

Home to House to Place

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Greer Honeywill is an architect's artist; not at home at home, but like an architect, wondering and wandering through time, space, memory and metaphor.

Childhood experience connects her to the home and memories of the domestic which in turn lead to contemplation of house, enclosure and then beyond, to the role of architecture and home in chasing dream, illusion and deceptions.

This particular body of work titled, *IN-Grained*, has been chosen by the curator Peta Heffernan. A Tasmanian architect with a pedigree, Heffernan has a nuanced understanding of Honeywill's work.

Heffernan's architectural practice and philosophy is centred on the making of unique space and the dialogue between object and the space it inhabits. This focus is ideally suited to Honeywill's explorations of domestic space, form and memory.

Heffernan's design for the exhibition space echoes the patterns of domestic architectural perambulation, a design that skilfully reinforces the conceptual framework of the artist's work. The gallery as house or the house as showpiece?

We move from the entry to internalised domestic ideas and beyond to broader concepts outside the home, culminating in a collaborative piece, *Groundcover* (2012), by artist and architect.

The works chosen by the architect/curator are predominantly made of wood, some concealed by white paint, some obscured or veiled, but all referring to the making of house. Often originating with the skeleton of the timber frame; the construction becomes mediator or divider, physically and metaphorically. Some things can now be obscured or hidden. What things happen behind the closed doors of the house you visit or the home you live in?

The vein of domesticity tapped in these works alludes to women's work and practiced skills and knowledge (overlooked and obscured for so long). We see craftsmanship in the making of these objects and the joy of making in wood, a practice now becoming rare.

However, Honeywill is no naïve interpreter of the homespun. Look carefully and the architectural modernists and reference to their 'heroic' machismo is integrated into many of these installations. The story of the suburbs is told and interrogated. The house dismembered, remembered, and re-represented.

Carpet (2005-2012), ushers us into the domestic realm and we become entranced by the craftsmanship, detail and patience of the piece. It is monumental yet requiring forensic viewing. Beyond the welcome a series of rooms illuminate the impacts of the suburban dream. The trickery of *Off the plan* purchases. What is it you're buying? And who's joking at whose expense? The subversion of planning has never been a joke and perpetuates suburban sprawl.

Then, the endless repetition captured by *Variation on Monotony* (2007), a townscape built on endless iterations and ultimately suburban despair. How can we find fulfilment and individuality when lost in the mundane and repetitive?

The haunting sentinels of *Anthology of Sadness* (2003-2012) reveal the repetitive nature of household life and the addictive accumulation and growth of pattern and craft and memories and stories, and lives and

Mothership (2006) with its 'army' of ready-mades seems orderly and controlled; suggesting balance and comfort; completeness and contentment. But does resentment swell? Does chaos beckon? Is the ideal of domestic life and suburban planning hiding despair or longing? Do memories fade sufficiently? Are we in step?

We are all on show, but *On Show* (2009-2012) also masks the mundane domestic. As in the Rudolph Schindler and Clyde Chase house of the early 20's where the planned union of two couples was thwarted by a house designed to unite.

Untiled (Colours of the Kitchen Cabinet) (2003-2012) returns us to the domestic kitchen, the repetitive, and the mundane; the scribbling of lists; the tedium of shopping. The work insinuates and loops itself into our subconscious. Shadows are of memory, the insistent whispering not to forget, is ever present. That 'silent' voice, that mantra made real, momentarily, by the sudden disgorgement of sound.

Elysium (2007-2012) suggests disorder within order. The archetypal house form diminished in scale and subjected to the reality of everyday life by repetitive piercings. The everyday impacts seem innocuous enough, like lace tracery injecting humanity into the idealised form; the veiling and screening of our internalised reality, our domesticity is comforting. Yet despite the play of light there is loneliness, alluding to despair as this object floats alone. No community and our daily lives contained, solitary and sometimes desperate.

The seven-level Milan family house by Paul Rudolph completed in 1962 stacks rectangle upon rectangle in a sculptural approach captivating and infuriating those living in the house. *To look at the moon* (2009) plays with this, quite literally. There is playfulness and ambivalence here. The 'hero' architecture versus domestic reality. But also an iconic façade, exploring the play between the inside and exterior space, again exploring and mediating what is seen, hidden or on display.

Finally a collaborative piece, theatrical, playing made space, against the natural. Like a score of sorts, the work plays the rhythm and beat of our lives against a literal overlaying, a coverlet of ideas, by artist and curator.

With Heffernan's selection and interpretation of the work we are able to penetrate deeply into Honeywill's world.

This is a powerful exhibition, tracing the evolution of Honeywill's study of home to house to place. The work originating in intimate childhood memories and moving to explore the notion of home ownership, suburban development, architecture with a capital 'A' and the role of women as survivors and interpreters of this realm.

This is a fascinating and rich area of enquiry as we look to making our communities and homes more responsive to our humanity and needs. As environmental and social

imperatives have demolished the heroic iconography of modernism, what is replacing it?

A pluralistic, inclusive society with a responsive and enabling built environment is sought.

As more and more women enter the architectural profession and make their mark on the buildings of the future I am heartened that we might get dwellings and cities that understand the land, humans, human interaction and are sustainable and nurturing.