



Winter 2018

Editorial

Kelly Heylen, Cuator



With edition #5 of our little quarterly zine, we have officially hit the one-year mark of Platform Gallery. From a mouldy-carpeted, cubicle-filled office space we have created a beautiful little gallery and shop that represents the best of Blue Mountains' culture and creativity.

In our first year, we have curated 12 exhibitions, featuring:

- o 38 artists, 68% of whom are women, and 94% of whom are from the Blue Mountains
- o 58% solo exhibitions of female artists
- o 42% first solo exhibitions of emerging artists
- o 10 GLBTI artists, 40% of whom have solo shows

Our gallery shop stocks the work of more than 40 artisans, 70% of whom are from the Blue Mountains.

We now have three staff, who have access to paid domestic violence leave, amongst other above-award entitlements – and we hope that by leading by example, we will encourage other Blue Mountains businesses to offer domestic violence leave too. We have also created paid work for more than a dozen local freelancers and contractors.

I'm delighted to have recently partnered with Art Money, who have a mission to make art more accessible. Art Money offers interest-free loans for art purchases, with payments spread over 10 months – and you can take the artwork home straight away.

I'm proud of what we have accomplished in our first year, from the artists we have worked with, to the creative community we are helping to nurture, to our public stance on issues such as domestic violence and the environment.

And this is only the beginning. We have so much more we want to achieve, and I want to say thank you for being part of our story. Here's to celebrating many more years of creativity and community together.

Kelly Heylen
Curator

Liminal

11 - 28 May

“The forms, material and textures have been combined to express those thoughts and feelings that couldn’t be expressed in words.”

“There are many ways a person can enter a state of transition,” says artist Heidi Axelsen.

“Major and minor shifts happen in life where a current state of being is no longer possible and transformation takes place. It’s this liminal space that I am interested in.”

Liminal is a series of delicate and meditative work that is drawn not only from Heidi’s personal transitions, but an entire universe of threshold space.

“The word ‘liminal’ for me represents that space between consciousness and unconsciousness; that quality of ambiguity and disorientation that occurs at times when you are neither here nor there, but swimming in a vast changing space.”

“Emerging from these liminal states are quiet, easily missed, in-between moments that I have tried to capture in this work. Being on the cusp of becoming a mother was one such potent liminal state for me, where both immense and subtle transformations take place in body and spirit.”

As Heidi’s daughter celebrates her third birthday, Heidi has reflected on motherhood and other states of transitions, and brought together this body of work.

“I’ve been working with concrete, plaster, marble, lead, felt, steel and copper, which I’ve been moulding, carving, folding, casting, sewing and assembling to find a material presence to immaterial and ephemeral experiences. The forms, material and textures have been combined to express implicit memories; thoughts and feelings that couldn’t be expressed in words but found in material and form.”

Most people know Heidi from her large-scale creative collaborations with partner Hugo Moline, but with *Liminal*, Heidi is showcasing a lesser-known side of her artistic practice.

The small scale, natural hues and reflective surfaces of these sculptural works stand in contrast to Heidi’s collaborative works of large architectural and environmental structures.

Whereas Heidi and Hugo work in the public realm rearranging social and spatial relationships, Heidi’s solo work invites contemplation of internal landscapes and dreamy states of being. Join us for this exciting and rare opportunity to see Heidi’s solo work.

Heidi Axelsen
Image by Katrina Lee Ford



Untitled 1 (2016)
ceramic and wire



Untitled 2 (2016)
plaster, pins



Greening the gallery shop

You can't live in the Blue Mountains and not have a love of nature. We all know about the host of environmental disasters our planet is facing, and so at Platform we're doing our little bit to help by stocking products that help us all reduce waste.

Joining the gallery shop recently, we have:

SUSTOMI WAX WRAPS AND STAINLESS STEEL STRAWS

Sustomi began in the kitchen, where founder Bronwyn was increasingly frustrated with the amount of plastic and waste her household was producing. She wanted to create a product that would enable people to reduce their waste, minimise toxic plastics and overall, help the environment.

Sustomi supports a social enterprise in Tasmania where their beeswax wraps are handmade, providing jobs to people marginalised from mainstream employment. If you like a bit of DIY, we also sell the wax so you can make your own wraps!

RETAP REUSABLE WATER BOTTLES

As a design gallery, we're understandably a bit mad for any type of Scandinavian design. Retap is a Danish design company whose mission is to transform the way we drink water. The founders were influenced by reading about the accumulation of plastic trash in the oceans, consisting mainly of plastic bottles.

Retap stands for 'refilling with tap water', and their beautifully sleek, award-winning bottles are made from virtually unbreakable borosilicate glass. We stock Retap in 300, 500 and 800 ml.



KIM WALLACE CERAMIC REUSABLE COFFEE CUPS

I'd been using a keep cup for years, but, like the waste it is trying to reduce, it too was made of plastic. Ceramicist Kim Wallace has found the solution, in her beautiful handmade reusable cups. Kim works from her boutique ceramics studio based in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

Her ceramics are well loved by some of the best-known chefs of Australia, with delicious dishes being served up on her handmade pieces at Aria Sydney, The Opera Bar, Ormeggio at the Spit and many more.



Sunday Crafternoon

2 : 0 0 -
5 : 0 0 P M

BYO craft project for a lovely afternoon in the gallery with fellow crafters.

Feminist Book Club

5 : 3 0 -
8 : 0 0 P M

Come along to our monthly get-together where we discuss feminism in all its fictional and theoretical literary forms.

Jess de Wahls Workshops

2 + 3
JUNE

Choose from either Big Swinging Ovaries or Vagestic Mandala embroidery workshops. Bookings at platformgallery.co

May

11	EXHIBITION	Liminal — Heidi Axelsen
17	COMMUNITY	Feminist Book Club — Am I Black Enough For You by Anita Heiss
20	COMMUNITY	Sunday Crafternoon

June

1	EXHIBITION	Big Swinging Ovaries — Jess de Wahls
2	WORKSHOP	Big Swinging Ovaries embroidery — Jess de Wahls
3	WORKSHOP	Vagestic Mandala embroidery — Jess de Wahls
14	COMMUNITY	Feminist Book Club — Woman on the Edge of Time by Marge Piercy
17	COMMUNITY	Sunday Crafternoon
29	EXHIBITION	The Unexpected In-Between — Hannah Surtees

July

12	COMMUNITY	Feminist Book Club — Ask Me About My Uterus by Abby Norman
15	COMMUNITY	Sunday Crafternoon
27	EXHIBITION	The Lost and Found — Rebecca Waterstone

Big Swinging Ovaries

1 - 25 June

“What matters to me is that people make up their own mind and interpret my art for themselves, no matter what I intended. What matters is whether or not the work speaks to you.”

“I use my work to explore societal ideas of what it means to be a woman: from governments trying to restrict and legislate what women do with their bodies, to society judging women for both having and not having ovaries,” says artist Jess de Wahls.

“Traditionally ovaries are such an integral part of being a woman, and yet there are many other ways of being a woman, from being a transgender woman to having had reproductive organs removed surgically to just being born in a body that doesn’t conform to any gender.”

Coming all the way from London for her Australian debut and a series of workshops at Platform, Jess de Wahls is known as the ‘*enfant terrible*’ of British textile arts’ for her boundary-pushing, provocative artworks.

The exhibition *Big Swinging Ovaries* will feature Wahls’ signature embroideries, where her ovary motif is stylised into various maximalist patterns, including ovaries as cacti, rainbows, and Frida Kahlo (Kahlovaries).

“Since I first developed it for a solo exhibition in 2014, the Big Swinging Ovaries name and design has very much become a brand and a visual tool for expressing many of my creative, political and social thoughts as a woman, a feminist and a textile artist,” says Jess.

“What matters to me is that people make up their own mind and interpret my art for themselves, no matter what I intended. What matters is whether or not the work speaks to you.”

Platform is hosting two incredible feminist embroidery workshops with Jess, alongside her exhibition. You can choose from creating your own Big Swinging Ovaries or a Vagestic Mandala, all the while taking your craftivism to new heights. You can book your ticket on our website — platformgallery.co

L: Trans Wonder
Woman (2018)
R: Kapovaries (2017)

Jess de Wahls
Image courtesy of artist



L: Bovaries (2017)
R: Kahlovaries (2017)



The Unexpected In-Between

29 June - 23 July



“This process has inspired me to push through my creative block. I’ve discovered that the good stuff can sometimes be hiding unexpectedly in the space in-between.”

“I feel like this time the inspiration has come from doing the work, rather than the other way around,” says Blackheath artist and designer Hannah Surtees.

Together with partner Mark, Hannah is the winner of this year’s Sculpture at Scenic World major prize, for their work *Geronimo*. With *The Unexpected In-Between*, Hannah is showing a body of solo work featuring sculpture, painting and prints. We talked to Hannah about how her process for this work evolved out of a creative block, which she pushed through by returning to childlike play with paper and pen.

“A few years ago, I was struggling to rediscover my own style, after years of producing commercial work for other people. I was blocked, creatively. We were heading overseas for a family trip, so I brought some sketchbooks with me, in order to get back to the basics.

“I found the act of doodling very cathartic and freeing for my creative process, where I didn’t have to worry about the end result; just being present in the moment. It took me back to when I was about five, spending many happy hours repeatedly drawing the British flag, filling sketchbooks with my drawings, trying to find the perfect one.

“When we got back from our trip, I photographed all the work from my sketchbooks and uploaded them into my computer, playing around in Illustrator and experimenting with reversing the doodles, playing with negative space.

“It was a serendipitous way of working, and I felt able to look at the end result more subjectively. I enlarged some of the shapes and painted one onto canvas, just feeling my way with colours and framing, going with my gut instinct.

“This process has inspired me to push through my creative block. I’ve discovered that the good stuff can sometimes be hiding unexpectedly in the space in-between. If you keep looking hard enough, you’ll find it eventually.”

This exhibition has been generously sponsored by Cottontail Press – a boutique letterpress, fine art and photographic printing studio here in the Blue Mountains.

Below: Hannah Surtees
Image courtesy of artist

Right: example of sketchbook doodle
that became art



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