

Sunrise Bluebird

City of Fremantle Art Collection Gallery

May 31 – July 17, 2014

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Sunrise Bluebird draws attention upon two senior WA artists: Ashley Jones and Helen Taylor. They crossed paths at Claremont Art School, became regular exhibitors at Fremantle Arts Centre in their early careers and were represented in the Art Gallery of WA Perth Festival exhibition *Ten Western Australian Printmakers* in 1978. Both Jones and Taylor are contemporaries of the *High Street Studio Realists* group and share a common focus of a distillation of graphic devices coupled with technical precision in their print making, to explore the human presence in a range of domestic, architectural and landscape subjects.

City of Fremantle Art Collection gratefully acknowledges Ashley Jones and Helen Taylor for their engagement and support of this project and the lenders who have been generous with their loans to make this exhibition possible.

Ashley Jones

Ashley Jones wanted to be an artist from an early age and was influenced by his mother who was a supporter of the influential WA designer David Phillips Foulkes-Taylor (1929-1966). While at high school, Jones was inspired by the design aesthetic extolled by *Graphis* magazine and the work of M.C. Escher, to consider entering Art School at 15 years.

Born to surfing off Perth beaches, a vocation he has carried throughout his life, Jones' creative career was fostered through painting surfboards at *Cordingley Surfboards* before enrolling in Graphic Arts at Perth Technical College. He later undertook a fine arts course at Claremont School of Art before completing study at Western Australian Institute of Technology (W.A.I.T.), now Curtin University, in 1974.

Jones' imaginative early work coupled figurative imagery sourced largely from popular print media and adapted compositional schema synonymous with his graphics training to devise metaphysical marine landscapes populated by archetypal female nudes. A consummate realist painter, Jones put intaglio printmaking front and centre of his practice in his formative years; enjoying the picture clarity and technical precision of the process, forged by finely tuned studio skills developed with WA print artist and mentor Cliff Jones (1931-2000) (no relation). Jones would define a strong linear graphic dimension to his work; which was evidence of his graphics sensibilities and impact of influential American realist Philip Pearlstein (1924 -) in his drawing from life subjects.

Jones shared a common ethos rather than ideological aspirations with Ray Beattie, Marcus Beilby and Ken Wadrop (*High Street Studio Realists*), artists of different vision and personality while maintaining a studio in Swanbourne, WA.

In later years Jones used photography and drawing directly from the 'real' world to make his images. He encapsulated an assemblage of ideas and local perspectives with great honesty and sensitivity. This output included a view of backyard steps in *Little Egypt*, 1981 and play of Perth light across a wall in *Tap*, 1981. Later work was more refined, rendering still life compositions from natural materials and botanical specimens gathered near his home in Yallingup, exemplified in *Place Setting* 1985 and his coloured etching *Bookplate Series* inspired by Banks Florilegium (1771-1784).

Helen Taylor

Helen Taylor is a senior WA artist, who produced significant bodies of printed images centred on representation of women's experience of landscape and the domestic realm. Originally trained in drawing and traditional print techniques, Taylor by mid career had moved into producing editions using photographic processes and technologies.

Taylor's early practice focused upon intaglio print making techniques, which she studied extensively at Perth Technical College, and later developed to a high standard using home 'set ups' in tandem with her then husband, printmaker Ray Beattie. Through the early phase of her career, Taylor produced images of unerring clarity and intensity, drawing upon her immediate domestic circumstance and suburban landscapes for her images. *Sunrise Bluebird*, 1976 is a reinvention of Cottesloe Beach, *Midnight at the Oasis* 1979, a local pool that Taylor frequented and *Possessions* 1975 and *Two Dressing Gowns* 1978, present the artist's assessment of intimate domesticity.

In an elegant series of dessert cake subjects produced in etching and aquatint, Taylor applies fine drawing and adapted skills used in jewellery making to cut and shape the plate, prior to chroming each section, to achieve remarkable delicacy and accuracy in pale colour printing. Exhibited here are *Tribute to JC* (a reference to printmaker Jock Clutterbuck) and *XCC4PC* ('x chocolate cake for Print Council'), each drawn from this 1978 series.

An outcome of Taylor's post graduate study (1982-4) in Tasmania (UT) was to investigate firstly photo etching and then Xerox techniques as an alternative to labour intensive reproductive processes, while exploring the subjects of migration, architecture and colonial landscapes.

Biography Ashley Jones

Ashley Jones was born in Perth in 1951 and studied Graphic Art at Perth Technical College 1970-71, Claremont Art School 1972-73 and W.A.I.T 1974. He has exhibited extensively in WA and interstate including solo and selective group exhibitions at: Old Fire Station Gallery 1975: with Ken Wadrop and Marcus Beilby in *Three Realists* at Undercroft Gallery UWA 1976; and important solo exhibition *West Coast Images* 1977; and a further seven occasions at Fremantle Arts Centre up to 1985. Jones was involved in establishing the Perth Fine Art Print Studio with Neil Hollis and Jeff Jones (no relation) assisted by an Australia Council grant. He travelled extensively in Europe in 1985 before returning to WA to establish with his partner, Gunyalgup Galleries in Yallingup in 1987, to represent WA artists and be near to his favoured surfing spots.

Ashley Jones is represented in many WA and interstate public, university and corporate and private collections.

Ashley Jones is represented by Gunyalgup Galleries.

Biography Helen Taylor

Helen Taylor was born in India in 1943 before migrating to WA with her widowed mother in 1952. She studied at Claremont School of Art 1974 and Perth Technical College 1976, before completing a Master of Fine Arts at University of Tasmania 1984. Taylor has exhibited extensively in WA and interstate including solo and selective group exhibitions at: Fremantle Arts Centre 1978; *Ten Western Australian Printmakers*, Art Gallery of WA 1978; Macquarie Galleries, Sydney 1980; Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery Festival of Perth exhibition 1992; *Feminisms* PICA 1992; *Absence of Evidence*, FAC 1994 and *Points of View*, Perth College, 1998.

In a long career she maintained a role in education as Lecturer in drawing and printmaking at Curtin University, Perth Technical College and Edith Cowan University over an eighteen year period 1975-92. Taylor has also completed commissioned artworks for public spaces; coloured etching and aquatint *Cold Comfort* 1978 for the Print Council of Australia; *Praxis Print Folio*, 1985; and Transperth Public Art Commission, Palmyra Bus Depot 1992. Taylor has also contributed to artist organisations: having an instrumental role in establishing the Print Association of WA; and was actively involved as a Praxis board member in the establishment of Perth Institute of Contemporary Art.

Helen Taylor is represented in many WA and interstate public, university and corporate collections including: Artbank; National Gallery of Australia; Art Gallery of South Australia; Art Gallery of WA; University of WA, Curtin University; Kerry Stokes Collection and regional galleries in Australia and New Zealand.

Chronic ill health has impacted on Taylor's capacity to make art since 2000.

Midnight Aggie 1978

coloured etching and aquatint ed.10
18 x 12 cm
Collection of Chris and Mary Hill

Pauline's Outside 1978

coloured etching and aquatint ed.20
62 x 49 cm
courtesy Edith Cowan University Art Collection

Two Dressing Gowns 1978

coloured etching and aquatint ed.15
53 x 48 cm
courtesy Edith Cowan University Art Collection

XCC4PC 1978

coloured aquatint ed.15
12 x 15.5 cm irregular
courtesy of the Artist

Tribute to JC 1978

two plate colour etching and aquatint ed. 20
19.5 x 23.5 cm irregular
Collection of Anne Neil and Steve Tepper

Midnight at the Oasis 1979

etching and aquatint A/P
43.5 x 30 cm
courtesy of the Artist

Crossing 1985

photo-etching ed. 4/35
6.8 x 13.3 cm
no. 572

Looking for the Promised Land 1985

black & white photocopy A/P
17 x 24.5 cm
courtesy of the Artist

Telling Tales 1994

two black and white photographs from series
21 x 31 & 31 x 21 cm
courtesy of the Artist

Working with the photocopier machine and photo etching during this period generated *Looking for the Promised Land* 1983/4 and *Crossing* 1985, a print produced for *Praxis Print Folio* in the same year.

Access to a well equipped dark room at UT at this time exposed Taylor to a direct line of image making without the need for processing plates. This inevitably led to embracing photography as a solution to process images and ideas efficiently, a transition influenced when Taylor attended a workshop by WA photographer John Austin. Taylor's final MA submission included her first photographic installation, which subsequently instigated two future projects. They included an investigation of WA regional landscapes through combination of drawing and photography in *Beyond the Picturesque: drawing Western Australia* 1989-91; and *A Stretch of the Imagination*, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, 1992.

Taylor participated in the ground breaking Fremantle Arts Centre interpretive project and exhibition *Absence of Evidence* 1994 which presented a range of artworks about women and women's experience within the high security of Fremantle Lunatic Asylum and WA Women's Prison. Using an infra-red photographic process enabled Taylor to capture images in low light to conjure the faint memory of women's presences and record habitation at the former asylum at Fremantle Arts Centre. Two photographs of the original *Telling Tales* 1994 series are included in this exhibition.

In her most recent project, Taylor returned to painting, an area of study originally undertaken at Claremont School of Art in the early 1970's. These delicate studies of simple objects painted on found timber, explore ideas and memories, following the passing of her step-father in the exhibition *Objects from my Father's shed* 1998.

Check list

Artworks are from the City of Fremantle Art Collection or stated otherwise and image dimensions are given as height by width in centimetres.

Ashley Jones

Portrait of KJ 1974
etching and aquatint A/P
32 x 24.5 cm
no.32

Dream of Laguna 1974
etching and aquatint ed. 5/10
32 x 24.2 cm
no.596

Tropical Honeysuckle 1975
etching and aquatint A/P
46 x 34 cm
no. 290

Midnight Creeper 1975
etching and aquatint ed. 1/20
33 x 30 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

A Girl With No Eyes 1976
etching and aquatint A/P
32.5 x 24.6 cm
no.1219

Another Man's Woman 1976
etching and aquatint ed. 1/20
30 x 37.5 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

Floating Rose 1976
etching and aquatint A/P
33 x 26 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

Little Egypt 1981
etching and aquatint ed. 39/40
39 x 58 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

Tap 1981
etching and aquatint ed. 35/40
40 x 58 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

The Claremont Suite 1984
four plate etching and aquatint ed. 35/40
27 x 25 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

Place Setting 1985
coloured etching A/P
22.5 x 41 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

Rocky Point 1991
coloured etching ed.99
38 x 41 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

Bookmark Series 1990 - 1993
five coloured etching ed.99
10 x 9 cm
Collection of Ashley and Nina Jones

Helen Taylor

Possessions 1975
hand coloured etching and aquatint ed. 9/15
42 x 29.5 cm irregular
courtesy of the Artist

Sunrise Bluebird 1976
coloured etching and aquatint ed.3/5
39.5 x 28 cm
no. 338

Window two 1976
coloured etching and aquatint ed. 7/7 2nd state
40 x 16.5 cm
Collection of Chris and Mary Hill