

Angela Brennan: Every morning I wake up on the wrong side of capitalism

A survey exhibition

21 June – 26 August 2006

Curators: Max Delany and Dr Kyla McFarlane



Angela Brennan, *The wrong side of capitalism* 2004, Private Collection, Melbourne

The Monash University Museum of Art presents a major survey exhibition focusing on the work of leading Australian artist Angela Brennan, to be presented at MUMA in June through August 2006.

Best-known for her colourful abstractions, as well as her irreverent humour, Brennan's practice encompasses portraiture, text paintings and landscapes. Her beguiling paintings and drawings draw inspiration from diverse realms including formalist abstraction, linguistic philosophy, art history and the unpredictable experience of everyday life.

Featuring works from 1975-2006, *Angela Brennan: Every morning I wake up on the wrong side of capitalism* brings together selected paintings covering the full scope of Angela Brennan's intriguing oeuvre in its wild abundance and diversity.

Curator Max Delany comments that

'the title of the exhibition – *Every morning I wake up on the wrong side of capitalism* – is drawn from one of the artist's paintings, based on a text encountered by Brennan in the anonymous form of graffiti. Whilst some might find the title ironic, given the success that has attended the artist's career, it encapsulates the relationship between the orthodox and unorthodox – the pitting of a lawless subjectivity against the symbolic order – that lies at the heart of Angela Brennan's art.'

Artist and psychoanalyst Lizzy Newman writes in her catalogue essay of the complexity and playfulness that is integral to Brennan's practice:

'...painting is at the same time trash *and* treasure...

Art usually captures both these extremes – the repudiated and the lauded – in the one moment. That's because art is a way of mediating or articulating our relationship to something primordial, horrifying, longed for and repressed. As artists we take a little thing – it might be almost nothing – and elevate it to the status of something, something with stature, something with dignity. Having done so, art nevertheless points to its excluded and traumatic real. I guess this is why art can make us anxious, if not embarrassed or uncomfortable.

Biography

Angela Brennan was born in Ballarat in 1960, and lives and works in Melbourne. She studied at RMIT University from 1979-81, where she completed a degree in Fine Art; and at the University of Melbourne from 1988-92, where she completed a Bachelor of Arts, with a major in philosophy.

Angela Brennan held her first individual exhibition, *Possible Worlds*, at the George Paton Gallery, University of Melbourne, in 1989, and has held regular solo exhibitions since 1991 with Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, and since 1992 with Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney.

Since the 1980s, Angela Brennan has participated in a large number of group exhibitions including *The Arthur Guy Memorial Painting Prize*, Bendigo Art Gallery, 2005 and 2003; *Abstract Dialogue*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney, 2004; *Good Vibrations: The Legacy of Op Art in Australia*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2002; *Portia Geach Memorial Award Exhibition*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, 1998-2001; *On the Brink: Abstraction in the '90s*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne 2000; *High Pop*, Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, 1993; *Exaltate Jubilate*, Store 5, Melbourne, 1991; *Room For Abstraction*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne 1991; and *Proposals*, George Paton Gallery, Melbourne, 1989.

In 2002 she undertook a residency at the Red Gate Gallery in Beijing, and presented an exhibition at Bei Goa, Beijing, in the same year. She was awarded the Moya Dyring Studio residency, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris in 1998; and the Australia Council Studio in Barcelona in 1990.

Angela Brennan was identified as one of Australia's 50 most collectable artists by Australian art Collector magazine in 2005.

Brennan's work is represented in major public collections including the National Gallery of Australia; the National Gallery of Victoria; Monash University Collection; TarraWarra Art Museum; Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery; La Trobe University; University of Melbourne; ANZ Bank; the World Bank; and private collections in Australia and internationally.

Angela Brennan is represented by Niagara Galleries, Melbourne and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney.

The exhibition will be accompanied by an illustrated catalogue featuring Angela Brennan's work alongside essays by Andrew Alexandra, Max Delany, Elizabeth Newman, Judith Pascale and Amanda Rowell.

Where: Monash University Museum of art | MUMA
Ground Floor, Building 55,
Monash University,
Clayton Campus, Mel map 575
T: 61 3 9905 4217
E: muma@adm.monash.edu.au
www.monash.edu.au/muma

Exhibition Dates: 21 June – 26 August 2006
Opening Function: 3-5pm Saturday 24 June 2006

Media Enquires: Melissa Keys, Program Administrator – 03 9905 1618