

A Rich Life – arichlife.com.au

Dai Li & David Frazer at Beaver Galleries, Canberra, Until 1 March 23 Feb 2020 by Jess Howard

Exhibitions from both Dai Li and David Frazer are on view now at Beaver Galleries, Canberra. Li's show 'Little things in life' and Frazer's 'A tangled wood' run until 1st March.

'Little things in life' appears as a delicate reminder to be in the moment and feel fulfilled by everyday things. The hand-built stoneware figures with eyes that dart around the room are content with the quiet moments they exist in, and they invite you to feel content as you drink in the soft colour palette and comfortable imagery.



Dai li – Scarf – hand built and glazed stoneware, 19 x 16 x 9 cm

Dai Li – In the mood for chips – hand built and glazed stoneware, 30 x 9 x 8 cm

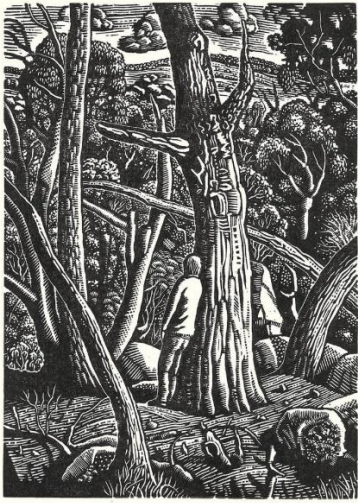
Perhaps the most memorable piece in the collection is a woman dressed in a baby pink dress that drifts all the way to the ground, holding a packet of Smiths cheese & onion chips, and absentmindedly raising one to her half-open mouth. This is an everyday act, the kind that we all engage in. Yet it is also intimate, even vulnerable because we know from personal experience that as we observe her the woman's thoughts are somewhere else. Every piece in Li's collection seems to have a similar effect; drawing you in through a sense of familiarity and keeping you entranced as you wonder what's going on in the minds of the individuals behind the sideways glances.

Frazer's work reflects on another side of the human experience, one that is equally as familiar as the themes in Li's work but perhaps more difficult to discuss. 'A tangled wood' presents intricate images of individual trees standing amongst twisted undergrowth. Frazer's etchings and prints suggest a feeling of isolation despite being surrounded by chaos and they communicate the damage that hopelessness and consistent lack of direction can have on us.



David Frazer – The tangled wood (composition I) – etching, edition of 40, 80 x 120 cm

Frazer's previous works have included the recurring image of a lone man with similar themes of despair and fragility at the core. However, with this exploration of new imagery of the tree trunk, the artist presents us with a more visceral commentary on the scars we accumulate through the deep lines he uses. Perhaps Frazer's trees even point to the feelings of being trapped in one place or not having the agency to move past pain and fear.



David Frazer – Complicated life – wood engraving, edition of 50, 12 x 8.5 cm

Taking a moment to reflect on Li and Frazer's respective collections reminds us that human perception is incredibly unique, but the urge to create meaning from our experiences is ultimately universal.