

NICOLA DICKSON

Nicola Dickson is a Canberra-based artist whose practice explores the natural world and perceptions of identity with particular reference to Australia's colonial history. Although primarily a painter, Nicola works with a range of media including drawing, installation, printmaking and ceramics. She says "my practice focuses on communicating the sense of wonder I feel when I encounter strange or novel things in the natural world. Small treasures, large landscapes, living creatures and remnants of past lives and stories folded into locations inspire my practice. My art works aim to convey the fascination that all these things hold for me." Retracing the footsteps of the 18th/19th century European explorers, naturalists and expedition artists to Australia, Nicola uses archival material from their voyages as a starting point. She re-presents these historical images of people, plants and animals, incorporating imaginary idealised landscapes and decorative forms to enhance the feeling of "other worldliness" that stemmed from these encounters. Her intricate paintings and drawings evoke not only a sense of beauty but also offer an opportunity to find historical resonances in the present.

Nicola Dickson graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the School of Art at the Australian National University in 2003 before undertaking a PhD which she completed in 2010. She has exhibited widely since graduating and, in 2013, was a finalist in the Sulman Prize and, in 2013 and 2014, received a Highly Commended in the Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize. Nicola's work was included in the National Portrait Gallery exhibition 'So Fine: Contemporary women artists make Australian history' in 2018 and is represented in the collections of the Canberra Museum & Gallery, Parliament House and the ACT Legislative Assembly. Nicola Dickson has undertaken several residencies including an artist residency in Mildura in 2021 and Rhode Island in 2019.

BIOGRAPHY

- 1959 Born, Southport, Qld
- 2000-03 Bachelor of Visual Art, Honours, School of Art, Australian National University
- 2004-5 Alumni in Residence, Edition and Arts Book Studio, Australian National University
- 2006-10 Doctor of Philosophy, School of Art, Australian National University
- 2014 Vice-Chancellor's College Visiting Artist Fellowship, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific
- 2017 Residency, Institut français résidence cité internationale des arts, Paris
- 2019 Mabel Residency, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Rhode Island, USA
- 2021 Artist in residence, The Art Vault, Mildura

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 "Only a remnant", Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, NSW
- 2022 "Walking the Murray - in the steps of Blandowski", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- 2021 "Space for Hope and Wonder", The Art Vault, Mildura
- 2020 "Voyagers' Tales – Baudin", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- 2019 "French Collection", Canberra Museum and Gallery
- 2018 "The Naturalist's Footsteps", Allport Museum and Gallery, Hobart
- 2017 "Voyagers' Tales: Labillardière", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- 2016 "Close Encounters", Alliance Française, Melbourne
- 2015 "Close Encounters", Canberra Museum and Gallery
- "Voyager's tales: Ferdinand Bauer", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- 2014 "Embodied encounters", Australian National University, Canberra
- 2013 "Frames of reference", M16 Artspace, Canberra
- "Birds from a New World, Bega Regional Gallery, Western Plains Cultural Centre, NSW
- 2011 "Indigene Imagining", Beatty Gallery, Paddington, NSW
- 2010 "Empire eyes", Beatty Gallery, Paddington, NSW
- "Wonderlust", School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
- 2009 "An 'other' visions", Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra
- 2008 "Other visions", foyer gallery, School of Art, Australian National University
- 2006 "Exotica", Beatty Gallery, Sydney
- 2005 "Mementos", Impressions on Paper Gallery, Canberra
- "Garden games", Canberra Grammar School
- 2004 "By any other Name", Canberra Contemporary Art Space

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 "Small works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
- Fisher's Ghost Art Award, Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW
- 2022 Canberra Art Biennial (installation at Beaver Galleries)

- 2021-22 "Harbinger", Mildura Arts Centre, Vic, Gippsland Art Gallery, Vic
2021 "Small works", Beaver Galleries
2019 Bayside Acquisitive Art Prize, Bayside, Melbourne
"Small works", Beaver Galleries
The R&M McGivern Prize, Melbourne
The Hadley's Art Prize, Hobart
2018 "Small works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
"So Fine", National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
"The Fellows", ANU School of Art and Design Gallery, Canberra
2017 "Avian", Canberra Museum and Gallery
"Naturally yours", ANU School of Art and Design Gallery, Canberra
"How does your garden grow?", Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW
2016 "Small works 2016", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
Stanthorpe Art Festival, Stanthorpe, QLD
"Bush Capital", Canberra Museum and Gallery
"Art not Apart, New Acton, Canberra
2015 "Art and Environment Exhibition in a Suitcase", ANU Regional Partnership Program
"VCCAFA 2014", School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
2014 "Art in Embassies Exhibition", US Embassy, Canberra
M16 artists' exhibition, M16 Gallery, Canberra
Waterhouse Natural Science Prize, South Australian Museum
2013 "Small Works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
Waterhouse Natural Science Prize, South Australian Museum
Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales
2012 "Groundworks", Form Gallery, Queanbeyan, NSW
"Climarte", Form Gallery, Queanbeyan, NSW
2011 "Natural Instincts", M16 Artspace, Canberra
"Blending Boundaries", Goulburn Regional Gallery, NSW
"A Gleam of Light", Helen Maxwell Gallery, Canberra
"Atonement", Bega Regional Gallery
"Imitation of Life", Canberra Museum and Gallery
2010 "The St George Art Award", Hurstville City Museum and Gallery
"The Kilgour Prize", Newcastle Regional Gallery, NSW
The Paper Show", Brenda May Gallery, Sydney
2009 "The Flower Show", Brenda May Gallery, Sydney
"M16 Drawing Prize", M16 Gallery, Canberra
"Prometheus Visual Art Award", Merrimac, Qld
2008 "The Gathering", M16 Gallery, Canberra
2007 "Great Southern Land", Beatty Gallery, Sydney
"Hazlehurst Art Award", Hazlehurst Regional Gallery, NSW
"Waterhouse Natural History Prize", South Australian Museum
"Caring for Land", Australian Botanical Gardens, Canberra
"Prometheus Visual Arts Award", Merrimac, Qld
2006 "Picture this: painting alumni 2000-6", School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
2005 "Canberra Contemporary Art Space Award", Canberra Contemporary Art Space
"Flock, group show about birds", Helen Maxwell Gallery, Canberra
"Willoughby Art Prize", Chatswood, NSW
"Artists Book Exhibition", Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby, NSW
"Vision Exchange", Ewha Woman's University, Seoul, Korea
"Prometheus Visual Arts Award", Merrimac, Qld
2005 "How I entered there I cannot truly say", touring exhibition, Artspace, McKay, Bathurst Regional Gallery, NSW, State Library of Victoria
"Cowra Festival Art Award", Cowra, NSW
2004 "Cowra Festival Art Award", Cowra, NSW
2003 "130 Degrees", School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
"The Lachlan: Blue-Gold", Grenfell, NSW

AWARDS / COMMISSIONS

- 2022 Grant recipient: CAPO Rosalie Gascoigne Memorial Award
- 2021 Grant recipient: ArtsACT Project funding
- 2020 Grant recipient: ArtsACT Arts Activity funding
- 2019 Mabel Residency, Norman bird Sanctuary, Rhode Island, USA
Grant recipient: ArtsACT Arts Activity funding
Finalist, The R&M McGivern Prize, Melbourne
Finalist, The Hadley's Art Prize, Hobart
Finalist, Bayside Acquisitive Art Prize, Melbourne
- 2017 Laureate Institut Française, residency program, France
- 2014 Vice-Chancellor's College Visiting Artist Fellowship, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific
Highly Commended, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
Finalist, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
- 2013 Highly Commended, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
Finalist, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
Finalist, Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales
- 2012 "Enlighten Canberra 2012", design of architectural projections
Highly Commended, Goulburn Art Award, NSW
CAPO Singapore Airlines Travel Grant
- 2010 Highly Commended, St George Art Award
- 2009 Graduate materials award, School of Art, Australian National University
- 2008 Istituto Italiano di Cultura Premio Italia Award
Cliftons Art Prize
- 2006 Australian Post-Graduate Award
- 2003 EASS Australian National University Art Collection Acquisitive Award
Australian National University HC Coombs Scholarship

PUBLICATIONS

- 2022 "Natural fascination with the world", Sasha Grishin, *Canberra Times*, 4 June
- 2020 "Imagining Malmaison: artist Nicola Dickson's wonderful journey", Genevieve Jacobs, *the-riotact.com*, 27 July
"Wistful works of detailed delicacy", Sasha Grishin, *Canberra Times*, 1 August
"Witnessing wonder at its most intense", Sally Pryor, *Canberra Times*, 3 August
- 2019 "Representing Encounters- The drawings of Jean Piron", *History and Anthropology*, Volume 33(1)
- 2018 "Translation and Transformation-Piron's Drawings' in Collecting in the South Sea: The voyage of Bruni d'Entrecasteaux 1791-1794", editors Bronwen Douglas, Fanny Wonu Veys and Billie Lythberg, *Sidestone Press, Leiden*
- 2017 "Nicola Dickson's Voyagers Tales at Beaver Galleries", Sasha Grishin, *The Canberra Times*, 13 August
- 2015 "Close Encounters at Canberra Museum and Gallery", Kerry-Anne Cousins, *The Canberra Times*, 18 November
- 2011 "Natural Instincts", Chloe Mandryk, *BMA Magazine*, Issue 383, 7 November
"Natural talent laid bare", Jacqui Cheney, *The Canberra Times*, 5 November, p. 24
"Flattery of imitation pervades exhibition", Jacqui Cheney, *The Canberra Times*, 3 September, p. 28
- 2007 "Rewriting the Exotic: in discussion with Nicola Dickson", J. Trevethick & N. Dickson, *Graduate Journal of Asian and Pacific Studies* 5(1)
- 2004 "Exhibition shows the beast behind the Beauty", Ian Warden, *The Canberra Times*, 23 November, p. 7

COLLECTIONS

ACT Legislative Assembly, Canberra; Canberra Museum and Gallery, Canberra; Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra; Australian National University, Canberra; Canberra Hospital, Embassy of the USA 'Art in Embassies' Collection, Network Economics Consulting Group, Sydney