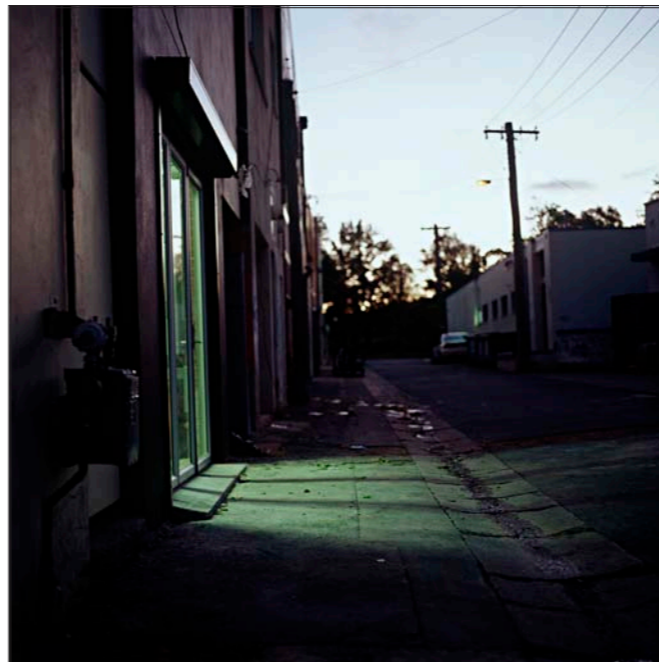
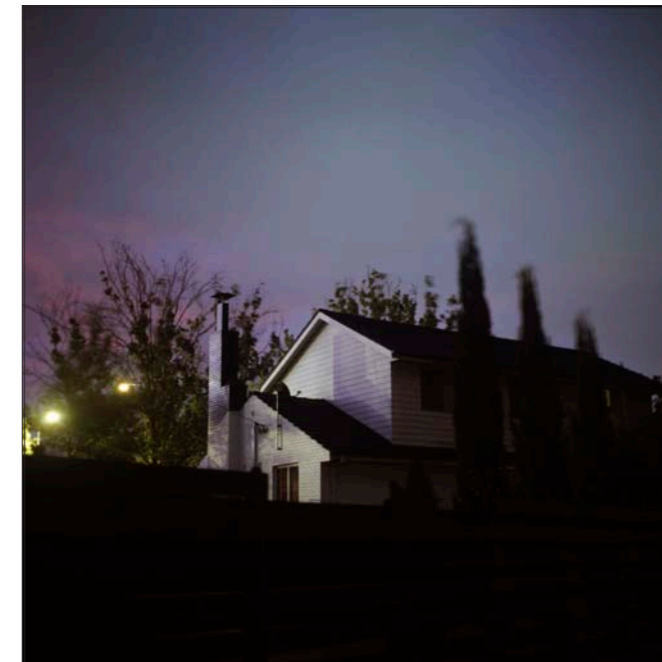


away from the crowds



and no one sees



inside, you don't hear

Introduction

Familiar Fable is Lauren Hewitt's first solo exhibition, and her second exhibition in the HUW DAVIES GALLERY at PhotoAccess. In February–March 2005 Hewitt and Madeleine Donovan, PhotoAccess artists in residence under the ANU School of Art's Emerging Artists Support Scheme, presented *Latent*—the first exhibition shown in the redeveloped HUW DAVIES GALLERY. In my catalogue introduction I wrote:

Lauren Hewitt had an earlier association with PhotoAccess as a diploma course student in 1998. *Under the Mango Tree* and *Airmail*, the work she presented in the ANU School of Art graduating show five years later, testified eloquently and beautifully to the success of her journey from craft to art. In *Latent* her interest in visually beautiful images persists, but there are also images suggesting mysterious goings on in dark gardens and other inhabited but unpeopled places. Drama laden night scenes—an unseen observer peering at light filled windows, peculiar shapes corralled by a backyard Hills hoist—contrast with atmospheric, exquisitely defined bare branches and wispy clouds threaded against many coloured skies.

Lauren Hewitt's work is introspective, touching on the deep personal emotions most of us feel but can't or won't voice. The images in this exhibition evoke feelings of wistful contemplation, love of the small and the grand things in nature, and agonising loneliness.

Familiar Fable continues Hewitt's exploration of ordinary places suggesting real or imagined narratives. But this work moves into the streets, laneways and roads that are part of the world we share as a community. Hewitt says in her Artist Statement that she has attempted to '... explore the way the local landscape is represented in the imagination. Capturing locations where sometimes something has occurred, an event, or where there is a hint of a happening, and locations that harbour that potential'.

Writing in *The Sydney Morning Herald* of 4 July 2009, John McDonald reflected on two recent shows of new media art, including Shaun Gladwell's Australian Pavilion work at this year's Venice Biennale. The work received the 'Worst in Show' award from *New York Magazine's* Jerry Saltz. McDonald observed that:

Standing in front of a work it should become pretty clear, pretty quickly, whether it captures one's attention or not. If we are not amused or entertained, we may rightfully pronounce the piece a failure. This idea will horrify art snobs, who see boredom and obfuscation as the hallmarks of high seriousness ...

Lauren Hewitt's work responds to places in a way that captures our attention and entertains our imagination. Her images are precisely drawn, dramatically lit by street and building lights or the last light of the day; dark areas are as meaning laden as the areas elucidated by light. The images demonstrate strong compositional skills that help organise spare visual elements into satisfying, powerful and evocative works.

Lauren Hewitt has made thoughtful, significant contributions to exhibitions at PhotoAccess over a number of years. A 2009 PhotoAccess residency assisted with the development of *Familiar Fable*, her first solo exhibition, in the HUW DAVIES GALLERY at the Manuka Arts Centre.

David Chalker

Artist Statement

Landscape, memory, construction, tangible, intangible, the familiar, the unfamiliar, lost, found, looking ...
The landscape provokes imagination, rumour, fable.

This body of work attempts to explore the way the local landscape is represented in the imagination. Capturing locations where sometimes something has occurred, an event, or where there is a hint of a happening, and locations that harbour that potential.

Drawing from the traditions of film noir, the familiar scene becomes the unfamiliar. Suburbia, seen from the car window, what we see everyday passes through our awareness, becoming swiftly invisible and unnoticed. Yet glimpses of these shadowed corners can spark the imagination for a fleeting moment, causing the birth of a brief fable, shortly lived, yet lingering.

I find that the urban landscape at night suddenly becomes a lot more interesting, and open to interpretation than during our everyday passings in the light hours. Trying to capture detail in the darkness, subtleties of shadow and low light for atmospheric scenery that easily impels the imagination. Working in the dark, at night, in obscure places is key to the process. It heightens the senses and the imagination, instils a sense of urgency and vulnerability.

The landscapes I shoot are not grand. I prefer a subtler scale, exploring how our history and memory inform our responses to the places we inhabit. We often do not choose our broader surroundings, they occur as a consequence to the places in which we choose to dwell.

Lauren Hewitt

Artist CV

Exhibitions

- 2009 Familiar Fable, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, PhotoAccess, Canberra, ACT
2009 One Shot, exhibition of selected photographers, Tuggeranong Art Centre Gallery, Canberra
2008 Access All Areas 2008: The PhotoAccess Members Show, HUW DAVIES GALLERY
2007 AIATSIS staff art show, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra
2005 Latent, HUW DAVIES GALLERY, PhotoAccess (joint exhibition with Madeleine Donovan)
2003 This is Us, group exhibition, Tuggeranong Arts Centre
2002 Noir, joint exhibition, Photospace Gallery, Canberra School of Art; Breathless, exchange group exhibition with Otago Polytechnic, Dunedin, New Zealand
2001 Noise, Online Gallery; Visual Frequencies, MCA online exhibition; Red Shoes, Photospace Gallery, Canberra School of Art

Awards

- 2009 PhotoAccess Artist in residence
2003 Canberra School of Art Emerging Artists Support Scheme (EASS) Canberra Museum and Gallery Award; EASS PhotoAccess Residency Award
2002 Tuggeranong Rotary Youth Art Award

Collections

AIATSIS permanent collection; Tuggeranong Arts Centre permanent collection; private collections in Australia and overseas

Publications

- 2006 Capital Chemist Calendar
2005 The Canberra Times, Times2, exhibition review, March 11
2004 Capital Magazine

Education

- 2003 Bachelor of Visual Arts with Honours, Canberra School of Art, ANU
1999 Diploma Visual Art and Craft, Canberra Institute of Technology

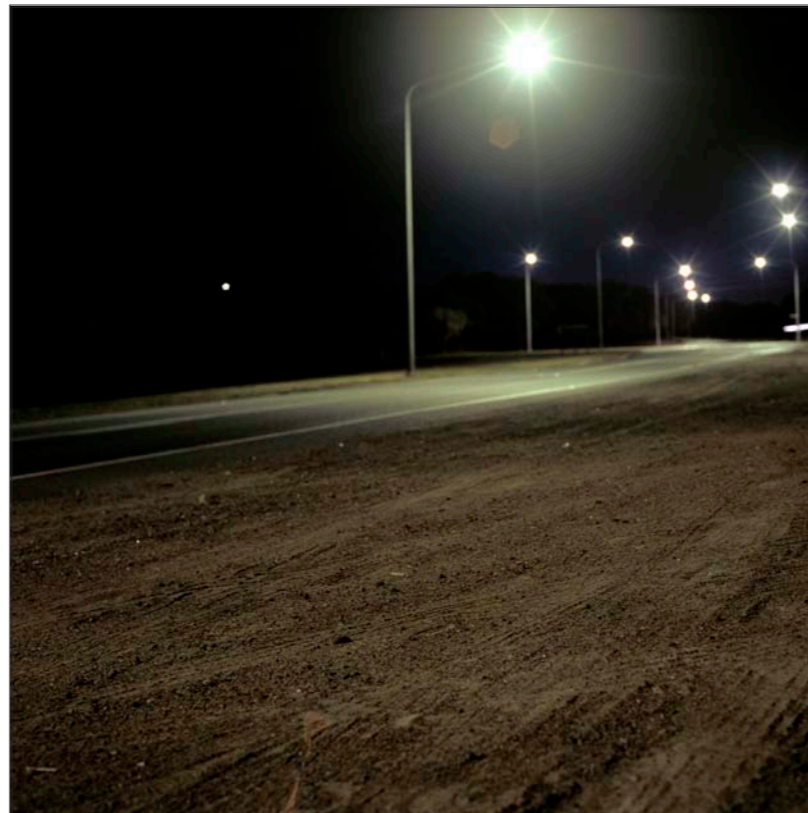
Experience

- 2003 Curator, Tuggeranong Rotary Youth Art Prize, Tuggeranong Arts Centre; Gallery Assistant, Tuggeranong Arts Centre
2002 Internship, Tuggeranong Arts Centre; Curated Working Out, a group exhibition of Canberra School of Art graduates, School of Art Foyer Gallery, Canberra School of Art

List of works

All works are pigment inkjet prints on Canson Museo Max, 795 x795 mm (overall); Artists proofs from an edition of 5; \$450 (unframed)

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|----------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>from outside</i> | 12 | <i>by the lake she was found</i> |
| 2 | <i>this was not</i> | 13 | <i>look behind</i> |
| 3 | <i>and when you see home</i> | 14 | <i>if only to breathe</i> |
| 4 | <i>and here was perfect</i> | 15 | <i>away from the crowds</i> |
| 5 | <i>this could have happened</i> | 16 | <i>no eyes to witness</i> |
| 6 | <i>the sky suggests it didn't</i> | 17 | <i>the air so charged</i> |
| 7 | <i>inside, you don't hear</i> | 18 | <i>the search lasted 3 days</i> |
| 8 | <i>and no one sees</i> | 19 | <i>hidden</i> |
| 9 | <i>no one ever comes here</i> | 20 | <i>but who would know</i> |
| 10 | <i>the footsteps behind</i> | 21 | <i>in the early hours</i> |
| 11 | <i>the air is still</i> | 22 | <i>away from view</i> |



the search lasted 3 days
Cover image: *in the early hours*

The artist wishes to thank PhotoAccess, in particular David Chalker and Ed Whalan for all their help; Dean Brown; Denise Ferris; Jocelyn Rosen; AIATSIS and Marion and Paul Jones from The Artworks



Familiar Fable



Lauren Hewitt
24 July — 9 August 2009

HUW DAVIES GALLERY

photoaccess
at the Manuka Arts Centre