

Coastal Comfort

Coastal Comfort is Suzie Edwards' second solo exhibition in the HUW DAVIES GALLERY. Like the first, *Please don't send me home* in 2007, Suzie has drawn on aspects of her life to tell an apparently familiar story. But it is told in a way that represents the complexity of coastal life. Here we see 'the coast' through the eyes of an imaginative and enquiring artist.

In the *Please don't send me home* catalogue I wrote:

As Gallery and Visual Arts Coordinator at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre, Suzie Edwards is accustomed to helping other artists present their work. She is also a teacher and curator, and has been a notable contributor to group exhibitions in Canberra for more than a decade. Considering the quality and consistency of her creative achievements it is surprising that *Please don't send me home* is her first solo exhibition.

Please don't send me home is a rich and powerful evocation of a nostalgic, but surprisingly optimistic, return home. Suzie Edwards' quietly beautiful images of places that were full of people and industry in her childhood contrast with 1950s and 60s images made by her father at a time when the cement works were the heart of Portland life. Together they contradict the impression most of us would have of the awfulness of living and growing up in an industrial landscape.

Please don't send me home was also shown in Bathurst and Broken Hill following its HUW DAVIES GALLERY showing.

Since 2007 Suzie has continued her contribution to PhotoAccess and other group exhibitions, she continues to support artists through her work at Tuggeranong and she continues to draw inspiration from regular visits to the New South Wales South Coast town of Merimbula. Like the images in *Please don't send me home* this new work brings to the wall and screen the pleasant and the unpleasant, the sunny and the dark dimensions of the coast—the squabbling, freewheeling aerobatics of seagulls, a kite flying high above a rock platform pounded by waves, a study of corpses: mutton birds dead from the exhaustion of battling storms in the course of their epic migration and discovered on a beach on Anzac Day 2008.

Edwards' use of several capture techniques has allowed her to create a range of moods. The Holga based images are atmospheric and beautiful. The digital work is sharp and full of detail. Edwards says the screen based work is '... about rhythms—the constant comfort that comes from routine. I notice the 'small things' down the coast such as the way the gentlest of breezes catches the curtains.'

Suzie Edwards was a 2000 artist in residence when PhotoAccess was in its original premises in Kingsley Street. She was an artist in residence again in 2007 in our new home at the Manuka Arts Centre. This thoughtful exhibition is another major accomplishment for Suzie and we are very pleased to share it with visitors to the HUW DAVIES GALLERY.

David Chalker

Suzie Edwards



Contemplation 1



Contemplation 2



Red Kite Delight

Artist statement

For a number of years now I have been visiting the village of Merimbula on the New South Wales South Coast, staying in a small cabin atop a cliff with a beach to my left and the Pacific Ocean to my right.

These monthly visits have sustained me in many ways—not the least of them creatively and physically. I know I am not the only Canberran to seek refuge and solace on the South Coast. The time spent there is as if I am in a vacuum: I am happy doing nothing aside from reading, listening to music, eating and photographing the endless and ever changing horizon. Time exists in a different continuum and the world seems very distant.

Today there are so many options available to photographers that it can at times be quite alarming. Our ever busy world foists upon us myriad ways to make things 'simpler' and more 'efficient', with the ultimate seductive promise of giving us more leisure time. However, I am finding this new found, so called efficiency intrudes into the 'everydayness' of our lives.

Our time to be alone, to contemplate and consider, is snatched away by the new technologies. You see it everywhere—personal space is now determined by earphones and, young and old alike, we carry mobile phones and laptops like security blankets and status symbols, interrupting even our most intimate conversations and tasks to answer to their calls.

This is part of the reason I have chosen the Holga as my companion. This *plastic fantastic* as it is affectionately known is so beautifully uncomplicated that using it has been like finding a very 'special place'. Like many people we meet, such simplicity belies a unique personality. Just when I think I know how to 'shoot' she will surprise me with something I was not expecting. Like a good friend, the Holga asks little of you; she is very forgiving and at the same time very surprising in what she presents you with. Every journey is different and always I learn something new.

To outsiders, Canberra may seem strange—we arrive here, usually from interstate without our family networks and friends, most of us work in one of the many bureaucracies and we live a very regimented life. Our day begins with how much water we use and how long we shower; our lives are determined by legislation and political correctness and, on top of that, we are seen by our counterparts as being a purely political community with no soul. It is essential that we seek to escape from this—so some of us go back to country and some of us go to the coast. It is here that I slow down, unwind, regather and recharge.

This exhibition is just about that: every month I exit the revolving door of work, politics, media and the wider world and seek the solace and comfort of my regular coastal comfort. I know for many of you, that too is so.

Suzie Edwards

August 2010

Biography

Solo exhibitions

- 2010 *Coastal Comfort*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, PhotoAccess, Canberra
 Please don't send me home, ICOMOS Conference, Broken Hill
- 2009 *Please don't send me home*, Somerville Museum, Bathurst, New South Wales
- 2007 *Please don't send me home*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, PhotoAccess, Canberra

Selected group exhibitions

- 2010 *Holiday snaps*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, PhotoAccess, Canberra
 Access all areas 2010: The PhotoAccess Members' Show, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, Canberra
- 2009 *Access all areas 2009: The PhotoAccess Members' Show*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, Canberra
- 2007 *Access all areas 2007: The PhotoAccess Members' Show*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, Canberra
- 2006 *Access all areas 2006: The PhotoAccess Members' Show*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, Canberra
 Wildside? What's going on on the hilltops of Canberra?, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, Canberra
- 2005 *Access all areas 2005: The PhotoAccess Members' Show*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, Canberra
- 2004 *Access all areas 2004: The PhotoAccess Members' Show*, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, Canberra
 Alchemy, Criterion Gallery, Braidwood, HUW DAVIES GALLERY and Tuggeranong Arts Centre
- 2003 *Inaugural Contemporary Art Competition and Exhibition*, Canberra Contemporary Art Space (CCAS)
 Alchemy group show, Criterion Gallery, Braidwood
- 2002 *Alchemy* group show, Tuggeranong Arts Centre, Canberra
- 2001 *Scandalous*, CCAS Members Show, Gorman House, Canberra
 Challenge the Space, invitational exhibition at Southern Exposure Gallery, San Francisco
- 2000 *Studio One Members Show*, Leichhardt Street Studios, Kingston, ACT
 168 Hours, ANCA Gallery, Dickson, ACT
 Traditional Values, CCAS Members Show, Gorman House, Canberra
- 1999 *Vast and Varied*, PhotoAccess members exhibition, Kingsley Street, Canberra

Awards

- 2007 Artist in residence, PhotoAccess, Manuka Arts Centre, Canberra
2004 Marketing grant, National Association of Visual Artists
2002 Youth Coalition grant for exhibition of artworks by young people at risk
2000 Artist in residence, PhotoAccess, Kingsley Street, Canberra
Artist in residence, Studio One, Leichhardt Street Studios, Kingston, ACT
Co-recipient, *Gordon Darling Foundation Grant*

Recent curatorial and other projects

- 2009 *One Shot*, an exhibition by ACT photographers, Tuggeranong Arts Centre
2008 July, eight days as volunteer with Sydney Biennale based at Pier 2/3 Walsh Bay and Cockatoo Island
2005 *Interchange*, Regional Arts Fund touring exhibition shown in Canberra, Goulburn and Collector
Painting Music, by Susana Enriquez
Images from workshops with Karralika residents (supported by Healthpact and Tuggeranong Arts Centre)
2004 *Images of the Drought*, by Darren Clark at Tuggeranong Arts Centre
2003 *imperfect, impermanent, incomplete...* by Payal Sehgal Mahajan, Huw Davies Gallery, Canberra
Our Country, by Israeli Photographer Alex Levac (in partnership with the Israeli Embassy)

Education

- 1997–99 Canberra Institute of Technology, Diploma in Visual Arts and Crafts
1996 Canberra Institute of Technology, Certificate in Design Studies



Unmade bed, from *Coastal Comfort* DVD

List of works

		Image mm	Price (unframed)
	Images 1–9 inkjet prints on Canson Infinity BFK Rives printed by Stephen Best, Macquarie Editions; photographed with Holga 120N using 120 film; artists proofs from an edition of 9		
1	Contemplation Diptych	430 x 430 (each)	\$300 (or \$175 each)
2, 3	Old Testament Sky I and 2	430 x 430 (each)	\$175 each
4–6	Poets Dream 1, 2, 3	430 x 430 (each)	\$175 each
7	On a Wing and a Prayer	430 x 430	\$175
8	Recognising Turner Diptych	430 x 430 (each)	\$300 (or \$175 each)
9	Red Kite Delight	430 x 430	\$175
10	Coastal Comfort DVD loop of images made over four years	1:30	NFS
11	Sky Dancers 1–18 Inkjet prints on Canon Archival matte paper; artists proofs from edition of 9	8" x 10" (each)	\$35 each
12	Monoliths Inkjet prints; 5 images on Canon Archival Matte paper; artists proofs from edition of 9	290 x 170 (each)	\$300 set
13	25 April 2008 Inkjet prints; 25 images on Canon Archival matte paper	8" x 10" (each)	NFS
14	Nocturnes Inspired by <i>The Death of the Bird</i> by A D Hope (reproduced courtesy of the A D Hope Estate); set of 10 images on Rives BFK, deckle edged and wrapped in silk paper; black cord and metal container; edition of 3	4" x 7" (each)	\$175 set
15	I must go down to the Sea (J Masefield) Inkjet prints; 3 images on Canon archival matte paper		NFS



Sky Dancer