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Branching & Summer in the City

By [Trevor Gager](#) ArtsHub | Friday, January 08, 2010



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Jewel N Kallincos

For any Melbourne based art lover who has not as yet had the opportunity to visit Guildford Lane Gallery, I have one question – why?

For anyone believing that all new art spaces in this great city are pretentious, commercial, uninspiring and predictable, I have news for you – you could not be further from the truth.

Guildford Lane Gallery's non blinkered approach to exhibiting is one that I find quite refreshing. Since opening its doors just over a year ago the gallery has gone from strength to strength and is now widely recognised as one of Melbourne's premium multi-functional art spaces.

This first offering for 2010 sees the opening of the gallery's top floor - now bringing the total up to four levels, and giving this facility even more opportunity to showcase new and established artistic talent.

There were actually two openings last night - *Branching* (utilising the ground floor space) and "Summer in the City" (the remaining 3 levels). *Branching* is an opportunity to experience the talents, friends, and family of Sydney based artist & jeweller Liz Paul.

Liz has managed to put together something very special here. The show incorporates an array of different mediums by 15 artists who are connected not just by the environmental and organic nature of the shows theme, but also by bloodline and friendship.

I found Liz's array of Bakelite sculptures truly wonderful. Playful, whimsical and exquisitely constructed they act as a fine centerpiece to this exhibition's narrative. As well as paintings, mixed media works & photography, there is also a chance to see some highly innovative ideas including an extraordinary collection of hand woven plastic bags, created by artist Helle Jorgensen.

The remainder of building is dedicated to *Summer in the City* an exhibition designed to give both emerging and practicing national artists a place to voice their finished and unfinished projects. For many of these artists this show represents the end of a creative concept, a way of cleaning out old ideas, for others it's a new beginning - a taste of things to come.

Once again, diversity is the name of the game here. From installations by artists, Anna Steel, Katy Bowman, Karen Bragg and Anthony West (who never ceases to surprise and amuse), to figurative works by Jen Broadhurst and Jennie Rosenbaum, there is literally something for everyone.

I was also most impressed by the range of photography on display. The architectural works of Freya Gould, and photographs by Stuart Silcox, described as being "collected during the course of a daily postal route" could not be more radically different from one other, yet somehow work together seamlessly as a sum.

On the top floor is an intriguing collection of images by the "Melbourne City Drain Painters" who list themselves as "a small group of dedicated urban explorers and drainers". Taking elements of contemporary Street Art and Light Art Performance Photography this group has found something unique and magical. I can only hope that this is just the taste of things to come.

Other highlights for me include a collection of ceramics by Ingrid Tufts - a highly accomplished and quite brilliant artist, paintings by Nicholas Kallincos, and two large scale works by Melissa Jay Egan - very powerful indeed.

As I'm sure you can tell - I had a really good time at this gallery. It is quite an accomplishment to coordinate something of this scale - in total the two exhibitions feature works by no less than 34 artists. I would love to give credit to many more of the fine artists involved in these projects but space simply does not let me permit. I have however listed all of the participants below to make some amends.

***Branching* – Artists:**

Liz Paul, Cheryl Collier, Deborah Deichsel, Rob Gale, Helle Jorgensen, Isabella Kerstens, Tim Laffey, Tigger Newling, Cathy Paul, Mark Paul, Nan Paul, Sarah Paul, Pete Smith, Haley Thornton & Chrissy Waller.

***Summer in the City* – Artists:**

Jennifer Broadhurst, Ingrid Tufts, Katy Bowman, Jennie Rosenbaum, Karen Bragg, Nicholas Kallincos, Freya Gould, Stuart Silcox, Melissa Jay Egan, Anna Steele, Dave Harkin, Jacinta Stephenson, Anthony West, Melbourne City Drain Painters, Shane Ross, Michelle Hinton, Jason B Gardiner, Rob Turney & Emily Clarke.

***Branching & Summer in the City* - January 5th – 16th**

Guildford Lane Galley, 20-24 Guildford Lane, Melbourne 3000



Trevor Gager

Born in the UK, Trevor's career within the arts has been quite a journey. From magician to photographer & then as an Art Auctioneer for 10 years within the USA; Trevor