

# Fogwell explores flowers and fertility

**Dianne Fogwell: Inflorescence**  
Beaver Galleries, 81 Denison Street,  
Deakin. Until September 9.  
**Reviewer:** Sasha Grishin

Dianne Fogwell has been exhibiting professionally since 1978 and her practice has been characterised by diversity, vibrancy and passion. She is a hyperactive and multifaceted individual who refuses to be pinned down or compartmentalised.

She is predominantly a print-maker, but she has also ventured into furniture design, she is a recorded jazz singer, and has worked with installations and on collaborative projects.

As an artist, Dianne Fogwell is a builder and compiler, rather than an inventor of the grand gesture. She will create an exquisitely wrought module which becomes the creative epicentre around which other modules are arranged. Her art involves adjusting and arranging until an internal harmony is achieved.

In her studio she has countless trays of small carved lino blocks which she will move around her picture space until the composition is resolved. The final piece appears as much of a surprise to the artist as to her audience.

A recurring theme in the exhibition is pollination and cross-fertilisation. The show consists of oil paintings and relief prints, the latter the backbone of the display.

A number of the titles I found puzzling, such as her oil painting *Anthomancy*. I am assuming from its etymology, anthos meaning flower in Greek and manteia prophecy, that it deals with making pronouncements about the future



**LINOCUT:** Dianne Fogwell's *Aroma* is a hymn to life.

by looking at flowers, like ripping petals off daisies to determine if she loves you. Are Fogwell's flowers the canaries in the cage that testify to our planet's health?

Fogwell's anthomania (love of flowers) leads to the creation of complex bouquets, in which sea shells and

ocean plants share the space with birds, butterflies and bees. It becomes a cornucopia of fecundity with precisely observed natural objects crammed into the same space. There is a sense of joy in her celebration of this fecundity and an appeal to all the senses.

Her linocuts, particularly *Aroma*, *Hover* and *Fragrant*, are the strongest pieces in the show. Delicate, exquisite in their articulation in a soft pastel palette, these prints are charming and breathe a distilled maturity. For the purist, the editioned black and white linocuts *Protea*, *Banksia* and *Waratah* are hard to beat, with a crisp classical beauty.

Dianne Fogwell has taught for many years and worked as a professional master printer. In these recent works she adopts a more reflexive attitude as she contemplates the beauty and magic of nature. She celebrates a fragile ecology with a wish and a prayer.