

Crossfire: print and glass

The genesis for the *Crossfire* exhibition really began with a glass piece, *Salt on Mina Mina*, by Warlpiri artist Dorothy Napangardi that had pride of place near the entrance to the National Art Glass Gallery for a time. It was a work that grabbed my attention on my initial visit to the Gallery. I was well acquainted with Dorothy's extraordinary paintings and prints and was surprised to see her distinctive iconography reproduced so beautifully in glass. I wondered how many other artists were represented in both the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery's collections and what other possible links there may be between the two Collections.

The Wagga Wagga Art Gallery is home to two significant collections - the National Art Glass Collection and the Margaret Carnegie Print Collection. The National Art Glass Collection, which is housed in the stand-alone National Glass Art Gallery comprises a world class, nationally significant collection of contemporary art glass, featuring approximately 500 pieces from well known Australian and international glass artists. The Margaret Carnegie Print Collection began with a donation in 1980 of a large number of original prints which represented some of Australia's leading printmakers from 1940 to 1976. The collection has continued to grow and currently holds approximately 1200 original works by some of Australia's premier artists.

Crossfire is a ground-breaking exhibition which highlights a multitude of connections between the mediums of print and glass, calling on examples from these two Collections to illustrate and tease out the links. The exhibition, which spans both the National Art Glass Gallery and the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, is an attempt to look at the Collections in cross-disciplinary and innovative ways, breaking down the barriers between media and incorporating creative methodologies. *Crossfire* includes artists who work across both media, artists who have creatively responded to works by other artists, processes such as etching and engraving which are used in both media and pairings of prints and glass that have thematic and conceptual resonances. *Crossfire* also highlights many of the most prominent artists in the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery's two collections and includes a focus on Indigenous print and glass.

As *Crossfire* is a truly cross-disciplinary exploration of creativity, the exhibition and catalogue also features literary responses to five of the pairings of prints and glass by writer Francesca Rendle-Short. Rendle-Short who loves to work with words, across artforms has contributed poetic and lyrical responses to the juxtaposition of certain artworks. Wagga Wagga Art Gallery is also indebted to Dr Sasha Grishin and Margot Osborne for their illuminating essays which explore cross-disciplinarity across the Collections.

The research and promotion of both the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery Collections remains an important objective of the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery. The *Crossfire* exhibition, which encourages this cross-disciplinary exploration, has been a wonderful opportunity to look at the Collections in new ways and

with fresh eyes and to reveal and explore some of the less well known connections between artworks and artists.

Cath Bowdler
Gallery Director and curator

Acknowledgements

The curation and research for the *Crossfire* exhibition has been a collaborative project across all Wagga Wagga Art Gallery's departments. Michael Scarrone, Curatorial Assistant – Glass has contributed to the conceptual development of the exhibition and research. Further research has been undertaken by Ray Wholohan Gallery Assistant – Exhibitions and Collections and Genevieve Mott – Casual Gallery Assistant. Drew Halyday,

Gallery Assistant – Exhibitions and Collections has been the principle photographer. Linda Elliot, Curator: Education & Public Programs, and Victoria Lowe, Gallery Assistant have been eagle eyed copy editors. Their work has been invaluable to the publication of this catalogue.

I would also especially like to acknowledge and thank Professor Sasha Grishin, Margot Osborne and Francesca Rendle-Short for their generous contributions to the catalogue. Professor Sasha Grishin studied art history at the universities of Melbourne, Moscow, London and Oxford and has served several terms as visiting scholar at Harvard University. In 1977 he founded the Fine Art Program at the Australian National University and in 2007 was appointed to the Sir William Dobell Chair of Art History and is Head of Art History at the ANU. He works internationally as an art historian, art critic and curator. In 2004 he was elected Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and 2005 he was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) for services to Australian art and art history.

He has published extensively in contemporary and medieval art and contributed to numerous journals and magazines. Professor Grishin has worked for many years as an art critic for the Australian and international press and since 1977 has been the art critic for *The Canberra Times*.

Margot Osborne, who has written perhaps the definitive book on glass art in Australia, *Australian Glass Today*, is an independent writer and curator who lives in Adelaide. She has worked for a range of arts organisations and written widely on Australian art and craft. Her previous publications include *Nick Mount: Incandescence* (2002) and the exhibition catalogue, *Wild nature in contemporary Australian art and craft* (2000). She is a former exhibitions curator for Jam Factory Contemporary Craft and Design, Adelaide, and a regular reviewer for the *Adelaide Review*.

Francseca Rendle-Short is a lecturer in the creative writing program at the University of Canberra and is the author of the novel *Imago* and *Big Sister* (Redress Novellas) and a short play called *Us for Six Pack* at The Street. She is interested in cross-disciplinary engagements.

Wagga Wagga Art Gallery is also indebted to its sponsors. We would like to thank, artsNSW, The Daily Advertiser, WIN Television and QUEST Serviced Apartments for their ongoing support.

Cath Bowdler