

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art

# ABOVE AND BEYOND

## Austral/Asian interactions

Kate Beynon, Neil Emmerson, Simryn Gill, Emil Goh, Joan Grounds, Pat HOFFIE, Lindy Lee, Alwin Reamillo, Kevin Todd, Judy Watson, Guan Wei, Ah Xian, John Young

**Curators** Clare Williamson ACCA and Michael Snelling IMA

EXHIBITION DATES: 2 August – 15 September 1996

*When East becomes North and West is under your feet, the compass spins frighteningly.  
To calm yourself you must find ..a new axis.*

Judith Wright

Above and Beyond investigates cultural interplay in the work of thirteen Australian based artists who all, all various ways, engage with Asia. During the nineties in Australia, artistic interest in the countries to our north has intensified, paralleling the development of political and economic policy, and building on an historical fascination with the orient. Correspondingly, contemporary artists practising within Australia are negotiating racial and national traditions and various cultural influences to produce art which escapes the boundaries of a singular identity.

Judy Watson's artistic preoccupation with the spaces between traditional & urban Aboriginal cultures, black and white was further amplified by her residency in India in 1994. Simryn Gill's coconut fibre suit of clothes reflects her Singaporean origins, and the notion of tropical resources machined to a Western style. John Young and Kate Beynon, both first generation Chinese Australian artists, consciously combine orientalist imagery with the aesthetics of postmodernism while Guan Wei and Ah Xian, based in China until 1989, recognise the influence of Western art history on their work throughout their practice. Kevin Todd found that spending time in Asia affirmed his Irish identity, and inspired him to explore similarities between Islamic and Celtic art in patterning.

East and West has always, in the Austral/Asian region, meant north and south. In their diverse sources and influences, the artists in Above and Beyond recognise the centred axis of crosscultural interaction.

Touring nationally.

A 48 page catalogue with colour illustrations and essays by Julie Ewington, Laleen Jayamanne, Michael Snelling and Clare Williamson is available.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT**

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