

six nine

69 street
smith

Art news and images from 69 Smith Street, an artist-run initiative

Issue 18, Mar 2007



Oshik Harari, *Echo*, 2006

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Welcome everyone to the first edition of *six 9ine* for 2007.

The year has already gotten off to a great start at the gallery with some fantastic exhibitions, and there is much more to come in the following, very busy, nine months.

2007 will see many changes for the gallery and its members, including some exciting opportunities – Ulrika Holmlund will be jetting off to work in Switzerland and Finland, and Gabrielle Bates will be doing a one-year residency in Malaysia. The new video website *Voyeur* will also soon be up and running

(see page 4), allowing video artists hither and thither the opportunity to collaborate.

Members involved in shows or events outside 69 Smith Street are reminded that they are most welcome to let us know of their goings-on if they would like a promo of their events (or brag of their achievements) in these pages.

Other artist-run spaces and groups are likewise invited to share their news. Email editor@69smithstreet.com.au with the info and we will do our best to help spread the word!

News from the committee

We say goodbye to our treasurer Julie Harmsworth. She has done an absolutely fantastic job keeping the 69 finances in order. We wish her well in her new work and look forward to seeing her at the occasional committee meeting and other functions.

Veronica Hodgkinson has volunteered for the job and I think she will carry on the good work. Veronica is a very welcome and capable addition to the committee.

Gabrielle Bates is off to Malaysia for 12 months. We will miss her smiling face, her intelligence and commitment and we look forward to her return. Meanwhile, Gabs will be our Asia correspondent, and continue with some of the media chores.

Carolyn Cardinet is moving house, she has very capably kept us all informed as our fabulous newsletter coordinator.

Philip Ingman has taken on the position of newsletter editor and some media responsibilities. It is wonderful to have someone from

a non-art background sharing his publishing and editing knowledge with us. He is a great addition to the committee and I look forward to reading his newsletters.

Irene Amorosi is taking over the job of the Small Window Gallery. Andrew Maes did a great job with the small space, keeping it filled with your work. Please contact Irene if you would like to exhibit in this free space.

Ulrika Holmlund, our gallery coordinator, leaves us on 1 May with our spaces filled till the end of September – great job; we wish her well and look forward to her return. Ulrika has a job in Zurich to help establish the Digital Art Week 07, and will then travel to Helsinki, Finland, for a two-month residency. She will be our European correspondent – our very best wishes.

Many thanks to Carolyn Straford for her efforts in organising the social dinners for 69 Smith Street, which were very successful.

A new member, Denise De Keyzer, has volunteered to fill Ulrika's

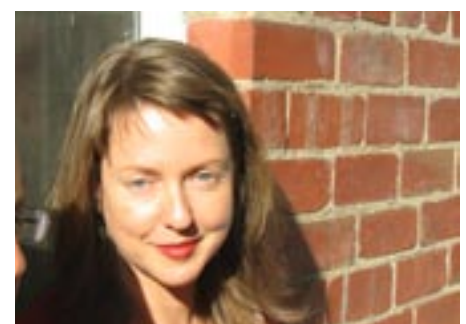
shoes, a warm welcome to Denise.

The committee is “looking good” with very capable folks volunteering for the various jobs. 69 Smith Street will continue to be a vibrant, interesting, happy place. Many thanks to all.

— Chairperson Merle



Ulrika Holmlund (above) and Gabrielle Bates (below) are going away for a while...



Wanted: EMAP 2007 coordinator and sculpture garden coordinator

69 Smith Street is currently seeking capable people for two specific roles.

Firstly, the gallery needs a coordinator for EMAP (the Ellen Mileo Art Prize) for 2007. The prize was held for the first time last year, with the theme *The Secret Life of the Shoe*. It attracted media and public attention for 69 Smith Street and gave away a total of \$3,000 in prize money to the three winners. The role would be quite a busy

one, especially towards the end of the year, but a great chance to be involved in this important annual event.

The sculpture garden at the back of the gallery has been growing in size, and it also needs its own coordinator. The coordinator would actively pursue interested artists to make sure the garden is always looking good with a variety of work. The garden is a new addition to the gallery's portfolio, but

we hope it will continue to grow.

Volunteers keep 69 Smith Street going, and they find it not only fun to work with such a great group of people but also can be an extremely valuable experience for those wishing to find paid employment in the arts in future.

Anyone interested in either of the above roles should email the gallery at info@69smithstreet.com.au or phone us on (03) 9347 2713.

Crawl.net.au

Crawl is an online project that serves as a news resource and archive for artist-run initiatives (ARIs).

Eventually, *Crawl* will be a rich media web site where gallery managers can create an account and update their page with information on upcoming exhibitions, as well as information about their gallery.

Users will be able to register with the site, and manage their own collection of favourite art spaces, and design their own email newsletter or RSS feed.

ArtForum Australia

ArtForum is a free-to-join online art forum and discussion board for Australian art. ArtForum has been online for almost two years, and was established by Brad Buchel.

At ArtForum you can meet artists, art teachers, art students and art industry workers; you can chat online, get advice, help each other, inspire each other

Think of *Crawl* as an online version of *Art Almanac*. The site will provide information on artist-run initiatives all over Australia and be free for all.

The web site is in development. The Exhibitions Calendar is at this point not for general use, but for visitors to view and comment on.

For the time being, *Crawl* will serve as a simple collection of links to ARIs, as well as a simple calendar to view upcoming exhibitions. See: www.crawl.net.au

and together support Australian art. ArtForum topics include art competitions, painting techniques, marketing your art, art books, art exhibitions and more.

If you have not visited Artforum before, please drop by and introduce yourself: www.artforum.com.au

Working bee

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the working bee on January 20.

Getting the gallery spruced up is no easy task but each year we manage to knuckle down and get the job done – and this year was no exception. Merle says: "The gallery looks beeyoodeeful. You are real troopers, true models for the volunteer ideal."

Small Window Gallery

We are seeking expressions of interest from members of 69 Smith Street Gallery for the opportunity to advertise their artwork in the John Clarke Window, a small window display visible from Smith Street.

The advertisement will be on display free of charge to the artist, and for a period of one month. Please contact Irene if you are interested in this special opportunity. Email her at: amorosi@69smithstreet.com.au or phone 0405 833 278.

Victorian ARIs unite for Making Space

VIA-N (the Victorian Initiatives of Artists Network) was formed in 2004 as a way to assist ARIs (artist-run initiatives) in Victoria. It currently represents 21 such spaces, including 69 Smith Street.

One activity of VIA-N has been the production of a map (ingeniously named *The Map*, soon to be available in its third incarnation) indicating the whereabouts of these spaces together with a brief lowdown on each, including information such as opening times and website addresses. Version three of *The*

Map will officially be launched soon, see via-n.org for details.

VIA-N is also behind the upcoming event Making Space, taking place from mid-April to mid-June, during which all ARIs involved in VIA-N will hold special exhibitions, forums and other activities. This will be a fantastic opportunity for Victorian ARIs to work together while showcasing their individual charms and talents.

Concurrent to the event will be the launch of a book, also called *Making Space*. The publication is the result of a huge amount of

collaboration between Victorian ARIs both extant and extinct – and much sweat, as well as the obligatory tears – and will be a beautiful and unique showcase of the history, present and future of a very important aspect to the art scene in this state.

Details are not yet finalised – keep your eyes peeled on via-n.org, 69smithstreet.com.au and other ARI websites for more information as it comes to hand.

—Philip Ingman

Watching the voyeur...

Voyeur is a Melbourne-based, artist-run information bureau dedicated to the worldwide distribution of information for contemporary video art via the internet, reporting on emerging and established video artists.

Founded in 2006, *Voyeur* creates opportunities for video artists to not only screen work online but also in national and international festivals, galleries and forums created by relations initiated by the collective to promote the *Voyeur* artists free of charge.

Voyeur will work as both an online video gallery and a forum for the presentation of diverse, exceptional and original video work

from emerging and established video artists from across the globe.

As a survey of contemporary video art, the mission of *Voyeur* is to provide a welcoming, creative, collaborative and affordable environment for artists and activists engaged in the pursuit of new ideas within video art.

With a news section, mailing list and a profile of each artist containing a current CV, a statement and one to nine video works per artist, *Voyeur* offers a state-of-the-art online video gallery in an easily digestible format as well as functioning as a platform for video artists.

Voyeur will launch its artists and website with an exhibition held at

69 Smith Street Gallery in Fitzroy, 18 April to 6 May 2007 during the ARI event Making Space, which will feature all artist-run initiatives in Victoria. Opening drinks will be on Tuesday 17 April from 6 to 8 pm. Subsequent screenings will be held in Zurich, Switzerland; Amsterdam, Holland; and Helsinki, Finland at venues and dates yet to be confirmed.

Voyeur is supported by 69 Smith Street Gallery, Uniform Design and the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, state and territory governments.

For more information visit: www.voyeurcollective.com

Off The Wall at Art Melbourne and Art Sydney 2007



Off The Wall is a feature within Art Sydney 07 and Art Melbourne 07 dedicated to the promotion of unsigned artists. The benefits to artists is enormous. All supporters of Off The Wall receive 4 complimentary tickets to Art Melbourne and/or Art Sydney opening night (valued \$160) and mention on the supporters board.

Applications for Off The Wall Art Melbourne are now closed, but applications for Art Sydney 2007 will be accepted up to 1 August.

All artists receive:

- a 12 month subscription to a full promotional page posted on the dedicated Off The Wall website www.artoffthewall.com.au linked to the Art Sydney and Art Melbourne websites (each receiving over 50,000 unique visits per show)
- inclusion on a powerpoint presentation of the artists' work and contact details on site within the Off The Wall feature at either Art Melbourne or Art Sydney
- 2 tickets to either Art Melbourne

or Art Sydney valued at \$40

20 applicant artists per show will be selected by a panel of industry experts to exhibit and sell their work as Off The Wall artists. These artists receive:

- exhibition space at either Art Sydney or Art Melbourne (and the opportunity to sell their work to 15,000 active art buyers)
- their work appraised by some of the most influential curators and commercial gallery directors in Australia
- an allocation of Exhibitor passes, complimentary tickets and promotional materials

- inclusion in the official Art Sydney or Art Melbourne website and show catalogue
- inclusion in press releases and promotional activities regarding Off The Wall in the lead up to the shows
- a dedicated sales person and installation manager
- an invitation to a professional development seminar

Artists can find out how to apply by visiting: www.artmelbourne07.com.au and going to the Off The Wall page.

— Samantha Bloodworth

Meditation group at 69 Smith Street

The Art of Meditation group meet for meditation and discussion at 69 Smith Street Gallery on the 4th Thursday of each month from 7 to 9 pm.

We are interested in exploring the blending of art into our meditations, and will be including information on the current exhibitions in the meetings and where appropriate using art as a meditation object. We welcome artists and members of the 69 Smith Street Gallery to come along and participate in the sessions. For more information about the meditation group see our website: meditation.meetup.com/266/

We currently have 90 members on the site with an average of ten attending each session. There is a \$2 fee for attending the meditations with all money collected donated to the gallery.

On behalf of the Art of Meditation group I would like to thank the gallery members, especially Gabrielle Bates and Irene Amorosi for making it possible for us to use the gallery space for meditation.

For more information you can contact Lee-Anne Bowles on 4018 640 009 or email labowles@bigpond.net.au

— Lee-Anne Bowles

Recently: Sofi Basseghi, *Turmoil*; Gabrielle Bates, *Guns 'n' brownies*; Oshik Harari, *Conflict*

14 February–4 March

Turmoil presented Sofi Basseghi's mixed emotions upon returning to the country of her birth, Iran, juxtaposing her feelings of pride in her family's past, and unease brought about by the inescapable changes that have taken place. Her series of photographs looked at how the elements, war, politics and "progress" have inscribed on the physical environment and traditional culture of her ancestors.

Oshik Harari also questioned notions of "home" in *Conflict*. Oshik photographed war sites in Israel, his homeland, during its war with

Lebanon. The resulting images reflected his dilemma of origin, and are at once bleak and beautiful.

Gabrielle Bates took a light-hearted approach to highlight the absurdity of war in *Guns 'n' brownies*. Her paintings of Brownie Guides were reminiscent of Hitler Youth propaganda, yet her young nationalists somehow seemed at home in an Australia of Cronulla riots and right-wing politics.

The three exhibitions were loosely grouped but worked very well together, making for a very successful and thought-provoking show.



Sofi Basseghi, Gabrielle Bates and Oshik Harari (top); and the most diabolical Guide leader ever (above).

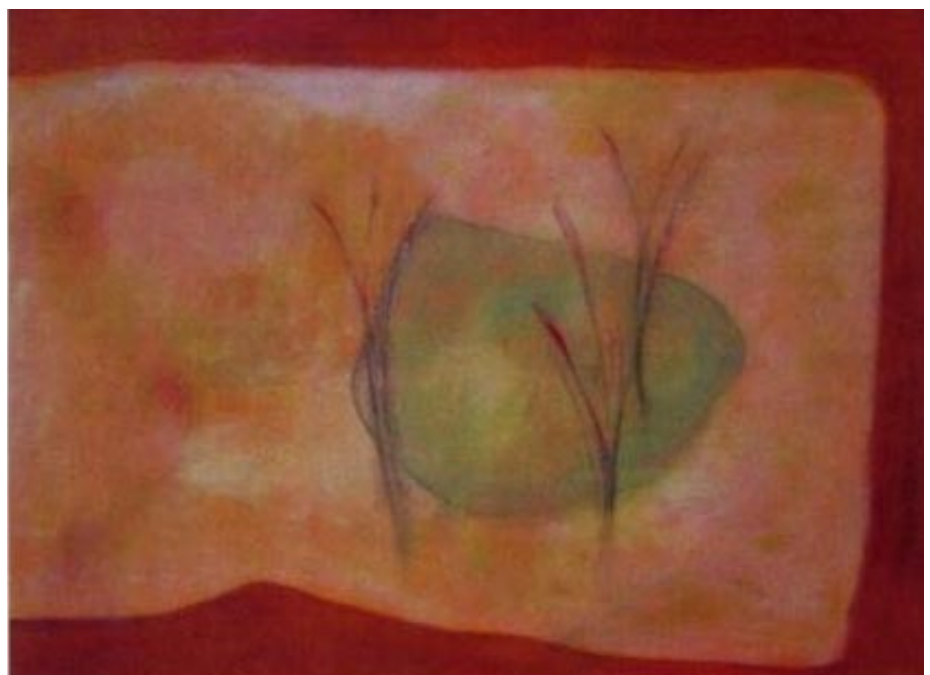
Recently: Michael Cuthbert, *Minimalist landscapes*

7–24 March

Those of you who haven't yet checked out Michael Cuthbert's *Minimalist landscapes* had better do so very quickly – it will be finishing on 24 March.

Minimalist landscapes has been a remarkable, semi-abstract commentary on the Australian landscape through red, burnt orange and yellow ochre.

Michael's exhibition is running concurrently to a group show upstairs, featuring a large number of new pieces from a variety of 69 Smith Street members. Get it while it's hot (i.e. now).



The sculpture garden

I have decided to write this article in three dimensions. Take care, don't read too closely, some of the words might have your eyes out.

Oh boy. That word "article" is all cubey. It feels like a filing cabinet. Feel the word "pebble" – smooth and polished.

Here comes the sound of an icecream truck. It's poking out of the page. Watch your eyes. Stanley knives. Stanley forks and Stanley tablespoons. Cut to a lion growling up and down in a cage and the smell of wet straw...

There's this space out the back at 69 Smith Street that you can use for sculptures. You might have some ideas. By the way, the highlight of the

first sculpture show was the buried television by Cath O'Dray. It was part of her sub-sculptural series entitled *Can you dig it? An investigation into Melbourne sub-sculptures 1997 to the present*. The television was buried and working. In really still moments you could just about hear the laughter from that show with all the monsters in it. What's it called? *The Footy Show*.

As I said, you might have some ideas for the sculpture garden.

Contact the gallery.

In conclusion, there are these two fish in a tank and one of them says to the other one, "How do you drive this thing?"

— Julian Di Martino



Cath O'Dray's piece prior to internment. *Can you dig it?* 2006. Metal, glass, dirt. 52 x 87 x 45 cm (subterranean)

Some upcoming shows

For a full list of this year's shows visit www.69smithstreet.com.au

28 March–15 April

Clive Stratford, *Recent paintings*

These paintings stem from reflections on having lived half of one's life – as Dante said: "Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita mi ritrovai per ona selva oscura..."

(In the middle of our life I found myself in a dark wilderness...)

These reflections concern loss, regret, betrayal, love and faith.

9–27 May

Carol Batchelor, *On Edge*

On Edge is a body of abstract paintings based on the grid as the

dominant structure or compositional element. The grid is the edge where tone, colour and surface meet and relate to one another. Perhaps more important than what the individual elements are, is how they relate.

9–27 May

Deane Sobey, *Out of Mind, Into Place*

Through combinations of figurative, abstract and decorative imagery, a sense of complexity is created within the narratives explored in this body of work. Japanese manga, surrealist automatic writing and popular

conventions of painting, such as graffiti and graphic novels, inform the work.

30 May–17 June

James Bryans, *Figments 99–07*

A nostalgic look at the present.

The way it might appear in memory a few years from now.

Square pieces of sky, street and city taken in broad twilight...

Immaterial events, moods and figments recorded in the slowest of slow motion.

69 Smith Street Gallery

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Management committee

Chairperson: Merle Parker

Exhibition coordinator: Ulrika Holmlund

Secretary: Michael Cuthbert

Treasurer: Veronica Hodgkinson

Newsletter editor: Philip Ingman

Asia correspondent: Gabrielle Bates

Small Window Gallery: Irene Amorosi

Marianne Little

Denise De Keyzer

Archives: Julian Di Martino

Website: Andrea Draper

Office helper: Trish Round

six 9ine is 69 Smith Street Gallery's newsletter and is published quarterly. It can be found online at www.69smithstreet.com.au

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of 69 Smith Street Gallery.

This edition of *six 9ine* was created through contributions from Irene Amorosi, Julian Di Martino, Merle Parker, Lee-Anne Bowles, Ulrika Holmlund, Philip Ingman, Samantha Bloodworth, Brad Buchel and Nicholas Hudson-Ellis.

Profile: Irene Amorosi

Small Window Gallery coordinator,

Art Talk coordinator

69 Smith Street

How long have you been volunteering for 69 Smith Street?

With a full time job I never had time to be a committee member, although I was always interested. Finally, 18 months ago, I made the time and became a committee member, and have also taken the role as the Art Talk coordinator.

How do you help out?

I regularly attend the three-weekly 69 Smith Street meetings, and enjoy focusing with a group of passionate people towards "providing opportunities for the professional development of visual artists working in a wide range of art forms." I enjoy going to these meetings as I feel that I am actively contributing towards the same goal as the rest of the committee group.

Tell me about the art you make.

My work can best be described as abstract. Everything around me affects me, so I find that these emotions play a major part in how I express myself. Printmaking is an integral part of my making art. However, I will give anything a go.

What do you hope for the future?

I hope to make more time to exhibit next year, and continue to work with the 69 Smith Street committee.

