

HUW DAVIES GALLERY 23 April–10 May 2009

First Impressions

David Bruce

David Bruce is relatively new to Canberra, which makes *First Impressions*, his first solo exhibition, unusual.

Unless they have been residents for many years, people making photographs in Canberra usually find the national capital icons irresistible. We see image after image of Parliament House, the two bridges and the lakeside institutions, Anzac Parade and its grand monuments all leading to the Australian War Memorial—possibly the most photographed building in Australia after the Sydney Opera House.

But David Bruce has gone beyond the grandeur and immediate visual pull of the Parliamentary Triangle to share with us a meditative and somewhat tranquil view of the city he now calls home.

He says of his work in *First Impressions*:

The idea of these images ... is ... not to document Canberra in any way, but rather to give impressions of it. This includes the colours and forms of both the natural and the manmade environment and, of course, some of the iconic buildings that are central to the very existence of Canberra.

These are little vignettes of Canberra, moments and places that are all small parts of the city and surrounding areas.

In the tradition of the Pictorialists, beginning in Nineteenth Century England and the United States and moving, inevitably later, to Australia through the work of Harold Cazneaux and some of his contemporaries, David Bruce is striving for something other than an objective visual record of the landscape. Even the national icons he has photographed are unrecognisable. This work, he says:

... reflects something of a new direction in my photography—away from a more literal documentary style of landscape photography towards a more impressionistic and artistic style.

PhotoAccess is pleased to provide this opportunity for David Bruce to introduce his work to Canberra in *First Impressions*, his first solo exhibition, in the HUW DAVIES GALLERY at the Manuka Arts Centre.

David Chalker

Supported by the ACT and Commonwealth Governments



Aspen is in fog



Against the wall



Wild blue yonder



Artist statement

This collection of images is called *First Impressions* for two reasons. Most obviously, it is a collection that was put together in my first year in Canberra—and so it literally is my first impression of the city and its surrounds. Less obviously, the collection also reflects something of a new direction in my photography—away from a more literal documentary style of landscape photography towards a more impressionistic and artistic style.

It is not clear even to me whether these two things are linked, or whether it is merely a coincidence of timing that the two should occur simultaneously. However, the combination made the selection of a title for this collection very easy. Indeed, I found myself mentally referring to the project as 'First Impressions' long before I formally adopted the title. The idea of these images as a project is therefore not to document Canberra in any way, but rather to give impressions of it. This includes the colours and forms of both the natural and the manmade environment and, of course, some of the iconic buildings that are central to the very existence of Canberra.

Each of the images in this collection is here for two reasons: first, it contributes to my overall impression of Canberra and second—I like it as an image for its own intrinsic aesthetic value. As a collection, I hope it gives a sense of the type of place Canberra is—but deliberately without giving a sense of what it looks like en masse. These are little vignettes of Canberra, moments and places that are all small parts of the city and surrounding areas. Even taken as a whole, the collection deliberately does not give the viewer a clear picture of Canberra (or at least, it is not intended to!). Rather, I hope it creates a sense of recognition with some things that are familiar and a feeling of curiosity for those that are not.

Being temporally pegged by its association with my first year in Canberra, this collection has its most power now. It is with this in mind that I seek to create the opportunity to exhibit the collection at this time.

David Bruce
April 2009



Looking for the way home



Deluge



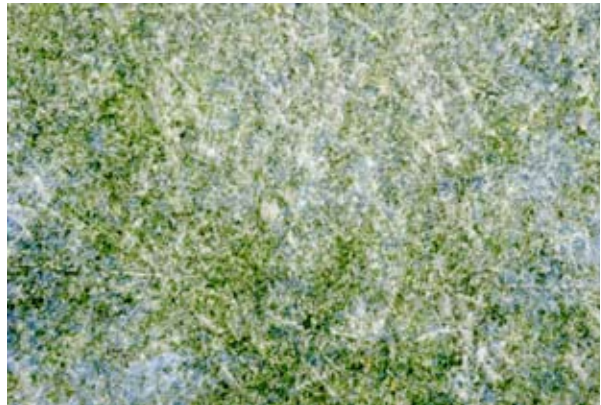
Bicycle rack



Still waiting



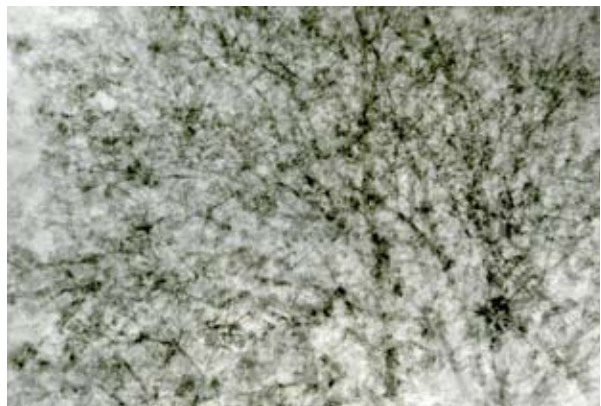
Spring



Summer



Autumn



Winter

Biography

David Bruce lived mostly in Western Australia, but also South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland before moving to Canberra with his wife and two children in 2007.

David has been taking photographs for more than 25 years. Originally learning the basics of photography with fully manual film cameras, he has a strong understanding of the optical science that underlies the art of taking photographs. His more serious photographic period commenced in 1999 with the purchase of his first ever brand new camera for an overseas trip. He now regularly travels with at least three or four cameras, including both digital and film formats. His photographic interests have typically been more documentary in nature, with an emphasis on landscape work (see www.auscenery.com for examples of this type of work). However, he has always had a strong interest in more artistic and abstract images, and this has become the dominant style in his more recent work.

David first began exhibiting and selling work in 2003, in the South West of Western Australia. His work has been seen in many exhibitions around the South West, including the *South West Survey* (Bunbury Regional Art Galleries, each year from 2003 to 2006), *Where the heart is* (ArtGeo, 2005), *Setagaya Sister City Photographic Exhibition* (Bunbury and Setagaya, Japan, 2005), *The critical eye* (Bunbury 2004), and the *Pemberton Art Show* (Pemberton, 2004). He was a finalist in the professional category of the Tourism Western Australia See WA competition, and his work can be seen on the cover of and throughout the *2006 Getaway* tourist guide to Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

David's work is, or has previously, been sold from a variety of outlets in Western Australia including Capel Vale Winery, Blue Lagoon Peals, Boggy Gate Road Picture Framers, Caf Fez, Juniper Estate Winery and Country Framers. Having recently relocated to Canberra, he will shortly seek to identify similar arrangements in the ACT.

In addition to his other photographic interests, David has completed a number of commissions including weddings and commercial photography for clients such as wineries, local newspapers and other smaller businesses.

List of works

Inkjet prints on Hahnemühle William Turner fine art inkjet paper; \$190 mounted for framing (other sizes and prices on request; only three images at all sizes will be sold)

		mm
1	<i>Against the wall</i>	330 x 560
2	<i>Looking for the way home</i>	330 x 505
3	<i>Still waiting</i>	330 x 470
4	<i>Aspen is in fog</i>	330 x 560
5	<i>Deluge</i>	330 x 505
6	<i>Chute</i>	400 x 400
7	<i>New growth</i>	400 x 230
8	<i>Bike Rack</i>	330 x 505
9	<i>North Curtin horse paddock</i>	250 x 550
10	<i>Trick of the light</i>	250 x 550
11	<i>Wild blue yonder</i>	330 x 560
12	<i>Spring</i>	330 x 505
13	<i>Summer</i>	330 x 505
14	<i>Autumn</i>	330 x 505
15	<i>Winter</i>	330 x 505



Chute



North Curtin horse paddock



New growth

HUW DAVIES GALLERY @ PhotoAccess

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