

Something for everyone

This year's Fremantle Arts Centre Print Award show offers a smorgasbord of ideas

VISUAL ARTS

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In its 35th year, the Fremantle Arts Centre Print Award showcases print media in all its variations. Encompassing digital, inkjet and linocut works, artist books and bigger installations, there is, as they say, something here for everyone.

This show at the Fremantle Arts Centre makes good use of the old museum wing, allowing more room to contemplate the 47 works.

The judges have handed the major acquisitive award to Rebecca Beardmore's ghostly apparition *Seeing Between II*. A lovely tactile work, Beardmore pushes the relationship between medium, support and subject matter to draw the viewer into a transient portrait.

It's an interesting choice, much more subtle than previous winners.

Nothing subtle about this year's non-acquisitive prize winner, Benjamin Forster's *Discourse*, a couple of receipt printers in conversation over where we've ended up as an economic marketplace. Karl Marx and Adam Smith quotes bounce off each other in an ode to consumption and production, not only of product but of conversation — with each, particularly in this case, ending in a pile of excess.

There are many other works which catch the eye. In no particular



Ghostly: Rebecca Beardmore's prize-winning *Seeing Between II*.

order, these for me include Valerie Sparks' long horizontal *This Weather No. 2 View2* and Peter Burgess' pointedly political and rotationally timely *Latent Object #6 — Wrapped Package*, 0.45 Scale, Tube Station Bombings, London 1973, Attributed to the IRA. I also enjoyed Joel Gailer's *Hwy Dreams 1*, a clever floor text print rolled off a car tyre which says "you'll go far baby" and David Thomson's *Ordinary Dave*, a comic strip outlining his recent life.

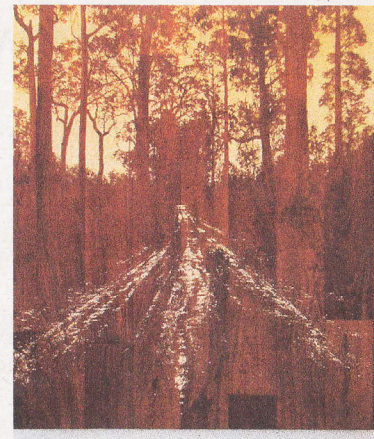
Upstairs at the centre is a wonderful little show of Poppy van Oorde Grainger's work titled *Watercolour Paintings on the Pavement* — which is exactly what the works are. It's the combination of the beautiful drawings, their innocuous location and the narrative of the making that draws you in.



Political point: Peter Burgess' *Latent Object #6 — Wrapped Package*.

Sitting on the pavement and drawing what is in front of her, van Oorde Grainger brings back the simple pleasures of chalk drawing on concrete as a child and, in doing so, disarms the community around her. Or perhaps charms them is a better description, with small gifts being left for her and pavement disappearing as keepsakes for the householders whose houses have been painted. This is a charming and ultimately poignant exhibition.

Also upstairs is the initially less interesting *Boab Inscriptions*. James Dodd's ongoing fascination with graffiti, or rather script, here records his travels in our north and the mapping of found carvings. What I do like about Dodd's work is the process, and ultimately what lifts his work above the banal is the idea of reinvesting life into dead text.



New direction: Tony Windberg's *West "woodcut"*.

This is done through the act of live tracing, best exemplified by the display of big plastic sheets in the installation downstairs. These sheets have been literally wrapped around boabs and the various carved graffiti — "I waz 'ere", "PJ luvs HT (4 eva)" — have been traced, lifting these vestiges of permanent record and bringing them into a new discourse.

The Fremantle Arts Centre Print Award, Poppy van Oorde Grainger and James Dodd are showing at Fremantle Arts Centre until November 21.

When I last encountered Annie Hsiao-Wen Wang, she was hanging G-strings up in *Spectrum*. Now she presents a series of sophisticated, lush paintings in a series titled

Illume at Perth Galleries.

Layering light to dark allows the paint to present the poetic semblance of light filling the canvas, soothing the eye and calming the nerves.

With titles like *Opus*, *Breath*, *Bloom*, *Inhale*, *Yearn* and *Id*, this is melancholic — with something about the void and the lurking other here — but equally demanding personal reflection, all achieved through the lush application of paint. There is an overall consistency to the work that allows an immersion and I look forward to seeing how the artist pushes paint and installation in the future.

At Gallery East Tony Windberg, well known for his technically accomplished realistic paintings of our South-West, has completely dismantled his methodology and struck out in a brave new direction . . . and with great results.

Questioning perspective, the vanishing point and the passive viewer position in the Western history of painting, Windberg creates a physical role for the viewer within his landscapes.

This is done through a series of imitation vinyl "woodcuts" that create "wide angle" illusions or three-dimensional "corner works" that stretch and shrink the South-West imagery as you move.

Illume at Perth Galleries and Viewpoints at Gallery East, next door to one another in Stirling Highway, North Fremantle, both close on Sunday.