

ON THE EDGE.....of a continent
.....of reality
.....of discovery
.....of departure
.....of renewal
.....knife's edge
.....the other side

Mixed media installation referencing the Great Barrier Reef

In making this work my aim was to create a luxurious, metaphorical, mixed media installation which celebrates the intoxicating, seductive, enigmatic and ambiguous nature of coral reefs, tidal pools, coast and shoreline. This work is an interpretative visual celebration of our rich marine habitats which I hope will heighten general awareness and public perception of the great beauty, delicacy and vulnerability of this zone.

The multiplicity of materials and techniques used are never ends in themselves - they are harnessed to provide the particular qualities needed for the overall installation - they are aesthetic vehicles.

There is no replication of any real marine animals here, but rather an amalgamation and exaggeration of those qualities found around our coastline: the often breathtaking colours and textures, the sometimes bizarre forms, the coexistence and the continual interplay of linear rhythms. Is this a snorkeller's dream?

PARADOX Painting on stretched canvas

Text painted on vertical, return edges of canvas in red:-

left side: Warning.....dramatic threats to coral reefs.....zones of great beauty, delicacy, but extreme vulnerability.....a measure for the future survival of our whole ecosystem.....warning....

Right side:- coral reefs, marine environment, coast and shoreline.....intoxicating, seductive, enigmatic.....and in perilous danger.....n.b. there is a reachable point of no return.....

Overlaid on top section of painting, in white lettering, a list of the litany of threats to the Great Barrier Reef, partly gleaned from a report on the reef in 1998 by the UN's technical advisers in Australia:-

- ~ trawling
- ~ the live fish trade
- ~ aquaculture
- ~ coastal development (including on islands)
- ~ neighbouring land use -sewage outfalls and run-off from agricultural activity
- ~ dam construction
- ~ pollution
- ~ oil spills
- ~ oil shale mining
- ~ crown-of-thorns starfish
- ~ global warming (coral bleaching)

SEEKING SYMBIOSIS

With much of my body adornment I utilise polymer clay as the matrix, unifying compound. the clay is textured, stained, modelled, manipulated and inlaid with a variety of media including paint, wood, glass, copper wire, textile, plated and enamelled pewter, shell, coral, twigs, pods, and semi-precious beads/stones.

Science and technology allow us to change our natural environment to suit perceived needs, but we must get the balance right. Attempts to dominate nature are futile - our very survival requires co-operative, symbiotic strategies.

Conceptually I explore intimate memories of place and tokens of landscape, the interconnectedness of forms and systems, the irregularity, unpredictability and regenerating power of our environment.

RETRIEVAL RENEWAL CONTINUUM

This symbolises my interest in both the visual diversity, power and excitement of natural surfaces and forms as well as my understanding of nature as an evolving force in a continual state of flux - nurturing, changing, regenerating, hopefully surviving. I aim to show something of nature's simultaneous complexity and simplicity. Natural forms and fragments can represent intimate tokens of landscape, memories of place, and suggest the infinitesimal immensity of the whole.

BODY ADORNMENT

In my work, I respond directly to my environment -visual wonders and quirks social issues, people and place.

Using a wide assortment of media, I create sometimes bizarre and fanciful and at other times restrained and classical body adornments which can become an outward expression of the personality, or even philosophy, of the wearer. I've always been interested in the communicative power of a simple tin badge emblazoning its message from chest or lapel and consider my work to be linked with this kind of language - my body adornments are part of a long tradition of wearing tokens which can be spiritual, ritualistic, political, individualistic, or worn for sheer joy and pride in decoration.

DAYDREAM PHENOMENA

DAYDREAM - a kind of reverie or state of delight indulged in while awake - it may be fantastic, fanciful, or an abstract musing

PHENOMENON - is something which actually appears - it is a fact or occurrence which is perceived or observed but the cause of which is open to question, or may be unaccountable.

My objects are PHENOMENA MATERIALISING MY DAYDREAMS.

However, my impulse and intuition is structured by an aesthetic response which controls and delineates the formal qualities in the work.

I like to think of my adornments as small fragments of colourful magic from which the wearer can make a temporary launch into the dazzling world of fantasy.

I possess bowerbird qualities, constantly collecting objects, always photographing the visual environment, making sketches - I choose both close focus and bird's eye views.

During my travels, my bowerbird collection grows:- suspended images, cultural tokens, historical sites, environmental adornments, markets

paraphernalia - I celebrate the micro environment, the textures and vividly coloured world at my feet.