

# FLORA

Presented by Cruthers Collection of Women's Art  
Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery  
10 February — 21 April 2018

Flowers have a multitude of meanings and uses: they can represent love, honour or death, they are used as decoration or medicine, art historians describe the 'useless beauty' of their imagery while botanists study their role in sustaining ecosystems. Often, flowers are aligned with women or with femininity, connections that colour the ways in which we value, understand, and construct our world.

Taking inspiration from Zadok Ben-David's *Human Nature*, this exhibition presents a bouquet of works drawn from the Cruthers Collection of Women's Art in which a variety of 'flora' are documented, mused upon, celebrated, or deconstructed.

## LIST OF WORKS

1. **Edith Trethowan**, *Adam Fig*, c 1928 - 29, wood engraving, 18.1 x 17.8cm, CCWA 97
2. **Angela Stewart**, *Salutation*, 1990, oil on canvas, 191 x 149cm, CCWA 577
3. **Kylie Wilkinson and Nat Thomas**, *Dynamic Lifter*, 2010, offset lithograph on acid-free 200gsm cotton rag paper with deckle edge, 76 x 56cm, CCWA 941  

This lithograph was produced as part of a Marrickville Council Artist Residency, during which the artists researched grass roots and collective food production in the urban centre of Sydney. Featuring handwritten gardening tips collected from Marrickville residents, the original non-numbered edition of *Dynamic Lifter* was made as a gift for people the artists met or worked with during the residency.
4. **Mei Swan Lim**, *Sky Life*, 2018, audio recording, 23 min loop, Courtesy of the artist  

Mei Swan Lim has produced a two-part audio response to the exhibition, contrasting the constructed image of the flower in the gallery with its integrated role in the environment. *Sky Life* and *Ground Life* combine field recordings from locations around Perth, including Baigup Wetlands, Piney Lakes Reserve, Joondalup Arena hedges, suburban Wanneroo and the Beeliar Wetlands. Lim refers to these sites as 'urban wild places nestled amongst human settlement' - the occasional plane or train intrudes on the sounds of the Honeyeater, Wren, Wattlebird, Crow, Magpie, Bee, Cricket Pobblebonk and Motorbike frog. 'Listening generously' to these sounds can be an act of respect and care, an acknowledgement of the custodians of these sites and of our shared human responsibilities.
5. **Peggy Crombie**, *Still Life (Flowers)*, 1935, oil on canvas on board, 38.7 x 41.7cm, CCWA 265
6. **Anna Kristensen**, *Flame Tree, Plume Smoke Bush and Lambs' Wool*, 2012, oil and acrylic on linen, 84 x 66cm, CCWA 947
7. **Nora Heysen**, *Gladioli*, 1933, oil on canvas, 61.5 x 47cm, CCWA 764
8. **Clara Southern**, *Chrysanthemums*, c 1892, oil on canvas, 74 x 44.5cm, CCWA 589
9. **Margaret Preston**, *Jug of Flowers*, c 1928, hand coloured woodcut, 21 x 28.5cm, CCWA 151
10. **Moya Dyring**, *Grass and Mushrooms*, n.d., oil on canvas, 61 x 46cm, CCWA 859
11. **Elizabeth Cummings**, *Windy Bush*, 1995, lithograph, edition 8/10, 45 x 58cm, CCWA 849c
12. **Penny Coss**, *Red Bloom*, 2012, acrylic on canvas, 153 x 153cm, CCWA 937  

Western Australian artist Penny Coss is influenced by the traditions of Abstract Expressionism and her relationship to the landscape. She describes her paintings as gestural and fluid, using a technique that stains the canvas with thinned pigment poured directly onto its surface. *Red Bloom* draws from observations of algal blooms and plumes of bushfire smoke, its vibrant colours and bleeding forms evoking environmental processes of both slow and violent change.
13. **Memnuma Vila-Bogdanich**, *Untitled (Seeds)*, c 1974, watercolor, 61 x 48, CCWA 791
14. **Ellis Rowan**, *Monodora Myristica*, n.d., gouache on cream paper, 61 x 40.5cm, CCWA 759
15. **Portia Bennett**, *Banksias*, c 1970s, oil on board, 98 x 75cm, CCWA 805
16. **Mary Moore**, *Xanthorrhoea Preissii - Grass Tree Flower Spike*, 2005, oil on MDF, 137 x 40cm, CCWA 836
17. **Lena Skinner Gnale**, *Bush Tobacco Flower and Desert Sand*, c 1997, batik on silk satin with azoic dyes, 476 x 114cm, CCWA 643f  

Aboriginal women from the Utopia region of the Northern Territory became renowned for their work with silk batiks in the late 1970s. The batiks played a role in the successful claim for Alyawarr and Anmatyerr freehold title over the Utopia Pastoral Lease in 1979, both as a source of income and as evidence of the women's ownership of country. Many of the women working in this medium went on to produce significant paintings, utilised skills with layering and line-work honed in batik. Lena Skinner Gnale's work is one of a group of Utopia batiks exhibited in Paris in 1997 and 1998 for the exhibition in *Peintres Aborigenes d' Australie*.
18. **Mei Swan Lim**, *Ground Life*, 2018, audio recording, 23 min loop, Courtesy of the artist
19. **Clare McFarlane**, *First Principles i-iv*, 2006, acrylic and screen print on board, four panels 18 x 18cm ea, CCWA 843
20. **Fiona MacDonald**, *Red Sea-weed*, 1992-93, collage, 30.2 x 21cm, CCWA 541
21. **Rosalie Gascoigne**, *A Rose is a Rose*, 1986-88, torn linoleum on board, 62 x 116 cm, CCWA 482
22. **Susanna Castleden**, *Filtered Visions*, 2003, screenprint and mapping pins, 131 x 87cm, CCWA 762
23. **Ann Newmarch**, *MALU KURU, Kangaroo Eye (Pitjantjatjara)*, *STURT'S DESERT PEA*, 1981, screenprint, four parts 76 x 52cm ea, CCWA 568
24. **Grace Cosstington Smith**, *Lily Growing*, c 1926-28, oil on board, 45 x 35cm, CCWA 214
25. **Lesbia Thorpe**, *Summer Thistle*, 1995, three colour etching on rag paper, 9.8 x 11.7cm, CCWA 959h

Exhibitions from the Cruthers  
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