



CITY OF  
Hobart  
Art Prize  
Paint & Fibre 2012

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ART PRIZE 2012  
Paint & Fibre

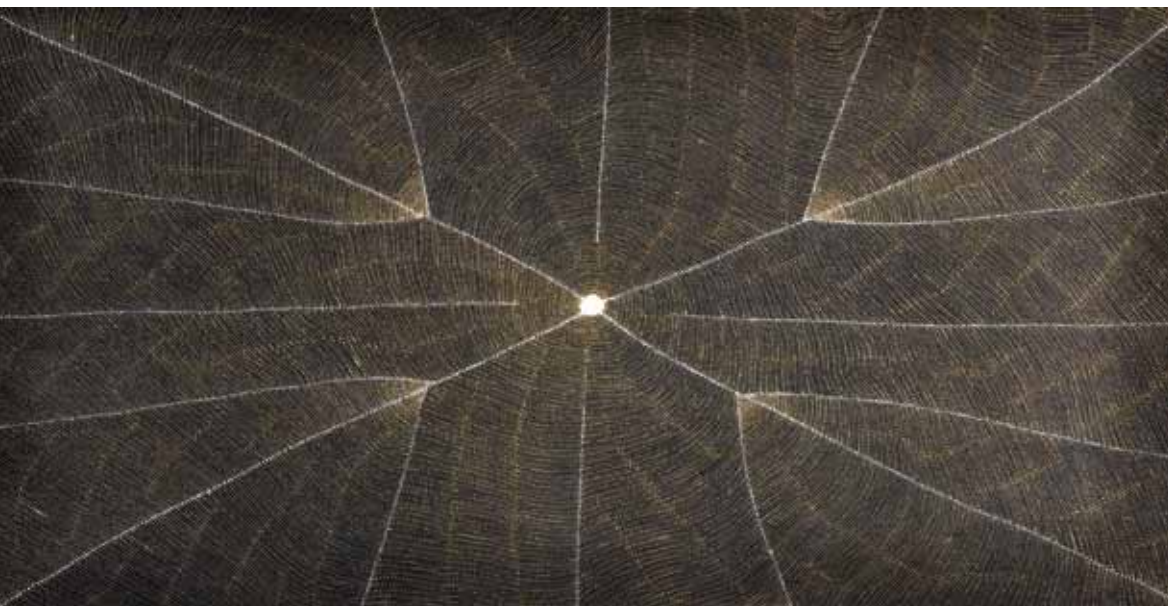


MINAXI MAY

*Sweeter & Happier* 2011

wool blend felt, spray adhesive,  
cotton thread, craft glue

470 x 1550 x 1050



MARGARET LOY PULA  
*Anatye (Bush Potato)* 2012  
acrylic on Belgian linen  
620 x 1210



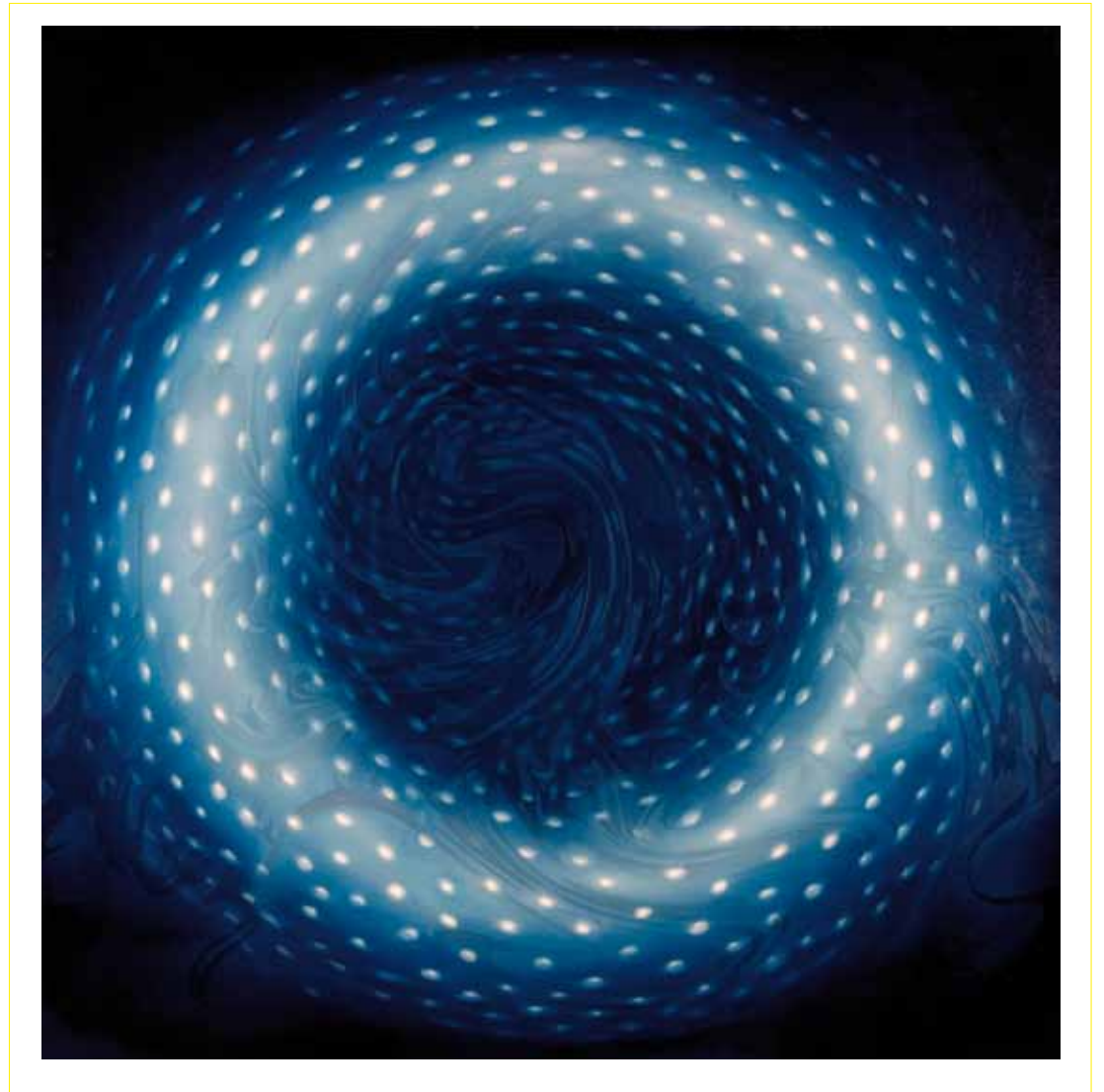
RAYMOND ARNOLD  
*Andromeda* 2012  
acrylic on linen  
1425 x 925



LUCAS GROGAN

*Welcome Home Babe 2012*

laminated cotton, upholstery fabric, cotton, silk  
1500 x 1500 x 25



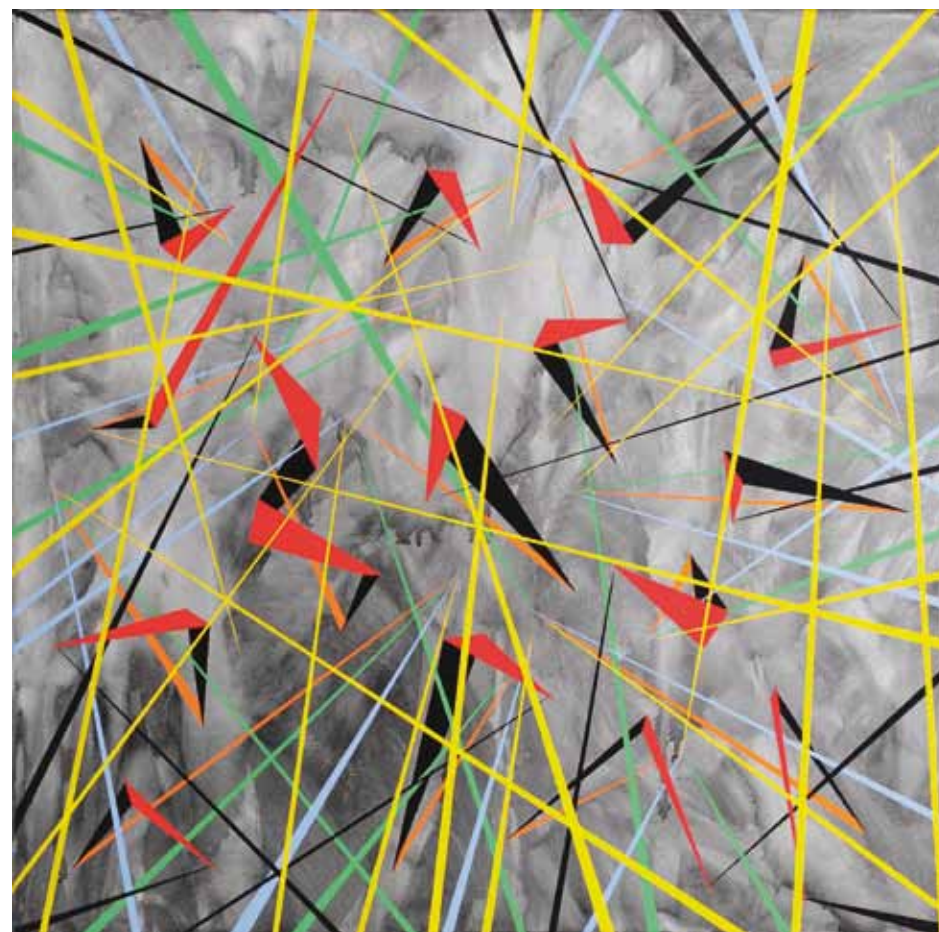
MEGAN WALCH

*Alias 2: Remix 2012*

acrylic, oil on canvas  
830 x 830



WAYNE BROOKES  
*Honky Historism* 2012  
acrylic on canvas board  
610 x 510



CHRISTIAN FLYNN  
*Eternally askew* 2011  
synthetic polymer on canvas  
800 x 800



YING CHEW

*Memento Mori 2* 2012

hand embroidery, petit-point, crochet on linen  
445 x 410 x 20



JULIA DEVILLE

*Charon* 2011

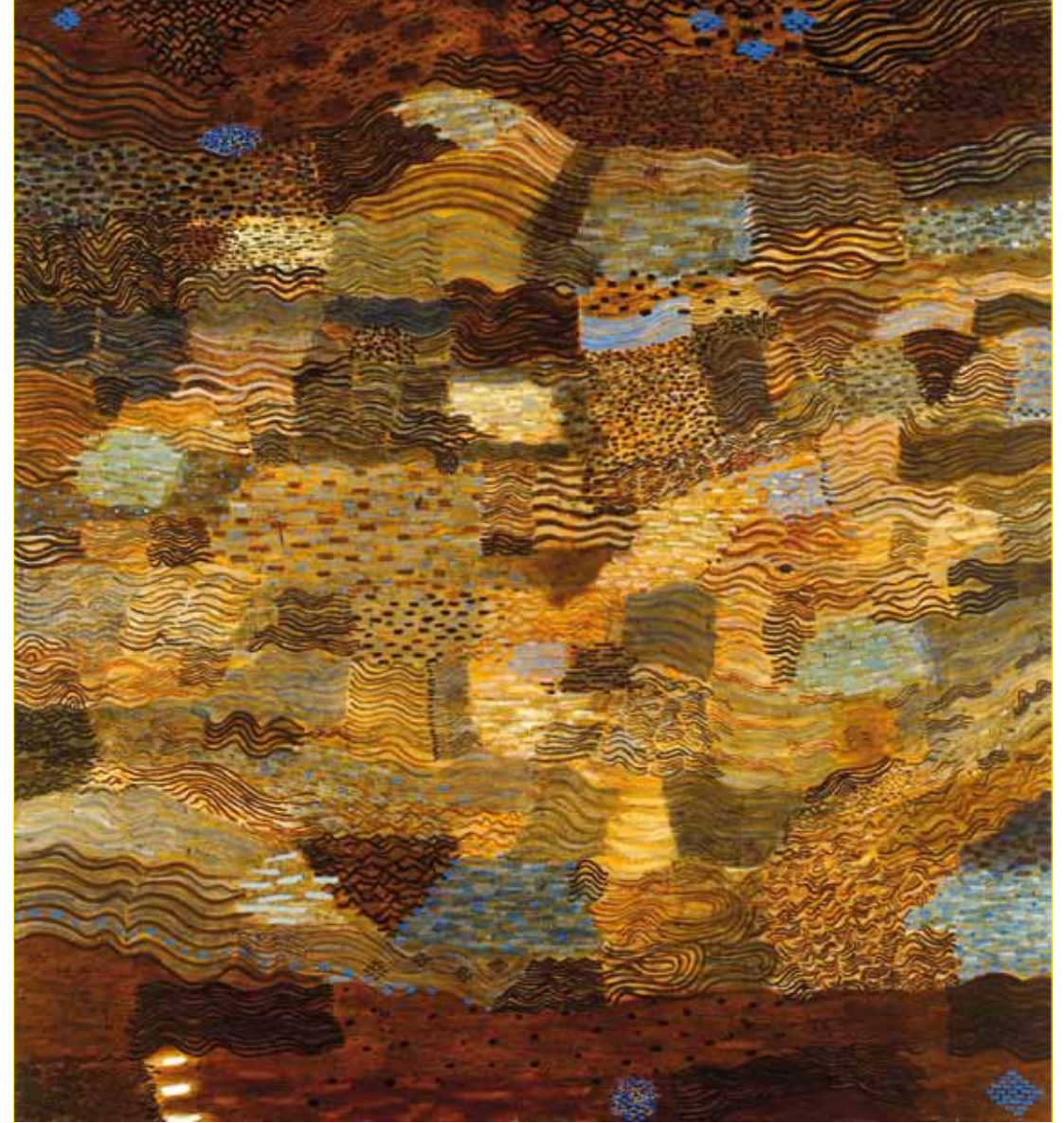
taxidermy guinea pig, chain mail,  
sterling silver, black garnets  
140 x 90 x 240



PAULA DO PRADO

*Ibeji (Sacred Brothers)* 2011

acrylic, Posca pen on various found and new fabrics, pom poms, glass seed beads, poly fill  
1800 x 1000 x 100



TIM BURNS

*Migrating mouse-quivering water;  
mountain-driven winter water* 2012

oil, beeswax on linen  
1690 x 1530





KATIE PETYARRE MORGAN  
*Bush Orange* 2012  
synthetic polymer on Belgian linen  
910 x 1500



EMILY PWERLE  
*Awelye Atnwengerrp* 2011  
synthetic polymer on Belgian linen  
770 x 1280



NICKY SCHONKALA  
*Under My Skin* 2011  
wool  
117 x 1123

GEORGINA CUE  
*On Exactitude in Science* 2011  
embroidery thread on tapestry  
canvas, hard wood, red cedar  
2000 x 2000 x 2000





MAVIS GANAMBARR

*Butjigit* 2012

pandanus, bush string,  
natural dyes  
each 140 x 120 x 340



ADRIENNE KNEEBONE

*Chrysalis* 2011

*Pandanus spiralis*, bush dye  
150 x 130 x 450

A MESSAGE FROM THE RIGHT  
HONOURABLE THE LORD  
MAYOR OF HOBART  
ALDERMAN DAMON THOMAS

Welcome to the 2012 City of Hobart Art Prize.

This year marks our 24th Art Prize and I congratulate the 35 finalists on their selection from a field of almost 400 entries. Two outstanding new works have been acquired for the City of Hobart Collection with a prize of \$15,000 each and I congratulate both of the winners.

The annual City of Hobart Art Prize exhibition is recognized and anticipated as a significant survey of the best Australian works in the selected media; this year Fibre and Paint. The Prize is deliberately inclusive and strives for excellence by not proscribing a theme or limitation other than the most generous possible definition of the media and setting necessary maximum dimensions.

This provides artists with the opportunity to experiment with their chosen medium, either in isolation or in combination with other materials. The resulting exhibition is then one which manifests delight in 'speculation' and 'play', the product of artists at their best.

Accordingly, I acknowledge and thank the many enthusiastic entrants for their support and ongoing goodwill toward this event. This selection of finalists range from across Australia and I acknowledge a notable increase in works by Aboriginal artists this year which make this a truly national exhibition. Of course we have a large sprinkling of local talent – who also happen to be some of Australia's most significant artists.

I gratefully acknowledge our major partner and host venue, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery for its ongoing support and for accommodating the Prize during what has been a year of redevelopment upheaval for this iconic Tasmanian institution.

Given the breadth of work entered this year I do not envy the judges' considerable task in making a small selection from such an excellent field, and I sincerely thank the judges for their commitment and dedication over three gruelling rounds of judging: Sue Backhouse, Senior Curator of Art, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Joe Pascoe, Chief Executive Officer and Artistic Director of Craft Victoria, Wayne Tunnicliffe, Head Curator of Australian Art, Art Gallery of NSW and Natasha Bullock, Curator, Contemporary Art, Art Gallery of NSW.

I hope you enjoy the exhibition!

JUDGES' STATEMENT

SUE BACKHOUSE  
NATASHA BULLOCK  
JOE PASCOE

The City of Hobart Art Prize 2012 provides audiences with a rich diversity of art practitioners Australia-wide working within the categories of paint and fibre. There is an even mix representing the two mediums.

The paintings, as you would expect from eighteen artists, provides a range of conventional materials and mixes, along with a range of surfaces and approaches. There are colourful and subtle works, hard-edged and organic, intricately detailed or reduced forms as well as complexities in concept. The diversity of fibre works is also apparent. There are many woven forms, often combined with natural or subtle colours. A large number incorporate traditional weaving, but often with overlays of meaning, other works are elaborate, humorous, quirky or more confronting. Parameters have been set for artists including definitions for each medium and the allowable maximum dimensions for work. These are important considerations for all entrants.

In each category of Fibre and Paint the judges have awarded a first prize and have chosen a second work for commendation.

The winner of the City of Hobart Art Prize for Paint is Katie Petyarre Morgan, a first time entrant to the award, with *Bush Orange*. For the judges this work stood out for its effervescent and supple use of paint. Although the artist has used a reduced palette, *Bush Orange* maintains a generous feeling of colour. The work plays with surface yet has depth. It is extraordinarily meticulous yet also gestural. The painting can also be read in many different ways in order to appreciate the work. The bush orange, also known as the native pomegranate, is a small bush bearing fruit similar to an orange. During different stages of maturation the fruit changes in colour and the artist's work explores the ripened fruit colours together with the tracks taken to locate the plants.

The winner of the City of Hobart Art Prize for Fibre is Julia deVillie for her work called *Charon*. The judges were impressed with this highly accomplished work and in particular, for the way in which it pushes the boundaries of craft beyond its traditional practice. Julia is both a jeweller and a taxidermist.

The work is hand made from the preservation of the guinea pig to the intricate stirrup, saddle and bridle accessories made of beading and silver. As one of the judges said 'it is a perfectly rendered hairy contemporary craft piece'. Charon, in Greek mythology, is the ferryman of the dead who carried the souls of the newly deceased across the river Acheron. As a euphemism for death, this fantastical and playful work harks back to the medieval concept of the role of animals where they take on another form.

The judges' commendation for Paint is given to Megan Keating for her innovative concept and use of materials. Although Megan's work was submitted as a painting it was felt that *Nature Strip #2 Bramble* crosses both paint and fibre in its broadest sense. From a distance the work is quietly subdued, yet on closer inspection, the work reveals a complex layering of forms and tones and the play between figure and ground becomes more apparent. Megan draws from her paper cutting practice to build depth with finely cut, polymer sheets pigmented and layered onto a wooden beech panel. The plant silhouettes, taken out of context, become dream-like particularly with their opalescent layers creating a balance between representation and abstraction.

Kate James receives the judges' commendation for Fibre. Kate has created an exquisitely woven and methodically detailed work which she has titled *Cornucopia*. This symbol of abundance and nourishment has been made from slim organic conical clay forms which have been woven around with horsehair. The weave creates a strong textural quality enhanced by the gradation of blond tones in the horse hair. Off-setting this meticulous method are more bulbous, organic forms on each end decorated with an abundance of opalescent glass and acrylic beads. Although organic in feel, they are none the less contained and tightly articulated.

The chosen works all possess finely tuned sensibilities. They contain symbolic or mythical qualities with a very deliberate use of texture and a reduced palette combined with a sense of the natural. The works make an imaginative and engaging show.

WINNER: FIBRE  
JULIA DEVILLE

I am fascinated with the aesthetic used to communicate mortality in the Memento Mori period of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, as well as the methods the Victorians used to sentimentalise death with adornment.

I work predominately in traditional gold and silversmithing techniques, combined with materials that were once living such as jet, a petrified wood historically used in Victorian Mourning jewellery, human hair and most importantly, taxidermy. I use these materials as a Memento Mori, or reminder of our mortality.

I incorporate the symbols of death throughout my work because I think it is important to identify with the concept that we are in fact mortal creatures. The nature of our culture is to obsess over planning the future, however in doing so, we forget to enjoy the present.

As a strict vegetarian, I consider my taxidermy to be a celebration of life, a preservation of something beautiful. I feel strongly about the fair and just treatment of animals and to accentuate this point I use only animals that have died of natural causes.

WINNER: PAINT  
KATIE PETYARRE  
MORGAN

I paint Atwakee [Bush Orange], where they grow in my country Ingkwelays [Kurrajong Bore], in different seasons and colours. Mostly I paint them in black and white, green and yellow or purple and blue to show how they change in colour, when they are ripe, when they are dried, when they small as well. I paint the tracks to the bush oranges, the tracks my ancestors travelled when they gathered them bush oranges. I am proud to paint my Dreaming, I use a thin stick to make the dots small and I take a long time to do it proper. I like it when we all paint together in bush workshops and sometimes we do them in Melbourne, which is special for us.



WINNER: FIBRE

JULIA DEVILLE  
*Charon* 2011



KATIE PETYARRE MORGAN  
*Bush Orange* [detail] 2012

WINNER: PAINT



KATE JAMES  
*Cornucopia* 2012

JUDGES'  
COMMENDATION  
FOR FIBRE



JUDGES'  
COMMENDATION  
FOR PAINT

MEGAN KEATING  
*Nature Strip #2 Bramble* 2012

## CITY OF HOBART ART PRIZE ESSAY SEÁN KELLY

Art competitions are common enough and they vary from the downright pointless and forgettable to truly significant and life changing events for the artist. An art prize has value for an artist more for the professional prestige and approbation it can bring than for the purse attached. Artists of quality are drawn firstly to those prizes which have proven themselves over time as a true objective measure of relative quality. The quality and experience of the judging panel, the professionalism of organisation and management, and the scale of its penetration into the national consciousness are all important measures of its significance.

The key measure of the esteem in which a prize is held can be readily demonstrated by the quality of the artists attracted to it. In this the City of Hobart Art Prize has established itself over 24 years as one of the most significant of Australia's art prizes since it consistently attracts artists at the top of their game and from all points nationally. Only a handful of Australian prizes have ever achieved such a status among artists, critics and arts professionals. It is true to say its regard and value is greater than many which may offer a larger purse or a bigger media splash. The image of this place, Hobart, is therefore greatly enhanced and promoted in the art world as innovative, critically aware and enlightened through this valuable highlight on the national artistic calendar.

The format of the Prize has always been to pair two media, in this case Fibre and Paint, which means that it also serves as a litmus as to what is currently occurring nationally in those fields. Importantly the broadness of the Prize's definition of each medium has allowed for the most experimental practitioners to propose imaginative and often radical approaches to their chosen art form since the key is that each field is generously opened out by the definition by that particular medium being required only to be the 'primary' medium in the artwork. [This relates to process as much as it does to the materials used.] This approach invites experiment and to allow artists to explore a range of relationships and usages of that 'primary' medium. This bespeaks inclusion and freedom, not the exclusion and exclusivity and limitations so often associated with single medium art prizes.

Scholars of the future can rightly look to the list of finalists and works presented over 24 years as a true record of innovation reflecting the broad range of practices extant at any one time in this State and this country, within those media and within visual art generally. At a time when convergence, collaboration, hybridity and cross-media activity have never been more prevalent in Australian Art the Prize has already achieved a framework to best represent that; the legacy is further enriched when we realise that the Prize may well have had a hand in bringing this rich cross-fertilization and renewal about and placing it prominently within the national consciousness.

Henry James wrote that, "The flower of art blooms only where the soil is deep". Hobart's Prize is a long established garden, regularly fertilized, weeded and tilled, and containing a soil that is each year a richer ground for the development of the most exotic and impressive blooms. Such an achievement is not possible without constant care and of course, healthy crop rotation.

Painting has been declared dead at least twice in this writer's lifetime. Thankfully painters have not accepted this and shrug with detached amusement every time it is deemed to have been born again. The same is true for the genres and sub genres of the medium. The finalists in this year's Prize represent how constant innovation and fresh, original individual voices are still present, as they ever will be.

Despite the fact that the Prize eschews a theme, landscape and concepts related to and arising from 'place' will always form a prime source of inspiration for many artists. Within the broad church of 'landscape' for instance, the range this year is vast, from the close view of a West Coast grave by Raymond Arnold, continuing his interest in 'figure ground' in an almost literal sense, Tim Burns combines poetry, music and silence in a work inspired by a Les Murray poem, Neil Haddon depicts disjuncture through a silhouetted figure in a garden of hard acrylic delights, Kristin Headlam's backyard is raised to memorability by the intense democracy of the treatment of its many messy elements and the contemporary indigenous landscape remains timeless yet newly invented and refreshed in the work of Katie Petyarre Morgan, Janie Petyarre Morgan and Margaret Loy Pula, while Mary Scott's figures and forms define their own physicality and presence through their interaction with the gravity and scale of the land and the insubstantial sky above it.

Landscape is of course equally present in much of the work in the Fibre category, or more correctly the 'land' since the term landscape is itself too limited to cover the many relationships with land and its representation, evocation and presentation in this exhibition. The relationship to land also overlaps the personal, including the autobiographical, and incorporates site, family and ancestries [as in the case of Paula do Prado]. Michelle Hamer explores urban banality and contemporary ideals through embroidered depictions of street signage, Adrienne Kneebone and Mavis Ganambarr use traditional indigenous weaving of natural materials – the direct product from the earth, as does Vicki West and in all cases the works reference deeper political issues and while they present as a traditional, formal weaving practice, Nicky Schonkala's work derives from and articulates a deep relationship with a particular place. From here the exhibition explodes in a number of directions - Funky [Paula do Prado, Julia deVille], Quirky [Megan Walch], two Baroque inspired artists [Hyper Gonzo – Wayne Brookes and flat-out modernist Paul Zika], shameless quilt subversion [Lucas Grogan] , introspective installation [Georgina Cue], and new wave Memento Mori [Ying Chew]. The fibre works show the fullest range from the most basic and traditional definitions of the term to the most extreme adventures at the borders of the form.

The fibre component of the Prize hang is truly remarkable in its diversity, not only of material but also conception and form. In any ecosystem biodiversity is the root requirement for vitality and survival. The health of art's ecosystem is reflected in the diversity of this exhibition in which invention builds from tradition, both subverting and extending it simultaneously. We have moved on from the cynicism and melancholia of post modernism's insouciant endgame gestures. Mannerism is thwarted by knowledge of tradition and by loaded engagements with the things we see, feel and believe and by the innocent eye. Artists are intrigued by phenomena and led by curiosity and desire and they are driven by the compelling need to translate and transmit both experience and its gifts of insight and wisdom.

It is never true to claim that all art is equal, that art cannot be judged or evaluated - that all opinions are equally valid. The old parameters hold true. There is value in craft, [skill, care and rigour in the making], for it leads to the deep inculcation of a language, an internalising of the knowledge of material, and this leads to freedom and flexibility and the capacity to choose the best vehicle to deliver each concept in its most intense and



efficient form. There is value in history, for with it we proceed, without it we repeat - we merely make gestures, or re-state the already known. True, skill can lead to shallow virtuosity and recently we have witnessed a kind of distrust of skill partly for this reason. That something is 'raw' in no way implies it is more valuable or more true [honest]. Cezanne claimed that the marriage of (youthful) passion with wisdom and skill was the basis of creating an art of significance and timelessness.

Perhaps the fact that the City of Hobart Art Prize has defined itself first within media and not within questionable and sometimes arbitrary sets of themes, [as many Biennales and major survey shows often do], is the proof of these assertions. The integrity of the exhibition, the unpredictability of the many conceptual positions within it and the sheer joy of surprise is the reward for the viewer. That it lacks any curatorial premise is in fact one of its key strengths and a key definer of the niche it has created over time. The Zeitgeist is perhaps best revealed as a function of simply presenting a representative range of work at any one time or from any place at one time. If we self-consciously seek to explicate it we are already one step towards a self-conscious evaluation of what we think it is. It is not the place of artists to make work under such curatorial determinations but many survey shows are predicated on this.

When artists second guess their work in this way the result is always compromised. Surely this is the role and the domain of the critic, the historian, possibly the sociologist, and of history itself. This exhibition subverts the possibility of the aforementioned limitations by simply inviting the best artists to produce their best work and leaves them free from dogma, recipe and artificial conceits in doing so. Much of contemporary art is so often alienated and so often alienating. Often it is an-aesthetic [and perhaps anaesthetic as well], because it spends too much time trying to look contemporary or to submit to questionable tropes in form and theoretical underpinning. This can make the experience of work both frustrating and unrewarding and the audience can rightly become jaded and frustrated. My experience of the City of Hobart Art Prize shows is always the opposite. This is always one of the most interesting and refreshing moments in the art calendar presenting opportunities for surprise, wonder, respect and challenge, and the 2012 show delivers that again, with generosity and rich diversity.



KATE JUST

*In My Skin* 2011

hand and machine knitted acrylic yarn  
10 x 1780 x 880



KIM MCKECHNIE

*Collection #1 (Memory Keepers)* [detail] 2012

banana fibre, silk, linen, cotton, wire, gold leaf

150 x 1300 x 150

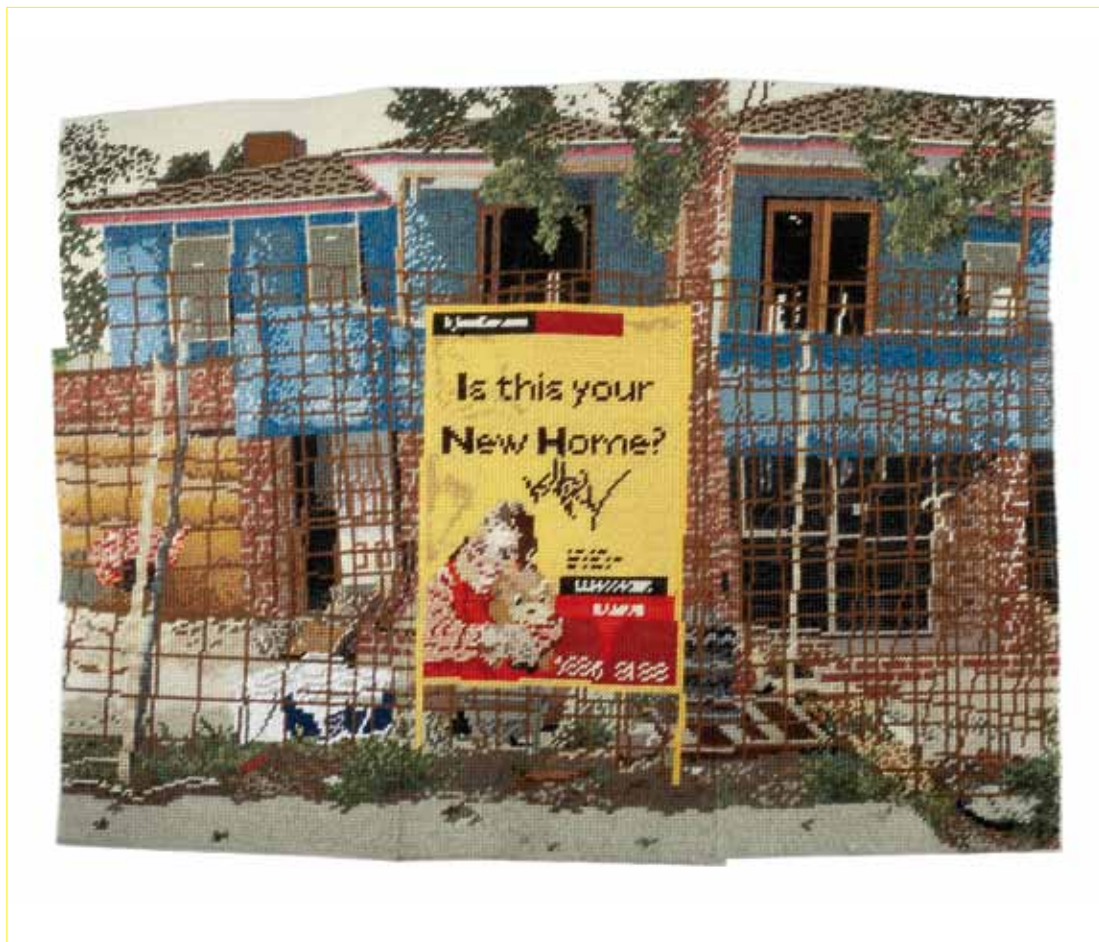


KATE JAMES

*Cornucopia* 2012

horsehair, glass, acrylic beads, clay

60 x 360 x 320



MICHELLE HAMER  
*Is this your new home?* 2011  
mixed yarn, hand-stitching on  
perforated plastic  
1050 x 820



NEIL HADDON  
*Grafting Landscape (West Hobart)* 2012  
enamel, oil, acrylic on aluminium panel  
1800 x 1600



NIGEL HEWITT  
*Icarus Dream* 2012  
wood ash, acrylic medium on canvas  
1365 x 1980



JANIE PETYARRE MORGAN  
*Bush Orange* 2012  
synthetic polymer on linen  
910 x 1300



DIANE MASTERS

*Blanket Restraint* 2012

woollen prison blankets, cotton, viscose/  
linen fabric, acrylic padding, metal buckles, eyelets  
1800 x 700 x 700



CATHERINE WOO

*Tangle* 2011

acrylic medium, calcium carbonate, black sand,  
rust, pigment on canvas  
1940 x 1330



STEPHANIE HAYGARTH

*Archive* 2011

acrylic on paper  
1300 x 1000



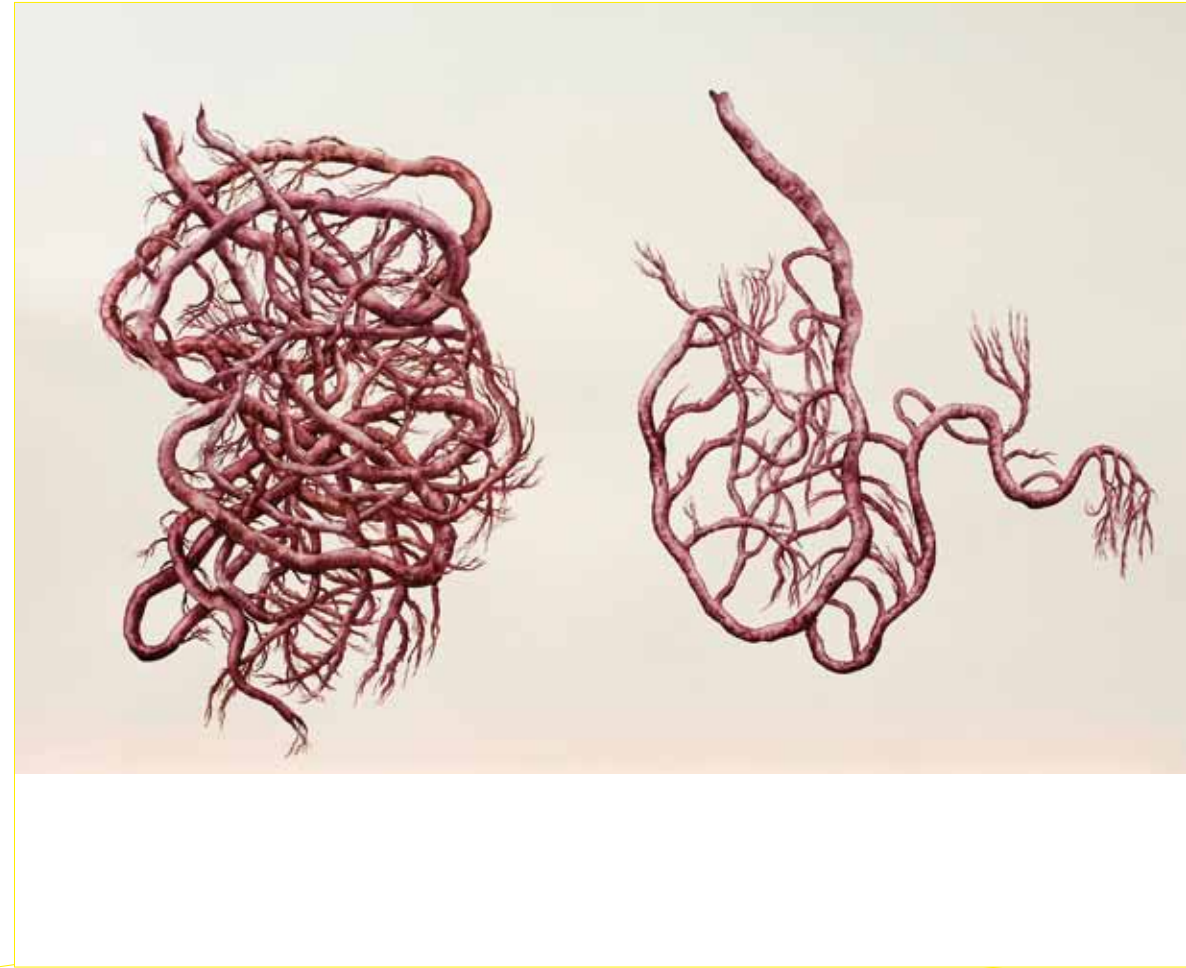
ALY DE GROOT

*Mermaid* 2012

monofilament  
1500 x 130 x 110



PAUL ZIKA  
*Terme 4* 2011  
acrylic on plywood  
1320 x 1130



ANNE MORRISON  
*Remnants* 2012  
acrylic, watercolour on paper  
1020 x 1540



KRISTIN HEADLAM

*May* 2011

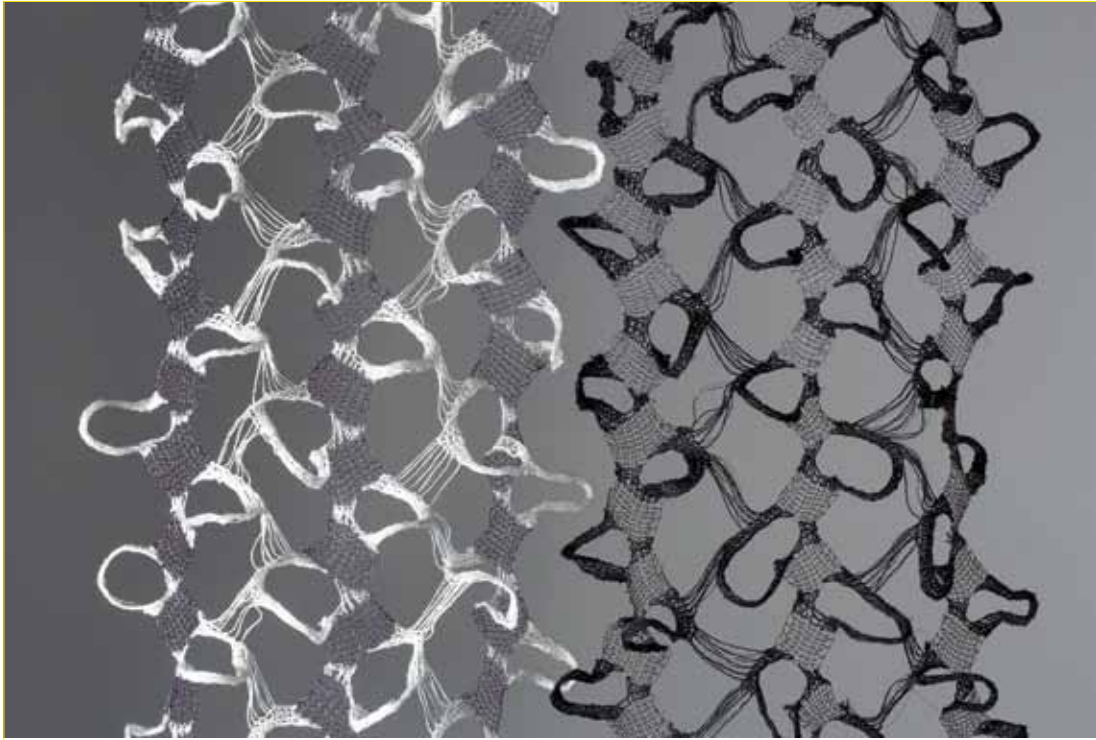
oil on Belgian linen  
1000 x 1800



VICKI WEST

*remember* 2012

dodder vine, flax, netting twine  
900 x 1000 x 1000



ESTHER PALEOLOGOS

*Untitled* [detail] 2012

copper wire, tinned copper wire, stainless steel  
wool blend, stainless steel, mercerised cotton  
1500 x 880 x 60



MARY SCOTT

*The Illusion of Truth* [detail] 2012

oil on linen  
1520 x 1670





MEGAN KEATING

*Nature Strip #2 Bramble* [detail] 2012

mica, pearlescent pigment, synthetic polymer on beech panel

1100 x 1000

## THANK YOU

### SPONSORS

The Hobart City Council wishes to thank the sponsors of the 2012 City of Hobart Art Prize for their generous contribution to the exhibition:

The Mercury newspaper provides local and state wide advertising of the exhibition.

All Art Prize printing undertaken by Focal Printing.

### PRIZES

The Hobart City Council provides two acquisitive awards of \$15,000 in each category, the \$1,000 People's Choice Award and the \$100 People's Choice Voter's Prize.

### JUDGES

Sue Backhouse, Senior Curator of Art,  
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

Joe Pascoe, CEO and Artistic Director, Craft Victoria

Wayne Tunnicliffe, Head Curator of Australian Art,  
Art Gallery of NSW (first & second round judging)

Natasha Bullock, Curator, Contemporary Art,  
Art Gallery of NSW (final judging)

### HOBART CITY COUNCIL

Project Management and Exhibition Design:  
Frances Butler

Exhibition installation: Craig Opie, Lance Richardson,  
Sharyn Woods

### TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

Project liaison: Peter West

Exhibition management: Garry Armstrong

Exhibition support: Jo Eberhard, Mark Colegrave

Conservation: Erica Burgess, Nikki King-Smith

Marketing: Mark Fitzpatrick, Jess Atkinson

## WRITER

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## GRAPHIC DESIGN

Tracey Allen – Liminal Graphics

## FREIGHT

Interstate entries are carried by StarTrack Express  
Many thanks to Damien le Rossignol.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Winning and commended images by Jonathan Wherrett.

Images by the artists except: Wayne Brookes by Romany Best; Tim Burns and Diane Masters by Jack Bett; Georgina Cue by Christo Crocker; Aly de Groot and Adrienne Kneebone by Fiona Morrison; Julia deVille by Terence Bogue; Paula do Prado by Andy Stevens; Christian Flynn by Carl Warner; Mavis Ganambarr by Mats Uden; Neil Haddon by Jefford Walker; Michelle Hamer by Marc Morel; Kristin Headlam by Robert Colvin; Nigel Hewitt by Ben Joel; Kate Just by Christian Redtenbacher; Margaret Loy Pula by Muk Muk Fine Art; Anne Morrison by Troy Ruffels; Esther Paleologos by James Morgan; Janie Petyarre Morgan, Katie Petyarre Morgan and Emily Pwerle by DACOU Melbourne; Nicky Schonkala by Peter Carroll; Mary Scott by Bill Hart; Megan Walch by Martin Walch; Vicki West by Ralf Haertel; Catherine Woo by Christian Capurro; Paul Zika by John Farrow.

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(All artwork dimensions are in millimetres.)

