

Out of Place



Temporary exhibition of photography, performance documentation, exhibition ephemera and texts by artists Richard Long, Mary Miss, Mel Ramsden, Robert Rooney, and Jackie Winsor. Courtesy the collection of Susan Taylor and Peter Jones (Spare Room 33)

**Drill Hall Gallery
ANU Canberra**

**2 June –
13 June, 2021**

Art collectors Susan Taylor and Peter Jones have a particular interest in early conceptual art practices of the 1960s and 1970s, especially as they relate to interventions in the landscape, inversions of the white-cube gallery space and other performative and text based practices which radically expanded the conceptions of what could be considered as art in the late 20th Century.

Taylor and Jones occasionally present thematic exhibitions at their house-gallery under the name Spare Room 33, generously sharing with local audiences carefully selected displays of artworks, photographic documentation and exhibition ephemera from their private collection and archives.

In conjunction with *Out of Place*, curator Oscar Capezio and Peter Jones have selected significant early works made within Australia by artists Mel Ramsden and Robert Rooney, along with examples from the earth art movement by prominent British artist Richard Long, and importantly, printed-matter related to less well known American female artists Mary Miss and Jackie Windsor.

Mel Ramsden

**b. Ilkeston, Derbyshire, Great Britain 1944.
Worked in Australia 1963-67**

Ramsden is a British conceptual artist and member of the Art & Language artist group. He studied at Nottingham College of Art from 1961 to 1963, before travelling to Australia in 1963, where he undertook study at the National Gallery School of Victoria. In 1967 Ramsden moved to New York City and began working on his series of *Secret Paintings*, black square paintings accompanied by self-referential texts. Together with prominent Australian conceptual artist Ian Burn, he co-founded the Art Press and The Society for Theoretical Art and Analysis in New York City in 1969, and later, Art & Language.

In 1964 in Melbourne, Ramsden constructed a large open rectangular 'frame' outdoors, as a sculptural viewing framework. He utilised the sculptural frame as a device to literally frame the landscape, documenting the action in serialized photographic images. Ramsden performed the 'fragmentating' of vision, whereby the object of perception (the frame) appears to multiply its levels of representation (multiple landscapes/multiple

images). The frame within the frame of the image multiplies the reality of the object, it produces a dis-unity of perception by producing ontologically different objects.

Robert Rooney.

b. Melbourne, Victoria, 1937. d. 2017

Robert Rooney was a Melbourne-based art critic, painter and photographer and a key proponent of conceptual art in Australia.

In Rooney's prosaic photographs of serial information, there is a deliberate absence of art. These were made at a point in Rooney's career when he fully embraced the tenets of conceptualism. For Rooney, this meant abandoning his abstract painting practice for the camera and photography.

Holden Park 1 and 2 was generated by placing a transparent overlay that was arbitrarily dotted with markers over a street directory for the Hawthorn area. The Holden car was parked as near to the position of the dots as possible, an everyday ritual recorded as a way of experiencing day-to-day life. His snapshots of streets, signs, and cars shares a concern with organization and efficient circulations. Placing his camera directly in front of the car, the object is parallel with the picture plane, and therefore easily described and mapped, where the view-point situates and maps the viewer's position within a circulation of other objects.

Conceptually and formally, his serial photography projects related to the artist's books of American artist Ed Ruscha, particularly his *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966), and the performance documentation work *Royal Road Test* (1967). Rooney's depiction of a distinctly domestic suburbia is personal and humble, drawing on the contemporary conceptualist approaches to explore the suburban milieu of his Melbourne hometown.

Richard Long

b. Bristol, UK, 1945

Richard Long has been at the vanguard of conceptual art in Britain since he created *A Line Made by Walking* over half a century ago in 1967. This photograph of the path left by his feet in the grass, a fixed line of movement, established a precedent that art could be a journey.

Through this medium of walking, time, space and distance became new subjects for his art. From that time he expanded his walks to

Richard Long (cont.)

art. From that time he expanded his walks to wilderness regions all over the world, including a walk in the Alps that was documented by his first text work. After 1969, Long began making journeys and sculptures in wilderness places all around the world.

In the 1980s, Long began making new types of mud works using handprints applied directly to the wall. He also continued to make large sculptures of lines and circles from slate, driftwood, footprints or stone, often sourced from quarries near the exhibition sites – inserting these natural formations into the white cube of the gallery space.

Long mediates on his experience of these places, from mountains through to deserts, shorelines, grasslands, rivers and snowscapes, according to archetypal geometric marks and shapes, made by his footsteps alone or gathered from the materials of the place. These walks and temporary works of passage are recorded with photographs, maps and text works, where measurements of time and distance, place names and phenomena are vocabulary for both original ideas and powerful, condensed narratives.

Mary Miss

b. New York, New York, 1944

Mary Miss has been redefining how art is integrated into the public realm since the early 1970s. Miss' work crosses boundaries between landscape architecture, architecture, and urban design. Her vision favors site-specificity and human perception over traditional concerns of the public monument.

As a public artist, Miss is considered a pioneer in environmental art and site-specific art, as well a leading sculptor during the feminist movement of the 1970s. From her earliest work, she has been interested in bringing the specific attributes of a site into focus along with and audience engagement within public space. Her work creates situations that emphasize a site's history, ecology, or aspects of the environment that have gone unnoticed. She has been particularly interested in redefining the role of the artist in the public domain.

In her influential 1979 essay, *Sculpture in the Expanded Field*, art critic Rosalind Krauss opens with a description of Mary Miss's, *Perimeters/Pavilions/Decoys*. Krauss uses Miss's

work to support her examination of sculpture's interdisciplinary nature between architecture and landscape.

Jackie Winsor

b. St Johns, Canada, 1941.

Jacqueline Winsor's work can be categorised as process art, "anti-form", and "eccentric abstraction". During the late 1960s, Winsor and her contemporaries collectively pushed modern sculpture into a new "Post-minimalist" direction. Richard Marshall states that these artists "shared a willingness, even a need to reinvent form (often using novel and unexpected materials), to invest that form with meaning."

The early sculptures Winsor created in materials such as rubber sheeting, tubes, cord, and even hair. Although visually similar to the works of Minimalism, Winsor's sculptures did not aim to completely separate herself or her personal experience from the work she was creating.

An important influence for Winsor during this time was American dance, choreographer, and filmmaker Yvonne Rainer. Rainer's work was experimental and its intention was to put the body back into abstraction and use it along with motion to create shape. Her performances were often based on particular actions or tasks, which Winsor felt had a relationship to the ways in which she herself performed tasks in her own work. Winsor remarked, "What interested me was that these abstractions had a physical presence because they were acted out with bodies," as opposed to "the hands-off sensibility toward abstraction" typically seen in Minimalist sculpture.

Winsor uses very involved, hands-on processes to create her sculptures, including nailing, wrapping, joining, and measuring. Winsor's work-flow has been described as being slow and obsessive. On average, Winsor produces only three sculptures a year. Winsor describes, "Maintaining integrity toward the perfection you envisioned in the beginning is a constant concern. I spend an enormous amount of time just trying to imagine if an eighth of an inch at some point is going to make a major difference in the completed construction of the piece." Her work not only examines form and material, but also process, space, surface, weight, and density. Winsor asserts her role as an object-maker by creating works with clear material integrity.

On the wall (L-R):

- Mel Ramsden, *Locations*, 1964. wood and paint (photographic documentation, Balwyn, Melbourne). Exhibited in 'Looking at seeing and reading' curated by Ian Burn, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, July 1 – 31, 1993.
- Robert Rooney, *Holden Park 1 and 2 May 1970*, 1970. 19 colour photographs (polaroids), text.
- Robert Rooney, *Luna Park: St Kilda 12 January 1975*, 1975. 51 colour photographs (polaroids), text.

Display case left (L-R):

- Jackie Winsor, *Bound Grid*, 1971-72 (photographic documentation). wood and hemp, 213 x 213 x 20 cm. Catalogue for the exhibition 'Jackie Winsor/ Sculpture', Contemporary Arts Centre Cincinnati, Ohio, October 2 – November 21, 1976.
- Art Forum*, February 1974, cover image: Jackie Winsor, *Bound Square*, 1972. wood and twine, 192 x 193 x 37 cm. Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York.
- Richard Long, *Camp fire ash, South America 1972; Two lines walked through dust covered grass Africa 1968*. postcard for the exhibition 'Richard Long', Wide White Space Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium, 15 March – 12 April, 1973.
- Richard Long, *A thousand stones added to the footpath marker*, 1974. postcard for the exhibition 'Richard Long', Konrad Fischer gallery, Düsseldorf, Germany, 20 December 1974 – 19 January, 1975.
- Mary Miss, *Underground structure*, 1978. outdoor sculpture (wood, 16' square opening, 7' deep, 40' square underground). Catalogue for the exhibition 'Mary Miss: Perimeters / Pavilions / Decoys', Nassau County Museum of Fine Arts, October, 1978.
- Mary Miss, *Stakes and Ropes*, 1968. wood and rope, 7ft tall, covering 50ft by 75ft area (photographic documentation, Maryland Art Institute, Baltimore MA). Catalogue for the exhibition 'Mary Miss', Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, September 16 – October 19, 1980.

Display case right (L-R):

- Richard Long, *A day's walk past the standing stones of Penwith Peninsula*, 1980. First edition. 10 panel concertina pasted into folding printed card cover. 1 text panel and 9 b/w photographs. Published by Coracle Press for Anthony d'offray, London, 1980. The photographs were taken on a walk in Cornwall in 1978. The book accompanied an exhibition of the artwork at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, London.
- Richard Long, *A line in Scotland, Cul Mor*, 1981. Photograph, from 'Vision #5: Artists' Photographs', ed. Tom Marioni, Crown Point Press, San Francisco, 1981.
- Richard Long, *Reflections in the Little Pigeon River, Great Smoky Mountains, Tennessee*, 1970. photograph and text. Published for Art & Project: Bulletin 35, Art & Project, Amsterdam, 1971.
- Richard Long, *Ten mile places, England*, 1986. text work from the 'Prepared Box for John Cage', Carl Solway Gallery, Chicago, 1987.
- Richard Long, *A three day bicycle ride*, 1982. text work.
- Richard Long, *Red Slate Lines*, 1982. jagged red slate stones (Installation image). Catalogue for the exhibition 'Richard Long', Sperone Westwater Fischer, New York, 1982. Published by Arnolfini, Bristol, 1983.
- Richard Long, *A line in the Himalayas*, 1975. Catalogue for the exhibition 'Richard Long' The Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1977.