



HANDLE WITH CARE

2008 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art

Art Gallery of South Australia. 1 March – 4 May 2008.

The fragile state of our world is explored from all angles by twenty-two of the nation's most innovative artists in the *2008 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Handle with care*. From anxiety over nature and the environment, to the erosion of cultural traditions, *Handle with care* presents diverse responses to contemporary issues in what is the flagship visual arts event of the 2008 Adelaide Festival of Arts.

Curated by renowned Sydney-based curator, Felicity Fenner, this insightful exhibition features works of art created since the last Adelaide Festival in 2006. Fenner has selected prominent Australian-born and immigrant artists, as well as lesser-known artists and filmmakers from South Australia, New South Wales, Western Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania. She has also created a "clean slate" in terms of participants: for the first time, none of the artists has previously appeared in an Adelaide Biennial.

The 2008 Adelaide Biennial artists are: Alfredo & Isabel Aquilizan; Dadang Christanto; Lorraine Connelly-Northey; James Darling & Lesley Forwood; Dennis del Favero; Janet Laurence; Anthony Mannix; Tom Müller; Dorothy Napangardi; James Newitt; Bronwyn Oliver; Gregory Pryor; Kate Rohde; Sandra Selig; Kylie Stillman; Warwick Thornton; Warlimpirrnga Tjapaltjarri; Hossein Valamanesh; Suzann Victor; Guan Wei; Catherine Woo; and Ken Yonetani.

"The works in *Handle with care* all respond to contemporary issues which generate disquiet, divide communities and incite debate" says Felicity Fenner. "I want this exhibition to stimulate ideas and provide a meaningful, hopefully moving experience of a range of recent art practice in Australia".

Works on display include paintings, sculpture, installation and film, and all encompass the notion of fragility or vulnerability of some kind. While some focus on the tenuous relationships between individuals, societies, urban and natural environments, others make symbolic or metaphoric use of delicate and ephemeral materials.

Water, light, glass and organic materials are among the eclectic media used by artists to convey the fragility of the world we live in. Linked to the familiar "Handle with care" removalist stickers, a sub-theme of the exhibition is the experience of shifting between social cultures; of crossing national as well as psychological borders. In addition to works that address environmental issues, there are installation and film-based works that reveal the personal trauma of troubled geographical, political and psychological realities.

The exhibition's accompanying catalogue features illustrations of work by all artists in the exhibition, a major essay by Felicity Fenner and texts on each of the artists by twenty-two Australian and international contributors, including John Barrett-Lennard, Hou Hanru, Binghui Huangfu, Victoria Lynn, Claire Roberts and Nick Waterlow, among others.

Handle with care is the 10th Adelaide Biennial since its inception in 1990. It remains the pre-eminent survey of contemporary Australian art and the only Biennial dedicated solely to recent Australian art. For only the second time, the Art Gallery of South Australia is devoting its entire temporary exhibition space to the display of the Biennial.

The *2008 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art: Handle with care* will be launched officially by Adelaide Festival Director, Brett Sheehy on Friday 29 February 2008, before opening to the public daily from Saturday 1 March until Sunday 4 May. Admission is free. It is presented by the Art Gallery of South Australia & Adelaide Bank Festival of Arts with the support of the Australia Council for the Arts and Major Sponsor, SKYY Blue.

2008 ADELAIDE BIENNIAL OF AUSTRALIAN ART: HANDLE WITH CARE

On View: Art Gallery of South Australia
North Terrace Adelaide
1 March to 4 May
Daily 10 am to 5 pm

Admission: Free

Free Guided Tours: 3 – 16 March: daily at 11am and 2pm
17 March – 4 May: every Wednesday at 1pm, and Saturday, Sunday and public holidays at 12pm

Public Information: Tel: +61 8 8207 7000 or visit www.artgallery.sa.gov.au

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IMAGES:

A selection of images from the 2008 Adelaide Biennial is now available for media download <http://www.artgallery.sa.gov.au/mediacentre2008adelaidebiennial/MediaCentreHandleWithCare.html>