

Gemma Dodd

You should really be familiar with my inner landscape before you make it your safe place 2008

Digital photographic print: 80mm x 10mm

Cover image: Untitled 2008



picton press

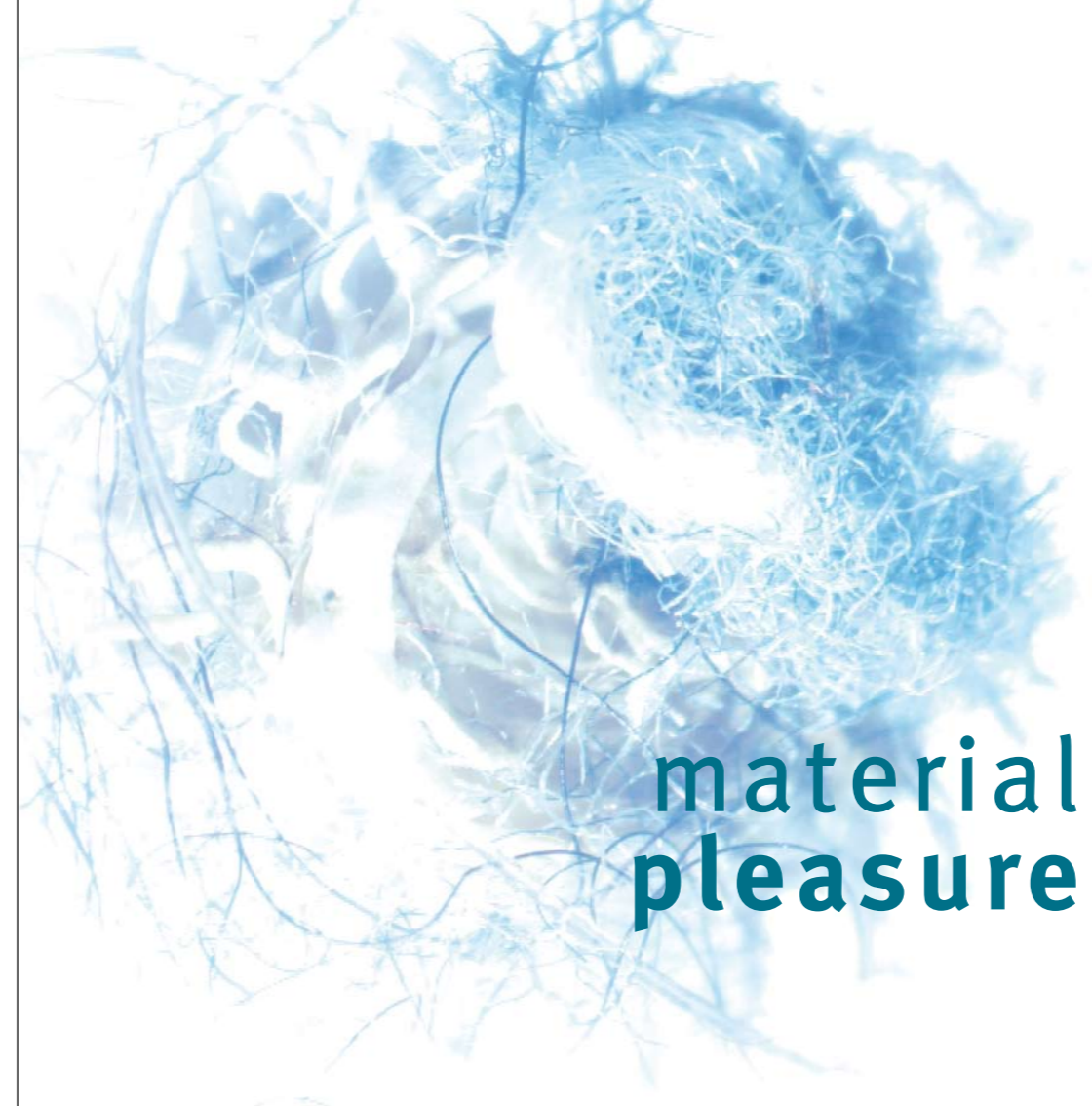


We would like to extend a huge thank you to Soula, Tony, Sue, Rochelle and our sponsors.

Material Pleasure 29 February — 6 April 2008



Heathcote Museum & Gallery
Heathcote Cultural Centre • Swan House • Dun Craig Rd, Applecross
Gallery hours: Tue–Fri 10am–3pm • Sat & Sun 11am–3pm • T: 9364 5666



Material Pleasure

Most people think of material pleasure as the hedonistic worldly acquisition of things and sensory delights. There is a lot of joy in material possessions. My silver ipod is beautifully designed, simple to use and it comes with endless musical choices. There is the voluptuousness of clean polished cotton sheets and the tangible weight of a book.

Being an artist means finding pleasure in working with materials, yet the material doesn't need to be considered beautiful. What draws us to making is the manipulation of "stuff", playing with colour, shape, form, space, texture, and the sense of something well crafted. Materials are an intrinsically important part of making because artists are thinking through these materials. Materials are what we use to express ideas. The creative process is not a mystical one but of bringing things together, working with hand and eye and mind. The discoveries come from the complexities of working with materials over time.

Art making is as much about coercing and manipulating the "stuff" of the world as it is about pleasure. It is the space in which we struggle to form links between the imagination and the actual world, between us and other stuff. Pain and discomfort is part of the making of an artwork: the juggling of the demands of life, fear of failure, doubt, emotional fatigue, the struggle to make the materials do what you want, and the physical pain of working in one position over a long period of time. Not to mention the depression after an exhibition, before the distraction of the next.

However, the physical experience of working with any material, the passing of time, produces a rhythm and a meditative focus. Serious sensuous pleasure is found in the contemplation of materials, enjoyment in their manipulation, in discovering and solving problems. There is a moment of rapture where the world of matter bends to your hand. Moments of rapture are also found when the material refuses to work with you, when it goes against your will and when something strange happens, something unexpected and impossible to control. The limitations of materials and the compromises that come from working with the "stuff" of the real world are in part what bring out these strange accidents. The struggle with materials and the spaces in making are where creativity is discovered. This is research through materials over time, through making a particular artwork, or a series of works, or the work of a lifetime. The finished artwork is the evidence of this process or journey.

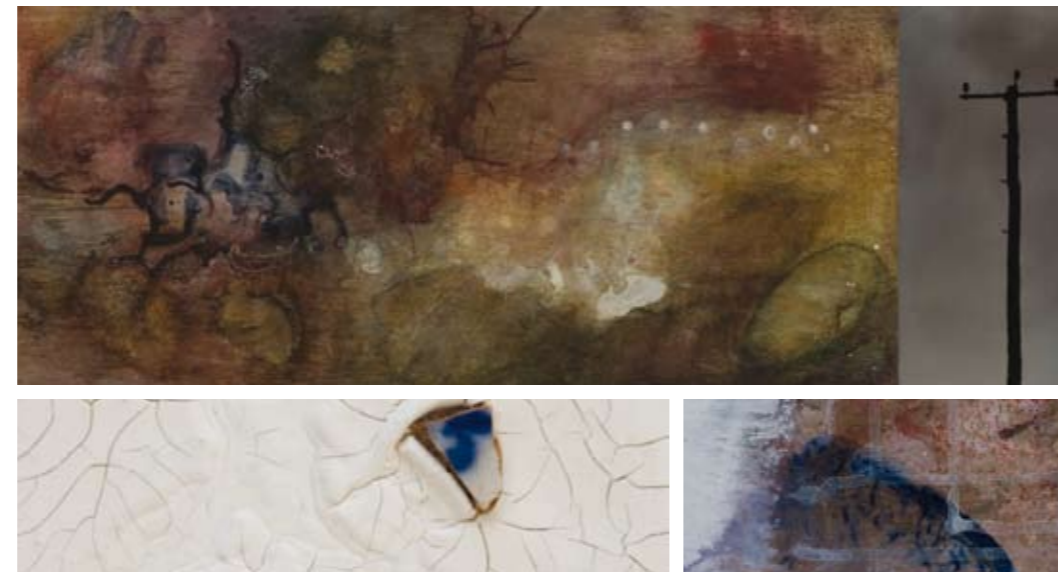
The pleasure of art making is achieved through materials: it is in the commitment to making, to self-discipline, to the process, to an experience full of gratifications, and discomforts, where in the end the pleasures have to outweigh the displeasures.

Susan Flavell

January 2008



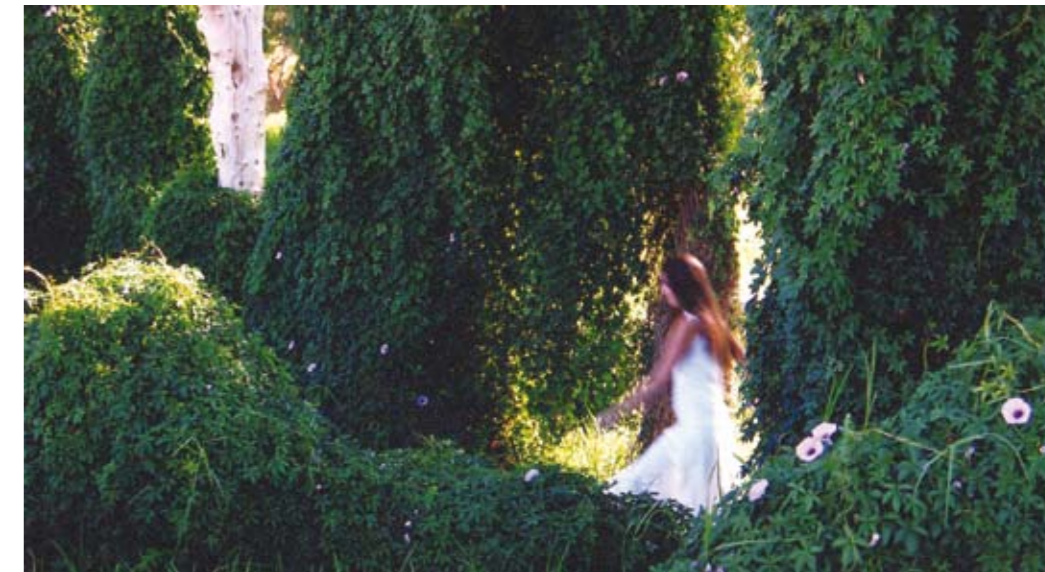
Natalie Williamson
 Fictitious Glade 2008
 Installation, synthetic flowers, fabric, wool & cotton.



1	Katie Martin	
2	3	2008



Mandy Harwood			
1	2	1. Keys 2007 timber, copper & steel: 2000mm x 650mm x 450mm	2. Dark Light 2008 felt: 2000mm x 2000mm x 3000mm



Melissa Carey
 2008