

**HUW DAVIES GALLERY** 25 November–13 December 2009

# *Threads* | Georgina Smith

Georgina Smith's *Threads* was shown in the HUW DAVIES GALLERY from 23 June to 25 July 2005. The series was donated to PhotoAccess and is now part of the PhotoAccess Collection; works from the Collection are shown in the HUW DAVIES GALLERY and our other Manuka Arts Centre rooms from time to time. We are very pleased to have an opportunity to show *Threads* again as part of the 2009 gallery program.

Smith's life and work has taken a further turn since she showed with us in 2005, as she says in the Artist Statement that follows. People who know Georgina will be interested to hear her news but, like us, disappointed that she is not actively making photo based work at present.

The words that follow accompanied the HUW DAVIES GALLERY showing of *Threads* in 2005.

'Georgina Smith is well known in Canberra through her work as an artist, as a PhotoAccess tutor, staff member in Photomedia at the ANU School of Art, and as owner and operator of the Criterion Café and Gallery in the historic Criterion Hotel in Braidwood.

With her family, Georgina moved to the South Coast last year. The sale of the Criterion meant the loss of an important exhibiting venue for Canberra photographers. Georgina Smith deserves warm congratulations and thanks for her work teaching and supporting the photo based arts in Canberra and the region.

PhotoAccess is delighted to have the opportunity to acknowledge her contribution and show the *Threads* series in its entirety in Canberra for the first time.

A number of the works were included in *Encapsulate*, a group show with Nina Sellars, Ed Whalan and Kate Ford in the very new HUW DAVIES GALLERY at PhotoAccess from 30 August to 28 September 2002. The entire series was shown at STILLS GALLERY, Paddington, in October and November 2003.

*Threads*, in Georgina Smith's words:

... looks at the human condition in terms of our watery essence. Within the images the thread serves as a metaphor for our DNA, the umbilical chord and the thread of life; spun, measured and cut by the three sisters of fate.

DNA, the thread of life, was originally formed in pools of highly fertile liquid. Within our fleshy pods we begin our journey inside the watery womb. Then emerging from the nurturing yet constraining capsule as creatures formed of up to 70 per cent water.

The process of maturation an entropy consumes our brief, fragile lives—the human mind a vastly complex and vulnerable pilot. In this series of images this is symbolically expressed as a continual act of balance on and within the impartial medium of water. The thread is supporting, constricting, flowing, twisting, swinging, enmeshing and balancing.

The images are not manipulated, but printed as digital scans onto Epson archival watercolour paper with archival inks. To create and enhance the ideas behind the theme the images themselves were produced with the use of disposable underwater cameras, chosen for their imperfect optics, surprising distortions and subsequent graininess of the image.

We hope visitors to the HUW DAVIES GALLERY will enjoy and be inspired by Georgina Smith's *Threads*, just as many people have been touched and inspired by the artist herself over the years in which she made such an important contribution to the photo based arts in Canberra'.

*Threads* is 14 images 295 x 445 mm or 445 x 295 mm. Prints from the series are available (unframed) in limited edition for \$250.

David Chalker

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## Artist statement

In 2003 Stills gallery in Paddington, Sydney, held my last solo exhibition. The work shown was entitled *Threads*; the body of images now exhibited at the HUW DAVIES GALLERY.

By nine o'clock on the morning after my opening I had decided on a career change: I would become—of all things—a Gothic Fantasy writer. I began writing that very day.

At that time I was a new mother and running a gallery/restaurant with my husband Alex.

Since that day more change has followed as we moved from Braidwood to a small property in Cobargo N.S.W, began Home Educating our (now) two children and embarked with fledgling steps on a path to self sustainability.

2009 marked an even greater leap as we realised, with increasing temperatures and continuing drought, that our growing plans were being thwarted. Alex and I and our children Maxi and Tristan, left mainland Australia and emigrated to Tasmania. We arrived mid-winter, in the wettest season Tasmanians can remember in fifty years.

After purchasing a twenty four acre property just out of Cygnet, we began to build. This we did in six weeks—first having to construct an access road, shifting seventeen tons of gravel by hand.

We live frugally, endeavouring, like all hippies before us, to limit our carbon footprint. 'Golden Valley Whole Farm' is intended to be a permaculture project.

The writing continues, having received an offer on my first book by Random House Publishers, which I declined on the advice of my Literary Agent (proving that you're never too old to play the fool). I am currently rewriting the manuscript for the fourth time.

Georgina Smith  
November 2009



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**HUW DAVIES GALLERY @ PhotoAccess**

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