

Sarah Elson
Born 1971

Education:

2003 Chelsea School of Art and Design, London. Masters in Fine Art
2000 Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia. Honours Degree in Art. Graduated with First Class Honours.
1994 Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia. Graduate Diploma Of Education (Secondary)
1991 Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia. Bachelor of Arts in Visual Art. Graduate with Distinction.

Related Employment:

2005 - Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia. Sessional Academic Tutor, Department of Art
1997 - Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia. Technician and Sessional Academic Tutor in the School of Art
1996 Central Metropolitan College of TAFE. Tutor in Jewellery and Drawing
1995 Lesmurdie Senior High School. Secondary Teacher in Art and Design and Design and Technology
1992 - 94 University of Western Australia Photographic Assistant – Media Services

Selected exhibitions:

2007 Galerie Düsseldorf, Perth – Anigozanthos (eudaimonia hybrid)
2006 Melbourne Art Fair, Represented by Galerie Düsseldorf, Perth + Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe 2006
2005 Church Gallery, Claremont – Art Angels Acquisitions 2005 + Form, Perth, WA – Home Ground
2005 Galerie Düsseldorf, Perth, (shelf) (life) Perth International Arts Festival
2004 Mundaring Arts Centre – Beyond the Brick + Moores Building, Fremantle - push
2003 Chelsea School of Art and Design, London – MAGraduate Show 2003
2003 Brunstfield YHA, Edinburgh, Scotland - Accomodation2 + Quadrivium, Sydney – Metal Element 6
2002 House Space, Chelsea School of Art, London - [not] from here
2002 Moores Building, Fremantle - Collection + Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne – Into the Blue
2002 CraftWest, Centre for Contemporary Craft, Perth – City of Perth Craft Awards
2002 Perth International Arts Festival, IASKA – International Arts Space, Kellerberin. Australia – Parallel Worlds
2001 CraftWest, Centre for Contemporary Craft, Perth – City of Perth Craft Awards
2001 Necromancy - Galerie Düsseldorf, Perth, WA
2001 Object Gallery, Sydney, Craft Queensland and Craft'West, Perth - Double Take
Recycling in Contemporary Craft. National Touring Exhibition
2000 CraftWest, Centre for Contemporary Craft, Perth – City of Perth Craft Awards - Open Award Winner
2000 Queensland Conservatorium – Graduate Metal 8 + John Curtin Gallery, Perth, WA – Added Dimension
2000 Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth – Hatched, Healthway National Graduate Show
1999 John Curtin Gallery, Perth, WA - Minimum Collateral Damage
1999 Moores Building, Fremantle – Nip and Fluff
1998 Centre for Contemporary Craft, Sydney and Craft West, Perth – Past Tense Future Perfect
1998 CraftWest, Centre for Contemporary Craft, Perth – City of Perth Craft Awards
1997 New Collectables Gallery, Fremantle – LUSH
1997 Contemporary Art and Design Gallery, Brisbane – Contemporary Collectables
1996 New Collectables Gallery, Fremantle – ANIMA + New Collectables Gallery, Fremantle – Graduate Metal 5
1992 Fremantle Arts Centre, Fremantle – Neck Works
1991 CraftWest, Centre for Contemporary Craft, Perth – City of Perth Craft Awards
1991 Curtin University of Technology, School of Art – Visual Arts Degree Show 1991

Awards:

2001 Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship
2000 City of Perth Craft Awards – Winner of the Open Award for Excellence
2000 Object Magazine Awards – selected as one of the outstanding graduates from an Australian Art School for 1999
1999 Curtin University of Technology, School of Art. Top Student in Visual Arts Practice, Honours Degree in Art.
1999 Galerie Düsseldorf Scholarship, selected from the graduating postgraduate students from Curtin University's School of Art
1991 Curtin University of Technology, School of Art – Consistent High Achievement and Excellence in Jewellery and 3D Design

Collections

Curtin University of Technology

Published in the Following Journals

West Australian News Paper – Ric Spencer "Insightful works a shore thing", March 18, 2006
West Australian News Paper – Ric Spencer "Homing in on defining Landscape" July 23, 2005
West Australian News Paper – Neville Weston "Celebrating the indigenous view" Sept' 22, 2001
Object Magazine – Susan Ostling "Double Take – Recycling in Contemporary Craft" No 3 2001
Object Magazine – 1999 Object Magazine Awards No 1, 2000
Object Magazine – Bronwyn Goss "Emerging West Australian Artists" No 4, 1997
Sunday Times – Judith McGrath "Feminine mystique captured in sensuous wonder", March 24, 1996

SARAH ELSON



Anigozanthos (eudaimonia hybrid)

5 August - 2 September 2007

GALERIE DÜSSELDORF

www.galeriedusseldorf.com.au

9 Glyde Street Mosman Park WA 6012 Australia tel/fax +61 8 9384 0890
Exhibition hours Wednesday - Friday 11 - 5pm Sunday 2- 5 and by appointment
www.galeriedusseldorf.com.au Directors: Magda + Douglas Sheerer

What makes you happy?

Ric Spencer

Sarah Elson’s title is a juicy one – it’s also very descriptive of her work ethic. It continues her tradition of using plant’s scientific names and then adapting them to greater meaning through the creative processes she uses.

Elson found the term eudaimonia in a mothering magazine, she found the dead and fallen anigozanthos specimens on various trips to parks and playgrounds with her children and her studio is a workplace within the home. All these things are not by chance and they, along with the title, go some way toward explaining the situation for Elson as an artist and a mother.

At certain periods in our lives the focus draws inwards and local and familial tendencies overtake the externalities of the world. What is home, what is a family, where is my sense of place and what makes me happy? This is the gratuity of being located, of being settled and of wanting to draw others into that settlement. Ethically this seems the natural path of a mother; and of an artist - whose fascination with what makes life precious continues to push her working method.

Beyond Elson’s method of finding and of family focus has continued to grow the ability to accept offerings and to embrace the nature of the cyclical. Again in the title we see this hinted at, the hybrid nature of things being grown and nurtured combining with the want of others to be part of that existence and to extend their helping hand. This is the type of community that is founded within families and those who share like-minded attitudes to creating life, love and happiness. There’s that word – eudaimonia – fundamentally the desire to live a happy life, to move toward happiness (from the Greek “eu” meaning “good” or “well being” and “daimon” meaning “spirit” or in the case of eudaimonia possibly a life spirit.) So what does it mean to live a good life, to be happy?

Here we get into Aristotle’s ethics and the nature of goodness. In the schema of associated meanings within eudaimonia two things stand out to me – particularly in their affiliation with Elson’s work. One is that the term “flourishing” replaces “happiness” in various references to eudaimonia and the other is that there are eudaimonic communities.

Flourishing is a word that Elson has used before to describe her work and I think it aptly links the way she uses plant life, swelled with metal to affiliate death with renewal and the joy of growth with the expediency of living. It simply makes sense to search for happiness in moments of flourishing.

In this sense to live to be happy is to give the things around you their full appreciation and to allow them to fulfil their “arête”, another word closely linked with eudaimonia which means virtue but which is also the gained knowledge of good and bad. This perhaps in terms of Aristotle means discerning what is right and wrong, good or bad, but in terms of art and indeed Elson’s practice it discerns the moment when something that is co-existing with us on this earth is being allowed to fulfil its rightful purpose. The plant, on this occasion the kangaroo paw, Western Australia’s state emblem, has lived and rejuvenated, now replaced in gratitude with a metal that longs to fulfil its own rightful purpose – that of extraction and filling form. The politics of landscape here comes to the fore in Elson’s work. In the painterly fashion of the grid, representational symbols of state and its economic engine come together in a mapping of common vision.

If eudaimonia is the right to be happy, a longing for right livelihood and the utopian vision of a meaningful life then surely Elson’s 338 anigozanthos have been respectfully given this. This eudaimonic community, this myriad of paws, all gaping and reaching out, symbolise in their populated co-existence the possibility of giving life and of giving it locally.

But is the desire for happiness an ethos or pathos? Is it a necessity for community function or purely pleasure driven and based on unrealistic expectations? Elson’s obsession with detail and the time taken to achieve good in each individual piece seems to critique both sides of the coin. The individualistic desire for perfect form is apparent, so too the desire for inclusion and attachment. Anigozanthos is as such an honest landscape of conflict and resolution, within the artist and as metaphor for social aspirations. In this sense Elson’s use of pins is a conscious one - they reinterpret a desire to pin down conflicting ideas and their similarity to weaponry boasts more than a coincidental passing glance to the narration of conflict and resolution played out over land, ownership and belonging through out history. The work also critiques well the conflicting telos of artists in which art becomes not only a drive for another form of eudaimonia, that of success, but also the very real desire to be true to the work, to the form and to the life, whether it be happy or not, that drives the artist to create.

1

Anigozanthos (eudaimonia hybrid)
338 cast kangaroo paws
Recycled alloys of silver, copper, bronze and gold
2000 x 1000 x 8 mm
\$ 300 each piece
\$ 25,000 complete work

2

Accumulation sculptures (disambiguation)
Nothing
13 cast moths
Recycled alloy of silver, copper, gold and bronze
\$ 400 each 11 larger ones
\$ 250 each 2 tiny ones

3

Hybrid
Cast section of a plant root
Recycled alloy of silver and copper
110 x 20 x 50 mm
\$ 950

4

Accumulation of succulents
Recycled alloy of silver and copper on board
260 x 325 x 90 mm
NFS

5

Accumulation shelf -

Rose White
American express tarnished silver
cast credit card
Recycled alloy of silver and copper
55 x 85 mm
\$ 600

Eudaminae

cast butterfly wings
Recycled alloy of gold cast onto silver
65 x 45 x 55 mm
\$ 950

Moth

cast moth
Recycled alloy of silver and copper
65 x 15 x 25 mm
\$ 500

Litoria moorei with Columbidae

cast motor bike frog and dove chick
Recycled alloys of silver and copper
70 x 35 x 13 mm, 35 x 20 x 15 mm
\$ 950

Nymphal skin from a Hemiptera

3 cast cicada skins
Recycled alloy of silver and copper
each 20 x 10 x 10 mm
\$ 400

Epiprocta / Alt

cast hind dragonfly wings
Recycled alloy of bronze
15 x 95 x 25 mm
\$ 500

Carassius acratius

cast half of a gold fish
Recycled alloy of gold
70 x 30 x 25 mm
\$ 950

6

Macropidia Fuliginosa
cast black kangaroo paws from pod to flower
Recycled alloys of silver and copper and board
170 x 50 x 45 mm
\$ 2,900

7

Solandra minimas
cast golden cup pods
Recycled alloys of silver and copper and board
Overall size 250 x 470 x 200 mm
\$ 3,900

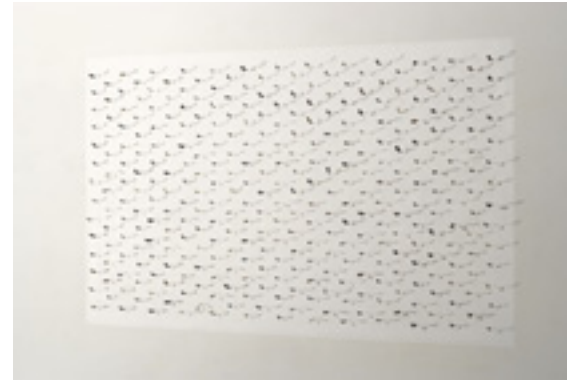
8

Eudamonia phylo
cast butterfly
Recycled alloys of silver and copper and board
300 x 270 x 50 mm
\$ 2,500

Sarah would like to sincerely thank the following people for there help in making this exhibition possible – Ric Spencer, Gwydian, Lucian and Suki Elson-Spencer Douglas and Magda Sheerer, Lisa Maccallini Susan Flavell, Claire Bailey and Regina Middleton



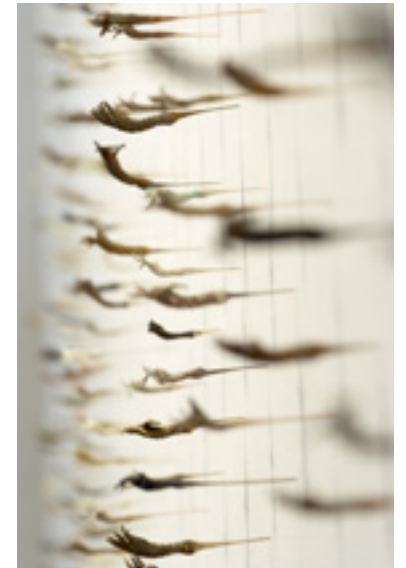
catalogue 6



catalogue 1



catalogue 7



catalogue 1 detail



catalogue 8

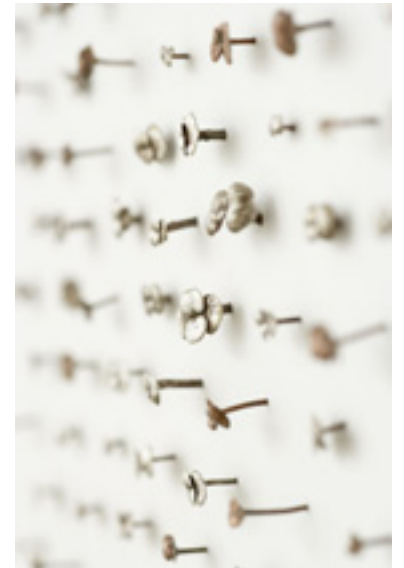




catalogue 2



catalogue 4



catalogue 4 detail



catalogue 3



catalogue 5