

Love and intimacy explored through the eyes of Patricia Piccinini and Joy Hester in major new exhibition

Patricia Piccinini & Joy Hester: Through love ...
24 November 2018 – 11 March 2019
Curator: Victoria Lynn



Patricia Piccinini, *Kindred* 2018, silicone, fibreglass, hair, 103 x 95 x 128 cm, The Michael Buxton Collection, Melbourne. Courtesy the artist, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney.

Love and intimacy will be the focus of a major new exhibition at TarraWarra Museum of Art that pairs the work of globally renowned artist Patricia Piccinini with that of important Australian modernist Joy Hester.

Opening on 24 November 2018, *Patricia Piccinini & Joy Hester: Through love ...* will present more than 50 works, including a major new sculpture by Piccinini and rarely-seen works by Hester, that show the incredible spectrum of human and non-human relationships, from romantic love and maternal devotion through to the connections formed between humans and animals, and animate and inanimate objects.

In the lead up to the exhibition, Piccinini's iconic, infrequently-seen 34m-long hot air balloon *Skywhale*, originally created for the Centenary of Canberra in 2013, will visit the Yarra Valley and take flight. Further details to be released soon.

Melbourne-based artist Piccinini is known for her large-scale, life-like sculptures of hybrid forms that often fuse together human and animal characteristics to examine the increasingly blurred boundary between the artificial and natural worlds. Her early practice was profoundly influenced by the work of Hester (1920-60), a member of Melbourne's 'Heide circle' who was

acclaimed for highly personal brush and ink drawings that evoked emotional extremes from passion to loneliness.

In a world first, *Through love ...* will exhibit Hester's ink and paper works as touchstones for Piccinini's extraordinary sculptures, photography, video works and drawings. Alongside a new work developed especially for TarraWarra Museum of Art, Piccinini will be represented by some of her most important sculptures including *The Young Family* 2002; *Nest* 2006; *Doubting Thomas* 2008; *The Lovers* 2011; *Kindred* 2018; and TarraWarra Museum of Art collection work *Thicker Than Water* 2007.

Through love ... will draw upon Hester's famous series *Love* 1949, and *Lovers* 1955-56, which portray intimacy in the form of couples joined together (so much so that their faces often share an eye), including key loans from the National Gallery of Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, Heide Museum of Modern Art, private collections and seminal works from the Museum's own collection.

Victoria Lynn, Director, TarraWarra Museum of Art, said, 'This is the first exhibition to explore the parallels between the works of Joy Hester and Patricia Piccinini, relating Hester's expressionistic ink portraits of lovers to Piccinini's depictions of intermingled human, non-human and hybrid forms.'

Patricia Piccinini said, 'The work of Joy Hester had a formative influence upon my early practice. Her portrayals of intimacy without borders - the figures merging into each other and becoming one - spoke to my desire to explore identity and our sense of self, subjects that I have returned to throughout my career.'

Hester similarly investigated ideas of love and identity: as she remarked in a letter to Sunday Reed in 1947, 'How can I love [him] when he is me ... He is the 'man' of me and I am the 'woman' of him ... part man, part woman ... It's like a puzzle piecing oneself together.'

Coinciding with TarraWarra Museum of Art's 15th anniversary, *Through love ...* continues the Museum's aim of connecting with the history of modernism through the filter of contemporary art. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully-illustrated catalogue and diverse range of public programs.

Through love ... is only possible thanks to the generous support of major exhibition partner, The Balnaves Foundation, whose ongoing partnership has enabled TarraWarra Museum of Art to present ambitious summer exhibitions over the past three years.

Neil Balnaves AO, Founder, The Balnaves Foundation said, 'The exhibition *Patricia Piccinini & Joy Hester: Through love ...* will be the fourth year that The Balnaves Foundation has supported TarraWarra Museum of Art to deliver exhibitions of note by Australian artists. The Foundation is proud to partner in these major endeavours, providing vital opportunities for important Australian artists to be showcased, whilst providing a broad range of audiences access to outstanding arts experiences.'

Patricia Piccinini & Joy Hester: Through love ... will be on display at TarraWarra Museum of Art, 313 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Healesville, from 24 November 2018 - 11 March 2019. Exhibition admission fees apply - \$12.00 Adults; \$10.00 Seniors; \$8.00 Pensioners and Students; Children 12 and under free.

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Patricia Piccinini biography

Patricia Piccinini (b. 1965) is a renowned contemporary Australian artist whose work encompasses sculpture, installation, photography, video and drawing to examine the increasingly blurred boundary between the artificial and the natural and how this effects our relationship to our bodies, other people and creatures, and the environment. She began her career as co-founder of an artist-run space in Melbourne called the Basement Project, exhibiting and curating exhibitions there in 1994. Within a few years, she was exhibiting her original and visionary works in Tokyo and Peru. In 2002, she held major exhibitions at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney. She represented Australia at the Venice Biennale in 2003. Since then, Piccinini has shown her work in numerous significant museum and commercial solo and group exhibitions throughout the world. Most recently, she was honoured with a major exhibition that toured in Brazil in 2015–16 and a retrospective at Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane in 2018.

Joy Hester biography

Joy Hester (1920–1960) was a member of the group of artists in Melbourne known as the Angry Penguins. Her work is characterised by the fluent use of brush and ink on paper and an expressionistic approach to figuration. Hester was part of the 'Heide circle', and was particularly close to Sunday Reed who was something of a mentor to her. Unlike her male counterparts, she suffered a large degree of neglect as a female artist and as an artist who worked primarily with brush and ink. During her lifetime, Hester had three solo exhibitions: in 1950, 1953 and 1956. She was a foundation member of the Contemporary Art Society and exhibited often in its annual shows. In 1963 the Reeds curated a retrospective of her work at the Museum of Modern Art and Design which they founded. In 1981 a survey of her work was shown at the National Gallery of Victoria and, in 2001, separate retrospective exhibitions of Hester's work were held at the National Gallery of Australia and Heide Museum of Modern Art.

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Opening Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am to 5pm. Open all public holidays except Christmas Day. Open 7 days a week from Boxing Day to Australia Day.

Exhibition Admission: \$12.00 Adults; \$10.00 Seniors; \$8.00 Pensioners and Students; Children 12 and under free.

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