



J. Stockdale

- 2015 -

The Boho

familja / Jacqui Stockdale

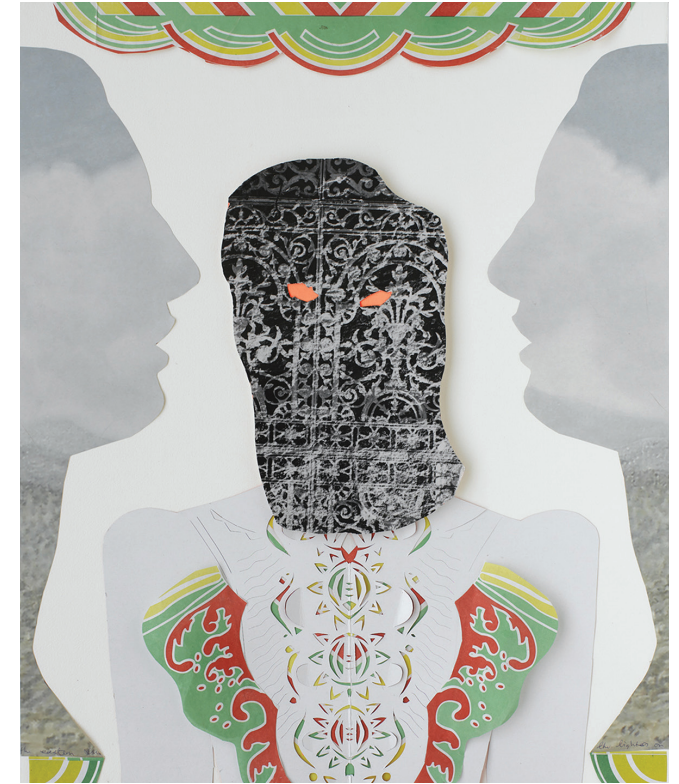
Introduction

Familija celebrates the extraordinary career of Jacqui Stockdale, an artist who grew up in Benalla and whose work is now acclaimed and sought after internationally. The exhibition brings together drawing, painting, collage and photography from the past 15 years of Stockdale's multilayered art practice and explores her fascination with the representation of the body, colonial history and constructed identity.

The Serbian word for family, Familija unites themes and interests which recur again and again within the artist's work. For Stockdale the notion of family extends beyond blood relations. Close friends and family frequently appear as models or subjects, their bodies or aspects of their daily lives sensitively observed and captured over years. Many of her works celebrate cultural hybridity and the connectedness of humanity, expressed through a carnivalesque anthropology of characters drawn from her experiences in Mexico, Spain, India, Indonesia and Australia. Adding to this mix are also influences of art history, the internet and the everyday barrage of images. Stockdale's first love is drawing, the pure focus of eye and gesture which captures a moment, a gaze, or the energy or languor of the body. Her prolific output is matched by a constant experimentation with materials and styles. Figure studies dashed off in pencil, exquisitely rendered ink portraits and soft charcoal nudes lie crammed in folders and spread across tables in her studio. Stains of watercolour form luminous bodies as drawing slides into painting, blurring the distinction between solid and liquid disciplines.

Jacqui Stockdale,
Photography: Chris von Menge





Underpinning all of Stockdale's work is her passion for the human body, from the most basic physicality of her drawings to the highly ornamented and performative evocations of her staged photographs. Her expression of the body's erotic, psychological and physical dimensions is at its most experimental in her collage works, surreal playgrounds where found faces, textures and forms are conjured into humanoid creatures from a subconscious dreamscape.

In the *Papercuts and Bloodlines* (2011) series, cut paper silhouettes of freakish bodies or the artist's own profile are combined with painted and found images. In each lurks a hint of menace, gleeful transgression or gentle absurdity waiting to be discovered like a strange inkblot test.

A collage approach also extends through Stockdale's staged photographs, in which elements of colonial and art histories are combined with contemporary references to explore personal and cultural identity. *Lagunta Man, Leeawuleena* (2012) from The Quiet Wild series references Tasmanian Aboriginal culture and elements of the artist's personal history to reflect on enduring and evolving cultural traditions.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

1. The Keeper, Collage elements, 76 x 56cm / 2010
2. To Return, Collage elements, 76 x 56cm / 2010
3. Careful She Might Hear You, collage elements, 76 x 56cm / 2010



Fur,
charcoal on paper, 73 x 57cm / 2003



Rose on Phone at Bundanon,
gouache on paper, 30 x 18cm / 2003



Kathy,
Chinese ink and stick on paper,
45x 65cm / 2001



Dine

Lagunta Man of Leeawuleena,
C Type Print, 100 x 78cm / 2012

LAGUNTA MAN
THE QUIET WILD
LEEAWULEENA



No Man an Island #1, charcoal on paper,
100 x140cm / 2010

Familija also suggests medieval supernatural beings, known as *familiars*, who assumed animal guises and wielded magical powers to aid their human companions. Stockdale's personal collection of dance and ceremonial masks play a similar role, forming a coterie of characters that embody supernatural belief systems. Collected while travelling in Asia and South America, the artist believes that these retain a kind of life force associated with their cultural rituals. These magical readymades appear in various images, bringing an uncanny presence with them.

No Man an Island #1 (2010) depicts a collection of these inanimate yet highly charged objects, piled up in a precarious totem. *Girl in Darkness* (2007) presents a more playful side, the childhood enchantment of trying on an identity and characteristics suggested by a mask's design.



The Lady's Daughter, C Type Print
57 x 40.5cm / 2005



Colonial Boy, C Type Print
57 x 40.5cm / 2005

Stockdale's 2005 series of photographic portraits, *Familija*, emulated early photographic portrait processes in which subjects posed in front of backdrops of exotic locations. For her backgrounds Stockdale created a series of paintings, *Terra Nullius*, which appropriated well known colonial landscapes by John Glover (1767-1849) and Augustus Earle (1793-1838) but left out the representation of the Indigenous inhabitants.

Several of these beautifully constructed photographs reference important portraits of well-known Aboriginal people of the time, including Earle's *Portrait of Bungaree, a native of New South Wales* (c.1826), and Thomas Bock's *Mathinna* (1842). Stockdale substituted non-Indigenous models for the original Indigenous subjects, playfully ridiculing the notion of terra nullius as a farcical construct.



Kelly, C Type Print
140 x 110cm / 2016



Where I Stood, C Type Print
140 x 110cm / 2016



The Offering, C Type Print
140 x 110cm / 2016



Man of Quinn, C Type Print
140 x 110cm / 2016

Stockdale's latest photographic series, *The Boho*, draws on 19th century narratives surrounding Ned Kelly. Benalla, Stockdale's childhood home, is situated in the heart of 'Kelly country' and the painted backdrops in each image are of historic Kelly landscapes such as Stringy Bark Creek and Power's Lookout. Through this series Stockdale explores lesser known aspects of the Kelly story, such as the meaning of the green sash Kelly was wearing at the siege of Glenrowan, the crossdressing habits of members of his gang and the role of women. In the image *Historia* (2016) Stockdale mobilises her powers of masquerade to undermine Ned Kelly's mask as a symbol of masculine nationalism, transferring its potency to an anonymous woman. In her reimagining of the story, Stockdale challenges some of the dominant narratives of Australian folk history and brings them into a contemporary context for re-examination.

Bryony Nainby, 2016

Jacqui Stockdale

Born 1968, Melbourne, Australia; lives and works in Melbourne, Australia, Jacqui Stockdale was raised in Benalla in northeast Victoria. She graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Painting) from the Victorian College of the Arts in 1990 and later moved to Hobart to undertake a Graduate Diploma (Video Art) at the University of Tasmania. She moved to Sydney in the late 1990s and then to Darwin in 2000 to take up an appointment as the Arts Officer at Berrima Prison.

Her experiences teaching art to inmates there fundamentally shifted the way she approached her art practice and thought about the construction of identity. Since returning to Melbourne in 2002 Stockdale has exhibited extensively within Australia and internationally, including most recently in *Magic Object*, Art Gallery of South Australia, 2016; *Arthur Guy Memorial Award*, Bendigo Gallery, 2015; *Joseph Ulrick & Win Schubert Award*, Gold Coast City Gallery, 2015; *Alles Maskerade*, Museum Villa Rot, Germany, 2014; and *Living Rooms*, curated by Robert Wilson, Louvre Museum, Paris, France, 2014. Stockdale's work is held in significant collections within Australia and internationally.

The exhibition Familija: Jacqui Stockdale was curated by Bryony Nainby for the Benalla Art Gallery and presented from 9 September to 13 November, 2016. The exhibition was supported by THIS IS NO FANTASY + dianne tanzer gallery, Artbank, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and private lenders.



Girl in Darkness, ink on Arches paper, 130 x110cm / 2005
FRONT COVER: Historia, C Type Print, 140 x 110cm / 2016

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