



MARNA HATTINGH

*Each Their Own
Wilderness*



CONTEMPORARY

Each Their Own Wilderness

The exhibition *Each Their Own Wilderness* at .M contemporary travels between a hybrid of fine art, literature and the complexities of contemporary life. “*Each Their Own Wilderness*” (1959) by distinguished British play write Doris Lessing, inspired the artist Marna Hattingh as it articulates her interrogation of the collective emotions of contemporary life, her work is simultaneously humorous and serious rendering it poignant and engaging.

Hattingh is not interested in capturing specific portraits of people rather, the complexities of our daily lives through a socially critical lens. As an artist Hattingh is concerned with the power of visual language to express that which cannot be articulated in mere words. Her direct and intuitive work allows for the viewer’s own interpretation as they delve into a labyrinth of complexity.

This complexity reflects Hattingh’s interpretation of contemporary life. The intricacy of the patterned background allows for adventurous exploration

employing the same illusionary techniques of camouflage. Hattingh’s distinctive graphic style is deeply layered and functions as a hyper textual visual language; allowing the figures to jump and spin, echoing the movements of dance and joyful abandon. The viewer who spends time with this work will be rewarded with an awareness of the poetic and lyrical within their own wilderness.

By Fiona Lanigan,
Gallery Researcher

Artist's Statement

The title of the exhibition is from a 1959 play by a British novelist, poet, playwright, librettist, biographer and short story writer, Doris Lessing. The title captures the essence of what I wanted to achieve - the works are interrogations or a kind of getting to grips with human nature; the drawings are both humour and serious at the same time.

I am inspired by the absurdities of contemporary life and the complexities of the society in which we live. My sense of this world as being in constant flux is embodied in the continuous feverish movement of the linear style; sometimes lyrical and poetic but also giving way to anxiety and insecurities. These ambiguous linear constructions are a reverie on impermanence and the ephemeral.

The drawings are deeply layered and function as hypertextual, image ridden networks of traces and meanings. My work has a strong narrative drive but the meaning stays intentionally open-ended and resistant to single interpretations. The power of visual art to convey certain visceral meanings which cannot be expressed in verbal language is important to me. The direct and

intuitive nature of drawing lets it speak of the limitless possibilities of the subconscious, the primordial. The drawing and viewing experience is an adventurous exploration of a labyrinthine constellation.

The protagonists in my drawings are masked as I am not interested in creating specific portraits of people. I want to express certain collective emotions and archetypal conditions. The characters are often frozen in time in highly expressive gestures borrowed from dance. Aspects of dance echo in compositional devices such as repetition, streams, waves, movement, diagonal lines and pattern. The act of dancing has certain visceral qualities of expression with which I identify. It has the ability to express a fleeting beauty and speaks of a joyful abandon.

The alluring yet subversive use of decoration functions on many different levels in the drawings as included in this exhibition. I'm interested in how ornamentation is not something that is frivolous or superficial but a legitimate expression of meaning. In modernism the elimination of ornament is seen as a sign of progress.

I use ornament in an ironic way to play with this idea of the un-modern and the primitive. Ornamentation is something that is seen as traditionally feminine and not serious. These eclectic interior design magazine patterns allude to good taste but are used in an obsessive exaggerated way. It is playful, yet it contadictingly creates a sense of unease that is at odds with the kind of luxurious contentment implied.

The series of circular drawings, entitled, The strangeness of others, illustrates a society driven by a group psychology. It is an investigation into flawed human nature and moral ambiguity. In this series I am creating a parallel world quite unlike our own but also strangely familiar: a world driven by ritual, superstition and dark logic. Good and evil is symbiotic here, stagnation and movement simultaneously present; you and other an interchangeable relationship.

King of the slums, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
100 x 70cm





Rain Dogs II, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



Words heard in dreams, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



Someone like you, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



This is paradise, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



Lost and Found, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



A comfortable life, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



Nervous Socialite, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



An Interior, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



Constellation, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gesso
on Hahnemuhle
207 x 114 cm



Carry me home, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



Heaven Knows, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



Confidence Men, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



It was on television, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70 cm



Period Piece, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
100 x 70 cm



Hollywood & Kerkmusiek, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
100 x 70cm



Dancers, 2013
Silkscreen on Fabriano paper
Edition /20 this print 1/20
100 x 70cm



Noise, 2013
Silkscreen on Fabriano paper
Edition /20 this print 1/20
90 x 70cm



On the other hand, 2013
Acrylic and ink and gouache
on Fabriano paper
70cm

Marna Hattingh

Born in 1977.

She lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa.

Hattingh graduated from the University of Stellenbosch in 2000 with a BA Fine Arts degree, and a post graduate Honours degree in Illustration.

While focusing on illustrating books, and winning awards for her work in this field, Hattingh also consistently produced paintings for group exhibitions, never losing sight of the art world. Over the years, her fine art work has developed into a highly unique and sought-after style, strongly influenced by an Asian sensibility and her experience as an illustrator, blending wry humour and social comment into playful palettes with a serious undertone. Her distinctive graphic style makes her work instantly recognizable

Hattingh finds inspiration for her artworks, within her South African and wider society, particularly the complexity of our daily lives. Drawing inspiration from an eclectic range including media, fashion, history and fictional novels, her finely drawn characters

jump, dance and spin across timeless, patterned backgrounds. Each painting is extensive worked and contains its own complex narrative; an immediacy that is difficult to ignore.

Hattingh works in a range of media including drawing, painting, print making and sculpture.

Her next solo exhibition is scheduled to open in Hong Kong in 2014.



.M Contemporary is a gallery space that aims to create a cross cultural conversation through showing and supporting emerging and established artists from around the world. We aim to foster a strong appreciation in Australian audiences for a new generation of foreign and domestic artists and to expose both novice and established collectors to these works.

By curating interactive exhibitions .M Contemporary aims to serve as a platform that introduces all mediums of art ranging from traditional to digital video art, interactive and immersive installations, showcasing the skill, creativity and concepts of artists within these mediums from around the world. .M Contemporary has a strong focus on supporting these artists ongoing presence through regular exhibitions, complemented by industry expert panel discussions, artist talks, social events and more.

Recognising the need for broader participation and exposure to art, .M Contemporary is also opening up itself to schools, universities and other parties as a platform for education where an appreciation for global and local contemporary art is inspired and nourished.

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