

VISUAL ARTS

Ric Spencer



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Prayer on a g-string

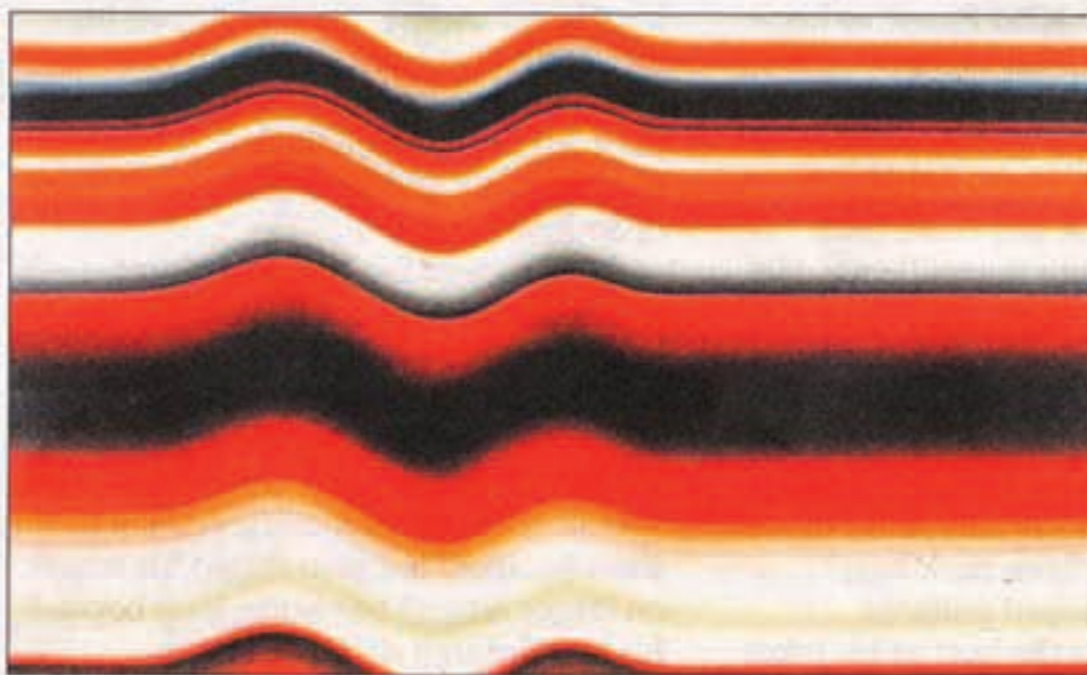
Beneath the polished veneer, discordant nature breaks out in diverse art forms



Impact: Janet Carter's rubber tube sculptures are strong and raw.



Knickers in a twist: Annie Hsiao-Wen Wang's Prayer Installation.



Polished: Exotic Particles is a thoughtful, experimental, probing show, full of quality.

Marion Borgelt's Exotic Particles, currently running at Turner Galleries, is an ambitious, polished and beautiful show, and it's a great experience just to be within it.

Taking up the whole gallery space and interspersed by an energising use of the dividing wall, Exotic Particles comprises 28 works across the media of paint, glass, marble, ply and paper. It's a varied mix but one handled with empathy as each material is thoughtfully played off against another.

Scale, multiples and assemblage are also important elements in Exotic Particles, with some works stretching 2m across while Lunar Arc: Red Eclipse 1 brings together 10 smaller curved pieces, each lifting off the wall to suggest different phases of the moon.

Lunar Arc is a good example of the way Borgelt uses rotation to provide optical movement in her works, enticing the viewer to complete the work by moving along the piece.

The sublime Venetian Tsukimi No. 2 (New moon to full moon) follows this same lunar arc only in solid Murano glass spheres. Laid out in a line along a perspex table, this time walking the line carries you through the lunar cycle as the glass balls turn from see-through to solid, swirling mass. More subtle than the wall lunar series, this is a successful tangent of the lunar theme and, like eggshell drawings, evokes the moon on a cloudy night.

Moving along the work also changes the mood of the big linen slit paintings, as the turned-over linen cuts turn from cool to fluorescent tones. A mix of Lucio Fontana and Bridget Riley, Liquid Light: Asian Sun Trilogy resonates deep vibrant oranges against the natural hue of the linen in a work that is ambient in its rhythms.

The Strobe Series of paintings

reminded me of Gerhard Richter's paintings in which he implies that the paint is dragged across the canvases. Again using rotation, Borgelt moves the viewer along the canvas, successfully meshing the physicality of the viewing act and the painting act, implying that art is a two-way dialogue.

Exotic Particles is a thoughtful, experimental, probing show that is quality viewing. Layered in critical and gendered meaning and evoking all types of sensual response, the works together provide a journey through nature's cycles and rhythms in an ode to our night's reflective light source and all the emotive nuances it provides.

Exotic Particles is at Turner Galleries, 470 William Street, Northbridge, until October 3.

The natural elements also influence the work of Annie Hsiao-Wen Wang and Janet Carter at the Spectrum Project Space. Discordant Natures is essentially an exhibition split in two — a clothesline in the front half of the gallery and several tyre tubes in the back.

Annie Hsiao-Wen Wang's Prayer is a number of Buddhist prayer flags hanging across the entrance gallery. But these are in fact g-strings on a line, each with a section of Germaine Greer's The Female Eunuch written on them.

In the corner is an upturned concrete cast of a torso which, when read along with the two hands that break out of the floor, is suggestive of someone hanging on, someone plunging or someone defying gravity. Prayer offers an immersive narrative of cultural and gender expectations, dispersing Greer's writings to the four corners like hope in the wind.

In the back gallery Janet Carter's collection of rubber tube sculptures is a strong and raw use of a seemingly ubiquitous object in a work that also engages

gendered readings. The works come across as pseudo-fetish or sado-masochistic but are more ingenious in their reductive use of material and imagination. The accompanying video which shows Carter (I presume) making the objects testifies to the strength and tenacity needed to cajole the objects into form. I particularly enjoyed the way this show was thoughtfully laid out.

Discordant Natures is at Spectrum Project Space, 221 Beaufort Street, Northbridge, until September 27.

Although it has already finished its short run, the Colours of our Country exhibition, which ran all-too briefly in the foyer of the Central Park building, was a terrific show full of vibrancy and enthusiasm that highlighted the work of two fast-emerging Aboriginal art groups from the Pilbara; the Roebourne Arts Group and Yinjaa Barni Art.

Comprising the work of 41 Pilbara-based artists, The Colours of our Country brought together 140 paintings, textiles and artefacts that resonated with colour and lively composition. Encompassing the outer wall of the foyer, the work covered a wide range of local narratives and personal stories, many to do with the flourishing of wildflowers after the rains.

In these stories of seeds blooming, the sweeping and at times audacious use of colour in the artists' palettes came into play, sharing a real sense of enjoyment in the change in the landscape.

The show as a whole engaged through various styles and individual responses — tidal rivers, stepping stones, bush tucker, mud flats and the story of the two snakes were all subject matter here, not to mention some probing discussion on the politics of contemporary land use.

ONWARD PRODUCTION in association with BLACK SWAN STATE THEATRE COMPANY present

7 deadly sins four deadly sinners

Compiled and written by
Norman Hudis
Devised and compiled by
Marc Sinden

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