



Heather + Kate Dorrough : Lineage



HEATHER + KATE DORROUGH : LINEAGE

This exhibition is a conversation across time. The multi-disciplinary works of mother and daughter Heather and Kate Dorrough explore the nexus between the arts and crafts movements, female creative lineage, body and landscape, river and fertility, and environmental issues and activism. The exhibition encompasses fibre art, paintings, prints, ceramics, sculpture and video.

Drawing on the Hawkesbury River landscape over the last 25 years of her life from where she lived on Dangar Island, Heather Dorrough (1933 – 2018) created a large body of prints and paintings, seen together for the first time at MAG&M. The exhibition includes her earlier fabric hangings and low relief sculptures that were her most significant works and heralded the shift at the time from a craft-based tradition to the arts, 1970s to 1980s. Originally trained as an Interior Designer, she worked in London and New York before arriving in Australia in 1962 and began making fabric and fibre works after the birth of daughter Kate. She developed her own techniques with machine embroidery, painting with dyes, and the sculptural use of fabric. Her work is represented in the National, State and Regional Gallery collections and included significant public commissions.

The practice of Sydney-based artist Kate Dorrough (b.1964) sustains a conversation between paint and clay, launching an inquiry into the interplay and tension between the gestural mark and the hand built ceramic form. The artist's recent work explores the River as metaphor, bestowal of fertility with a cyclicity of renewal and destruction. Her painterly gestural marks evoke totemic symbols and an inferred language of an enduring landscape. Dorrough's work as a painter and ceramicist has led to an extensive career exhibiting work at leading galleries in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra, as well as a number of residencies and prizes. In this exhibition her work will directly respond to her mother's, creating a dialogue and an interplay exploring memory and the personal in recognition of her mother as mentor.

Manly Art Gallery & Museum, 1 September - 8 October 2023

Manning Regional Gallery, 1 February - 17 March 2024

Tamworth Regional Gallery, 13 April - 16 June 2024

Ararat Gallery TAMA, 13 July - 13 October 2024

Curated by Kate Dorrough and Terry Dorrough





Heather Dorrough, '*Lunar series, Moon at Dusk*' 2012, drypoint etching and monoprint, 94 x 67 cm

Kate Dorrough, '*Tidal marks, River Landscape*' 2023, stoneware ceramic with glaze, 50 x 28.5 x 28.5 cm

Julie Ewington

Heather Dorrrough and Kate Dorrrough — mother and daughter — shared family ties, love, art, ideas, laughter. They were, as Kate says today, great friends. And a crucial part of true friendship is the mutual recognition of what makes each person distinctive. Here we have two artists, mother and daughter, and two different life trajectories that intersected, and productively so. This exhibition recognises those links and lineages, and those differences, over six decades.

Heather Dorrrough (born 1933) and Kate Dorrrough (born 1964) are, as an early commentator remarked of Heather, 'born artists'. The difference was that Heather escaped small-town England to dive into the wider world of art and design, while Kate grew up within the creative pool of the Dorrrough family's Sydney home: her architect father Terry worked together with interior designer Heather on many commissions. For Kate, the home was a hub of constant activity: Heather and Terry's energy and commitment set the pattern of her life long before she embarked on formal art training. This was a rhythm of making, thinking, reflecting, learning.

In this exhibition, with her selection of Heather's work and her own recent ones, Kate recognises and honours her mother's role as her first and longest-lasting mentor. Heather's sumptuous 1965 wall-hanging, and playful wearable stitched works from 1979, suggest the lively textures of 1960s/1970s modernist Sydney; Kate was just a child when the rich colours of Heather's hangings enlivened the restraint of Terry's modernist spaces. Her development as a painter led her to share interests with her mother—working with fabrics and patterns, thinking through feminist imagery—bracketed by a longstanding interest in landscape: her graduation piece, *Abstracted Landscape* (1994), is Kate's earliest work in the exhibition. Whatever the interests of the moment, however, the enduring pattern is the indissoluble interweaving of life, art, making, design: all came together in the Dorrrough family homes, where cloth, paper, canvas, clay, wood, were put to the service of so many creative projects over the years.

Importantly, there was a constant desire with both artists to find new ways of working, and a willingness to explore a wide variety of genres and materials: fibre, painting, printmaking, ceramics, sculpture, video. During her long productive career Heather Dorrrough undertook a remarkable variety of projects, commissions and exhibitions; she collaborated with Terry Dorrrough as an interior designer for architectural settings, creating a number of major works for public buildings, including the New South Wales Parliament House (1980) and the Hyde Park Barracks (1991). Heather's exhibitions in the mid-1980s were equally notable: her two major series of feminist-inspired works exploring the representation of the female body, the '*Self Portrait*' series (1982) and *Covert Covers, The Lie of the Land* (1987), were both important contributions to the development of feminist art at the time. Forty years later, Kate's recent '*Recollections*' series (2023) is a direct response to the legacy of Heather's inquiring and self-reflective 'Self Portraits'.

Always there was drawing, a fundamental discipline of inquiry for the entire family: the cabinets included in the exhibition testify to the constant use of drawing in all its varieties by both artists. Originally trained in the exquisite sketchy ink-drawing style of 1950s London, Heather remained an indefatigable student; she was constantly looking to understand new techniques or materials with great thoroughness, taking many art courses, including a Master's degree, to update her ideas and skills over the years. In her sixties, Heather returned to a thorough study of European oil painting, so she could satisfy her desire to capture the days and nights of Dyarubbin/the Hawkesbury River, flowing in front of her Dangar Island home; these quiet intense loving paintings, and associated prints, are seen together for the first time in this exhibition.

The commitment to experiment that marks the work of both Heather and Kate Dorrrough continues to the present day, with Kate now painting on clay as well as on linen—she has learned over the last two decades how to make ceramic vessels, so she could transfer her painting onto clay surfaces, such as *River Icon* and *Tidal marks*,

River Landscape (both 2023); since around 2012, the expansive paintings such as *Reflections on a River* (2012), together with the painted ceramic vessels, show the longevity of Kate's preoccupation with this subject. There is, similarly, great clarity with the distinctive purpose of Kate's explorations, while the eventual outcomes are so entirely different from her mother's works about a similar subject: Heather's paintings and prints focusing on Dyarubbin/the Hawkesbury are contained, still, reflective, while Kate's larger works inspired by the rivers of the Sydney Basin are all fluid energy and open gestures.

Now Kate has taken that exploration into video: *River Theatre* (2023) brings together painting, ceramics and moving image to evoke the constant restless passage of the river waters that she knows and loves. She has long been familiar with Dyarubbin at Dangar Island, where her parents lived from the 1980s, and which enters the ocean some few kilometres north of Manly Art Gallery and Museum; she has undertaken residencies on the Murray and Manning Rivers, the Shoalhaven at Bundanon, and now lives very close to the Cooks River in southeastern Sydney. We sense in the broad washes of colour and large gestures in her paintings that a myriad of overlapping associations and memories are provoked by this long connection with these rivers.

The ways that Heather and Kate, in their turn and their own times, have tackled the Dyarubbin/the Hawkesbury River, and the broad metaphorical theme of the river, could not be more different: Heather's rather modest studies are just that, close evocations of specific different times of days, and various plays of weather and light on the water's surface close to her home; her very last work,

in 2013, is the painting *Across the river*. With Kate, the large watery gestural paintings suggest energy, the waters of life, even the flows of fertility. Yet despite the differences in their approaches, over recent decades daughter and mother shared concerns about the pressing environmental issues that affect the region's waterways, and a commitment to activism on its behalf, expressed through punctilious looking at the life of the country; Heather's 1995 *The Hawkesbury sandstone* garden detailed the flora of the region, and her lovely 2012 'Lunar' series of monoprints gestures to connections between women's bodily cycles and the River.

Indeed, Dyarubbin/Hawkesbury River, along with the image of a river as a symbolic emblem, remains the connecting link between Heather and Kate Dorrrough, between mother and daughter: a fluent always-present site, a set of images, and a metaphor for the Dorrrough family's life and work. For the River — all rivers — is the source of life, and of continuing fertility. Without its waters the country around it would wither, and so would the families that have loved it for millennia and continue to do so.

Notes

1. Barbara Campbell Allen, teaching at Willoughby Arts Centre, taught Kate Dorrrough how to coil ceramic forms; she fires her works at Sydney Clay Studio at St. Peters.
2. See Grace Karskens, *People of the River: Lost Worlds of Early Australia*, Allen & Unwin, 2020, for a wonderful history of Dyarubbin/the Hawkesbury-Nepean.



Heather Dorrough, *'Self Portrait 1'*, 1980, timber, perspex sculpture with machine embroidery, 20,5 x 20 x 15,5 cm

Heather Dorrough, *'Bird in the Hand'*, 1975, with removable bird brooch, Fabric, dye, machine embroidery, 30 x 20 cm

Kate Dorrough *'River Effigy'*, 2020, stoneware ceramic with glaze, 37 x 44 x 24 cm

Kate Dorrough *'River Dialect'*, 2020, stoneware ceramic with glaze, 46 x 39 x 23 cm

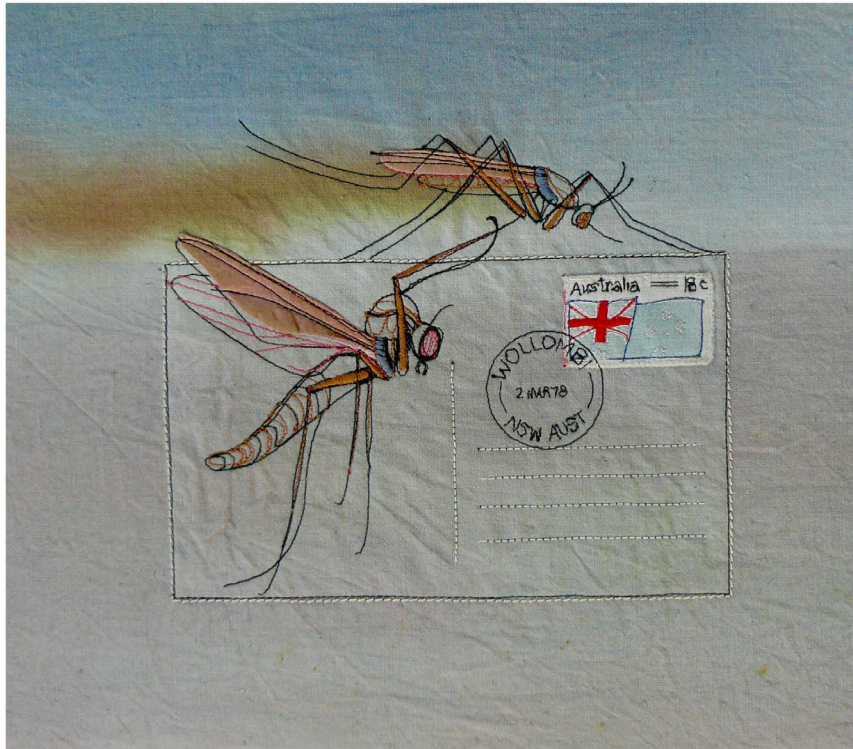


Heather Dorrough, *The Hawkesbury sandstone garden* 1995, ink and gouache on paper, 92 x 122 cm





Heather Dorrough, *'Red Wall Hanging'*, 1965, Coloured hessians and furniture fabric, 170 x 175 cm
Heather's first solo exhibition, *'Large Scale Fabric Works'*, Darlinghurst Galleries, 1965
Kate Dorrough, *'The Enduring Echo'*, 2019, stoneware ceramic with glaze, 36 x 49 x 20 cm



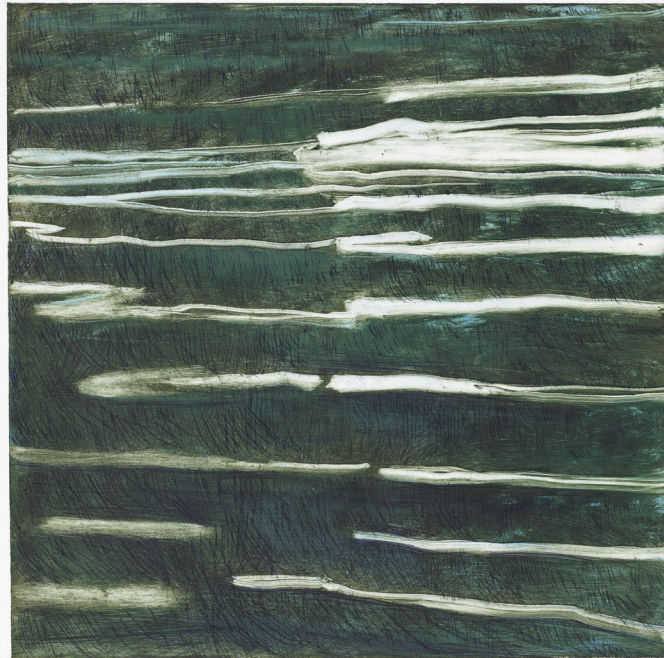
Heather Dorrough, *'Postcard from Wollombi Mosquitos'*, 1979, fabric, dye, machine embroidery, 24 x 35 cm
From the 'Wollombi Farm' Exhibition, Robin Gibson Gallery, Sydney, 1979
Kate Dorrough *'Reflections on a River'*, 2012, acrylic on linen, 168 x 214 cm



A/P

Water surface IV

#Dorrough 1/06

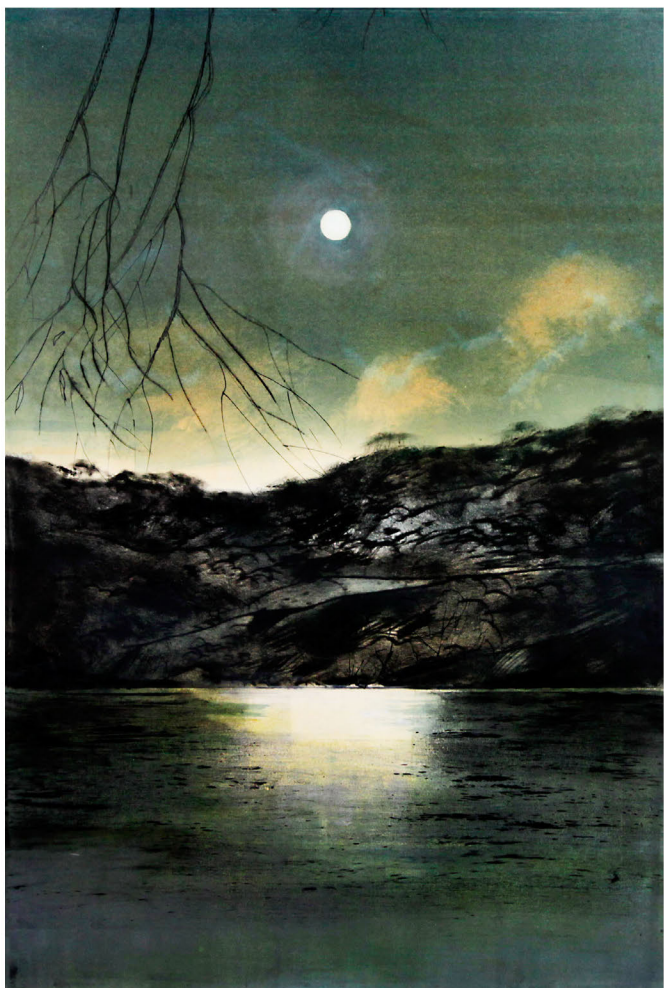


A/P

Water surface VI

#Dorrough 1/06

Heather Dorrrough, 'Water surface IV' 2006, etching and mono print, 78 x 62 cm
Heather Dorrrough, 'Water surface VI' 2006, etching and mono print, 78 x 62 cm



Heather Dorrrough, *'Lunar series, Moon over the Tanks,'* 2012, drypoint etching and monoprint, 94 x 67 cm
Heather Dorrrough, *'Lunar series, Boat in moonlight,'* 2012, drypoint etching and monoprint, 94 x 67 cm



Kate Dorrough 'Calligraphic Marks of a River Landscape' 2022, acrylic on linen, 152 x 168 cm



Kate Dorrough, *'River Icon'*, 2023, stoneware ceramic with glaze, 50 x 42 x 35 cm



'River Theatre', 2023, Video installation with sound, filmed at Dangar Island, Hawkesbury River, backdrop painting, acrylic on linen, 168 x 214 cm, ceramic vessels, stoneware ceramic with glaze, 58 x 36 x 28 cm to 44 x 34 x 32 cm



Heather Dorrough, *'Covert Covers, The Lie of the Land'*, 1987, pastel on paper, 200 x 115 cm

Heather Dorrough, *'Fragmented cast, on drawing'*, 1984, plaster, sand, acrylic paint, charcoal, 152 x 110 x 6 cm



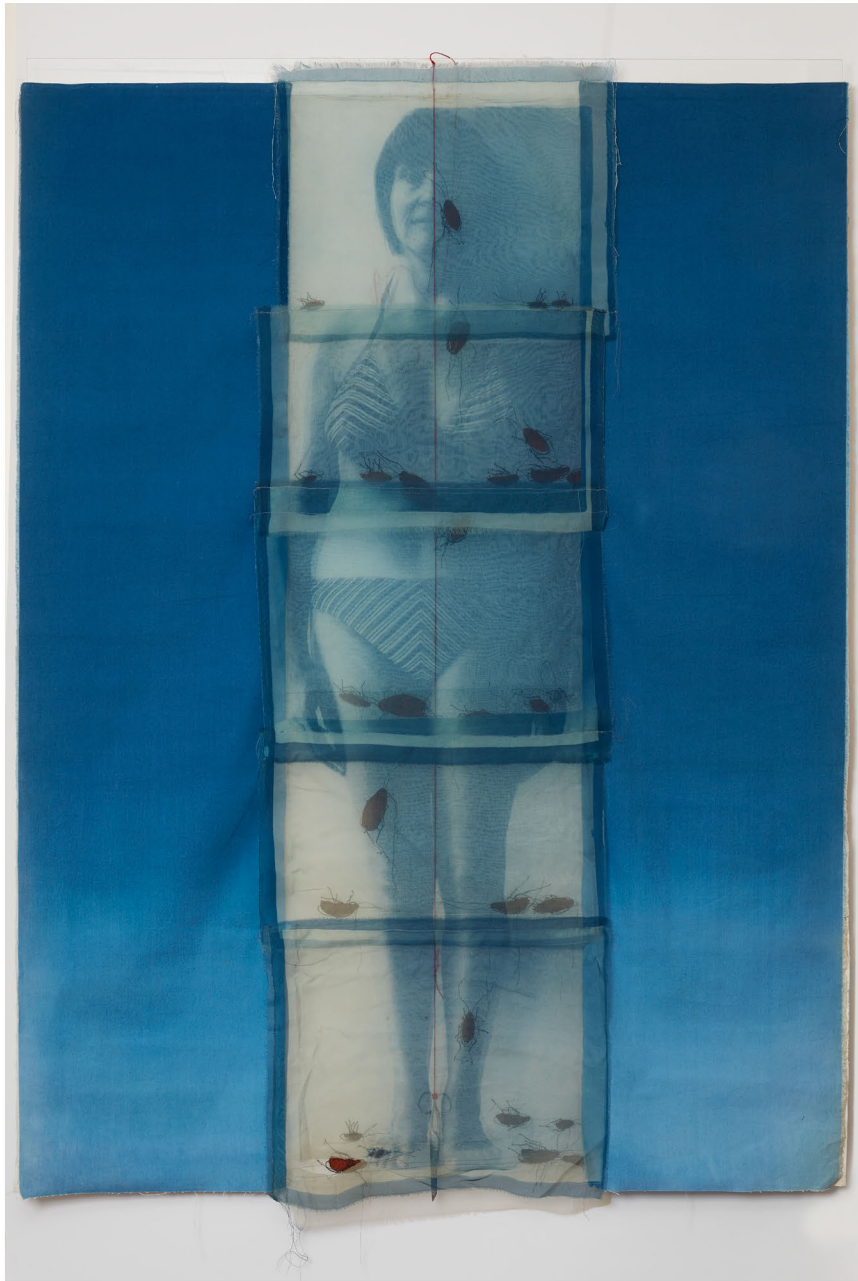
Kate Dorrugh, *'Recollections'*, 2023, textile hangings, textile with stitching, paper, ink and acrylic paint, beads and sequins, 330 x 550 x 70cm



This exhibition pays homage to my mother, Heather Dorrough, and her significant influence on my art practice. The exhibition is a dialogue between two artists, a mother and a daughter. As an example, my installation 'Recollections' exhibited alongside and in direct response to Heather's 'Self Portrait' series of 1982, incorporates Heather's fabric, paper and clothing remnants. Fabric and textiles were always a big part of my mother's world, informed by her initial career as an Interior Designer and her methodical training at the Royal College of Art, London. Memories of heading to school while Mum busily worked in her home studio machine embroidering delicate blowflies and creating intense personal explorations of self-identity. Growing up with the sound of the sewing machine whirring into the night, I took it for granted that art was an important and central part of life. Her studio lined with a carefully arranged rainbow assortment of beautiful coloured and textured fabrics, was full of energy and dedication. Heather approached everything she did with integrity, focus and commitment. She was both my inspiration and my mentor.

I have vivid memories at the age of five delighting in the satisfying marks made with thick waxy crayons on black paper, with Mum working in her studio, and Dad upstairs doing architectural drawings are suffused with the hum of making. My art practice which over 30 years has evolved to focus on the River as a central and symbolic theme, encompasses large acrylic paintings and ceramic vessel forms; it has recently expanded to incorporate installations with textile and video components.

In the curation of this touring exhibition with my father, Terry Dorrough, themes and links between my mother and myself have evolved and become apparent. Firstly, is the love of the natural world and the river; the Hawkesbury River at Dangar Island being Heather's home for the last part of her life, and mine, the Cooks River, Sydney, alongside various art residencies and childhood memories swimming in the Wollombi Brook on a shared family property. Secondly, explorations of identity, the female form as an archaic and eminent presence, fertility and the role of motherhood for sustenance and protection, alongside a joy de vivre and pleasure in making, drawing, experimentation and extending one's practice. We would have many long conversations together over pots of tea about art, ideas and exhibitions. In touring this exhibition, Terry and I wanted to acknowledge the calibre and tenor of Heather's work and life. Exhibiting my works alongside my mother's highlights the theme of lineage, and its impact, fostering a love of creativity. It is the role and importance of art in all our lives; to sustain, to inspire, to be a transformative place of depth and meaning, that this exhibition seeks to promote.



These, and the following works are from the 'Self Portraits' Series, exhibited at the Crafts Councils Centre Gallery, Sydney, the Meat Market Crafts Centre, Melbourne, and the Adelaide Festival Centre Gallery, in 1982.

Heather Dorrrough, *'Self Portrait No.4, (Cockroaches)'*, 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 176 x 126cm



Heather Dorrough, *"Self Portrait No 27 (Knots inside)"*, 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 175 x 55cm



Heather Dorrough, *Self Portrait No. 20 (Fat issue)"*, 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 210 x 92cm



Heather Dorrough - *'Self Portrait No 6 (Buzzflies)'*; 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 212 x 54cm



Heather Dorrough, *'Self Portrait No13 (Sexuality)'*; 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 232 x 87cm



Heather Dorrough, *'Self Portrait No.2 (Woven into landscape)'*, 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 242 x 109cm

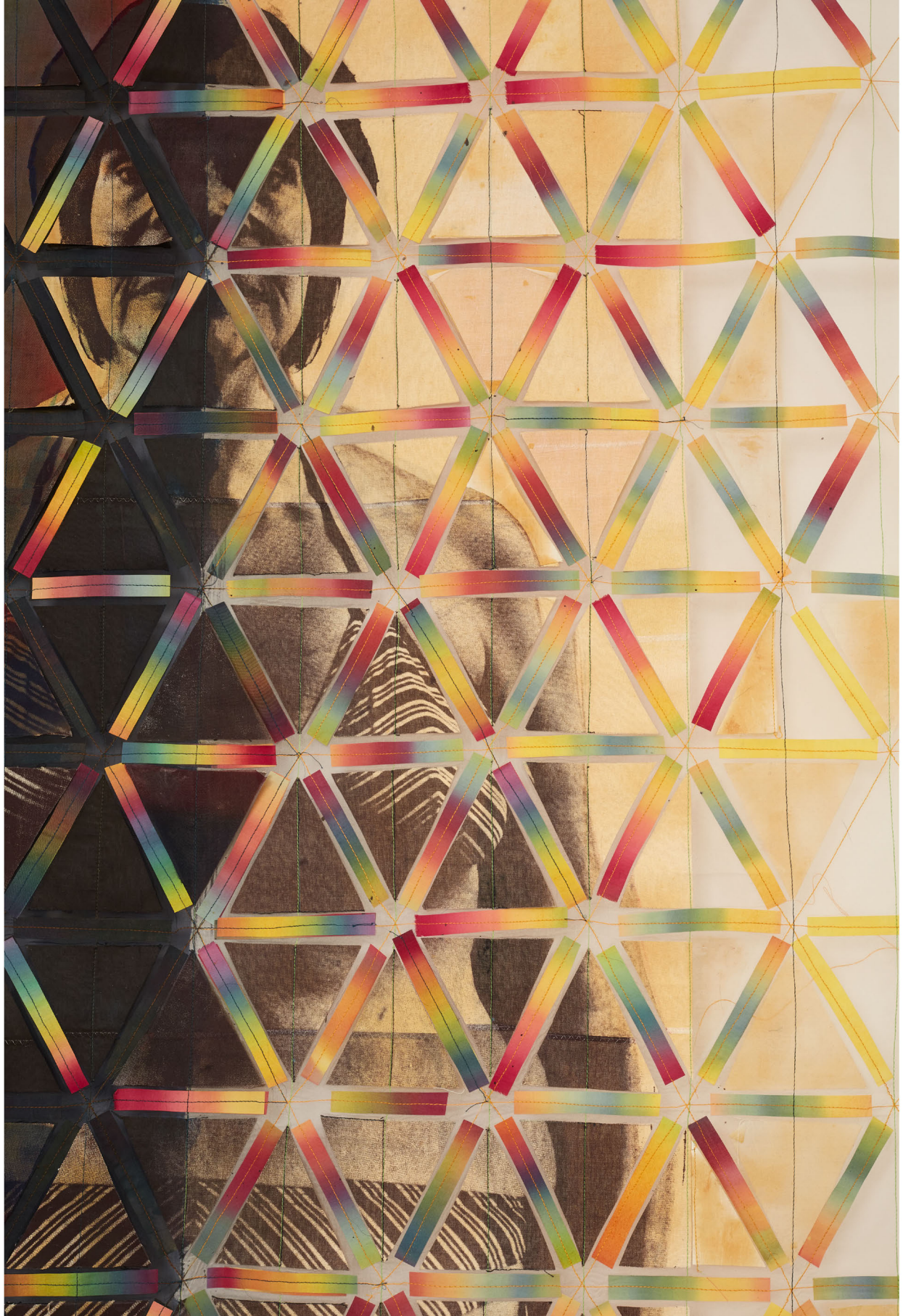


Heather Dorrough, *'Self Portrait No.22 (Black nude)'*, 1982, textile dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 190 x 51cm



Heather Dorrough, *'Self Portrait No 21 (Marriage)'*, 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 175 x 64cm
Heather Dorrough, *'Self Portrait No 24 (Wallpaper)'*, 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 187 x 62cm

Following page: Heather Dorrough, *'Self Portrait No. 25'*, 1982, textile, dye, photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 242 x 109cm



HEATHER DORROUGH

BIOGRAPHY

Born London, 1933

1952 National Diploma of Art and Design, Eastbourne College of Art, UK

1956 Interior Design Degree, Royal College of Art, London

1984 Master of Visual Arts, City Art Institute, Sydney

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2007 Dangar Island Diary: Paintings and Prints, Stella Downer Gallery, Sydney

1987 Covert Covers: The Lie of the Land, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

1985 Self Perception/Fibre/Image, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

1982 Self Portraits, Crafts Council of Australia Gallery, Sydney, Meat Market Exhibition Hall, Melbourne, Festival Centre Gallery, Adelaide

1981 Drawings, Robin Gibson Gallery, Sydney

1979 The Wollombi Farm Series, Robin Gibson Gallery, Sydney

1977 Wearable Art (Travelling Exhibition), The Craft Board of Australia Council

1976 Wearable Works, Bonython gallery, Sydney

1965 Large Scale Fabric Works, Darlinghurst Galleries, Sydney

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2012 Lynne Boyd, Heather Dorrough, Joy Warren, Stella Downer Gallery, Sydney

2006 The Crafted Object 1960s - 80s, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

1986 Biennale of Sydney, Holdsworth Contemporary

1987 Australian Perspecta'85, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney

AWARDS

1987 Overseas Fellowship Grant, Residency in Italy, Visual Arts Board, Australia Council

1983-84 Postgraduate Award, Commonwealth Department of Education

1978 Senior Fellowship, Craft Board, Australia Council

1975 Grant, Craft Board, Australia Council

1956 Travelling Scholarship, Royal College of Art, London

BIOGRAPHY

Heather Dorrough was at the forefront of the contemporary Craft movement of the 1970s and 1980's, her work being a representative of a political shift from Craft based traditions to the Arts. Her work was selected for the 1986 Biennale of Sydney and the 1987 Australian Perspecta'85, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney. Her work is held in the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (Powerhouse), Parliament House, Sydney, Queensland Art Gallery, West Australian Art Gallery, Tamworth and Wollongong Regional Art Galleries, the Orange City, Victoria Festival and Melbourne State College Collections. Holding nine solo exhibitions, including touring exhibitions, group exhibitions and awards which includes the Overseas Fellowship Grant, Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, Senior Fellowship and Grant, Australia Council and Postgraduate Award. Heather lectured at the College of Fine Art, full time tutor in Design, Drawing & Sculpture, 1989-91, and the UNSW, Fine Art, as a part time tutor in Design, Drawing & Fibre/ Sculpture 1965-88. Heather has produced numerous commissions throughout her career, a sculpture installation for Hyde Park Barracks and textile works for the NSW Parliament House, Sydney Bond University, Queensland, IBM Australia and the Australian Ambassador's Residence, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Her work appears in numerous publications including; 'The Craft Movement in Australia: A History', NSWU Press, 'A Dictionary of Women Artists of Australia', Craftsman House, 'Australian Women's Art', Bicentennial Publication, '4th Perspecta of Sydney' Catalogue, '12 Australian Craftsmen', Angus & Robertson, and 'Crafts of Australia', The Craft Council of Australia, and numerous 'Craft Australia' Magazines.



KATE DORROUGH

BIOGRAPHY

Born Sydney, NSW

1994 Master of Art, COFA, UNSW, Sydney

Sydney University Archaeological Expedition, Drawing team,
Greece

1987 Bachelor of Visual Arts (Dist), Canberra School of Art

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2023 The Vessel and the River, ArtHouse Gallery, Sydney

2021 Theatre of the River, The Cube, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney

2020 River Language, ArtHouse Gallery, Sydney

2019 The Lyrical River, Manning Regional Art Gallery, NSW

2018 Pieve di San Cresci of Domesticity, La Macina di San Cresci,
Italy

2012 The Enduring Landscape and the Inland River, ArtHouse
Gallery, Sydney

2011 The Enduring Landscape, Catherine Asquith Gallery,
Melbourne, Landscape paintings, near and far, The Art Vault
Gallery, Mildura, VIC

2010 Pants Off, ArtHouse Gallery, Sydney

2009 In Stillness, Edwina Corlette Gallery, Brisbane

2008 Ode to light and slow Time, ArtHouse Gallery, Sydney

2006 The Cup, Melbourne Art Rooms, Melbourne

2005 The Garden, Beaver Galleries, Canberra, ACT

2005 Hearts Are Trumps, ArtHouse Gallery, Sydney

2004 Fetes Galantes, ArtHouse Gallery, Sydney

2002 Whims and Fripperies, ArtHouse Gallery, Sydney

2000 Café, Art House Gallery, Sydney

1999 Suburban Scene, Access Contemporary Art Gallery, Sydney

1997 Side Show, Access Contemporary Art Gallery, Sydney

1996 Bronte Bathers, Access Contemporary Art Gallery, Sydney

AWARDS/PRIZES

2021 Highly Commented, Paddington Art Prize

2018 Cooks River Small Sculpture Prize

Artist Residency, La Macina di San Cresci, Italy

2011 The Art Vault Artists Residency, Mildura, Victoria

2005 Hill End Artists Residency, Bathurst Regional Gallery, Hill
End, NSW

2003 Ceramic Residency, Fusions Gallery, Brisbane

1999 Artist in Residence, Bundanon Trust, Bundanon Artists
Centre, NSW

AGNSW Denise Hickey Studio Residency, Cité Internationale des
Arts, Paris

2023 Artist Residency, WayOut Art Space, Kandos, NSW

BIOGRAPHY

Kate Dorrough is represented by Art House Gallery, Sydney and has exhibited since 1996, holding twenty solo exhibitions in galleries; Access Contemporary Art Gallery and ArtHouse Gallery, Sydney, Beaver Art Galleries, Canberra, Edwina Corlette Gallery, Brisbane and Catherine Asquith Gallery, Melbourne.

She has also exhibited in numerous group and selected exhibitions; the Refuse Exhibition, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Paddington and Mosman Art Prizes, the Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize, the Northern Beaches Environmental Art & Design Prize, Ravenswood and Meroogal Women's Art Prizes, The Calleen, The Still Life and Fishers Ghost Art Awards, and the Gold Coast International, North Queensland Ceramic and Clunes Ceramic Art Awards. Selected for the Australian Ceramic Association exhibition, 'The Course of Objects, and 'Land,' Manly Art Gallery & Museum. Her installation work has also been selected for the North Sydney Art Prize, The Hidden and Sawmillers Sculpture Exhibition, 'The Cube' Mosman Art Gallery and Cementa 2024. Kate has undertaken numerous residencies and is held in the collections of the Ballarat, Campbelltown, Grafton and Manning Regional Art Galleries and the Melbourne Casino.



Exhibition

1 September - 8 October 2023 Manly Art Gallery & Museum,
West Esplanade Reserve, Manly, NSW, magma.com.au

1 February - 17 March 2024, Manning Regional Art Gallery,
12 Macquarie Street, Taree, NSW, mrag.midcoast.nsw.gov.au

13 April - 16 June 2024, Tamworth Regional Gallery,
466 Peel Street, Tamworth, NSW, tamworthregionalgallery.com.au

13 July - 13 October 2024, Ararat Gallery TAMA,
82 Vincent Street, Ararat, Victoria, araratgallerytama.com.au

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Katy Mitchell, Visual Arts Coordinator, Ararat Gallery TAMA

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Catalogue design, Jane Hosking, Assistant Art Gallery Director,
Manning Regional Art Gallery

Jenni Carter, photography

Terry Dorrrough, co-curator

Film, Heather Dorrrough, *Not Just the Object*, Edited by Meg Stewart, for the
Crafts Council of Australia, 1978. Editing, Film and Sound Archives, Graphics,
Craig Elliott

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Cover: detail, Heather Dorrrough, *'Self Portrait No 6 (Buzzflies)'*, 1982, textile, dye,
photographic silk screen printing, machine embroidery, 212 x 54cm, detail, Kate
Dorrrough, *'The Enduring Echo'*, 2019, stoneware ceramic with glaze, 36 x 49 x 20 cm
Inside Cover: detail, Heather Dorrrough, *'Dark Canopy'* 2007, acrylic on canvas, 122 x 91 cm
detail, Kate Dorrrough, *'River Night Song'* 2022, acrylic on linen, 97 x 107 cm





Hawkesbury River, *Dyarubbin*, taken from Dangar Island, photo, Terry Dorrough



Heather and Kate Dorrough at work in their studios