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2013

The Surface of Language

Madeleine T. Kelly

University of Wollongong, mkelly@uow.edu.au

Publication Details

M. T. Kelly 2013 The Surface of Language Griffith University Queensland Webb Gallery 10-21 September

RESEARCH IMPACT STATEMENT

Research Background

This body of work, comprising 9 paintings, 6 concrete poems and a compilation of 6 mixed media works, came about because of an invitation to exhibit at the Webb Gallery, Griffith University. Exploring themes of subjectivity, fragmentation and the construction, connotation and application of language, the research asked: 'how might the methods of linguistics and archaeology apply to artefacts and images?'

Research Contribution

The work is a creative response to Michel Foucault's ideas about imagination:
"And in fact imagination has nothing to do with forms or formation... we might rather describe the manifestations of the imagination as de-formation... while the imagination de-forms, it never destroys."

The Surface of Language

Abstract

The roots of these paintings are fragments. Forms that appear grotesque, hollowed or as though composed of splintered fields are spliced together in oneiric landscapes. Their content and process are a sort of sabotage – deformed protagonists appear caught in the act of breaking and in turn collide with the push and pull of paint. If this is aestheticising destruction, it is only in an ironic hope to interrogate conflict that surrounds drone warfare, blind consumption and the massacre of living things.

The lines in the collection of stones exhibited here provide a surface of exchange for the intersection of language and surface. Existing in a fragmented state of containment, they are small monuments to the etymology of words and the play of materiality and language – itself a living thing.

Keywords

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Disciplines

Arts and Humanities | Law

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The exhibition seeks to embody the rubs between words and images, as well as the creation and destruction of knowledge. The paintings inform and are informed by the work in other media. The *Surface of Language* used as its starting point a collection of stones containing a distinct line of quartz. This ‘law of the line’, combined with the form of the stone, was used to conceive the symbolic references.

Research Significance

Exhibited by invitation at the Webb, Gallery, Griffith University, the exhibition was reviewed by Hayley McFarlane, in 'Brisbane Gallery Hop', *Artlink*, Vol.33, no.4, 2013; the artist was interviewed by Bridget MacLeod in 'Profile: Madeleine Kelly', *Artist Profile*, November, Issue 25, 2013-14 pp52-55.



The Surface of Language

Madeleine Kelly

Image: Madeleine Kelly *Broken Memories* 2013, Oil and acrylic on polyester, 103 x 70cm

Tuesday 10 September – Saturday 21 September 2013

Opening night 6pm - 8pm, Friday 13 September 2013

RSVP 07 3735 6106 or qcagalleries@griffith.edu.au

Gallery opening hours Tuesday to Saturday 9 – 5pm

Webb Gallery	Ground Floor
Queensland College of Art	Webb Centre Building
Griffith University	226 Grey Street
South Bank campus	South Brisbane

griffith.edu.au/qca

 **Griffith** UNIVERSITY
Queensland College of Art

WEBB GALLERY