byron Bay
2004  Jacaranda Drawing Acquisitive Prize Exhibition, Regional Gallery, Grafton
       Rush, Campus Central Student Art Award, Next Gallery, Lismore
       National Tertiary Art Prize Exhibition, Powerhouse Gallery, Invermay Tasmania
       Blackfriars Drawing Acquisitive Exhibition, Art Gallery Civic Centre, Wagga Wagga
       Summer Show, Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby
       Vox, Southern Cross University, Lismore
       Trial Run: Susannah Pohlen and Liz Deckers, Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby
       Chapter II, an Artists’ Book Exhibition, Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby
       Feminisms, Next Gallery, Lismore

2003  Piece on Earth, Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby
       CPM National Print Awards, Tweed River Regional Gallery, Murwillumbah
       Objects of Desire, an Artists’ Book Exhibition, Byron Fine Art Gallery, Byron Bay

Professional Experience

2004  Tutor, TAFE/Get Skilled Course, Basic Relief
       Curator of Chapter II, an Artists’ Book Exhibition, Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby
Curator of *Summer Show*, Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby
Technical Assistant, TAFE/Get Skilled Course, Printmaking
Curator of *100 postcards of Mullumbimby*, community art show, Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby

2002-2005 Studio manager, executive member and co-curator of c.a.s.e., running a not for profit print studio and art gallery in Mullumbimby

1998-2002 Community Printmakers Murwillumbah, committee member.

**Awards, Prizes and Residencies**

2005 Bundanon Residency

2004 Jacaranda Acquisitive Drawing Award, Grafton Regional Gallery, Acquisition Prize
Outstanding Achievement in Visual Arts, SCU Cultural Award
Outstanding Achievement in the Arts in the Community, SCU Cultural Award
Rush, Campus Central Student Award, Encouragement Award, SCU
National Tertiary Art Prize 2004, Painting/Printmaking section: First Prize

2002 Kaske Award, SCU

**Collections**

2004 Grafton Regional Gallery
Helen Geier

Education

Diploma of Art (Education), National Art School, Sydney
1996-98 Master of Arts (Fine Art) by Research, RMIT, Melbourne
1972-73 Certificate of Post Graduate Studies, St Martin’s School of Art, London
1969 Teacher’s Certificate, Alexander Mackie Teacher’s College, Sydney

Solo Exhibitions

1998 Expanded Field, Oedipus Rex Gallery, Auckland, NZ.
1997 Two Worlds Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne
Perspective and Chance Connections, Latrobe Regional Art Gallery, Morwell, Victoria
Helen Geier, Painting and Works on Paper, Bega Valley Regional Art Gallery, Bega
1996 Perspective and Chance Connections, The Substation, Singapore
1995 Experiments and Games of Chance, Beaver Galleries, Canberra
1994 Perspective ... The very soul of painting, Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne
Parallel Perceptions, William Heinemann book launch with Rhyll McMaster, Fire Station Gallery, Sydney
Recent Works, Anima Gallery Adelaide
1993 Perspectives, Ben Grady Gallery, Sydney
1992 Space and Structure, survey exhibition, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, Goulburn, NSW
The Crawford Gallery, Sydney
1991 Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne
1990 Robert Steele Gallery, Adelaide
1988 10 Year Survey, Canberra Contemporary Art Space
1987 Anima Gallery, Adelaide
1986 Coventry Gallery, Sydney
1985 Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne
Michael Milburn Gallery, Brisbane
1984 Solander Gallery, Canberra
1982 Axiom Gallery, Canberra
1981 Huntly Gallery, Canberra
1980 Axiom Gallery, Melbourne
1978 Powell Street, Melbourne
1977 Huntly Gallery, Canberra
1976 Rex Irwin Gallery, Sydney
1974 Bonynthon Gallery, Sydney
Print Editions


Workshops/Lectures

1998 *Mapping the landscape* Singapore artists eight day fieldtrip and workshop, Braidwood, NSW.

1997 *Perspective and Chance Connections* public lecture and collaborative installation workshop, Latrobe Regional Art Gallery, Morwell *Cultural Intersections and chance connections*, Canberra School of Art. ANU. *Tracing thought patterns*, Monash University, Melbourne.

1994 *Cultural intersections*, public lecture, Bega Valley Regional Art Gallery *Patterning* lecture, Goulburn TAFE.


Awards and Grants

1999 Australia Day Inaugural Cultural Achievement Award
1997 Canberra Times Artist of the Year Perspective ad chance collections installation workshop funded by Sidney Myer Foundation

1996 Cultural Council of the ACT Government Artist’s Project Grant
1995 Cultural Council of the ACT Government joint grant. Nomination Canberra Times Artists of the Year

1993 Prime Painting Prize, Highly commended, Newcastle Regional Art Gallery

1991 Capital Arts Patrons organisation fellowship, Canberra Critics’ circle award, Richmond Purchase prize

1986 Matarra Festival of Newcastle, Peter Sparks Memorial Prize
1982 National Art Award, Canberra Times
Selected Bibliography


Peter Haynes, exhibition commentary, *Art & Australia*, vol. 55, no. 2.

Sasha Grishin, “Provocative and rich in beauty,” *Canberra Times*, March.


Rhyll McMaster, *Perspectives*, exhibition catalogue.

Collections

Artbank  Hugh Young Collection
Australian National University LASALLE – SIA Contemporary Art Collection
Ballarat Fine Art Gallery National Gallery of Australia
Bank of Melbourne National Gallery of Victoria
Canberra College of Advanced National Library of Australia
Education Newcastle Region Art Gallery
Canberra Institute of the Art Collection Parliament House Collection
Clark Hummerston Collection The Phillip Morris Collection
Coventry Collections Richmond City Council Collection
Geelong Art Gallery Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Collection
Goulburn Regional Art Gallery St Edmund’s College Collection
Griffith University Collection Warrnambool Art Gallery
Holme-a-Court Collection
Barbie Kjar

Education
2002 Master of Fine Arts, RMIT, Melbourne
1987 Bachelor of Fine Arts, University of Tasmania, Hobart
1975 Bachelor of Education, University of Tasmania, Hobart

Solo Exhibitions
2002 *Los Semblantes/The Faces*, University of Tasmania.
2001 *Entre cielo y tierra*, Helen Maxwell Gallery, Canberra.
1995 Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne.
1994 Grahame Galleries, Brisbane.
1993 AGOG, Canberra.
1991 Devenport Gallery & Arts Centre, Devonport.
1987 *Salamanca Place Gallery (Dick Bett)*, Hobart.
1986 *Salamanca Place Gallery (Dick Bett)*, Hobart.

Group Exhibitions
1998 *Bolder Bags and Old Baggage*, collaboration between artists and Health Department, Hobart. Curated by Sue Moss, Schoolhouse Gallery, Rosney, Tasmania.
1997 *Borge’s Bestiary*, 3 person exhibition, Grahame Galleries & Editions, Brisbane.
1987 *Decalogue: A Catalogue of Ten Years of Australian Printmaking*, co-

**Fremantle Print Prize**, exhibition finalist, Fremantle, WA.

**Collector's Print Folio**, Dick Bett Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania.

**Fremantle Print Prize**, exhibition finalist, Western Australia.

**Alice Prize**, exhibition finalist, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

**Hobart City Art Prize** (Printmaking Category), Carnegie Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania.

**Fremantle Print Prize**, exhibition finalist, Fremantle, WA.

**Alice Prize**, exhibition finalist, Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, Northern Territory.

**Hobart City Art Prize** (Printmaking Category), Carnegie Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania.


**Upbeat**, Dick Bett Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania.

**Tripping the Light**, curated by Robyn Daw, University of Tasmania, Launceston.

1996

**Poets & Painters Exhibition**, collaboration with Sue Moss, Salamanca Writers Festival, Hobart.

**Pulp**, curated by Michael Edwards, Burnie Regional Art Gallery, Tasmania.

**National Print Exhibition**, University of Western Sydney, NSW.

**27th Alice Prize**, Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs.


1995


**Art, Gender, Identity, women artists from the permanent collection**, Devonport Gallery.

**Colonial Past-time to Contemporary Profession, 150 years of Australian Women's Art from the Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery Collection**, Hobart.

**Poets & Painters Exhibition**, collaboration with Margaret Scott, Dick Bett Gallery.

**Figure & Ground**, curated by Ray Arnold, Dick Bett Gallery, Hobart.

**Dualism**, tapestry collaboration with Sarah Lindsay, touring galleries Tasmania, Victoria & Western Australia.

**Alice Prize Exhibition**, Alice Springs.

**Hobart City Art Prize Exhibition**, Hobart.

1994

**Island**, Long Gallery, Hobart.

**Gold Coast Art Award**, Surfers Paradise, Queensland.

**Fremantle Print Prize Exhibition**, Fremantle WA, Artists for Mt Wellington, Long Gallery, Hobart.

1993

**Barbie Kjar, Tim Maguire & Tom Samek**, Dick Bett Gallery, Hobart.

**Fremantle Print Prize Exhibition**, Fremantle WA.

**Alice Prize Exhibition**, Alice Springs.

1992

**Antarctica Fax Exhibition**, Curated by Kevin Todd, Launceston.

1991


**Entrepot Gallery**, Centre for the Arts, University of Tasmania, Hobart.

1990

**9th Biennial Print Exhibition**, Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre, Victoria.

**Contemporary Printmakers**, Gallery Cimitiere, Launceston.
When the Boat Comes In, Entrepot Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart.
1988
Landfall, Chameleon Contemporary Art Space, Hobart.
1987
Hystericl Perspectives, Chameleon Contemporary Art Space, Hobart.
1984
Printmakers Exhibition, Chameleon Contemporary Art Space, Hobart.

Grants and Awards

1999
Conrad Jupiter Art Prize, Queensland
1998
Project Grant, Arts Tasmania, Hobart Tasmania
1997
Artist-in-Residence, Canberra School of Art
1995
Devonport Health Centre Commission
Gladstone Art Prize for Works on Paper, Queensland
Project Grant, Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board, Hobart
1994
The Bill Board Project, Trades Labour Council, Tasmania
1993
Eskeleigh Art Award, Tasmania (Works on Paper)
1992
Trust Bank Art Award, Launceston (Print Prize)
1991/92
Project grant, Visual Arts and Crafts Board Australia Council
Artist-in-Residence, International Print Studio, Barcelona, Spain
1988/89
Project grant, Visual Arts and Crafts Board Australia Council, Sydney
1987/88
Artist Development Grant, Tasmania Arts Advisory Board, Hobart
Artist-in-Residence, Kala Print Workshop, Berkeley, California, USA

Bibliography

1998
Michael Denholm, Periphery, Surveying Tasmania’s Art, No.34, p. 18-20.
Ruth Johnstone and Di Waite, Decalogue: A Catalogue of Ten Years of
Australian Printmaking, Metropolitan Museum of Seoul, Korea.
1997
Sasha Grishin, Australian Printmaking in the 1990’s: Artist Printmakers
Siglo, Spring/Summer Issue 9, p13.
Australian Literary Review, May (cover image).
Fremantle Print Prize, exhibition catalogue (image reproduced).
1995
Review, The Mercury, October.
1994
Dick Bett Newsletter, No.24.
Fremantle Print Prize, catalogue.
Gold Coast City Art Prize, catalogue.
Review, Canberra Times, 25 March.
1993
Grahame Galleries and Editions, Prints, Brisbane.
1992
Jules Carroll, ISIS: Newsletter for the Office of the Status of Women,
Tasmania.
1991
Imprint, Postcards from a Dream, (curated project), Vol.26, No.2.
Preludes 7, (cover illustration), University of Tasmania, Hobart.
1990
1988  *The Sunday Tasmanian*, (feature article), 10 January.

**Collections**

Artbank
Arts Tasmania
Australian National Gallery
Canberra
Devonport Art Gallery
Hobart Fine Arts Committee
Launceston Public Buildings Scheme 1991
Parliament House, Canberra
Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery
Queensland University of Technology
Rosny College
Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery
The Tamar Collection
University of Southern Queensland
University of Tasmania
and private collections in Australia, New Zealand, USA, England and Europe
Marion Manifold

Education

2001  PhD, Deakin University, Warrnambool.
1996  Bachelor of Arts with Honours, Deakin University,
1978  Higher Diploma of Teaching (SAC), Melbourne State College

Solo Exhibitions

2004  *Lace Trimmings* Stonington Stables, Melbourne
       *Raby's World.* Doll's House, 108 Miller St. Preston
2003  'Of Essence and Lace Trimmings' Fremantle Arts Centre.
2001  *'Sub rosa'* Glen Eira City Gallery
2000  *'Sub rosa'* Warrnambool Art Gallery
1997  George Lance Print Gallery, Warrnambool Gallery
1996  Glenample Homestead, Princetown

Selected Group Exhibitions

2004  *Warrnambool Art Gallery Award: New Social Commentaries,*
       Warrnambool Art Gallery
       *Lace Trimmings,* The Stables, Deakin Museum of Art
       *Seeing Red,* Maroondah Art Gallery
       *23,* Port Jackson Press & La Trobe University, Bendigo
       *The Hutchins Art Prize*
2003  *Geelong Print Award*
       *Flying Carpet,* International Travelling Exhibition.
       *The Hutchins Art Prize*
2002  *Silk Cut Award*
       Customs House Gallery, Warrnambool
       *The Hutchins Art Prize*
2001  *Shell Fremantle Print Award*
       *Allure. The Feminine in Print,* Maroondah Art Gallery.
       *The Hutchins Art Prize*
2000  *Figure, Fashion & Fetish,* Warrnambool Gallery
       *Shell Fremantle Print Award*
1999  *Shell Fremantle Print Award*
1997  *Rena Ellen Jones Memorial Print Award*
       *Geelong Print Award*
1990  *Women Artists of the South-West,* Customs House Gallery,
       Warrnambool

Teaching

2002-4  Deakin University

Awards
2002  Silk Cut Award. Commended by Judge, Bruno Leti.
2001  Shell Fremantle Print Award. Winner
2000  Shell Fremantle Print Award. Runner up
1998-2001  Deakin University Postgraduate Scholarship
1996  Canson Student Print Encouragement Award
1994  Darrian Prize for Painting. Deakin University

Judging

2003  Shell Fremantle Print Award

Bibliography

2000  Andrew Clark, “Beyond the Farm”, *The Age*, 10 June.

Collections

The City of Fremantle
Deakin University Museum of Modern Art
Warrnambool City Gallery
and private collections in Australia.
Susan (Sue) Pickering

Education

1994 M.F.A.D., Tasmanian School of Art.
1991 Bachelor of Fine Arts (1st Class Honours), Tasmanian School of Art.

Solo Exhibitions

2002 *From the Sky*, Port Jackson Press, Melbourne
1996 *Queen Vic Cafe Show*, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.

Group Exhibitions

2004 *Images of Tasmania 7*, Long Gallery, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart.
*Hutchins Art Prize*, Long Gallery, Hobart.
*New Wave*, The Print Room, Port Jackson Press, Melbourne.
*From a Constructed Tasmanian World*, Port Jackson Press, Armadale, Victoria.
*2004 Shell Fremantle Print Award*, Fremantle Arts Centre.
*Sequence*, 10th anniversary exhibition of the Fern Tree Printmakers, curated by Milan Milojevic, Carnegie Gallery, Hobart.
*Swan Hill Regional Gallery Print and Drawing Awards*, Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery.

*Essence;* The Fern Tree Printmakers at the Rosny Schoolhouse Gallery.
*Island Art Prize*, Stanley Artworks, Stanley.
*Raw Art*, Convent Gallery, Daylesford.

2002 *Images of Tasmania 5*, Long Gallery, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart.
*Fluent*, Susan Pickering and Bill Thomas at the Devonport Regional Gallery.
*The 2002 SILK CUT Acquisitive Award for Linocut Prints*, Glen Eira City Gallery.
*Homage*, Handmark Gallery, Hobart.
*With a French Accent*, Despard Gallery, Hobart.
*Crossroads*, Broken Hill City Art Gallery.
*Confluence*, Warrnambool Regional Art Gallery.

*Hutchins Art Prize*, Long Gallery, Hobart.
*Confluence*, the Fern Tree Printmakers at the Devonport Regional Gallery.
*Food in Art*, Devonport Regional Gallery.
*Concurrent*, Port Jackson Press, Melbourne.

Melbourne Artfair 2000, Royal Exhibition Buildings, Melbourne.
Artists' Botanica, Discovery Centre, Botanical Gardens, Hobart.
2000 Shell Fremantle Print Award, Fremantle Arts Centre.
The 2000 SILK CUT Acquisitive Award for Linocut Prints, Glen Eira City Gallery.

1999/2000
Images 2 of Tasmania, Long Gallery, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart.

1999
Rena Ellen Jones Memorial Print Award, Warrnambool Art Gallery.
Hutchins School Art Prize, Hutchins School.
Leaves, Handmark Gallery, Hobart.
N/S art, Nisart, Launceston; Discovery Centre, Botanical Gardens, Hobart.
1999 Shell Fremantle Print Award, Fremantle Arts Centre.
Geelong Print Prize Exhibition, Geelong Art Gallery.
Illawarra Print Awards, Illawarra Grammar School, Wollongong.

1998
The 1998 SILK CUT Acquisitive Award for Linocut Prints, Glen Eira City Gallery.
1998 Shell Fremantle Print Award, Fremantle Arts Centre.
Imposition, Devonport Gallery and Arts Centre; Handmark Galleries, Hobart.
From Stone to Digital, Nisart, Launceston.
Images of Tasmania, Long Gallery, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart.
Winter Here, Winter There, Sidewalk Gallery, Hobart; Studio One Gallery, Canberra.

1997
Rena Ellen Jones Memorial Print Award, Warrnambool Art Gallery.
Undergrowth, Sidewalk Gallery, Hobart; Nisart, Launceston.

1996
Duodecimo 2, Gallery 2, Launceston.
OS, Burnie Coastal Art Group, Burnie; Sidewalk Gallery, Hobart.
View landscape, Burnie Regional Art Gallery.
UWS Macarthur National Printmedia Acquisitive 1996.

1995
Duodecimo, Entrepot, Tasmanian School of Art, Gallery 2, Launceston.
The 7NT Tasmanian Art Exhibition 1995, Burnie Regional Art Gallery.

1994
Exhibition of Masters Submissions, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart.

1993
Rotary Art Exhibition, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart.
Canson Student Print Awards; COFA Gallery, Sydney, The Australian Print Workshop, Melbourne.

1992
Rotary Art Exhibition, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart.
All Inked Up, Designer/Maker's Co-op, Hobart.

1991
First Editions, Entrepot, Tasmanian School of Art.
Inaugural Trust Bank Print Awards, Launceston.
Canson Student Print Awards, Melbourne.
Exhibition of work by Honours Students, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart.

1990
Canson Student Print Awards, Melbourne.
Rotary Art Exhibition, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart.
Professional Experience in Fine Arts

1995 - 1998  Board Member, Contemporary Art Services Tasmania.

Scholarships

1992  Commonwealth Postgraduate Course Award.
1971  Commonwealth Scholarship for tertiary studies.

Awards and Commissions

2004  Arts Tasmania, Natural and Cultural Residency
2001  Arts Tasmania, Artists' Development Program.
1999  Rena Ellen Jones Memorial Print Award 1999 (acquired)
      Goddard Sapin-Jaloustre Scholarship
      Arts Tasmania, Artists’ Development Program.
      Print Council of Australia Member Print Commission.
      Geelong Print Prize (acquired).
      Bundanon Trust Residency (member of group application).
1997  Rena Ellen Jones Memorial Print Award 1997 (acquired).
1994  VACB, Australia Council professional development grant (member of
group application).
1992  Dante Alighieri Society Prize.
1991  University Medal in Fine Arts.
1990  Mount Nelson Prize in Art.

Bibliography

      16-17.
      Art Monthly, August 1998, p 12. (illustrated)
      8.
1996  Diana Klaosen, “Fern Tree Printmakers Now”, Imprint, 31, no. 2,
      p. 20.
1995  “Introduction”, Art of Reproduction, exhibition catalogue, Plimsoll
      Gallery, University of Tasmania, pp. 9-15.
      Diana Klaosen, “Review, Duodecimo: Prints by the Fern Tree
      Printmakers”, Imprint, 30, no. 4, p. 16.
1991  Anne Connors, review of Canson Student Print Prize, Imprint, 26,
      no. 4, p. 7.
Collections

Art Gallery of South Australia
Artsbank
Bathurst Regional Art Gallery
Brisbane Grammar
Bundanon Trust
Burnie Regional Art Gallery
Canson Australia Pty Ltd
City of Fremantle Arts Centre
City of Whitehorse
Devonport Gallery and Arts Centre
Dowlands College, Toowoomba
Geelong Art Gallery
Goldcoast City Art Gallery
Grafton Regional Art Gallery
Hutchins School, Hobart
Kooweerup Secondary College
Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School
Presbyterian Ladies' College
Print Council of Australia
Printmaking Department, Carrington Smith Library, Tasmanian School of Art
Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery
Queensland University of Technology
St Catherine's School, Melbourne
Sydney Church of England Grammar School
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery
Vermont Secondary College
Warrnambool Art Gallery
Wesley College, Prahran

and private collections in Australia, Europe and USA.
Judy Watson

Education

1986 Graduate Diploma in Visual Arts, Monash University, Gippsland
1982 Bachelor of Fine Arts, University of Tasmania, Hobart
1979 Diploma of Creative Arts, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2004 Swallowing Culture, Bellas Milani Gallery, Brisbane.
2003-2004 Sacred Ground Beating Heart: works by Judy Watson 1989-2003,
Asialink Travelling Tour, Saigon South Arts Centre, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam,
Finomenal Space, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Cultural Centre of the Philippines,
Manila, The Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane.
2002 Judy Watson, Monash University Centre, Prato, Italy.
1997 Running Water Works, Fisher Gallery, Manakau City, Aotearoa,
New Zealand.
1994 Untitled, Dhoomimal Gallery, New Delhi, India.
1993 The Artist's Studio, Art Gallery of New South Wales.
1990 Groundwork, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane.

Selected Group Exhibitions

2004 Place Made: Australian Print Workshop, National Gallery of Australia,
Canberra.
2004 Contemporary Australian Prints from the Collection, Art Gallery of
New South Wales, Sydney.
2001-2002 16th Asian International Art Exhibition, Guangdong Museum of Art,
Guangzhou, China.
2001-2003 Imaging identity & place, touring exhibition: Grafton Regional Gallery,
Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Goulburn
Regional Art Gallery, Manly Art Gallery & Museum, Orange Regional
Gallery, Bendigo Art Gallery, Albury Regional Gallery, Tweed River
Regional Art Gallery, Campbelltown Regional Gallery, Gold Coast City
Art Gallery, Tamworth City Gallery, Carnegie Gallery, Hobart.
2000 Side by Side, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth.
1999 Landscapes in Sets & Series: Australian Prints 1960's - 1990's,
National Gallery of Australia & national tour.
1995 The Right to Hope, Johannesburg Art Gallery, South Africa.
Selected Bibliography

“Judy Watson”, *Australian Art Collector*, January-March, pp.103.


Selected Collections

Art Gallery of New South Wales
British Museum, London
Museum of Modern Art, New York
National Museum of Australia
National Gallery of Victoria
National Gallery of Australia
Bibliography

Interviews, correspondence and survey submissions:


Bartlett, Alison, interview with the author, Toowoomba, Queensland, 9 October 2002.

Boag, Adele, interview with the author, Hahndorf, Adelaide Hills, South Australia, 2 November 2002.


Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, interview with the author, Murwillumbah, New South Wales, 5 October 2002.

Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah, survey submissions, December-January 2001-02.


Fern Tree Printmakers, survey submission, December 2001.

Geier, Helen, interview with the author, Braidwood, New South Wales, 10 September 2001.

Green, Kaye, interview with the author, Hobart, Tasmania, 3 December 2002.

Greenaway, Paul, correspondence with the author, 6 January 2004.

Hall, Rita, interview with the author, Adelaide Hills, South Australia, 2 November 2002.

Killeen, Fatima, interview with the author, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 28 August 2002.

Kjar, Barbie, interview with the author, Hobart, Tasmania, 4 December 2002.

Lankester, Jo, interview with the author, Townsville, Queensland, 20 October 2002

Larner, Bronwyn, interview with the author, Lismore, Queensland, 3 October 2002.

Lord, Anne, interview with the author, Townsville, Queensland, 22 October 2002.

McKay, Kirsten, interview with the author, Castlemaine, Victoria, 13 December 2002.

Manifold, Marion, interview with the author, Camperdown, Victoria, 20 September 2003.

Ogden, Annette, interview with the author, Brisbane, Queensland, 11 October 2002.

Perry, Peter, interview with the author, Castlemaine, Victoria, 13 December 2002.

Pickering, Susan, interview with the author, Fern Tree, Hobart, 4 December 2002.
Porter, Christine, interview with the author, Lismore, New South Wales, 1 October 2002.

Purves, Stuart, telephone interview with the author, 14 March 2005.

Sankey, Olga, interview with the author, Adelaide, South Australia, 4 November 2002.

Saunders, Robyn, interview with the author, Murwillumbah, New South Wales, 6 October 2002.


Spurrier, Stephen, interview with the author, Toowoomba, Queensland, 10 October 2002.

Summerfield, Rochelle, interview with the author, 4 October 2002.

Wright, Melissa, interview with the author, Brunswick Heads, New South Wales, 3 October 2002.

Selected bibliography


Bowles, Carrington, *All Draughtsmen's Assistant or Drawing Made Easy*, London: Sayer and Bennett, 1770, frontispiece.


*Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah newsletter*, 5, 1994, np.


Fink, Hannah, Victoria Lynn et al., "From the ground up," Green Point: Moet & Chandon, 1996.


——, Southern Highlands Printmakers Come to Town, Campbelltown: Campbelltown Regional Art Gallery, 2005.


Haynes, Peter, Dissolving View: The intellectual landscape of Helen Geier, Canberra: Canberra Museum and Art Gallery; ANU School of Art, 2000.


______, South Australian Women Artists: Paintings from the 1890s to the 1940s, Adelaide: Art Gallery Board of South Australia, 1994.


King, Grahame, "Printmakers: An Exhibition Arranged under the Auspices of NGV, CAE, Education Department of Victoria and PCA," Melbourne: PGC; NGV.


313


Northern Territory University, *Art and Place: Collecting Contemporary Art at Northern Territory University*, Darwin: Northern Territory University, 1999, p. 7.


Smith, Sydney Ure, Australian Present Day Art, Sydney: Sydney Ure Smith, 1943.


_____, "In Awe of the Plate? On the Contrary!," *Community Printmakers of Murwillumbah newsletter*, issue 7/8, 1994, np.


University Museums Review Committee, *Cinderella Collections: University Museums & Collections in Australia* Canberra: Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee, 1996.

University of Melbourne, *Curiosity: 150 Years of Collecting at the University of Melbourne*, Melbourne: Ian Potter Museum of Art, 2003;


Waterlow, Nick, *Seven*, Ivan Doherty Gallery: College of the Arts, University of Sydney, 1992, np.


