

Huw Davies Gallery

6 March - 4 April 2020

Re-Generations

Elise Searson, Helga Salwe, Suellen Cook, Tricia King and Tamara Whyte. Curation by Hilary Wardhaugh in collaboration with PhotoAccess.



Image credit: Elise Searson, *Mother One*, Digital Scan, 2019

Drawing together five female artist photographers from around Australia, *Re-Generations* investigates experiences of personal growth, self-making and metamorphosis. Exposing inheritances of trauma, the possibilities of family and the legacies of inter-generational memory, the exhibition presents a nuanced look at the possibilities of female lives today.

These artists were selected from the 2019 Loud and Luminous finalists to receive an award stipend to produce new work for *Re-Generations*.

Celebrating Contemporary Australian Women Photographers

'Regeneration', although a noun, could more aptly be understood as a verb. It is the process by which renewal, restoration and replenishment takes place. In essence it is about growth and metamorphosis, the journey towards improvement. Yet this process is not a passive one, it doesn't happen 'to us' so much as 'by us'. Regeneration is an action - intentional and determined. In both nature and history it is born of the necessity to rejuvenate that which is no longer viable.

The *Re-Generations* exhibition makes reference to this process as well as serving as a timely example of the action required to generate change. For more generations than can be remembered women artists have been active, complex and nuanced contributors to the artistic narrative. Yet their voices have all too often been relegated to the margins, overshadowed by society's celebration of the artistic achievements of their male counterparts. I never cease to wonder how the perspectives of half the human population could be so easily dismissed.

The *Re-Generations* exhibition is an initiative that seeks to shed light on the artistic careers of five contemporary Australian women photographers. These women come from all corners of the Australian continent, each with their own unique background, histories, stories and perspectives. Their individual approaches to the artistic medium of photography are equally as complex and diverse. Chosen from the 100 finalists in the 2019 Loud and Luminous exhibition, they have each been invited to develop a series of new works - specifically for this exhibition - that represent their individual directions as some of today's most relevant Australian photographers.

The works of these five artists reflect the breadth and depth of photographic practice in Australia today. The diversity of each artist's style and the subjects they have chosen to investigate provide us with an opportunity to engage with a world both within and beyond the everyday. Each of these artists invites us to stop, to look closer and to question our responses to what we find.

The photo documentary work of Helga Salwe brings an exquisite sensibility to the depiction of her subjects. Her documentation of humanity spans the globe and yet it is the little details she captures, hiding in the everyday moments of her subjects, that brings such potency and richness to her work.

Tamara Whyte, a Indigenous artist from far North Queensland also adds a very important voice to this exhibition. A descendant of the Warrgamay people of coastal north Queensland and with a Vanuatuan ancestry, Whyte's work explores key themes close to her heart of identity, resilience and sovereignty. Shot on Country, Whyte's video work is an extension of her background in both photographic and video documentary practice.

The artists Suellen Cook and Elise Searson each draw on personal narratives within their work, yet they each do so from completely different perspectives. Cook's evocative landscapes are like a series of poetic metaphors, symbolic of the private yearnings that exist within each of us. They are filled with a sense of longing and beauty - a stillness where contemplation can hold an ocean in a single moment.

In Searson's poignant body of work we see a powerful visual expression of her intensely personal story around the complex experience of motherhood. A fearless reflection of truth that reminds us all that universal human experience is lived by individuals and there are many stories to be told.

The social documentary work of Tricia King explores the importance of memories as a place where identity and meaning can be rediscovered and shared. Her powerful photographic portraits of older Australian women living in aged care, embody the very notion of 'regeneration' for people who so often feel forgotten and isolated from their loved ones and former lives.

Curated by Hilary Wardhaugh in collaboration with the team at PhotoAccess, *Re-Generations* is an exhibition that seeks to highlight the excellence in Australian art being produced by women photographers across the country. These works present us with an opportunity to engage in conversation about the stories, issues and ideas that matter to us. Through initiatives such as this we can all play a part in redefining the framework by which we appreciate women artists and the significant contributions they make to our lives.

- Kate Baker, Artist, 2020

About the Artists and Works

Suellen Cook

I am a photographer of the imagination. I like to tell stories through images that mysteriously bubble into my consciousness from deep within my imagination. It is when this sense of curiosity, mystery and imagination combines with the rigour and discipline of creatively blending together multiple photographs into one image, something truly magical happens; reality is reinvented into a single image of my imagination.

Artist Statement

My works for this exhibition are the expression of emotions that I have experienced in my lifetime. The sea is my motif as the sea has been the one constant, running through most aspects of my life. It holds the universe in its waves. It can be both fearful and protective, violent and calm, peaceful and deeply soulful. It is also where I turn to for solace.

These works are the expression of moments or periods in my life when adversity or important life changing events have, knocked me down but I've got up again, grieved lost relationships, but then forged new ones, lost my way then found a new direction, learned acceptance, looked for the positive amongst all the negative. I have not done all this alone although I have felt alone much of the time. I have wished somethings were otherwise but have no regrets. As for the future, there is nothing if there is not hope, determination, persistence and patience. I, like many of us, are a work in progress, a regeneration of a past self.

I wish to acknowledge the generous support of Hilary Wardhaugh and Melissa Anderson who are Loud and Luminous (provider of the stipend), Photo Access (stipend support and exhibition space) and Kayell (image printing) for their generous sponsorship for this exhibition. If it were not for the tireless work of all three organisations this would not be taking place. I sincerely thank them all from the bottom of my heart for this wonderful opportunity. I also congratulate the other four exhibitors, Tricia King, Helga Salwe, Elise Searson, and Tamara Whyte. I have no doubt that the inspiring imagery you see before you is nothing short of magical.

Tricia King

Tricia King is a Lecturer in Photography at the University of the Sunshine Coast and an active documentary photographer. Her research focuses on photography, its role in personal and cultural memory, and the construction of identity. Utilising techniques like photo-elicitation, documentary and photography, Tricia develops collaborative participant driven projects working predominantly with people experiencing social isolation. Most recently she has worked with older people living in aged care to explore their lived experience and help develop programs to assist with greater socialisation. She is working to expand this project to include other communities and will work with participants on further co-curated exhibition projects.

Artist Statement

The work arises from a phenomenological qualitative research practice looking at the role of the photograph as we age, particularly focusing on the period of time transitioning from the home environment into aged care. Building upon my previous work in this area, which focused directly on the lived experience of aged care, this extended body of work looks at the concept of "home" and explores how to replicate a feeling of home when home has been lost. Exploring the relationship between photographs and memory and their role in positioning and repositioning identity, the work seeks to address our relationship to photography and the power within our lives enacted in our memories and considers, in a world of selfies and snapshots, what constructs an image that both represents and lasts a lifetime.

Helga Salwe

Helga Salwe is a documentary photographer whose work draws attention to the everyday beauty in people, places and communities. Helga is based in Tasmania.

Artist Statement

These pictures were taken in the mountains and deserts of Morocco in 2019. It was a period of radical change and intense upheaval in my personal life. The space and timeless raw beauty of the Moroccan landscape allowed painful feelings to emerge and heal.

Over the years, I've become interested in the way our intuition leads our eye to focus on particular moments, helping to create images that reveal aspects of our subconscious and allowing repressed emotions to be expressed.

Tamara Whyte

Tamara Whyte works across video, photography and Pphotomedia. A descendant of the Warrgamay people (far north Queensland) and with Vanuatuan ancestry, she grew up in Brisbane and spent a number of years living in Japan – an experience which still informs her work. Whyte's practice focuses on narrative and non-narrative works. Her artwork explores identity not as a construction, but as numerous relationships and points which are visited and revisited from a personal perspective and the wider Australian experience. Since 2010, the artist has written, directed and produced a number of short documentary and video works, which have been screened and exhibited both nationally and internationally. She is a member of Verge Collective – a female collective of photographic and new media artists.

Artist Statement

These works focus on the survival of Aboriginal people and the stories which we continue to live through to this day. Our continual presence and engagement is evidence of survival, and this in itself is a form of resilience and community. Every sovereign expression at the individual, family and community level, continuing and adapting amongst changing influences is evidence of resilience and resistance.

This work is a mixture of documentation, response to place and recontextualised stories by investigating 'place' and the natural world, highlighting the continuation of life largely unknown by the rest of the country. These natural experiences and their dynamics reflect the unseen lived experience. Through the works, daily acts of living are viewed as daily acts of survival and sovereignty.

Elise Searson

Elise is an Australian based photographer / journalist with a main focus on story telling. She has completed a Bachelor in Photography at Griffith University/Queensland College of Art with work exhibited internationally and nationally. Upon completion of her degree, Elise secured work as a staff photographer for News Ltd and is now working as a photojournalist in Batemans Bay.

Artist Statement

Becoming a mother can alter the way we see life and our ourselves. It makes one examine their past and especially how we all begin life. For some, generational trauma can disrupt how we experience this socially perceived 'time of our lives'. It can trigger questions about how we parent and how we were parented. Some say a mothers trauma from a past century can present itself in the now in the most indistinct way. Through discovering our family history we can put the pieces together allowing us to compartmentalise our memories and emotions giving space to heal.

Image list

1.	Suellen Cook, <i>DON'T LOOK BACK</i> , 2020, photographic inkjet print, 75 x 75cm	1/10	\$4000
2.	Suellen Cook <i>EVERYTHING I WANTED</i> , 2020, photographic inkjet print, 75 x 75cm	1/10	\$4000
3.	Suellen Cook, <i>THE PHOENIX</i> , 2020, photographic inkjet print, 75 x 75cm	1/10	\$4000
4.	Suellen Cook, <i>TURNING POINT</i> , 2020, photographic inkjet print, 75 x 75cm	1/10	\$4000
5.	Suellen Cook, <i>MAYBE, ONE DAY</i> , 2020, photographic inkjet print, 75 x 75cm	1/10	\$4000
6.	Tricia King, <i>The Photographs of Home; Mildred</i> , 2019, photographic inkjet print, 80 x 40cm	1/5	\$400
7.	Tricia King, <i>The Photographs of Home; Jill</i> , 2019, photographic inkjet print, 80 x 40cm	1/5	\$400
8.	Tricia King, <i>The Photographs of Home; Margerie</i> , 2019, photographic inkjet print, 80 x 40cm	1/5	\$400
9.	Tricia King, <i>The Photographs of Home; Clarissa</i> , 2019, photographic inkjet print, 80 x 40cm	1/5	\$400
10.	Helga Salwe, <i>Landscape</i> , 2019, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 42 x 30 cm	1/5	\$440/ \$640 framed
11.	Helga Salwe, <i>Fellow Traveler</i> , 2019, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 42 x 30 cm	1/5	\$640/ \$840 framed
12.	Helga Salwe, <i>Fresh Bread</i> , 2019, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 42 x 30 cm	1/5	\$440/ \$640 framed
13.	Helga Salwe, <i>Sirocco</i> , 2019, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 30x 42cm	1/5	\$540/ \$740 framed
14.	Helga Salwe, <i>Toward the Light</i> , 2019, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 30x 42cm	1/5	\$540/ \$740 framed
15.	Helga Salwe, <i>Sandstorm</i> , 2019, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 30x 42cm	1/5	\$640/ \$840 framed
16.	Helga Salwe, <i>Home of the Earth</i> , 2019, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 42 x 30 cm	1/5	\$640/ \$840 framed
17.	Helga Salwe, <i>New Friend</i> , 2021, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 42 x 30 cm	1/5	\$640/ \$840 framed
18.	Helga Salwe, <i>On the Way</i> , 2019, archival pigment ink on portfolio rag, 42 x 30 cm	1/5	\$640/ \$840 framed
19.	Tamara Whyte, <i>Bonescape</i> , 2020, single channel digital video, 16.5 seconds	-	POA
20.	Tamara Whyte, <i>Willi Willi 2</i> , 2019, single channel digital video, 1 minute 10 seconds	-	POA
21.	Tamara Whyte, <i>Buffalo Horns</i> , 2018, single channel digital video, 1 minute 25 seconds	-	POA
22.	Elise Searson, <i>Mother One</i> , 2020, multimedia digital scan and inkjet print, 61cm x 91cm	1/5	\$900
23.	Elise Searson, <i>After Innocence</i> , 2020, 61cm x 63cm	1/5	\$600
24.	Elise Searson, <i>Mother Two</i> , 2020, 91cm x 61cm	1/5	\$600

