

ANITA TRAVERSO GALLERY

RYAN PONSFORD

Ryan Ponsford works with a combination of museum specimens and found objects to create images that are an amalgamation of the ideas of the vanitas painters of the 19th century and the clean, cold aesthetics of 1960's minimalism.

The work captures the tension between preservation and degradation, life, death and the irreversibility of natural processes.

Ponsford's photographs are a reminder of the tactility of the print in a digital age. They not only investigate the nature and classification of photography as an art form but more importantly they remind us of the beauty, fragility and brevity of life.

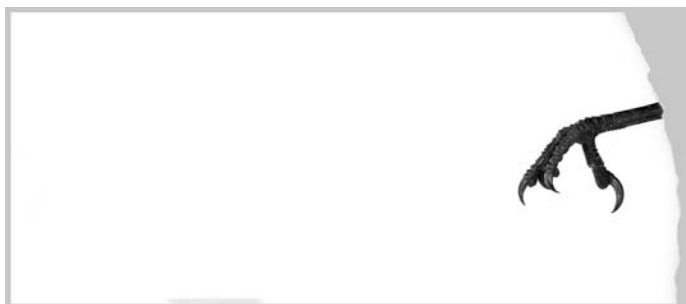


Figure in a Landscape

[2011] pigment ink on bamboo rag 77.5 x 134cm

exhibitions: *Harry Nankin and Ryan Ponsford* at Red Gallery + AT_SALON² at ANITA TRAVERSO GALLERY

This work is part of an ongoing series that looks at the relationship between human and the non-human, particularly animals. A claw emerges from the right hand side of the paper, which has been torn off, its black a stark contrast to

the white of the paper. It's as if this work had been part of something much larger, but this panel has been separated, stopping the claw from moving in any further. The length of the panel suggests the tradition of the panoramic landscape. But this landscape is empty, reminiscent of vast emptiness of outer space.



The Eater of Lost Souls

[2011] pigment ink on bamboo rag 118 x 228 cm

exhibitions: *Harry Nankin and Ryan Ponsford* at Red Gallery

To the average Australian a shark is a set of jaws propelled by a tail, designed to kill. In this large photograph, a mummified shark floats still in the centre, its threat subdued and its beauty exposed. Titled after the Fijian shark god Dakuwaqa 'the eater of lost souls,' who according to mythology was said to protect the Fijians, our

perceptions of this creature are put into question. To the Fijians, the shark is protector, not a killer. Ultimately this work looks at the way different cultures can perceive the same animal with such disparity and the connotations of this to our humanity coexisting in the same environment.



The Agony and The Ecstasy (fragment)

[2011] pigment ink on bamboo rag 94 x 64 cm

exhibitions: 2014 "Without A Shadow Of A Dao" ANITA TRAVERSO GALLERY

publications: *The Australian Photo Compendium* p.148

The bat in this piece (which is part of a much larger work) hangs languidly, from the top of the panel. It looks like it is in a moment of ecstasy but in truth the bat is trapped in its last agonising moment of life. It died in a heatwave, along with many bats that died at Yarra Bend in the summer of 2013-14. With the onset of global warming the risk of similar or worse heatwaves becoming more common is a threat to the bat colony and the fragile ecosystem to which they contribute. This work shows beauty and horror in one image, it serves as a warning, as without bats many plants cannot be pollinated and causing a break in the food chain, which could be devastating to other species, including humans.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- Items that best illustrate the physical, artistic, cultural, social, historical and political identity of the municipality of Yarra:

Represented by Anita Traverso Gallery operating in the City of Yarra.

- Items that do not require immediate and considerable additional resources related to conservation and storage:

The first two works are framed to archival standards and equipped with hanging mechanism for easy storage. *The Agony and the Ecstasy (fragment)* is unframed.

- Artworks that represent emerging innovative art forms:

The selected works by Ponsford showcase a new wave of photography, integrating skills traditionally associated with the medium, with new technological methods. The formal presentation of the work is subsequent to the innovative approach to photography taken by the artist.

- Items that have the potential for display and exhibition:

Ryan Ponsford's work touches on aspects of global warming and the environment. His work is highly poignant and covers a number of avenues for exhibition-based dialogues. The unobtrusive and educational aspects of his work make these works successful candidates for display in several council contexts

- Artworks, which are of high quality, by respected emerging and mid, career artists:

Ryan Ponsford has recently been offered two opportunities to exhibit with the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, one as part of a group show and the other a solo exhibition in 2016. This is a highly prestigious opportunity for an emerging artist and is indicative of the high quality of his works.

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