



EYE OF THE BEHOLDER:  
THE ART OF  
**Lucy Culliton**



# Lucy Culliton

was born in Sydney in 1966 and since graduating from the National Art School with a Diploma in Painting in 1996, has become a much loved Australian artist. *Eye of the Beholder* presents a survey exhibition of over 130 artworks by this remarkable artist who is one of the most talented and important of Australia's contemporary painters.

Winning the Mosman Art Prize in 2000 was an important career milestone for Culliton, who has since enjoyed a meteoric career ascendancy exhibiting regularly to much critical and public acclaim. With an extraordinary creative output and an inexorable passion for her work, Lucy Culliton is renowned for her intense scrutiny of a single subject, with her gaze ranging from much loved horses, farm animals and farm machinery; to domestic still life subjects of food, plants and curios; to Australian as well as international landscape subjects. Like many artists she draws direct inspiration from her immediate environment and circumstances, approaching her diverse subjects with an intensity that can only come through a strong connection with them.

Culliton is a regular finalist in the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes and her work is represented in several important public and private art collections. Culliton is represented by The Hughes Gallery, Sydney. *Eye of the Beholder* features artworks drawn from public and private collections, showcasing all aspects of the artist's career.



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MOSMAN ART GALLERY

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opposite:  
Greg Weight  
*Lucy with April the rooster, 2003*







# FOREWORD

**John Cheeseman**  
**Director Mosman Art Gallery**

When considering the art of Lucy Culliton one word constantly comes to mind – beauty.

In Australia the word ‘beauty’ has many meanings and Culliton’s work makes an obvious claim to the word in the sense of delighting the eye. But there is more than an aesthetic claim at work here. The word ‘beauty’ also describes things that are successful or highly valued. It is a word that describes how we feel – excited, fulfilled, exuding a sense of passion, achievement and exhilaration. ‘Beauty’ is also used to indicate agreement or acceptance, expressing an explicit bond or compact. It is appropriate to use the word ‘beauty’ in all these varied senses when considering Culliton’s work. Additionally, ‘beauty’ is an expression of celebration and accomplishment, and I am sure many collectors (who have been fortunate enough to buy a Culliton in the past) have left galleries breathlessly exclaiming the words ‘You little beauty!’.

Mosman Art Gallery has long established a reputation for curating significant survey exhibitions of important living Australian artists, especially those with a connection to our region, including Ken Done, Kerrie Lester and Guy Warren to name a few. Following in this vein the Gallery is thrilled to present this mid-career survey exhibition, giving a ‘thumbs-up’ to the last eighteen years of Lucy Culliton’s practice. Culliton has a long association with Mosman and her winning of the Mosman Art Prize in 2000 became a launching pad for her success. She is a tireless practitioner, working daily in her studio, encouraging others through her teaching work at the National Art School and through her participation in artist-led projects across Australia. Without reservation, we are proud to celebrate one of the finest painters active today and one that we envision will permanently become part of the pantheon of acclaimed Australian artists.

*Eye of the Beholder* has been masterfully curated by Katrina Cashman the Gallery’s Assistant Director/ Senior Curator, who has worked to join the many elements of Culliton’s career to compile an exhibition that highlights the very best examples of the artist’s work. On behalf of the Gallery, I would like to thank the artist for her invaluable collaboration which has brought this project to fruition. We wish to thank the notable art critic and writer John McDonald for his insightful text and contribution to the catalogue. We would also like to thank Evan and Ray Hughes (and all the staff at the Hughes Gallery in Surry Hills) for their assistance in the development of this exhibition and acknowledge their long time advocacy of Culliton and her art. The Gallery also acknowledges our funding partners Arts NSW and Mosman Council for their financial support of the project.

Mosman Art Gallery would like to thank the public institutions who have lent works from their holdings for the exhibition: Artbank, Gold Coast City Gallery, Griffith University Art Collection, National Gallery of Australia, Parliament of New South Wales, Sydney University Museums and University of Queensland Art Museum. In addition the exhibition would not be possible without the many private lenders who have kindly made their artworks available for inclusion in this exhibition including Stephanie and Tony Culliton, Anna Culliton and Boris Hunt, Lissa Barnum, Carol and Brian Carrigan, Isaac and Zara Crichton, James and Jacqui Erskine, Lady Nancy Gorton, Rebecca Hingerty and Gareth Sage, Ray Hughes, The Hughes Gallery, Charlotte Inglis, the Lee family, Mr and Mrs McKenzie, Richard Mortlock and Marion Bennett, Duncan and Cath Sim, Annette Teckemeier as well as those many private lenders, some with significant holdings of Culliton’s works, who wish to remain anonymous.



*Still Life/White Ground, 2000*  
 Oil on board  
 122 x 122 cm  
 Mosman Art Collection





*Lucy Culliton in her studio at Bibbenluke, NSW, 2014*



# ARTIST'S STATEMENT

**Lucy Culliton**

I feel very honoured to be the subject of this survey exhibition at Mosman Art Gallery. Looking back over my career as an artist has been a very rich and rewarding experience. Working closely with Katrina Cashman, of Mosman Art Gallery, we have sifted through loads of catalogues and images of over eighteen years of my paintings. Its been fantastic to see these 'friends' again and reflect on the mountain of work I have left in my wake whilst in pursuit of the next great painting. I certainly have been quite busy!

I had forgotten some of the artworks, and others that I thought I knew well seemed quite different from my memory of them. The funny thing is that I remember everything about making each picture - where I was, what else I was up to that day - and every other thing going on in my busy life at the time. Seeing these paintings again was like reading a diary.

I need to make art because I see a subject and have to make a painting to show how important it is. I want

to bring out the subject's beauty, and to describe it in such a way as to make it bigger, better and more beautiful than what other people might notice when simply passing it by. I want you to see the ornate stitches on a hand made coat hanger, the glisten in the red sauce on hot chips, the depth of beauty in the shine in a pigeon's eye and I want the viewer to know how lucky I am to be surrounded by lovely things – inherited, collected or self-made.

Making paintings makes me feel good. Starting is so exciting, the middle is testing... is it wrong? is it what I was hoping to describe? Maybe its better? It is about here that I get the next idea for a new painting so I finish as quickly as possible as I can't wait to start painting the next work. I scratch my name on the surface, nail it up, decide then if it's a 'keeper' or should I scrape it off and start again.

Painting has given me so much happiness in my life. I wish everyone would do it and experience what I do every day. Give kids paint!





# LUCY CULLITON: HUNGRY EYES

John McDonald

Art critic for The Sydney Morning Herald  
and film critic for The Australian Financial Review

Lucy Culliton's paintings are a perfect reflection of her personality: open, big-hearted, unpretentious and highly colourful. Culliton may not have the highest profile among the artists of her generation, but no-one could be better-loved. In its simplicity and directness her work is virtually irresistible, with those collectors who have acquired one of her pictures usually coming back for another, and another.

Perhaps Culliton's most endearing characteristic is that she is relentlessly focused on the work rather than her career. She paints for pleasure, and as a way of relating to the world. It was said of the French critic, Roland Barthes, that everything he read would lead to an essay. For Culliton, everything she lays eyes on seems to end up in a painting. She has those "hungry eyes" that Margaret Olley was once accused of possessing, and the same no-frills attitude towards her work. From the early horse paintings and still lifes to the late landscapes, she has retained a freshness of touch that argues an ability to keep seeing familiar things as if for the first time.

For an artist this is a supreme gift. It eliminates the nagging anxiety about style and subject matter that forces some painters to keep reinventing themselves every few years. In its extreme manifestations one thinks of a figure such as Giorgio Morandi, who spent many happy years painting the same collection of dusty jugs and bottles on a table top. There's no doubt that Culliton could get an entire exhibition from the contents of a shelf, but she prefers to vary her subjects in accordance with her moods and circumstances.

"You don't know what things look like until you paint them," she says. "You have to paint something in order to understand it."

Having been a "horse-obsessed little girl", it seemed natural that Culliton's first major series should feature horses. She moved on to cups and saucers, then shells. She returned to the crockery, with paintings of food on plates. She painted old machinery and "stripey rocks". The roosters she saw at the Royal Easter Show led to a series of portraits of these exotic birds. A passion for cacti inspired some of her most vibrant and ambitious canvases. There was no calculation involved. Every new series was simply the result of following her heart and her instincts.

opposite: *Self with Reno*, 2001  
Oil on board. 200 x 120 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Jeremy Dillon

In the early 2000s she turned to painting the Hartley landscape with same sense of spontaneity, never feeling for a moment that this was a radical departure from the still lifes and animals. There was no sense that she was entering into a venerable tradition of Australian art, or competing with the iconic painters of the bush.

Landscape was merely another element in Culliton's everyday environment, to be met and mastered to the best of her ability.

When she painted the desert landscape of Arizona in 2004, one could feel her excitement at being immersed in such an exotic environment. At home in Bibbenluke, in the Monaro, she creates formal garden paintings reminiscent of the Impressionists. It's clear Culliton has no 'method' other than those processes generated by her intuitive response to the motif.

Few artists manage to avoid the scourge of self-consciousness so completely. Her work argues an exceptional ability to concentrate on the subject at hand to the exclusion of those egocentric factors that bring so many artists undone. For Culliton the gap between observation and depiction is almost non-existent. Her brush responds quickly to a glint of light on a cup, the woollen texture of a soft toy, or the bloom of a cactus flower. There's plenty of time to think about it afterwards, and to find ways of improving her technique.

Culliton draws constantly but treats drawing as a self-contained activity. She says she never makes a drawing as a preliminary to a painting. Instead she is more likely to sketch a subject in paint on a small scale, and use that as a launching pad for a bigger work.

Because Culliton is such a natural painter it would be easy to imagine her as a kind of superior primitive, with no sense of art history. This would be naïve, as she has taken every opportunity to travel and study the works in museums. Her pictures display the most rigorous concern with composition, and are filled with references to the art of the past. The most obvious instance is *Self with Reno*, (2001), a full-length nude self-portrait that pays playful homage to Picasso's Rose Period masterpiece, *Boy leading a horse*, (1906). The picture is remarkable not simply because of the chutzpah involved in comparing oneself with Picasso, but because Culliton has painted herself with the same candour with which she might paint a cup or a cactus. Her approach is humorous rather than narcissistic, the statement of a woman who feels comfortable in her own skin.





In other works one can detect traces of many different influences. No-one can paint a still life without thinking of Chardin, but one suspects Culliton also admires the Pop still lifes of Californian painter, Wayne Thiebaud. With the *Cock* series, one inevitably thinks of Chaim Soutine. In her love of colour, work ethic, and willingness to tackle any subject, the artist who offers the best point of comparison is David Hockney.

Looking at Hockney's monumental survey show last year in San Francisco, I was struck by the energy and sheer *joie-de-vivre* in so many of his paintings. Hockney can make a nondescript corner of Yorkshire into a place of wonder, and Culliton has a similarly fresh and fearless attitude to the landscape. Like Hockney she has a rigorously democratic view of art: it is something to be enjoyed by everyone; it can conjure a spark of beauty out of the most unpromising material.

One sees this most clearly in those paintings that are little more than accumulations of mundane objects, such as *Padlocks*, *Spark plugs* and *Taps* (all 2008). Isolated against a flat backdrop, these objects take on a sculptural dimension, their contours moulded by the play of shadows. Every detail assumes an exaggerated importance, as if we were looking at the remains of an ancient civilisation in a museum display case.

To see what a complete artist Culliton is, one might compare these collections of inanimate objects with her larger-than-life portrait of art dealer, Ray Hughes, holding a spoon poised menacingly over a bowl of icecream. The viewer feels like a Lilliputian, standing on the table looking up at the red-faced Hughes, striped shirt straining against his considerable girth. It's an image that manages to be both comical and frightening – turning dessert in a Parisian restaurant into a scene of Falstaffian excess.



Culliton tends to see all her paintings as 'portraits', whether they portray human beings, cocks, or woollen toys. She believes that every thing has its intrinsic character that may be captured in paint. It's an appealing idea, and one that seems justified by the care she takes with colours and textures. She paints those things she loves and knows well - motifs that have a role in her life.

In an art world that makes a fetish out of its own alienation, Culliton's paintings take the opposite approach. Her images connect with the world in a positive, dynamic manner. They invite our appreciation, if only we dare to be cheerful.

top: *Taps*, 2008  
Oil on board. 80 x 80 cm  
Private Collection

opposite: *Ray in Paris*, 2010  
Oil on board. 200 x 80 cm  
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program  
by Lucy Culliton with assistance from Ray Hughes Gallery, 2012.  
Griffith University Art Collection Photography: Art Gallery of New South Wales

following page: R.Ian.Lloyd  
*Lucy in her studio*, 2004











# EYE OF THE BEHOLDER: THE ART OF LUCY CULLITON

**Katrina Cashman**

**Assistant Director / Senior Curator Mosman Art Gallery**

It's like being punched in the gut, when one first encounters the work of Australian artist Lucy Culliton. So arresting are her images, so confident in their execution, that viewing them can be equated with physical sensation itself. Their undeniable beauty is at times gutsy and powerful and at others delicate and exquisite. In an art world where the rejection of beauty as a creative ideal has dominated the discourse since the advent of modernism, Culliton's work is audacious. Running the risk of anachronism, the artist's work forms a strong defence against contemporary notions that beauty in art is a superficial and bourgeois value, or, that for contemporary art to be relevant it should eschew the realm of beauty and court the radical. Precociously talented and independent of accepted contemporary art orthodoxies, Culliton's work is in itself an exercise in the subversive. It is unashamed in its celebration of beauty. Uncompromising in her vision, Culliton's paintings challenge us to free ourselves from pretensions and beliefs that modern radical art has always rejected the beautiful. The works form a powerful statement — a declaration, that perhaps beauty in art is the most dangerous idea of all.

The Greek phrase 'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder' has since the third century been variously quoted or similarly paraphrased — that the perception of beauty is subjective. In Lucy Culliton's case, this subjectivity is widely shared and appreciated. Since graduating from the National Art School in 1996, Culliton's career has ascended to the point where she is arguably one of Australia's most important representational contemporary painters. An authentic creative spirit with an inexorable passion for her work, Culliton's artistic output in this period has been remarkable. Well known for her intense scrutiny of a single subject, Culliton's gaze has consistently moved between *plein air* landscape subjects including her homes at Hartley and Bibbenluke in New South Wales and domestic still life subjects — of plants and her collections of curios — and interiors, portraiture and figurative works including her beloved pets and farm animals. Essentially a figurative painter, as subjects they hold no particular broader currency, but for Culliton they are deeply important: the rural properties and landscapes she has lived in that have held her in their thrall; her much loved menagerie of animals; the plants she has grown;

curios she has amassed over many years; the people she loves. Culliton has revisited several of the primary themes in her artworks throughout her practice, with one series of works informing and inspiring the next, and clear visual links between the works which show the development of her aesthetic sensibility. Like many artists she draws direct inspiration from her immediate environment and circumstances, approaching her diverse subjects with an intensity that can only come through a strong connection with them. Supporting this is a deep inner belief in her work and a conviction that drives her art practice.

Lucy Culliton's remarkable talent for creating richly coloured, radiant and sensuous paintings finds its base in her acute powers of observation. It is her 'eye' for seeing beauty, for creating outstanding colour harmonies and thoughtful, intelligent compositions, which has seen the artist produce an extraordinary body of artworks over the past eighteen years. The fact that Culliton plunders her subject matter almost to the point of obsession has worked in her favour; rather than her images appearing laboured, repetitive or predictable, Culliton's gift is the astonishing sense of immediacy, freshness and affection she brings to her paintings, time and again. Knowing her subjects so well engenders Culliton's work with a great sense of intimacy, and she captures the intrinsic character of her subjects. Over time she has developed a distinctive visual language which moves between tightly organised, formal and compressed images, to looser, more gestural and expressive works.

There are clearly some significant influences in her early development which include the still life practices of American artist Richard Diebenkorn, and distinguished Australian modernist artist Margaret Preston. This is particularly evident in Culliton's use of flattened perspective, negative space and her colour palette. Like Margaret Preston's eternal quest to achieve 'decoration' through her art, Lucy Culliton's work transcends those commonly held contemporaneous, derisive notions regarding the decorative. Under Culliton's perceptive eye and dexterous hand, her images are elevated beyond artifice or the planes of mere skilled observation. It's a unique form of alchemy that she performs, through her signature colouristic, painterly approach and the undoubted sense of harmony, balance and rhythm she achieves in her work.





*Tulips II*, 2012  
Oil on board. 60 x 60 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay





*Snowdome multi panel, 1997*  
Oil on board. 65 x 65 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Jason Martin

*opposite: Tea cup stack, 1998*  
Oil on board. 30.5 x 19 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth



## EARLY YEARS AND TRAINING

Lucy Culliton was born in 1966 and grew up in Sydney into a creative family who encouraged her interest in art. Culliton's mother Stephanie was an art teacher, her father Tony was a TV director and producer of major productions. Culliton's younger sister Anna Culliton is also an artist, and is a notable ceramicist. Culliton was also a cousin of Alan Sisley (the legendary Director of the Orange Regional Gallery who sadly passed away recently) who was a direct descendant of the distinguished French impressionist painter Alfred Sisley. With these auspicious beginnings, her parents recall her as being completely driven by art from a very young age, with a particular obsession for drawing horses which would later emerge as a strong theme in her art practice. Indeed the artist is well known for her deep love of her horses and farm animals, which remain central to her life. She lives with a veritable menagerie of animals at her rural farm property in Bibbenluke, in southern inland New South Wales.

A seminal period in Lucy Culliton's childhood which left an indelible mark on the artist was when her family spent a brief holiday on a large sheep farm at Ando, an area situated on the treeless plains of the Monaro, in southern New South Wales. 'Rosemount' was a property owned by family friends, the Kimbers. Falling in love with Ando and the freedom it represented, the Cullitons took a sabbatical, leaving Sydney to live and work in the country for a year. Aged eight, Lucy and her younger sister Anna attended the local school while the family lived in the old shearers quarters at 'Rosemount', with no electricity, a gas fridge and a generator which was turned on for an hour at night. It was a tough year on the family, but for Lucy it created a deep connection with that Australian landscape with its particular qualities of light and its hills covered in velvety grasses. Culliton's experience of living at Rosemount would have an irresistible pull on her psyche, later re-surfacing as a major source of inspiration in her art practice. Resettling a year later back into life in Sydney, the young student undertook secondary studies at Hornsby Girls High School, which she found oppressive and a difficult environment. Leaving school as soon as she was able to, Culliton completed a Diploma in Graphic Design at Randwick TAFE which led to full time employment in the public sector. She recalls this period as being a deeply unhappy one: "I hated that job. I would walk home some days literally crying in frustration".<sup>1</sup>

Following ten years of work as a graphic designer, in 1993 aged 27 Lucy Culliton gave it away to finally pursue her dream of studying art, enrolling at the National Art School: "I gave up security, permanence and imminent

long service leave. My family thought I was crazy to leave a regular job".<sup>2</sup> Art school proved a revelation for the young, irrepressible artist — its environment and the camaraderie of her tutors and fellow students inspired and nourished her practice. Having experienced several unsatisfying years in graphic design, it's not surprising that Culliton, with no time to waste, threw herself into art school with passion and a clear vision of what she wanted to achieve. Among the teaching body and student cohort she quickly earned the reputation of being ambitious with complete focus on her work. Common student antics of late night carousing held little appeal for Culliton. Instead, her enduring love of horses saw her daily routine to include rising pre-dawn, working at the stables and taking an early morning horse ride at the Sydney Showground, before arriving for the day of work at art school.



Culliton credits her time at the National Art School as being a special period in her development, particularly in cementing her future direction and ambitions to pursue her practice. It gave her the confidence that she was on the right path: "Art School gave me a peer group of like-minded people. We had some fantastic times together but we all worked incredibly hard. We took it very seriously".<sup>3</sup> Influential teachers in this period included Bill Brown, Noel Fergate, Roger Crawford and Sue Archer. Fellow students and friends included Lorna Grear, Kat Mills, Sophie Gralton, John Stanford, Craig Waddell, Alan Jones, Jason Martin and Rachel Fairfax.

It was not long before the artist and her work began to attract considerable attention. The prominent artist and former Director of the National Art School, Bernard Ollis remembers Lucy Culliton as being an extremely hard working and dedicated student who was incredibly driven and very much her own person:

*Lucy has no pretensions at all. When I first met her she had an incredible sense of confidence and she was very grounded. She was very honest, and I found this refreshing, in a school full of young, impressionable students, mostly more concerned with how to 'fit in'. Lucy didn't give a damn what others thought about her work. She was very, very talented and almost dogmatic in following her own creative path. I always respected that about her. She had a deep sense about what she was doing and where she was going with her work, and she achieved this with incredible hard work and incredible sincerity. There was something about her integrity as a person and there was something of substance about her – I do think she is an artist of great substance.*<sup>4</sup>

## AFTER ART SCHOOL

In the immediate years following graduation from the National Art School, Lucy Culliton began exhibiting regularly in group shows with other graduates at various small galleries in Sydney's inner city. The first of these exhibitions, a series of still life works titled 'Cups', (with fellow artist Lorna Grear) at Commonwealth Street in Surry Hills, reveals the artist's fascination with eclectic artefacts, and *objet trouvés*. Always a voracious collector, Culliton's focus turned to her inherited collections of antique crockery. These colouristic works were primarily intimate in scale, their materiality bringing to mind the works of the Annandale Imitation Realists (including Colin Lanceley, Mike Brown and Ross Crothall), with their roughly hewn approach to materials, creating artforms which were part painting, part assemblage-collage.

Like many emerging artists living a somewhat hand-to-mouth existence, Culliton sourced her painting substrates from building sites, council clean ups and road sides. Despite the inherent nature of these crude pieces of detritus, these early works have a refined sense of composition, orderliness and charm. They reveal the emergence of the visual language within Culliton's art practice which has endured throughout her career — the use of the grid and assemblages of board panels where still life objects, and particularly their shadows, overlap and interplay in lively compositions; her use of pinks and reds as her base paint, with the painting of the actual image using a palette of seductive, complementary colours prepared with a white base. Culliton's perceptive understanding of colour is one of her key strengths, with rich colour harmonies that make her works glow. They are light filled, revealing her allegiance with those legendary Australian women painters Nora Heysen, Ethel Carrick Fox and Hilda Rix Nicholas among others.

In these early works Lucy Culliton's use of high key colour, flat picture planes and use of negative spaces, shift throughout her assemblages. The artist deliberately creates a visual jarring of the panels at the point where they connect, producing a strange tension in the works which can be disorienting for the viewer. In her words: "I like to create a trick of the eye in how the frames connect. I like changing the [colour of the] grounds and playing with the eye, my grounds are always as important as the subject".<sup>5</sup> Culliton's treatment of her work in this fashion was initially derived somewhat from necessity, with the artist working in a very small, cramped studio at her home in Crown Street, Surry Hills, painting the individual boards then piecing them together akin to a patchwork. While the works are drawn from direct observation, there are also elements of Culliton taking artistic liberties in these works where her viewers are none the wiser, for example *Tea cup with Reno the horse*, (1997) which details Culliton's favourite pet horse 'Reno' in its intricate patterning.

Additional exhibitions from this period included 'Sea shells' at Level Gallery in Newtown, where small, intimate assemblages of images were juxtaposed with huge over-scaled works, the artist enlarging her subject matter to dramatic effect. Culliton's legendary love of horses and animals emerged in this period with the 'Family portrait' show of 1999, which included life sized portrait works of Culliton's various pet animals including her cat, rats and her beloved pony 'Stumpy Lollipop' and horse 'Reno'. Curious, quirky and definitely eccentric, these works were instrumental in gaining Culliton an early following of devotees.





top: *Spotty cup*, 1998  
Oil on board. 36 x 26 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp

left: *Reno*, 1998  
Oil on canvas. 191 x 60 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp

bottom: *Tea cup with Reno the horse*, 1997  
Oil on canvas. 90 x 90 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth

## THE HUGHES GALLERY

The most important moment in Lucy Culliton's career development which has had an enduring and significant influence on her success as an artist, was being offered an exhibition with the seasoned and highly successful art gallerist, Ray Hughes in 1999. As a young art student living on Crown Street around the corner from the Hughes Gallery in Surry Hills, Lucy had often frequented the gallery, greatly admiring the work of several of the artists in the Hughes Gallery stable including William Robinson, Joe Furlonger and Ian Smith. After a period of helping out in the Gallery, like many hopeful artists she approached the larger-than-life Hughes with some trepidation, to show him some examples of her work. Lucy Culliton was not the first artist Ray Hughes had found and mentored to incredible success. Realising her enormous talent and that he had found something special in the young artist, Hughes was quick to secure her for an exhibition:

*I guess it's a case of being in the right place at the right time. One day she brought in a small book with photos of her recent paintings – shell paintings that she was preparing for a show at Level Gallery. From the photographs I thought she looked pretty interesting – a real painter. I went round the corner to see the works in her studio in the flesh and bought two straight away. I said 'Righto – I want to do your next show'.*

*Mostly when young artists ask you [for a show] – you know its not going to work out. Lucy knew us and she knew that she would fit here and that her work was right for us. Her shell works reminded me of the British artist Paul Nash – they had a surrealist quality about them. And when you are looking at an artist it's a kind of intellectual pedigree you are looking for – an awareness of the bigger art movements and her place as an artist, within this.<sup>6</sup>*



*Shells, 1998*  
Oil on canvas. 120 x 180 cm  
Collection of Ray Hughes  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery



With an immediate and positive public response to her work, Lucy Culliton's first exhibition with the Ray Hughes Gallery, 'The Farm', in 1999, was a resounding success, and a precursor to the phenomenal achievements she would enjoy under Hughes's mentorship.

Inspired by her return to Ando on the Monaro after finishing her studies at the National Art School, Culliton's original intention was to paint its verdant landscapes, however she soon became enthralled with painting remnant farm equipment and machinery - trucks, engines, tractors and sheds on the farm. These subjects again reveal her attraction to collections of objects and an intrinsic interest in the materiality of her subjects. The artist relished the challenge of painting debris, rusted iron and dilapidated buildings and such, finding beauty where others would see decay. These images were juxtaposed with a series of small panel, grid works focussing on Culliton's collection of tiny lead animals - her highly skilled use of light, shade and negative space is evident here as is the fact that the ground of the artwork is given equal importance to the image as the subject itself.

Lucy's relationship with Ray Hughes has been central to her developing career. His acceptance of the young artist into his stable was symbolic, and an anointment of sorts, which set the trajectory for her future career. From this point Culliton started submitting works and gaining selection as a finalist in many prestigious art prizes and an early string of successes cemented her reputation as a rising star. The self-portrait *Self with Cup*, (1999) received a Highly Commended in the notable Portia Geach Memorial Award. This was a hugely encouraging moment for Culliton. The image is prescient in that it captures a tangible sense of the artist's inner confidence and determination. Portrayed in her 'uniform', literally covered in paint, Culliton's direct gaze back to the viewer is resolute, yet has an air of vulnerability. It is one of many revealing self-portraits the artist has made throughout her career.

Lucy Culliton's magnificent artwork *Little Hartley landscape*, (1999) proved another work that would bring the artist significant acclaim. Culliton was one of only a handful of artists to have work acquired as part of the prestigious Conrad Jupiters Purchase Art Prize for the Gold Coast City Gallery art collection. *Little Hartley landscape*, (1999) is a large scale, multi-panel piece depicting the view of rolling hills and valleys from her parents' property at Little Hartley, west of the Blue Mountains. With thick application of paint, Culliton's palette uses high key, saturated colour to achieve a vivid

*Self with cup*, 1999  
Oil on board. 165 x 61 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery





*Watermelon and knife, 2000*  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection

intensity in the work. There is no equivocation in the brushwork, just an assured and confident hand creating a seductive surface which immediately draws one in.

However it was winning the Mosman Art Prize in late 2000 with her work *Still Life/White Ground*, (2000 - page 5) that proved to be the most significant of this trifecta of early art prize successes. As the most prestigious council funded painting prize in Australia, winning this prize was a defining moment in Culliton's life and career. For many artists, selection as a finalist in this prestigious prize is significant in itself, but for Culliton it gave much more. At the time the prize was worth \$15,000, which was not an inconsiderable amount. It provided the funds for her to build a fit-for-purpose art studio on her parents' rural property at Little Hartley which would have an important influence on the direction and scale of Culliton's future paintings. In addition, it gave her the caché of her artwork entering the Mosman Art Collection, joining a long list of Australian art luminaries including Grace Cossington Smith, Nancy Borlase, Margo Lewers, Guy Warren, Lloyd Rees, Janet Dawson, Jenny Sages and Elisabeth Cummings to name a few. It was an important milestone for Culliton supporting her future creative ambitions.

The painting *Still Life/White Ground*, (2000) was part of Culliton's 'Food' series which celebrated both traditional crafts and the domestic, elevating the ordinary into the extraordinary with a deep sense of nostalgia.

Culliton's choice of subject matter — antique crockery and classic Australian cake shop fodder — and her saccharine palette, verges on the kitsch and of being overly sentimental, yet the image is painted with such a freshness that it has a strong sense of vitality. With her signature use of the grid of boards and lively interplay of forms, Culliton's inimitable gift for colour and texture comes to the fore, the artist capturing an astonishing likeness of the pearlescent sheen of a lustre-ware mug and the reflective gold edge of an antique tea cup.

Lucy Culliton's major success with the Mosman Art Prize in 2000 was followed within weeks by another, the 'Food' exhibition, her second solo show with Ray Hughes Gallery. The entire exhibition sold out before the opening night, cementing her place in the art dealer's stable. In this series the artist's gaze turned to various mundane 'food' subjects from the everyday, ranging from her prize winning cakes, to fruit and vegetables as well as pizza, hot chips and baked beans. The food paintings such as *Watermelon and knife*, (2000) often also featured kitchen implements in a direct reference to American painter Richard Diebenkorn's still life practice.

From a distance the works are literal representations and easily legible, on closer inspection, one can see the vigour and spontaneity of Culliton's brushwork, where strokes and patches of pure colour are laid down quickly. They are gestural in their application, rather than tight, in contrast to the 1950s domesticity they evoke. Culliton plays with tilted perspectives and her bright, pop art inspired palette constantly moves and changes throughout the works, giving them a real sense of theatre. The stunning major work, *Summer Fruits*, (2000) has a strong sense of rhythm and movement throughout the work. Its forms tumble across the surface, rendered in a profusion of colour, resonating with a cacophony of tropical sound. Generous and sumptuous, it is a veritable cornucopia of delightful and delicious offerings. Of the 'Food' series Culliton recently said:

*I like to paint my own possessions, my crockery and collections of things. I get enormous satisfaction from working with colour and composition to build the image. I am trying my hardest to make something ordinary look beautiful. I love the challenge of painting what I see – the sculptural elements of a plate of spaghetti or mixing paint to capture the appearance of silver foil".<sup>7</sup>*





Summer fruits, 2000  
 Oil on board. 120 x 240 cm  
 Private Collection







## A STUDIO AT LITTLE HARTLEY

Lucy Culliton's move from the inner city to live and work at Little Hartley in 2001 with her brand new studio (a generous 100 square metres), inspired a change in direction from the interior domesticity of her 'Food' works to a series of *plein air* landscape paintings. Freed from the constraints of her Surry Hills studio, there was corresponding dramatic increase in the size of the artworks made at Hartley, which became much looser and more gestural in their application.

Lucy Culliton has always considered her drawing practice to be a completely separate art practice. When painting, she prefers to paint in natural daylight, directly onto the board or canvas, in-situ and 'wet-on-wet'. This imposes a degree of speed in making the work, and so with the stability of having a new studio, and the discipline of painting every day (akin to a daily meditation), Culliton painted literally hundreds of *plein air* landscape paintings at Hartley, portraying its fecund, glorious rural vistas. The strength and consistency of the Hartley series is again due to the artist's familiarity with her subject, observing that particular landscape day after day, morning, noon and night, and throughout the seasons. In her words:

*The decision making is already done in my head – the hand just brings it out. Hartley gave me so much to work with – such a range of imagery, from wild, untamed bush landscapes to rolling hills and lush green pastures. I worked with the sunshine, intense heat and droughts of summer and the frosts, fogs and mists of winter. I had the warmth and comfort of the studio and could*

*paint the view, literally straight out the door. I had my music, my kettle and a comfortable place to sit and look at what I'd done that day. For me it was about capturing the strong light there. I want my paintings to be beautiful and light imbued.*<sup>8</sup>

The Hartley works are extraordinarily beautiful and masterful, proof of Culliton's inherent skills and her understanding of colour, texture and recessive space to create perspective. However it is her gestural, expressive mark making which give these outstanding artworks their strength and grandeur. *Hartley landscape*, (2002) evokes the cool and shade of the evening with its luminous sunset, while the expressive *Hartley landscape XLVIII*, (2002) captures the stunning view of the distant local landmark, the Hassans Walls. Looking back on these works Culliton recently remarked: *I feel very proud to see these works and I love the freshness of them. Over time my work has become tighter and tighter – I would love to return to this looseness and gestural marks in my work.*<sup>9</sup>

A smaller group of concurrent works, somewhat tangential to the Hartley works was the 2001 series 'Rock, Paper, Scissors', in which Lucy Culliton resumed working in still life, examining the sculptural possibilities of her own collections of everyday, utilitarian scissors. Like her artistic hero Diebenkorn, Culliton had over time amassed

opposite: *Hartley landscape XXIII*, 2002  
Oil on canvas. 200 x 120 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

*Rock, paper, scissors*, 2001  
Oil on board. 100 x 190 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery







a hoard of various scissors: kitchen scissors, sewing scissors, paper scissors and Chinese scissors. In these works Culliton painted lavish compositions in which her subjects — various sets of scissors, sheets of paper and the artist's large collection of striped river rocks — were intermixed to create intense artworks with almost a kinetic energy about them. There is so much happening in these images, the eye hardly knows where to rest. *Rock, Paper, Scissors*, (2002 - page 51) is a masterful example of Culliton's developing style; the images becoming increasingly formal and concentrated, with very little of the actual painting ground on view. Packed tight, her quirky subjects (including rolls of toilet paper) are rendered in rich detail. Similarly in *Paper, Scissors, Rock*, (2001) Culliton works with diagonal movement to build a rhythm between her paper aeroplanes, striped rocks, as well as the books, photographs and postcards featuring more, and yet more, of her beloved horses.

Lucy Culliton's interest in figuration and portraiture has endured throughout her career, the artist painting several illuminating and candid self-portraits concurrent to her major series in still life and landscape works. An important self-portrait from this early period is *Self with Reno*, (2002 - page 8). Hung in the Portia Geach Memorial Award and painted only two years after her earlier highly regarded work *Self with Cup*, the image *Self with Reno* is a striking self-portrait, depicting a naked yet supremely confident Culliton. The artist 'leads' her horse 'Reno' through a rural pasture, the direct light and heat of the day bearing down on her, with the familiar hills of Hartley in the background.

With explicit reference to Picasso's 1906 painting, *Boy leading horse*, this bold and painterly work is both compelling and enigmatic. Unashamed, Culliton's statuesque body is generous in proportion and emphasises her womanliness, borrowing Picasso's signature solidity of form. Like Picasso's famous image, the artist appears to lead the horse despite the absence of leads in her hand. Muse-like she walks before Reno, appearing to hold the horse in her spell, governing him with a single hand gesture, whilst he follows mutely behind.

Similarly the work *Self with Cock*, (2002) is an outstanding, painterly self-portrait. There is an honesty and self-assuredness in the work that gives it a strong sense of potency. A more pragmatic rather than idealistic self-portrait, the artist's defiant gaze is full of bravura. One can't help but think Freud would have a field day with the double entendre of the artwork's subject and title. The work evolved from Culliton's highly successful group of works simply titled 'Cocks'; large scale, over-sized portraits of her own pet cocks, as well as poultry she painted at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. The works are strongly related to the artist's earlier 'Family Portrait' series

in which her own life and pet animals are the direct source of inspiration for her work. As her close friend and fellow artist McLean Edwards has said: "Lucy is incontestable for her ability to convey the character of her subjects. These are not just an act of description, rather they are an indication of character".<sup>10</sup> Perhaps a seemingly odd choice of subject, the 'Cocks' are pure Culliton, the artist painting her own life and things dearest to it — her pet animals. There is a literalness and directness about Culliton and her approach to her art practice which might bewilder some, yet is refreshingly free of artifice.

Along with painting the familiar subject of the self, Culliton has equally painted various portraits of friends and colleagues throughout her career. The portrait *Del*, (2001) is a stunning work again revealing the confidence of both the artist and her sitter, fellow artist Del Kathryn Barton.



*Self with Cock*, 2005  
Oil on canvas. 75 x 60 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth

opposite: *Del*, 2002  
oil on board. 199.7 x 99.6 cm  
Collection of The University of Queensland. Gift of Lucy Culliton through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2008.  
Photo: Carl Warner

Lucy Culliton's love of gardening and interest in cactus plants became her singular focus in an outstanding series of works created at Hartley, inspired by the huge collection of cacti Culliton had amassed over several years, with literally hundreds of varieties in pots and planted in the garden beds about the studio. Of all Culliton's works it is this series that established her reputation as a force of nature in the broader public imagination, with outstanding colouristic artworks. The first works of the series were direct observations of the cacti, with clever arrangements of the plants on domestic wire frames, again revisiting earlier domestic still subjects of tea pots and cups, using a colour palette which evokes a nostalgia for the 1960s. The larger works from the series employ an over-head perspective with a direct and intense focus on concentrations of abundant succulent cacti, in an inspiring homage to nature. The magnificent work *Cactus*, (2004) clearly illustrates the development of Culliton's painting practice over many years to become a painter of outstanding talent. Her singular obsession with her subjects is amply exemplified in the major work *New Arrivals*, (2004), where a profusion of cacti are depicted freshly unwrapped, following their delivery to the artist by mail order. Ensnared in their yellow newspaper wrappings, Culliton's reverence for the cacti is akin to worship of a sacred object.

The highly successful 2004 exhibition of cactus works at the Hughes Gallery inspired Lucy Culliton's trip to America to paint cactus in-situ, within the landscapes

of Arizona. What was originally intended to be a road trip turned into a residency of sorts, Culliton living and working for six weeks on a property that backed onto the Saguaro National Monument, in Tucson, Arizona. This legendary national park is home to America's largest cacti, with the giant saguaro being a universally recognised symbol of the American west.

By pure accident, Culliton visited Arizona during the best spring season the region had had in years – Saguaro was in full bloom, providing her an abundance of subject matter. The trip proved an amazing experience that fuelled Culliton's art practice and returned her undivided attention once again to the landscape. Immersed in and completely enthralled by this magnificent desert, at Tucson the artist painted prodigiously, creating numerous small studies which were later worked up into major pieces at home. Her creative response to its wild and untamed beauty gave rise to a series of extraordinary artworks which mark a turning point in her art practice. Works such as *Tucson cactus*, (2005) show her masterful ability to capture the highly textured landscape, rich with detail like a tapestry. The work has a wonderful sense of rhythm and space, achieved with layered intervals which stretch before the eye. The artist harnesses a radiant sense of light, with the desert flora in the foreground seeming to glow with a sense of spirituality. And just as the mid 19th century Mormon settlers were seeking salvation and in their crossing of the Mojave Desert, Culliton's majestic painting delivers us its own version of a promised land.



*Cactus*, 2004  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp



*Three cacti*, 2004  
Oil on board. 66 x 66 cm  
Private Collection





Cactus, 2004  
Oil on canvas. 116 x 102 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth





*Self with friends*, 2006  
Oil on canvas. 98 x 130 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp

With her art practice consistently moving between her domestic still life, interior and her landscape subjects, Culliton has revisited several of her earlier themes throughout her career. Her experiences of spending time at the Sydney Royal Easter show painting the poultry for her earlier 'Cocks' series led Culliton to revisit this subject in an exhibition simply titled 'The Show (domestic science)'. In this series Culliton's focus was taken by the highly traditional, 'domestic arts and crafts' commonly found at country and rural shows. Evoking a deep nostalgia for childhood and the past, these quirky paintings depict kitsch, yet poignant, subjects of prize winning tea cosies, coat hangers, doilies, knitted dolls, toys, biscuits and preserves. Culliton's superb and natural gift for painting pulls these works back from the brink of affectation, and they have a great sense of fun and humour about them. Many of the works also feature place winning certificates bearing the names of Culliton's friends, family and favourite musicians, in a tongue-in-cheek gesture to Culliton having suffered the disappointment of artworks being culled from major prize exhibitions.

Despite the odd rebuff, a significant event for Culliton in this period was winning the Portia Geach Memorial

Award in 2006 with her work *Self with friends*, depicting the artist with her close friends Ray Hughes and artist McLean Edwards at their regular haunt, The Clock Hotel. Winning this important prize propelled Culliton into the centre of public attention, the artwork gaining her much critical acclaim.

Lucy Culliton was by now becoming a regular finalist in the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman art prizes at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, with an increasing public awareness of her work. *Hartley landscape - Cactus Garden*, (2008) is a remarkable work, where a profusion of cacti are portrayed within Culliton's luxuriant Hartley garden landscape. With tight formal painting qualities the image is drenched with high pitched, saturated colour taking Culliton's colour register to a new level of intensity. The overall impression is of a familiar yet slightly surreal landscape; its hyper-real iridescence presents a contemporary aesthetic, in stark contrast to the artwork's conventional landscape form. It's a great example of just how deceptive Culliton's artworks can be. She's always unpredictable, always full of surprises. Ever the alchemist, Culliton is in constant motion, taking her works in a new direction, setting a cracking pace for us to keep with.





Hartley landscape - Cactus Garden, (Lucy's garden), 2008  
Oil on canvas. 178 x 247 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

## LIFE AT BIBBENLUKE

Lucy Culliton's 2008 return to 'Rosemount' at Ando on the Monaro for a six week painting trip and break following the successful 'Domestic Science' exhibition was an experience that set the course of her future life and career. A neighbouring historic property 'Bibbenluke Lodge', was available for sale, and with acreage too large for a weekender and too small to be economically viable as a farm, the property had been on the market for some time. With its stunning 1930s Spanish mission style homestead and established cool climate gardens it represented an opportunity that Culliton had been seeking, the promise of a more fulfilling country lifestyle with plenty of space for her family of pet animals, and an escape from city life. She acquired Bibbenluke Lodge without hesitation and slowly built a new life for herself, with her daily routine extending to include gardening and the substantial task of feeding her vast array of pet animals.

At Bibbenluke, with its picturesque gardens, vast landscapes and the sense of freedom and space, Culliton found what was aptly described by writer Nikki Barroclough as 'a life bucolic'.<sup>12</sup> Its small acreage

included several out-buildings that were converted over time for Culliton's use, including a studio with direct views out to the stately Monaro plains. But most importantly, Bibbenluke provided Culliton with change, and a new life alive with creative possibilities and a wealth of subjects to pursue.

The first of Culliton's series to spring forth from this move to Bibbenluke was a small series titled 'Stuff' which was inspired by her return to Rosemount. In her words:

*I wasn't yet well set up with a painting studio at Bibbenluke as I was still settling in, and painting from inside the house. I visited Rosemount and discovered huge amounts of amazing objects to paint in John's sheds. That's where the collections came from; the shed was full to the brim with oil cans, spark plugs, auto globes, wheel runners, padlocks, you name it. It was a complete treasure trove for me.<sup>13</sup>*





*Padlocks*, 2008  
Oil on board, 80 x 80 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth



In the 'Stuff' series we witness Culliton's compulsion for painting collections of objects taken to a new level. Formally arranged, the works have a sense of historical categorisation about them, the artist documenting these relics from another time with great care and precision. But there is not a hint of sentimentality about these works, instead they are dynamic. Amongst the crowded surfaces, Culliton's objects jostle for space, eager to be the centre of attention. Again the artist's palette is a primary force here, where shadows leap off the surface in her signature iridescent hues of purples and electric blue.

Having conquered the interior territory of the 'Stuff' series Culliton began painting Bibbenluke Lodge and its acres of stunning garden and rural vistas throughout the seasons. Of course for the artist, painting her environment was Culliton's way of getting to know her new home, of understanding its place within that particular landscape and its future possibilities. It was a task she relished and this was a particularly exciting and inspiring time for her, with *plein air* landscapes painted in gouaches and smaller oil studies from every angle throughout the property.

The major works from this period are some of the most masterful of all of Culliton's landscape works. Like highly textured tapestries these layered and sumptuous garden paintings are intensely descriptive. With their tight formal arrangements and precise brushwork, drenched with colour, they form a visual assault on the senses. In contrast, Culliton's rendering of the open plains of the Monaro with its vast skies and velvet hills, are captured with a much faster, more relaxed, painterly dexterity.

Further works to take direct inspiration from Bibbenluke Lodge are from Culliton's beautiful and contemplative 'Home' series of 2011, marking once again her consistent movement between landscape and interior, still life art practices. Documenting Culliton's home and life in the country the works are intimate, personal subjects, rendered with a softer edge, pastel palette and domestic scale. They are immediately calm and restful, evoking the peace and quiet of her country retreat. With a plethora of images, Culliton sees creative possibilities in every room, nook and cranny. Of course her array of pet animals are ever present in the images, as they are in her life, portrayed with great charm and great affection. In a warts-and-all view inside her home, the everyday and the ordinary are again the subject of Culliton's focus. While the building's architecture and the artist's collections of curios make for interesting subjects with great appeal, they are revealing works which give us insight into Culliton's life. Many of the artworks feature images of paintings in her own art collection by various artist friends, as for the artwork *Bedroom – 'Bruiser'*, (2010), in which the 'bruiser' in question, was painted by McLean Edwards as Lucy's 'protector', when she first moved to Bibbenluke and lived there alone.



top: *Spring pear tree*, 2009  
Oil on canvas. 130 x 130 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay

*Bedroom-'Bruiser'*, 2010  
Oil on canvas. 86 x 76 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay





*Winter pear tree, 2009*  
Oil on canvas. 130 x 130 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: Penelope Clay



There have been periods when Culliton hasn't been able to paint, usually for a couple of months once she has finished with a subject, while working out the next direction to pursue in her work. Culliton often uses these periods to catch up on other parts of her life including her horse riding and gardening. "It feels like starting again – it's great when the studio is empty because it's a new and fresh start".<sup>14</sup>

However Lucy Culliton suffered a much more significant period away from painting following the sudden and tragic death of her beloved nephew Reuben, who was killed in a car crash in 2011. Particularly close to Reuben, a grieving Culliton spent many months out of the studio. When she returned to painting again, her subjects were a series of beautiful antique glass bottles found at Bibbenluke, up turned in the soil by some excavation works within the garden. With their references to Morandi, these paintings are steeped in stillness, an emotive expression of Culliton's loss. The day she placed a cut flower sprig from her abundant garden in one of the bottles, everything changed. She had unwittingly found a path back to painting, and so the strikingly beautiful 'Bibbenluke Flower' series was born.

Grown and cultivated by the artist in her own garden, the Bibbenluke Flowers represent the grand overarching narrative in Culliton's painting practice, and the synthesis of her creative path over the past eighteen years. Painting the hundreds of varieties of flowers as they bloomed throughout the seasons, the flower paintings are undoubtedly romantic with a strong feminine sensibility. Yet it is Culliton's unmatched ability to capture their essential character that makes the works so striking. Each of the blooms have their own personalities ranging from those in-your-face attention seekers (think of Dame Edna's abundant Gladioli), to the more humble and demure 'wallflowers'. Pictorially the images are highly refined yet there is an openness about the Bibbenluke Flower paintings, a reassertion of the painter's ground within the images, following years of the artist creating tightly packed images. The flowers in all their glory are afforded due space, and while there is a return of Culliton's signature treatment of her ground and negative spaces, this is only in supplication to the key subjects, the flowers themselves.

In essence, Lucy Culliton is a painters' painter. She is an authentic creative spirit whose drive to create is palpable to the point of obsession but it is also a way of life. Her work and creativity are absolutely central to her being and the life she has created for herself, living on the Monaro. While in the past Culliton has, in a self-deprecating manner, eschewed notions of her works containing allegory or narrative, it is this very painting of her own life that is the grand narrative in Culliton's work.



*Daphne*, 2012  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

As McLean Edwards comments: "When looking at Lucy's work you immediately start searching for connections with peers or looking for antecedents, or you start eliminating what kind of a painter she is not... and at some point you realise you are in 'Lucy Land', and it's a very interesting, joyous and intoxicating place to be".<sup>15</sup>

Bibbenluke Lodge has proved itself to be a generous source of inspiration and it will keep giving as it grows and evolves along with Lucy Culliton's life and art practice. Culliton is currently building a larger and purpose-built studio at Bibbenluke in order to once again be able to paint in much larger scale and to capture that environment:

*Because I had a big space (at Hartley) I had space to put the works up and look at what I'd done each day, to see what worked and what didn't work. If something didn't work I scraped it back immediately. But those that worked would feed the next work. I could see what I liked and what I wanted to take into a future work. I don't have that here (currently at Bibbenluke). I really miss seeing the works and that continuity. So I can't wait for the studio to be finished and to get stuck into it.*<sup>16</sup>



Since moving to Bibbenluke and building her life there, Lucy Culliton's pace of production has eased somewhat, as after all, there are the hoards of animals to tend to, and an additional and much larger canvas, a work-in-progress in the property's substantial park-like grounds. Already the garden has inspired a new series of works, which in Culliton's direct and literal fashion, is simply titled 'Weeds'. That Culliton has been so incredibly productive over the past eighteen years is something of a phenomena in itself. As Ray Hughes has said:

*When asked recently about what makes a good artist I said 'it's addiction' – Lucy has that. She has ambition for her art but she is completely free of pretention. She gets excited by her ideas and falls in love with her subjects – she is inventive, she is smart and has good ideas. She takes me on a journey, too, along with her.*<sup>17</sup>

Throughout Lucy Culliton's outstanding career she has received much critical acclaim and has equally attracted a large following of devoted collectors and admirers. Maintaining a strong practice and working between still life, interior, figurative and landscape works, Culliton's art and life are inextricably entwined, with each informing and inspiring the other. She is a natural painter, and while conventional in her imagery and subject matter, she is full of surprises. Unconcerned with paying any great heed to the art that holds contemporary currency, Culliton has forged her own artistic path, following her creative vision with passion and conviction.

Now at the mid point of her artistic career, we can all share and delight in Lucy Culliton's art practice, and this exhibition is a fitting acknowledgement of her incredible achievements in a relatively short space of time. Culliton is a major Australian talent, now poised for the next phase of her artistic production, which will undoubtedly continue in the same successful vein. Perhaps it is the intense beauty and the literalness of Culliton's artworks that sees her works residing at boundaries of contemporary practices, after all, beauty in art has long been considered passé in some orthodoxies. But with our intrinsic human desire to look for joy in the world and to seek out beauty in all its forms, isn't the real danger of complacency, that Culliton's artworks might be dismissed at face value? If all art speaks for itself, then together Lucy Culliton's artworks mount a formidable argument. Her internal drive, passion to create, and precocious talent continue to give rise to an undeniable and astonishing production of artworks, radiant with presence and beauty.

This is the great allure of Lucy Culliton's artworks. Painted with an assuredness and integrity, their particular beauty and joyful nature provides us a form of sanctuary and space for contemplation. Such is their impact, they make

one want to return to them over and again, earning Culliton the broad respect of her peers and a rightful place in public opinion as a much loved Australian artist. With her sharp eye and voracious appetite for painting, Culliton's art practice like her life, is ever changing, ever evolving. The question is where, and on what, will Culliton's gaze next reside? One thing is certain, while we can expect the unexpected, her future works will unquestionably spring from the same well of inspiration that has sustained her art practice throughout her career — a celebration of beauty, that delivers for all who encounter them, passage to a better place.

**Katrina Cashman**  
**Assistant Director / Senior Curator**  
**Mosman Art Gallery**

#### ENDNOTES

- 1 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 13 August 2013.
- 2 Benjamin Wilde, 'Art takes the cake for late developer', *The Sun Herald*, 31 December 2000, p66.
- 3 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 13 August 2013.
- 4 Interview with Bernard Ollis, Sydney, 15 May 2014.
- 5 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 7 August 2013.
- 6 Interview with Ray Hughes, Sydney, 16 May 2014.
- 7 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 7 August 2013.
- 8 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 7 August 2013.
- 9 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 13 March 2014.
- 10 Interview with McLean Edwards, Sydney 11 June 2014.
- 11 Interview with Ray Hughes, Sydney, 16 May 2014.
- 12 Nikki Barrowclough, 'A blooming career', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14-15 April, p6.
- 13 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 7 August 2013.
- 14 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 13 March 2014.
- 15 Interview with McLean Edwards, Sydney 11 June 2014.
- 16 Interview with Lucy Culliton, Sydney, 13 March 2014.
- 17 Interview with Ray Hughes, Sydney, 16 May 2014.



## SELECTED WORKS



*Bearded iris*, 2011  
Oil on board. 60 x 60 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly





top: *Chinese cups*, 1998  
Oil on board. 54 x 60 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp



left: *White tea cup*, 1997  
Oil on board. 15 x 15 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth

above: *Pink tea cups*, 1998  
Oil on board. 44 x 84 cm  
Collection of Annette Teckemeier





top: *Shells*, 1998  
Oil on board. 32 x 32 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth



left: *Broken shells*, 1998  
Oil on board. 20 x 62.5 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

above: *Shells*, 1998  
Oil on board. 12.5 x 38 cm  
Collection of Annette Teckemeier





top left: *Tractor*, 1999  
Oil on board. 30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

bottom left: *Untitled (Dump Truck)*, 1999  
Oil on board. 30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

top right: *Grader II*, 1999  
Oil on board. 29.5 x 30 cm  
Private Collection

bottom right: *Ando water tanks and drums*, 1999  
Oil on board. 30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly





*Horse multiple, 1999*  
Oil on board. 144 x 241 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly





top: *Family portrait*, 1998  
Oil on board. 22 x 50 cm  
Collection of Anna Culliton and Boris Hunt  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth

bottom: *Donkey*, 1999  
Oil on canvas. 40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Jason Martin

right: *Stumpy lollipop*, 1998  
Oil on canvas. 100.5 x 42 cm  
Collection of Anna Culliton and Boris Hunt  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth







*Little Hartley landscape, 1999*  
Oil on board. 120 x 160 cm  
Collection: Gold Coast City Gallery  
Judges Selection, 1999 Conrad Jupiters Art Prize









opposite  
top: *Passionfruit tart*, 2000  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

bottom left:  
*Untitled (papaya)*, 2000  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

bottom right:  
*Garlics on blue and white plate*, 2000  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Carol and Brian Carrigan

*Untitled (Orange)*, 2000  
Oil on board. 122 x 122 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

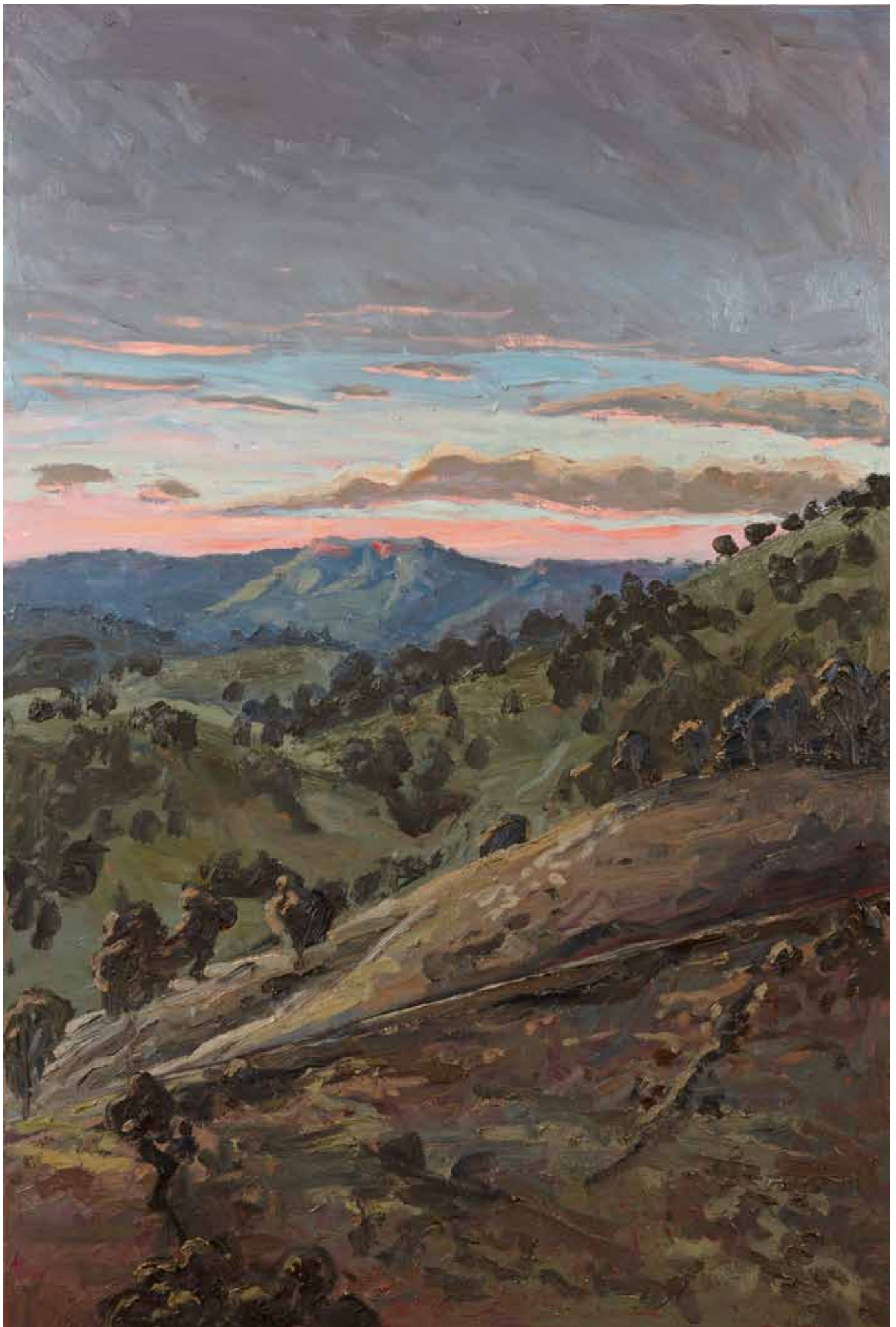




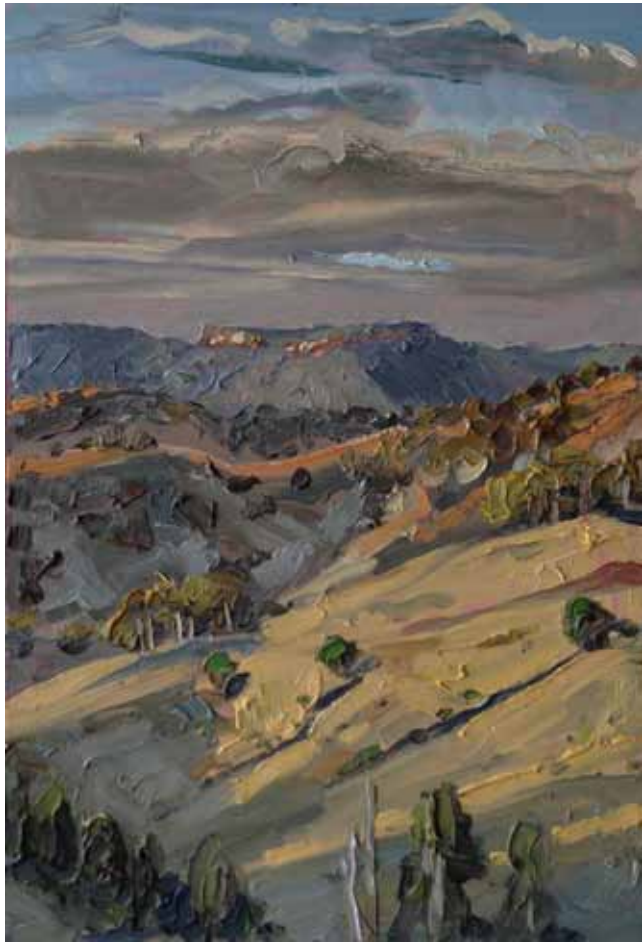
*Salt and pepper*, 2000  
 Oil on board. 90 x 90 cm  
 Private Collection  
 Photography: Tim Connolly

opposite: *Hartley landscape*, 2001  
 Oil on board. 129 x 87 cm  
 Private Collection  
 Photography: Tim Connolly

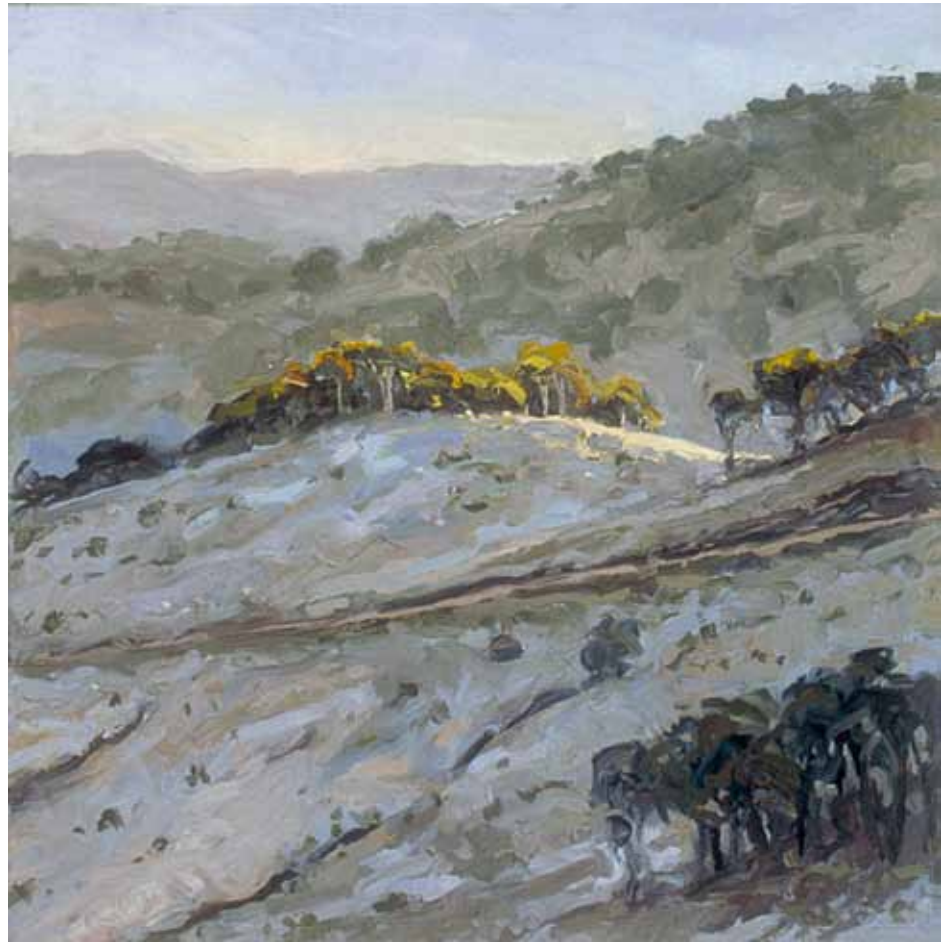








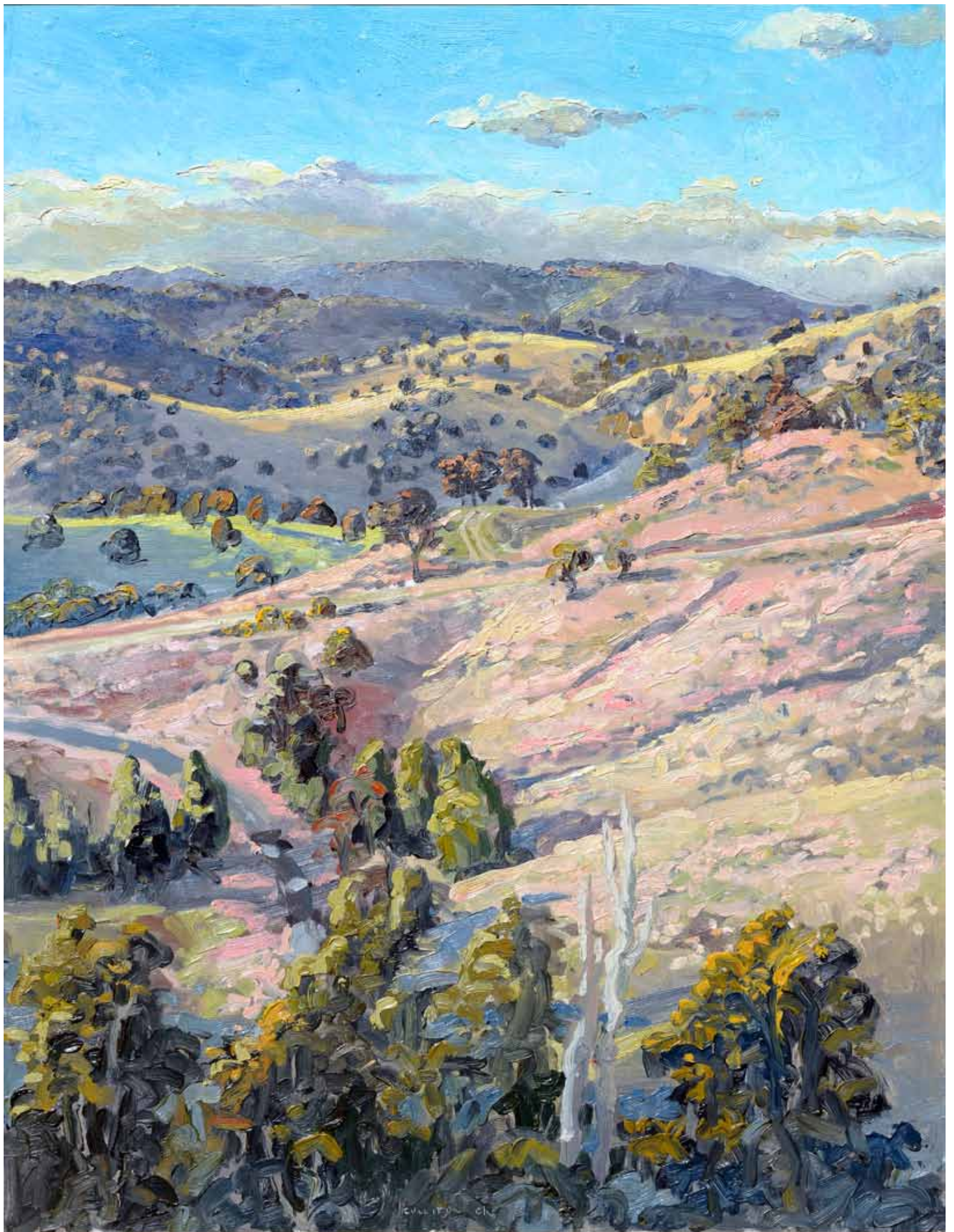
*Hartley landscape XLVIII, 2001*  
Oil on board. 60 x 40 cm  
Collection of Carol and Brian Carrigan



right: *Hartley, Winter frost, 2002*  
Oil on canvas. 104 x 104 cm  
Artbank Collection, purchased 2003

opposite: *Hartley landscape, 2002*  
Oil on canvas. 120 x 90 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth













*Rocks, scissors, paper, 2002*  
 Oil on board. 200 x 200 cm  
 University of Sydney Union Art Collection. Purchased 2002.  
 Photography: Courtesy Sydney University Museums

opposite: *Rock, paper, scissors, 2001*  
 Oil on canvas. 129 x 87 cm  
 Private Collection  
 Photography: Tim Connolly





top left: *Cock I*, 2002  
Oil on board. 60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp



bottom left: *Cock IV*, 2002  
Oil on board. 60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp



top right: *Cock III*, 2002  
Oil on board. 60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp



bottom right: *Cock V*, 2002  
Oil on board. 60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp

opposite: *Cock II*, 2002  
Oil on board. 60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp









*Cactus II*, 2004  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp





*New arrivals, 2004*  
Oil on canvas. 160 x 160 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly





Cactus, 2004  
Oil on canvas. 101 x 133 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

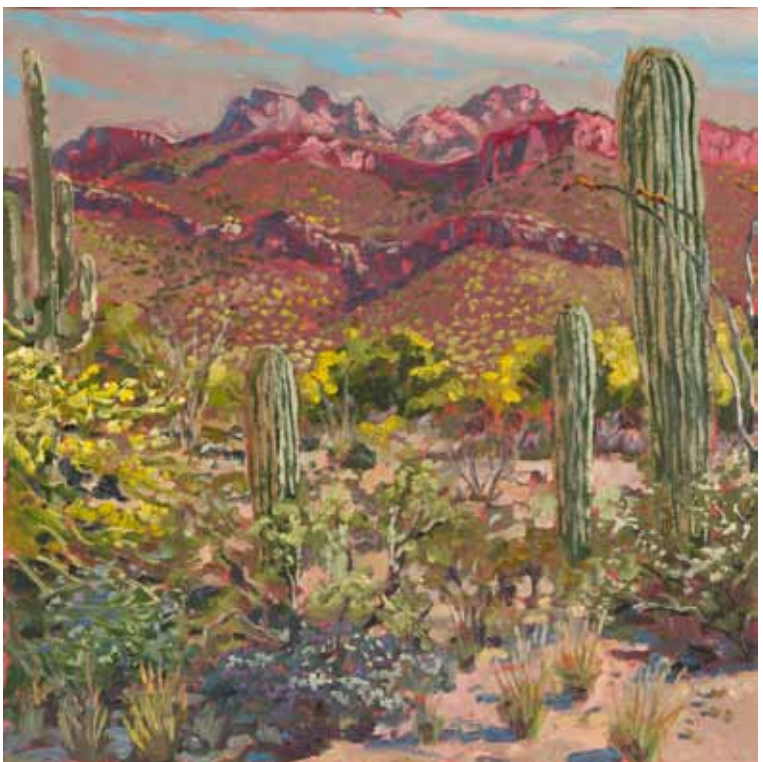
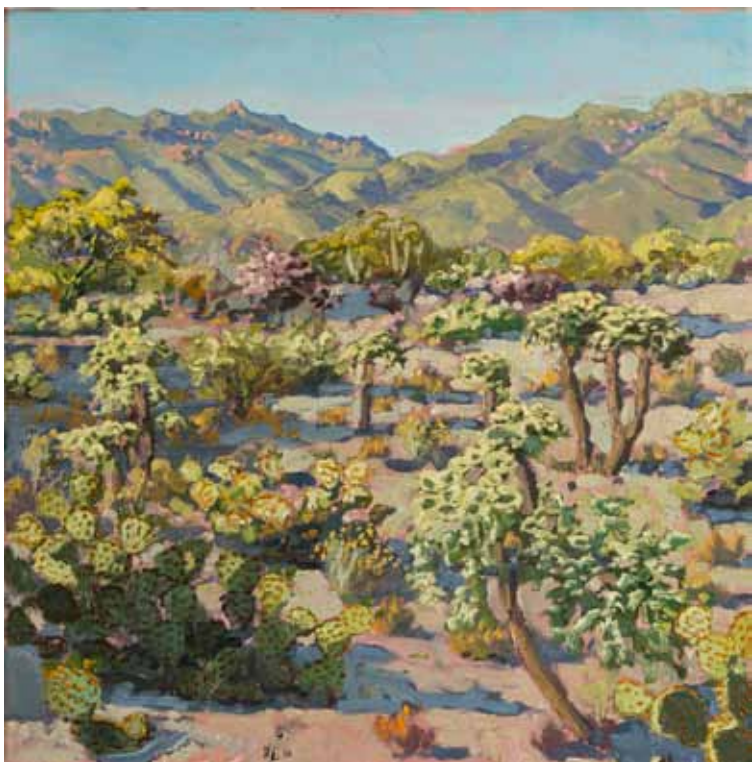
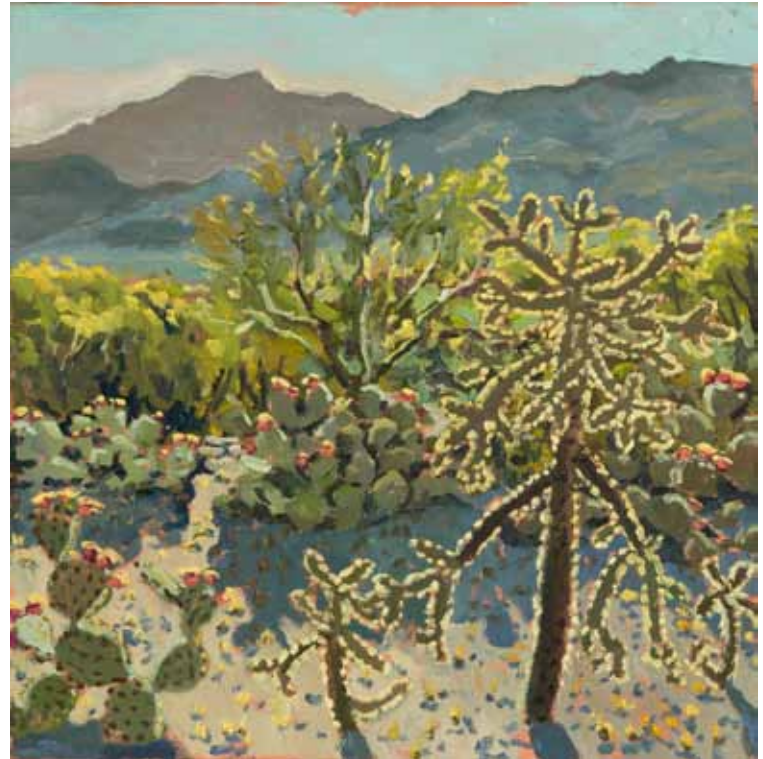




*Cactus III*, 2004  
Oil on board. 65 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth

left: *Cactus*, 2004  
Oil on board. 133 x 101 cm  
Collection of Ray Hughes  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery





top left: *Mike's place (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp

top right: *Peter's place (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp

bottom left: *Tucson cactus (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp

bottom right: *Saguaro National Monument (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp





*Tucson cactus*, 2005  
Oil on canvas. 150 x 150 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth





top: *Self with cactus, Tucson (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board. 66 x 66 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton

*Morning, Alta Vista, Tucson*, 2005  
Oil on canvas. 100 x 100 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly





*Knitted dolls, crowd scene, 2007*  
Oil on canvas. 120 x 120 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Jeremy Dillon





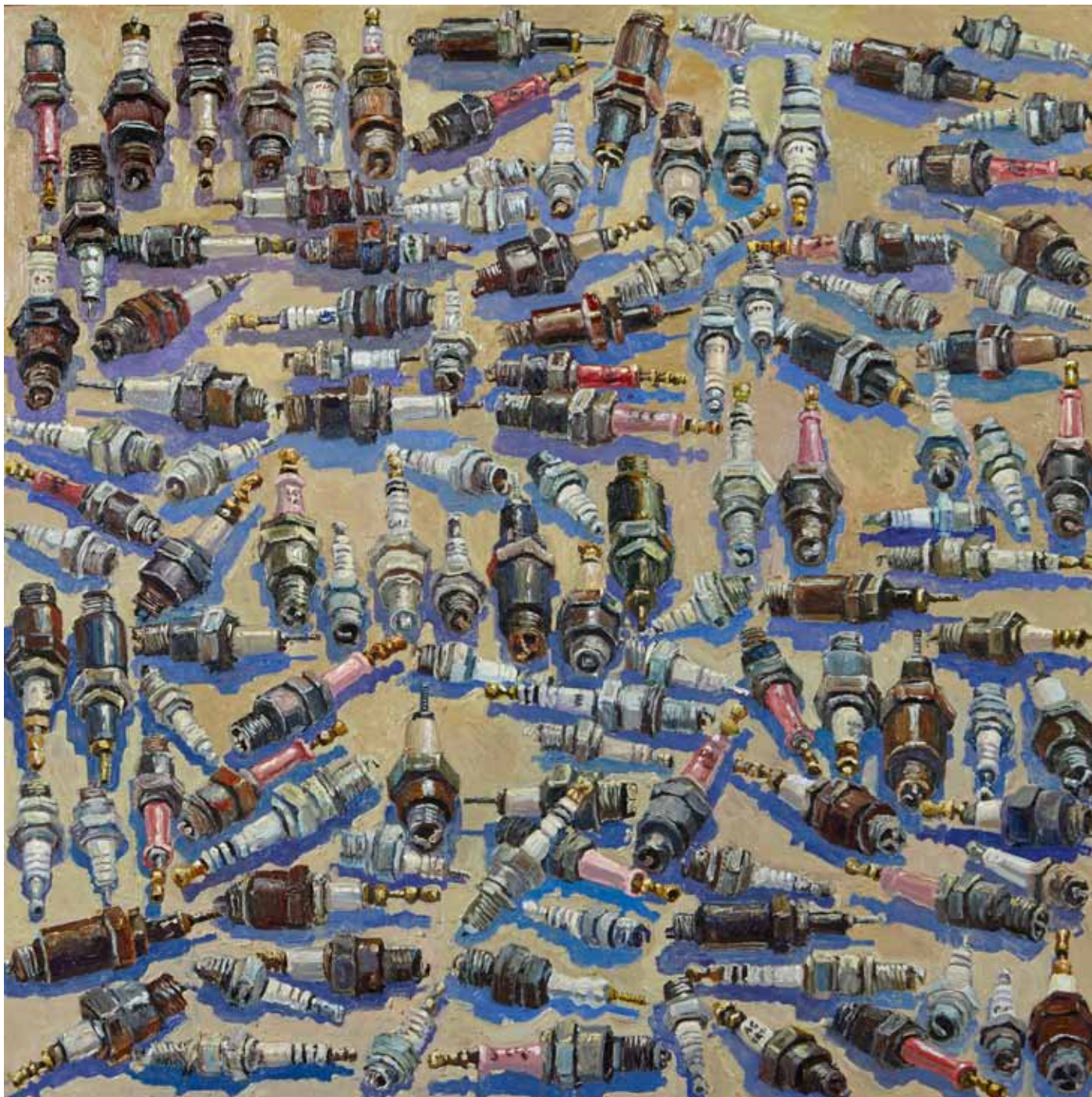












*Spark plugs*, 2008  
Oil on board. 80 x 80 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly





*Wheels IV*, 2008  
Oil on board. 80 x 80 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly



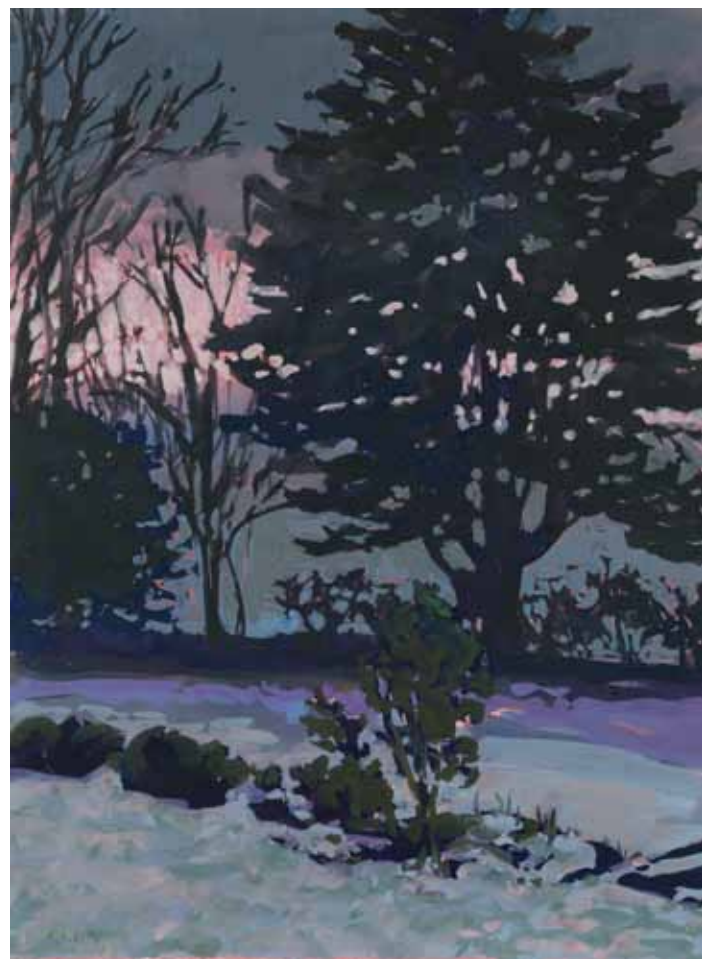


*Auto globes*, 2008  
Oil on canvas. 130 x 130 cm  
Private Collection





*Autumn birch trees, 2009*  
 Oil on canvas. 0 x 48 cm  
 Private Collection  
 Photography: Penelope Clay



right: *Gouache #15, 2009*  
 Gouache on paper. 38 x 28 cm  
 Private Collection  
 Photography: Penelope Clay





*Summer garden, 2009*  
Oil on canvas. 145 x 190 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: Penelope Clay





*Autumn afternoon, 2009*  
Oil on canvas. 145 x 190 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay





*Good room, spring, 2010*  
Oil on canvas. 80 x 110 cm  
Collection of Richard Mortlock and Marion Bennett  
Photography: Penelope Clay





top: *Good room, fireplace*, 2010

Oil on canvas. 86 x 76 cm

Private collection

Photography: Penelope Clay

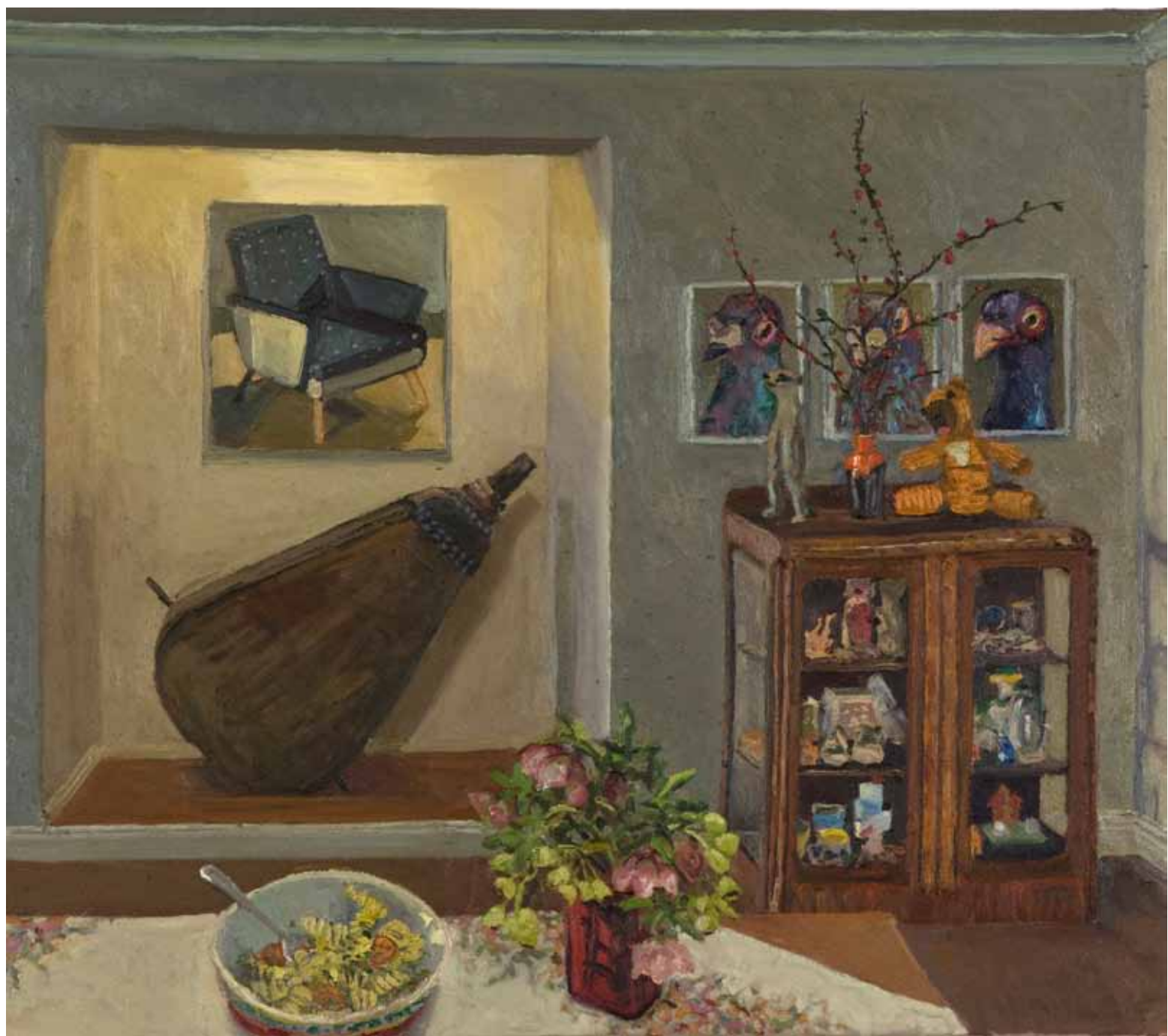
right: *Lucy's bathroom*, 2010

Oil on canvas. 86 x 76 cm

Collection of Rebecca Hingerty and Gareth Sage

Photography: Penelope Clay





*Good room, bellows, 2010*  
Oil on canvas. 76 x 86 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay





*Japonica III*, 2011  
Oil on canvas. 80 x 110 cm  
Collection of Duncan and Cath Sim  
Photography: Penelope Clay





Wattle, 2011  
Oil on canvas. 80 x 110 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly





top left: *Red cone flowers*, 2011  
Oil on board. 60 x 60 cm  
Collection of Lady Nancy Gorton  
Photography: Penelope Clay

top right: *Crocus*, 2012  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

bottom left: *Alliums*, 2011  
Oil on board. 60 x 60 cm  
Collection of Ray Hughes  
Photography: Penelope Clay

bottom right: *Love in the mist*, 2012  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay





*Tree peonie*, 2011  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay



# LIST OF WORKS

1. *Tea cup with Reno the horse*, 1997  
Oil on canvas  
90 x 90 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
2. *Reno cup*, 1997  
Oil on board  
30 x 20 cm  
Collection of Charlotte Inglis
3. *White tea cup*, 1997  
Oil on board  
15 x 15 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
4. *White tea cup floral*, 1997  
Oil on board  
15 x 15 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
5. *Snowdome multi panel*, 1997  
Oil on board  
65 x 65 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Jason Martin
6. *Tea cup stack*, 1998  
Oil on board  
30.5 x 19 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
7. *Spotty cup*, 1998  
Oil on board  
36 x 26 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
8. *Chinese cups*, 1998  
Oil on board  
54 x 60 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
9. *Pink tea cups*, 1998  
Oil on board  
44 x 84 cm  
Collection of Annette Teckemeier
10. *Shells*, 1998  
Oil on board  
32 x 32 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
11. *Broken shells*, 1998  
Oil on board  
20 x 62.5 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
12. *Four shells*, 1998  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection
13. *Multiple shells, pink cones*, 1998  
Oil on board  
25 x 35 cm  
Collection of Ray Hughes  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery
14. *Shells*, 1998  
Oil on board  
12.5 x 38 cm  
Collection of Annette Teckemeier
15. *Family portrait*, 1998  
Oil on board  
22 x 50 cm  
Collection of Anna Culliton and Boris Hunt  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
16. *Stumpy lollipop*, 1998  
Oil on canvas  
100.5 x 42 cm  
Collection of Anna Culliton and Boris Hunt  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
17. *Reno*, 1998  
Oil on canvas  
191 x 60 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
18. *Horse*, 1998  
Oil on board  
7 x 40.5 cm  
Private Collection
19. *Austin*, 1998  
Oil on board  
11 x 34.5 cm  
Private Collection
20. *Self with cup*, 1999  
Oil on board  
165 x 61 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery
21. *Little Hartley landscape*, 1999  
Oil on board  
120 x 160 cm  
Collection: Gold Coast City Gallery  
Judges Selection,  
1999 Conrad Jupiters Art Prize
22. *Horse multiple*, 1999  
Oil on board  
144 x 241 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
23. *Cow multiple*, 1999  
Oil on board  
64 x 64 cm  
Private Collection
24. *Donkey*, 1999  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Jason Martin
25. *Donkeys II*, 1999  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection



26. *Untitled (Dump Truck)*, 1999  
Oil on board  
30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
27. *Untitled (Tin Sheds)*, 1999  
Oil on board  
30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
28. *Tractor*, 1999  
Oil on board  
30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
29. *Ando water tanks and drums*, 1999  
Oil on board  
30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
30. *Grader II*, 1999  
Oil on board  
29.5 x 30 cm  
Private Collection
31. *Tractor II*, 1999  
Oil on board  
30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection
32. *Tractor III*, 1999  
Oil on board  
30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection
33. *Red Truck*, 1999  
Oil on board  
30 x 30 cm  
Private Collection
34. *Hartley landscape*, 1999  
Oil on board  
60 x 60 cm  
Collection of the Lee family
35. *Still Life/White Ground*, 2000  
Oil on board  
122 x 122 cm  
Mosman Art Collection
36. *Summer fruits*, 2000  
Oil on board  
120 x 240 cm  
Private Collection
37. *Untitled (Orange)*, 2000  
Oil on board  
122 x 122 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
38. *Salt and pepper*, 2000  
Oil on board  
90 x 90 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
39. *Baked beans*, 2000  
Oil on board  
122 x 122 cm  
Collection of James and Jaqui Erskine
40. *Garlics on blue and white plate*, 2000  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Carol and Brian Carrigan
41. *Watermelon and knife*, 2000  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection
42. *Chillies, Chinese plate*, 2000  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection
43. *Passionfruit tart*, 2000  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
44. *Untitled (papaya)*, 2000  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
45. *Lamington, green plate*, 2000  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection
46. *Self with Reno*, 2001  
Oil on board  
200 x 120 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Jeremy Dillon
47. *Rock, paper, scissors*, 2001  
Oil on board  
100 x 190 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery
48. *Scissors 1*, 2001  
Oil on board  
36.5 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
49. *Rock, paper, scissors*, 2001  
Oil on canvas  
129 x 87 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
50. *Scissors green*, 2001  
Oil on board  
30.5 x 22.5 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton
51. *Hartley landscape*, 2001  
Oil on board  
129 x 99 cm  
Private Collection
52. *Hartley landscape*, 2001  
Oil on board  
129 x 87 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
53. *Hartley landscape I*, 2001  
Oil on board  
129 x 87 cm  
Private Collection
54. *Hartley landscape XLVIII*, 2001  
Oil on board  
60 x 40 cm  
Collection of Carol and Brian Carrigan
55. *Rocks, scissors, paper*, 2002  
Oil on board  
200 x 200 cm  
University of Sydney Union Art Collection. Purchased 2002.  
Photography: Courtesy Sydney University Museums
56. *Hartley, Winter frost*, 2002  
Oil on canvas  
104 x 104 cm  
Artbank Collection, purchased 2003



57. *Hartley landscape XXIII*, 2002  
Oil on canvas  
200 x 120 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
58. *Hartley landscape*, 2002  
Oil on canvas  
120 x 90 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
59. *Del*, 2002  
oil on board  
199.7 x 99.6 cm  
Collection of The University of Queensland. Gift of Lucy Culliton through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2008.  
Photo: Carl Warner
60. *Cock I*, 2002  
Oil on board  
60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
61. *Cock II*, 2002  
Oil on board  
60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
62. *Cock III*, 2002  
Oil on board  
60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
63. *Cock IV*, 2002  
Oil on board  
60 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
64. *Cocks at Hartley*, 2003  
Oil on canvas  
75 x 120 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
65. *Pidgeon I*, 2003  
Oil on board  
45 x 30 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton
66. *Pidgeon II*, 2003  
Oil on board  
45 x 30 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton
67. *Cactus*, 2004  
Oil on board  
133 x 101 cm  
Collection of Ray Hughes  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery
68. *Cactus*, 2004  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
69. *Cactus II*, 2004  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
70. *Cactus*, 2004  
Oil on board  
133 x 101 cm  
Private Collection
71. *Three cacti*, 2004  
Oil on board  
66 x 66 cm  
Private Collection
72. *New arrivals*, 2004  
Oil on canvas  
160 x 160 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
73. *Cactus*, 2004  
Oil on canvas  
101 x 133 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
74. *Cactus*, 2004  
Oil on canvas  
116 x 102 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
75. *Cactus III*, 2004  
Oil on board  
65 x 45 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
76. *Self with Cock*, 2005  
Oil on canvas  
75 x 60 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
77. *Tucson cactus*, 2005  
Oil on canvas  
102.5 x 103 cm  
Collection: The Parliament of New South Wales
78. *Tucson cactus*, 2005  
Oil on canvas  
150 x 150 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
79. *Morning, Alta Vista, Tucson*, 2005  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 100 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
80. *Mike's place (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
81. *Peter's place (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
82. *Saguaro National Monument (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp



83. *Tucson cactus (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
84. *Self with cactus, Tucson (study)*, 2005  
Oil on board  
66 x 66 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton
85. *Self with friends*, 2006  
Oil on canvas  
98 x 130 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
86. *Knitted dolls, crowd scene*, 2007  
Oil on canvas  
120 x 120 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Jeremy Dillon
87. *Hand knit toy*, 2007  
Oil on canvas  
135 x 135 cm  
Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.  
Purchased 2007.
88. *Knitted toys*, 2007  
Oil on canvas  
83 x 83 cm  
Artbank Collection, purchased 2007  
Photography: Jenni Carter
89. *Coat hangers*, 2007  
Oil on canvas  
83 x 83 cm  
Artbank Collection, purchased 2007  
Photography: Jenni Carter
90. *Self with subject (Domestic Science)*, 2007  
Oil on canvas  
70 x 100 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery
91. *Champion knitting (baby doll)*, 2007  
Oil on board  
60 x 60 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
92. *Six small cakes iced and decorated*, 2007  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of the Lee family
93. *Reuben's decorated arrowroots*, 2007  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Anna Culliton and Boris Hunt  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
94. *Wheel runners*, 2007  
Gouache on paper  
28 x 38 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
95. *Wheel runners II*, 2007  
Gouache on paper  
38 x 28 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Daniel Shipp
96. *Spark plugs*, 2008  
Oil on board  
80 x 80 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
97. *Auto globes*, 2008  
Oil on canvas  
130 x 130 cm  
Private Collection
98. *Wheels IV*, 2008  
Oil on board  
80 x 80 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
99. *Padlocks*, 2008  
Oil on board  
80 x 80 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
100. *Taps*, 2008  
Oil on board  
80 x 80 cm  
Private Collection
101. *Noddy Dogs II*, 2008  
Oil on board  
80 x 80 cm  
Collection of Richard Mortlock and Marion Bennett
102. *Hartley landscape - Cactus Garden, (Lucy's garden)*, 2008  
Oil on canvas  
178 x 247 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
103. *Gouache #60*, 2009  
Gouache on paper  
38 x 28 cm  
Collection of Carol and Brian Carrigan  
Photography: Penelope Clay
104. *Bibbenluke, late winter*, 2009  
Gouache on paper  
38 x 28 cm  
Collection of Carol and Brian Carrigan  
Photography: Penelope Clay
105. *Autumn afternoon*, 2009  
Oil on canvas  
145 x 190 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
106. *Summer garden*, 2009  
Oil on canvas  
145 x 190 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: Penelope Clay
107. *Winter pear tree*, 2009  
Oil on canvas  
130 x 130 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: Penelope Clay
108. *Autumn birch trees*, 2009  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 48 cm  
Collection of Mr and Mrs McKenzie  
Photography: Penelope Clay



109. *Autumn Bibbenluke Lodge*, 2009  
Oil on board  
48 x 60 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: Penelope Clay
110. *Gouache #15*, 2009  
Gouache on paper  
38 x 28 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
111. *Spring pear tree*, 2009  
Oil on canvas  
130 x 130 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
112. *Gouache*, 2009  
Gouache on paper  
38 x 28 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
113. *Ray in Paris*, 2010  
Oil on board  
200 x 80 cm  
Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Lucy Culliton with assistance from Ray Hughes Gallery, 2012.  
Griffith University Art Collection  
Photography: Art Gallery of New South Wales
114. *Good room, fireplace*, 2010  
Oil on canvas  
86 x 76 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
115. *Bedroom-'Bruiser'*, 2010  
Oil on canvas  
86 x 76 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
116. *Stripey towel*, 2010  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Lissa Barnum  
Photography: Penelope Clay
117. *Guest room - blue sink*, 2010  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Annette Teckemeier  
Photography: Penelope Clay
118. *Lucy's bathroom*, 2010  
Oil on canvas  
86 x 76 cm  
Collection of Rebecca Hingerty and Gareth Sage  
Photography: Penelope Clay
119. *Good room, spring*, 2010  
Oil on canvas  
80 x 110 cm  
Collection of Richard Mortlock and Marion Bennett  
Photography: Penelope Clay
120. *Good room, bellows*, 2010  
Oil on canvas  
76 x 86 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
121. *Jerusalem sage*, 2010  
Oil on board  
60 x 60 cm  
Collection of Isaac and Zara Crichton  
Photography: Penelope Clay
122. *Tree peonie*, 2011  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
123. *Wattle*, 2011  
Oil on canvas  
80 x 110 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
124. *Large flower*, 2011  
Oil on canvas  
102 x 141 cm  
Collection of Annette Teckemeier  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery
125. *Japonica III*, 2011  
Oil on canvas  
80 x 110 cm  
Collection of Duncan and Cath Sim  
Photography: Penelope Clay
126. *Red cone flowers*, 2011  
Oil on board  
60 x 60 cm  
Collection of Lady Nancy Gorton  
Photography: Penelope Clay
127. *Daisies*, 2011  
Oil on board  
60 x 60 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
128. *Bearded iris*, 2011  
Oil on board  
60 x 60 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
129. *Alliums*, 2011  
Oil on board  
60 x 60 cm  
Collection of Ray Hughes  
Photography: Penelope Clay
130. *Crocus*, 2012  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
131. *Daphne*, 2012  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly
132. *Love in the mist*, 2012  
Oil on board  
40 x 40 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
133. *Tulips II*, 2012  
Oil on board  
60 x 60 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Penelope Clay
134. Ann Cape  
*Lucy and friend*, 2009  
Oil on canvas  
123 x 103 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth
- opposite:  
Ann Cape  
*Lucy and friend*, 2009  
Oil on canvas. 123 x 103 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth







# LUCY CULLITON CV

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 *Bibbenluke Flowers*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2011 *Home*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2009 *Bibbenluke*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2008 *Stuff*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2007 *The Show (domestic science)*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2005 *Tuscon paintings*, The Palm House, Botanic Gardens, Sydney
- 2004 *Cactus*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2002 *Hartley landscapes*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2000 *Food Paintings*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1999 *Farm Paintings*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1998 *Paintings*, Level Gallery, Sydney

## SELECT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2013 *Three Australian Landscapes*, The Hughes Gallery, Sydney  
*Life's a Beach*, The Hughes Gallery, Sydney  
*Paper Trail*, The Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2012 *Fresh from the Studio '12*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 2011 *'Ray in Paris'*, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 2010 *'Rice Crackers'*, Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 2009 *'Arkaroola'*, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 2008 *On the Heysen Trail*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney  
*'Hartley landscape – Cactus Garden'*, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney  
*Salon de Refuses*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2007 *Cuisine and Country*, Touring Exhibition, Orange Regional Gallery  
*'Self with Subject (Domestic Science)'*, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney  
*'Dressed Doll Knitting'*, Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 2006 *'Self with Friends'*, Winner, Portia Geach Memorial Award, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2006 *'Knitted Toys'*, Winner, Dubbo Lexus Mortimore Art Prize

- 2005 *'Self with Cactus'*, Portia Geach Memorial Award, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2004 *'Cactus 1'*, Winner, Kedumba Drawing Prize, Blue Mountains, NSW
- 2003 *'Cacti, Mail Order'*, Dobell Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney  
*'Self with Subject (Cock)'*, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
- 2002 *Australian Women Artists 1920-2000*, Vanessa Wood Fine Art, Mosman  
*Gallery Artists*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney  
*Drawn Together*, Bathurst Regional Gallery
- 2001 *'Garlic Painting'*, Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney  
*Portia Geach Memorial Award*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney  
*Redlands Art Prize*, Mosman Regional Art Gallery, Sydney
- 2000 *Portia Geach Memorial Award*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney  
*'Still Life/White Ground'*, Winner, Mosman Art Prize, Mosman Regional Art Gallery, Sydney  
*Australian Landscape*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney  
*Thinking Aloud...A drawing show*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1999 Highly Commended, Portia Geach Memorial Award, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney  
*Group Show*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1998 *Gallery Fund Raiser*, Herringbone Gallery, Sydney  
*Dog Show*, First Gallery, Sydney  
*Crickart*, Bat and Ball Hotel, Sydney  
*Body of work*, First Gallery, Sydney  
*Alcart*, Bat and Ball Hotel, Sydney  
*Crickart (travelling)*, The Don Bradman Museum, Bowral
- 1997 *Diptych*, Level Gallery, Sydney  
*Crickart*, Bat and Ball Hotel, Sydney  
*Lucy Culliton & Lorna Gear*, Level Gallery, Sydney  
*Alcart*, Bat and Ball Hotel, Sydney  
*Triptych*, Level Gallery, Sydney  
*It's A Guitar Shaped Word II*





## AWARDS

- 2006 Dubbo Lexus Mortimore Art Prize  
Portia Geach Memorial Award,  
S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney  
Nowa Nowa Nudes Art Show
- 2004 Kedumba Drawing Prize, First Prize (Acquisitive)
- 2001 Rydal Show
- 2000 Mosman Art Prize, First Prize (Acquisitive)
- 1999 Conrad Jupiters Art Prize,  
Gold Coast City Gallery (Acquisitive)  
Highly Commended, Portia Geach Memorial  
Award, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney Judging

top: *Autumn Bibbenluke Lodge*, 2009  
Oil on board. 48 x 60 cm  
Courtesy The Hughes Gallery  
Photography: Penelope Clay

## JUDGING

- 2014 Sydney Royal Easter Show  
Bombala Show
- 2013 Mosman Art Prize  
Sydney Royal Easter Show
- 2006 Nowa Nowa Nudes Art Show
- 2001 Rydal Show

## COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra  
Queensland University Art Museum, Brisbane  
Australian Parliament House, Canberra  
Griffith University, Nathan, Queensland  
Macquarie Bank  
Gold Coast City Gallery, Queensland  
Mosman Art Gallery  
Parliament of New South Wales, Sydney  
Private collections



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- April 2014 Magazine cover and feature article, 'Lucy Culliton, Painting Life's Pleasures', *Artist Profile*, Owen Craven, Issue 27, April/May, pp 54-64
- 2014 'Creature Comfort', *South Coast Style magazine*, Alison McKay and Richard Morecroft, Winter 2014. No 50
- 17/05/13 'Lucy Culliton to Judge Mosman Art Prize', *Mosman Daily*, Kate Crawford
- 2013 Feature article 'Cottage Charm', *mindfood*, Karen Cotton, pp 86-91
- 13/04/12 Spectrum cover and feature article, 'A Blooming Career', *Spectrum*; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Nikki Barrowclough
- 03/12/11 'The Art of Christmas', *Good Weekend*; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, compiled by Janet Hawley, page 17
- 18/04/11 'Lucy Culliton's sky full of natural diamonds', *The Daily Telegraph*, Elizabeth Fortescue
- 16/04/11 'Portraits on Parade', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, John McDonald
- Oct 2009 'Home is where the art is for Culliton', *The Daily Telegraph*, Elizabeth Fortescue
- 31/11/09 'Bibbenluke', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Louise Schwartzkoff
- 28/08/08 'The good oil on art', *The Daily Telegraph*, Elizabeth Fortescue
- 28/03/08 'Disoriented in the Great Outdoors', *The Australian*, Sebastain Smee, page 12
- 24/05/07 'Coloured by their Emotions', *The Australian*, Sebastain Smee, page 12
- 05/07/07 'Private Collections', *The (Sydney) Magazine*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*
- 05/07/07 'Lucy Culliton: Bibbenluke Flowers', *The ticket*, *The (Sydney) Magazine*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Michael Fitzgerald
- 01/05/07 Cover image, *Good Living*; *The Sydney Morning Herald*
- 21/04/07 'A Ribbon for Artistic Pedigree', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, John McDonald
- 29/09/06 *The Australian*, Rosalie Higson
- 29/09/06 *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Jaime Pandaram
- 2006 *Belle*
- 04/06/05 *The Art Oracle*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Michael Reid
- 04/10/04 'A singular obsession', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Matt Buchanan
- 2004 'Passions', *The Sydney Morning Herald*
- 2004 'Culliton clearly makes her point', *Sydney Live*, *The Daily Telegraph*, Elizabeth Fortescue
- 2000 *Vogue Living*, Betsy Brennan, Dec/Jan Issue
- 31/12/00 'Art takes the cake for late developer', *The Sun Herald*, Benjamin Wilde, page 66
- 08/12/00 Metro, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Courtney Kidd, page 27
- 01/12/00 'Art of Good Taste', *Sydney Live*, *The Daily Telegraph*, Elizabeth Fortescue
- 28/11/00 *Short Black*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, John Newton, page 2
- 25/11/00 'Art House', *Christmas Gift Guide*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sebastian Smee, page 22
- 03/08/00 'A piece of cake says Lucy', *Mosman Daily*, Kate Crawford
- 06/11/99 *Spectrum*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, page 16, Bruce James
- 15/10/99 *The Sydney Morning Herald*, page 3
- 02/09/99 *The Sydney Morning Herald*, page 5
- 1999 'We love Lucy', *Marie Claire Lifestyle*, Aug/Sep Issue



Scissors 1, 2001  
Oil on board. 36.5 x 30 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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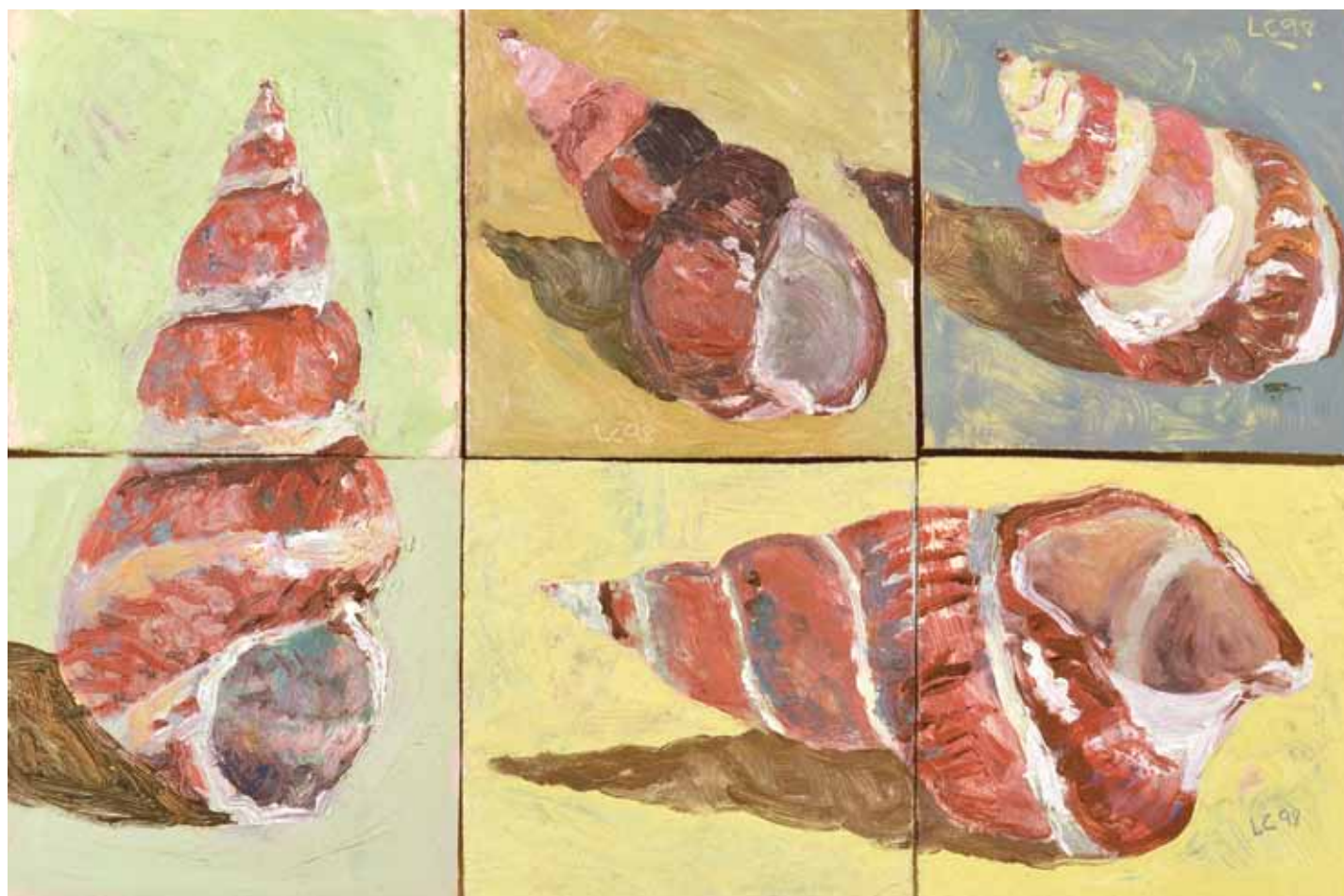
The exhibition would not be possible without the significant loans from both public institutions as well as private lenders who have offered works for inclusion in the exhibition: Artbank; Gold Coast City Gallery; Griffith University Art Collection; National Gallery of Australia; Parliament of New South Wales; Sydney University Museums; University of Queensland Art Museum;

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*Multiple shells, pink cones, 1998*  
Oil on board. 25 x 35 cm  
Collection of Ray Hughes  
Photography: The Hughes Gallery



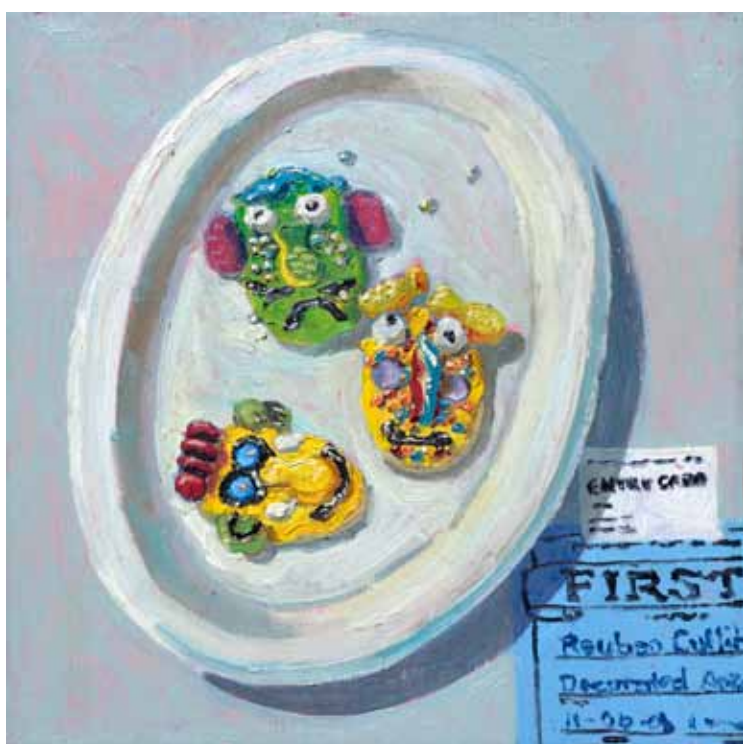


**Katrina Cashman** is the Assistant Director/Senior Curator at Mosman Art Gallery. She has a background in teaching and arts management and has worked in the museum and gallery sector since 1996. She joined the Mosman Art Gallery when it opened in late 1998, coordinating the Gallery's annual exhibition program, curating over thirty exhibitions in this period.

Major exhibitions she has curated include: *Eye of the Beholder: The Art of Lucy Culliton* (2014), *From the Forest: Ruth Burgess 30 years of woodcuts and wood engravings* (2013), *ATTACK: Japanese midget submarines in Sydney Harbour, paintings by Ken Done* (2012), *Controversy and Acclaim: 60 years of the Mosman Art Prize* (2009), *Bon a tirer: Diana Davidson and the Whaling Road Print Studio* (2005), *A Stitch in Time: Kerrie Lester's World* (2004), *Presence and Landscape: Guy Warren in Retrospect* (2003), and *Margaret Preston in Mosman* (2002).

**John McDonald** is the art critic for the Sydney Morning Herald and film critic for the Australian Financial Review. He is a notable Australian writer who has written extensively on Australian and International art for over thirty years. His authoritative texts have featured in a large range of books, publications, journals and exhibition catalogues. [www.johnmcdonald.net.au](http://www.johnmcdonald.net.au)

*Reuben's decorated arrowroots, 2007*  
Oil on board. 40 x 40 cm  
Collection of Anna Culliton and Boris Hunt  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth



Curator: Katrina Cashman

Catalogue Design: Kasia Froncek, Bespoke Creative

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## MOSMAN ART GALLERY

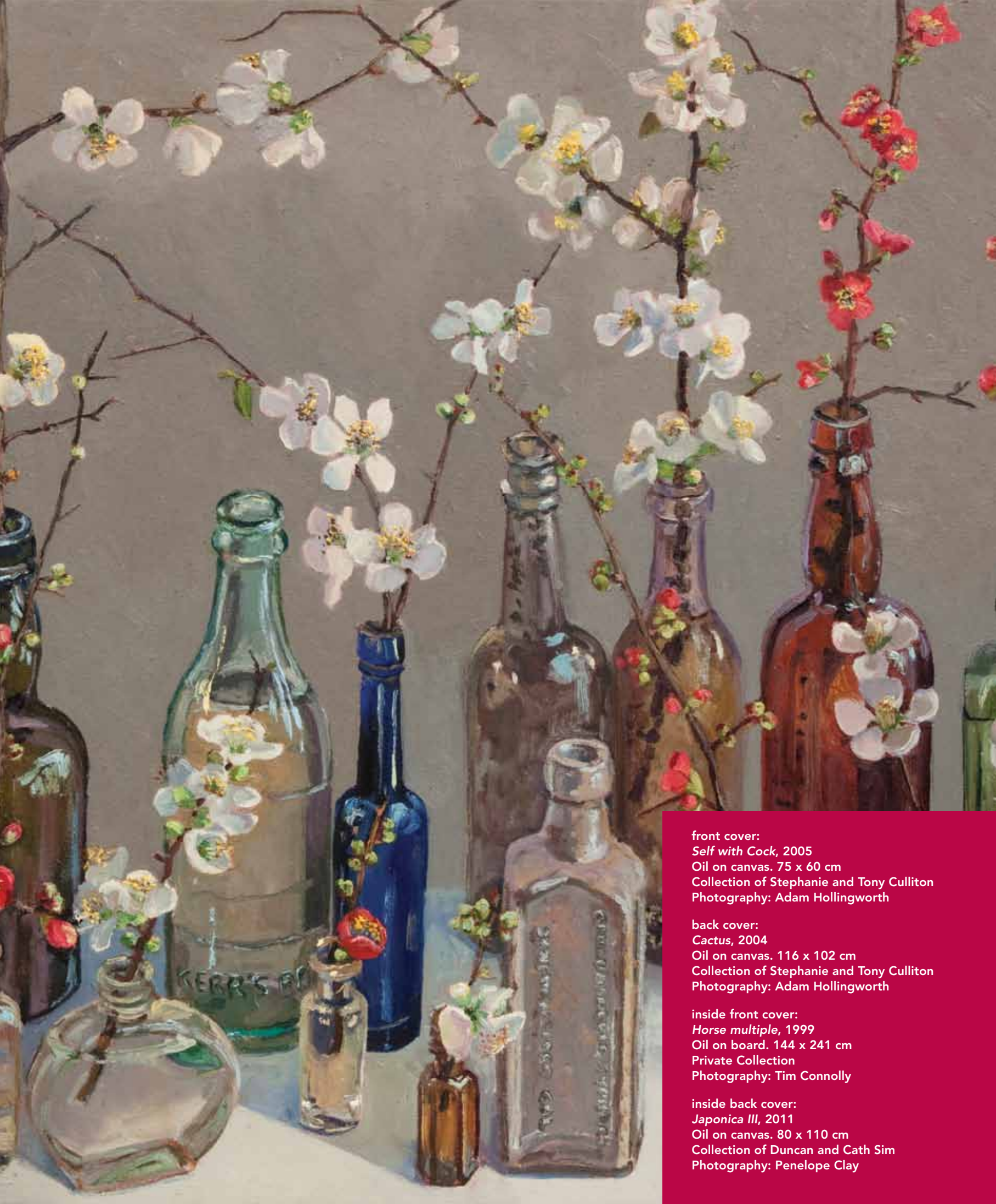
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*Mosman Art Gallery is a cultural service provided by Mosman Council*



**the hughes gallery**





front cover:  
*Self with Cock*, 2005  
Oil on canvas. 75 x 60 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth

back cover:  
*Cactus*, 2004  
Oil on canvas. 116 x 102 cm  
Collection of Stephanie and Tony Culliton  
Photography: Adam Hollingworth

inside front cover:  
*Horse multiple*, 1999  
Oil on board. 144 x 241 cm  
Private Collection  
Photography: Tim Connolly

inside back cover:  
*Japonica III*, 2011  
Oil on canvas. 80 x 110 cm  
Collection of Duncan and Cath Sim  
Photography: Penelope Clay



