

**ROSALIE
GASCOIGNE
A CATALOGUE
RAISONNÉ**

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MARTIN GASCOIGNE



Australian
National
University

PRESS



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CONTENTS

vii Abbreviations and navigation

1 Introduction

The Artist

5 Rosalie Gascoigne: A chronology

13 A biographical note

81 Rosalie's country

99 Rosalie's materials

127 Flower arrangements, the Academy of Science and ikebana

The Catalogue Raisonné

139 Catalogue organisation and terminology

145 Catalogue entries

Appendices

315 Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions

357 Appendix 2: Selected group exhibitions

389 Appendix 3: Works in public collections

393 Bibliography

405 Acknowledgements

Index

413 List of works

421 Index

ABBREVIATIONS AND NAVIGATION

Using the catalogue / navigation

The essays and catalogue make extensive use of family letters (see Bibliography). Letters are cited by date then initials of author and recipient, as in c. Jan 1974 RG to TG. If the letter was published in Mary Eagle (ed.) *From the studio of Rosalie Gascoigne* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 2000 (exh. cat.), the reference is accompanied by a page number, as in 25 Jan 1974 RG to MG, p. 43.

Abbreviated citations are also used for Rosalie's talks and interviews, in the form of the date and either last name of interviewer or location of the talk (as in 1982 North and 1985 School of Art). If the extract is from a published talk a page reference is given. Full titles are listed in the Bibliography.

Citations for other references (such as books, and journal and newspaper articles) use the author–date format, for example, Vici MacDonald 1998. References occurring only once or twice are presented in full in the catalogue and are not repeated in the Bibliography.

Abbreviations

General abbreviations

#	catalogue number
abt	about
Acc no.	accession number
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
BG	SCB 'Ben' Gascoigne
c.	circa, as in c. 1980
cat.	catalogue

cm	centimetres
coll.	collection
diam.	diameter
exh.	exhibited / exhibition
exh. cat.	exhibition catalogue
FSC	phenolic surface film (on plywood to create builders' formboard)
illus.	illustrated / illustration
incl.	including
inv.	invitation
irreg.	irregular
l.c.	lower centre
l.l.	lower left
l.r.	lower right
M.	Melbourne (for auction location)
ME	Mary Eagle
MG	Martin Gascoigne
NFS	not for sale
NSW	New South Wales
NZ	New Zealand
p. / pp.	page / pages
pers. comm.	personal communication
QLD	Queensland
q.v.	see
ref.	reference
RG	Rosalie Gascoigne
S.	Sydney (for auction location)
<i>SMH</i>	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>
TG	Toss Gascoigne
u.c.	upper centre
u.l.	upper left
u.r.	upper right
VIC	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

Institutions

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Commission (1932–1983) and Australian Broadcasting Corporation (1983 onwards)
ACAF	Australian Contemporary Art Fair
AGNSW	Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
AGSA	Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
AGWA	Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
ANG	Australian National Gallery, Canberra (NGA after 1993)
ANU	The Australian National University, Canberra
Auckland AG	Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, New Zealand
CMAG	Canberra Museum and Art Gallery
Heide MOMA	Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
IMA	Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane
MCA	Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
MOCA	Museum of Contemporary Art, Brisbane
MoMA New York	Museum of Modern Art, New York
MoMA Oxford	Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, UK (now Modern ART, Oxford)
NGA	National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (ANG until 1993)
NGV	National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
NLA	National Library of Australia, Canberra
QAG	Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
QAGOMA	Queensland Art Gallery Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
UMelb	The University of Melbourne
UNSW Sydney	The University of New South Wales, Sydney
UQAM	The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane
UTas	University of Tasmania, Hobart
UWA	The University of Western Australia, Perth
VAB	Visual Arts Board, Australia Council for the Arts

INTRODUCTION

Rosalie Gascoigne (1917–1999) was a highly regarded Australian artist whose assemblages of found materials embraced landscape, still life, minimalism, arte povera and installations. She was fifty-seven when she had her first exhibition. Behind this late coming-out lay a long and unusual preparation in looking at nature for its aesthetic qualities, collecting found objects, making flower arrangements, and practising Ikebana. Her art found an appreciative audience from the start. She was a people person, and it pleased her that through her exhibiting career of 25 years her works were acquired by people of all ages, interests and backgrounds, as well as by the major public institutions on both sides of the Tasman Sea. Reflecting on her success, she recognised she was in the right place at the right time, when the art world was embracing new forms of art and was becoming receptive to the work of outsider artists.

Rosalie's aesthetic was informed by an early love of the romantic poets and her close engagement with the country around Canberra, although her formal art training was limited to the study of ikebana — the Japanese art of flower arranging — in the 1960s. Her art was an art of feelings, of 'emotion recollected in tranquillity' as she was fond of saying. 'I like pleasures of the eye, and I feed on nature', she told Peter Ross in 1990. Her materials were ordinary, simple things from everyday life: battered enamelware, discarded beer cans, torn linoleum, weathered galvanised iron and discarded retroreflective road signs and soft-drink boxes. She liked the look of them and her art celebrated their intrinsic aesthetic qualities.

It has fallen to me, Rosalie's oldest child, to prepare this catalogue raisonné as the definitive statement of the artist's oeuvre. The foundations were laid by Rosalie's husband and my father, Ben Gascoigne, who kept excellent records. He began photographing her work in the mid-1970s, often recording the dates on which the negatives were processed, and in the mid-1980s started to compile a database of her works, recording titles, materials, dimensions and their first exhibition. At first he recorded his data on cards, but in the 1990s he transferred the information into a computerised database, to which his grandson Charles added images of the works. He also compiled individual albums for each of her exhibitions and, in the 1990s, started recording the dates on which he photographed works. I took over the database in 2001 and added information about materials, inscriptions (where available), subsequent exhibition histories, references in reviews and the literature, and comments Rosalie made about specific works in her letters, talks and interviews. Works are dated in accordance with the date inscribed (where known) or listed in exhibition catalogues unless there is evidence, from contemporary sources such as photographs or letters, that points to an earlier date. Usually the difference is only a year or two. Sometimes the letters and talks included references to the construction history of

a particular work and this has informed the catalogue entries. Those construction histories, when read together with the remarks on Rosalie's treatment of her materials and the general observations on her studio practice, demonstrate the hands-on, rather than conceptual, approach she took to her work.

The catalogue covers all 692 works, almost all of which were exhibited in her lifetime, other than a small number of studies and related items from her studio. To provide context I have included a biographical note, an essay on Rosalie's engagement with the country around Canberra, and a note on the materials from which she fashioned her art. The biographical note is not a full biography — rather, it looks at Rosalie's evolution and career as an artist, as much as possible using contemporary sources. The focus is on the people, places, events and experiences that were important in her journey, and the text reflects the very close relationship I had with Rosalie on art matters, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. I have included only a few broad observations on the broader art world in which Rosalie practised and made no assessment of the art-historical significance of her work, tasks better left to the art historians.

Family letters while I lived overseas from 1971 to 1974 and 1977 to 1980 (and while my brother Toss lived in London and Hobart) provide a detailed contemporary account, particularly of the critical first half of Rosalie's career. Rosalie wrote lively letters, a skill honed in a thirty-year correspondence with her mother, who was equally as good. The letters are full of pithy observations about people she was meeting, accounts of family activities, her reactions to art she was seeing and reports on her creative activities. The records of Rosalie's many talks and interviews have been an important additional source. Rosalie was a compelling speaker and sadly the printed word, quoted extensively throughout, cannot capture the vitality of her delivery or the nuance in her message.

This catalogue is not a substitute for the real thing, the artwork itself. In this regard Rosalie was adamant, as she made clear in her opening address for *Australian Perspecta* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, on 5 October 1993: 'Art is a visual medium ... words come later. Artists are not communicating with words, and you, the viewer, can only communicate with them by standing in the presence of the work. They after all have gone the journey to arrive at this place. They have lived in mirage country — now you see it, now you don't. And you have to meet the work first on their terms. Afterwards — the big secondary industry of words takes over.'

I am grateful for the interest shown and assistance provided by many people over many years — family, friends, curators, gallerists, owners, photographers, archivists, librarians — as listed (as best I can) in the Acknowledgements. There were many benefits in being Rosalie's son as I worked on this catalogue, but its production also called for detachment and a broader perspective on the art world that my family connection might cloud. In this regard I am immensely grateful to two very fine art historians and curators — my wife and companion on this journey, Mary Eagle, and my friend and mentor, Daniel Thomas — for the encouragement, advice and exemplary standards they set me. I also thank Daniel for his thorough and constructive reading of the complete text.

Martin Gascoigne
Canberra



THE ARTIST

Overleaf: (Detail) The last photograph of Rosalie, taken in Auckland in July 1999
by Marti Friedlander

Photograph from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of the Marti and Gerrard Friedlander Trust

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE: A CHRONOLOGY

- 1917 Rosalie Norah King was born on 25 January in her parents' house at 8 MacMurray Road, Remuera, Auckland, New Zealand, the second child of Marion (née Metcalfe) and Stanley Walker.
- 1922 Rosalie's parents separate and Marion and children live with Marion's widowed mother, Jessie Metcalfe, and unmarried sister, Ellen. Marion resumes working as a teacher to support her family. Stanley returns to the family house in c. 1933.
- 1935–38 Rosalie attends Auckland University College where she studies English, French, Greek, Latin and mathematics. Graduates with a Bachelor of Arts degree.
- 1939–42 Completes a one-year course at Auckland Teacher Training College in 1939 and from 1940 takes up teaching positions at various schools, including Auckland Girls Grammar School, where she teaches from 1941 to 1942.
- 1943 Travels to Australia to marry SCB 'Ben' Gascoigne on 9 January (they met in Auckland in 1933 and were at university together) and set up house on Mount Stromlo, a small, isolated scientific community outside Canberra. First child, Martin, is born on 21 November, followed by Thomas 'Toss' on 15 June 1945.
- Rosalie begins to explore the local landscape and vegetation and bring home pieces that attract her eye, and would continue to do so for the rest of her life.
- In December 1943 Rosalie meets Ben's friend, Sydney artist Carl Plate (1919–1977), who introduced Ben and Rosalie to the world of modern art.
- 1946 Rosalie and children visit Auckland (December 1945 – April 1946) (probably with Ben in March–April). They make a second visit in 1948–49.
- 1949 Ben and Rosalie buy a car in June, a second-hand Austin 7, and Ben teaches Rosalie to drive. Daughter Hester is born on 12 December. As war-time restrictions ease, Mount Stromlo begins to see new investment in facilities and housing, and life there gradually improves.
- 1952 A bushfire on 5 February destroys part of the Mount Stromlo workshops, along with most of the pine forest covering the mountain.

- 1955 Rosalie begins to enter flower arrangements in the Horticultural Society of Canberra exhibitions and over the next ten years attracts notice (and prizes) for her imaginative work. She introduces found objects and dried materials into her arrangements, and would use similar materials in her assemblages in the 1970s and 1980s.
- 1957 Mount Stromlo Observatory becomes part of The Australian National University, greatly expanding Rosalie's range of social contacts. In August Rosalie and daughter visit New Zealand, her last visit until 1983.
- 1959 Rosalie is commissioned to decorate the lobbies and main lounge of the Roy Grounds-designed Academy of Science building (the Shine Dome, formerly known as Becker House). This gave her an opportunity to work on a much larger scale in a sympathetic environment, with its natural light, muted natural colours and clean, uncluttered spaces. The challenge was stimulating. Although she terminated her original contract in 1962 she continued to provide installations on an occasional basis until 1974.
- 1960 The family moves from Mount Stromlo to 22 Dugan Street in the Canberra suburb of Deakin. The decade ahead was a time of great change in Canberra following the Menzies government decision in 1957 to resume development of Canberra as the national capital.
- 1962 Rosalie begins taking ikebana flower-arrangement lessons from the Sydney-based master Norman Sparnon (1913–1995), an exponent of the modern Sogetsu School. These take place monthly in the hall attached to the Methodist church in National Circuit, Barton (now the Canberra Central Uniting Church). Ikebana immediately influences her floral art entries in the Horticultural Society shows (she stops competing in 1964). After receiving her ikebana teaching certificate in November 1965 Rosalie offers her own classes in 1966 and continues to teach until about 1970. Her ikebana skills and demonstrations are highly regarded.
- 1963 The family, except for Martin, travels to England so Ben can take up a six-month sabbatical at the Royal Observatory at Herstmonceux in Sussex. They travel by sea via Athens (where Rosalie has a cousin), and by rail on to London and Sussex. Ben and Rosalie visit exhibitions in London, including the fourth *Sculpture in the Open Air* exhibition at Battersea Park, where Rosalie is much taken with Henry Moore's work. Rosalie and Hester return to Australia in November, travelling by sea from Sweden via South Africa.
- c. 1965 Rosalie begins collecting rusted farm machinery components from the paddocks around Canberra and old mining areas such as Captains Flat, initially using them in her ikebana arrangements. In the mid-1960s she starts to make small metal sculptures from rusted iron. In 1967 Ben brought back from London the catalogue of Roland Penrose's Tate Gallery exhibition *Picasso: Sculpture, Ceramics, Graphic Work*. Rosalie enjoyed Picasso's 'sportiveness, his enjoyment' and in later years took heed of this in her own practice.
- 1967 Rosalie and Ben decide to build their own house and they buy land at 3 Anstey Street in Pearce. Melbourne-trained architect Theo Bischoff designs a house with Rosalie's work in mind, incorporating some of the aesthetics of the Academy of Science dome.
- Ben is appointed astronomical adviser to the Anglo-Australian Telescope Board, and later commissioning astronomer for the telescope. His escalating involvement in the project means he is frequently away from home (until mid-1975).

- 1969 The Gascoignes move into their new house in June, which provides much improved working spaces for Rosalie, and in the following years they work hard to establish a garden.
- Martin introduces Rosalie to James Mollison, recently appointed exhibitions officer at the Prime Minister's Department. He would become the first director of the Australian National Gallery (later National Gallery of Australia).
- 1970 Rosalie accompanies Ben on a work trip to Europe, visiting Tokyo, Copenhagen, Stockholm, England, Paris and Portugal. In Paris they meet up with Carl Plate and, through him, other Australian artists there.
- 1971 Martin takes an appointment with the Asian Development Bank headquarters in the Philippines. He leaves his small collection of contemporary Australian art with his parents, who display it in their house. Their correspondence with him (and with Toss in Hobart and England) documents Rosalie's gradual emergence as an artist.
- James Mollison is appointed acting director of the Australian National Gallery, and through his friendship Rosalie is given access to the developing national collection.
- Rosalie's work as an assemblage artist is recognised for the first time through her inclusion in Fay Bottrell's book *The artist craftsman in Australia* (published in 1972).
- 1972 Rosalie resigns from Norman Sparnon's classes in February and winds back her ikebana activities. Ben enrolls in an arc-welding course at the Canberra Technical College in order to help Rosalie stabilise her rusted metal assemblages, but her attention soon shifts from rusted iron constructions to other materials.
- The Gascoignes acquire a second car for Ben's use, so Rosalie now has full access to the family station wagon for her collecting forays into the surrounding countryside. She begins to make large works out of found animal bones and continues to do so in 1973.
- Rosalie meets Sydney artist Michael Taylor (born 1933), who had taken a teaching position in Canberra, and the two quickly become colleagues and friends. She buys one of his paintings (and others later).
- Rosalie has another reason to visit, see exhibitions and engage with the art world in Sydney when Hester moves there, returning in 1973.
- 1973 Rosalie discovers a cache of abandoned apiary boxes near Gundaroo, north of Canberra, in May. She uses them (and others) as containers for her assemblages and by year-end has completed several works. She uses boxes for many works until the mid-1980s.
- Two of Rosalie's sculptures are included in an exhibition in Adelaide, *Life Style 70s*, at Myer department store, a display developed to promote Bottrell's *The artist craftsman in Australia*.
- In October Rosalie briefly experiments with paper collage, inspired by Michael Taylor's work. She begins to collect advertising logos for Arnott's parrots (biscuits), Norco cows (butter), Daffodil (margarine) and, in 1976, images of footballers, cricketers and racehorses from newspapers. She also sees the exhibition *Recent Australian Art* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, with its diverse range of art forms and practices.
- Martin sends Rosalie a copy of William Seitz's exhibition catalogue *The art of assemblage* as a Christmas present, from which she learns that what she makes is assemblage art. She subscribes to art periodicals such as *Art and Australia*, *Art in America* and *Artforum*, which she likes for their images of contemporary art.

- 1974 Rosalie has her first solo exhibition, at Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, in June. It includes rusted iron works (their first and only showing) and several works assembled in boxes. In September James Mollison buys two boxes for the Philip Morris Arts Grant collection of ‘young, bold and innovative artists’, the first of several purchases over the next few years for the Philip Morris and the Australian National Gallery collections.
- Rosalie develops a friendship with Melbourne artist Ken Whisson (born 1927) after buying his painting *And what should I do in Illyria?* 1974. He would invite her to write the introduction to his survey exhibition at RMIT Melbourne in September 1978.
- In May Martin returns to Canberra after two-and-a-half years in Manila.
- 1975 Michael Taylor selects Rosalie for inclusion in the exhibition *The Artists’ Choice* at Gallery A Sydney. This effectively launches her career. In May Ben declines a tempting offer of a job in Sydney because the move would be so disruptive for Rosalie’s art practice.
- 1976 Rosalie holds her second solo show, *Assemblage*, at Gallery A, Sydney. The work in this exhibition includes elements from a carnival sideshow found at the Bungendore tip in 1975, as well as advertising logos, dried plant materials (salsify stalks), enamelware and galvanised iron.
- Finds major source of galvanised iron and old window frames at the abandoned Canberra brickworks.
- James Gleeson is appointed visiting curator of Australian Art, Australian National Gallery 1975–78 and also a member of the first council of the ANG 1976–82. He becomes a valued friend.
- 1977 First show in Brisbane, at the Institute of Modern Art, where she exhibits *Pale landscape* 1977 — a great ‘carpet’ of swan feathers woven through newspapers — as well as two works with corrugated iron and old window frames. She also takes part in a group exhibition at Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane.
- Martin moves to Hong Kong, where he stays for three years. Once again family correspondence documents Rosalie’s progress and life in the art world.
- James Mollison is appointed first director of the Australian National Gallery.
- In November Rosalie acquires her first jigsaw, which she uses to cut out the shapes of images and logos she has glued to plywood.
- 1978 In April Rosalie’s first art-museum exhibition opens at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, four years after her debut. *Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne* was curated by Robert Lindsay.
- Rosalie discovers the Schweppes depot at Queanbeyan, NSW, near Canberra, which would be an important source of the wood she used in many works in the years ahead.
- 1979 Rosalie’s *Feathered fence* 1978–79, exhibited in the 3rd Biennale of Sydney, *European Dialogue*, attracts a lot of attention from visiting European artists. Nick Waterlow, the biennale director, remained an influential supporter of Rosalie’s for the rest of her career.
- Her solo show in June at Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane, includes *March past* 1978–79, the first work made with boards from dismantled soft-drink boxes.

- 1980 Rosalie exhibits *Paper square* 1979–80, a major piece made with newspaper, at the Adelaide Festival (reconstructed and exhibited as *Harvest* 1981–82 at the Venice Biennale 1982).
- Rosalie travels alone to New York and Washington DC to see the art there. This was her only trip to the United States.
- Martin returns from Hong Kong. Ben retires from Mount Stromlo as professor emeritus but continues his astronomical research and writing. He helps Rosalie find technical solutions for her works but as time goes on she has less need of his help in the studio. He also begins to photograph her works more systematically.
- 1981 Rosalie has her first exhibition at Pinacotheca, Bruce Pollard's gallery in Melbourne, marking the beginning of a long relationship. She shows works made with boards from soft-drink boxes, linoleum, newspaper, advertising logos, dried salsify and thistle stalks, shells and small stones, including two large floor pieces and several boxes. She continues to show at Pinacotheca until 1993.
- 1982 Rosalie is the first woman to represent Australia at the Venice Biennale, chosen by the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts, where Nick Waterlow is director. She exhibits with Peter Booth. The experience is not a happy one because the promised pavilion was not ready and the exhibit was only properly displayed a month after the biennale opened. Despite this her work receives favourable attention from the international press. Rosalie travelled alone and stayed six weeks, escaping from Venice to visit *Documenta* — a different survey of international contemporary art — in Kassel, Germany, and making a brief stop in London on the way home. She lost the hearing in one ear while returning to Australia.
- The Australian National Gallery opens in October.
- 1983 Ben puts part of his retirement payout towards the construction of a studio next to the family house. Completed in June 1983, Rosalie now has the space to work on a larger scale and on several pieces at once.
- Rosalie travels to New Zealand for the opening of her major exhibition *Rosalie Gascoigne: Sculpture 1975–1982*, curated by Ian Hunter, at the National Art Gallery, Wellington, and afterwards touring the North Island. This was her first trip back since 1957 and her first as an artist. Coincidentally, Colin McCahon's work is also showing at the gallery and during her visit she buys a painting from McCahon's *Gate* series. She also shows five works in Tokyo in *Continuum '83: The First Exhibition of Australian Contemporary Art in Japan*.
- 1984 Rosalie's solo exhibition at Pinacotheca again included a mix of works in different formats and materials. It was the last time she showed boxes.
- 1985 Rosalie creates *Highway code* 1985, her first work using yellow retroreflective road signs. She includes it in her show *Rosalie Gascoigne: New Work*, curated by Mary Eagle, at the Fine Arts Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart. She also exhibits *Honey flow* 1985, her first work featuring yellow boards from Schweppes soft-drink boxes.
- 1986 Rosalie makes her first works using plywood formboard, *High country [1]* and *Shoreline*. From 1986 to 1995 Rosalie would use coated formboard to make fourteen works having a pictorial element suggestive of landscapes (as well as using it in other works).
- About this time Rosalie first engages an occasional studio assistant, initially Stuart Vaskos and, from 1989, Peter Vandermark. Ben gradually assumes a new role as Rosalie's archivist and in the late 1980s starts a database of her work.

- 1988 Rosalie's work is included by biennale director Nick Waterlow in the 1988 Australian Biennale exhibition *From the Southern Cross: A View of World Art c. 1940–1988* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, where it is displayed alongside the work of Colin McCahon. It is praised by the American curator and critic Dan Cameron, who includes Rosalie's work in his 1989 survey of international contemporary art *What Is Contemporary Art?* at the Rooseum in Malmö, Sweden.
- In November Rosalie acquires a tradesman's bandsaw, which she uses to cut the wooden slats of her dismantled soft-drink boxes, creating the fine, slightly curved slivers of wood employed in works such as *Monaro* 1988–89. Her solo exhibition at Pinacotheca for the first time includes works using red/orange reflective road signs, along with works utilising hand-painted 'for sale' signs from roadside stalls.
- Visits New Zealand in November for the Colin McCahon retrospective at Auckland Art Gallery.
- 1989 Rosalie exhibits at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, her first solo exhibition in Sydney since 1976. She continues to exhibit at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery regularly, until her death in 1999.
- 1990 The exhibition *Rosalie Gascoigne and Colin McCahon: Sense of Place*, curated by Louise Pether, is shown at the Ivan Dougherty Gallery in Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery in Melbourne. It marks 1000 years of Maori settlement and the sesquicentenary of Pakeha (European) settlement of New Zealand, and was opened in Sydney by Mr Geoffrey Palmer, Prime Minister of New Zealand.
- 1993 Rosalie begins using red, white, black and yellow cable reels as a source material.
- 1994 Rosalie embarks on two multi-piece installations on the theme of air: *Plein air* 1994 and *But mostly air* 1994–95. Her solo exhibition at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery comprises predominantly white works.
- Rosalie is honoured as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her services to art.
- 1995 Rosalie is awarded the Grand Prize of the Cheju Pre-biennale in South Korea for her work *Set up* 1983–84.
- 1996 Rosalie holds her first solo exhibition in Adelaide at the Greenaway Art Gallery as part of the Adelaide Festival.
- 1997 A major survey of Rosalie's landscape-based work, *Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as Landscape*, curated by Deborah Edwards, opens at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. It is shown at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, in 1998.
- Rosalie shows four pieces in an exhibition of contemporary Australian art, *In Place (Out of Time): Contemporary Art in Australia*, at the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, United Kingdom, curated by David Elliott and Howard Morphy. Her work attracts very favourable attention in the English press.
- 1998 A major monograph, *Rosalie Gascoigne*, by Vici MacDonald, is published by Regaro Press, Sydney. Film Australia's program on Rosalie in its Australian Biography series is broadcast for the first time.

- 1999 René Block includes eleven of Rosalie's works in his exhibition *Toi Toi Toi: Three Generations of Artists from New Zealand*, shown at the Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, New Zealand. Block had previously selected her work for the *8th Biennale of Sydney, The Readymade Boomerang: Certain Relations in 20th Century Art*, in 1990.
- Rosalie completes major works from her remaining stockpiles of Schweppes soft-drink boxes (*Great blond paddocks* 1998–99), retroreflective road signs (*Metropolis* 1999) and coated plywood formboard (*Earth* 1999).
- Rosalie travels to New Zealand in July to speak at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki on the occasion of the exhibition *Home and Away: Contemporary Australian and New Zealand Art from the Chartwell Collection* curated by William McAloon.
- Rosalie Gascoigne dies in Canberra on 23 October 1999. A memorial service is held at St Paul's Anglican Church, Manuka, Australian Capital Territory, on 5 November.
- 2000 The exhibition *From the Studio of Rosalie Gascoigne* curated by Mary Eagle is held at The Australian National University Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra. It is the first showing of *Earth* 1999. The exhibition catalogue includes memoirs of Rosalie by Ben and by Peter Vandermark and Marie Hagerty (her studio assistant and artist friends), and extracts from her letters to Martin in the 1970s about her art and the art world she moved in.
- 2004 The survey exhibition *Rosalie Gascoigne: Plain Air*, curated by Gregory O'Brien with Paula Savage, is held at the City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand. It is the first survey exhibition of Rosalie's work since her death. *Earth* 1999 is shown in Sydney at a solo exhibition at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery.
- 2008 The first full retrospective of Rosalie's work, *Rosalie Gascoigne*, opens in Melbourne at the Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, in December. It was curated by Kelly Gellatly.



A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Rosalie Gascoigne had three very distinct lives, more or less of equal length. Her first life was as a child and young woman in New Zealand, the second as a wife and mother on Mount Stromlo and in Canberra, and the third as an artist. One constant in Rosalie's life was her love of nature and the outdoors, which helped carry her through difficult times. Although born and raised in the city, it was her time alone on the beach or in the paddock that she found both nourishing and liberating, nourishing because the natural world fed the 'pleasures of the eye', and liberating because in the vastness and immutability of the landscape she found the freedom to be herself. And it was this engagement with the landscape and the things she found in it that was at the heart of the explanations Rosalie offered when asked about her career as an artist and the source of her creative sensibility. 'You can't do better than nature', she would often observe.

A. The Auckland years

Childhood and family

Rosalie was born in Auckland, New Zealand, on 25 January 1917, and lived there until she left to get married and live in Australia in 1943, just short of her twenty-sixth birthday. Rosalie remembered the New Zealand of her childhood as a 'colonial outpost, small and behind the times'. Auckland was by far the largest and most important town in New Zealand, and for most of Rosalie's time there its population was about 200,000. Her family on both sides arrived in Auckland in the 1870s, her father's Irish Protestant family having migrated from County Wicklow and her mother's Anglo-Scots family, with roots in Hampshire, Gloucestershire and Glasgow, arriving after a short spell in Australia. One of the challenges for Rosalie while growing up was learning to navigate her way between these two cultures and temperaments, a task made more difficult by the rupture in her parents' marriage when she was five years old.¹

Rosalie in front of *But mostly air* 1994-95
at the Art Gallery of New South Wales,
November 1997

Photograph by Christopher Snee courtesy of the
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Rosalie was the second child of Marion and Stanley Walker. She had an older sister, Daintry (born in 1915), and a younger brother, Douglas (born in 1918). Her father, Stanley, trained as a motor engineer and had a car maintenance and importing business. Mother Marion (née Metcalfe) was one of the first female graduates of Auckland University College (later the University of Auckland), earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1905.

¹ Rosalie Gascoigne 'My country childhood' *Country Style* Dec 1997, p. 19.

Marion was a teacher at Auckland Girls Grammar School before her marriage. The family lived in the prosperous middle-class suburb of Remuera.²

It had been an unlikely marriage: Marion and Stanley were both 31, a late marriage for the times. Marion was a bright, witty, educated woman who played hockey and tennis at university, liked reading and was interested in history and the classics. Stanley's education went no further than incomplete trade qualifications, and he was not interested in sport. She was from a prosperous conservative family, where the men were all in the professions and the daughters married into them; her father was a highly regarded civil engineer whose practice extended over the whole of the North Island. Stanley was from a family past its prime and with few resources, although his father had been a well-known Auckland liquor merchant in the 1890s. Stanley could not have been more unlike Marion's father, whom she adored. The marriage took place on 10 March 1915 at St Mary's Cathedral, close to the Metcalfe family house in Parnell.³

In Rosalie's memory, the Walkers were a proud (Protestant) Irish family from County Wicklow, with strong women and weak men. Stanley was the second youngest child in a family of ten children, with a brother, six sisters and two half-brothers. His family doted on him. As a young boy Stanley was dressed in trousers edged with lace which might help explain how in his youth Stanley acquired the nickname 'Masher', which stuck long enough for the story to survive, if not the nickname ('masher' — all dressed up). As a young man he took the far-sighted decision to train as an auto-engineer and served a five-year apprenticeship. Soon after, in December 1905, he went to San Francisco, presumably to further his training or possibly to strike out on his own. He survived the great earthquake there in April 1906 (neglecting to tell his family he had done so), and stayed on until sometime after April 1910, working as a machinist with the Union Iron Works Company. It is not clear when he returned to Auckland, although he was there in time to be registered on the 1914 electoral roll, by which time both his parents had died.⁴



Rosalie aged about five years
Photograph from author's archive

² This account of Rosalie's childhood, family and forebears draws heavily on my earlier work *Rosalie Gascoigne: Her New Zealand origins* (Martin Gascoigne 2012). Rosalie's recollections of her childhood are recorded in 1997 Frost, 1997 Ross, 1998 Hughes and Vici MacDonald 1998 (especially pp. 9–13); see also 1982 North. These are the sources for the unattributed quotations on Rosalie's childhood.

³ The Metcalfe house, called 'Turarua', was at 5 Bridgewater Road, and set on over two acres (about 8100 square metres) near the waterfront (sale advertisement, *Auckland Star* 10 Jul 1919, p. 6). Marion's siblings were also married at St Mary's.

⁴ The apprenticeship data comes from the 1922 bankruptcy papers (NZ Archives ref. BAEA 21460 A709 152c 1922/220). Californian passenger lists record his arrival in San Francisco on the *Sonoma* on 4 December 1905, and the 1910 United States census conducted on 15 April lists him as a boarder living at 681 Fell Street in the 37th Assembly District. Union Iron Works was a big shipbuilder.

There is no record of how Stanley and Marion met or what brought them together; perhaps they met because Stanley had lodgings in St George's Road in Parnell, near the Metcalfe house, or through the school where Marion was roll mistress for Stanley's niece Vera Cashell. Once married, what money Stanley had was invested in his garage, and Metcalfe money financed the purchase of the couple's house. Metcalfe money (and some from a Walker brother-in-law) also saw him through when he ran into trouble getting bank finance for his business. There were other cultural differences. Unlike the uptight Metcalfe brothers who crewed a coastal steamer during the 1913 maritime strike, it is hard to think of Stanley as a strike-breaker, let alone imagine him sailing. Sailing was important in the Metcalfe family and Stanley was not a sailor, not a Metcalfe. Having been judged medically unfit, he did not go to war, unlike Marion's brothers, one of whom was killed, the other almost so.⁵

If it was Irish pride that fed Stanley's ambition to prove himself to the Metcalfes — and to Marion — by expanding his business in a risky way, then its failure must have hurt. In 1922, when Rosalie was five, Stanley's business failed, in large part because of his drinking, and Stanley was declared bankrupt on 10 October 1922. Two months later the family home was sold to pay Stanley's creditors. Marion and Stanley's mismatched partnership could not cope with the pressures and the marriage fell apart. After a blazing row one night, Marion called a taxi and took her children to live with her widowed mother and her unmarried sister, Ellen. Stanley removed himself to the Thames district at Turua, where he remained until 1932. He had a garage but continued to be troubled by his drinking, and lost his driver's licence for two years in 1929 for drink-driving offences. When he visited Auckland on business or to see his children he stayed at the Glenalvon guesthouse owned by his sister Gipsy and her husband Robert McCallum.⁶

Marion's mother lived at 8 Halls Avenue, Remuera (later 8 Robert Hall Avenue), not far from the house Marion had shared with Stanley. The Halls Avenue house had been bought for Marion's mother, Jessie Alexander Metcalfe (née Hamilton), downsizing following her husband's death in 1918.⁷ When Marion and her children moved in, Grandmother Jessie was in her seventies. She had never really got over the death of her older son, Henry Ernest, killed in France on the Western Front in April 1917. Henry's death, and the death of her husband a year later, led to the closure of the Metcalfe family engineering business, the source of the family's prosperity.

Having left Stanley who had no money, Marion needed to find a job. Her mother simply did not have the resources to maintain a household in the style to which she had become accustomed and to provide for her unmarried daughter Ellen and now Marion and her three children as well. So in 1923, at the age of 41, Marion went back to teaching. This was unusual for a married woman in those days, but Marion was probably helped by women she had known at university. She taught at Epsom Girls Grammar School, which was well regarded academically and close to the house in Remuera. Marion developed a great rapport with her students and after two years she was a senior mistress, teaching English, history and languages. She taught there until she retired in 1943.⁸

5 'Vera Cashell': Auckland Girls Grammar School archives. Vera was the niece of Stanley's half-brother Arthur Cashell. Financial details from Stanley's bankruptcy file (see footnote 4) and the report on a meeting of his creditors in the *NZ Herald* 19 Oct 1922, p. 5. The bankruptcy was discharged on 26 October 1932. Additional information on Metcalfe loans in HH Metcalfe estate papers in the HJHM archive. Stanley was on the NZ Army Reserve Roll 1917. He is thought to have been assessed as unfit for active service because of a hand injury that restricted its use.

6 Drink-driving episodes reported in *Auckland Star* 6 Feb 1924, p. 6; 10 Nov 1926, p. 8 and 27 Mar 1929, p. 11; and *NZ Truth* 18 Nov 1926, p. 7. Stanley also spent a year at the Salvation Army's inebriates home on Rotorua Island (*Auckland Star* 15 Jul 1936, p. 8).

7 Ownership of the house would be transferred to Marion in 1938.

8 Marion's teaching record: Epsom Girls Grammar School archives.

So it came to be that between the ages of five and eleven Rosalie shared the house with not only her immediate family but also her moody grandmother and spinster aunt. It was not a large house, especially compared with the twelve-room Metcalfe family house Jessie had shared with her husband in upmarket Parnell, but it was large enough, with four bedrooms, a maid's room, a sitting room, dining room and conservatory. It cannot have been easy for any of them. Rosalie recalled years later, 'by the time we moved into my grandmother's house she was unable to do much for herself, or so she liked to believe. She needed to be catered to.' Jessie set the tone of the household: she was the daughter of a prosperous Scottish merchant and had been brought up in the fashionable English spa town of Cheltenham in Gloucestershire where the Hamilton family became close to the Metcalfes, a Hampshire county family of independent means also living in Cheltenham. The atmosphere at Halls Avenue was oppressive, standards of behaviour were important, happiness didn't enter into it, and it was all adults. Rosalie remembered: 'People had high standards for you. You had good table manners and you spoke correctly, and you were seen and not heard a lot, because people did not have time for you, really.' She remembered noticing a girl smile up at a friend's mother once and thought 'What's she smiling for? Adults aren't our friends.' Another of Jessie's granddaughters, Nicolette, remembered Jessie as being 'a bit of a tyrant' and her brother Bill 'used to be scared of her'.⁹ Rosalie recalled: 'After my mother left the house in the morning to teach ... my grandmother would make us wash up the breakfast dishes and we'd miss the tram to school and be in trouble. It wasn't any good pointing this out to her.'

The breakfast dishes aside, the brunt of the household work fell on Marion's older sister Ellen (known as Nellie). Aunt Nellie was later fixed in Rosalie's mind as someone 'who did things' — forever polishing tables, painting garden barrels green and raising chicks and ducklings. During the 1914–18 war Nellie had served as a volunteer aid detachment nurse in India, where she had Hamilton cousins and a Metcalfe aunt and afterwards lived in England, but returned to Auckland in 1921 to look after Jessie.¹⁰ It was Nellie who responded to a ten-year old Rosalie's pleas for ideas for an entry in the school flower show: 'Why don't you do buttercups and broom in brass?' Rosalie, desperate to do well, was very dubious, but went ahead and won first prize, much to her delight. This is the first recorded instance of Rosalie using yellow as the predominant colour in one of her works.



Marion Walker (Mrs MH Walker BA) in 1929, an image from a poster picturing all the teachers at Epsom Girls Grammar School at the time

Photograph courtesy of Hannah Fink



Stanley with his children, c. 1930: Daintry, Rosalie and Douglas

Photograph from author's archive

⁹ 'A bit of a tyrant': 20 May 2005 Nicolette Benyon to MG: she was only four when Jessie died and does not remember her, only her reputation. 'Scared of her': 17 Dec 1999 HJ (Bill) Hamilton Metcalfe to Mrs Benson (Metcalfe Society) (HJHM archive). He was seven when she died in July 1928. Jessie had been in poor health for the six months before her death.

¹⁰ A legacy of Nellie's Indian experience was the name given to one of the family dogs, 'Kutah', later taken up by Rosalie's family in the 1950s.

With hindsight, Rosalie came to think of Nellie as a frustrated artist. As a young woman Nellie had been a water-colourist, probably taught by her father, and was later described by an English Metcalfe aunt as ‘a keen artist’, but the demands of running the busy household in Halls Avenue meant she had neither the time nor opportunity to venture out to scenic spots with brushes in hand. Rosalie also concluded that she was closer to Nellie who did things, than to her bookish sister Daintry. Indeed, there was something of Nellie’s busy hands in Rosalie and in the way she worked in the studio. There was one other legacy: when Nellie died in 1931 she left the bulk of her estate to Rosalie and Daintry, which helped pay their expenses while at university.¹¹ There was a legacy of a different kind from Grandmother Jessie because, in addition to the training Jessie provided in social standards, Rosalie inherited Jessie’s abiding love of the colour yellow and of fine china. ‘My grandmother was very fond of yellow. She had yellow curtains. She used to buy a lot of yellow china.’ In terms of the art Rosalie was to make fifty years later, it was a noteworthy legacy.¹²

When Rosalie was between the ages of eight and thirteen, summer holidays at Waiheke Island (about 18 kilometres north-east of Auckland in the Hauraki Gulf) provided relief for all from the pressures of the Remuera house. ‘I think the reason we [Rosalie, her sister, brother and their mother] went to Waiheke each year was to give my grandmother a rest.’¹³ Their six-week holidays were fairly lonely. Waiheke was then a ninety-minute ferry ride away, with perhaps one boat a week. Rosalie’s later success as an artist gave an edge to her memories of New Zealand and she would describe the Waiheke experience ‘as one of my great influences’, one borne out by the evocations of those times in her work fifty or more years later and mirrored in the similar sense of freedom she found on her travels in the countryside around Canberra. ‘It was the freedom that made our time at Waiheke so different from now, so different from our everyday life then ... We could do what we wished. No one could say to us yea or nay. We loved the house and the deserted beach. If by chance someone did wander onto our territory — and the shoreline was public of course — we resented their presence.’ When Rosalie’s brother and sister were doing ‘meaningless’ things like making rafts and boats she would wander off on her own and look at shells. The shells and all her other finds came back to the beach house where they were ‘arranged in rows on tabletops. Endlessly, so no one could eat.’ This would be a familiar experience for Rosalie’s family and friends in the 1970s when the dining table and then all the living areas in the house in Pearce were taken over as her workspace. It was a practice that carried over into her art, notably in *Games table* 1975–76.¹⁴

There were also country holidays with Metcalfe family cousins at Te Kuiti — ‘it was always the paddocks ... And not much personal supervision ... and you made something out of nothing’. In 1997 Rosalie could still remember how suddenly a calf was born on the hill and then a donkey, and in the orchard how the plums turned yellow and gold. Memories of these times found their way into Rosalie’s constructions, none more so than in the aptly titled *Age of innocence* 1993, which captured the feel of Waiheke’s blue seas, sandy bays, green pastures and rocky promontories. Later, in Canberra, she came to enjoy — need — the solitude of the Australian countryside, and would speak about the ‘lyrical quality of acceptance, of taking things as they come, and accepting the perfect with the imperfect’ that she felt while out in the country.¹⁵

11 ‘A keen artist’: Florence Metcalfe as told to HJ Hamilton Metcalfe (HJHM archive). Ellen died on 15 July 1931. Her estate was valued at £1300 (Probate no. 570/31).

12 ‘Fond of yellow’: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 12.

13 One summer Jessie sent a message to stay longer: there had been an outbreak of polio in the city. Jessie’s relief was the occasional holiday with her daughter Dolly Broadfoot at Te Kuiti (1997 Frost) (also for country holidays).

14 ‘My great influences’ and Te Kuiti: 1982 North; ‘arranged in rows’: 1997 Ross.

15 Metcalfe cousins: the cousins were the two daughters of Marion’s sister Dorothy (Dolly), who married Walter Broadfoot, a solicitor at Te Kuiti. He was elected to the New Zealand parliament in 1928, served in the war cabinet, was later postmaster general and was knighted for his political services. ‘Lyrical quality of acceptance’: 1982 North (talking of *Scrub country* 1981–82).

Rosalie's references to the 'freedom' and 'acceptance' she experienced in rural settings are a recurring theme in her memories. The place where she found peace was in nature: 'I looked at nature and was accepted.' She came to recognise herself as someone who was different, who did not conform and did not fit in. Apart from anything else, she was the tallest in her family, even taller than her parents. Rosalie also understood she was like her estranged father rather than her Anglo-Scottish mother: 'I had a bit of that unacceptable Irish from my father', whereas her sister and brother did not. Of the three children, it was Rosalie who looked most like her father. She remembered him as a man who liked to be happy and laugh a bit. Daintry, like their mother, was academically inclined. 'Brains were valued in the family. I was always out of step. More like my Irish father — you did not have to take me seriously. I think I probably drove my mother mad with my lateral thinking. I always looked sideways. The others all read books — so I was always on my own a bit.'¹⁶

As a child Rosalie tried to find things to amuse herself and would follow her mother around asking her to give her something to make. 'But she was so busy she couldn't direct me towards anything creative although she did sometimes say she was sure I could paint. I can't paint and I can't draw. She'd recognised something in me which made me different from the others but she'd hit upon the wrong medium.' So far as artists were concerned, the only models Rosalie had were her aunt Ellen, her cousin Damaris and her dead Metcalfe grandfather, who could all draw and paint — the very skills that eluded her. Rosalie had seen her grandfather Metcalfe's sailing sketchbooks filled with watercolour sketches and she admired the seas he painted. Her cousin Damaris could draw well and when she grew up sought work as a book illustrator 'whereas I couldn't draw anything at all that looked like anything'. She failed dismally in her attempt at secondary school to get one of her works on the wall in the display case that showed the best student works. 'It was absolutely hopeless. I had no self-belief at all.'¹⁷

Art did not play much part in Rosalie's childhood. 'To be really into art in the New Zealand of that time was to possess a Medici print of Van Gogh's *Sunflowers*.' People rarely had paintings in the house at all, although at Halls Avenue there were oils done by English aunts — 'very proper, conventional pictures ... heather on the moors' — and a few of Ellen's watercolours, though once all Rosalie remembered was 'a terrible sepia thing' in the hall, of Hope sitting on the world [by the symbolist GF Watts, *Hope* 1886], and, on another occasion, prints of Van Gogh's [*Langlois*] *Bridge of Arles* and *Cornfield* [probably *Wheatfield with Crows*]. 'If you were terribly, terribly forward looking and artistic, you had a print on your bedroom wall.' Rosalie had 'a Madonna and an oil' on hers. In 1942 these were joined by an unidentified print, which Ben Gascoigne ('Gassy') had sent her for her birthday. 'I like the picture very much espec[ially] the sky and I like the general blueness.' His gift reflected a newly discovered interest in art on his part, and suggests that maybe he had seen something in Rosalie to prompt his choice.¹⁸

16 'Looked at nature': 1997 Frost; 'unacceptable Irish': 1982 North and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 12. Rosalie would later observe, 'Irish got to be a fairly dirty word. You know, "I'm Irish" and that excused everything. They're old outmoded ideas but this did happen. But I'm always thankful to have a bit of Irish in me. There was an awful worthiness about the other thing' (1995 Topliss, p. 7).

17 'But she was so busy': Frost 1997; 'whereas I couldn't draw': 1995 Topliss, Janet Hawley 1997, also Damaris's daughter Nicholas Rodgers with MG July 2005.

18 'English aunts': Janet Hawley 1997. Florence Metcalfe was a serious practitioner, drew and painted in watercolour and oil and subscribed to *The Studio* magazine; her sister Clara also painted. For a more detailed account of the Metcalfe family in England see Martin Gascoigne 2012, pp. 132–135. 'Hope': the oil painting on which the print was based is in the Tate Museum, London — my thanks to Daniel Thomas for the attribution. 'I like the picture': 20 Feb [1942] R.G to B.G. Ben bought it from Carl Plate's Notanda Gallery in Sydney.

Teenager, student and teacher

Rosalie recalled her teenage years as a period in which she completely lacked self-confidence. While lack of confidence is not unusual for a teenager, Rosalie also had to cope with the troubles within her family, and the scandal surrounding her cousin, Bill Bayly, who was hanged in 1934 for murdering his neighbours (and earlier was suspected of being responsible for the mysterious death of another Walker cousin in 1927). Although Rosalie missed the presence of her father in the house, so far as her daily life was concerned she seems to have been otherwise unaffected by this background tumult. Schoolfriends recall Rosalie quite differently from the out-of-step girl she remembered herself as. One of them, Ruth Evans, described her as ‘gregarious and good company for other children, so she would get asked away on holidays with them’. She went on: ‘Rosalie and Daintry were very different personalities, Daintry being quiet and Rosalie the more dominant personality. Rosalie was always stimulating company and it was great fun to be with her on the many walks we took together round the streets of Remuera. We’d admire the gardens and the view [of Waitemata Harbour from Mount Hobson “in all its moods”]. This would be when we were in our early teens. Rosalie and her mother put on wonderful parties with new and exciting games that they introduced. Exciting food, too.’¹⁹



Rosalie (far right) and the Epsom Girls Grammar School tennis team in 1934, next to her friend Marie Best. Joan Hewitson is second from left

Photograph from author's archive

From 1930 to 1934 Rosalie and Ruth were schoolfriends at Epsom Girls Grammar School, where Marion taught. ‘We were in the top form at EGGs. I was very aware that Rosalie was much cleverer than I was. She was extremely clever but not overly academic (and not ambitious to be the top). She was able to perform well in English, Mathematics and Science but was reluctant to do homework so didn’t perform well in subjects that required learning French vocabulary. She was not interested in acting Shakespeare and the like, so she did not try, but she would listen well as others “strutted” their parts.’ According to Ruth, Rosalie was very strong physically and, like her mother, good at games like hockey and tennis.²⁰ She was extremely confident in her attitude towards teachers and pupils. She liked them and they liked her. Rosalie had no desire to be popular but the other pupils liked and respected her. She was compassionate and would feel sorry when her friends endured bad luck. She could be patient, too, with those in sore trouble. In 1999 another schoolfriend wrote to Rosalie after seeing her work exhibited in Auckland: ‘I had absolutely no idea what your approach would be but I should have realised — remembering you as I do [from school] — that it would be no conventional scenes.’²¹

¹⁹ Bill Bayly was the son of Stanley’s sister Constance and Frank Bayly. ‘Schoolfriends recall’: Ruth Evans to MG, also the source for the next paragraph; see also 28 Oct 1999 Ruth Evans to BG (BG papers NLA).

²⁰ The yellow-orange in Rosalie’s triptych *Orangery* 1998 triggered memories of the egg-yolk yellow gym smocks or skirts worn at Epsom Girls Grammar School. See the catalogue entry on *Orangery* 1998.

²¹ ‘Remembering you as I do’: 1 May 1999 Joan Hewitson to R.G.

After Ellen died in 1931 Marion allowed Stanley to return to the family at Halls Avenue where he had a room of his own and the shed to work on cars. Rosalie, who was about fifteen at the time, was pleased to be part of a normal family again, although it was an uneasy household. Marion and Stanley were really only reconciled after Marion retired ‘but it was never an equal sort of relationship. [Mother] always had the upper hand, she was the stronger personality.’ Rosalie remembered, ‘father did not give up his ways and so we had royal battles’. After another drink-driving incident in 1936 he lost his licence for five years, which put a dent in his car maintenance business.²²

Times were tough in the Depression: a teacher’s pay did not always arrive on schedule, which could cause embarrassment with the housekeeping bills, but the family was still better off than many. At least there was money for the ‘pound and a half of gravy beef’ that Rosalie remembered having to fetch from the butcher, and to pay unemployed men who came to the house ‘two bob after they cut the lawns’. There was also the money from Ellen’s estate and, later, bursaries to pay for the girls’ education. In an atmosphere of insecurity generated by the Depression, Stanley’s rocky relationship with Marion and his inability to provide for his family, the focus of the children’s education was economic security and their ability to earn a living. When Rosalie left school her aim was to get the qualifications for a job, which in her case would be teaching. She had a strong role model — her mother, Marion, whose education and teaching experience meant she could get a job to support her family when she left Stanley. Rosalie was awarded a University National Bursary (one of three for her school that year), so she was eligible to apply to the Education Department for a bursary tenable at Auckland University College, which she attended from 1935 to 1938. She studied English, Latin, Greek, French and pure mathematics, majoring in English and Latin and graduating in 1939 as a Bachelor of Arts. She was very proud of her degree.²³

It was a good time to be studying English at Auckland. A new professor, Arthur Sewell, had been appointed in 1934. He was only thirty, a fine literary critic, known internationally and a good actor with a beautiful speaking voice. ‘His lectures to large classes were performances of a high order.’ The English course placed a lot of emphasis on the history of English language, which was taught by Philip Arden. Sewell and Arden made a great combination. Keith Sinclair, who was a student at the same time as Rosalie and became a distinguished historian, thought the students were very lucky: ‘They could not have received a better undergraduate education — and training — in English language and literature in many places of the world.’²⁴ This was the foundation for Rosalie’s love of words and her appreciation of ‘the blow to the solar plexus that the right word in the right place, or the new word in the right place, [which] gives me pleasure beyond belief’. Later, her knowledge of words was obvious to anyone foolish enough to challenge her to a game of Scrabble, in her skill with cryptic crosswords, and in the titles she chose for her assemblages. Rosalie was a natural poet and, like her mother, able to conjure up the apt and pungent phrase for person, thing or event. The poetry she studied at university stayed with her: Rosalie would acknowledge late in life that the aim of her work ‘was probably nearest to lyric poetry. Its purpose is feeling, not recognition.’²⁵

22 The best account of Rosalie’s memories of her father is in 1998 Hughes; ‘lost his licence’: *Auckland Star* 15 Jul 1936, p. 8.

23 Bursary: *Evening Post* 1 Feb 1935, p. 10. Courses of study from Rosalie’s academic record, courtesy of the registrar University of Auckland and Dianna Howard 27 May and 4 June 2004. Daintry went to Massey Agricultural College in Palmerston North to train as an agricultural scientist, and became the first female to graduate from the college. It wasn’t cheap: the fees were £100 a year (about NZ\$885 in 2017), plus the extra costs of living away from home. Douglas became an accountant.

24 Quotes from Keith Sinclair *A history of the University of Auckland, 1883–1983* Auckland University Press, 1983, pp. 173, 145–187. Auckland University College course details from the college calendars 1935–38.

25 ‘Blow to the solar plexus’: ‘Poems chosen by Rosalie Gascoigne’ *A return to poetry 1999* Duffy & Snellgrove, Sydney, 1999; ‘nearest to lyric poetry’: 1996 Davidson.



Auckland University College Field Club Christmas excursion to Great Barrier Island in the Hauraki Gulf, 100 km north-east of Auckland. Rosalie is standing in the centre. Marie Best is the blonde at lower right and Charles Fleming, one of Rosalie's suitors, upper right, wears a hat

Photograph from author's archive

Rosalie's memories of her university days do not put much weight on her academic endeavours. She remembered it as a time of young men and failed relationships, sports and social activities. 'I played tennis [she was one of four in the university tennis team] and was with a lot of people. We mainly enjoyed ourselves and did not make too much of the lectures — you took notes and did enough to pass the exams and you went to field clubs and things.' Field clubs were run by zoologists and botanists: 'you walked for miles and had your meals in huts and they'd say this rock was greywacke but you did not care whether it was greywacke or not, as you were having a nice time'. Rosalie and her friend Marie Best were about the only two non-scientific walkers 'asked along by one of the boys for light relief as the scientific women were pretty earnest. I didn't want to be scientific but it was a sort of way of life in the back-to-nature-and-the-old-hut and that sort of stuff I liked.'²⁶

In March 1938, while still at Auckland University College, Rosalie did some practical teaching at Whangarei, 140 kilometres north of Auckland. Letters home to 'Gassy' Gascoigne, whom she got to know at university, describe the school (which didn't impress), her classes and her strategies for dealing with her girls. In her first class, her pupils 'tried everything on to see how much I'd take. But I was determined that whatever my shortcomings as a teacher might be, at least I wld be respected as a keeper of order. So my classes are orderly if uninformed, poor things.' Rosalie encouraged self-expression in her students: 'I want them to write on simple subjects ("Rain") that they can have their own thoughts about and not dish out the ideas of other people'. Rosalie did well enough for the headmistress to offer her more relief teaching but Rosalie turned her down because she missed her Auckland life and needed to complete her degree.²⁷ After graduating, Rosalie undertook a year's teacher training under John Murdoch, then head of the graduate course at the teacher's college. There was a lot of emphasis on the theory and practice of teaching, and half of students' time was spent in observation and practice.²⁸

26 'I played tennis', 'walked for miles' and 'light relief': 1998 Hughes.

27 She worked out that she was getting paid about £3 a week plus a boarding allowance of 12/6 (12 shillings and sixpence), but board cost 30/- (30 shillings) and consequently 'life isn't everything that I expected it to be' (3 Mar 1938 R.G to B.G). In other words, Rosalie's total weekly income was £3/12/6 of which £1/10/0 was the cost of board, leaving her with £2/2/6.

28 Murdoch described his students as 'keenly critical, possessed of the highest ideals, anxious to learn, often charmingly modest and extraordinarily gifted. Many are "born teachers", adapting themselves to new conditions with amazing ease' (Louise Shaw *Making a difference: A history of the Auckland College of Education 1881–2004* Auckland University Press, 2006, pp. 100–101). The curriculum was broad and as well as the principles and practice of education, and courses in hygiene, physical education, music and art, students were required to undertake three subjects not included in their degree. When asked about her formal art training, Rosalie remembered her teacher training course 'but that was different'; she regarded her ikebana lessons in the 1960s as her first and only formal art training (1998 Hughes).

Rosalie began teaching in 1940 at Kowhai Intermediate School near central Auckland, and in 1941 she joined the Auckland Girls Grammar School (AGGS), where her mother had taught thirty years before. It was a traditional establishment with extremely high standards. ‘I enjoyed [teaching] when I knew the subject, and I was good with children. I could teach English and Latin but when it came to history or geography I was just hopeless. I hadn’t read the books.’ Rosalie taught at AGGS in 1941 and 1942, until resigning to get married in Australia.²⁹ Her training and her brief career as a teacher left their mark. In later life Rosalie was a skilful communicator well able to handle public lectures and journalists’ interviews. She had good stuff to say and could deliver her messages in vivid images. She made a great subject for television.

At university, boys would single Rosalie out for attention. ‘This was a revelation to me — Who? Me? At university I had a few things where I was special to a few people. And this made a lot of difference; it was a bolstering effect to me that, in spite of those girls being prettier ... somebody singled you out. I think that was what I needed, that you wanted to be special.’³⁰ One of those boys was SCB Gascoigne (‘Gassy’, whom she was later to call Ben). Rosalie met him in 1933 when he was at university but she was still at Epsom Girls Grammar School. Although their families moved in different circles, they had at least one mutual friend, Bob Foster, who invited Ben to make up a four for bridge with Rosalie. They did not see much of each other until Rosalie went to university in 1935. On one memorable occasion, when they were closing up the university theatre after a student dance, Rosalie engaged Ben in a game of ‘will o’ the wisp’, in and out of the heavy curtains. They would walk home together from the university because ‘girls of her background did not walk out alone at night’. At weekends they would take the train up north to Henderson, about half an hour away, and tramp over the hills to the coast, about eight miles. They both loved the theatre (rather than the cinema) and would save up so they could go, several times a year.³¹



Student trampers: (left to right) Edmund Hillary, Neil Robinson, Ed (Eddy) Burton and Ben; Neil and Eddy would become godfathers to Ben’s sons
Photograph from author’s archive

29 On teaching, see 1982 North and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 13. AGGS archives has the old class rolls with Rosalie’s signature on them: RNK Walker. When Rosalie’s son Toss took up teaching in England, she recalled some of her experiences in letters to him. ‘I always remember a tough class of 45 grade C girls (sixteen-year-olds) I had once in the war. They had driven the two teachers before me into other professions. That’s where I learnt you never antagonise. What they did like was being encouraged to write a class magazine with a suitable quotation for each class member. The girl who got expelled for writing a rude essay about teacher (me) (very rude essay) got “This body did a grievous wrong”. But it brought out the best in them. That, and praise at the drop of a hat’ (9 Jun, 7 Jul 1971 RG to TG).

30 ‘Who? Me?’: Rosalie was not alone in this. Betty Churcher (1931–2015), one-time director of the NGA, described feeling exactly the same way (Betty Churcher *Notebooks* Melbourne University Publishing, 2011).

31 BG reminiscences 1999: ‘Will o’ the wisp’ in MG’s eulogy at Rosalie’s memorial service, November 1999 (RG papers NLA). Ben remembered seeing the *Comedy Harmonists* (visiting Auckland in November 1937) and *The Whitehorse Inn* with Rosalie. ‘Four for bridge’: undated letter c. 2009 Bob Foster to MG.



The portrait Rosalie commissioned in 1941 for Ben in Australia

Photograph from author's archive



Rosalie and Ben photographed outside the Allens's house on Mt Stromlo where they had their wedding reception in January 1943. Clay Allen gave the bride away

Photograph from author's archive



The families and friends left behind: Marion hosted a party in January 1943 to celebrate Ben and Rosalie's wedding in Canberra. Seated (left to right): Angela, Pamela and Rene Gascoigne (Ben's sisters and mother), Marion and Daintry Walker. Standing: possibly Dolly Broadfoot (aunt) on far left, Bob Foster fifth from left, then Marjorie Daniel (behind Rene); fourth from right is Phyllis Buddle (aunt) (behind Marion) and on the far right is Marie Best

Photograph from author's archive

Rosalie wrote to Ben from Whangarei when she was teaching there in the autumn of 1938. As well as describing her life in Whangarei, Rosalie's letters to Ben also touched on their relationship, including her desire to get back to Auckland for the Rowing Club dance: 'Blast it, this is going to sound crude, but you wouldn't mention dances to a girl unless your intentions were the best, would you Gassy?' They were good friends, certainly, but Rosalie was intent on playing the field: 'Your chief fear seems to be that I'll take you too seriously. There is neither hope nor fear of that. I'm not taking anyone seriously. I'm having a good look round and finding out what I really want and when, about four years hence, I've made up my mind I'll start in being ingratiating. Then if it's you, lookout!' She was, after all, only just 21 and he was planning to do a PhD in England, though a friend at the time remembers him as having 'a keen eye on a lovely Rosalie Walker'. Four years later, she would make up her mind and move. In the meantime Ben sailed from Auckland in August 1938 and returned two years later, on the last passenger boat to leave England for Australia as the Battle of Britain was about to start. When he arrived back in Auckland, his own family had fallen on hard times and could no longer accommodate him, so Marion invited him to board with them.³²

Rosalie continued to live at home while she was at university and teaching, and she and Marion became very close. Daintry had long left home in pursuit of her career as an agricultural scientist. Douglas went off to war. 'Mother missed me frightfully when I left home because I was her amusement and her companion. I was teaching at one of the high schools and she was teaching at another. It was a terrible wrench leaving her because I could vicariously suffer all that she was suffering.'³³

In August 1941 Ben left Auckland for Australia to take up an appointment at the Commonwealth Solar Observatory at Mount Stromlo outside Canberra where he would be engaged in war-production work, designing and constructing optical instruments for weapons systems, and would go on to have a distinguished career as an astronomer and telescope designer.³⁴ Rosalie had her photograph taken for Ben and the photographer put a copy of it in his window, prompting many queries from young American servicemen seeking her name and address, but to no avail. She had her other admirers, keen to marry her, but it was Ben she chose, and in 1942 she sent him a telegram asking if he would marry her.

³² Rosalie's undated letters are in the BG papers NLA. She did get to go to the Rowing Club dance (*New Zealand Herald* 14 Mar 1938, *Auckland Star* 4 Apr 1938). Ben and Rosalie's granddaughter, Hester (Hetty) Gascoigne, remembers Grandfather Ben being very pleased with the string of boyfriends she introduced to him. He told her it was a good thing she was not making her mind up on a man before trying out a few first. 'A keen eye': 8 Jun 2010 Sir Owen Woodhouse to MG.

³³ One time they decided to beautify their sitting room on a modest budget 'so they dyed the elderly carpet black and chose yellow silk for the curtains' — the colour scheme of Rosalie's many retroreflective road sign assemblages and also a favourite of Jessie Metcalfe's. As part of their contribution to the war effort they taught English to refugees (March 2005 Ruth Evans to MG).

³⁴ On Ben's career, for which he was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO), see his Academy of Science personal record and BG papers NLA.

The engagement was announced on 6 June 1942 and in January 1943 Rosalie found herself in a flying boat headed for Sydney, then on the train to Canberra and Mount Stromlo. They were married in St John's Church, Canberra, on 9 January 1943 and spent their honeymoon in Sydney, buying furniture for the house that would be their home until 1960. In marrying and leaving New Zealand Rosalie was following her idea of what life was about: 'I always knew I meant to get married and have children. I knew I had to have children — I just needed them. It was unthinkable for me not to have children.'³⁵

The memory of New Zealand

The New Zealand that Rosalie maintained contact with from Australia was very much the New Zealand of her childhood and university days. By far the strongest link with the past was her mother, Marion. They exchanged long, lively letters every couple of weeks, with vivid descriptions of the things they had been doing, news of the extended family and of the people they knew. The letter writing continued until Marion's death in 1969. There were visits to and fro: Marion made visits in 1944, 1950 (with Stanley), 1952 and in 1961. Rosalie went back in 1946 and 1948–49 to show off her young sons, and in 1957 with her daughter, but did not go back again until 1983. Some friends kept in touch at Christmas but, with one exception, it was rare for old friends to visit Canberra.

The notable exception was Rosalie's teacher friend Marjorie Daniel, who made twenty-four visits over thirty years, each one an occasion for reliving the Auckland of the 1930s. After the 1988 visit, Ben observed, 'Marjorie went back last Tuesday, reluctantly as usual, but not before she and yr mother had once again recreated their girlhoods in minute detail'. They were also occasions for the two old friends to observe the comparative advantages of Australia over New Zealand: after one three-week visit, Rosalie reported that Marjorie has 'gone back with 2 smart dresses, 2 pairs shoes, chinaware, glassware and a new dressing gown. EVERYTHING better than in N.Z. ... enjoyed her stay.'³⁶



Marion and Stanley photographed in Sydney on a visit to Australia, c. 1950
Image courtesy of Neil Walker

³⁵ Engagement: *New Zealand Herald* 6 Jun 1942, p. 4; 'meant to have children': 1998 Hughes. The wedding was to have been a week earlier but had to be rescheduled when Rosalie's flight was delayed. Ben kept the finance document listing the purchases from Anthony Hordern and Son: namely a kitchen table and chairs, one bedroom suite, a lounge suite, a card table, a few other small items and several 'druggets' (BG papers NLA).

³⁶ 'Marjorie went back': 17 Sep [1988] BG to TG; 'gone back with': 11 Sep 1972 RG to TG. Rosalie's experience was typical of many emigrants, whose perception of their homeland is naturally shaped by their memory of their homeland as it was when they left, but what is unusual in Rosalie's case is the constant reinforcement of those images of old Auckland through her mother's letters and visits from Marjorie Daniel (until the mid-1990s).



Rosalie in Auckland with Marjorie Daniel and the author. This visit was an important milestone because it was then that she understood: 'You can't live in two countries. Once you leave home, there's no such thing as going back' (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 14). She learnt to 'let go' and come to terms with her life in Australia

Photograph from author's archive

Once Rosalie was fully embarked on her career as an artist, she had another perspective from which to view her old life in Auckland and within her family. She concluded that she could never have been an artist in New Zealand, constricted as her childhood was by a need to conform, and believed that 'plenty of New Zealanders would not have considered me an artist even when I sort of arrived'. She stayed away. Speculating in 1978 that Ben would like to return she commented, 'there'll be no cooperation from me'. It was only when she began to know the art world in New Zealand in the 1980s and 1990s, and could relate to New Zealand as an artist, that her attitude changed.³⁷

In reflecting on her upbringing and how she finally found herself, Rosalie took her cue from Picasso and put it like this: 'I think you are born the artist, but you've got to shake off a lot of your conditioning and you've got to shake off a lot of what the people who influenced you in your childhood thought you were, which you certainly are not.' It is an idea that informed her remarks about her big linoleum work, *Letting go* 1991. Or as she told Robert Lindsay in 1978: 'this art thing lets you free to be yourself, regardless of what anybody thinks, and I think that's probably what I needed to be because you get rather sick of being always a little bit out of step'.³⁸

Picasso's observation that 'you don't become an artist, you are born an artist' was one she would often bring up. 'I think if you're that sort of animal you find the way. If you're really desperate enough and you want to you can find a way for your art.' But it wasn't easy. 'It takes a long time to sort yourself out though ... and I think that's what an artist probably should be doing, sorting themselves out, what they really are. And it takes you decades to find out what you are.' Rosalie was in her mid-fifties when she found out. What follows is an account of Rosalie's long journey of self-discovery and fulfilment.³⁹

³⁷ On conformity and 'would not have considered me an artist': 1997 Ross; 'no cooperation': c. 30 Nov 1978 RG to TG.

³⁸ 'Born the artist': 1997 Ross (and others); 'this art thing': 1978 Lindsay.

³⁹ Picasso observation: 1978 Lindsay, 1982 North, 1984 Wood Conroy, 1995 Topliss, 1997 Ross, 1997 Feneley; 'if you're that sort of animal': 1995 Topliss; 'it takes a long time': 1990 Ross.

B. Marriage and family

Early life on Mount Stromlo

The challenges Rosalie faced when she arrived in Australia were much the same as those facing any young immigrant: she had to shed her old life and come to terms with marriage, family and life in a very different community in a very different landscape. It took Rosalie seven years to do so, until around 1950. Thereafter, life became easier, and Rosalie gradually began to have more time for creative activities, particularly for her country foraging and flower arranging.

When Rosalie arrived in Australia, Canberra had only 8000 people and was barely twenty years old, an isolated country town markedly different from the bustling, lush green harbour city of about 200,000 she had left behind. Canberra was a hierarchical town of public servants who had no need for or interest in the handful of scientists on Mount Stromlo. When offered the choice of living in town or in the country, and knowing little of what it would be like to live on the mountain as a young mother in 1943, Rosalie chose the mountain, which she thought would be the safer bet. The dawning reality must have come as a huge shock after the pleasures and convenience of city life in Auckland. She found herself confined to a small, isolated community of about thirty adult residents on a pine-covered mountain top at the end of a ten-mile unsealed road to the nearest town. Wartime petrol rationing meant there were few opportunities to get away. Indeed, life was such that government employees living on Mount Stromlo were paid a hardship allowance of £39 a year in addition to salary, a considerable sum at the time. Rosalie's decision to live there would have a profound effect on her future life.⁴⁰

She was a welcome addition to the mountain community. When Rosalie first arrived, she impressed a neighbour as 'rather tall and slight, rather nice looking ... she seems to fit into our household very easily', and one of the European refugees working there remembered: 'from the day you introduced her to the Stromlo bachelors she always charmed me — and everybody else'. She liked the company of these intelligent, lonely, displaced men, whom she would ask to join her for a cup of tea, and they liked her. She also struck a chord with the urbane, Cambridge-educated director of the observatory, Richard Woolley, who regarded her as the only good conversationalist on the mountain, and turned up one night with HC 'Nugget' Coombs in tow to meet this 'Jane Austen' (as Ben recalled). For similar reasons he also invited the Gascoignes to dinner when the master of his old college at Cambridge visited Canberra. But these were to be rare events.⁴¹

Six married women provided female companionship: three were married to scientists, one to an instrument maker and two to groundsmen. They had very assorted backgrounds and interests, and not much in common with Rosalie. For Rosalie in 1943 and 1944, used to the pleasures and convenience of urban life, the stimulus of her teaching job and the easy availability of like-minded friends and family in Auckland, the solitude and isolation was testing — no place to meet, no place to shop. 'My mother came, and said, "this is a terrible place. Can't even go anywhere to borrow a book." And you couldn't.' There were trips up to the observatory to collect the mail, simply in the hope of receiving a friendly nod. 'You'd see some of those glamorous people



A postcard of Mount Stromlo in the early 1940s with the Tidbinbilla range beyond. The family houses are not visible, but were left centre, down the hill in the pine trees, which made for a gloomy environment and added to the sense of isolation that Elinor Ward noticed when she described mountain life in 1950. It was something of a revelation to the residents when the forest was destroyed in a bushfire in 1952

Photograph from author's archive

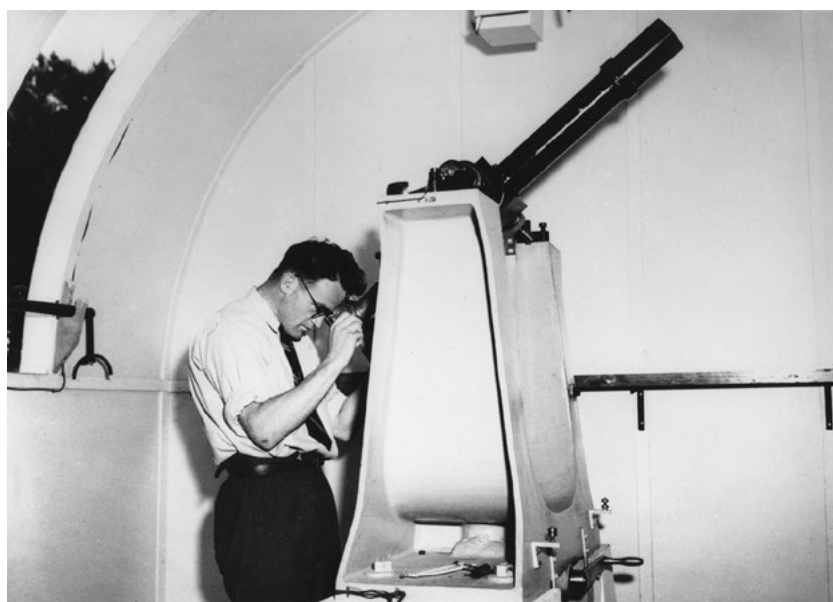
⁴⁰ 'Offered the choice': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 17. The number of residents is derived from the 1943 electoral roll, which lists 22, not including Rosalie or the wartime refugees recruited to work at the observatory because of their special skills. Nor does it include the workers who lived in Canberra and were transported to and from the mountain each day. 'Hardship allowance': CW Allen papers NLA (diary 2 Feb 1943).

⁴¹ 'Rather tall and slight': CW Allen papers NLA (diary 6 Jan 1943). Allen gave Rosalie away at her wedding and hosted the wedding breakfast. 'Stromlo bachelors': Oct 1999 Czech optician Francis Lord to BG (BG papers NLA); see also 1998 Hughes on 'good works' with the bachelors. Woolley: recollections of TG and Mary Eagle of conversations with BG. Woolley shared a flat with Coombs in Melbourne, who became one of the greatest public servants of his generation. When FJM Stratton, Master of Gonville and Caius, Woolley's old Cambridge college, was in Canberra on a wartime mission Woolley invited them down to the Hotel Canberra to dine with Stratton.



Ben returning home from the observatory to the house on Mount Stromlo one memorable winter in the late 1940s (because snow like this was uncommon). The only heating was from wood fires and single-bar electric radiators until the mid-1950s, when an oil-burning heater was installed. Rosalie would talk about the air in the house being 'blue with the cold'

Photograph from author's archive



Ben with the first telescope he designed. Absorbed in his science and war work, he only recognised much later how much at sea Rosalie was on the lonely mountain top, the first time she had lived away from home for any length of time

Photograph from author's archive

who worked. People smiled at them in the corridors. I used to say to my husband, "you don't know what it's like in a house all day, with nobody." It was real loneliness.' Ben agreed, 'It was the first time she had left home and she was very much at sea. I wish I'd appreciated this more at the time.'⁴²

If these were tough times, they got worse in November 1943 following the birth of her first child, who immediately required surgery in Sydney. The surgery was done 'with misgivings as the complaint was not positively identified'. (It turned out to be pyloric stenosis, which caused projectile vomiting.) Rosalie stayed in Sydney for two months, with only limited access to her child and having to deal with unsympathetic nursing staff. Mother and child returned to Canberra on 2 February 1944, accompanied by Marion, who, having retired in 1943, came from New Zealand to stay for five months, primarily to help Rosalie with her baby. A second child followed in June 1945 and a third in December 1949.⁴³

There were rare opportunities to escape. One came after only two months on the mountain, when Rosalie jumped at the chance to accompany Ben on a visit to Sydney. She had planned to stay with the Allens but at the last moment changed her mind, somewhat to the relief of Clay Allen who wrote that 'she wasn't a cheerful visitor this afternoon and it is well she went off to Sydney'. There was a week in Sydney in November 1944 (with Rose Allen), and the question of a hurried visit to Auckland came up on 7 September 1945 'on a boat supposedly leaving on Monday [10 September]' but nothing came of that. Three months later, however, in December 1945, Rosalie did return to Auckland, taking her two sons (then aged two years and six months respectively) and she stayed away until April 1946. Ben remained in Australia but joined the family in Auckland for their last few weeks there. While it was natural that Rosalie would want to show off her new family to old friends, and welcome her mother's help with the children, the length of the stay also suggests Rosalie was continuing to find mountain life difficult.⁴⁴

⁴² Regarding the women on Mount Stromlo, see ABC radio talk c. 1960 RG 'Too many pine trees'. The text on loneliness is drawn from Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 14–15.

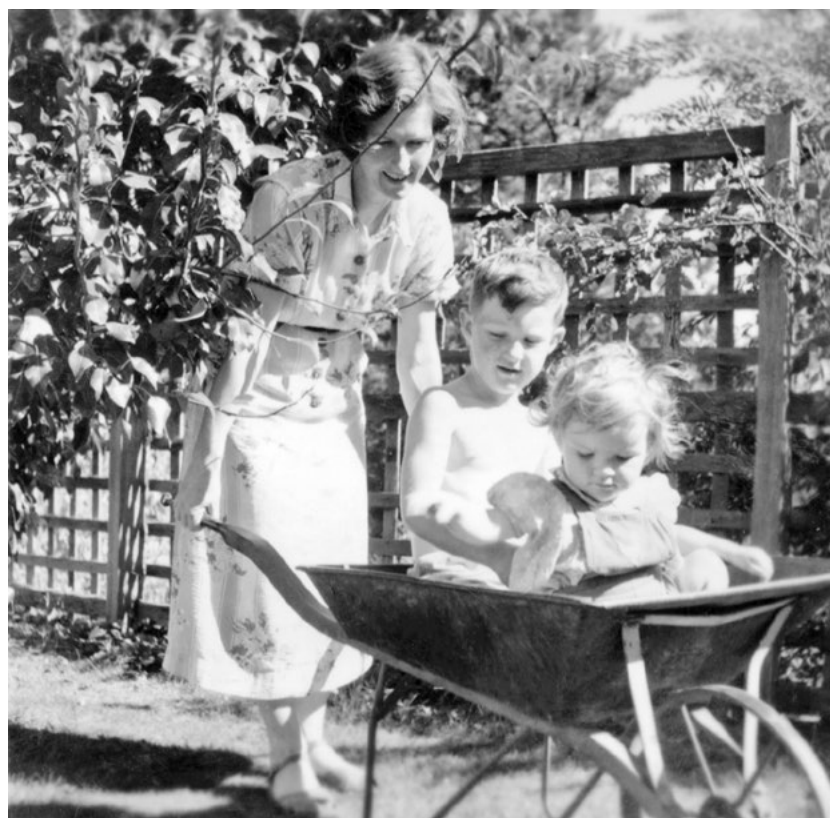
⁴³ Baby's illness: CW Allen papers NLA (diaries 5, 15 Dec 1945; 2 Feb, 23, 28 Jun 1946). Rosalie and Ben were accompanied on the train by Unity Cunningham, a young woman with nursing training who worked on Mount Stromlo in the optical assembly unit. On Unity Cunningham see Jennifer Horsfield *Mary Cunningham: An Australian life* Ginninderra Press, Canberra, 2004, pp. 213–214 and her unpublished lecture 'Some stories from Mount Stromlo during the war' to the Queanbeyan Historical Society, April 2009 (BG papers NLA). Unity stayed in Sydney with the family for some weeks. Rosalie and Ben also visited Carl Plate: see Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 16.

⁴⁴ See CW Allen diary entries for 6 Apr 1943 (Sydney holiday); 27 Nov, 1 Dec 1944 (week in Sydney); 7 Sep, 6, 12 and 23 Dec 1945, 24, 26 Feb 1946 (Rosalie in Auckland, Ben in Canberra). During the 1946 visit the two sons were christened on 27 March 1946 at St Andrew's Church, Epsom (author's archive).

In August 1950 *Woman's Day* published a feature article about life on Mount Stromlo. It was written by Elinor Ward and presented a mostly cheery picture (at her editor's insistence).⁴⁵ Her account squares with the picture of mountain life painted in the diaries of resident scientist CW (Clay) Allen, a colleague and neighbour of the Gascoignes, although the diaries lack a woman's perspective. Clay's account predates Ben's arrival in 1941 and ends with the Allen family's departure in October 1951. From his diaries we learn that wood-fired stoves were the main source of heating and cooking, that the first electric stoves were only installed in 1944, that the supply of fresh milk was unreliable and that the only refrigeration was a community refrigerator installed in 1948 after much debate. As it turned out, the Gascoignes did not get their electric stove until April 1946 (and the old fuel stove was replaced with another in 1951).⁴⁶

Even in 1950 Ward could write that there was a 'sense of being cut off from the rest of the world' on Mount Stromlo, which 'serves to emphasise the remoteness and the feeling of being a separate community that the little community holds'. She noted that, for women, 'life on Stromlo has its peculiar domestic problem. Shopping has to be carefully planned ... Once a week, if she can get someone to look after the children, a housewife may take a shopping jaunt into Canberra. This is her personal link with outside life and stimulation.' Ward highlighted the sense of community, including 'the community refrigerators which the Department of the Interior had installed to serve family groups. Each family has its own shelf and users are rostered, week about, to clean the machine.' Other community efforts included 'an orchard, in which the men work together in their spare time and share the crop'. Large wood-burning stoves were used to heat the houses and 'the menfolk frequently make up logging parties to drag in timber and chop it in company'.⁴⁷

Rosalie's (and my) memories square with Ward's account. In 1960, when Rosalie was about to leave the mountain and looked back on her time there, she recalled the challenge of learning to live in a small community. 'I learnt about it the hard way, with many trials and many errors.' But she



Rosalie with Toss and Hester in 1951
Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

45 Elinor Ward 'Living with the stars' *Woman's Day* 14 Aug 1950, pp. 40–41. She visited Mount Stromlo on 27 May 1950 (CW Allen papers NLA). Elinor (sometimes Ellinor) was the wife of Frederick Ward, a Melbourne-based industrial designer, who in 1954 was invited to form the ANU Design Unit. Ward, a working woman herself, was an enlightened observer of the plight of women who were expected to make do with home making and child rearing. After the observatory became part of the ANU, Rosalie and Elinor ('Puss' as she was known) would become friends. She died in 1989. Her son Martin told me his mother was unhappy with editorial changes to her article, because they put a more cheerful spin on her story (13 Jun 2016 Martin Ward with MG).

46 CW Allen's diaries include many entries on social life on the mountain, including the women's sewing circle, wood cutting (including a reference to Ben's cross-cut saw), the installation of the first electric stoves in November 1944 and debate about the community refrigerator in 1947. The diaries have references to the Gascoignes visiting to listen to plays and radio talks in their first years; I think they did not get their own radio until Ben made one. Clay's wife Rose ('Vich') was Rosalie's closest friend on the mountain. Gascoigne stove: from maintenance records of the house in the Government property and tenancy registers 1925 to 1968 at archives.act.gov.au.

47 Elinor Ward op. cit. It was only when oil-burning heaters became available in the mid-1950s that there was some relief from the winter cold inside.



Rosalie's patchwork quilt (detail). The completed patchwork covered a single bed. Rosalie had put it aside in the late 1940s and did not complete it until the early 1950s. Rosalie's approach to the construction of the patchwork foreshadowed the work practices she would apply in her art twenty-five years later

Image courtesy of the photographer, Hester L Gascoigne

concluded, 'I think I can say I have got to like living in a small community. I think I learnt how to.' In the early years 'with the men scientifically occupied both day and night, the women had to make a life for themselves as best they could. In the country but not of it, there we were. Assorted ladies, different backgrounds, different age groups, different interests, but dependent solely on each other for companionship ... We must all have been fighting loneliness for our own kind, and I think now that most of our problems sprang from that.'⁴⁸

Rosalie's ways of coping were various, as much as a young family would allow. She gardened a little, writing to Ben in Melbourne in the late summer of 1944 about watering the stocks and an orange canna in flower. Her aunt Ellen had been a gardener and when her mother Marion retired she also would be a keen gardener (as would sister Daintry). Initially the garden was close to the house but in the years ahead it spread and included a large rockery in a previously neglected area by the driveway: 'One day I saw a marigold growing there and realised the soil where they'd thrown it was good.'⁴⁹

Rosalie, true to her childhood inclinations, found things to make. She made children's clothes, knitted and in the early 1950s took up embroidery for a brief period, making samplers (including a tea-cosy) based on stitches in the *Woman's Journal book of stitches*. One winter shortly after the war, when materials were still scarce, she began a patchwork quilt, piecing together flowery hexagons, their colour and cheerfulness relieving the bleak chill of a 'large, cold house and a bad-tempered fuel stove'. She may have brought the idea of a patchwork with her from Auckland Girls Grammar School, which made patchwork quilts for the war effort. The pleasures of the hunt for suitable materials, the meticulous work involved in converting them to the hexagons from which she constructed the quilt, the aesthetic judgements involved in arranging the hexagons, and the process of working with small units all foreshadow the work practices Rosalie adopted in her art twenty-five years later.⁵⁰

Books were another escape, especially in the 1950s when she could visit the Canberra library (then in Kings Avenue, later demolished) on her trips to town and when the mobile library began making regular visits to Mount Stromlo from 1956. Rosalie sought out books based on people, hoping to combat the solitude and limited human contact mountain life had to offer. 'I met the pleasant, the calculating, the good and the bad, the rich and the poor, the stupid, the fascinating, the artistic — hundreds of them, and they all helped, even the ones I didn't believe in.'⁵¹

48 'I learnt about it': c. 1960 RG 'Too many pine trees'.

49 Gardening: [possibly 24 May] 1944 RG to BG, BG papers NLA; 'marigold': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 16. It was in the rockery that Rosalie grew the polyanthus that she used in one of her first competitive flower show entries.

50 Patchwork: c. 1960 RG 'Too many pine trees'; illustrated in Vici Macdonald 1998, p. 15.

51 c. 1960 RG 'Too many pine trees'.

Rosalie's survival skills included all those childhood attributes her friend Ruth Evans remembered: the gregarious girl who was good company and hosted wonderful parties with new games and exciting food. She drew on these skills to entertain both the adults and, later, the children on the mountain. There were parties and games, beginning with the 'soup kitchen' that Ben and Rosalie hosted shortly after they settled into their house. A few months later there was a party for 'nearly all the Mt Stromlo people' where they 'had various competitions and finished up with many short charades'. Another evening of games and competitions at the Gascoignes 'kept us amused until late'. Reflecting Rosalie's love of words and punning, one of those games involved completing a short story by filling in missing words, all of which were cued to the names of the residents: 'until the *Buscombes* [bus comes]', 'a tame *Cookaburra*', 'a *Clare* [clear] case of love at first sight', 'took the last *Bend* at seventy', 'licked his lips with *Gusto*', 'turned *Ashley* pale'. One children's party featured a pond made with a large silver tray covered with green jelly and home to a chocolate frog for each guest. Another was based on the theme of a gypsy camp complete with fortune teller. At Christmas she decorated the tree with yellow-painted kurrajong pods, hung it with little cut-out birds fitted with shiny cellophane wings, and topped it with a fairy holding a wand with a gold star attached. In the 1950s Rosalie devised decorations for observatory social evenings, including gold and black posters of the signs of the zodiac for a staff dance.⁵²

Coming to terms with the landscape

Rosalie's first experience of the Australian landscape was of a small scientific community in a pine forest in the heat of summer. 'I remember the first impression I got of Mount Stromlo was the colour actually. It was a different colour scheme from New Zealand and it was all orange roofs and really deep green pine trees and blue sky ... It was very different from New Zealand ... the birds were all big and they toppled the branches like the biblical birds. I was amazed at how big the birds were and as for the parrots, it was like living in a zoo for a while.' She had experienced nothing like it before. 'You had to learn that feeling of rock under your feet. We have squelch in New Zealand because it's green; there are no snakes and you can walk on it, and it smells sweet.' She struggled with this new environment for many years 'wondering where to put my emotions'.⁵³

She was also struck by the scale of things. 'You'd stand up there on the top of the hill and look way down to the 'Bidgee [Murrumbidgee River] and the Brindabellas [mountains] out there. It was gigantic.' She recalled coming back from a visit to New Zealand and standing out on the back of the hill. 'The air hung from the top of the sky down to the ground, empty, and I remember saying to myself: "nothing's going to happen, so you might as well get used to it" and it's very true, nothing did happen.' Forty years on she stood on the ridge above Lake George and revelled in the freedom and air and all that space, and recalled somebody 'who wrote about a place where the horizon came down to his boots; I think that's a lovely expression ... and Eve Langley [who] wrote ... about the gigantic Australian afternoon ... I think Europeans don't live with gigantic'.⁵⁴

52 Parties, games nights: CW Allen papers NLA (diary entries 21 Feb, 22 Jul 1943, 25 Dec 1944, 26 Feb 1947). The diaries also include references to communal chess tournaments (for men only), evenings of recorded music at the bachelor quarters, play readings and flag bridge. I remember Rosalie and Ben making nautical flags and stands to hold them for flag bridge tournaments. Two stories from the punning games, dating from the early 1950s, are in the BG papers NLA. Children's parties, decorations: MG personal memories.

53 'The first impression': 1997 Feneley, also 1982 North; 'that feeling of rock': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 37; 'wondering where to put': 1996 Davidson.

54 'You'd stand up there' and 'horizon came down to his boots': 1995 Topliss; 'the air hung': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 14; similar remarks in 1997 Feneley and 1999 Auckland AG.



Rosalie with pram, c. 1944

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Rosalie by the Murrumbidgee River, c. 1950,
stone in one hand, driftwood in the other

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

Rosalie's childhood provided her with strategies for dealing with her new world. Place had a special value for Rosalie. She remembered the childhood holidays at the beach: 'It never became a sort of home or place where I was willing to stay until ... I had walked every path and knew things about it.' She did the same on Mount Stromlo. Walking the unkempt gravel road along the top of Mount Stromlo looking for something — anything — to take the eye, at first it was a case of 'goodness, where's a tree I know? Nowhere'.⁵⁵ 'Also, I used to walk out of the house and down the hill and round the place and I came to the conclusion that, well, nature was a friend anyway and something I knew about. As Picasso said once, you've got to start with what belongs to you, and that belonged to me because I knew about that. Nobody was going to tell me.'

'I'd push the children's prams around that lonely mountain until I knew the shape of every stone and tree, the texture of every patch of dirt and grass, the colour of every leaf and weed.' She began to forage the shaped branch, unusual leaves, native grasses in their different seasonal colours, whitened bones of long-dead livestock, pieces of driftwood or stones smoothed by the river. 'I had to have things that I found interesting. There wasn't any stimulation of the eye. You fed your eye as much as you could. And that's where I think I started. You were just hungry for something extra, and not the ordinary turnover of the everyday.'⁵⁶

As the children grew and went off to school, Rosalie could forage further afield. On family picnics Rosalie would encourage them to look for materials: one day it was black river stones, another day it was interesting driftwood. Selections came home and ended up on the mantelpiece, to the scornful looks (Rosalie thought) of the other mountain-top women. She had done the same as a child at Waiheke and, as an ikebana practitioner and assemblage artist, would continue bringing things in to live with, watch and assess 'until I get a feel of them'.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ 'It never became': 1998 Hughes; 'goodness, where's a tree': 1982 North; 'I used to walk': 1997 Feneley, also Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 16.

⁵⁶ 'I'd push the children's prams': Janet Hawley 1997; 'I had to have': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 16.

⁵⁷ 'On family picnics': MG personal memories; 'scornful looks': Janet Hawley 1997, Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 16; 'until I get the feel': Australian Information Service c. 1969.

Mount Stromlo in the 1950s

Life on the mountain — and in Canberra and elsewhere — improved as wartime restrictions and shortages eased. The local community began to grow in 1951 following the government's decision to invite international observatories to build facilities on Mount Stromlo. New houses were constructed to support the observatory's expansion and this brought new families and more women. Rosalie recalled, 'As time went on we got better at coping. People ceased, some sooner, some later, to look for the kind of lives they had left behind them in the cities of Australia or, in many cases, overseas.'⁵⁸

Rosalie's remark that people ceased to look for the kind of lives they had left behind them applied in her case as much as to others. Rosalie was fortunate in having had the opportunity to revisit her old life — unlike others on the mountain — not least because the visits sharpened her awareness that the mountain was now her home and Australia her landscape. Rosalie and Ben would go back to Auckland with the boys again, in the summer of 1948–49.⁵⁹ This visit was an important milestone because it was then that she understood: 'You can't live in two countries. Once you leave home, there's no such thing as going back. You're different, the children are different. Your friends have made other friends.'⁶⁰

Soon after they returned to Australia the family bought a small car, in June 1949, and Rosalie learnt to drive. The car gave her more control over her life and she could venture into town (including the library) at times of her choosing. She was no longer dependent on the goodwill of others and the limited public transport available to those living on the mountain when she needed to go shopping or do canteen duty at the boys' school (which had the side effect of expanding her range of contacts).⁶¹

More women arrived on the mountain, giving everyone a chance to find someone who shared at least one interest with them. For Rosalie, flowers and gardening was one of those shared interests. In 1955 one neighbour, Royal Buscombe, persuaded Rosalie to enter flower arrangements in the Horticultural Society of Canberra's Spring Flower Show and she won a second prize with a bowl of polyanthus. For the next ten years Rosalie would continue to enter the society's competitions on a fairly regular basis, with a growing measure of success, and sometimes she participated in similar shows run by others. In terms of her later career as an artist, Rosalie did not put much store by her flower arrangements, but the shows were important because they were an opportunity for Rosalie to do something for herself, an activity of her own independent of family needs and providing an outlet for her creative instincts. Three times a year, in March, September and November, the Horticultural Society show schedule arrived in the mail, and she would read it eagerly to see what classes she might enter. Her preferences were twofold: initially she concentrated on modest domestic arrangements, for 'a breakfast table' or 'a bedside table' and such, but her strength lay in classes calling for much more imagination: 'Autumn', 'modern arrangement with driftwood', 'a touch of Midas', 'industry', 'forest fire' and so on.⁶²

58 New telescopes: *Canberra Times* 13 May 1949; new housing: *Canberra Times* 4 Apr 1950, p. 4; 'better at coping': c. 1960 RG 'Too many pine trees'.

59 I remember the second trip, including the flying boat with its staircase we travelled in from Rose Bay to Auckland and back; the house at Robert Hall Avenue, with the train line on the other side of the road; and visiting Daintry in Hamilton.

60 'You can't live in two countries': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 14.

61 The car was a second-hand Austin 7 previously owned by the Allens: CW Allen papers NLA (diary 5 Jun 1949).

62 MG personal memories. See also Vici MacDonald (1998, p. 17) and the Horticultural Society of Canberra papers, ACT Heritage Library. Show results were reported regularly in the *Canberra Times*. The last competitive show Rosalie entered was in September 1965, by which time she was well into ikebana.



Rosalie's 'modern arrangement of flowers and driftwood' selected as the outstanding decorative arrangement at the Spring Flower Show in 1960. See pp. 128–132 for more illustrations of Rosalie's flower, dried and ikebana arrangements

Photograph from author's archive

Rosalie's decisions on what to enter also took account of practical considerations, especially the restricted palette of flowers she had available from her garden. She experimented with other materials, including the wood, stones, grasses and weeds she encountered on her explorations of the local countryside. An early example from about 1958 was a work called 'Cotter Road', named after the still-unsealed road at the foot of Mount Stromlo linking Canberra to the junction of the Cotter and Murrumbidgee rivers and beyond. The work consisted of a sheep's skull, rocks and dried grass on a copper sheet with a blue denim background, and was a remarkable evocation of the road to the river. A work in the 1960 Spring Flower Show attracted the attention of the *Canberra Times*: 'Mrs. S. C. B. Gascoigne's modern arrangement of flowers with driftwood was the outstanding exhibit in the decorative section. It was an excellent arrangement, simple in form but with a definite line. The driftwood was well chosen and pebbles were selected carefully for colour, and arranged to form the base for the whole design.'⁶³ She taught herself how to dry and preserve many sorts of plant materials, native and exotic, and she made a name for herself by using these materials to create long-lasting arrangements.

Encounters with art (1)

One of the new experiences that awaited Rosalie in Australia was exposure to a community of artists. It began very slowly, through her marriage to Ben, which immediately brought her into contact with the Sydney painter Carl Plate (1909–1977), and expanded as an art-minded community developed in Canberra from the late 1950s. Ben and Carl had shared a cabin on the *Orcades* in 1940 on their voyage back from England. Never having put his head inside a gallery, Ben found himself travelling with a group of artists, theatricals, writers and musicians, all returning to Australia after varying degrees of exposure to the European experience. 'We talked all day and night, as one did on shipboard, and as well as undergoing a course in modern art, I was introduced to a very different way of living.' The meeting with Carl Plate was fateful — he would be the first artist Rosalie got to know. Carl introduced Ben and Rosalie to the contemporary art world and an artist's milieu. Ben later observed that what she got from Carl and his people was a feeling that there was an art community that lived very different lives from the community she knew in Auckland.⁶⁴

⁶³ *Canberra Times* 20 Sep 1960.

⁶⁴ 'We talked all day': BG papers NLA (Box 1 personal record, p. 7); 'Ben later observed': mid-2000 BG with Mary Eagle, pers. comm.

Carl was an active member of the Contemporary Art Society and he took Ben to meetings. He ran the Notanda Gallery at 41 Rowe Street behind the GPO in Sydney where he sold prints he had brought back from Europe as well as books and reproductions. Carl gave the newly married couple a watercolour of an Australian bush landscape. Rosalie first met Carl in Sydney in December 1943. They did not hit it off: he was still a bachelor and she was nursing a sick baby, felt very isolated, and had no experience of the bohemian art world. 'I was really, really on the wrong side of the tracks with him ... and he was really, really chauvinistic.' For a long time Rosalie found dealing with Carl a daunting prospect. He thought of her as a suburban housewife and wrote her off as someone with no real creativity or appreciation of art, but as time went on he came to see otherwise and he was very encouraging about Rosalie's early sculptural works.⁶⁵

Once in the early 1950s Carl came to stay with the Gascoignes, bringing his wife Jocelyn (daughter of Allyene Zander, a Sydney art patron in the 1930s) and their neighbour (William Edward) James Cook (1904–1960), a teacher at the East Sydney Technical College and art critic for the *Daily Telegraph*. Plate and Cook had their easels and painted views from Mount Stromlo. Ben later remembered Rosalie chafing at having to do all the cooking but noted that, at the same time, she got plenty out of the visits and even in those early days could talk about art. The Gascoignes made a reciprocal visit to holiday at the Plate's house in Woronora, a bushland estuary on the southern outskirts of Sydney. I don't recall ever visiting the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW) on our infrequent trips to Sydney as a child, but we certainly always went to the David Jones department store (although usually not to its gallery) and to the Notanda Gallery, where we were allowed to choose postcards and Carl advised Ben and Rosalie on the selection of reproductions. On one occasion a Braque lithograph, *The bird* 1949, turned up instead of the Utrillo print they had asked for. Through Carl they met his sister, artist Margo Lewers (1908–1978), and her husband, sculptor Gerald Lewers (1905–1962), both of whom would have large works on display in public places in Canberra.⁶⁶



Carl Plate in his Notanda Gallery in 1953 'which sells prints by old and new painters. He shows customer Gaugin, Picasso' (PIX caption). The family would usually drop in when in Sydney and the children were encouraged to choose postcard-size prints

Image from PIX, 2 May 1953, courtesy of Cassi Plate

⁶⁵ For Rosalie on Carl Plate see 1998 Hughes and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 16. As for bohemian life, even in the 1950s Rosalie could still be shocked at seeing Jocelyn Plate spitting in a frying pan to test the temperature (MG personal memory).

⁶⁶ Ben's recollections: BG papers NLA (Box 1 personal record, p. 7) and mid-2000 with Mary Eagle, pers. comm. Holidays and Sydney visits: MG personal recollections (my brother and I learnt to swim in the nearby Woronora River when we stayed at the Plates). The watercolour dated 1943, plus another from the early 1950s of a view from Mount Stromlo through pine trees, and the Braque lithograph, are all in the ANU Art Collection. (William Edward) James Cook gave the Gascoignes oil paintings of views from Mount Stromlo in different lights, studies for a larger painting intended for the Wynne Prize (family collection). In 1960 Margo Lewers had a large mosaic at the entrance to the Canberra Rex Hotel, at the time Canberra's grandest; Gerald Lewers's carved stone piece *Relaxation* 1953 and his bronze fountain *Swans in flight* 1960 were installed outside University House and his large copper relief (completed by Margo) was installed in the main hall of the Reserve Bank, Canberra, in 1965.

In 1941 Ben bought a copy of Herbert Read's book *The meaning of art* from the Notanda Gallery. Over the next fifteen years Ben and Rosalie would acquire other art books, primarily Penguin *Modern painters* paperbacks on contemporary, mostly figurative and mostly English, artists such as Paul Nash, Ben Shahn (American), Stanley Spencer, Frances Hodgkins, Edward Hopper (American), Ben Nicholson, John Piper and Ivor Hitchens. Visiting astronomers from New York gave the couple a book on Matisse in 1953 and a few years later they bought John Rothenstein's *The Moderns and their world*.⁶⁷

As Rosalie's children grew up and there was space for other things in her life, art gradually began to play a bigger part in the Gascoigne family. Rosalie made friends with a few potters and in about 1954 took a brief evening course in pottery at the Canberra Technical College (a lot of women were interested in pottery then). More reproductions were acquired, including a Signac-like harbour scene in yellows, and a very large image of a doll's house-like interior. Ben spent six months in the United States and Europe from August 1956 to February 1957 and came back with reproductions from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. I recall Picasso's *The lovers* 1923, a cubist work by Stuart Davis, a John Marin seascape, an Alexei Jawlensky portrait and two Indian paintings.

Canberra grew slowly in the 1950s and with it a small community of people engaged in the arts, including two art clubs, one very traditional and the other with a contemporary twist. It was the latter that attracted Rosalie and Ben and in the mid-1950s they bought a semi-abstract oil painted on rough hessian and called *After midnight* (artist unknown). Rosalie's social world expanded further when Mount Stromlo became part of The Australian National University (ANU) in 1957. She made friends with the arts-inclined wives of other academics and, stimulated by the arrival of a Swedish couple on Mount Stromlo, she became interested in Scandinavian design. Ben brought several examples back with him after visiting Copenhagen in 1957.⁶⁸

The 1960s: Expanding horizons

In 1960 the Gascoignes moved to the new suburb of Deakin at the foot of Red Hill, a move made to accommodate the needs of three teenage children. It was a poorly designed house on sloping land facing north, entered by way of a long concrete ramp that opened onto wasteful passageways and a dining room that would just allow for a table seating six people. Opposite was a sitting room with a fireplace that, when first lit, filled the room with smoke and ash while Rosalie was entertaining. Outside a windy terrace faced west. So far as Rosalie's work was concerned, all it offered was space underneath where she could hang the materials for her dried arrangements. But as her children became more independent at least she had more time to pursue her interests.

The departure from Mount Stromlo coincided with an invitation from the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) to give a radio talk about life on the mountain. The ABC had in mind a talk aimed especially at women living in small communities, including Service wives living on military bases in South-East Asia. Rosalie called her talk 'Too many pine trees' and in it described her life on Mount Stromlo, still very fresh in her mind. It has been an important source for this biographical note.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ The *Modern painters* series was edited by Kenneth Clark; artists listed by publication date. Most were acquired in Canberra from Verity Hewitt's bookshop. The Matisse was Jean Cassou *The Faber Gallery: Matisse* London, 1953. John Rothenstein *The Moderns and their world* Phoenix House, London, 1957.

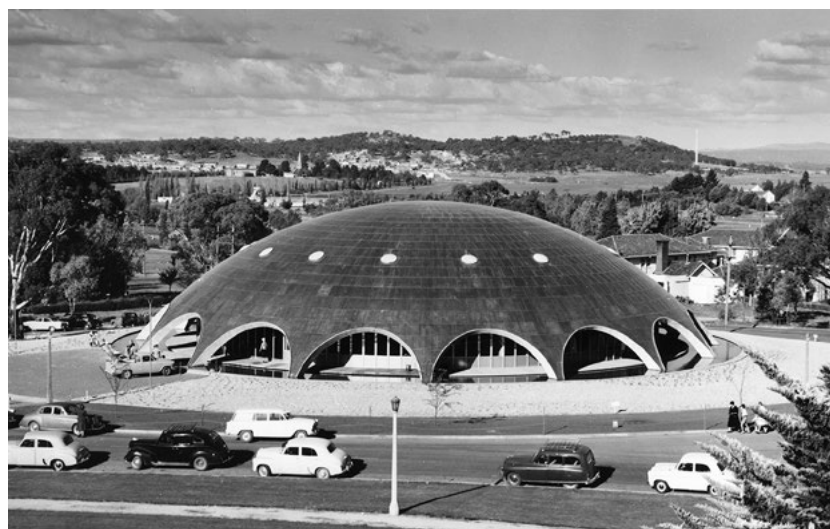
⁶⁸ For an account of the pottery/ceramics course at the Canberra Technical College, see Michael Agostino *The Australian National University School of Art: A history of the first 65 years* ANU eView, Canberra, 2010, chapter 11. Ben's six-month trip overseas had another consequence; previously the traditional housewife, Rosalie for the first time was fully in charge of the family, had to learn how to manage the family finances and had to buy a new car to replace their ageing, unsafe one. Scandinavian design: the Swedish couple was Bengt and Vivi Westerlund. Rosalie and Vivi became close friends — Vivi introduced Rosalie to Swedish rug making and Rosalie introduced Vivi to ikebana.

⁶⁹ c. 1960 R.G. 'Too many pine trees'. There is no record of the date of broadcast, but it was probably in 1960 or 1961.

In terms of Rosalie's future life the talk is particularly interesting for what she says about her country foraging trips and her awareness of the beauty of the grass, stones and bare branches she came across. So much so that by 1960 she had 'a very satisfying hobby in still life arrangements ... [which] takes me out over the paddocks on fine mornings and fills my house with mountain stones and river stones and flat frost-split rocks, dry grasses, cones, thistle heads, seed heads, lichens and driftwood. The possibilities are endless, the excitement of the chase exhilarating ... I have never had such a rewarding hobby.'⁷⁰

Rosalie became a popular and sought-after lecturer on flower arranging and dried arrangements, and the prime minister's wife, Dame Pattie Menzies, invited her to the Lodge for private lessons.⁷¹ Good teacher that she was, Rosalie usually spoke without notes, her only aids being the materials she was using in her demonstrations. But notes do exist for a radio talk on dried arrangements in 1960 or 1961. The interesting thing about this talk is that it describes practices and interests that would continue throughout Rosalie's later career as a fully fledged artist. Right up front, in the first paragraph, is a lasting signature: 'when I am making an arrangement ... I like to have a lot of stuff', as photographs of the clutter and accumulations in her studio and surrounds in the 1990s demonstrate. Then there were the materials she spoke about: 'ordinary roadside grasses ... I pick when it has burnt brown and blond and orange in the sun'. She 'wouldn't be without' the heads 'of a very tall thistle that springs from a plant with mottled leaves' (the variegated thistle, *Silybum marianum*), and she gathered in 'even the prickly Blue Devil' (*Eryngium ovinum*). She spoke, too, about using crumpled chicken wire secured to a Masonite base as the foundation for her arrangements, a combination of materials that Rosalie would revert to in her airy assemblages in the 1990s, though with the wire and Masonite as an important and visible part of the composition, rather than the hidden support.⁷²

Rosalie's work attracted the attention of Jack Deeble, executive secretary of the Academy of Science and a former neighbour on Mount Stromlo. In 1959 he invited her to dress the newly opened Roy Grounds-designed academy building for an important international conference it was hosting. 'I couldn't believe I'd been singled out ... So I did huge dried [arrangements in] ... the Academy colours, all those greys and Roy Grounds colours ...' Grounds was impressed and at his instigation the academy offered her a contract to continue her installations. This gave her an opportunity to work on a much larger scale in a sympathetic environment, with its natural light, muted natural colours and clean,



The Academy of Science building, 1960. Designed by Roy Grounds, who admired Rosalie's installations there, the building would influence the design of Ben and Rosalie's house when they came to build in 1968–69

Image courtesy of the Australian Academy of Science, photographer unknown

70 'Satisfying hobby': c. 1960 RG 'Too many pine trees'.

71 'Dame Pattie': MG personal memory. The social pages of the *Canberra Times* and *Canberra Courier* contain many references to talks given by Rosalie.

72 c. 1960 RG 'Dried arrangements'.

uncluttered spaces. The challenge was stimulating. ‘This was pretty good for me, really, because you got those good sculptural spaces. You had to think big.’ The experience was to influence the design brief when Rosalie and Ben came to commission their own house in 1968.⁷³

Unbeknown to Rosalie, Roy Grounds’s sympathetic response to her work in the academy — especially her use of the natural pieces she had found in the fields and by the river — would find its parallel in Hal Missingham, then director of the AGNSW. In November 1962 the gallery mounted an exhibition called *Found Objects*, which James Gleeson reviewed: ‘Pieces of wood, stone, metal, bone or shell can be enjoyed simply because their form is beautiful, their colour is attractive or their texture unusual.’ Even then, this was a song Rosalie certainly knew well, although I doubt that she saw the show or even knew of it.⁷⁴

Ikebana

In 1962 Rosalie was persuaded to accept an invitation to join classes in ikebana, the traditional Japanese art of flower arrangement, which were being offered by Norman Sparnon. Sparnon was a Sydney-based and Tokyo-trained master who came to Canberra once a month and taught the modern, twentieth-century style known as the Sogetsu school, founded by Sofu Teshigahara. At the time ikebana had a growing following in Australia, including in the art world, such that Sydney’s *Contemporary Art Society broadsheet* in April 1959 noted in its list of forthcoming exhibitions that there was to be an exhibition of Classical and Modern Flower Arrangements by Norman Sparnon 13–18 April at David Jones Gallery. Rosalie had already read Sparnon’s book *Japanese flower arrangement* when she was asked to join his class. She had bought it in Sydney and afterwards sat on the steps of Mark Foy’s department store with her coffee and leafed through it. A great wave of recognition passed over her: ‘I read on, feeling that I knew for myself everything it was saying’.⁷⁵

In the light of Rosalie’s later career, it is fascinating to read what Sparnon had to say about modern ikebana. It ‘utilises all forms of plant life, living or dead in every conceivable form — whole tree trunks, stumps, roots, grasses, flowers, vines [and] all varieties of dried materials ... The container may be of the conventional type or may be one of the arranger’s invention such as automotive parts or drain-piping ... and used along with other non-floral materials such as wrought iron, scrap metal, wire, stone ... [and others].’ He also made a point about the creativity of the practitioner and the importance of materials in determining the outcome: ‘the student should strive to be creative and original ... the idea for an arrangement should come from the material to be used’. And the punch line: ‘Above all, the arrangement should be endowed with feeling. The material should be carefully studied and utilized to its best advantage to express the feelings of the arranger.’⁷⁶

73 ‘I couldn’t believe’ and ‘this was pretty good’: 1982 North. See also Martin Gascoigne and Alan Roberts ‘An artist at the academy’ in Alan Roberts *A big, bold, simple concept: A history of the Australian Academy of Science* Australian Academy of Science, Canberra, 2010. Re design of house, see Milton Cameron 2012, chapter 5 and Theo Bischoff papers, ACT Heritage Library. Ben was elected a fellow of the academy in 1966, which helped consolidate her link. Although Rosalie terminated her original contract with the academy in 1962, she continued to provide installations and massive ikebana pieces on an occasional basis until 1974.

74 *Found objects* (exh. cat.) AGNSW 7–26 Nov 1962 with introduction by Hal Missingham, AGNSW Research Library courtesy of Hannah Fink; James Gleeson ‘The beauty created by time’ *Sun Herald* 11 Nov 1962, p. 87; see also WT [Wallace Thornton] ‘New exhibitions’ *SMH* 7 Nov 1962, p. 14. I thank Mary Eagle for drawing the exhibition and reviews to my attention.

75 Ikebana in Sydney: *Contemporary Art Society broadsheet* in AGNSW Research Library courtesy of Mary Eagle. At this time the Blaxland Gallery hosted regular ikebana exhibitions organised by Norman Sparnon: ‘The flower of ikebana expertise’ (obituary) *The Australian* 12 Jul 1995, p. 12; Norman Sparnon *Japanese flower arrangement* Charles Tuttle, Tokyo, 1960; Mark Foy’s and ‘I read on’: Mary Eagle 1985.

76 Norman Sparnon op. cit., pp. 137–140.

This was all grist to the mill for Rosalie. 'I was already bringing back the hill-tops and the rivers in the form of dried native flowers, river stones and grasses. I was all wild surmise. I saw Norman Sparnon using materials such as tree roots which I'd already lugged into my house and not known how to use. Ikebana gave an absolute. It gave form. To do things exactly steadied you down. From ikebana I got the vision of how to use the things I liked.'⁷⁷

Rosalie was a quick study and in November 1965 she was awarded her teacher's diploma. She continued to take lessons with Sparnon but as time went on she found that her fellow students watched her as much as Sparnon, and that she was learning less and less from him. She offered her own classes (1966–70), gave demonstrations for charity events, organised ikebana exhibitions, and in 1968 was commissioned to provide arrangements for the opening ceremony of the new National Library. In 1969 the Australian Information Service chose her as the subject of an article on ikebana in Australia subsequently published in the Japanese press.⁷⁸

Rosalie was a very good practitioner. When Sofu Teshigahara came to Australia in September 1967 Rosalie spent five weeks filling the basement of the Academy of Science building with materials she had collected for his exhibition there. He was very taken with what she offered, and after inspecting the materials turned to her and said, 'you've got a great eye'. He remembered this back in Tokyo, when he reportedly told people that the material in Canberra was amazing, the best in Australia.⁷⁹

As time went on Rosalie's thinking about ikebana evolved. She began to tire of the emphasis on things Japanese, especially Sparnon's use of imported Japanese materials when there was so much wonderful Australian material available. After seven years 'I had decided that I didn't want anybody else's ... Japanese things ... I wasn't so great on the iris and this sort of stuff ... So I planted [my ikebana] firmly in the Australian context ... I got the farm iron and what was growing around here.' Rosalie 'was trying to make the countryside visible — the Australian countryside, not the Japanese'.⁸⁰

She also wanted something more permanent, something that would last more than a couple of days. She noted that Sofu Teshigahara had a streak of this in him because he also made sculptures and he left a couple behind in Australia (at the AGNSW, and National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) in Canberra). 'I started making things that would



The photograph of Rosalie at Anstey Street taken to illustrate an article on ikebana in Australia published in the Japanese press in 1969. See pp. 128–132 for more illustrations of Rosalie's flower, dried and ikebana arrangements. On the wall is a Modigliani print bought in London in 1963

Image courtesy of the National Archives of Australia (A1501, A9510)

77 'I was already bringing': Mary Eagle 1985, fourth page of the essay. Eagle spoke at length with Rosalie about her work while she was preparing her essay for Rosalie's 1985 exhibition in Hobart.

78 The women's pages of the *Canberra Times* have many references to Rosalie's demonstrations in the 1960s. In 1968 Rosalie was invited to mount a special, non-competitive, display of ikebana at the Horticultural Society's spring bulb show. The *Canberra Times* includes interviews with Rosalie (13 Nov 1968, p. 13; 18 Jul 1969), reports of her talks and advertisements for her classes. Re opening of NLA, see David Reid images in NLA: call no. PIC NL1723–4 LOG NL1723; 'published in the Japanese press': Australian Information Service c. 1969.

79 On Sofu's reactions in Canberra see 1982 North.

80 'I had decided that': 1982 North; 'make the countryside visible': 1996 Davidson, see also 1998 Hughes.

last. I got a bit sick of the fact that ikebana things if they lasted for four days this was absolutely marvellous ... It wasn't good enough for me. Nor was it good enough for the Sogetsu headmaster [Sofu Teshigahara] who made great sculptural things bought by the French, particularly. And he was playing for permanence too.' She experimented with a twisted she-oak tree trunk, burning holes in it with a blowlamp. The piece was modelled on images of Sofu's sculptures and she installed it in the Academy of Science.⁸¹

Reflecting on her ikebana years, Rosalie acknowledged several debts. First, ikebana taught her that she was good at something, and that success opened doors for her. But more than anything else, ikebana taught her to think like an artist, and made her for the first time feel that she could do 'legitimate' art. The change can be seen by comparing what she said about her work in 1960 with what she said in 1969. In 1960 Rosalie had spoken about her 'still lifes' as 'a very satisfying hobby'. Ten years on, she spoke about her ikebana in a very different way: 'It's more a way of living than a hobby. It colours the very way I look at everything now. It has sharpened my perception.'⁸²

Ikebana, she said, 'gave me a whole free open world. I could do what I liked. And that was great.' A recurring theme in her interviews in 1968 and 1969 is the personal nature of ikebana, and the opportunities it offered for self-expression. It was 'as personal as oil painting', she told one interviewer. 'I found that when you learn ikebana, after a while you learn the rules, and then you learn what rules you want to keep. You're on your own after that.' She went on: 'And so you can put everything you are into ikebana', a remark that echoes what would become a favourite saying of hers by Jasper Johns: 'A picture is what a painter puts whatever he has into'. She was beginning to think like an artist and to see herself as one.⁸³

Ikebana, she recognised in 1969, 'sharpened my perception. I enjoy sculpture as I never used to'. There were practical consequences for her foraging trips: 'I got a more sculptural eye and I remember when I used to walk in the paddocks, I used to see a lot more and I used to see the potential of things and I remember once walking over a piece of rusty, ordinary fencing wire and [thinking] oh, that's only old wire ... And so I came back and I picked it up, humbly — a bit of humility doesn't hurt anybody — because it was a good shape. I should have picked it up in the first place.' Or as she told Ian North: 'Anything that had good shape, or I found ... exciting, I didn't query what it was. If that was an exciting ... shape I took it. And so I got into the rusty wire and that sort of stuff.'⁸⁴

Rosalie's collection grew so much that by 1968 the whole back lawn of the Dugan Street, Deakin, house was covered with the material, arranged in neat rows to make mowing easier. When the sculptor and art critic Donald Brook came to a party at Dugan Street and saw it all spread out, he asked Rosalie, 'When are you going to have an exhibition? I love your iron.' She began to visit country dumps and that same trained eye eventually led her to all sorts of other materials, including the battered sheets of old, corrugated iron and the discarded kitchen enamelware that she used in her assemblages from 1974 until 1993. Ikebana had helped her see them and given her permission — and the confidence — to use her finds.⁸⁵

81 'I started making': 1998 Hughes. Sofu sculpture: Rosalie had a copy of the catalogue for the 1968 survey exhibition of Sofu's sculpture (Atsua Imaizumi 1968). See also Helen Frizell 'The grand master puts on a show' *SMH* 22 Sep 1967, p. 6 for description of sculpture. Sofu Teshigahara, *Castle*, camphor wood covered with brass, AGNSW SO1.1967, gift of the artist 1967. Sofu also gave a sculpture to the NCDC, illustrated in the *Canberra Times* 27 Sep 1967, p. 13. Titled *Hinoki*, it is a freestanding abstract wooden sculpture, just under two metres tall and partly sheathed in copper, and in the 1970s was displayed in the entrance to the Woden Library in Canberra (NCDC *Works of art in Canberra* NCDC, Canberra, December 1980, p. 53 (illus.)). The 1968 Sofu exhibition catalogue also lists other works in Australia. 'Blowlamp': I gave Rosalie a small gas-fired blowlamp as a Christmas present in 1968.

82 'Opened doors for her': 1988 Ewen McDonald (similar references in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 19 and 1998 Hughes); 'satisfying hobby': c. 1960 RG 'Too many pine trees'; 'way of living': Australian Information Service c. 1969.

83 'Whole free open world': 1998 Hughes; 'as personal as oil painting' and 'learn the rules': Doreen Hungerford *Canberra Times* 13 Nov 1968, p. 20, also 1982 North, Carole Lax *Canberra Times* 18 Jul 1969 and Australian Information Service c. 1969. Jasper Johns quote from Rosalie's Marimekko notebook, unsourced, and cited by Rosalie in Janine Burke 1979, in a letter to Josephine Humphries dated 26 Jul 1993 (notebook and letter, RG papers NLA) and 1997 Ross. Vici MacDonald refers to Sofu Teshigahara's description of ikebana as sculpture using flowers 'in which the subjectivity of the arranger is prominently expressed', and writes about how, as Rosalie grew in confidence, she personalised each aspect of the discipline — materials, container, construction and context (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 18).

84 'Sharpened my perception': Australian Information Service c. 1969; 'more sculptural eye': 1997 Feneley; 'anything that had good shape': 1982 North.

85 'Donald Brook': 1982 North. The party must have been before 1968 when Brook moved to Sydney.

The rusted metal became one of the ways in which Rosalie personalised her ikebana, using it as containers for, but more often as part of, her compositions. The major element in a 1965 work was a ‘piece of that squared-off reinforcing iron that had been twisted ... it had lovely spaces and lovely close bits and lovely wild pieces and it strained’. Sparnon was so taken with one of her constructions that he used it in an arrangement to illustrate one of his books, though he failed to credit Rosalie’s work. In 1969 visitors to the new house in Pearce were confronted with an arrangement of ‘two pieces of dried fern and a berry branch in an old motorcycle petrol tank’ and nearby ‘some perfectly circled dried grass in an upturned piece of blue metal piping’.⁸⁶

Beginning in the mid-1960s Rosalie also started using rusted farm metal to make figurative sculptures, with sideways looks to artists such as Picasso and Robert Klippel. The sculptures were in stark contrast to her ikebana pieces, usually small and with explicit human or animal references, although there was also a larger Heath Robinson-like fountain made with plough discs and plumbed with a garden hose. Her interest was such that in 1967 Ben brought back from London a copy of the catalogue of an exhibition at the Tate Gallery of Picasso’s sculptures and ceramics. Rosalie was much taken with his *Bull’s head*, which he made from a bicycle seat and handlebars. She enjoyed Picasso’s ‘sportiveness, his enjoyment’ and in later years would take heed of this in her own practice (see, for example, *Side show parrots* 1981). Herein lay the seeds of Rosalie’s assemblage work in the early 1970s.⁸⁷

Various curators have assessed the influence that ikebana had on Rosalie’s later art, and one Japanese author has argued that her later assemblages stand as an extreme example of modern ikebana. Rosalie herself once spoke of her boxed assemblages as ‘little ikebana’s’. Ikebana not only allowed Rosalie freedom of expression, it also gave her discipline with which to exercise it. ‘It stopped me looking predominantly at colour and it started me looking at line and form, and I suppose fairly naturally getting into a more sculptural, three-dimensional way of thought. The other thing I think ikebana teaches one is the balance of one thing against another, the spacing between things — the sort of principles you can study and adopt in any sort of work you do. I think it was invaluable to me.’⁸⁸



The backyard at Dugan Street, c. 1968, with some of Rosalie’s collection of rusted iron
Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author’s archive

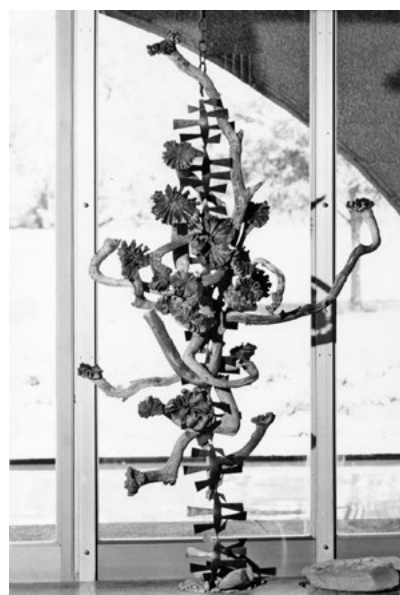
⁸⁶ ‘Squared-off reinforcing’: 1982 North; ‘failed to credit’: see Norman Sparnon and EG Waterhouse *The magic of camellias* Ure Smith, Sydney, 1968, p. 40; ‘visitors confronted with’: Australian Information Service c. 1969 and Carole Lax *Canberra Times* 18 Jul 1969.

⁸⁷ Picasso exhibition catalogue: *Picasso: Sculpture, ceramics, graphic work*, 9 June –13 August 1967, Tate Gallery, London. The *Bull’s head* illustrated was the version cast in bronze in 1943, not the 1942 original. See also Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 20, 21.

⁸⁸ Curatorial assessments: see Mary Eagle, Deborah Edwards and Kelly Gellatly listings in bibliography; ‘extreme ikebana’: Shoso Shimbo 2013; ‘little ikebana’s’ 1998 Hughes and also p. 60n142; ‘it stopped me’: 1978 Lindsay (also 1982 North, 1997 Ross and 1998 Hughes).

Encounters with art (2)

Most of the books Rosalie bought in the 1960s were about ikebana, but she began buying the quarterly *Art and Australia* sometime after it began in 1963 and she had a copy of Bernard Smith's *Australian painting 1788–1960*, published in 1962. When she bought art books and journals, and she only really began to do so in the 1970s, it was primarily for their illustrations, not their words. I doubt she spent any time with Ben's copy of Herbert Read or read much of Bernard Smith.



Rosalie's ikebana assemblage of rusted iron and weathered mistletoe in the Academy of Science in c. 1968 would not have been out of place in Lenton Parr's book on Australian sculpture
 Photograph by Ted Richards from author's archive

In 1961 there were two noteworthy additions to the family's art books, noteworthy in the light of Rosalie's later career. One was Lenton Parr's *Sculpture* in Longmans's *The arts in Australia* series and the other was David Douglas Duncan's expensive, glossy *Picasso's Picassos*. The latter was a gift from me and an indication of just how much art was becoming a family value.

Parr's book may have attracted attention because it included images of a sculpture by Gerald Lewers (*Fountain* at ICI House, Melbourne) and a portrait bust of Edmund Hillary, with whom Ben had gone hiking while at university in Auckland. Pictures of two abstract metal pieces by Margel Hinder call to mind the sculptural qualities of the natural materials Rosalie was using in her work at the time. In its scale and pattern, Hinder's four-metre-high, floor-to-ceiling *Abstract sculpture in steel and bronze* (later *Growth forms*) — then in the lobby of the Western Assurance Company in Sydney, now in the University of Technology Sydney collection — is not unlike a smaller installation of rusty metal and mistletoe heads Rosalie would do in the Academy of Science lobby in the late 1960s. And Hinder's small metal *Construction* 1957 calls to mind Rosalie's interest in blue devil, a plant she would use in her arrangements and, much later, in one of her works (*[Still life]* 1983). There is also an echo of the sprawling form of Parr's welded steel work, *Orion*, in Rosalie's *Joie de mourir* 1973.⁸⁹

If Parr's book was Rosalie's first introduction to contemporary sculpture, her horizons widened further in 1963 when she made a six-month visit to England with Ben, who was taking sabbatical leave at the Royal Observatory Herstmonceux in Sussex. This was her first trip to Europe and it gave her opportunities to see some of the art in London. Two memorable events were an exhibition of outdoor sculpture at Battersea Park and an exhibition of paintings by Francis Bacon at Marlborough Galleries. The Battersea Park exhibition included Henry Moore's *Standing figure (knife-edge)* and a large group of American

89 Lenton Parr *The arts in Australia: Sculpture* Longmans, Melbourne, 1961 and David Douglas Duncan *Picasso's Picassos* Macmillan, London, 1961. Margel Hinder *Growth forms* 1958/59 brazed copper sheet over steel armature, 410 × 150 cm.

sculpture put together by the Museum of Modern Art, New York.⁹⁰ Later she much admired Moore's works modelled on animal bones (and used bones in her own work), and owned several books on Bacon, with whom she was fascinated and recognised something of herself in his messy studio.⁹¹

Canberra's hitherto fairly barren cultural landscape began to change as the city grew in the 1960s. There was more art to see and a wider variety, both national and international. There were artists to meet and get to know, including the Sydney artists who taught at the technical college, such as Tom Gleghorn (b. 1925) and John Coburn (1925–2006), and the architects and designers helping to build the new city (including furniture designer Fred Ward (1900–1990) and the design team at the ANU). The community of people for whom art was important and had seen art elsewhere grew. At the ANU there was the new philosophy professor, Peter Herbst (who had known the Boyds at Murrumbidgee in Melbourne), his protégé and sculptor Donald Brook, and the artists associated with the ANU Creative Arts Fellows program, including Sidney Nolan and John Perceval. Commercial galleries began to appear in Canberra, encouraged by Canberra's rapid growth and the scent of sales, notably Macquarie Galleries and Gallery A (which lasted only two years), both in 1965, and the Australian Sculpture Gallery/Centre, which opened in June 1966. This last was run by an old Auckland acquaintance of Rosalie's, Lesta O'Brien, and in its early years had some notable sculpture shows, including Oliffe Richmond and Clement Meadmore. A branch of the Arts Council of Australia was established in 1962 and sponsored visiting exhibitions. Canberra, being the national capital in an era of international cultural diplomacy, attracted travelling shows of painting and sculpture from around the world.⁹²

Rosalie and Ben found ready acceptance in this new world. It included a group of women artists, mostly the wives of ANU academics, who lived nearby and exhibited locally; one of them had worked with Henry Moore. Family members were regular attendees at opening events, even though Rosalie and Ben were not buying because they were saving to build their own home, the exceptions being a painting of Glebe House by Gray Smith (Canberra-based and one-time partner of Joy Hester) bought in 1966, a small Ray Crooke landscape and a small semi-abstract figurative oil by Pamela Macfarlane (the artist wife of an ANU academic) both bought in 1967, and pottery by Ivan Englund and Ivan McMeekin (both of whom had taught at the Canberra Technical College in the early 1950s). The family interest rubbed off on me, and I was actively engaged in the Arts Council exhibitions program. Having both the opportunity and a salary I started to buy the work of my contemporaries, and within two years had two paintings by Dick Watkins, one each by Robert Hunter and Guy Stuart, and a Roy Lichtenstein screen print (*Shipboard girl* 1965). In 1989, at the Australian Sculpture Centre, I met the future director of the Australian National Gallery (ANG), James Mollison, who introduced me to the contemporary art scene in Sydney. And I introduced Mollison to Rosalie.⁹³

90 Battersea Park: 2010 BG with MG, pers. comm. The exhibition was the fourth *Sculpture in the Open Air* exhibition staged in the park. British artists included Moore, Chadwick, Caro, Fink and Hepworth; Americans included David Smith, Alexander Calder, John Chamberlain and Jason Seley (both using automobile parts), Stankiewicz, Ferber and Lipton. Ben and Rosalie probably also visited the exhibition *British Paintings in the Sixties* organised by the Contemporary Art Society at the Tate Gallery and Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1–30 June 1963 (catalogue in RG papers NLA). One purchase in London was a reproduction of a Modigliani portrait. Another memorable experience was the discovery that poet Rupert Brooke's reference to 'a tunnel of green gloom' in 'The old vicarage, Grantchester' was such a literal rendering of English country lanes. Rosalie felt let down by the discovery.

91 Fascinated by Bacon: Marie Hagerty in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 26. Re Bacon's studio: 1995 Topliss and 1998 Hughes.

92 Canberra art: the many reviews in the *Canberra Times* by Donald Brook and, later, Robin Wallace-Crabbe, give a good idea of what was shown, including a travelling exhibition *Recent Australian Sculpture* in March 1965 at the ANU. Gallery A opened a branch in April 1965, Macquarie Galleries in July 1965 and the Australian Sculpture Centre in June 1966 (for which see *Canberra Times* 6 Jun 1966, p. 8 and 24 Jul 1968, p. 23 and James Gleeson 'A gallery for sculpture' *SMH* 12 Jun 1966, p. 79). Lesta O'Brien's ex-husband had been on the Auckland University College rowing team with Ben.

93 Rosalie's friends included Vicki Mimms, Mim Smyth, Jan Brown (who had assisted Henry Moore), Monica Freeman (who photographed Rosalie in the country), Dorothy Cameron and Jean Conron (who was with Rosalie when she first discovered abandoned apiary boxes near Gundaroo). The Gray Smith and Ray Crooke are in family collections; the Pamela Macfarlane *Red Queen* c. 1967 is in the ANU Art Collection. Rosalie gave the Ivan Englund pot to the NGA in the early 1980s. I made my first purchase in May 1965, Erica McGilchrist's abstract *Enigma* about 5 × 4 feet, bought from Ric Legrand's gallery Studio Nundah in O'Connor, and in 1967 Ben, on a visit to London, bought me a serigraph by Ceri Richards.

A new house in Pearce

In June 1969 Rosalie and Ben moved to 3 Anstey Street in the new suburb of Pearce, up on Mount Taylor at the southern end of Woden Valley. The house had been two years in the making, from the purchase of the land lease in June 1967 until the move in June 1969. Ben and Rosalie contributed to the design brief in their different ways: Ben, scientific, rational, specific, remembering the limitations (especially) of the Mount Stromlo and Deakin houses, Rosalie more instinctive and intuitive: ‘don’t shut us in ... I need space ... lots of air: high ceilings and wide windows to allow the elements in and frame the views of the distant hills’. The architect was Melbourne-trained Theo Bischoff, who had worked closely with Roy Grounds on some of his Canberra projects. The palette of materials was much like that used by Grounds in the Academy of Science: pale, natural wood, liver-coloured bricks and tiles, plain muted carpet. The house was a strong, plain statement, neutral and light and informal, and close to the ground. It faced north to the sun, with framed views over the valley and warm, sunny spaces inside and out (a lesson from the icebox on Mount Stromlo), high ceilings, and a lot of open space and places to show art.⁹⁴



View of the house at Pearce, c. 1971, which looked north over the back garden
Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

The core of the house was a wide, tiled entrance hall and gallery that wrapped around a sheltered courtyard and opened out into a broad informal dining room. Both the dining and sitting rooms had easy access to the terrace on the north side and to the courtyard on the south, which opened on to another sheltered space with a workbench and storage space. There was a second workbench in the garage. An important feature of the sitting room was a long, strong timber bench on which Rosalie could display and assess her works, watching them and living with them ‘until I get a feel of them’. The dining table served as her primary workspace, and from the dining room, Rosalie could easily look one way into the courtyard and see all the materials stored there (so unlike the Deakin house), and just as easily look the other way and view the terrace, garden and hills beyond. The valley was full of air.⁹⁵

Despite a vigorous cull Rosalie brought with her to Pearce a lot of the rusted iron and old wood that had covered the backyard in Deakin. She placed a large grey weathered tree stump at the entrance to the house. At first the house was bare inside, but it soon filled up: Rosalie and Ben bought a tapestry by the French artist Mathieu Matégot to go on the high brick wall in the entrance hall, and by the time a journalist from *Vogue Living* visited eighteen months after the move she found

⁹⁴ ‘Don’t shut us in’: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 22; ‘strong, plain statement’: Bischoff’s design notes c. July 1967, Theo Bischoff papers, ACT Heritage Library. For an extended account of the house and its creation see Milton Cameron 2012.

⁹⁵ ‘Until I get a feel of them’: Australian Information Service c. 1969. It was a habit that extended to the things she found on her country explorations. Peter Vandermark observed the same behaviour when he was her studio assistant in the 1990s (discussed later in this essay).

a 'gallery and studio: extremities piled with rusting iron shapes, logs, twigs, bundles of seed heads, cartons of broken glass; the shelves of the mantels inside showplaces for the sculpture and other art work these things ultimately become'.⁹⁶

Outside, Rosalie and Ben were kept busy taming their block. They planted native trees and bushes at the front and around the perimeter, and Ben had a few fruit trees and a lawn at the back, which became a stage for some of Rosalie's sprawling bone pieces but ultimately gave way to more plantings. Near the house were cottagey flower gardens and a few herbs. Rosalie liked to have both handy for use in the house. For many years a wisteria vine sheltered the north terrace. There were bird tables, including one outside the kitchen window visited by crimson rosellas, cockatoos, galahs and magpies. Birds would be an important theme in Rosalie's art.

C. The artist: Early years: 1970–82

Transitions 1970–72

In 1970 Rosalie was on the cusp of a new world. She was thinking more like an artist, exposed to a broader, richer world of art and artists, and restless with her chosen form of artistic expression. She had an opportunity to explore what all this meant for her because the family had dispersed and her husband was caught up in his astronomical work and absent for long periods. And she had the space in which to create: instead of the confined rooms and corridors in Deakin, at last she had a house designed around her creative needs. She also had a husband able and willing to support her; this financial security meant she had the time and resources to pursue her interests full time.⁹⁷

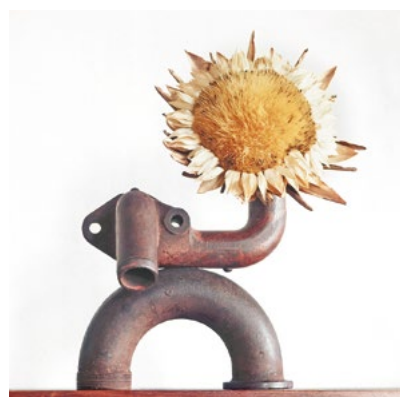
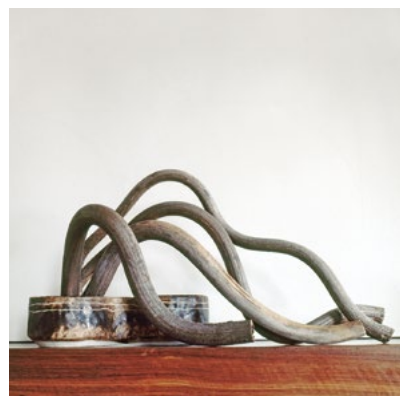
Rosalie's ikebana practice continued to flourish. She visited the Sogetsu school in Tokyo while en route to Europe with Ben in 1970, buying more vases. Back home her demonstrations were a drawcard for charity functions, and she continued to make outstanding pieces for ikebana exhibitions, including 'a large arrangement on the floor with a huge gum branch that mistletoe had grown on'. There were commissions, notably for the Industrial Design Council of Australia awards (1971) and the Japanese Embassy, for whom she became the go-to person when they needed ikebana for important events, such as the opening of the embassy's new chancellery (1970) ('an elaborate sculpture ... of pieces of wood collected in rural parts of the ACT and dried local flowers'), and the Japanese Ambassador's dinner for the Crown Prince of Japan in 1973. Rosalie came out of retirement for that, to make 'a great structure of wisteria vine filled with chrysanthemums and long branches of pulverulenta', which took 'about four days' work'.⁹⁸

After the move to Pearce Rosalie continued to work on her metal constructions, especially once she got her garden sorted out. A new strain of work emerged, particularly apparent in the pieces Rosalie began making to draw out the aesthetic qualities of the materials she chose to work with, an early example being [*Glass insulators*] c. 1971. Something similar was going on in her ikebana at the time: alongside more traditional pieces, there were now works that used only one or two materials, such as the uprooted stems of dried thistles, or the sawn-up branches of a white-barked tree. They had a strong sculptural presence and were more

⁹⁶ Mathieu Matégot (Hungarian/French, 1910–2001) *Cinnebar* tapestry, illus. Shapiro Sydney catalogue for auction 30 Jul 2014, lot 67. 'Weathered tree stump': Carole Lax *Canberra Times* 18 Jul 1969; 'Art is where you find it' *Vogue Living* 12 May – 10 Aug 1972, p. 10 (based on a visit in February 1971; see 4 Feb 1971 RG to TG).

⁹⁷ Ben liked to quote Rosalie's response when she was asked by a student, 'What is the most important thing you need when you are setting out to be an artist?' She reportedly replied, 'A partner with enough money to keep you for the rest of your life' (Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 15).

⁹⁸ 'Large arrangement on the floor': 19 Oct 1970 RG to TG; 'an elaborate sculpture': *Canberra News* 24 Aug 1970 (with image); 'great structure of wisteria': 19 May 1973 RG to TG.



Which is ikebana and which is sculpture? Six pieces from 1972–74. The first three are untitled ikebana pieces, the others are *Elephant pot* 1972, *Twig tidy* c. 1972–73 and *Standing piece* 1973/74

Top four: Photographer unknown, from the author's archive. Bottom left: Image courtesy of Bonhams. Bottom right: Image courtesy of Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW

about showing off the qualities of the materials than the re-creation of nature. In other works, plant materials were incorporated with rusted metal containers, pieces which beg the question: where did the ikebana end and the sculpture begin? One senses that Rosalie is feeling her way, reflected in a reference she made to 'my living sculptures' in a letter in July 1971.⁹⁹

The way ahead was by no means obvious, at least to Rosalie. Her view of what it took to be an artist was shaped by her Auckland upbringing: artists could draw and paint and carve and model, and she could do none of these. Artists she knew in Canberra had formal art education, and the art programs at the Canberra Technical College where she knew some of the teachers were a further reminder that she was an outsider. Rosalie had training as a teacher and in ikebana but had none of the traditional training of an artist. So there she was in the summer of 1971–72, a woman in her fifties with little idea where she might belong in the art world or how her works might fit into the canon of art. 'Is it valid?' was a question she asked about her work at the time, 'and how should I describe it?' and she would seek confirmation from others whose authority and knowledge she respected. But she knew she was on to something, because in the July 1971 letter she also mentioned the need 'to hire a good photographer soon'.¹⁰⁰

These issues came to a head in November 1971. She was already ambivalent about Norman Sparnon, feelings reinforced in October 1971 when she spent five weeks organising an ikebana exhibition, after which he high-tailed it back to Sydney leaving the cleaning up to everyone else. 'What a lot of work', she wrote, 'I have a long list of Never Agains'. Over the summer she decided to withdraw from Sparnon's classes 'to do her own thing', as she put it in a letter in February 1972, telling him she had been offered a show in Melbourne. She wanted to move to something more Australian, closer to home. What tipped the balance, however, was the encouragement she got from two visitors who had responded warmly to her iron assemblages.¹⁰¹

99 'Living sculptures': 7 Jul 1971 RG to TG. Sofu Teshigahara believed that floral arrangements were sculptures with living flowers (see Atsua Imaizumi 1968).

100 'Hire a good photographer': Rosalie did commission someone to photograph a selection of sculptural ikebana pieces, possibly Wes Stacey, who visited in c. December 1971 to take photographs to illustrate Fay Bottrell's *The artist craftsman in Australia*.

101 'What a lot of work' and the October 1971 ikebana show: 19 Oct 1971 RG to TG, also 2 Oct 1971 BG to TG; 'do her own thing': 8 Feb 1972 RG to TG. Thereafter she accepted no more ikebana engagements, other than the Crown Prince's dinner in May 1973.

Carl Plate was the first. There was quite a lot of contact between the Gascoignes and Plates in the early 1970s. Ben and Rosalie had two of his large canvases in their new house, one a gift and the other a purchase, and they had made a side trip from England to see the Plates in Paris in August 1970 (where Plate organised a studio party with other Australian artists there: the Charles Blackmans, John Coburns and Matcham Skipper). They went to Sydney for his show in November 1971 and he visited them later that month (and twice in mid-1972). Out of all this came two things: Rosalie quickly latched on to Carl's word 'presence' as a descriptor for a work of art, and used it as her own thereafter. The second thing was an endorsement of Rosalie's work. 'He thinks I'm really on to something. A comment he doesn't make lightly. Says he wouldn't have said so five years ago', and he offered to help get her a show at the Bonython Gallery in Sydney. He also tried hard to prise Rosalie's 'Germaine Greer' figure out of her (and eventually succeeded).¹⁰²

The second endorsement came out of the blue. Fay Bottrell, a Sydney textile artist and teacher, was preparing a book on artist craftsmen in Australia. The book would cover forty of the top craftsmen in Australia, include statements by each artist on why they did what they did, and be profusely illustrated with photographs by Wesley Stacey. In Canberra she had been told to visit the 'ikebana woman' and one morning turned up on Rosalie's doorstep with the briefest of notice, accompanied by Anthony Pardoe, a Sydney artist who was helping the noted collector Margaret Carnegie dispose of her collection. Pardoe moved along the sitting room bench saying: 'what excellence ... Margaret Carnegie would go mad about this'. Rosalie felt she was in a dream. Then the visitors spoke of a gallery in Sydney where they were keeping samples of people's work to be seen by architects wanting stuff for their buildings. 'They took iron and sunflowers [*Sunflowers and radiator*] c. 1970–71 from Bungendore tip. A price? No comment from me. \$95 said Fay with conviction. Me speechless.' Margaret Carnegie wanted to buy it but the sale fell through when the work was damaged in the gallery.¹⁰³



Carl Plate in November 1971
Photograph courtesy of *The Australian*

¹⁰² The two Plate canvases were *Graph segments No. 6* c. 1964 (ANU collection) and *Blue monument No. 5* 1967 (AGWA collection). Paris: RG postcard dated 11 Aug 1970; 'presence': early Dec 1971 BG to MG; 'really on to something': 16 Nov 1971, 2 Jun 1972 RG to TG and RG to MG, 10 Jun 1972 BG to TG. The first record of Rosalie using the term 'presence' is in Bottrell 1972: 'to combine things so that one gives more life to the other and so that, together, they become a separate presence'. 'Germaine Greer': see 015 *Germaine Greer* 1972, p. 150.

¹⁰³ Bottrell visit and 'they took iron and sunflowers': 16 Nov 1971 RG to MG, pp. 33–34 and 2 Dec 1971 BG to MG, p. 34. Rosalie was well aware of Margaret Carnegie's collection and standing, son Toss having been instrumental in the 1960s in borrowing works from it for exhibition at the ANU. On Pardoe and Carnegie see *SMH* 26 Feb 1971, p. 6; also *SMH* 24 Dec 1966, p. 6 and 4 Jun 1970.



Fay Bottrell in 1972
Reproduced courtesy of the photographer,
Wesley Stacey

Bottrell's book — published in November 1972 — was the first serious recognition of Rosalie as an artist. It gave her a new context in which to see and think about her work. The illustration chosen to exemplify her work makes this point precisely: it showed the sawn-off stalks of dried variegated thistles (*Silybum marianum*), presented along with all the other craftworks in the book. In fact, it is a detail of a work she had exhibited as ikebana only a few months previously.

While Rosalie had reservations about the finished publication, it was impressive enough for her to feel a certain satisfaction at being included. Exciting as the recognition was, Bottrell's request for a statement gave rise to a more perplexing issue: how should Rosalie describe her art? One of the problems was the context in which her work was placed — craftspeople — potters, jewellers, weavers and fibre artists. She tried out the term 'bush sculpture ... "bush" partly because of their content and partly in the context of "bush lawyer", "bush carpenter"', but when Bottrell suggested 'field-found constructions', Rosalie was happy to go along with that. In the end neither term was used and she ended up simply talking about her art as 'a non-binding sort of art' set in the context of her foraging trips and love of the Australian countryside. It was another two years before she discovered the term 'assemblage artist' and adopted it for herself (of which more shortly). But one thing she was sure of was her 'commitment now ... to show how beautiful and visually exciting ordinary things can be', something that she held to throughout her career.¹⁰⁴

There was more fallout from the Bottrell visit. Fay was so taken with Rosalie's work that she was determined to help her get it shown in a commercial gallery. She thought of Realities in Melbourne (hence the reference to a Melbourne show in Rosalie's letter to Sparnon in February 1972) and in March 1972 she took Rosalie around several Sydney galleries that might suit her work. Nothing came of those activities, but she did invite Rosalie to place works in an exhibition at Myer department store gallery in Adelaide to promote the book and its artists. The exhibition was in October 1973 and Rosalie had two pieces: *Surveyor's pegs* 1973 (a collection of survey pegs in a metal container) and her bone work *Spine* 1972. This was the first public exhibition to include Rosalie's work.¹⁰⁵

Rosalie took heed of Plate's and Bottrell's encouragement to exhibit and continued to think about possibilities throughout 1972. She was also motivated by the success that Hilary Wrigley had had with her show at Bonython in Sydney: Wrigley was a Canberra friend although Rosalie was not very keen on her art. Rosalie went off Plate's idea of showing at Bonython's — 'too impersonal for me' — and decided she would like to show with Frank Watters because she liked Frank and the intelligent setting, but nothing came of that, to Watters's subsequent regret. The lack of resolution was frustrating, but ultimately Rosalie was much better served by the delay because she was able to put forward a stronger body of work when eventually she did show in Sydney.¹⁰⁶

Art takes over

After Rosalie decided to withdraw from Sparnon's ikebana group and wind back her ikebana practice, art rapidly took over her life. 'Like the old concept of religion', she said in an interview at the time of her first solo show, in June 1974, art was to 'be lived all the time, not just on Sunday'. Materials and works in progress spread through the house, and the sitting room joined the dining room as a workspace because she didn't have a studio

¹⁰⁴ Satisfaction with book: 4 Dec 1972 RG to MG; 'bush sculpture': 13 Dec 1971 RG to MG, p. 34; 'field-found constructions': 11 Jan 1972 RG to MG; 'commitment now': Bottrell 1972, p. 39. Rosalie still did not have a sure way of describing her art as late as November 1973, when she wrote 'whatever it is I am doing, it takes all my time' (6 Nov 1973 RG to TG).

¹⁰⁵ Bottrell contact: 8 Feb 1972 RG to MG, p. 32, 28 Mar 1972 and for Adelaide 30 Sep 1973, p. 42.

¹⁰⁶ 13 Sep, 16 Oct 1972 RG to MG, pp. 37, 38; Watters's regret: Hannah Fink 2009, p. 150.

(and did not get one until 1983). Or as Ben wrote in September: ‘the sitting room ... is now the studio, and woe betide all visitors, except the ones the young men at the National Gallery keep bringing in [who] treat yr m. as a contemporary, more or less’.¹⁰⁷

It helped that Rosalie now had the family station wagon for her sole use, Ben having seen the light and acquired a small car for his own use around town. She was able to explore the country at will. Her explorations freed her from the mundane matters of everyday life and fed her need for visual pleasures. For the rest of her life Rosalie valued ‘the sense of personal freedom, no phone, no nothing’ that came with her country driving. ‘Nobody can get you, you don’t have to do your housework. You go, it’s a nice fine day and the country is there waiting for you.’ She would sashay out to take another look, to keep her enthusiasms up. ‘I have got to go out in the country and confirm myself that it is good. You ... sit at home and you forget what a tree looks like ... And you forget the smell of it ... I’ve got to live it.’ There were other attractions: ‘air always does something for me I think. And smells, country smells ... I suppose it’s relaxing and gives you a great feeling of freedom.’ As her artist friend and confidant Marie Hagerty put it: ‘Driving in the country was for her what drawing is for me. Liberating.’¹⁰⁸

She also discovered that the artist’s life could be lonely, beyond the comprehension of people not likewise engaged. Her social life changed — no more Melbourne Cup day events or lunches with ambassadorial wives if she could avoid them, unless poets were to be present. She had been introduced to Rosemary Dobson, a neighbour, in 1972 and they got on well; through her Rosalie met David Campbell, Judith Wright and others, all sharing an interest in landscape and words.¹⁰⁹

So far as Rosalie’s creative activities were concerned, ‘her thing’ in the summer of 1971–72 was constructions with rusted farm iron. Writing to me in January 1972, she said: ‘I am having a week to myself — not unprofitably. Plenty of company, of the ironware variety. Consolidating ideas — a v. good opportunity. Made a chance seabird today — the fact that it has 4 skinny legs instead of two doesn’t seem to detract from the clarity of the image. I have a lot of things coming to the boil, and ... I have plenty of time to consider.’

One of the problems with the metal constructions was their stability, so Ben took a professional welding course in February 1972 to help her with the problem, especially now there was talk of an exhibition, ‘so her stuff has to stick together’. Rosalie was pleased: ‘Welding equipment due to arrive on Tues — he has bought it ... Anyway, I hope to have a lot of stuff finished soon.’ But she had a sense of foreboding: ‘I sometimes have a vision of him going berserk at bottom of garden welding up huge sculptures for himself.’ By October Ben reported that she had ‘gone cold on welding’, and by the end of the year Rosalie’s interests moved on again. She would eventually dismantle most of her iron pieces and in 1974 would write that they ‘are so far from what I am doing now that I find it embarrassing to have them on public display’.¹¹⁰

The iron pieces gave way to assemblages of found objects, which Rosalie began to arrange in boxes and which would account for a large part of her practice until the early 1980s. In 1982 she told Ian North how she started using boxes:

¹⁰⁷ ‘Like the old concept’: Jacqueline Rees 1974; ‘the sitting room is now the studio’: 22 Sep 1974 BG to TG.

¹⁰⁸ This catalogue raisonné includes a chapter dedicated to Rosalie’s relationship with the country. Ben’s own car, a Datsun 1600: 11 Sep 1972 RG to TG; ‘sense of personal freedom’: 1998 Hughes, and also, for telephone, 11 Oct 1977 RG to MG, p. 51; ‘sashay out’: 1982 North; ‘I have got to go out’: 1998 Desmond; ‘air always does something’: 1980 Gleeson (talking about *Country air* 1977); ‘driving in the country’: Marie Hagerty in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 23.

¹⁰⁹ The letters have many references to poets, especially Rosemary Dobson: comes to lunch, 10 Apr 1972, p. 35; to join RG for country trip, c. 16 Nov 1972, p. 39; at dinner for Michael Taylor, 4 Dec 1972, p. 40; and Patrick White, 21 Apr 1977, p. 46; drives RD to Judith Wright, 4 Sep 1978, p. 55; trip to chalk quarry, 23 Oct 1978, p. 56. See also Rosemary Dobson 2004. Other local poet acquaintances included John Rowland and Geoff Page, who dedicated his poem *Monaro* to her (see p. 402).

¹¹⁰ ‘Having a week to myself’: 13 Dec 1971, 11 Jan 1972 RG to MG, pp. 34–35; welding references: 8 Feb 1972 BG to MG; 8 Feb, 10 Apr 1972 RG to MG; 6 Aug, 25 Oct 1972 BG to MG, pp. 35, 37, 38; ‘embarrassing to have them on display’: 10 Nov 1974 RG to TG.



Rosalie working with bones on the back lawn at Anstey Street
 Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

I was just making a pink circus at the time [I brought home the boxes] and every time anybody went past it ... fell to the ground, or people knocked it, and it got to be a terrible domestic curse. I thought I must contain it, you know; and suddenly I thought, well, I'll box it: that will stop it falling over. And that's what got me into boxes ... it was a practicality, I could now contain what I wanted to say in this box.¹¹¹

Rosalie first used old boxes she came across in the dumps. In May 1973 she found a new source when driving near Gundaroo. She chanced upon an abandoned apiary and came away with twenty-two weathered apiary boxes, which she described in a letter: 'lovely faded pink and green paint on some of them and lots of good greys'. She stacked them in her hallway with other boxes she had collected, and very quickly saw their potential for stabilising her perilous constructions. This was months before she ever saw any of Joseph Cornell's works using boxes. Rosalie would end up making about fifty works with boxes of different kinds.¹¹²

In between the metal works and the boxes, Rosalie turned her hand to something completely different: a remarkable series of works constructed out of bleached sheep and cattle bones she gathered in from the paddocks (some still with the gristle holding the joints together). They are notable both for her choice of material and for the innovative form that her constructions took.

Rosalie's appreciation of the sun-bleached bones had its origins in her flower-arranging days. She had used a sheep's skull in an arrangement in the late 1950s and in April 1961 she won first prize with an arrangement, 'Study in contrasts', that included another sheep's skull — 'nice and clean and white'. Ikebana helped her see other things in the bones: 'they were interesting shapes ... the shapes nature does, they're absolutely wonderful ... And a beautiful grey-white'. She began collecting bones in earnest in 1972, filling sacks with them as she roamed the paddocks. She ended up making four or five works from her bones in 1972–73.¹¹³

Her letters at the time reflected her interest: 'Found a lovely line of good quality cattle bones on last trip. Have a beautiful 6-bone spine in good working order. It's a poem of engineering ... I feel that the wonder is in it just as it is, and I am keen to keep it movable so that one can enjoy the clever mechanics (God's, not mine). At the moment I have it on ... [two] iron uprights on iron base. The idea is audience participation and

¹¹¹ 1982 North; see also 1984 Wood Conroy and 1998 Hughes. The circus work referred to did not survive.

¹¹² Discovery of apiary boxes: 16 May 1973 RG to MG, p. 41, also 19 May 1973 RG to TG.

¹¹³ 'Study in contrasts 1961': inscribed photograph in MG papers; show results in *Canberra Times* 24 Apr 1961, p. 6; 'interesting shapes': 1998 Hughes.

involvement. Spine carefully threaded on Pole A can be unthreaded piece by piece and threaded, face down, on Pole B ...' This was *Spine* 1972, exhibited in Adelaide in 1973.¹¹⁴

Two, much larger, bone works followed. *Last stand* 1972 was made of cattle and sheep bones strung two metres high on iron rods. 'Harsh weed shapes is what I am aiming at ... Could turn out to be something bigger than all of us!' *Joie de mourir* 1973 (Joy of death) was a 'large, looping bone sculpture on the croquet lawn ... waiting expectantly for Jim Mollison to visit it. He will be surprised.' Made mostly of sheep bones threaded on wire supported on rusty metal rods, they 'went across the lawn and they danced everywhere ... it was fairly low to the ground ... they were part of the landscape ... they were really beautiful'. This 15-metre-long arabesque owed something to Alexander Calder and also to Tony Coleing's wiry sculptures of the late 1960s, which she had seen in Sydney: 'I was surprised at the licence people took [in art]. That was when I first realized you could do things creeping along the ground.'¹¹⁵

Art-world context

As this remark about the sprawling bone pieces suggests, Rosalie's evolution did not take place in an art-world vacuum. She would later explain her transition from ikebana practitioner to assemblage artist in terms of her wider engagement with the arts world. 'I became more aware of other arts and more familiar with modern painting and sculpture, and I began to study the vision of other people and compare it with the vision I had of the spirit and features of the places I live in.'

Looking back, she recognised that the times were right for her wayward, unconventional art, which she described early on as 'lyrical derailments'. As she put it, 'it was sort of fortuitous in a way that the art of the time was geared perhaps to people more like me ... you know, you could break the rules, I think that's what it was. Before it was rules and you had to have this sort of thing to qualify as an artist. I found I could be an artist without, which was marvellous because I knew I didn't have any [conditioning], and I really didn't have any abilities either.' She had in mind *arte povera* and Australian artists such as John Armstrong, Tony Coleing and John Davis.

She might well also have been thinking of American Minimalism, which she knew through the American art magazines she subscribed to, the works James Mollison was acquiring for the Australian National Gallery,



The sitting room at Anstey Street in 1975, with Dick Watkins's *A charming study* 1963 over the mantelpiece. John Armstrong's *Tag rack* 1973 is next to the fireplace (and in front of a small Ray Crooke landscape) and Ken Whisson's *And what should I do in Illyria?* 1974 is above the sofa. Rosalie's works (from top to bottom) include *Norco cows* c. 1974–75, *Tap* 1974, *Pink parrots* c. 1974–75, *Pub* 1974 and *Interior decoration* 1975 on the hearth. The pedestal table holds *The cottage* 1974 and a collection of small pieces that ended up as part of *Games table* 1975–76

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Dick Watkins's *A charming study* 1963
Reproduced courtesy of Dick Watkins and the
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114 'A lovely line': 16 Nov 1972 RG to MG, p. 39; 'exhibited in Adelaide': 30 Sep 1973 RG to MG, p. 42.

115 'Harsh weed shapes': 4 Dec 1972 RG to MG, p. 40; 'large, looping bone sculpture': 19 May 1973 RG to TG; see also Noel S Hutchison 'Aspects of geometrically non-figurative sculpture in Australia' *Art and Australia* January 1973, p. 273; 'they danced everywhere' and 'I was surprised': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 23; Calder reference: 25 Mar 1973 RG to MG.

and the exhibition *Some Recent American Art* at the AGNSW in April 1974, which included works by Carl Andre, Don Judd, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Eva Hesse, Richard Serra, Brice Marden and Agnes Martin, among others. The increasing recognition being afforded to 'outsider' and women artists also helped her gain acceptance, although Rosalie did not participate in the women's art movement.¹¹⁶

So the early 1970s was a period in which Rosalie educated herself as an artist and honed her eye by looking at art, by talking to artists and people she respected in the art world, and by looking at (rather than reading) magazines and books (including *Art and Australia*, *Art in America* and *Artforum*). It was a time when she was exploring the possibilities of art and sorting out what was right for her. Her practice evolved accordingly, and she experimented with forms, notably with her bone pieces, though her work would always be materials-driven and shaped by what she found and had at hand.

Rosalie's education involved trips to Sydney and living with art — my collection and then works she bought. She was good at describing works she liked and why. I don't recall whether Rosalie saw the exhibition *Two Decades of American Painting* in Sydney in 1967, but she certainly had an opportunity to become acquainted with Rauschenberg's pre-pop style of assemblage art through Dick Watkins's assemblage *A charming study* 1963, in the centre of which was a crude square of rough wood painted in turquoise and pink stripes. Rosalie struggled to come to terms with that bit of wood, but she took the piece on in September 1971 when I went overseas for three years and left my collection with her.



Dick Watkins's *Untitled* 1968, which Rosalie hung in her bedroom. Watkins was (and is) widely regarded as the most interesting and talented artist of his generation

Photograph by Matt Kelso, reproduced courtesy of Dick Watkins and the Copyright Agency

Rosalie looked long and hard at my works. She had problems with the minimalism of Robert Hunter's *Untitled No 10* 1968, white squares with the palest cream inserts in sections created by faint ridges of paint (although she preferred it to the one she saw in James Mollison's flat and hung it in her sitting room). She also had my Roy Lichtenstein lithograph *Shipboard girl* 1965, enjoyed Guy Stuart's indigo pastel of an oil drum (*Untitled* 1968) in her entrance hallway, and was much taken with a big hard-edge pop collage-like canvas by Dick Watkins, *Untitled* 1968, which she hung in her bedroom. This was a noteworthy success: 'I enjoy it more and more. There is a lot in it ... I watch it constantly.' She came close to buying her own Watkins shortly afterwards, a grey and white drip painting, but in the end decided against it because it did not work in the house or with her things. And she ended up hanging *A charming study* in her sitting room amid her own work.¹¹⁷

There was more new art in Canberra, including works from the Power Gallery of Contemporary Art in 1971, and more and more trips to Sydney, sometimes just for the day, to the extent that when Rosalie's cleaning lady retired, she saw the potential to use the savings to fund more visits. She visited the galleries: Watters, Bonython, Rudy Komon, Gallery A, Coventry, depending on what was on. There were trips for openings by Carl Plate and Michael Taylor, and another to see John Armstrong. She met dealers such as Frank Watters, whom she took to and who asked her to dinner and visited her in Pearce.¹¹⁸ In October 1973 at the AGNSW she took in *Recent Australian Art*, a survey of very contemporary Australian art with works in many styles, including sculptural

116 'I became more aware': RG manuscript 13 Mar 1983; 'lyrical derailments': Bottrell 1972, p. 39; 'sort of fortuitous': 1995 Topliss. *Some Recent American Art* was organised by the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art New York and shown in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Auckland as well as Sydney (5 April – 5 May 1974). The exhibition coincided with a showing of Jackson Pollock's *Blue poles* at the AGNSW and Margaret Dodd's collection of Californian Funk art, both of which would have been further reason for Rosalie to visit the AGNSW. Even as early as November 1972 Rosalie made a small work inspired by a large minimalist piece by the Filipino artist Arturo Luz (*White relief #1, #2 and #3* 1972), which I had just bought and photographed for her, and she picked up on Luz again in 1977 (16 Nov 1972, 11 Oct 1977 RG to MG, pp. 40, 51) (see top illus. p 116, background detail).

117 *A charming study* and Mollison: 28 Mar 1972 RG to MG; Watkins *Untitled* 1968: 13 Dec 1971, 11 Jan 1972 RG to MG; possible Watkins purchase: 28 Mar, 2 Jun 1972 RG to MG, p. 35.

118 Re Frank Watters: 17 Sep 1972, p. 37; visits RG, 16 Oct 1972, p. 38; attends Watters's dinner party, 16 Nov 1972, p. 39; reportedly likes RG's work, 4 Dec 1972, p. 40.

pieces by Armstrong, Bill Clements, Aleksander Danko, John Davis, Ross Grounds and Nigel Lendon. She was taken with Dale Hickey's *Cup series* paintings, reflecting her interest in the beauty of everyday objects, and she could look at Robert Hunter and Dick Watkins again, in a setting quite unlike her sitting room.¹¹⁹

She thought about what she saw. Of the 1971 Arthur Boyd show in Canberra she would write: 'I spent quite a lot of time there and was amazed at how much I got out of the show after an initial disappointment. I feel Boyd has travelled such a long journey to reach the point he is at now, that it is hard for the uninitiated to comprehend him. Like air travel — the soul follows on foot.' Carl Plate's paintings were 'difficult serious pictures — out of mood with the times perhaps. You have to look and look at them.' Hilary Wrigley's show 'was clever. I didn't care if I never saw it again.' Alun Leach-Jones at Watters prompted 'Size for sake of size?', and she 'couldn't bear' Donald Laycock at Bonython's but she enjoyed George Baldessin's pears and white wooden chair and table at Komon's. Sydney Ball 'did nothing for me — big wafty things of no distinction', and Dickerson at Holdsworth was 'No dice' but Michael Taylor's *Frozen cloud* 1961, which she bought in 1972, 'opened up a whole new appreciation of abstract painting for me. I think I can read the artist's feelings right out of it — a degree of communication not hitherto arrived at.'¹²⁰

John Armstrong's show in 1973 was 'exciting' and she was very much taken with 'a vaguely ecclesiastical and very elegant piece' (*Tag rack* 1973, which I was to buy). Her description of the 'ecclesiastical' piece she was attracted to bore out the qualities she aimed for in her own work: 'Definite presence. Nothing to be added and nothing to be taken away. Also neatness and lasting qualities. Disciplined ... classical.' In my absence Rosalie took delivery of the sculpture and placed it in her hallway. It was something to measure her own work against, as Michael Taylor did, pointing out to her: 'there was a thing made by a man with a worldwide reputation standing among [your] things and everything looked right. [You] should find it very encouraging.' Rosalie would buy a small work from Armstrong's Canberra exhibition in March 1974 (*Feathered foot* 1974).¹²¹

Though Armstrong's aesthetic was very different from Rosalie's — she disliked the materials he bought in hardware shops, so new and unlike her weathered, found materials — years later there would be echoes of the works she saw in 1973 in her own work. In *Grass rack* 1977, Rosalie suspended sheaves of blond grass from a frame, echoing Armstrong's *Tag rack* 1973 (although she had also hung dried materials under her house in the late 1950s), and Armstrong's use of small pedestals supporting horizontal elements in *Bag rack* c. 1973 (NGA) would become a feature of some of her installations, of which *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80 (NGA) was the first. This was a variation on an idea Rosalie had employed when she placed a smooth river rock on a wooden block in *[River stone]* c. 1966–68 to bring out the form of the stone, as she would do with her enamelware in *Set up* 1983–84.¹²²

119 *Recent International Art: Works from the Collection of the Power Gallery of Contemporary Art, the University of Sydney* (an AGNSW travelling exhibition), Canberra, April 1971; *Recent Australian Art* AGNSW, 18 Oct – 18 Nov 1973, curated by Daniel Thomas and Frances McCarthy (later Lindsay).

120 Boyd: Oct 1971 RG to MG, p. 32 (*Arthur Boyd* Melville Hall, ANU, Oct 1971); Plate: 16 Nov 1971 RG to MG, p. 33; Wrigley: 13 Sep 1972 RG to MG, p. 37; Leach-Jones, Laycock, Baldessin: 4 Dec 1972 RG to MG, p. 40 (Baldessin); Ball, Dickerson: 25 Mar 1973 RG to MG; Taylor: 16 Nov 1972 RG to MG, p. 39.

121 Armstrong (later known as Jihad Muhammad John Armstrong): 27 May, 25 Jun 1973 RG to MG, p. 41. After the show she went off with Armstrong and James Gleeson to see his showpiece for the forthcoming São Paulo Biennial, and Armstrong was pleased with her response: 'It reminds me of pubs and breweries, and big old Melbourne bars that are being pulled down. It's very Australian. Nobody in England or Italy or the U.S. would have made a thing like that.' Taylor: 30 Sep 1973 RG to MG; *Feathered foot*: 11 Mar 1974 RG to MG (with sketch): 'A lovely ambivalence between Victoriana and Rococo. Funeral plumes Victorian, buttoned boots, aspidistras, tropical palms, bags of hashish in cages, miserable prisoners in wickerwork. Whole effect rather elegant.' Armstrong was a man of the moment: as well as selection for the 1973 São Paulo Biennial, Mollison was buying multiple pieces for the ANG, three of which were exhibited in Canberra in March 1975 (*Australia 75: Festival of Creative Arts and Sciences*), and the AGNSW featured him as one of three sculptors in *Project 3: Objects* (with Aleksander Danko and Tom Arthur, curator Robert Lindsay) in May 1975.

122 On Armstrong's materials: 1998 Hughes.

James Mollison

Then there was James Mollison, who was appointed acting director of the new Australian National Gallery in 1971 (and director in 1977) and gathered around him gifted curators, artists and scholars, introducing a new element to Canberra's art world. I had met him at the Australian Sculpture Gallery in January 1969, shortly after he arrived in Canberra, and introduced him to Rosalie. I used to take him out to Pearce for meals with her, and after I went away they continued to see each other and develop a deeper relationship. Mollison was an important figure because he helped Rosalie sharpen her thinking about what she liked and why, and gave her insights into what was going on in the contemporary art world. He was an early patron, acquiring works for his personal collection, for the Philip Morris collection of 'young, bold and innovative' artists and for the nascent Australian National Gallery. Rosalie admired Mollison for his commitment to art and for the passion with which he pursued his interest and communicated it to others: 'you need someone who can get airborne on art and see a sort of truth' she later recalled. He had exactly the sort of gravitas and knowledge she was looking for as she sought to test the validity of her ideas and find her place in the art world.¹²³

For Mollison the relationship offered a friendly safe haven from the considerable pressures of his job, comfortable dinners (sometimes self-invited), and engagement with an interesting emerging artist. He valued people who had a discerning eye and an instinct for art. The relationship unfolded slowly, as they discussed works of art when they met at the local exhibitions or social occasions, and Mollison would seek her views, testing her maybe, and assessing her eye. In July 1972 Mollison suggested she help him choose pots for shows: when she protested 'amateurism' he said to her 'there are amateurs and connoisseurs', and asked her to look at some European posters with him. For her part Rosalie quickly found that she needed to have a considered opinion and one she could stand by: this meant working things out for herself. In a 1974 letter she writes about visiting the national gallery art store at Mollison's invitation to see new works, where he showed her an 'instantly recognizable Man Ray mysterious object, wrapped sewing machine or whatever': this was *The enigma of Isadore Ducasse* 1920 (reconstructed 1971). She noticed that the string had slackened over the years and the tension of the really poked-up bit had disappeared. 'Which I thought was crucial. Said so. Jim said, "Well, he tied the string and we don't like to touch it". But showed me the photo [of the work when first made] which bore out my point.'¹²⁴



Patrick McCaughey, James Mollison and Pamela Bell outside the ANG art store at Fyshwick when Jackson Pollock's *Blue poles* arrived. Pamela Bell wrote enthusiastic reviews for *The Australian* when Rosalie showed in Brisbane, and in the early 1990s she sought Rosalie's opinion on a collection of her poetry

Photograph by Matt Kelso, courtesy of the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra

¹²³ 'You need someone': 1997 Ross.

¹²⁴ Mollison would also call on several other older women associated with the gallery. 'Choose pots' and 'amateurs and connoisseurs': 24 Jul 1972 RG to MG, p. 37; Man Ray: c. 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 43.

Another dimension was added to the relationship as Rosalie's work developed, and she looked to him as a sounding board for testing new works and her plans for exhibitions. She well knew that when Mollison visited her he cased her pieces surreptitiously while she was out of the room, not saying anything, until one day in March 1972 he suddenly came out with a comment: 'you're really very good with your bits of rubbish'. This was particularly meaningful confirmation of what Carl Plate and Fay Bottrell had told her only a few months before. Six months later, when Mollison turned up for another dinner, he opened with 'what new goodies have you got ... that's the best thing you've done of that sort', and when he saw her large bone sculpture (*Last stand* 1972) in the Academy of Science in April 1973 he commented to Ben 'on how much she has improved — those bones are GOOD'.

But in coming to terms with Rosalie's art Mollison was really challenged by her unconventional pathway to art, especially via ikebana of all things. This was not how it was supposed to happen, and Rosalie remembered him as being very nervous about the reaction she would get in Sydney to her first solo show there. Despite his reservations, he bought the first two of several pieces for the Philip Morris collection in September 1974 and two more six months later, and then two for himself from her first solo show in Sydney in 1976 (along with four selected by James Gleeson for the Australian National Gallery).¹²⁵

His confidence in her views and her art was such that he would invite her, as one of a very few outsiders, to his gala picnic for the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art (New York) in 1975 (the subject of her work *Jim's picnic* 1975). When he was confirmed as the first director of the gallery in February 1977 he turned up that night, without any notice, with two bottles of French champagne under his arm. Rosalie continued to look to Mollison as a sounding board until the early 1980s, and he thought enough of her in 1980 to sound her out about becoming a member of the gallery council, though nothing came of that. But it wasn't always an easy relationship, and when Rosalie was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1994, prompting a congratulatory letter from Mollison, her reply briefly summarised their relationship: 'Thank you also James for your encouragement, often oblique to be sure. You have always been someone I needed to prove it to.' Or as she would put it when asked by others about their relationship: 'he was important in my scheme of things because it was always James's cold eye and cruel tongue that I had to convince'.¹²⁶

Michael Taylor and assemblage

Another person who was important in Rosalie's life at this time was the artist Michael Taylor. Taylor was regarded as one of the most gifted painters of his generation. She met him in September 1972, shortly after she bought one of his paintings, *Frozen cloud* 1961. The Taylors lived at Bredbo, about 80 kilometres south of Canberra on the Monaro Highway that leads to Cooma and the Snowy Mountains. Over the next three years Rosalie saw a lot of Taylor and his wife Rominie. When the Taylors came to Canberra, where Michael taught at the local art school (now the ANU School of Art and Design), they would come by for lunch or drinks or dinner and stay for long talks. In this way Rosalie discovered the pleasure of 'shop talk' between artists, something akin to the discussions among her scientist husband's colleagues. It was an important breakthrough



Michael Taylor and Rosalie at Anstey Street in 1976, with a *Flower tower* in the background

Photograph by Matt Kelso from author's archive

¹²⁵ 'Bits of rubbish': 28 Mar 1972 R.G. to M.G.; 'what new goodies': 16 Oct 1972 R.G. to M.G., p. 38; at Academy of Science: 7 Apr 1973 B.G. to T.G. Rosalie remembered Mollison's uncertainty about her early work: 'Jim wasn't so sure ... but after a while he came to be convinced that I was something different' (1998 Hughes). Mollison's trepidation about Sydney show: 'I remember his unmistakable relief and incredulity in Sydney': 28 Jun 1977 R.G. to M.G., p. 49.

¹²⁶ 'Turned up without notice': c. 27 Mar 1977 B.G. postscript on R.G. to M.G.; 'gallery council': M.G. personal recollection; 'thank you also James': 28 Jun 1994 R.G. to Mollison (original on NGV artist file); 'he was important': 1997 Ross, see also 1998 Hughes ('James could be cruel, he could be very cruel'). As early as May 1973 Rominie Taylor had cautioned her: 'you have to be careful with Jim', prompting this reflection by Rosalie: 'Which gave me food for thought. Remarks like that usually spring from specifics' (16 May 1973 R.G. to M.G.).

and the memory of it stayed with Rosalie throughout her life, as she would recall: 'The ease with which [I] could talk [with Michael] fed a great hunger in me. Michael was the first person who made me feel I could be a real artist.'¹²⁷

Rosalie's work-at-hand provided the background to these conversations, and the objects — made and half-made — were in the room while they talked. During these critical years the Taylors provided encouragement and confidence. Michael's support helped convince Anna Simons to offer Rosalie her first solo show, at Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, in June 1974. More significant for its impact on Rosalie's career was Michael's decision to nominate her for *The Artists' Choice* exhibition at Gallery A in April 1975, which launched her on the Sydney art scene.

In terms of their art, the painter Michael and the sculptor Rosalie touched common ground in collage and in their love of the Monaro landscape. In October 1973 Michael exhibited fifty collages and drawings in Canberra and Rosalie bought a large collaged drawing of a hillside (*Untitled* dated 24.3.73). Taylor's collages, though not the first she had seen, led her to try her hand at this art form and for a few weeks she cut up and pasted images into a large scrapbook.¹²⁸ This activity did not last. If there was a lesson she absorbed from the exercise, it was to consider the possibilities of the branding symbols on packaging in her supermarket and she began to include these images in her more sculptural assemblages and to make works that celebrated the intrinsic qualities of their designs: Arnott's Biscuits parrots, Norco Butter cows, Daffodil margarine logos. She also collected graphic images of the footballers, cricketers, and, briefly, racehorses. By this time also she was familiar with pop art and its use of similar images.

In November 1971, Fay Bottrell and Carl Plate had encouraged Rosalie to reach for her own star. Two years later, in December 1973, she realised that she might succeed. She had just completed *Parrot lady*, which she described in a letter to me at the time as 'a lovely mad woman in a box full of Arnott's Biscuit parrots that M[ichael] and R[ominie] admired yesterday. I feel a great flood of enlightenment every so often.' Rosalie always remembered that rush of certainty: 'I think it was the first work ... that made me think maybe I would make it as an artist'.¹²⁹

By the end of 1973 she had made three boxes and was working on another, and by February 1974 she had extended her range of logos to Norco cows: 'Also got nice Norco Butter cardboard carton stamped with blue cows. Am boxing them ... I think I'll go down and climb J.B. Young's mountain of boxes and drag out a few spare cows. I like to have a lot.'¹³⁰

127 Rosalie occasionally visited the Taylors at Bredbo, and she went to Michael's exhibition openings in Sydney. Once the Taylor family joined Rosalie and Ben at the beach and stayed overnight (6 Nov 1973 RG to TG). There are many references to the Taylors in the family letters. 'Shop talk': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 25. Taylor exhibitions in Sydney visited: Watters August 1973, Watters May 1975, Coventry July 1977.

128 *Michael Taylor: 50 drawings* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, 1973 (exh. cat.); *Untitled* dated 24.3.73 (ANU collection). The show opened on 13 October. There were still collections of collage materials in her studio when she died. The collage *Untitled* is illustrated in *Michael Taylor: A survey 1963–2016* Canberra Museum and Art Gallery, 2016, p. 62, as is Taylor's *Pink sky* 1975 (p. 35), a large oil on canvas painting, which Rosalie and I bought in 1975.

129 'A lovely mad woman': 30 Dec 1973 RG to MG, p. 42. *Parrot lady* 1973, The Cruthers Collection of Women's Art, UWA (gift of Sir James and Lady Sheila Cruthers). 'I think it was': Dec 1994 RG to John Cruthers (RG papers NLA). These early works used several different types of box, and not the apiary boxes. See also 1997 Feneley: 'And I really thought when I saw it standing there ... I really might make it. Just might make art you see.'

130 'Made three boxes': 30 Dec 1973, 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, pp. 42, 44. J.B. Young's was a local department store, but the remark applies equally to her local supermarket.

December 1973 was important in Rosalie's development for another reason. During a brief visit to Canberra in mid-November 1973, I had noticed her interest in collage and assemblage, so when I stumbled across a copy of William Seitz's catalogue for his 1961 exhibition *The art of assemblage*¹³¹ at the Museum of Modern Art in New York I knew immediately it would interest her and sent it off as a Christmas present. It was only then that she understood where her art might fit and thereafter she referred to herself as an 'assemblage' artist, a term which required no further explanation and positioned her in the mainstream of art. Seitz's catalogue includes a chapter titled 'The realism and poetry of assemblage' and his observation that 'figuratively, the practice of assemblage raises materials from the level of formal relations to that of associated poetry' could have come straight from Rosalie's practice.

She wrote back to me about the book:

I am thrilled with it. None such in sight here. It couldn't be more timely. It's just what I am at the moment and there is all the difference between borrowing from a library and having a book of one's own. Michael [Taylor] was deep in it last night. I find myself so much at home among many of those artists — confirmed again when I found a great volume of Marcel Duchamp in the library on Saturday. How exciting.¹³²

The term 'assemblage' has been used to describe an artist's use of a diverse range of materials in a work of art and has its origins in the cubist collages of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque of 1910–12. In Australia the term 'assemblage' is most strongly associated with the early 1960s works of the Imitation Realists — Mike Brown, Ross Crothall and Colin Lanceley — which with their great diversity of found materials were sometimes referred to as 'junk art'. (This was a term Rosalie strongly resisted in relation to her own work because of its implication that her materials were not beautiful and that her work embodied the same anarchistic intentions as the others.) The term 'assemblage' could also apply to the use of a much narrower range of one or two materials, and in this respect Rosalie's evolving practice would show parallels with the French 'accumulationists' such as Arman and 'serial' artists such as Donald Judd, Louise Nevelson and Andy Warhol. In the Seitz catalogue I had made a notation drawing her attention to a work of Arman's that made use of many plastic dolls' hands glued inside a wooden drawer, having noted her use of a doll in *Parrot lady*.¹³³

In 1992, nineteen years after seeing the Seitz book, Rosalie was asked to judge an art prize for works of assemblage, collage and mixed media and wrote a short introduction for the catalogue. She began her essay with Picasso and included references to Kurt Schwitters, Juan Gris, Joseph Cornell and Salvador Dali, but the core of the piece was an observation about assemblage artists that clearly reflects her own work and creative processes:

I think artists of this persuasion are partially motivated by a very basic human love — the love of toys. They need things to delight in, to play with and to evoke dreams with. They like colours and shape and texture and things and, I think, chance. They pursue the allusive and elusive. They see the art underfoot in the city street, in the bush and on the beaches, and the lavish waste of exciting material strewn by nature and society. They delight in wayward inventiveness and lyric derailments ...

She concluded by stating: 'art is a very serious business whatever guise it takes'.¹³⁴

131 William Seitz *The art of assemblage* Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1961 (exh. cat.), 2nd printing 1968.

132 'I am thrilled': 30 Dec 1973 RG to MG, p. 42. She would also get a large volume on Kurt Schwitters: Werner Schmalenbach *Kurt Schwitters* Thames and Hudson, London, 1970 and other volumes on assemblage.

133 'The practice of assemblage': William Seitz op. cit., p. 84. My thanks to Daniel Thomas for suggesting this broader art-historical context. Regarding the Imitation Realists, in 1975 Nancy Borlase drew the parallel and went on to observe, 'there is, however, no hint of Dada, no element of anti-art or irresponsible nihilism in these ingenious and tasteful assemblages' (Nancy Borlase *SMH* 17 Sep 1976).

134 Rosalie Gascoigne 'Assembled art' 1992 *Gold Coast City Conrad Jupiters Art Prize* Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Queensland, Aug 1992.

First exhibitions: 1974, 1975, 1976

In June 1974 Rosalie finally got her first solo show, *Rosalie Gascoigne Assemblages*, which took place at short notice at the Macquarie Galleries, Canberra. There were more than fifty pieces ‘shovelled in ... you couldn’t see a thing’. Mollison had advised her not to be too proud to show her beginnings, so there were many rusted iron figures, a few pieces with grasses and wood, and ten of her new boxes. Rosalie did not even have time to title her pieces, so the gallery proprietor provided her own ‘unsuitable’ names. The exhibition was well attended, iron works sold and Rosalie used the proceeds to buy a dishwasher. But she later regretted Mollison’s advice because, by and large, the new boxes were ignored among all the other works and only one sold, although in Rosalie’s eyes some of them were really good. There was a patronising review by Geoff de Groen in the *Canberra Times*: ‘although it is not profound it is quite an achievement for a first one-man show’.¹³⁵

The show was an important milestone for Rosalie who knew she needed one to establish her work. She got confirmation shortly afterwards, when Mollison bought two boxes for the Philip Morris collection (*Back verandah* 1974 and *The dredge* 1974) and two more in 1975. ‘So then I felt I was real’, and if anyone asked she could say she was in the Philip Morris collection. Afterwards she gave a box to Mollison’s assistant Gary Anderson (*Bottled glass* 1974) (AGNSW) and in November the Canberra College of Advanced Education (now University of Canberra) bought [*Glass insulators in box*] 1974. Others sold when exhibited in Sydney in 1975 and 1976.¹³⁶

If the Macquarie show did something good for Rosalie’s ego, what happened next would bring her to the notice of the Sydney art world. In February 1975 Michael Taylor told her Gallery A in Sydney had invited him to nominate an artist for an exhibition in May. He wanted to nominate her, and insisted that he would choose the works. Rosalie was amazed at what he chose: no boxes with poetic arrangements of found objects, instead, four quiet, abstract pieces that were all about the materials from which they were made. One was a work with dried seed heads of the purple daisy-like wildflower, salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*), arranged in wire netting and corrugated iron (from the Macquarie show) (*Standing piece* 1973/74) (Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW), another involved cubes of pink-painted offcuts roped to a board that leant against the wall (*Leaning*



Rosalie’s works in *The Artists’ Choice* exhibition at Gallery A in 1975: (left to right) *Lying piece* c. 1975, *Leaning piece* 1974, *Collection [1]* 1974 (on stand) and *Standing piece* 1973/74

Image courtesy of the National Art Archives, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

¹³⁵ ‘Shovelled in’ and ‘regretted Mollison’s advice’: 1982 North; ‘unsuitable names’: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 25; ‘dishwasher’: 1 Jul 1974 RG to TG; Geoffrey de Groen ‘Prints of classical brilliance’ *Canberra Times* 20 Jun 1974, p. 10.

¹³⁶ ‘Felt I was real’: 1982 North. Similar remarks in 1998 Hughes: ‘I remember lying on the carpet. I was so impressed with this fact that the things had been bought by such as Jim Mollison.’ Mollison’s first two purchases were included in the 2nd Philip Morris Arts Grant exhibition in Melbourne and Sydney in February–March 1975 and mentioned by Nancy Borlase in her review (*The Bulletin* 15 Mar 1975, p. 51). The works acquired in 1975 were *Woolshed* 1974 and [*Bowls of balls*] 1974–75. All the Philip Morris works were part of the Philip Morris gift to the Australian National Gallery in 1982.

piece 1974) (Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney), the third had broken white porcelain insulators on wads of newsprint arranged in a grid (*Lying piece* c. 1975) and the fourth presented tight bundles of rusty bush nails in tins on a piece of curved grey wood (*Collection [1]* 1974). The works looked back to her late ikebana and forward to the innovations of the late 1970s and years following. Sydney had seen nothing like them (unlike the works of the other artists chosen). Three sold — the first things to sell — and the gallery immediately offered Rosalie her own show.

The critics noticed her, too. Most important of all was the judgement of AGNSW curator and *Sydney Morning Herald* art critic Daniel Thomas: ‘the most interesting choice is the only fully cross-cultural one: the painter Michael Taylor chooses sculptures by Rosalie Gascoigne, quite unlike his own work, and quite unlike anybody else’s in Australia ... She assembles disparate objects ... with a marvellously sure and fully sculptural taste in setting up contrasts of texture, colour, direction and weight.’ Others followed him, writing about Rosalie’s ‘small, intimate and poetic assemblages’ [Ruth Faerber], and her ‘instinctive feeling for the texture and colour of weather-worn discards ... are the most satisfying but least ambitious works here’ [Nancy Borlase]. Her work was ‘a welcome relief from the largely predictable look of the other artists’ [Sandra McGrath]. Nancy Borlase was already familiar with Rosalie’s work, having been drawn to her pieces in the Philip Morris collection when it was shown in Melbourne in February.¹³⁷

This flowering of Rosalie’s career had one other effect. Ben had been faced with a very tempting offer to take a position with the Anglo Australian Telescope, which he had been working on for the past ten years, but it would have meant moving to Sydney. On the eve of the Gallery A show, he turned down the offer, essentially because the move would be so disruptive to Rosalie’s art practice.¹³⁸

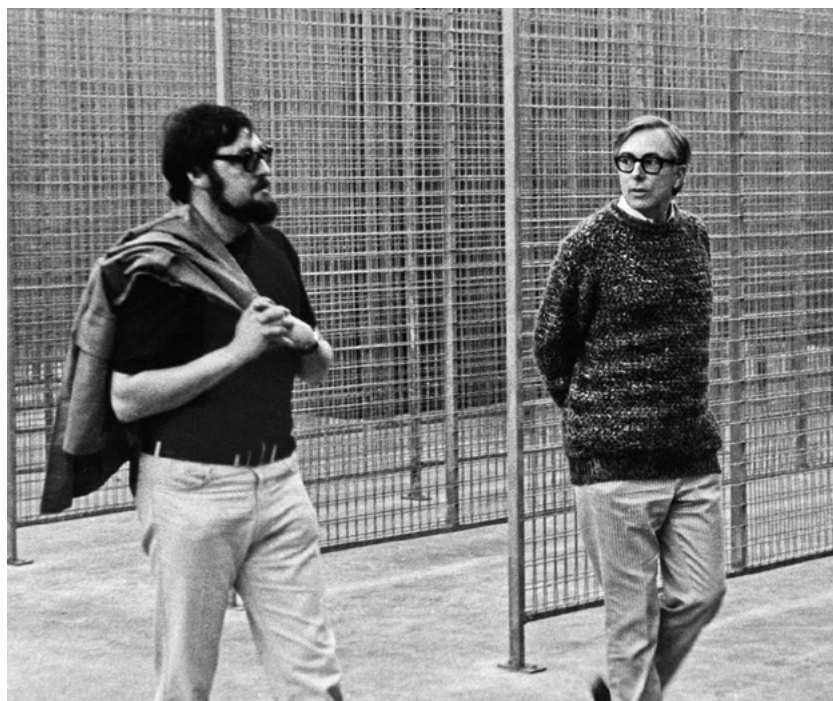
The solo show Gallery A had offered opened on 11 September 1976. *Rosalie Gascoigne Assemblage* was another big show, with fifty-four works, but quite unlike her offering at the gallery in 1975. The first room was dominated by a huge banner advertising a fairground boxing troupe — Bell’s Touring Stadium — and a fairground atmosphere filled the room because Rosalie had used materials the troupe had dumped at the Bungendore tip. Memorable among these were the plastic kewpie dolls, whose arms she had ripped off. When she showed her finds to Mollison he suggested she might do a whole show using only the sideshow stuff. But she didn’t, and the back rooms were quieter. If some elements



View of Rosalie’s first solo show in Sydney from the entrance to Gallery A, September 1976
Image courtesy of the National Art Archives, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

137 Daniel Thomas *SMH* 8 May 1975; Ruth Faerber *Australian Jewish Times* 15 May 1975, p. 16; Nancy Borlase *The Bulletin* 17 May 1975, p. 55 and earlier in *The Bulletin* 15 Mar 1975, pp. 51–52; Sandra McGrath *The Australian* 24 May 1975. On Rosalie’s two shows at Gallery A, see Hannah Fink’s invaluable ‘The life of things’ 2009.

138 See SCB Gascoigne: Personal record (BG papers NLA) and 2000 BG interview with Bob Crompton for the Australian Academy of Science: www.science.org.au/learning/general-audience/history/interviews-australian-scientists/professor-ben-gascoigne-1915-2010.



Daniel Thomas (right) in 1971 with the visiting Swiss curator and art historian Harald Szeemann at the Art Gallery of New South Wales

Photograph by Brian Adams, courtesy of the National Art Archives, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

suggested play, others called for contemplation, including a number of works that again emphasised the intrinsic beauty of materials used, such as discarded domestic enamelware, corrugated iron, plain wooden blocks and the dried heads of salsify. There was a fair showing of works using Arnott's parrot and Norco cow logos. 'As an entity', Hannah Fink would write, 'the exhibition *Assemblage* was like a collection of short stories, or perhaps a collection of ideas for short stories — an archaeology of bush life'.¹³⁹

The show was popular. The boxing banner was visible from the street and drew in patrons from the pub across the road. Gallery staff complained about being run off their feet. Rosalie was pleased: 'it was nice to get ordinary people involved. They'd seen art for the first time, these men from the pub.' Sales were impressive: James Gleeson bought four for the Australian National Gallery, Daniel Thomas two for the AGNSW and two for himself, and others went to the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston and the Newcastle Art Gallery. There were sales to art-world notables, including Kym Bonython, Pamela Bell, Robin Gibson, Grazia Gunn, Ann Lewis, James Mollison, Guy Warren and a collector in New York. 'The world opened up', Rosalie recalled, 'I found I was legitimate. And then there was no hiding me.'¹⁴⁰

Contexts, influences and appropriation

Years after the Gallery A show Daniel Thomas wrote about his reasons for buying the two pieces for the AGNSW. Thomas observed that curators always see art history in works of art. It was the minimalism of *Crop [1]* 1976 that appealed. 'It was made in the heyday of, or ten years after the heyday of, Donald Judd and Minimalism. We'd known for twenty years or so the assemblages of dirtier things that artists like Robert Rauschenberg made. And I thought, ah ha! This is neater and more minimalist than most Rauschenbergian assemblages.' In *Enamel ware* 1974 the thing he saw 'was primarily a kind of surrealist playfulness ... Biomorph forms dancing playfully in space. Rosalie did later admit to an influence from Miró, one of the great Surrealists.'¹⁴¹

Curatorial emphasis on art history is sometimes taken a step further, into a discussion about 'influences' — or 'pigeonholing' as Rosalie would say. Joseph Cornell is seen as the father of all boxes, hence his is the tradition to which everyone refers when thinking about Rosalie's boxes.

¹³⁹ Mollison suggestion: 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG; Hannah Fink 2009, p. 160.

¹⁴⁰ 'Run off their feet': 27–29 Sep 1976 RG to TG; 'it was nice to get': 1982 North; 'the world opened up': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 29.

¹⁴¹ Daniel Thomas 'Rosalie Gascoigne: Up in the air' lecture given at City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand, May 2004 (transcript RG papers NLA) and see his exhibition catalogue essay 'Rhythm and lift-off' 2004, p. 17.

Cornell's role in Rosalie's art was specific but limited: she had already taken boxes into her repertoire and begun using them for practical reasons — to contain and frame her assemblages and to stabilise them (an ikebana legacy) — before she encountered Cornell (and other artists using boxes) in William Seitz's book on assemblage. If Cornell's enigmatic boxes were about mysteries and cabinets of curiosities and the interiors of his mind, Rosalie's were poems about the world she lived in, the things she knew and materials that pleased her eye. 'Little ikebanas' was how she once described them. Rosalie's sensibility was very different to Cornell's. Describing Cornell's boxes as miniature theatres, she distinguished her work thus:

his [Cornell's] platform is quite different because he was doing it to divert his brother who was ill — of course he had the interest himself in these old theatre programs and everything but he was making little worlds for his brother to step into ... I wasn't doing it for those reasons at all, I was doing it to make the countryside here visible to me and I could have what I loved inside with me and I could watch it, and this is a different thing.¹⁴²

'Influence' is one thing; 'borrowing' or 'appropriation' is another. Rosalie wrestled with the problem — which for her was an issue of integrity: 'I worked abortively all day yesterday [29 December 1973]. What with your book and large [library book about] Marcel Duchamp I have taken on influences. Rewarding in end but clouding my own vision at moment. I assessed position last night. False, false, and this a.m. returned to my true loves and think I have pulled it off.' The work was *The dredge* 1974. With appropriation in mind, she goes on: 'Interesting to find that the finishing touch was something I got from your book [Seitz]. The [idea for the] base and the top piece of wood are really due to Cornell's influence and change the whole concept [of the box].' The idea of a plinth that Rosalie took from Cornell for *The dredge* is something she would make use of in other boxes from this period, including *Enamel ware* 1974, *The Pepper Pot* 1975, *Black bird box* 1976 and *Room with a view* 1976–77. The plinth provided the finishing touch and helped ensure that each work had 'presence'. For Rosalie, a work without presence was 'a proper nothing'.¹⁴³

Rosalie refined her views on appropriation, and spoke about them to students at the Canberra School of Art in 1985. After observing that 'we all see the overseas magazines. Lots of people travel', she went on to caution them, 'everybody takes on influence, but you have to digest them until you get them down to what you honestly feel yourself and what you like ... You want to speak louder than they do when you have finished.' Writers and curators would see in Rosalie's later work similarities with American minimalists such as Carl Andre, Eva Hesse, Jasper Johns and Agnes Martin, among others. As she said of her art, 'the times were right for me', so one might expect viewers of her art to find resonances in the art of the times. Rosalie could: she would refer to a piece of sawn formboard in *Suddenly the lake* 1995 as her 'Ellsworth Kelly curve', a reference to the NGA's Kelly *Orange curve* 1964–65 which she had seen and admired almost twenty years beforehand; to the void in the centre of Morris Louis's curtain paintings when talking of *Parrot country* 1980; and to the abstract calligraphy of Cy Twombly in talking about *Close ovly* 1988.¹⁴⁴

142 'Little ikebanas': 1998 Hughes ('Unlike Cornell mine was stability problems and I was really making little ikebanas in boxes, you know, the positions and things.'). Rosalie was sensitive about comparisons with Cornell, as this extract from a 1980 letter shows: 'Have been trying to do a star one for ages. Not a BIT like Cornell. Your father went and got Cornell book just to show how different it was. For one thing, it has a strange black horse in foreground' (5 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60). But she soon dismantled the piece (which she had called *The dark side of the moon*). On stability and ikebana: 1997 Feneley; 'his platform': 1995 Topliss; see also Mildred Kirk 1986 for a discussion on Rosalie's boxes and the work of Cornell and Kurt Schwitters.

143 'I worked abortively': 9 Jan 1974 RG to MG, p. 43; 'proper nothing': 1995 Topliss, 1997 Ross, 1997 Feneley, 1998 Hughes. The issue reared its head again, in 1980. Rosalie was working with 'all my pink wood, lovely bloom on it. Half arranged it and thought I was really getting somewhere. Then I realised I had the nearest thing to a pink [Louise] Nevelson that you would be likely to see. Which definitely will not do!' (24 Jan 1980 RG to MG, p. 60).

144 'Ellsworth Kelly': 1997 Feneley, 28 Oct 1977 RG to MG, p. 51; Morris Louis: 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, pp. 60–61; Cy Twombly: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 32. Rothko's name also came up when she talked about *Clouds II* 1992; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 52.



Rosalie with Ken Whisson at Anstey Street in 1978

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Ken Whisson's *And what should I do in Illyria?* 1974, which Rosalie bought in 1974, echoes of which turned up in her work over many years

Photograph by Matt Kelso, reproduced courtesy of Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, and Watters Gallery, Sydney

Rosalie looked at other artists, but in the end there were only three who mattered to her: Ken Whisson, Pablo Picasso and Colin McCahon (of whom more later). Rosalie was a great admirer of Whisson's work, whose paintings James Mollison had drawn to her attention. In October 1974 she bought *And what should I do in Illyria?* and would acquire two more (*View from my window No 6 or 7* 1974 and *Flags* 1976). After living with *And what should I do in Illyria?* for only a few weeks, she described her responses thus: 'I wrote a short note to him saying "It NEVER goes to sleep". Rather like a cocky in a cage that you eventually put a blanket over ... Lovely grey sea levels and sportive blue sky with peculiar cloud shapes, and even more peculiar Whisson-type figures on foreshore ... Extraordinary how it brings the sea right into the room — and the air off the sea, too.' A year after buying *And what should I do in Illyria?*, Rosalie would find in it the means to complete her construction *Enamel ware* 1974. As she was later to acknowledge: 'That blue saucepan up there, I am sure I got its placement directly from Ken Whisson, whose paintings I am terribly interested in. I suddenly realised I should put the shape across the work. That was a big departure for me.'¹⁴⁵

Whisson visited Rosalie in Canberra in July 1978 when they 'got on like a house on fire'. He had been sufficiently impressed by her response to his work to invite her to write an introduction for a retrospective of his work to be held in Melbourne in September 1978. Her piece concluded: 'Whisson's paintings have the quality of looking freshly made. They continue to exercise the viewer long after his initial response to them; and the viewer, once involved, will not easily, if ever, get to the end of them.' Prophetic words: years after, Rosalie would recall the interest she and Whisson had shared in sky and air and clouds. When Rosalie started to tear up linoleum and Masonite board to make works such as the sequence *Clouds I*, *Clouds II* and *Clouds III* 1992 and *September* 1992, the shapes would echo those in her Whisson paintings. She described the shapes as 'Ken Whisson shapes'.¹⁴⁶

Picasso was the one artist in whom Rosalie had a long-term interest, reaching back to that book *Picasso's Picassos* I gave her in 1962. His art, his creative process and his colourful life all engaged her. As well as benefiting generally from Picasso's legacy to assemblage art, Rosalie shared his interest in circus themes, and the 'shabby tired performers' in *The players* 1981 have much in common with Picasso's Pierrots, harlequins and saltimbanques (and, indeed, the work includes an image of one of his saltimbanques). But it was his creative process which really mattered, and it provided a model for completing another of her circus-

¹⁴⁵ 'I wrote a short note': 10 Nov 1974 RG to TG; Whisson responded to Rosalie's letter on 10 Nov 1974 (RG papers NLA); see also 22 Sep 1974 BG to TG, 1998 Hughes; 'blue saucepan': 1985 School of Art.

¹⁴⁶ 'House on fire': 1 Aug 1978 RG to MG, p. 55. For her Whisson exhibition note dated 8 August 1978 see Ken Whisson *Selected paintings* RMIT Gallery, Melbourne, 1978. 'Ken Whisson shapes': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 32. *Wind and weather* 1994 is another work with an obvious 'Whisson' shape.

related works, *Side show parrots* 1981. The story echoes her recourse to Whisson when placing the blue saucepan in *Enamel ware* 1974: 'I'd been seeing things about Picasso. And I get the feeling about Picasso that he didn't give a damn. He made it work, however unlikely ... He knew he was a master and he just made it work ... And I'd thought of Picasso and his sportiveness, his enjoyment, you know, this sort of thing ... And so instead of being fussy, particularly about the pieces I chose [to use], I thought, right — and with my very positive hand I did these parrots, and I accepted that one, going the wrong way ... and I got a very different quality, I thought, [because] of it.'¹⁴⁷

Consolidation: 1976–79

One constant in Rosalie's practice was her way of working in units, which she would usually combine into larger constructions. Her circumstances encouraged this approach, which helped compensate for the lack of a decent workspace when her primary workbench was the dining table. It was a method she was very comfortable with, allowing her to explore her materials and to see where the results took her as she considered the pieces; she had learnt this early on, from the broken china insulators and wads of newsprint in *Lying piece* c. 1975, the columns of pink cubes of wood in *Leaning piece* 1974 and the many small cigarette tins filled with broken china in *Mosaic* 1976 (AGNSW).

Working in units helped Rosalie assess the form and scale of a piece she was working up, adjusting the number of units until she was satisfied with the overall size, as she did with *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80, expanding it from nine to fifteen units to cover 3.5 square metres, or *Parrot country* 1980, which began as a single unit, was expanded to three and later reconstructed and expanded again to four units (*Parrot country II* 1980/83) (Te Papa Wellington, NZ). Of necessity, big works were constructed from units, which made them much easier to handle, as with the heavy boards which provided the base for *Paper square* 1979–80.

Rosalie's use of units was closely tied to another feature of her practice: her use of grids as an organising principle, which helped bring out the subtleties and richness of her materials. She used grids from the start, in works such as *Bottled glass* 1974, [*Glass insulators in box*] 1974 and *Lying piece* c. 1975. Grids and units also situated her practice in a broader tradition of 20th century art and, together with the minimalist look and repetitions of many works, meant her art was recognisably contemporary.¹⁴⁸

Rosalie continued to make boxed works until 1984, but in the six years after her show at Gallery A she also worked with a wider range of materials and used old favourites in new ways. She took on empty beer cans she found discarded by the roadside because there were lots of them and she liked their faded pastel colours, which reminded her of early Italian renaissance paintings. The summer of 1976–77 was a particularly good year for grasses and resulted in five works of golden grass. At the old Canberra brickworks she came across great sheets of battered corrugated iron with traces of faded paint, which she put together with the discarded window frames she also found there (*Country air* 1977) (NGA). A chance discovery of a bird sanctuary at the southern end of Lake George was the start of a romance with feathers — thousands of them, picked up from among the tussocks and mud, washed and sorted, and used in three major works: *Pale landscape* 1977 (Te Papa Wellington, NZ), *Feathered chairs* 1978 and *Feathered fence* 1978–79 (NGA). The daily newspaper was not ignored — first used as a source of images of racehorses and sportsmen, and later for the qualities of the newsprint itself,

¹⁴⁷ On RG's interest in Picasso's life see Marie Hagerty in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 26. On *The players* 1981 see catalogue entry. 'I'd been seeing things about Picasso': 1982 North. Picasso's creative process was the theme of her talk about his *Still life with mask* (NGA) in 1997, part of the farewell celebrations for Betty Churcher when she retired as director of the NGA in 1997. Unfortunately, there is no record, although I remember how she began, with Picasso in the studio picking the box off the floor, placing it on his canvas and asking himself 'what would go with that?' and later, 'what else do I need?'

¹⁴⁸ 'Easier to handle': 1982 North (talking about *Paper square* 1979–80). On Rosalie's use of the grid and work practice generally, see Mary Eagle 2007.



Black swans and drowned fences at Lake George in the mid-1970s, where a chance encounter led Rosalie to a bird sanctuary and thousands of feathers she used to make *Feathered fence* 1978–79 and other feathered works. The memory also inspired *Lake* 1991, of which she said: ‘you see the lake going like that and the levels of the lake, very level lake country ... And there’s nothing else there, but levels. And the curve. And nature says it all without saying too much’ (1998 Desmond)

Photograph c. 1977 by Ben Gascoigne from author’s archive

notably *Paper square* 1979–80 made for the Adelaide Festival in 1980, and described by Mollison as ‘opulent’. Rosalie’s first works with printed linoleum found at country dumps were made in 1977 (*River banks* 1977 and *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80). In July 1978 she discovered the Schweppes drink depot in Queanbeyan where she found wooden soft-drink boxes painted red or green or white and a few yellow. Some of these materials she used only briefly, moving on after exhausting her exploration of their qualities. Others would be the foundation for her practice for the rest of her career. A word she often used to describe her materials was ‘elegant’, which she applied to newsprint, domestic enamelware and galvanised iron among others.¹⁴⁹

As Rosalie developed her ideas there were new forms and bigger works, insofar as she could manage them within the limitations of her working spaces. The modest floor piece she exhibited in 1975 (*Lying piece* c. 1975) exploded to cover almost thirty square metres in *Pale landscape* 1977, both works having newsprint as their base. There are echoes of *Leaning piece* 1974 propped against the gallery wall to be found in the stripped thistle stalks leaning against the four window frames that make up the 3.5-metre-long *Takeover bid* 1981 (Heide MOMA) and in the fence droppers against the wall in *Smoko* 1984. The sprawling arabesques of bones she made in 1973 (*Joie de mourir*) became a very disciplined line of feathers clamped between wood and placed on wire mesh stands (*Feathered fence* 1978–79). The same discipline is apparent in the bundles of stripped thistle stalks placed in a grid almost four metres by five metres (*Piece to walk around* 1981) (Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney). Rosalie played with viewer participation in works such as *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80, where she invited viewers to step among the blocks, or *Pale landscape* 1977 and *Piece to walk around* 1981 where viewers were encouraged to circle the piece and view the way the light played on the squares of stalks. With works such as these Rosalie had taken on another aspect of the contemporary art scene (much as she had invited participation in *Spine* 1972). And in her letters she began to mention ‘installations’.¹⁵⁰

Rosalie was keen to have Mollison’s reactions to new works and exhibition proposals, and he followed her work closely. He told her that her ‘beer can piece is a major work’ (*Room with a view* 1976–77) (QAGOMA) and in 1978 he invited himself to dinner to see her *Feathered chairs* 1978. It was a two-way street. He bought *River banks* 1977 (her first linoleum piece) and *Cloister* 1978 for his own collection and she gave him *Daffodil box* 1977. He offered her studio space if she would like it but

149 ‘Opulent’: c. 16 Nov 1979 RG to MG, p. 59.

150 ‘Installations’: ‘Meanwhile I am mostly working and feel I am getting up a new head of steam ... Have also done a work with birds [made] of Lake George stones about 5 ft long, still in the making, all beiges and grey with three slatted squares as background ... Question at moment is whether I could present it as a sort of installation and not try to stick down the very heavy bird forms. Mustn’t let practicalities slow down the flow of art!’ (11 Oct 1977 RG to MG, p. 51).

nothing came of the offer, although when she needed a place to set up *Feathered fence* 1978–79 — ‘impossible to see 30 ft clear of background here’ — he said, ‘Bring it down here [to the gallery store]. Bay 5 is empty at moment.’¹⁵¹

Rosalie consulted Mollison before accepting Robert Lindsay’s invitation of a survey show at the NGV because he had previously cautioned her about showing in Melbourne. In October 1978 she wrote: ‘On Jim’s recommendation I have agreed to have a show of ten boxes in Brisbane about June next year’, and reports that ‘he said he thought I ought to do more boxes, that it was a pity to have them spread too thinly about the country’. But gradually she also learnt to trust her own judgement more: ‘Jim doesn’t always know, and sometimes I think he mistakes all this carry-on at home for what I’d do in an exhibition. I remember his unmistakable relief and incredulity in Sydney.’¹⁵²

Mollison continued to respect Rosalie’s eye: he invited Rosalie to preview the hang of his *Genesis II* exhibition in 1978, which would be the first public showing of major new acquisitions for the national gallery collection. Rosalie made a few suggestions regarding the spacing of several items, which he seized upon. ‘He was exhausted. Seemed really grateful to hear me voice pleasure in the show ... Then he asked if he could come and visit in weekend.’¹⁵³ Michael Lloyd, who watched Rosalie and Mollison together, would also seek out Rosalie’s views on his displays in the 1980s when he was curator of international art at the Australian National Gallery and later assistant director.

Another person Rosalie liked to show her works to was James Gleeson, surrealist artist, critic and from 1975 visiting curator of Australian art at the Australian National Gallery. She had first met him in 1973 at Watters Gallery looking at John Armstrong’s show, but it was only when he was visiting Canberra as visiting curator that they really got to know each other, and he became ‘a real family friend’. No wonder: after he first came to dinner at Pearce she wrote: ‘He talks very well — your father most impressed ... a really meaty conversation ... James talks about art quite differently from Jim. Full of scholarship — says Carl is too sophisticated in a French way to be popular with Australians ... James said something about getting the same frisson from my work as he did from Chardin.’ She was sorry her installation windows (*Country air* 1977) had not come back from Brisbane so that she could try them out on him, and when he did see them later that year he asked if he could put them to Mollison for the gallery collection. She noticed how much of their thinking matched and warmed at his responses to her works. Gleeson laughed delightedly at her two feathered chairs (*Feathered chairs* 1978) and when she showed him what would be the first panel of *Parrot country* 1980 he confirmed her feelings for it: ‘The parrot is the country ... Albert Tucker TRIED to do that.’ She gave him some of her stripped feathers to use and he invited her to Sydney to see the joint work (*Locus solus* 1979) he and Robert Klippel had just completed, thus opening up another relationship. Their mutual respect is evident in Gleeson’s interview of Rosalie in February 1980 about her works in the national gallery’s collection.¹⁵⁴

Rosalie exhibited her corrugated-iron windows *Country air* 1977 and her *Pale landscape* 1977 with its feathers on newspaper at the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane in 1977, where they were well received by the critics. In 1978 she had her survey show at the NGV, with only three solo shows at dealers’ galleries under her belt.



James Gleeson, whom Rosalie first met in 1973 and got to know when he became visiting curator at the Australian National Gallery in 1975. She noticed how much of their thinking matched and appreciated his responses to her works

Photograph by Matt Kelso, courtesy of the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra

151 ‘Beer can piece’: 28 Jun 1977 RG to MG, p. 49; ‘to see her *Feathered chairs*’: 23 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53; ‘offered her studio space’: c. Oct 1978 RG to MG; ‘bring it down here’: c. 23 Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 58.

152 NGV show: 4 Jul 1977 RG to MG, p. 49, also 7 Apr, 28 Jun 1977, pp. 46, 49; ‘ten boxes in Brisbane’ and ‘ought to do more boxes’: 12 Oct 1978 RG to MG, p. 56; ‘Jim doesn’t always know’: 28 Jun 1977 RG to MG, p. 49.

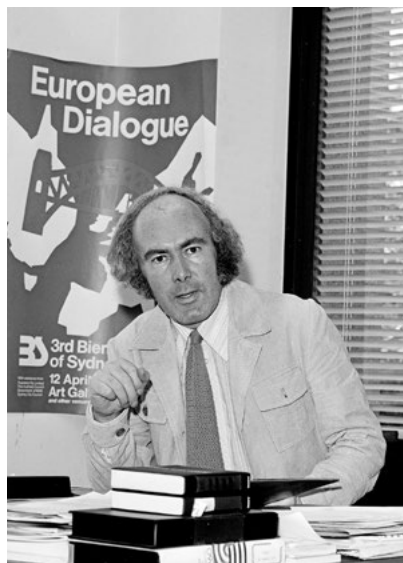
153 ‘He was exhausted’: 27 May 1978 RG to MG.

154 ‘Real family friend’: 11 Jan 1978 RG to MG; ‘talks very well’: 23 May 1977 RG to MG, p. 47; *Country air* for ANG: 8 Nov 1977 RG to MG; ‘laughed at *Feathered chairs*’: 28 Jan 1978 RG to MG; ‘parrot is the country’: 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG; re Klippel: 24 Jun, 27 Nov 1979, 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG; ‘mutual respect’: 1980 Gleeson.

The NGV survey was one of a series of small shows by emerging artists instigated by curator Robert Lindsay. Rosalie's show was popular with the public and the press, and the catalogue sold out in ten days. Lindsay made a short, videotaped interview with Rosalie for the show: it was to be the first of many in the years ahead. There was a solo show at the Ray Hughes Gallery in Brisbane in 1979 with nine boxes, three grass works, her surrealist *Feathered chairs* 1978 and *March past* 1978–79 (NGA) (the first work made with slats from soft-drink crates) and a couple more. The boxes included two with images of classical art works, the start of a practice of reframing such images as homages. Rosalie bought a new jigsaw with the proceeds. She decided she didn't want to show in Brisbane again because she needed a more clued-up audience and an understanding dealer, which was also the reason she gave for not showing again at Gallery A in Sydney. After the Brisbane show Mollison told her not to show for another two years.¹⁵⁵

The 1979 Biennale, New York, Pinacotheca and Venice 1982

Rosalie's work began to be included in major surveys of contemporary art: the 3rd Biennale of Sydney (AGNSW) in 1979; *Drawn and Quartered: Australian Contemporary Paperworks* (Art Gallery of South Australia) for the Adelaide Festival in 1980 (*Paper square* 1979–80); and in 1981 both *Australian Perspecta* at the AGNSW (*March past* 1978–79) and the *First Australian Sculpture Triennial* in Melbourne (*Piece to walk around* 1981). In Adelaide *Paper square* 1979–80 had 'pride of place right opposite the stairs and lift on wall of its own' and in Melbourne *Piece to walk around* 1981 was singled out as 'the most stylish of the pieces in the La Trobe University Union Hall' where its 'quietness ... was a relief and a joy'.¹⁵⁶



Nick Waterlow in his biennale office
Image courtesy of the National Archives of Australia
(A6180, 18/12/78/5)

The 3rd Biennale of Sydney, *European Dialogue*, was the first time Rosalie showed in international company and the first time she attracted any sort of international attention. Rosalie showed two works: *Feathered fence* 1978–79 and *Winter order* 1978–79 (QUT Brisbane), chosen by Nick Waterlow, the biennale director. It was the start of an important relationship: Waterlow would become a great supporter, selecting Rosalie and Peter Booth as the two artists to represent Australia at the 1982 Venice Biennale and including her works in the 1988 and 2000 biennales of Sydney, among other exhibitions. In Sydney Rosalie was pleased that 'my things are saying what I meant them to — all pale country air. Will they understand?' Waterlow thought so, recalling that '*Feathered Fence* ... epitomised for the visiting Europeans the psyche of the Australian landscape and it helped them understand it more effectively'. Which is why he thought she would be a good choice for the Venice Biennale.¹⁵⁷

Rosalie enjoyed meeting some of the other artists, including Richard Dunn and Tom Arthur, but overall she did not get much out of the 1979 biennale. 'There is a lot of carry-on that I don't find particularly refreshing. I think I will soon want to go back to walking the beaches and the paddocks.' She 'didn't feel moved by most of the clevernesses. Just more confirmed in what I do myself.' One work that did stick in her mind

¹⁵⁵ 'New jigsaw': 22 May 1979 BG to TG. It was acquired several months later. Wanted a 'more clued-up audience' in Brisbane: 28 Jun 1979 RG to MG, and Sydney: 11 Apr 1979 RG to MG; 'don't show for another two years': 28 Jun 1979 RG to MG, p. 58.

¹⁵⁶ 'Pride of place': 3 Mar 1980 RG to MG; 'most stylish': Jeffrey Makin 'Sculpture lacks challenge' *Sun News Pictorial* 4 Mar 1981; 'quietness': Janine Burke 'Do you see the koala-bears with machine guns?' *Art Network* no. 3 & 4, 1981, pp. 26–28.

¹⁵⁷ 'My things are saying': 11 Apr 1979 RG to MG, p. 58; 'epitomised for the visiting': Nick Waterlow in Ewen McDonald 2000, p. 168; also '*Feathered Fence* ... became for the visiting artists a poetic metaphor for this place that none had previously visited' (Nick Waterlow 1992). I am grateful to Katrina Rumley for clarifying Waterlow's role in selecting Rosalie for the Venice Biennale. On the biennale's significance and background see Anthony Gardner and Charles Green 'The Third Sydney Biennale: "White elephant or red herring?"' *Humanities Research* vol. XIX, no. 2, 2013, pp. 99–116. Waterlow also chose RG's work for an exhibition of seven sculptors — *Confrontations* — at the Ivan Dougherty Gallery in 1993 and *Spirit + Place: Art in Australia 1861–1996* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 1996–97.

was Nikolaus Lang's *Samples of earth colours and paintings* 1978–79, which Mollison bought for the Australian National Gallery. Rosalie had an opportunity to revisit Lang's work when it was exhibited in Canberra in the summer of 1980–81 and later adopted the concept and format for her *Industrial area* 1982–84.¹⁵⁸

Waterlow's biennale had been preceded by a lot of discussion about the weighting to be given to Australian and foreign artists, and to the number of women artists to be included. These were debates that did not interest Rosalie. When Janine Burke asked six women artists to write personal statements about their art, Rosalie was crystal clear on the point. 'I don't feel involved/committed to the idea of women's art, I feel committed to the idea of my art.' She went on: 'Art is desirably the reflection of a whole person — what the artist is, and how he/she is shaped by the human predicament. I feel that being a woman fits very neatly into the category of what I am ... To women who call themselves women artists I would say that an artist is neither man nor woman, has been born an artist and not become one.'¹⁵⁹

In late April 1980 Rosalie headed off to New York, alone, to see the art, and took the train to Washington to see more. She had been thinking about getting away since her 1979 Brisbane show and James Mollison had been encouraging her to go 'to see what the big boys are doing'. She timed her visit to coincide with his — they would overlap for five days — and hoped he would give her pointers on what to see, some chat and maybe some contacts. She did not want to go around with him and chose to stay in a different hotel (the legendary Algonquin). But it did not work out: 'Jim let me down with a thump. Finally got on to me the morning he was leaving.' He preferred the company of the embarrassed young friends accompanying him. All was not lost, however, as she met up with Patrick McCaughey and his father and they saw the film *The tin drum* together, which she found extraordinary and not to be missed, and they talked of visiting Washington together.¹⁶⁰

Nor did it help that it rained torrents for several days at the start and she had no luggage, which PAN-AM had mislaid en route. But when the weather cleared she walked miles all over Manhattan, halfway across the Brooklyn Bridge, through Central Park, all the way up Madison Avenue and took the ferry around the Statue of Liberty. She was taken with the chewing gum on the pavements. 'It patterns the whole place over like lichen, green, pink, apricot, white. It's worn down with weather and lost all its unpleasant quality and looks rather beautiful — to me at any rate.'

As for art, she went to the Metropolitan Museum where she enjoyed the early Italian art, the 'gentle' Pompeian things and an exhibition of Chinese bronzes. The Museum of Modern Art was closed because it was setting up for its Picasso retrospective. At the Whitney she loved Arshile Gorky's *The artist and his mother* and saw 'a wonderful circus made by Calder [*Calder's circus* 1926–31] ... so lively and inventive' and a room of sculptures by people she had seen in magazines — Oldenburg, Cornell and others. She visited three loft spaces, which were in districts 'where you expect to see lots of rats'. She could not be bothered with a lot of the art she saw, which she found as boring as its Australian counterparts, decided that she had made several pieces that were as good as, or better than 'a heap of green wire mesh' at the Whitney, and was unimpressed with Walter De Maria's *New York earth room* (1977) — 'the product of a decadent society, it should be left out in the sun with a pigeon sitting on it' — and his *The broken kilometer* 1979 — a mile of brass pipes in an upstairs room. So Rosalie saw

158 'A lot of carry-on': 11 Apr 1979 RG to MG; 'didn't feel moved': 30 Apr 1979 RG to MG; Lang in Canberra: *Landscape – Art: Two Way Reaction*, an Australian National Gallery exhibition at the ANU 1980–81.

159 Janine Burke 1979, p. 314.

160 'Thinking about getting away': c. 10 Jun 1979 RG to TG; 'see what the big boys are doing': 16 Nov 1979 RG to MG, p. 59. Further references to New York plans in 3 Oct 1979 RG to MG, 9 Dec 1979 BG to TG, 12 Dec 1979 BG to MG, 7 Jan, 5 Feb, 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG.



Bruce Pollard 2 by Robert Rooney 1979

Image courtesy of Trevor Fuller, copyright the Executors of the estate of Robert Rooney

‘the big boys’ and found a lot of the art ‘very false’, but there was other art ‘that was truer’, and in this she found a valuable lesson: it confirmed in her the wisdom of sticking to her guns.¹⁶¹

Just before Rosalie went to New York she had been in contact with Bruce Pollard of Pinacotheca Gallery in Melbourne and in April he had written to her advising that she would be ‘most welcome’ to show with him. Rosalie had met Pollard in 1978 at her survey show at the NGV, and taken to him and his atmospheric Richmond factory, a great bare space with rough wooden beams and timber floors, which she liked better than the other galleries she had seen in Melbourne, and she began to think about showing there. Rosalie found in Bruce a dealer in whom she recognised a similar sensibility, confirmed when he remarked to her after looking long and hard at her work: ‘Your work is about feeling, it’s not about seeing’. Pollard ran a minimalist operation and Rosalie’s one frustration concerned the lack of feedback on reactions to her shows. Rosalie would have seven solo shows at Pinacotheca, the first in May 1981, the last in 1993, and Pollard would buy eight of her works for his own collection.¹⁶²

The first Pinacotheca show differed from previous shows in that the major element was eight works made with reassembled boards from soft-drink boxes to hang on the wall. Many of the works were bigger than pieces she had previously shown, including two multi-panel works (*Parrot country* 1980 and *Reading left to right* 1981). There were two floor pieces (*Piece to walk around* 1981 and *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80), two works with the stripped stems of thistles (*Takeover bid* 1981 and *Piece to walk around* 1981), two linoleum pieces and ten smaller works, five of which involved collaged Arnott’s parrots. NGV curator Robert Lindsay reserved three (including *Piece to walk around* 1981) but they were turned down. Press commentary was lukewarm but Pollard wrote a rare letter saying that the show was much loved and drew out of people a type of warmth and appreciation he rarely saw.¹⁶³

Shortly after the Pinacotheca show closed Rosalie received a letter inviting her to represent Australia at the Venice Biennale in 1982. It was from the Visual Arts Board (VAB) of the Australia Council, the federal government’s arts agency (where Nick Waterlow was director and Ann

161 Account of New York visit: 9 May 1980 R.G. to T.G., also Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 32, 1998 Hughes and MG recollections. Re PAN-AM losing her luggage, Ben suspected she failed to collect it in Los Angeles when she went through customs there. Rosalie would later use an image of the Gorky painting in her [*Homage with Arshile Gorky’s The artist and his mother*] c. 1984.

162 ‘Most welcome to show’: 14 Apr 1980 BP to R.G.; Pinacotheca plans: 24 Sep 1978 R.G. to M.G., p. 56 (second meeting with Pollard), 12 Oct, 26 Dec 1978, Feb 1979 R.G. to M.G., p. 67; ‘feeling, not seeing’: 1997 Feneley, 1998 Hughes. At various times Pollard owned *Venus* 1980, *Shoreline* 1986, *Grasslands [I]* 1987, *Formal flowers* 1988, *Plantation* 1988, *Denim* 1990, *Lantern* 1990 and *Amber* 1992. On Pollard’s aesthetic and style as a gallerist, see Jonathan Sweet *Pinacotheca 1967–1973* Prendergast Publishers, Melbourne, 1989 and interview with Christopher Heathcote ‘The making of Pinacotheca’ *Art Monthly Australia* no. 37, Dec 1990/Jan 1991, pp. 3–7.

163 Pollard letter: 15 Jun 1981 BP to R.G. (R.G. papers NLA). For exhibition reviews see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions.

Lewis chairman of the VAB). She would be partnered with Peter Booth. The idea was to present two facets of contemporary Australian art, with Booth's focus on the human predicament in neo-expressionist paintings and Rosalie's on landscape in assemblage sculptures. For Rosalie, the invitation was the final seal of her acceptance as an artist, coming only seven years after her first solo show. She was delighted and, I think, a bit humbled by this recognition of her work by the art community. She knew Venice was a significant opportunity and consequently she was determined to put her best foot forward. After she was selected James Mollison telephoned her to try and dissuade her from accepting the offer because he thought it would be better if Peter Booth was the sole representative, but she was not to be talked out of the offer (which, she argued, after all was the considered judgement of the VAB).¹⁶⁴

Waterlow's catalogue foreword spoke about Rosalie's ability to create new and totally unexpected life from nature's excesses and from utilitarian discards. Rosalie showed works made with corrugated iron, swan feathers, salsify heads, yellowed newsprint and dismantled soft-drink boxes, and four Arnott's Biscuits parrot boxes. She remade *Crop [1]* 1976 and *Paper square* 1979–80 for the exhibition (exhibited as *Crop 2* 1981–82 and *Harvest* 1981–82 respectively) and completed the nine-panelled *Scrub country* 1981–82 in time for it to be included. One side-product of the catalogue was the lengthy interview Rosalie did with Ian North for his essay, the first time she had spoken at length about her life and art (New Zealand-born North was then curator of photography at the Australian National Gallery).¹⁶⁵

Venice was tough because the promised space for the Australian exhibit did not eventuate, and for the vernissage it was mounted in an incomplete pavilion without waterproofing. The exhibit was taken down immediately afterwards, though not before the international press had been through and noticed Rosalie's work. It took six weeks of hassling and threats to withdraw before the show was installed in a proper location. Rosalie liked meeting other artists in Venice, enjoyed drinks at Harry's Bar, and was pleased with the Missoni jacket she bought, but Venice itself did little for her, being so remote from the country that fed her art (she described Venice as a Gilbert and Sullivan set). She had a great time at *Documenta* in Kassel, Germany, to which she repaired briefly to escape the chaos and depression of Venice. In the end, over-decorated, man-made Venice confirmed her love of the marvellous, fresh, pristine natural beauty of the spare Australian landscape.¹⁶⁶



Rosalie with Katrina Rumley in the half-completed Australian pavilion in Venice as they sought to ready her exhibit for the vernissage. They had to paint the walls themselves — helped by visiting Australians — because the builders were on strike about concerns over protected olive trees. The whole experience reinforced the argument for a permanent Australian pavilion, which opened in 1988 and was replaced in 2015

Photograph from author's archive



Rosalie with Ann Lewis at the vernissage, Venice Biennale 1982, with *Scrub country* 1981–82 in the background

Image courtesy of Mossgreen

¹⁶⁴ 'James Mollison telephoned': MG recollection; Ben remembered likewise. Rosalie still wanted the confirmation of Mollison's eye — 'more the eye of Nemesis now' she wrote — and he agreed on a time to visit but failed to materialise (6 Jan 1982 RG to TG).

¹⁶⁵ 'Lengthy interview': 1982 North.

¹⁶⁶ Reaction to Venice: 1988 Ewen McDonald, 1997 Mollison and Heath, p. 7; for more references see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions. 'Harry's Bar': Aug 2016 Katrina Rumley to MG. There was another legacy of the trip — Rosalie lost the hearing in one ear as a result of an infection caught shortly before she returned to Australia.

On their return the Australian exhibits at Venice and at *Documenta* were displayed at the National Gallery of Victoria and the Art Gallery of New South Wales. The context is telling — Rosalie was grouped with three young men regarded as working at the cutting edge of contemporary practice, the only woman of the four, and a generation older than the three men: Peter Booth, John Nixon and Imants Tillers.

D. Mature years: 1983–99

The studio

If the years up to Venice were about Rosalie finding herself and her metier, and becoming accepted as an artist, the years that followed are about her practice as a fully matured artist. When Rosalie returned from Venice she was ready to address an issue that had been hanging over her for several years: the need for a studio. An architect and builders were engaged and in June 1983 she moved in. Eight metres long and five metres wide, the new building on the back of the garage offered much more space than anything in the house, including two big walls for hanging works, good light, some storage and winter warmth. There was a workbench with her tools and, down the centre, a large trestle table made with thick planks of Oregon pine about two metres long. Ben paid for the studio with money he had received as part of his retirement package in 1980.¹⁶⁷

The studio was an immediate success. ‘New studio is putting a different complexion on large carpentry pieces. And it’s light and warm ... I’ve never had it so good.’ The first work Rosalie made there was *Club colours* 1983. The scale and ambition of her work grew, and within six months she had completed *Parrot country II* 1980/83, a rebuilt 1980 work which she extended to four units, and had begun two major floor pieces, *Piece to walk on* 1983–84 and *Set up* 1983–84, which were soon to be followed by *String of blue days* 1984 (AGWA) — a precursor for the great airy installations of the 1990s — and *Industrial area* 1982–84.¹⁶⁸

Rosalie would say that when she started out she had no mechanical skills, but gradually — and with Ben’s help — she mastered a whole range of them. In her maturity as an artist she could use a drill press or an electric screwdriver or the bandsaw or the nibbler (used for cutting corrugated iron) or the sander or even the circular saw, all with some assurance,



The new studio in late 1983. Rosalie relished having a large, dedicated space to work in and responded immediately. On the back wall *Club colours* 1983, on the floor *Set up* 1983–84 and (foreground) *Piece to walk on* 1983–84 under construction. Note the corrugated iron on the wall on the left, which she only turned to in 1993 when she made the *Rose red city* pieces. The blue CRYSTAL boards in the left-hand corner may be panels used in *String of blue days* 1984

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

¹⁶⁷ Ben's letters include references to the need for a studio: 27 May, 30 Sep 1981, 19 Jan, 28 Jun 1983 all BG to TG.

¹⁶⁸ 'Immediate success' 28 Jun 1983; BG to TG; 'large carpentry': c. Jun 1983 RG to TG. Years later Rosalie spoke about the effect of the new studio on her work: 'My work got bigger. If I had a hangar, it would be different again. You need height above your head, because you use the air. I could do with four times the space now' (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 33).

which, as Ben noted, was just as well because she always insisted on doing as much as she possibly could of her own construction work. As Rosalie's skills grew she needed Ben's assistance less, and though he would be invited to help out with some of the heavier pieces, his assistance was mostly provided out of the studio, as record keeper and photographer. In time Rosalie would hire a part-time studio assistant to help square up works, apply aluminium strip bracing to their backs and prepare them for exhibition.¹⁶⁹

Rosalie was in the studio every morning, leaving only for lunch and her daily dose of the television soap opera *Days of our lives*. She would cast an eye over the previous day's efforts and if she decided it 'was a proper nothing' it was put aside, to be reworked another day or abandoned. While working, Rosalie let her materials 'take her by the arm'. The idea of drawing, or trying out compositional ideas on paper or using collage meant nothing to her. Her artist friend Marie Hagerty observed that Rosalie was actually opposed to the idea of planning. Drawing was an academic practice. Premeditated. She didn't like premeditation.¹⁷⁰

Her approach was visual and practical, not conceptual. She strongly believed that art came from inside the person, hence her liking for the Jasper Johns remark quoted earlier about a picture being whatever an artist has got put into it. And that art was driven mostly by passion, because 'it is passion that drives you through unlikely places to unlikely things. Because you have got to have it [art].' Rosalie 'needed so badly something to look at', and fell back on the only skills she had: 'I can't do anything except I can see and I can arrange ... but mostly I can arrange'. She went on: 'I can do something that feels like something but I can't do anything that looks like something.'¹⁷¹

Peter Vandermark, who started helping her in 1989, remembered Rosalie's way of working: she would keep shifting the assemblage about, her hands moving, constantly in process, trying out the look of things and when the assemblage showed something, leaving it there. She would have many things going at once in the studio, several works in process, one stacked on another and others kicking around the floor. Even when she had completed a work, she would watch it on the wall, in passing, or by chance or out of the corner of her eye while working on something else, 'trying to catch them unawares and get the freedom of a first sighting', much as she had with her early finds of 'interesting shapes' when exploring the mountain or, later, searching the country for ikebana materials. Vandermark also observes that her works, no matter at what stage of completion, were open to reformation.¹⁷²

She continued working — primarily but by no means exclusively — with units, large and small, sometimes with the units separated (*Letting go* 1991, *Orangery* 1998), sometimes joined together (*Plenty* 1986, *Standard* 1990–91, *Rose pink* 1992) and sometimes mixing different sizes or different materials (*Plein air* 1994, *Skylark* 1994–95, *Night and day* 1996). Occasionally, small units were treated as individual works, which she called *Tesserae*. Working method and creative temperament were aligned. Vandermark observed that 'she liked the hazard of not knowing. There was no preconception of whether to produce a single panel, or a work comprising several panels, with her size was never preordained, not even orientation; typically, the size was determined at the end when she judged the work complete.' Sometimes she decided against using all the units she had made (*Monaro* 1988–89, *Archipelago* 1993 and *Skylark* 1994–95), the remainders either being treated as a separate

169 For a more comprehensive account of Ben's role see Ben Gascoigne 2000, pp. 9–15. Rosalie's first assistant (in the mid-1980s) was Stuart Vaskos, a local art student. From 1989 she employed the sculptor Peter Vandermark. See 'Peter Vandermark and Marie Hagerty in conversation with Mary Eagle' in Mary Eagle 2000, pp. 19–27. Eagle 2000 also includes a comprehensive list of Rosalie's tools, p. 17.

170 Marie Hagerty in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 20. Throughout the 1990s Marie visited Rosalie on a weekly basis, ostensibly to help in the house, but their conversations about art and Marie's work and what was going on in the art world were far more important, for both of them. On 'proper nothing' see, for example, 1997 Ross.

171 Quotes from 1997 Ross.

172 Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, pp. 23, 25; habits of the 1960s: see earlier discussion in this essay and Australian Information Service c. 1969.

work (*Outback* 1988) or catalogued as studies (*[Archipelago studies A & B]* 1993). Occasionally she turned the process on its head, cutting up large panels or even finished works and reassembling the pieces in a different order (*Target* 1991, *Byzantium* 1997).¹⁷³

The studio was always full of works, some completed and others still in progress, and cane baskets, tubs, cardboard boxes and plastic bags stuffed with offcuts, all sorted by size and colour. Rosalie, who always needed to have a lot of material to hand, was a hoarder and discarded very little. So the studio was also a storehouse, which spilled over into the courtyards outside and which inevitably became workspaces as well, places to observe, sort and rearrange her stuff. Materials could lie around for months or even years before they were used, if they ever were.¹⁷⁴

The 1980s: Soft-drink crates and road signs

Several things happened with Rosalie's art in the mid-1980s. She stopped making boxes, *Habitation* 1984 being the last, although their legacy is to be found in the small, framed homages she continued to make, using art reproductions and graphic images that caught her eye. She developed an interest in making installations or environments, to which she would return in the 1990s. The first of these was *String of blue days* 1984, made of warped weathered wooden fence railings and blue soft-drink box boards, prompted by the silhouettes of old stockyard fences against a clear country sky. There were more floor pieces including *Piece to walk on* 1983–84 (soft-drink box boards), *Industrial area* 1982–84 (gravel heaps on newsprint), *Flight* 1985 (thistle stalks) and *Inland sea* 1986 (rusted corrugated iron) (NGV).

If weathered wood was one of Rosalie's favoured materials, then the wood from discarded soft-drink boxes must be at the top of the list. In the course of her career she made about 127 works in which wood from dismantled soft-drink boxes was the sole or a major component of the piece. They range in size from some of the biggest she made to the most intimate, and account for about twenty per cent of her total production. Another, unlikely, favourite was discarded retroreflective road signs. The road sign works became something of a signature material of Rosalie's, especially the yellow, although she also used the orangey-red non-reflective signs. Rosalie made 108 works (including four studies) using road signs, always plywood and never the metal signs (she did not like the material and, apart from anything else, they were too hard to



Studio interior with Ben photographing *White city* 1993–94 for his records. *White city* was the first of the white works made from dismantled cable reels. The big yellow work is *Loose leaf* 1990

Image from author's archive

¹⁷³ 'Vandermark observed' and 'turned the process on its head': Mary Eagle 2000, p. 25; see also Vandermark's description of the reformatting of *Byzantium* 1997 in the catalogue entry for the work.

¹⁷⁴ 'Materials could lie around': 1998 Hughes.

cut up). When the road sign works were first shown, the lighting was arranged to bring out the retroreflective gleam but Rosalie ultimately preferred to do without special lighting as it was too harsh, and instead hoped for an accidental, unexpected flash to light up the room briefly.¹⁷⁵

Over time Rosalie explored every aspect of her boxes and signs (and their lettering), whole, sliced and diced, and arranged in grids or small units and glued or screwed to backing boards (much as she had cut up and rearranged her parrot and cow logos in the mid-1970s). The cutting became easier when she acquired a full-sized tradesman's bandsaw in November 1988. The move into soft-drink boxes raised new issues of technology for her: how to secure her arrangements of boards. The solutions she found with Ben's help laid the foundation for her practice thereafter, being just as applicable to works made from road signs and dismantled cable drums. Most of these flat works were made by screwing or gluing the wooden component pieces to plywood (or, later, composition board) bases. One of the earliest soft-drink box works was *Dove grey* 1980. Ben remembered that it 'had to be screwed to a back support, with screws no one could see. We had a lot of trouble working out a solution. Eventually we glued them on, then screwed.' To help with the screwing Ben bought Rosalie a cordless electric drill in April 1983. By the mid-1980s Rosalie found that she could get by if she just glued the works to the backing.¹⁷⁶

There was another problem: 'The plywood bases had a tendency to warp, countered by strengthening them with lengths of aluminium strip, which we usually screwed in place, parallel to and near the edges, and this became a regular practice. The strip was 30 mm wide and 3 mm thick, and we used hundreds of metres of it.' Rosalie described the first occasion: 'Your father has discovered aluminium strips and we have been playing unpick, unpick, unpick followed by join up, join up, join up. Result is lighter and much more professional looking.'¹⁷⁷

Critical responses

Rosalie had a second show at Pinacotheca in 1984, followed by shows in 1986 and 1988. Unlike the enthusiastic reception she got from the mostly female writers in 1978, the predominantly male Melbourne critics of the 1980s were very slow to take to her work and patronising, arguably highlighting the parochialism of the Melbourne art world and the influence of post-modernist writers there. In 1981 Robert Rooney thought that 'the materials she uses are often more interesting than her formal arrangements' although Alan McCulloch found her work 'all done with taste, energy, talent' but fingered a problem for viewers: 'Rosalie Gascoigne's work makes for one of those art forms that seems so strange to a generation sure of its definitions — painting was painting and sculpture was sculpture and so on.' Ronald Millar thought her Venice works looked 'precious' next to Peter Booth's and in 1984 found 'a whiff of nostalgia' and 'nothing even a bit rough or un-artistic; the good taste never lets up'. Rod Carmichael, too, picked up on her 'impeccable' taste. Sue Cramer at least responded to 'a gentle, poetic art'. By 1986 Millar had softened and thought Rosalie made 'brilliant use' of her found objects and 'arrives at such serenity that you forget that she begins with a load of old rubbish'. Most notable of all, however, was Gary Catalano, who wrote: 'Gascoigne's sculptures are empty and entirely without merit'. As he saw it, there was not a single work 'made in response to a genuine imaginative pressure'. It took the Sydney-based artist Ewen McDonald to see things differently: he thought the 1986 show was an 'excellent

¹⁷⁵ On the display of the retroreflective road sign pieces see 1988 Ewen McDonald and 1997 Ross.

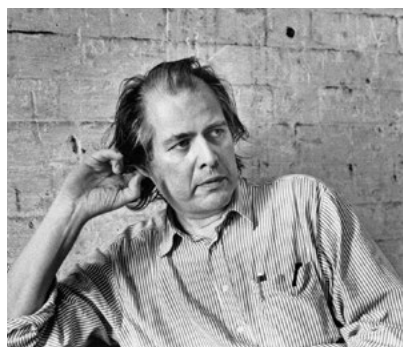
¹⁷⁶ 'Most of these flat works': Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 12; '*Dove grey*': mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.

¹⁷⁷ 'The plywood bases': Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 12; 'your father has discovered': c. Jan 1981 RG to TG. Some of the earlier, larger pieces made of columns of slats were backed by wooden battens and/or aluminium strip. In *Scrub country* 1981–82 the aluminium strip was screwed directly to the wooden slats from behind, although in *Parrot country II* 1980/83 the slats were screwed to wooden battens which were joined up using aluminium strip.

exhibition' by 'a remarkable woman' whose 'work has a monumentality that comes from its sheer simplicity'. The critics ignored the 1988 Pinacotheca show. It was not until 1990, when Rosalie was paired with Colin McCahon in *Sense of Place* at the Ian Potter Gallery, The University of Melbourne, that the Melbourne press — but not Gary Catalano — really responded warmly to Rosalie's work. Robert Rooney converted, so much so that in 1993 he argued that she should have won the triennial Clemenger Contemporary Art Award for that year (rather than Bea Maddock).¹⁷⁸

Despite the lukewarm media response in Melbourne, Rosalie found strong supporters there. After Catalano's review in 1986, Bruce Pollard wrote to her that his remarks had had no effect: 'in fact, it bounced back on to him as most people were moved enough to say how ridiculous his statements were. Some people used more obscene or violent language.' His advice to her: 'the show had such a strong impact that you do not have to rush shows in Sydney or elsewhere'.¹⁷⁹ Rosalie only started showing commercially in Sydney again in 1989, when she came to an arrangement with Roslyn Oxley.

Pollard was right about Rosalie's impact. As a now-established artist Rosalie's presence in important group exhibitions included an exhibition of contemporary Australian art in Tokyo in 1983, the *Second Australian Sculpture Triennial* in Melbourne in 1984–85 and the biennales of Sydney in 1988 and 1990. The biennales had unexpected consequences. In 1988 the visiting New York curator Dan Cameron was so taken with Rosalie's work that he included eight of her works in a show of international contemporary art he curated in Sweden in 1989, along with artists such as Jeff Koons, Katharina Fritsch, Rebecca Horn, Mike Kelley and Sherrie Levine. Cameron's catalogue essay includes the following comment about Rosalie: 'What is unique about her practice, however, is neither its labor-intensiveness nor its inherently handmade qualities, but rather Gascoigne's evocation of a sense of place that is both nowhere and everywhere at once. This is the famous edgelessness which appears repeatedly as a motif in Australian art, even when, as in Gascoigne's work, the intimate presence of the land itself is part of the texture of the work.'¹⁸⁰



René Block in Sydney, 1990

Photograph by Heidrun Lohr, courtesy of René Block

The 1990 Biennale of Sydney, *The Readymade Boomerang: Certain Relations in 20th Century Art*, was selected by the noted European curator René Block and Rosalie once again was hung in the company of international artists. Block would later select Rosalie for his 1999 exhibition *Tōi Tōi Tōi: Three Generations of Artists from New Zealand*, shown in Kassel in Germany and in Auckland. Another outcome was Rosalie's brief foray into printmaking, Block persuading her to contribute to the print portfolio he commissioned for the Biennale of Sydney (see *Close owly* 1990).

178 On reactions to the exhibitions see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions. Melbourne critics: Robert Rooney *The Age* 6 May 1981, *Weekend Australian* 10 Apr 1993, p. 13; Alan McCulloch *The Herald* [Melbourne] 7 May 1981; Ronald Millar *The Herald* [Melbourne] 25 Nov 1982, 18 Oct 1984, 23 Oct 1986; Rod Carmichael *The Sun* 24 Oct 1984; Sue Cramer *The Age* 17 Oct 1984; Gary Catalano *The Age* 22 Oct 1986, 29 Aug 1990; Ewen McDonald *Art review* ABC Radio National, 20 Oct 1986 (unpublished transcript 20 Nov 1986). Rosalie was thinking of Catalano when she said, 'I have critics in Melbourne who I think have never stood in a paddock in their lives. Would hate a paddock, couldn't bear it, would run screaming out of it. And they like bookshops and things in Melbourne, you see. Well you can't speak to people like that because they don't need that emotion, you see. But you don't bother about them. You go for yourself and then people who feel the like way. So that's, that's a dividend. It pays for you' (1998 Hughes). She put her feelings in a poem, the first lines of which read: 'How can I show you the land I walk? / You, who stand on pavements, / Have never seen the wide places I know' (RG papers NLA).

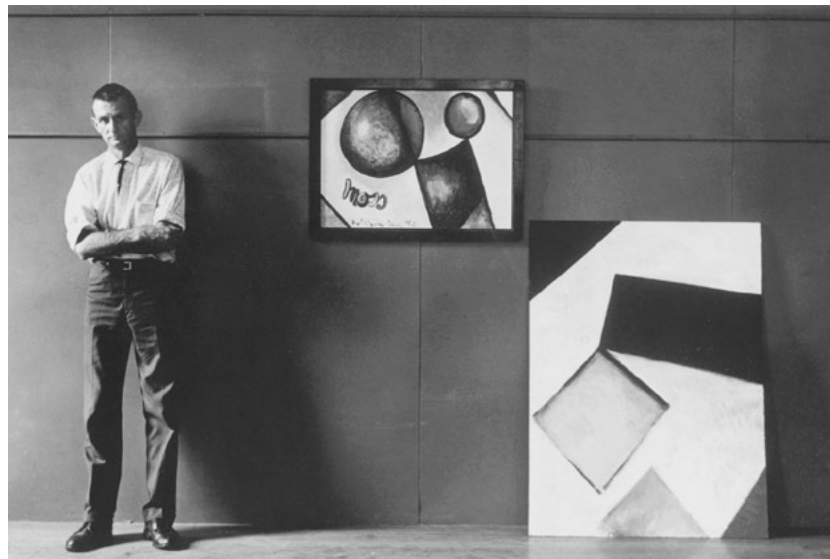
179 7 Nov 1986 Pollard to RG (RG papers NLA).

180 Dan Cameron *What is contemporary art?* Roosuum (Centre for Contemporary Art), Malmö, Sweden, 1990, pp. 17–18.

New Zealand and Colin McCahon

Rosalie's inclusion in *Toi Toi Toi* neatly captured the distance she had travelled since leaving Auckland. It was a remarkable turnaround for someone who thought she could never have become an artist had she stayed in New Zealand. When the artist Rosalie had opportunities to engage with New Zealand art and artists, she began to take a more positive attitude. The key was Colin McCahon, whose *Victory over death 2* 1970 and *Crucifixion: the apple branch* 1950 she saw in the newly opened Australian National Gallery in 1982. She wrote about *Victory over death 2* for *Art and Australia* in 1983. Her appreciation of McCahon firmed in December 1983 when she visited New Zealand. It was the first visit since 1957 and it was art that brought her back. She was there for an exhibition of her work at the National Art Gallery in Wellington, which coincided with the gallery's exhibition *Colin McCahon: The Mystical Landscape*. She sought out his dealer, Peter McLeavey, and bought a painting related to the *Gates* series (*Floodgate 1* 1964–65). Rosalie was of the same generation as McCahon and had been brought up in the same landscape, which helps account for her immediate response to his art. She would have been delighted with the observation by New Zealand poet and art critic Ian Wedde about their coinciding shows: 'These beautiful works [of Gascoigne's] using a variety of "found" materials were a good complement to the McCahon landscapes.' She came to think so highly of McCahon that, when asked to show with him in *Toi Toi Toi*, she said: 'As soon as they mentioned Colin McCahon, well I would cross the seas to go anywhere with Colin McCahon. I really think he's the greatest antipodean, he gives you the country they would never know in the northern hemisphere.'¹⁸¹

It also helped Rosalie to re-engage with New Zealand — albeit reluctantly at first — when she found an appreciative audience there for her art, beginning with her solo show in Wellington, which opened at the National Art Gallery in December 1983 and travelled to Auckland, Palmerston North and New Plymouth in 1984. Viewers applauded: to New Zealanders she was one of them. In 1990 she was paired with McCahon in *Sense of Place*, an exhibition at university galleries in Sydney and Melbourne to commemorate New Zealand's sesquicentenary, curated by Louise Pether and opened in Sydney by New Zealand's Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer. Buyers began to cross the Tasman in



Colin McCahon in early 1961 with *Moss* 1956 and *Gate* c. 1961. Rosalie bought his *Floodgate 1* 1964–65 when she visited Wellington in 1983

Photograph by Bernie Hall, courtesy of the EH McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

181 'She wrote about': Rosalie Gascoigne 1984, pp. 490–491; 'these beautiful works': Ian Wedde 'Where was the best art this summer' *New Zealand Art News* vol. 1, no. 1, 1984; 'as soon as they mentioned': 1998 Hughes; re Rosalie's first encounter with McCahon, see Ewen McDonald 'There are only lovers' 1990, p. 13. She apparently did not see or did not remember his works from an Australian tour of eight New Zealand artists that came to Canberra in April 1966 and I suspect may not have remembered Hamish Keith's article on him in *Art and Australia* vol. 6, no. 1, 1968, p. 61 or seen an *Art New Zealand* 1977–78 article until shortly before she came to write about him in 1983. Rosalie met McCahon once, at his show associated with the 1984 Biennale of Sydney: *I Will Need Words: Colin McCahon's Word and Number Paintings* Power Gallery of Contemporary Art, University of Sydney, 11 April – 17 June 1984.

search of her works. Public institutions in New Zealand made significant purchases, particularly the Chartwell Trust and Auckland Art Gallery. In 1988 she visited New Zealand again, to see the McCahon retrospective in Auckland, and she returned in 1999 to speak about her work at the Auckland Art Gallery. During this last visit, just three months before she died, she was able to engage closely with the local art community; the visit was a great success and she left deeply impressed with all that she encountered.

If New Zealand was keen to claim Rosalie as one of its own (notwithstanding a debate in the local arts press about her inclusion in *Toi Toi Toi*), Rosalie herself thought otherwise. Place of birth was one thing, but what mattered was the places that formed her, ‘and it was certainly circumstances in Australia that formed me’, although echoes of her New Zealand years would turn up in the works she made forty and fifty years after she left Auckland. These echoes were inherent in her creative process, for which her shorthand summary was simply a Wordsworthian reference from her youth: ‘emotion recollected in tranquillity’.¹⁸²

In a longer account of her process, Rosalie told James Gleeson about what stirred her creativity:

I like this material, it always excites me. And then I think, I don’t want to make it less than it is now, because as it is it’s exciting. And then sometimes I find an unlikely juxtaposition, a chance. And I think ... that works or that’s exciting and you get more knowing as the work goes on ... And suddenly there’s an association in your mind, or something you have had an emotion about. It’s that Wordsworthian thing about emotion remembered in tranquillity. Because you felt about various things in your life, and suddenly you’ve got these inanimate objects and ... you can plug into that. Old experiences, old emotions ... you have to work something you genuinely felt into it. It’s not a question of just making pictures as it were. It’s expressing something.¹⁸³



Hill station 1989, made when Rosalie was thinking of her sister Daintry who had farmed in New Zealand and had just died. Rosalie had visited her sister at the farm in November 1988

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Rosalie’s strong sense of place reinforced the emotional content of her work, including the fourteen McCahon-like formboard landscapes made in the ten years between 1986 and 1995. Most were inspired by her Australian experiences but *Age of innocence* 1993 recalls her childhood holidays on Waiheke Island, *Landfall* 1989 school lessons about Captain Cook in New Zealand, *Beach house* 1990 (slivers of soft-drink boxes) the holiday cottages she stayed in, and *Hill station* 1989 was inspired by her sister Daintry’s farm near Putaruru (south of Hamilton), a work made shortly after Daintry died. Rosalie had visited Daintry and her farm in November 1988 when she had gone to Auckland for the McCahon retrospective. When one museum director wondered whether *Hill station* 1989 was perhaps too like Colin McCahon, she explained: ‘I look at these mountains. I see the same things [as McCahon] ... So you fit the things you’ve got into a format that reminds you of something.’¹⁸⁴

‘Feelings’ is a word Rosalie often used in talking about her works. In *Room with a view* 1976–77 she recalled what it felt like to stand before the picture windows at the Art Gallery of New South Wales; in *Herb Garden* 1982 she is thinking of Sunday Reid’s garden at Heide; in *Early morning* 1977 about holidays in simple beach cottages; and in *But mostly air* 1994–95 she is on the escarpment high above Lake George. The feelings in other works might relate to loneliness and her early years on Mount Stromlo (*Pink window* 1975), or her sense of freedom and infinite open space while out in the country (*Piece to walk around* 1981, *Plein air* 1994, *Overland* 1996). And if her viewers had other feelings, that was OK too (*Pale landscape* 1977, *String of blue days* 1984).

182 New Zealand claiming Rosalie: her death was widely reported in the New Zealand press, and the City Gallery Wellington used the tagline ‘Rosalie Gascoigne: Australia’s most famous New Zealand artist’ for its survey show of her work in 2004 (see notes on *Toi Toi Toi* 1999 in Appendix 2: Selected group exhibitions for debate about RG’s inclusion, and also the notes on *Rosalie Gascoigne: Plain Air* 2004 in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions); ‘it was certainly circumstances in Australia’: 1998 Hughes.

183 ‘I like this material’: 1980 Gleeson. The Wordsworth quote reads: ‘Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity’ and is from his preface to *Lyrical ballads* 1800.

184 ‘I look at these mountains’: 1998 NGA. The director was Ron Radford at the Art Gallery of South Australia. The New Zealand poet and curator Gregory O’Brien has written beautifully about the New Zealand elements in Rosalie’s work; see O’Brien ‘Plain air/plain song’ 2004.

The 1990s: Cable reels, linoleum and installations

Rosalie's work in the 1990s was marked by the introduction of new materials and a renewed interest in installations. As her supplies of road signs and Schweppes boxes ebbed and flowed, she turned to the thick wood from cable reels, which she discovered in 1993. The reels were used to transport cables for telephone or powerlines, or fencing wire. They had several attractions: they were painted in good colours (dark red, yellow, orange, white and black), often had numbers and letters stencilled or stamped on them and sometimes carried hand-written inscriptions. When cut up, the curves from their rims provided a new range of shapes, and the holes with which they were pierced added another element to her compositions. Rosalie made sixty works and nine studies using wood from cable reels. Linoleum also resurfaced in a big way in the early nineties, and she extended the tearing technique used with the linoleum to sheets of Masonite board and similar building materials.

Over the decade Rosalie created nine large multi-unit works exhibited as installations (although in two cases the units were offered for sale separately, to Rosalie's later regret). Rosalie drew on the full range of materials in her store for these works: torn linoleum, painted corrugated iron, weathered plywood formboard, rusted enamelware, apiary boxes, wood from soft-drink boxes, cable reels, packing cases, wire netting. In one work she also used full-sized sheets of new Masonite board, which she washed with a thin coat of white paint (a rare example of her creating materials for her work). The references were varied: autumn leaves (*Letting go* 1991) (NGA), the ancient city of Petra (*Rose red city* 1991–93), mountain weather (*Sheep weather alert* 1992–93), rural Australia (*Frontiers I–V* 1998), Gerard Manley Hopkins (*Skeubald* 1993) (Auckland Art Gallery), the coloured soils in the landscape (*Earth* 1999) (NGA).

The most ambitious works call to mind Claude Monet's quest for the 'unobtainable': 'I want to paint the air around the bridge, the house, the boat. The beauty of the air where they are, and it is nothing other than impossible.' Rosalie's subject in works such as *Plein air* 1994 (AGWA) and *But mostly air* 1994–95 (Art Gallery of South Australia) was the high sky and the marvellous width of the land and the air that filled the space. They were an attempt to 'do air', to capture the 'nothingness' of the countryside. 'I was enraptured with the feeling of getting out of my car at the top of the range above Lake George and Gundaroo [Collector] and seeing Australia stretch away under a big dome of sky. Nothing is there, but everything is there. It was very free and uncalculated. You cannot really express it in concrete terms, you have to be elusive and allusive at the same time.' It was an important theme for Rosalie: 'I think people who paint Australia and don't put in the towering sky are missing out on one of the real factors of Australia, the personal freedom of it and the big sky'. Way back in 1979 she had identified 'air and space and a sense



Lake George and the escarpment under the high sky, looking south towards Bungendore
Image by the author



Roslyn Oxley, with whom Rosalie would have six very successful shows. Her exhibition in 1989 was her first solo show in Sydney since 1976 at Gallery A

Photograph by Jon Lewis, courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

of physical freedom' as something she always returned to, having first discovered it on Waiheke Island as a child and then again — albeit very slowly — on Mount Stromlo in the 1940s.¹⁸⁵

In the 1990s many of the new works were exhibited in Sydney at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, where Rosalie would have six solo shows, all successful critically and for their sales. The gallery also showed some of Rosalie's white cable-reel works in Switzerland at the Basel Art Fair in 1996. Her last commercial show at Pinacotheca was in 1993 (although she did show *But mostly air* 1994–95 there in 1995). She also had two shows with Paul Greenaway in Adelaide, in 1996 (as an Adelaide Festival event) and 1998, and both did well. The cultural diplomats sought out her work for exhibitions in Asia, one of which resulted in Rosalie being awarded the Grand Prize of the Cheju Pre-biennale in South Korea in 1995 for *Set up* 1983–84.

Three late 1990s exhibitions

Three late-period exhibitions stand out: *In Place (Out of Time): Contemporary Art in Australia* at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, United Kingdom, in 1997; *Material as Landscape* at the AGNSW, also in 1997; and *Toi Toi Toi* in Kassel, Germany, and Auckland in 1999 (already discussed). The Oxford show, curated by David Elliott and Howard Morphy, paired Rosalie with eleven other artists, nine of them Aboriginal. She showed four works, *Highway code* 1985, *Afternoon* 1996 (TarraWarra Museum of Art), *All summer long* 1996 (Bendigo Art Gallery) and *Overland* 1996 (Queensland Art Gallery). She wanted to create 'a feeling of infinite space and air' and she succeeded: 'this is thin air, shifting, sultry, off-peak, embodied in warped board'. Laura Cumming wrote about *Afternoon* 1996 in *The Observer*. The show received extensive and very positive media coverage, Rosalie's work included, including in the *Wall Street Journal*: 'The whole of the Oxford museum is given over to this show, which has been sparsely hung — with stunning results in the large central gallery, where Ms Gascoigne's art-from-debris pictures and floor installations are absolutely "beaut"'.¹⁸⁶

The AGNSW's *Material as Landscape* was the first extensive look at Rosalie's art in twenty years, since Robert Lindsay's smaller show *Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne* at the NGV in Melbourne in 1978. When AGNSW curator Deborah Edwards spoke with Rosalie about the show that became *Material as Landscape* they agreed that neither wanted a full-scale

¹⁸⁵ Monet's oft-quoted remark is from an 1895 interview with the Danish author Herman Bang for the publication *Bergens Tidende*, published 6 April 1895. 'I was enraptured': 1996 Davidson; 'people who paint Australia': 1998 Hughes; 'air and space': Janine Burke 1979, p. 314.

¹⁸⁶ 'This is thin air': Laura Cumming 'The week in reviews: Art' *The Observer* 3 Aug 1997, p. 13; 'the whole of the Oxford museum': Paul Levy 'The gallery: Mondrian and his heir' *Wall Street Journal Europe* 15 Aug 1997, p. 11, also the *Wall Street Journal* 10 Sep 1997, p. A20.

retrospective. It was billed as a ‘mid-career survey’ rather than a ‘full stop’ because Rosalie wanted to leave open the possibility that there could be more: ‘I always think you have for yourself if you’re an artist, my sort of artist, that you have an expanding universe and as long as you’ve got the heart and strength to your elbow you can discover something else.’ And Rosalie did make more works, in her last year using up her stockpiles of soft-drink boxes, road signs and formboard to make, respectively, *Great blond paddocks* 1998–99, *Metropolis* 1999 (both AGNSW) and *Earth* 1999 (NGA).¹⁸⁷

Material as Landscape focused on the landscape component in Rosalie’s work and the linkages with her materials, Edwards selecting thirty works to make her point, to great acclaim. Way back in the 1940s Rosalie might have begun by looking ‘long and hard at a very ordinary piece of Australian countryside, and tried to wring visual interest and variety’ out of what she saw. But as she grew more familiar with the Australian landscape and formed an emotional attachment with it, the connection became something more: ‘You see something very beautiful or very moving in nature, and then there’s part of your human nature that wants to have it. Possess it.’ She had Picasso in mind, whom she remembered saying, ‘“If you want to possess anything, you paint it.” Like a rose. If you painted a rose he had it, it was part of him.’ This idea of possession stayed with her, and when James Mollison interviewed her in 1997 she remembered that ‘standing on the mountain, looking to the Brindabellas, is so beautiful. I always wanted to possess it, to set it in time.’¹⁸⁸

Recognition and reflections

Rosalie’s late career brought with it recognition of a different sort, reflecting her standing among her peers. James Mollison invited her to judge the John McCaughey prize at the NGV in 1991 (she chose Paul Boston over Mollison’s preference for Louise Hearman).¹⁸⁹ Edmund Capon invited her to open the contemporary art survey *Australian Perspectives* at the AGNSW in 1993 (quote on page 2), having been asked to do so by its curator, Victoria Lynn, both because of her ‘enormous’ respect for Rosalie’s art and because she saw Rosalie as a role model for many emerging female artists at the time. Her art caught the eye of a younger generation, notably Imants Tillers, who in 1996 began to include references to Rosalie’s work in his explorations concerning place, locality and evocations of the landscape. There was recognition, too, at the other end of the scale: somebody once painted a large inscription on the plywood hoarding that was screening development near St Mary’s Cathedral in Sydney: the inscription read ‘Installation by Rosalie Gascoigne’. This was while *Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as Landscape* was showing at the AGNSW in 1997–98. Poets and novelists wrote about her. Educators noticed and Rosalie’s work was included in the school arts curriculum and discussed in associated textbooks. Less welcome recognition came from a varied group of imitators who tried their hand at works ‘influenced by’ Rosalie, using weathered wood and sawn-up road signs in constructions modelled on hers.¹⁹⁰

In 1994 Rosalie was made a Member of the Order of Australia for her services to art. The media discovered she was good copy and a natural at the televised interview, notably the Film Australia interview with Robin Hughes broadcast in the Australian Biography series in 1998. The National Library of Australia recorded her thoughts for its oral history archive in 1995, and in 1998 Vici MacDonald’s monograph on Rosalie, based on extensive interviews with her, was published.¹⁹¹



Homage to Rosalie on the hoardings outside St Mary’s Cathedral in Sydney, January 1998

Image from author’s archive

187 ‘I always think’: 1997 Feneley.

188 ‘Looking long and hard’: Bottrell 1972, p. 39; ‘something very beautiful’ and Picasso: 1984 Wood Conroy; ‘Brindabellas’: 1997 Mollison and Heath, p. 7.

189 McCaughey prize: RG to JM ‘Sunday’ (Mar 1991) NGV artist file 157 (on RG). She judged the Gold Coast City Conrad Jupiters Art Prize in August 1992.

190 Victoria Lynn and *Australian Perspectives*: 14 Aug 2016 email Victoria Lynn to MG; Imants Tillers first referenced Rosalie’s work in *Farewell to reason* 1996 (NGA) and by February 2018 had done so 73 times, with *Monaro* 1988–89 being a significant source (1 Feb 2018 email Imants Tillers to MG); ‘Installation by Rosalie Gascoigne’: Leo Schofield *SMH* 10 Jan 1998, p. 26; poets and novelists: see Bibliography pp. 401–402; ‘educators noticed’: examples include Donald Williams 1987, p. 143, Donald Williams and Colin Simpson 1996, p. 171 ff. (3 illus.) and Margaret Marsh, Michelle Watts, Craig Malyon *ART: Art, research, theory* Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1999, p. 199–200 (illus.).

191 NLA oral history: 1995 Topliss. The Bibliography lists talks and interviews with transcripts.



Rosalie and Ben at home, 1997
Reproduced courtesy of the photographer,
William Yang



The last photograph of Rosalie, taken in
Auckland in July 1999 by Marti Friedlander
Photograph from author's archive, reproduced
courtesy of the Marti and Gerrard Friedlander Trust

The talks and interviews were opportunities for Rosalie to reflect on her life, work out a narrative that made sense of her journey, and identify those things that mattered most for her as an artist. What stood out were her love of nature (born in part of her love of the romantic poets), her sense of being out of step — different — for much of her life, her need for personal freedom and the sense of freedom she found in the Australian countryside.

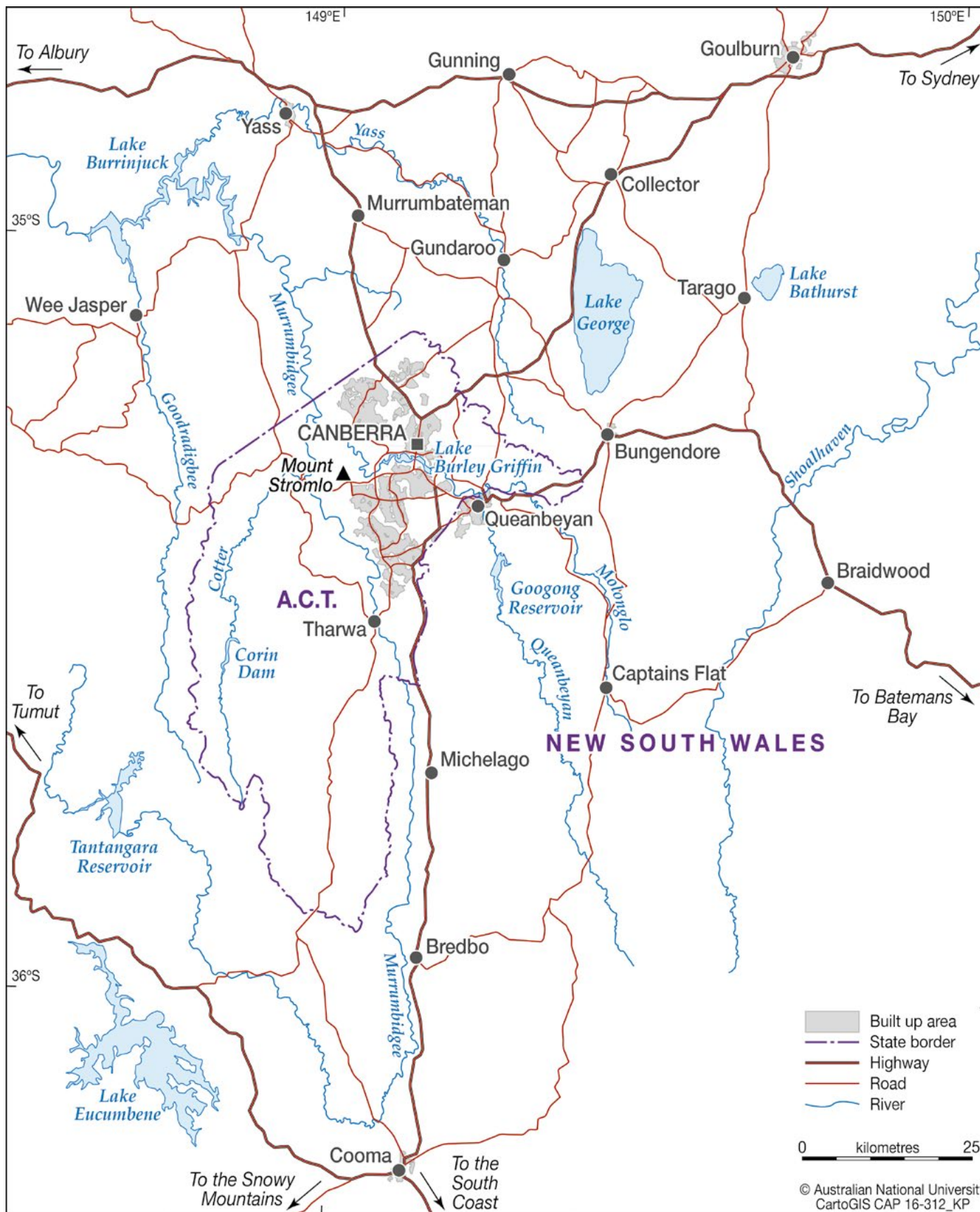
It was in her art that Rosalie became herself. A favoured remark about her life was ‘art confirmed me’, pointing to the sense of fulfilment, of completeness, that she got from her creative work. She might have been channelling Robert Rauschenberg, whose observation that ‘I do what I do because painting is the best way I’ve found to get along with myself’ she had written down in her notebook of memorable quotations. When she spoke about what it took to be an artist, she emphasised honesty and self-knowledge and the solitude of the desert, as well as hard work and a certain bloody-mindedness. She was fond of paraphrasing Bette Davis’s remark about old age, though in her version being an artist, like old age, was not for sissies.¹⁹²

Rosalie liked to talk about the expanding universe of art. ‘I think it’s a great human fear of being boxed in by life’, she told Peter Ross. ‘I want my universe to expand visually to see more and to feel more and to be aware of more.’ And, ‘I like to feel something splendid could still happen, you see’. This was the reason she kept on venturing into the country and going out to her studio every morning until the cancer that killed her caught up with her.¹⁹³

Rosalie died on 23 October 1999. Her passing was marked in Australia and New Zealand by numerous obituaries lauding her achievements. Her ashes were later scattered with Ben’s on a hill overlooking Mount Stromlo and the landscape that they, in their different professions, had made their own. In the years after her death Rosalie’s work was the subject of a major survey show at the City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand, in 2004 and a full retrospective at the National Gallery of Victoria in 2008–09. Her works attracted sustained, strong interest on the secondary market and in 2018 the Tate Gallery in London (in partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney) acquired her work *Habitation* 1984 for its collection.

¹⁹² The comment ‘in her art Rosalie became herself’ is an observation Elizabeth Cross made about Kevin Lincoln in *Kevin Lincoln: The eye’s mind* Art Gallery of Ballarat, 2016, p. 13; ‘art confirmed me’: a term R.G. used as early as 1985 — see Mary Eagle 1985; on bloody-mindedness, she wrote to Mollison in 1994: ‘Talent is only one of the things it takes (quoting Robert Klippel). Necessary also I think is a certain bloody-mindedness and a steel-plated persistence’ (28 Jun 1994 R.G. to JM), see also 1997 Ross on what it takes to be an artist; ‘Bette Davis’: 1998 Hughes.

¹⁹³ ‘Expanding universe of art’: 1990 Ross, 1995 Topliss, 1997 Feneley; ‘I want my universe to expand visually’: 1995 Topliss; ‘a great human fear’ and ‘I like to feel’: 1990 Ross. The cancer was only diagnosed in September 1999. Rosalie’s late-life remarks are mirrored in an observation by the noted neurologist Oliver Sacks, who wrote that it was insufficient for human beings to live on a day-to-day basis: ‘We need to transcend, transport, escape; we need meaning, understanding, and explanation; we need to see over-all patterns in our lives. We need hope, the sense of a future. And we need freedom (or, at least, the illusion of freedom) to get beyond ourselves ... to rise above our immediate surroundings.’ Rosalie’s accounts of her life, career and inspiration mirror what Sacks described. His references to transcending, escaping, need for freedom and a sense of the future were deeply embedded in her story (Oliver Sacks ‘Altered states’ *New Yorker* 27 Aug 2012).



ROSALIE'S COUNTRY

The country Rosalie inhabited was at the core to her art. Country driving for her was an opportunity for renewal, satisfying her need for visual pleasures and liberating her from the mundane demands of domestic life. The great sense of freedom she felt in the country was something that helped release her creative processes when she was back in the studio. The country was also the source of her materials and the act of collecting them an integral part of her process. Her forays also gave her a yardstick for measuring her product: 'You've got to watch yourself all the time ... Nature is so much better. And there it is, mocking you. And being better. And also, discarding a lot of stuff. Nature discards an awful lot of stuff.'¹ All aspects of the country found their way into Rosalie's art: the landforms, the types and patterns of the vegetation, the play of light at different times of the day, the seasons and weather, the air that filled the spaces and the skies and clouds, the marks of human activity and even the birds and farm stock. 'My art is, I think, the outside come indoors.'

Rosalie's materials, whether animal, vegetable or mineral, and in their natural state or manufactured, had been exposed to the elements in country dumps or factory yards, as debris in rivers and creeks or as abandoned materials from rural properties in the scrubby paddocks she encountered on her frequent drives beyond Canberra. 'I like getting things in from the paddock. They've had the sun, they've had the rain, it's real stuff, it's not like stuff you buy from a hardware shop, I find that very inert.' She would cite Robert Rauschenberg, 'who never used new stuff', and would recall his remark about things having been somewhere and done something and are something. 'It's got life in it, you see. And what you're trying to get is vitality ... And it feeds all these things back to you.'²

In 1997 Deborah Edwards curated a major survey show at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, which she called *Rosalie Gascoigne: Materials as Landscape*. The focus, as the title implies, was on landscape themes and the exhibition explored the way in which Rosalie used her different materials to evoke the landscape. But there was a deeper truth in the title as it related to Rosalie's thinking about her materials: they *were* the landscape. 'I think things speak of the place they came from. After all they know about the wind and the sun and the casualness — casualness is a great thing.' Everything she gathered had 'to be something ... that is the language of the country where I live'. So she was happy to describe herself as a regional artist and liked to quote a remark she attributed to Fred Williams that 'if Australian art is any good at all it is because it is regional'.³

1 'You've got to watch': 1997 Ross; similar thoughts in 1995 Topliss and 1997 Feneley.

2 'From the paddock': 1997 Feneley; 'Rauschenberg': 1980 Gleeson, p. 15, 1997 Feneley and 1998 Hughes. Rosalie's notebook included the following entry: 'Robert Rauschenberg (on seeing a wrecked car) "It looked dead, but wasn't dead. It had been somewhere and done something and had become real — it had experience."'

3 'Things speak of the place': 1980 Gleeson, also 1990 Ross; 'language of the country': 1998 Hughes; 'regional artist' and 'Fred Williams': 1985 School of Art.

On the occasion of *Materials as Landscape* Stephen Feneley drew from Rosalie an anecdote that suggests another reading of Rosalie's materials, as a self-portrait. 'If I like it, that's it and therefore I think if you go by what you like the resonance is going to come out ... I've always said this to people who teach children, they want to get the kids to make a scrapbook and they paste in everything they like ... to look at it, the car and the hippo, whatever. And then after a while ... if you've been honest, you turn over [the pages of] that scrapbook and get a picture of yourself.' The same could be said of Rosalie and her materials.⁴

Andrew Sayers, then director of the National Portrait Gallery, once made an observation about the possibilities of an exhibition called 'Landscape as Portrait' in the Australian context. 'The idea would be that there is an emphatic relationship to the landscape, which makes landscapes embodiments, signs or projections of identity.' He might have taken his words straight from Rosalie who, after all, told the students at the Canberra School of Art: 'I think art should be your natural product. It should come out of you naturally ... That is what you have to plug into, the region where you live, and what you really know is in your bone marrow.'⁵

Rosalie's letters, talks and interviews include many references to her country travels, reactions to what she was seeing, the materials she found there and the landscape references in her works, and I have drawn on all of these to expand on the discussion of country in the Biographical Note (p. 48). It is important to remember, though, as Hannah Fink has so astutely written, that although Rosalie's vision 'undeniably originates in her relationship with the land ... to say that her works are purely about landscape is to inhibit their power'. By way of example she refers to *White garden* 1995, an arrangement of sheets of white-painted corrugated iron, which she observes has a great resonance within the Australian landscape and memory. The work 'seems more elemental than descriptive ... Yet in this work any nostalgia for a rural past is a byproduct, not the subject. The artist's aim is to convey the simple beauty of the material and perhaps to conjure the pure abstraction of silence or air.'⁶

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Rosalie negotiating with the keepers of a country dump

Photograph by Mildred Kirk from author's archive

4 'If I like it': 1997 Feneley. It is interesting in this context to note that some Aboriginal bark paintings have been called portraits because they describe the artist in terms of their traditions and family ties and lands (*Old masters: Australia's great bark artists* National Museum of Australia, Canberra, 2013, pp. 202–204).

5 Andrew Sayers: see Vivian Gaston 'Faces in dialogue: An interview with Andrew Sayers' *Art & Australia* vol. 38, no. 3, 2001, p. 416; 'your natural product': 1985 School of Art.

6 As well as Rosalie's letters, interviews and talks, data on her travels comes from the calendars and diaries in which Rosalie recorded her travels for tax reasons from the 1980s onwards. 'Rosalie's vision': Hannah Fink 'The regional modernism of Rosalie Gascoigne' 2000.

Rosalie's first experience of the Australian landscape was in the blazing summer on top of Mount Stromlo, surrounded by pine forest. Initially confined to the unkempt gravel roads on the mountain, Rosalie's territory gradually widened to take in the valleys between the mountain and the Murrumbidgee River, especially after the family acquired a car in 1949 and the children were all at school. In 1960 the family moved from Mount Stromlo into Canberra, offering new opportunities as the town began rapidly expanding into the surrounding farmland, exposing places previously off limits. 'Champions are out of their house on Kambah Road and bulldozers are in. Walked around garden. Some lovely old roses and lots of irises. Also a huge wisteria vine if one could be bothered. Instead I took 2 seven foot lengths of knobbly espaliered pear tree for some future reference.' She discovered 'a marvellous place beyond the pine forest at back of the checking station, where you can get down to the [Molonglo] river (through cows), what a place for a natural Canberra park! Amphitheatre of hills, casuarinas, willows, calm sheets of water with ducks, springy turf, rock outcrops ... I am carrying uphill as many of the art forms as I can, which are loading its banks.' On another trip to the river she 'happened upon a marvellous natural John Armstrong. One of the rough bridges had broken loose in the floods and was standing upright against the casuarina trunks — abt. 20 ft. tall with the water surging all around.' She collected coloured rubber balls and tennis balls from 'near the Scrivener Dam, slipped from children's grasps'.⁷



Rosalie was passionate about the grasses that grew around Canberra, which she had first used in her dried arrangements in the late 1950s, and continued to do so when she moved into sculpture. This is an early 1980s image

Photograph from author's archive



The old Canberra brickworks, a source of corrugated iron and salsify in the 1970s

Photograph by author

The new suburbs being developed in southern Canberra drew Rosalie in. 'Yr father and I drove around Kambah last weekend — the first suburb of satellite town of Tuggeranong. To coin a phrase, you just won't know this when you see it again. It's amazing how quickly the countryside gets tamed. Surveyors sticks everywhere.' That was in 1973. By 1982 work was well under way at Erindale, several kilometres to the south-east: 'I spent two hours this morning out in the ghost suburb of Erindale — roads and crescents and circles and places but no houses. The grasses are magnificent, all the lovely old weeds [which are] fast disappearing in our immediate environment ... I became aware of the magnificent stands of grey thistle stalks [the variegated thistle, *Silybum marianum*].' And more surveyors' pegs: 'I found a whole lot of them in the mud over in Erindale where the grass had grown over and they'd obviously been left'. Later she found a great source of the variegated thistles along Mountain Creek Road where it meets the road from Yass to Wee Jasper.⁸

The old Canberra brickworks in Yarralumla was good for corrugated iron and salsify. She visited the site in 1974 when work to dismantle the brickworks had begun: 'I thought I'd go down and see what they were discarding ... I found four pieces [of corrugated iron] ... It was beautiful tin, it was beautiful.' In December 1978 she went back 'a few times and picked salsify by the brickworks'. Building sites were another source, especially for shaped formboard, notably in the mid-1980s when she parleyed access to the Questacon site opposite the National Library. The sites were also good for pink-painted offcuts.⁹

Over time Rosalie's territory expanded to take in the area within about 100 kilometres of Canberra, bordered in the west by the Brindabella ranges and north-west by Wee Jasper, in the north by the Hume Highway between Yass, Gunning and Goulburn, in the east by Braidwood and the tableland escarpment, and in the south by the Monaro district as far south as Cooma (see map at beginning of this essay). Within this area were several places particularly significant for Rosalie: Gundaroo, Collector, Lake George, Bungendore and Captains Flat. She occasionally ventured beyond these limits, to places such as Grabben Gullen, Shannons Flat and Adjungbilly.

⁷ 'Champions are out': 2 Nov 1971 RG to MG; 'a marvellous place': 21 Jun 1973 RG to MG (about where the suburb of Coombs is, next to the Molonglo River corridor); 'happened upon a marvellous': 10 Nov 1974 RG to TG; 'coloured rubber balls': Jacqueline Rees 1974.

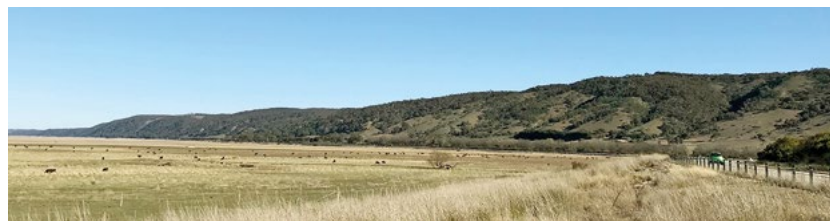
⁸ Kambah visit: 2 Mar 1973 RG to TG; Erindale visit: 1982 North.

⁹ Corrugated iron at brickworks: 1980 North; 'picked salsify': 26 Dec 1978 RG to MG, p. 57; 'shaped formboard': c. Feb 1987 RG to TG; 'pink offcuts': 1998 NGA.

These landscapes are shaped by broad, shallow valleys running mostly north–south between low ranges, including the Great Dividing Range, and by rivers and creeks draining west into the Murray–Darling basin, notably the Murrumbidgee, Molonglo, Queanbeyan and Yass rivers, as well as the Shoalhaven River draining north–east towards the coast. Europeans first settled the area in the late 1820s and left their mark in the small townships, abandoned mines and scattered farms with their sheltering windbreaks and rough-hewn timber stockyards. The better land is cleared but the slopes are covered in scrubby vegetation and trees, and marked with rocky outcrops. Summers are warm to hot; winters are cool to cold, often with frosty mornings and clear, sunny days. It can rain at any time of the year: the average throughout the area is 600–650 mm, but drier to the south and west.

The land then mostly supported sheep and cattle grazing, though hobby farms were also becoming more common, much to Rosalie’s disgust because she disliked the way they changed the character of the land. She did not live to see the advent of the wind farms near Lake George and would have hated the solar farms that have sprung up along the Monaro Highway. I don’t recall much canola being grown then, though now that it is widespread Rosalie would surely have had something to say about the brilliant yellow paddocks in spring when the canola is in flower.

Rosalie made trips into this country that might take all day. It helped when Ben bought a car for his own use in 1972, leaving Rosalie with unfettered access to the family’s Holden station wagon. The Holden was followed by Mazda and Subaru wagons, equipped with a roof rack, various lengths of rope, a hammer and saw, a spanner and some tinsnips. She also travelled with large-scale maps of the region. The experience of driving through the country informed Rosalie’s work, none more so than in *Suddenly the lake* 1995 (about encountering Lake George at Gearys Gap), and *Skylark* 1994–95, which can be read as a series of ‘postcards’ of hillsides and skylines encountered on her drives. The very roads she travelled inevitably also found their way into her works: *Beaten track* 1992, *Roadside* 1987, *Rocky road I* 1993/96 and *Rocky road II* 1996, as well as the road-themed works made with retroreflective road signs such as *Highway code* 1985 and *Through road* 1990–91.¹⁰

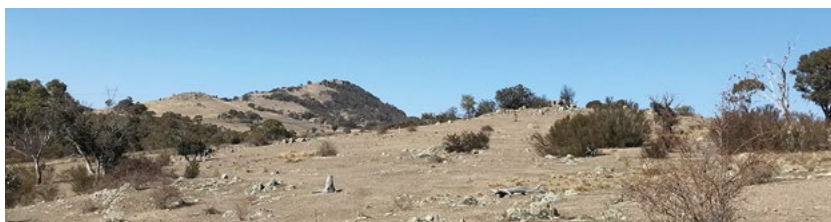


Near Collector, looking south over the dry bed of Lake George
Photograph by author



A remnant of the yellow gum – red box grassy woodland that was once widespread throughout the region
Photograph by author

10 Second car: 24 Jul 1972 RG to MG, p. 37; ‘equipped with’: RG ‘Diary’ 1987.



Between Tharwa and Tidbinbilla

Photograph by author



View from Lanyon, near Tharwa, looking south-west

Photograph by author

Driving on the highways had its problems, especially the road between Canberra and Cooma. Much as she enjoyed the views of the mountains and skylines along that drive, 'the Cooma road carries the snow traffic, always in a hurry with skis on top. It's all about getting there, not about enjoying the scenery.' So 'that meant you were battling the traffic all the way, and that's no good if you're looking — keep your eye on the road sort of stuff'. Rosalie preferred back roads 'and mostly I drive without a specific purpose, taking the most interesting options'.¹¹

Country roads also had their hazards, and Rosalie learned to be wary. 'Sometimes I used to go as much as 300 kilometres, way out and back. And if I got mud-bound or anything I was in deep, deep trouble. Especially as the night used to come down, back of the Brindabellas. You had to get out of the car and sort of see how deep [the mud pools] were before you went through. Because if they were too deep, you were stuck.' Adventuresome though she was, Rosalie had remarkably few incidents while out driving. She ran into trouble near Tarago in late 1976, but the local police constable helped rescue her and in gratitude Rosalie made a donation to the Goulburn Police Boys Club. On another occasion, she was stranded with a flat battery on the Shoalhaven River (resulting in an expensive taxi ride from Goulburn to Canberra), but the most dangerous incident occurred around January 1977 when the tyre on one wheel blew and the car came off the road. Rosalie was lucky: she only broke an ankle and her passenger was not hurt but the car needed extensive repairs.¹²

Sometimes Rosalie would take a break at the coast where she would walk the beaches between Ulladulla in the north and Narooma in the south, gathering shells and examining the debris along the tideline, repeating something she loved to do in her New Zealand childhood. 'I have been summering at Batemans Bay for 4 nights. What a good idea ... We stayed at a Country Comfort Motel at the head of B. Bay bridge, walked the beaches, picked up a million shells (why?) paddled on nice clean beaches, ate fish and chips on the waterfront and drank white wine in our rooms at night. Relaxing. Will do it again.' Ben reported on an earlier visit: 'Successful week at beach, thousands of pieces of driftwood laid out in rows like department store, not to mention stones of every size shape and colour.' These excursion and childhood memories found their way into works such as *Down to the silver sea* 1977/81, *Private beach* 1979, *Turn of the tide* 1983, *Twofold bay* 1988, *Beach house* 1990, *Shark* 1998 and *Tidal* 1997.¹³

¹¹ Quotes from 1998 Hughes and RG 'Diary' 1987.

¹² 'If I got mud-bound': 1998 Hughes; donation to Police Boys Club: letter of thanks dated 3 Aug 1976 (RG papers NLA); 'flat battery on the Shoalhaven': RG 'Diary' 1987; blown tyre: MG personal recollection and BG note in RG financial records (RG papers NLA).

¹³ 'Summering at Batemans Bay': abt Feb 1979 RG to TG; her companion was Diana Woollard; 'Ben reported': early Dec 1971 BG to MG.

Rosalie was happy to travel alone, but she would occasionally invite one of a very select group of friends to accompany her. One was her New Zealand friend Marjorie Daniel, who she described as an ideal companion: ‘so patient with my enthusiasms and, of course, wanting nothing for herself’. Another was the poet Rosemary Dobson: ‘At the moment I would like to drop everything and be out in the paddocks. Rosemary Dobson is ready and eager to come with me. I can see it would be the ideal outing for her — real escapism. Ideal companion for me, too — wouldn’t get between me and nature. Last person I took kept holding up things and saying “Look!” I had to gallop over the nearest hill whenever I stopped the car, to get out of earshot.’ Rosemary understood: ‘When we arrived at our destination dump we would immediately begin our separate searches. Rosalie was intent at once, and I quickly learnt to take a different path to hers, and not to obstruct her eagerness. But I was always keen to see what would attract her attention. At one stage it was certainly these white enamelled kitchen vessels, which became so calm and beautiful in their final arrangements, as in *Habitations* [sic] and *Setup* [sic]. So I kept out of her way then, looking myself, for small rounded stones.’¹⁴

Rosalie looked at the country with a poet’s eye. Her country was ‘the old, old tapestry woven by years of sun and wind’, in which she saw:

Muted greens — burnt yellows — stitched with the
brilliant pricks of red and citrus yellow
of tiny extravagant flowers and flashing bird-wing ...¹⁵

When Rosalie and Rosemary were out together they would discuss words to describe what they were seeing as they drove: ‘I remember the day I drove with poetess Rosemary Dobson and the culverts and the natural hollows were full of long pale winter grass — hushed, as it were. Stretching? Yawning? Sighing? We tried to think of words for grass of that sort. I kept coming back to the pallor of it. “Ashen” we thought but it has a dying fall to it. We suggested and discarded and found no right answers at the time.’ When Rosalie and I were driving together our conversations were always to do with what we were seeing — the way the light played on the passing landscape, and how the colours of passing cars read in the landscape and against the black road-top. We were both visual people.¹⁶



A day in the country, c. 1973: Rosalie’s friend Marjorie Daniel, who was ‘an ideal companion’ on their foraging trips

Image from author’s archive

¹⁴ ‘Patient with my enthusiasms’: 11 Sep 1972 RG to TG; ‘ready and eager’: c. 16 Nov 1972 RG to MG, p. 39; ‘when we arrived’: Rosemary Dobson 2004.

¹⁵ ‘Rosalie to a Melbourne critic’, 1986, written in response to Gary Catalano’s review of her 1986 exhibition at Pinacotheca (see the Biographical Note and 1986 entry in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). It begins: ‘How can I show you the land I walk? / You, who stand on pavements, / Have never seen the places I know’ (RG papers NLA).

¹⁶ ‘I remember the day I drove’: RG ‘Diary’ 1987.



Captains Flat in 1975, looking up to the old mine which was a rich source of rusted iron
Image courtesy of the National Archives of Australia (A6180, 15/1/75/77)

Another companion was her studio assistant and artist Peter Vandermark: ‘When I went out with her in the car she was almost silent, yet it never felt uncomfortable. At the tip we’d split up and go in different directions. After looking she’d get me to pick up the things she’d selected. Usually she’d come home with something, a couple of pieces of tin maybe, but it didn’t matter if we returned with nothing. There was no music, I’d drive and she’d just check out the landscape. Rosalie would bring the same things each time: a thermos of coffee, a packet of date roll biscuits, some pieces of fruit — a snack. We’d take time off. At Captains Flat for example, we’d stop at the oval and if there was a road-working team, she’d go up to them, introduce herself, and explain how she used the signs. She knew the best way to get the signs was to carry a slab of beer in the car. She knew the currency of workers.’¹⁷

The country’s drawcards included the township dumps, particularly those at Bungendore, Captains Flat, Collector and Gundaroo. She liked a dump that gave her ‘the assortment of human living, which is what you need’. She was drawn to ordinary, readily available domestic objects, none more so than domestic enamelware: ‘I just like ordinary stuff. People get so exotic about everything and ordinary stuff is so good ... I think a lot of people just discard all the ordinary things and produce this laborious end product [which I find] so unexciting ... I would like to say, “look this is better, it didn’t cost this or that, but visually it gives you more feedback”’.¹⁸

The old mining town of Captains Flat, much diminished following the closure of the mine in 1962, was ‘loaded with what I need’. The town dump was the source of ‘a whole lot of very good quality linoleum that they’d apparently ripped up from the city hall’. She found the grey wooden blocks used in *Cityscape* 1972 and the doll in *Parrot lady* 1973 in Captains Flat, and in September 1972 alone she made three visits there in as many weeks. The mine was a rich source of rusted iron: ‘I used to go up to Captains Flat, up the mine, with a bucket. I remember trudging across that mud plain, it was magic. The iron work used to be like [Alberto] Giacometti’s iron. It’s all eaten away by the nasty acids and things they have in Captains Flat where the mine was.’¹⁹

Gundaroo ‘used to be an absolutely marvellous dump, it was spread out over all the hillsides, nobody bothered to tidy it up, and there were old organs, and old shoes and old bottles and old everything. There were some awful, awful smells in the dump in summer, and you never went in really in the height of summer.’ The dump at Bungendore was

¹⁷ Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 23.

¹⁸ ‘Assortment of human living’: 1997 Feneley, also 1980 Gleeson and Jacqueline Rees 1974.

¹⁹ ‘Loaded with what I need’ and ‘three visits there’: 13 Sep 1972 RG to MG, p. 37 (part quote); ‘good quality linoleum’: 1982 North; ‘wooden blocks’: 2 Jun 1972 RG to MG, p. 35; ‘up the mine’: 1998 Hughes.

a favourite: 'Mildred [Kirk] and I did Bungendore tip again last week. What an embarrassing choice of art forms.' She remembered it in 1997: 'it was a marvellous dump to find refuse from people's lives. Once they'd tipped out a whole failed sideshow and I picked up 300 plastic dollies.' The dolls found their way into *Dolly boxes* 1976. Rosalie also had success at the dump at Collector, where she found the sawn-up road signs used in *Highway code* 1985, a by-product of 'the new road through to Goulburn'. Other finds included the clove-pink 'Stop' sign used in *Red* 1992 and two pieces of old water tank used for *Swell* 1984, which she found 'outside the fence where somebody had just dropped it'.²⁰

But times change and so did the dumps. Rosalie's letters reflect the change. In 1972 she wrote about the tip at Gundaroo: 'My last visit to THAT dump — the real dump I mean. It has got very sordid and regimented. Trenches bulldozed and filled in. All that is valuable now lying full fathom five under clay.' In 1973 she discovered the same about Captains Flat: 'Went twice to Captains Flat with Mildred last week. They are doing big clean up and soon there won't be any pickings ...' And so it was also with the 'lovely dumps' beyond Yass. Looking back she reflected: 'They've ruined dumps now, for people like me. Modern dump hygiene, recycling and selling have become terrible words.'²¹

She found other sources. One was the Schweppes depot in Queanbeyan just over the railway bridge on the road from Canberra (see p. 68). Thus began a long relationship with Schweppes. When Schweppes phased out its wooden crates Rosalie had to look elsewhere. Peter Vandermark remembers going to Hope's Goulburn Cordials depot in Goulburn with Rosalie in 1990. 'We hired a covered truck, the biggest I was allowed to drive, and went to Goulburn, and came back with it chock-a-block with soft-drink crates.' Another source, also close to home, was that modern innovation, the recycling centre. A favourite was Revolve at the dump in south Canberra near Hume where salvaged items were for sale at modest prices. Rosalie frequented Revolve in the 1990s, especially in 1994–95 when she made at least seventeen visits between July 1994 and June 1995. Revolve was the source of the white cable drums used in *White city* 1993–94 and the many white works in 1994, the blue wood in *Plein air* 1994 and *Suddenly the lake* 1995, and the red road signs in *Hung fire* 1995.²²

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Rosalie's art was dependent on what the country yielded up: 'I haven't got any stuff to work with if I don't find it and I can't go to the drawing board and sketch ... (and determine) that now I need all this plywood or I need all this ... I don't do it like that. I wait till I've got the stuff and then I think: well, what can I make.' Chance was a great friend: 'it is very much a question of which road you take, and which day, and what your eye happens to be sharpened to at the time'. Rosalie wasn't looking for apiary boxes when she came on an abandoned apiary as she was driving in the bush one May morning. She had no expectation of finding the remains of a travelling fairground sideshow at the Bungendore tip, but she was instantly taken with the visual quality of the material. 'I went over a hillock ... they had thrown the whole sideshow out ... I was excited ... You have got to be there on the right day!' A day or so later, another scavenger might have found the stash or, more likely, the tip managers might have burnt or buried the lot. She came upon the swan feathers used in *Pale landscape* 1977 and *Feathered fence* 1978–79 when she was looking for a 'nice place for lunch' with her New Zealand friend, who couldn't stand the smells of the 'beastly dump' at Bungendore any longer. They happened on a side road near the southern end of Lake George and came across the feathers in a bird sanctuary



'The assortment of human living ... I just like ordinary stuff. People get so exotic about everything and ordinary stuff is so good.'

Photograph by Kath Giovanelli from author's archive

20 'Gundaroo used to be marvellous': 1997 Feneley; 'Mildred and I': 30 Nov 1973 RG to MG; 'it was a marvellous dump': Janet Hawley 1997; 'the new road to Goulburn': 1998 Hughes; 'clove-pink stop sign' and 'outside the fence': 1998 NGA.

21 'My last visit to THAT dump': 11 Sep 1972 RG to MG, p. 37 (part quote); 'went twice to Captains Flat': 30 Nov 1973 RG to MG; 'dumps beyond Yass': 1997 Feneley; 'they've ruined dumps now': Janet Hawley 1997.

22 'Hired a covered truck': Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 23; 'white cable drums' and 'red road signs': 1995 Topliss; 'blue wood': 1998 Hughes.



Unexpected bounty. Rosalie first chanced upon an abandoned apiary in May 1973 and came away with twenty-two weathered apiary boxes, which she described in a letter: 'lovely faded pink and green paint on some of them and lots of good greys'

Photograph from author's archive

'which I had never actually found before'. When Rosalie collected the first retroreflective road signs, already sawn into squares and slashed with white paint, she wasn't thinking of the art possibilities; rather, she had in mind their potential as play material for her young grandsons. Then one day she noticed the gleam on them, wet with rain, looked at them with a new interest and took them into the studio.²³

Tactics were also involved. The sight of a truck loaded with Schweppes boxes led her to a factory just over the railway bridge in Queanbeyan, which had a large pile of boxes ready to burn. She realised immediately it was much closer to home than the country dumps, did not smell and had great quantities of boxes that were going to be destroyed. So in 1978, just after her survey show at the National Gallery of Victoria, Rosalie paid a visit, 'waving my Melbourne catalogue as credentials' and having 'sweet-talked the yard man' she was granted access to the discards pile. She did the same again, in 1982 after she came back from the Venice Biennale, when she called on the manager with copies of the exhibition poster, which featured *Scrub country* 1981–82 made with boards from Schweppes boxes, and said to him, 'you've been so kind with your discard pile, maybe you'd like one of these'. Indeed, the manager wanted ten, and in return offered her a case of soda water and, most importantly, said, 'feel free with our pile'.²⁴

A similar outgoing approach yielded results in 1987 when her stock of road signs had dried up. She returned to the original source. "I come bearing gifts and seeking information", I said, putting down a 24-can pack of Fosters. My contact sketched the merest glance at its direction. "Gifts are always welcome", he said. He filled me in: lists of depots — Yass, Gundagai, Goulburn, Cooma; names of men — he rang people up. Chance is a fine thing and it serves me well, but this was organised opportunity ... On the way back to Canberra I came upon a road gang sitting among the winter tussocks having a smoko. I pulled up. Heads turned. Six men, one stare, closed ranks. Embarrassment gets me nowhere and nothing. I assumed confidence. "I want, I NEED some broken retroreflective road signs. I am a sculptor." They looked concertedly amused and sceptical. "I've just been up to Cooma and Mr. X has let me have some from the depot; they are in the boot" (seen to be true). The foreman detached himself, sorted through his signs, and offered me one I didn't want. I accepted gratefully. "Maybe", I suggested,

23 'Stuff to work with' and 'which road': 1995 Topliss, also 1997 Feneley; 'apiary boxes': 16 May 1973 RG to MG, 19 May 1973 RG to TG; 'over a hillock': 1998 Hughes; 'right day': 1985 School of Art; 'happened on a side road': 1982 North, also 1998 Hughes (the bird sanctuary was in the sheltered area where Butmaroo Creek enters the lake); 'first retroreflective road signs': 1985 School of Art, also 1995 Topliss, 1998 Hughes and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 35.

24 First visit to Schweppes depot: 15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55, also 1998 Hughes (where the two visits are conflated).

“I could have that lovely yellow one? It does, after all, have a hole in it.” He stretched a point and let me have it. He carried it to my car. I was touched. In the scavenging business one usually lugs one’s own.²⁵

Materials taken home would be allowed to accumulate, inside and outside the house and studio. They had to be cleaned, stripped down, pulled apart, sawn up — hard work. She would coat rusted iron with a transparent acrylic resin (Bedacryl) to stabilise the rust. The prickly leaves of dried thistles (particularly the yellow-flowered saffron thistle, *Carthamus lanatus*, and the purple-flowered variegated thistle, *Silybum marianum*) needed to be stripped off to bare the stalks. Salsify seed heads on stalks needed the same treatment (*Tragopogon porrifolius*, a common biennial wildflower with a daisy-like purple flower and button-like seed head). Ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) was hung upside down to dry and shed its seed. Muddy feathers needed to be washed carefully and allowed to dry. Soft-drink boxes took a lot of dismantling — hacksaws were used to cut through the many nails — and when the job was done the various components were neatly stacked in the courtyard between the house and studio until they were further dismembered and the individual boards separated, some later to be split with a tomahawk or sawn in strips. The hardwood cable reels were a challenge and crowbars were needed to help separate the parts. Sometimes Rosalie would experiment with the surfaces of the retroreflective road signs, sanding back the lettering until only their ghosts remained. Very little was thrown away. As the years passed the courtyard between the house and studio filled up with builders’ plywood formboard, scarred and scratched and stained with concrete or paint, with rusted corrugated iron and the offcuts of dismantled soft-drink boxes sorted by size and colour. There were collections of old cigarette tins, blue glass bottles, copper ballcocks, shells and many types of fencing wire. The first sight guests might encounter on arrival would be stacks of newly gathered materials by the front door at the bottom of the driveway.

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In July 1987 Rosalie was asked by Peter Townsend, then editor of *Art Monthly Australia*, to describe what she had been doing that month. She wrote about how she had ‘been driving north because I have been hunting specific material at my most likely dump. But sometimes I go west to Wee Jasper — different sort of country, fatter cattle, kinder contours: or along the Cooma road which has the best mountains, and skylines that are more varied and exciting than any others around here.’ That northern country included the area around Gundaroo: ‘unspoilt, unscavenged country, we saw white cockatoos, a wallaby which fled in front of the car for hundreds of yards, a slim black snake, a fox, a field full



Materials stacked in the courtyard in 1982, before the studio was built, including a panel from *Parrot country* 1980 and *Last stand* 1972 (restored in 1985)

Photograph by Matt Kelso

25 ‘Stock of road signs’: RG ‘Diary’ 1987, also 1998 Hughes. In Rosalie’s papers I found a bit of paper with the names and numbers of the various contacts she was given during this foray, later recorded in one of her notebooks.



Rosalie amid the throne-like stumps on the ridge above Lake George in the early 1980s
 Photograph by Pat Horner from author's archive

of long grass and long-beaked ibises'. A few weeks earlier Rosalie had taken a turning just past Gundaroo in the direction of Yass, 'and almost immediately [we] were in different and more beautiful country. Even came upon black boys (*Xanthorrhoea*) growing in paddocks'.²⁶

She knew the country around Lake George intimately and from all directions. One of her favourite drives took her through Gundaroo, along the escarpment above the lake, and down to Collector, bypassing the Federal Highway, and with a stop at clearings overlooking Lake George. 'Standing on the ridge above Lake George ... you suddenly find that there's nothing much there but everything's there for you, and there's the white cockatoos going over, which I think are marvellous, Lake George floating away to the right, lots of air, and the air is beautiful. What's that Shakespeare quote in *Macbeth*? "This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself unto our gentle senses."' It was a place she liked to take visitors: 'That's what Australia's like, the distance, the height, the clarity ... Everything is there that you could possibly need ... the place is splendidly ornamented — ornamented, but it's not trying, it's not standing on its ear putting everything in.' It was this sense of air and space and nothingness that informed *Plein air* 1994 and *But mostly air* 1994–95 and other air-related works of the mid-1990s. Air — and sometimes the wind — was also there in earlier works, such as *Country air* 1977, where the breeze disturbs the iron curtains, *Jim's picnic* 1975 where 'the wire netting ... is mountain air. I was enclosing air with those spaces', *Scrub country* 1981–82 where 'I have let air through it because we see a lot of filtered light, random pattern and carelessness in the Australian landscape', and *Letting go* 1991, where the moving air has the leaves swirling as they fall from their trees.²⁷

Up on the ridge there was a paddock of grey tree stumps. 'Years ago someone had gone to work with a chain saw and there was a legacy of bush chairs. All grey, some monumental as thrones — statuesque, lurching, personalised. An obliging friend took photos for me — one chair per picture (centred). Pasted in rows on a grey board, thin blue winter sky, close khaki-green winter grass, grey trunks in gentle threadbare country — they read well. The mind reaches for the absentee sitters out on the hillside.'²⁸

²⁶ 'Been driving north' and 'almost immediately': RG 'Diary' 1987; 'unspoilt, unscavenged country': 9 Nov 1972 RG to TG.

²⁷ 'Standing on the ridge': 1997 Feneley, also 1996 Davidson; 'this castle': Duncan, *Macbeth*, act 1, scene 6; 'that's what Australia's like': 1998 Hughes, also Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 37; 'mountain air' in *Jim's picnic*: 1985 School of Art; 'air' in *Scrub country*: 1985 School of Art, also 1982 North and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 4.

²⁸ 'Years ago': RG 'Diary' 1987. The boards with attached photos (not catalogued) turned up in the studio after Rosalie died, hidden away and badly faded, and they were subsequently destroyed. They had something about them of Robert Rooney's early 1970s work using multiple photographs. Prints of the photos survive.

Approaching the lake on the old Federal Highway from Canberra, at Gearys Gap, there was a different view: ‘before you go down to Lake George, suddenly there’s that water, that straight line, it’s absolutely miraculous, it’s breathtaking to me, every time I see it’. Her recollection of this encounter found its way into *Suddenly the lake* 1995. A bit further on, fences ran from the road out into the lake. ‘I’ve always loved those long, pure horizontal lines of fences that stretch out across the shallows of Lake George, almost as if they are floating.’ *Feathered fence* 1978–79 refers directly to this landscape. She wanted it ‘to read like one of those half-drowned fence lines stretching out into the lake — very pure and uncluttered with a lot of air.’²⁹

The flatness was something that also struck Rosalie when she viewed the lake from the bird sanctuary at the southern (Bungendore) end. The first Lake George work, *Pale landscape* 1977, was ‘all about horizontals and pallor’. It ‘read to me like the levels of the lake where I collected the feathers’. Talking about her work *Lake* 1991, Rosalie said: ‘I’d spent quite a lot of time down on the end of Lake George that is near Bungendore ... there’s nothing else there, but levels. And the curve. Nature says it all without saying too much. And this is what I’ve tried to latch on to.’³⁰

Rosalie’s way of talking about particular works reveals the sharpness of her observations and a sense of the country she had claimed, picking up on its many different aspects. *Monaro* 1988–89, for example, ‘is the grasslands, partly grass, partly scrub, partly cut-down trees, which stretch all the way down to the sea’. *Piece to walk around* 1981 ‘is about being in the country with its shifting light and shades of grey, its casualness and its prodigality ... I hope this picture will convey some sense of the countryside that produced it and ... induce in the viewer the liberating feeling of being in the open country.’ *Plenty* 1986 is ‘the countryside around Canberra when the yellows are out ... and it’s like a great, unmade bed. Terrific. When I started making that, I thought, “It’s got to be big enough for a horse to roll in”. And it was.’³¹



Lake 1991 (detail, three of seven panels): ‘There’s nothing else there, but levels. And the curve. Nature says it all without saying too much.’

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

29 ‘Before you go down’: 1997 Feneley, also Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 84. The old highway at Gearys Gap is now called Hadlow Drive, opposite the Weereewa lookout. The view represented in the third panel of *Suddenly the lake* more closely approximates the view as the road from the Federal Highway to Bungendore descends from the escarpment to the lake plain, rather than the view at Gearys Gap (even before the highway was realigned). ‘I’ve always loved’: Janet Hawley 1997; ‘to read like’: 7 Dec 1978 R.G. to Nick Waterlow (R.G. papers NLA), see also 14 Feb 1978 R.G. to MG, p. 53, and 1998 Hughes. Lake George was the source of an old fence post Rosalie used in a flower arrangement in 1962, according to her inscription on a photograph of the work.

30 *Pale landscape*: 1998 Hughes; *Lake*: 1998 Desmond, also 1998 NGA. Horizontals in the landscape were also an element in *Crop [1]* 1976 and *Crop 2* 1981–82.

31 *Monaro*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 66, also 1998 Desmond; *Piece to walk around*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 48 (see also R.G. in *The first Australian sculpture triennial* 1981, and 1985 School of Art); *Plenty*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 65.



Scrub country 1981–82

Image courtesy of John Cruthers and Bonhams



'I have let air through it because we see a lot of filtered light, random pattern and carelessness in the Australian landscape.'

Image by the author

Rosalie's driving took her through a lot of bushy country which found its way into her work, none more so than in *Scrub country* 1981–82. Soon after finishing the work she spoke about it before it went off to the Venice Biennale: 'It's the product of the experience of standing on lightly wooded country where things are self-sown and there's a lot of air between the trees and gentle grass and these things grow up as they will. With that colour weight of grey, and brown and black oven-stick ... the writing on the boards — reads very nicely as the black note in the landscape. And the ... foliage, that is blue-grey ... it is almost the [*Eucalyptus pulverulenta*] that you can see through here [in my garden]. And yellow wattle. Or even yellow flowers in the grass. It's the first spring colour you see amongst that khaki.' She continued: '[It's] that sort of feeling you get in the country, to me a lyrical quality of acceptance, of taking things as they come, and accepting the perfect with the imperfect. That feel. You know, you get the perfect branch and you get the scruffy one. And you get the one that falls down and the one that stays up. And that lightly balancing look of the scrub. And a lot of air again.'³²

Other aspects of the bush also made their way into her work. Of *Wattle strike* 1983 she said: 'I am always fascinated when I think how the first settlers must have felt when suddenly a dark hill lit up unexpectedly, randomly, with the wattle when they had not seen it before. I think in Canberra particularly we are always very conscious of the wattle lighting up.' And there was the aftermath of the bushfires that marked the area: *Regeneration* 1994 is 'the bushfires, the regeneration powers. When the gums burn, you get sprouts like that. The bush fire went through here, and it was heady stuff; it's beautiful, it glows at night ... After the flames had died down it was amazing to see what was standing and what was burnt to a cinder. All of the gums looked shattered, but you get those blue-green shoots after, it's very gentle.'³³

Rosalie liked the country in winter. One attraction was the cross light on the landscape from the sun lower in the sky. It was a good time to be out: 'We've been lucky with the weather lately: high blue days ... the wind from the snowfields not too keen, not much mud and, of course, no snakes or flies. Good country-going weather.' She recalled a winter trip to Cooma when there was hoar-frost. 'You went over the hill and into Bredbo and the whole place was standing with hoar-frost. It was absolutely like a wonderland. And even the willows, like Druids, they were, all their sagging branches were covered. And the paddocks looked through the hoar-frost, ancient gold. It was absolutely marvellous.'³⁴

³² *Scrub country*: 1982 North, also 1985 School of Art and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 42. Rosalie's language mirrors the Japanese aesthetic of wabi-sabi, sometimes described as one of beauty that is 'imperfect, impermanent and incomplete'. My thanks to Hannah Fink who first drew my attention to the concept of wabi-sabi.

³³ *Wattle strike*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 64; *Regeneration*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 63.

³⁴ 'We've been lucky': R.G. 'Diary' 1987; 'You went over the hill': 1998 Hughes.

In winter ‘the paddocks go back to their bones and the hills go back to their shape’. Rosalie described it as clean country. ‘The grass gets bare and the fences get bare. It’s a very thin time of the year. And it’s very beautiful.’ Using just feathers and sheets of newspaper, she translated this thought into *Pale landscape* 1977: ‘you could see that if you made an awful lot of [the feathered sheets] you had indeed the winter landscape around Canberra which goes back to its bones’. The same thought lay behind *Clean country* 1985, where she employed wire netting and stripped thistle stalks on weathered wood bases. Of *Winter paddock* 1984 she said: ‘That is a colour weight I return to all the time. To me it is the winter paddock when it is bare and the colours are pale — rather drab, but beautiful. The top section is made of feathers. There is ambivalence as to whether this is to be read as birds or whether it is meant to be the quality in the winter sky ... That is the quality of a winter’s day to me, and for me it is right.’³⁵

All seasons feature in Rosalie’s work. Many works have summery titles, combining her twin loves of the tall summer grasses and the colour yellow. But the heat and the glare could discourage exploring. In February 1974 she reports a conversation with Rosemary Dobson: ‘We still plan a country trip. But it’s too hot.’ In March 1980: ‘Another hot afternoon. Autumn is what I want.’ As for the glare: ‘The light kills you here, if you’re born somewhere else’. The times of day also featured in her works, especially morning (including *Winter morning* 1976, *Early morning* 1977, *May morning* 1992, *Top of the morning* 1993–94 and *Morning glory* 1996).³⁶

Sometimes Rosalie’s landscape was a landscape with a human presence, by implication rather than representation, which she wrote about and referred to in her talks, though she never managed more than a good story out of her encounter with the woman and her old transvestite father camped in the bush beyond Braidwood. *Smoko* 1984 caught something of the Australian workman in the road gang she encountered taking a break among the winter tussocks: ‘I am rather keen on this lackadaisical air you get both in the landscape and in a lot of Australian attitudes and for me that [work] is about it. You lean and you stay where you lean and you don’t arrange yourself too much.’ Her most figurative work is *Pink on blue* 1982–83, which alludes to bathers in the river or at the seaside: ‘that’s skinny dipping, you know, that’s all those people jumping in the water with their pink arms shrieking’. *Hill station* 1989 includes ‘a slight tracing of a Lysaght lady’s face ... standing way out in the paddock’. Rosalie thought about the women who lived on the land, drawing on memories of her own lonely days when she first arrived on Mount Stromlo. Of *Pink window* 1975 she said: ‘At the time I was on about the emptiness of the Australian landscape, and I kept thinking of a woman stuck out there on the plains standing at her window. She looks out, what does she see? Nothing. It spoke of loneliness.’ Rosalie spoke of the ‘nothingness in the Australian landscape ... and the sort of hope that that [sound] might be a car or galloping hooves or something. Nothing happened on Stromlo a lot, and people did sort of yearn for other places, familiar times, friends.’ *Country air* 1977 took up a gentler aspect of country living: ‘what I saw eventually in it was a row of windows as in a country place and the wind coming into the building, lifting the curtains ... and you are looking out through this very humble shed and there is the landscape, the clover field and the green field and the curtains’.³⁷



The human presence: *Smoko* 1984
Image from author’s archive



The human presence: *Pink on blue*
1982–83
Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

³⁵ ‘The paddocks go back’: 1998 Desmond; ‘the grass gets bare’: 1998 Hughes; *Pale landscape*: 1999 Auckland AG; *Winter paddock*: 1985 School of Art. Other works with a winter theme include *Winter morning* 1976 and *Winter order* 1978–79.

³⁶ ‘We still plan’: 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG; ‘another hot afternoon’: mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG; ‘the light kills’: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 80.

³⁷ Writings on people: see Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 28, and RG ‘Diary’ 1987 (including the transvestite story); *Smoko*: 1985 School of Art; *Pink on blue* and *Hill station*: 1998 NGA; *Pink window*: 1985 School of Art; ‘nothingness in the Australian landscape’: 1998 Hughes; *Country air*: 1980 Gleeson.



Jim's picnic 1975 — the poetry of it: wire netting 'containing' air, parrots standing in for kangaroos

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of John Cruthers and Bonhams

Then there were the animals, farmed and native, beginning with her Norco cows of the mid-1970s. *Sheep weather alert 5* 1992–93 'is a misted over one; they're washed over, and it reads like shapes looming in the mist. When you have shearing time round Canberra, the yards are full of sheep, the trucks are full of sheep, the hills are full of shorn sheep — sheep, sheep, sheep — you're just surrounded by it. That's what I was after.' [*High country cows*] c. 1976 was 'the high country where the cattle go up for the summer, then they're driven back down for the winter. You just see these shadowy beasts. Nothing there but grass and sun.' More abstract is *String of blue days* 1984 where grey fencing is placed against blue soft-drink boards: 'I would go out into the country and there would be the sheep yards, with grey rails surrounding them, sometimes on the top of a hill, enclosing the blue of the sky. Each cow had a bit of blue sky to stand against.' *Jim's picnic* 1975 involved a poetic flight of the imagination using Arnott's Biscuits parrot cut-outs. 'It was [about] a marvellous impractical picnic with the clouds coming over, the kangaroos hopping up and down. The kangaroos are the parrots, if you can bear the transition, but that was the life element in it and it was to capture the actual event ... for me [the parrots] are almost the animal in the landscape as Ned Kelly is to Nolan. I use them a lot.' The linoleum used in *Cow pasture* 1992 'looked like cow pasture — cow parsley and things. A bit of manure there too. If you go through cow paddocks watching where you tread, and there's a lot of flowers around, that's exactly what I see there.' In one piece, [*Sheep yard*] c. 1982–83, she actually used sheep droppings, precisely set out in a grid much as she did with her shells, and for several years displayed the work over the mantel in her sitting room. In others she used the wool from sheep and cattle that collected where they had scratched themselves on fencing (*Pub* 1974). And wool was the subject of *Wool clip* 1995. Nor did the crop growers escape her attention, in works such as *Orchard* 1986, *Stubble field* 1988, *Wheat belt* 1989, *Summer stack* 1990, *Sunflowers* 1991 and *Vine* 1996.³⁸

Birds in the landscape were a recurring theme. At the sanctuary on Lake George 'the swans and all the other birds, the pelicans and everything, were going up and down — it was like Venice, flotillas of birds. Marvellous.' Cockatoos were a favourite, and she loved watching them on the bird table outside her kitchen. There they are in *Highway code* 1985: 'that sign had white flashes on it that cancelled it out. When you drive around the country the white cockatoos fly up, like porpoises in front of a ship. I've always seen the cockatoos going up ... always, always. They're untidy and their wings are every which way, and they're shrieking. So I left the white on.' They are also there in *Cockatoos* 1991: 'To me it was linked with the personal experience of driving through the country, scrubby old paddocks, and suddenly the cockatoos go up, and they are absolutely

³⁸ *Sheep weather alert 5*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 60; [*High country cows*]: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 30; *String of blue days*: 1996 Davidson; *Jim's picnic*: 1985 School of Art; *Cow pasture*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 62.

wonderful. Strap-like white leaves — wings — all going in different directions and squawking. This is very noisy, everybody has said that who has seen it ... it's not that it is a picture of cockatoos, it's the feel of cockatoos.' And in *But mostly air* 1994–95: 'The mouth of the bird, the circle, is in the middle of it, you see, and to me it was what happened when you get a flock of cockatoos and you frighten them and up they go screaming, screaming ... I'm going to put it in an installation ... about the country atmosphere here.'³⁹

Parrots evoked memories of her early years on Mount Stromlo. 'It was like being inside a zoo when I first came [to Mount Stromlo]. I couldn't believe these brightly coloured parrots for free. Flying around in our balconies. We had a berried pyracantha hedge. And they went snip, snip, snip, like dressmakers in it. Snip, snip, snip. And then they flew onto your balconies. Just amazing.' Parrots turn up in many works, none more so than in the dazzling yellow, green and scarlet *Parrot country* 1980 and *Parrot country II* 1980/83. 'It is a fairly big piece and it's made of natural coloured Schweppes boxes. We were getting Eastern rosellas on our bird table. It's meant to screech at you, and it does.'⁴⁰

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Although it was her Australian experiences that enabled Rosalie to find her calling, echoes of her New Zealand years would turn up in the works she made forty and fifty years after she left Auckland, including works such as *Hill station* 1989, *Landfall* 1989, *Beach house* 1990, *High water mark* 1992 and *Age of innocence* 1993. From time to time Rosalie would be asked about what part other places played in her art. Her response throws back to her schooldays and the time she needed to settle into the holiday house: 'I'm not keen on travelling because though the country is my thing, I've got to make friends with it first. It's got to be familiar to me ... I'm an east coast type of person ... I don't think I can relate to desert, because I don't know about it. I really never lived in it, real sandy type desert.' It was the same when she visited Kakadu in tropical northern Australia in December 1994: 'I didn't particularly like it. The vegetation was different; I thought the rocks belonged to the Aboriginal people, not to me. You salute it but it's not your thing.' Nonetheless, the trip resulted in two works, *Top End* 1994–95 and *Kakadu* 1994–95 (later dismantled and not catalogued). In 1980 Rosalie visited New York and Washington



Cockatoos in flight near Canberra
Reproduced courtesy of the photographer, Geoffrey Dabb



The cockatoos in *But mostly air* 1994–95
Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

39 'The swans': 1998 Hughes; *Highway code*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 72; *Cockatoos*: 1999 Auckland AG; *But mostly air*: 1995 Topliss. For an extended discussion of bird themes in Rosalie's work see Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004.

40 'Like being inside a zoo': 1998 Hughes and 1982 North; *Parrot country* and *Parrot country II*: 1985 School of Art.

to see the art. 'I found a lot of the art was very false. But the vibe in the street was something you just had to experience.' She had, of course, been brought up in a city, albeit a pretty small one.⁴¹

Rosalie rarely travelled beyond Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart, but memories of more distant trips sometimes made it into her art. Rosalie would talk of 'taking on visual cargo' which could resurface years after the event. So *Municipal gardens* 1983 embodies a memory of the public gardens in Ballarat and Bendigo she saw when driving back from the Adelaide Festival in 1976: 'band rotundas and fat beds of blue salvia and marigolds and petunias', and *Herb garden* 1982 memories of Sunday Reed's enclosed garden at Heide. *Out of Africa* 1994 and *Africa* 1995 hark back to 1963 when the cargo ship Rosalie was travelling on from Sweden stopped in South Africa and she visited the Zulu market in Durban. *Madonna and child* c. 1970–72 was inspired by a 1970 trip with Ben to Portugal: 'It was the sort of thing they had in churches with flowers in jam jars — very primitive.' Possibly her reference to the elegance of corrugated iron 'straight from Corinthian pillars' comes from a stopover in Greece to visit a cousin in Athens in 1963. *Reconstruction* 1980–81 was suggested by New York's 'skyscraper horizon', which she had seen in 1980, and the *Pavement* works of 1997–98 possibly allude to the sidewalks there, which had intrigued Rosalie with their patterns of discarded gum. More generally there are many city allusions in Rosalie's titles (including *Cityscape* 1972, *City birds* 1981, *Across town* 1990, *White city* 1993–94, *Down town* 1994, *City block* 1996 and especially *Metropolis* 1999).⁴²



'This ornamentation in a bare place': Rosalie's bird table
Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

Travel confirmed Rosalie's sense of what was important to her. 'After I left Venice, I thought "who needs that?" Everything man-made and so decorated. Look at what we have: space, skies. You can never have too much of nothing.' She told another interviewer: 'The visuals were not my visuals, they were more ornamented. And they were terribly decaying, which I found, coming from a fresh clean country, wasn't my thinking.' Rosalie knew where she belonged: 'I remember as soon as I got home ... it was the winter, and we had one of those very fine, clear winter days — very thin blue sky, very pure — and a white cockatoo arrived on top of the pergola with his yellow comb — the beauty of it! This ornamentation in a bare place, instead of the ornamentation everywhere in Venice. You wouldn't change it, that, for this lovely threadbare winter landscape, olive green and pale green. The beauty of it! It was, and I hate these terms, a "moment of truth".'⁴³

41 'I'm not keen on travelling': 1998 Hughes; 'Kakadu': 1995 Topliss; 'New York and Washington': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 32, also 1998 Hughes.

42 'Visual cargo' and 'Africa': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 21; 'band rotundas': 8 Apr 1976 RG to TG; *Madonna and child*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20; 'Corinthian pillars': 1998 Hughes; *Reconstruction*: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34.

43 'After I left Venice': 1997 Mollison and Heath, p. 7; 'the visuals were not': 1998 Hughes; 'I remember as soon as': 1988 Ewen McDonald, also 1997 Mollison and Heath, p. 7.



ROSALIE'S MATERIALS

I don't live in the rest of the world; this is Terra Australis, the Great Southern Land. Use it and make something.

— Rosalie Gascoigne¹

Rosalie's letters, talks and interviews contain many references to her materials: where she found them, what she liked about them and what she did with them. A recurring theme is the beauty of the commonplace object. Rosalie hated the word 'junk' applied to her materials: it meant people had too easily dismissed the object and hadn't seen its beauty, its intrinsic aesthetic qualities, such as the 'faded Italian colours, the Piero della Francesca' blues and pinks in the discarded beer cans she collected, or the elegance of corrugated iron, reminiscent of the Corinthian pillars of ancient Greece. 'Elegance' and 'classical' are words she often used when talking about her materials. She realised, however, that the context in which her works were presented was important. 'If you use stuff like that, you have to divorce it from anything else that came from the dump or a waste yard, or anything like that. If you put them down with good furniture and good rugs, they can look so vital and exciting.' She was talking about old painted corrugated iron but could have said the same thing about any of her materials.²

She chose her materials for the visual pleasures they gave her. Nostalgia and sentiment were not part of her aesthetic. 'I'm not sentimental, I don't think I'm sentimental ... Sentimentality is old birthday cards.' James Gleeson once asked her if she was like Kurt Schwitters and collected objects because of their emotional or personal souvenir value, and she answered: 'No. I collect them because I personally like the look of them.' She spoke about having been accused of nostalgia for Arnott's parrots. 'I wasn't brought up with Arnott's parrots, I just think they look good.'³

This essay expands on comments about Rosalie's materials in the Biographical Note and Rosalie's Country, and in Catalogue Organisation and Terminology, which includes technical information about terms used for materials in the catalogue and essays. The discussion follows a loosely chronological arrangement, beginning with natural materials and moving on to farm iron, wire mesh, found objects, printed images, linoleum, apiary boxes, weathered wood and plywood formboard, galvanised iron, soft-drink crates, road signs and cable reels.

Rosalie working with pieces of cable reels
(*City block* 1996)

Reproduced courtesy of the photographer,
William Yang

¹ 'I don't live': 1997 Mollison and Heath, p. 7. She summarised much of her thinking about materials in an artist's statement for the *Drawn and Quartered* exhibition catalogue (see p. 191).

² 'Hated the word junk': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 28; 'faded Italian colours' and 'Corinthian pillars': 1998 Hughes; 'if you use stuff like that': 1998 NGA.

³ 'Not sentimental': 1997 Feneley, also 1980 Gleeson; 'accused of nostalgia': 1985 School of Art. Rosalie owned a large book on Schwitters and so was familiar with his work (Kurt Schwitters, Werner Schmalenbach, Thames and Hudson London 1970).

Natural materials

Grasses, salsify and thistles

Rosalie made twenty-three works using grasses, thistles and similar plant materials between 1970 and the mid-1980s, in addition to her ikebana pieces. A talk she gave on dried arrangements in c. 1960 throws early light on what she liked about these materials. It is worth quoting from at length:

Some years I gather ordinary roadside grasses in the spring and tie them in bundles and hang them under the house ... Grass gathered in the late spring won't drop its seed when dry ... Barley I find very decorative, and wheat, and wild oats, which grow plentifully along the roadsides ... Other grass I pick when it has burnt brown and blond and orange in the summer sun. Besides grasses there are tall spikes of verbascum ... which can be picked green and dried in the dark or picked later in any of its stages from brown to black ... Another thing I would not be without are the heads of a very tall thistle that spring from a plant with mottled leaves ... Left in the weather the heads become silver grey and the centre's a lightly mottled darker grey [probably the variegated thistle, *Silybum marianum*] ... There is also a smaller type of thistle which has a yellow flower [probably the saffron thistle, *Carthamus lanatus*]. This thistle has short thin stems branching from a stronger, main stem rather like a candelabra in form. I always smooth the small very prickly leaves from the stem so the individual heads seem to float free from the heavier mass of the arrangement ... Apart from firm favourites such as these I find any walk or drive in the country yields more things I can use ... Even the prickly blue devil [*Eryngium ovinum*] ... will retain enough of its original blueness to be interesting.⁴

Rosalie would later use many of the plants referred to in her talk in her assemblages. So the variegated thistle was used in several works including *Twig tidy* c. 1972–73, *Takeover bid* 1981 and *Flight* 1985, and was probably the tall thistle referred to when she spoke about her 'six-foot arrangement of thistle stalks in the Academy' in 1970. The variegated thistles used in *Flight* 1985 came from 'a place near Wee Jasper', a reference to the stands of thistles that grow alongside the roads near the intersection of Wee Jasper Road and Mountain Creek Road about 25 kilometres south of Yass. She used the saffron thistle in *Piece to walk around* 1981 and *Clean country* 1985, and blue devil in *Still life* 1983. The talk included a reference to the straight stalks of verbascum providing a strong vertical line, something she returned to years later when talking about her bone construction *Last stand* 1972 as 'reminiscent of that rank weed — verbascum — that grows and leans on the hills around Canberra'. (Verbascum, also known as mullein, is a biennial with small, simple yellow flowers on stems from 0.5 to 3 metres tall.)⁵

Collecting and preparation took a lot of work. When out collecting in February 1980, she 'became aware of (some) magnificent stands of grey thistle stalks (the saffron thistle candelabra style) and since I chased that particular and noxious specimen much further afield last year with little success, I started cutting. Came home in a lather of sweat at 12 o'clock with great grey armfuls. I have my eye on an installation of some sort. I have it clean and piled in the passage between the courtyard and the sofa I now write on. The light runs along it — a beautiful metallic light grey.' She remembered the light running along the grey stems and took up the idea in *Piece to walk around* 1981. Salsify, found by the old Canberra brickworks in Yarralumla, also required 'hours of stultifying labour stripping it' of its leaves and stems. Salsify, or *Tragopogon porrifolius*, is a member of the sunflower family with purple daisy-like flowers on tall stems. Regarding the salsify used in *Crop 2* 1981–82, she told Ian North: 'You pick day and night ... You strip it down ... you cut ... It takes absolutely hours and the house is full of the waste products.'⁶



The variegated thistle (*Silybum marianum*) beside Mountain Creek Road

Image by the author

4 c. 1960 RG 'Dried arrangements'.

5 'Six-foot arrangement': 26 Oct 1970 RG to TG; 'near Wee Jasper' and 'that rank reed': 1985 School of Art.

6 'Magnificent stands of': 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60 (contrary to the inserted reference in the edited letter, the saffron thistle was not used in *Takeover bid* 1981); 'salsify': 26 Dec 1978 RG to MG, p. 57 and 1982 North, also 1985 School of Art.



Salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*)
 Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Dried seed heads of salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*) (detail of *Crop [1]* 1976)

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



Cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) at
 Jerrabomberra Wetlands near Fyshwick.
 Note the grey stalks from the previous
 season which Rosalie collected

Image by the author



Summer grass near Bungendore

Photograph from author's archive

Twenty years after the talk on dried arrangements, Rosalie's love of grasses was stronger than ever. 'I must say the golden grass [harvested in summer] looks marvellous in winter time — really holds the summer — scarcely believable at this time of year.' Ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and African lovegrass (*Eragrostis curvula*) were favourites. In 1985 she talked about grass works she made in 1977 'when I was struck yet again by the beauty of grass ... This is beautiful [rye] grass [*Grass rack* 1977] ... It was stiff grass, really quite firm, like a brush, and to me it is what the country says. I am a real grass watcher and I think if you want one of the most relaxed features of the Australian countryside around the Monaro — which is about all I know — it is that grass theme. To me it is lyrical.' Ryegrass 'came up in a great flood in the early summer and what you did was painstakingly take all the little white pieces off, the flowers.'⁷

There was something surreal in Rosalie's vision of the grass. In March 1979 she had an idea. 'There are still some fields brimful of golden grass. I have a vision of getting a team of people to play swimming in the grass, all bobbing heads and striped bathing suits — diving in off the fence posts and such. Fun photography!' So taken was Rosalie with the summer grass around Canberra that she thought Canberra should host a grass festival: 'I always have the feeling, it would be very nice in Canberra some time, instead of having a lilac festival [as Goulburn did], to have a celebration of the grass, because I think our grass is magnificent. Whenever I talk of grass festivals everybody immediately thinks that people can sit around smoking marijuana. But I wouldn't mind that. I think we ought celebrate our grass — that is, the ordinary ryegrass, there is an awful lot of it.' She returned to the idea in February 1980: 'The grasses are magnificent ... Some day, maybe, I'll really get to do my celebration of the grass — the blonds are beautiful like clean lace.' There is an echo of this interest in the title of one of her very last works, *Grassfest* 1999, a work made of yellow boards from Schweppes soft-drink boxes.⁸

Another material Rosalie collected was the stalks of cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*, also known as Queen Anne's lace). It grows in great stands along some roads around Canberra, including the dairy country near Fyshwick and along parts of the highway to Sydney, so it was an obvious target for her. The memory of those stands found their way into *Cow pasture* 1992. Rosalie used the stripped, dried stalks with wire cages in 1978–79 but dismantled the piece soon after (see 'Wire, wire mesh and cages' later in this essay). She kept great bundles of the stalks at Anstey Street, Pearce, which were still there when she died.

⁷ 'I must say': 20 July 1977 RG to MG, p. 49; 'the beauty of grass': 1985 School of Art; 'came up in a great flood': 1999 Auckland AG.

⁸ 'There are still some fields': c. 20 Mar 1979 RG to MG; 'host a grass festival': 1985 School of Art; 'the grasses are magnificent': 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60.

Bones

Rosalie made about eight works using sheep, cattle and rabbit bones between 1972 and 1988, some a celebration of bones and a few in which bone was just one element. The Biographical Note includes an account of her first use of the sun-bleached bones in her flower-arranging days, 'nice and clean and white', and how ikebana helped her see more: 'I think they're very beautiful and I think that any artist of any persuasion should be able to find plenty of inspiration about a bone. They're good. Nature is just so much better than we are.' It was their shapes and colour that got her: 'they were interesting shapes ... the shapes nature does, they're absolutely wonderful ... And a beautiful grey-white.' In the late 1990s she had 'some kangaroo shin bones — beautiful things they are. [Alberto] Giacometti would have loved them.' When it came to collecting bones, she remembered: 'I just gave away Canberra and all its pretensions — I remember even scraping some flesh off, I was so keen'. She was talking about the bones used in *Spine* 1972: 'Was so taken with it [the spine] that I quelled my squeamishness and scraped intervening gristle off with the bread knife'. Jean Conron, an artist friend who lived nearby, remembers accompanying Rosalie to lunch at Michael Taylor's house in Bredbo when Rosalie spotted white cattle bones on the hill against the blue sky: Rosalie stopped the car and in their luncheon finery, they went off over the paddock, collected the bones which they placed on a rug held between them, got them back to the car and continued on to lunch. In 1972 and 1973 she constructed large, strung-out arrangements on the back lawn, and despite the need to move them to mow the grass they lasted five years or more, because some were photographed there in early May 1978. But bones left outside degrade and the three works with bones that survive did so because they were small works kept inside.⁹

Feathers

When Rosalie arrived in Australia she had been struck by the birds that she encountered on Mount Stromlo, which were very different to the birds she had known in New Zealand. Bird themes are present in many of her works. She was always pleased to find a pristine feather on her walks, glossy black and white from a magpie or currawong, a cockatoo's yellow curl, and the red and blue of a crimson rosella. It is not surprising, therefore, that sometimes these finds made their way into her early assemblages. In the late 1970s she used vast numbers of swan and cormorant feathers and in 1984 she used seagull feathers. She used feathers in eleven works.



Joie de mourir 1973 on the back lawn, 1978
Photograph by author

⁹ 'I think they're very beautiful': 1985 School of Art; 'interesting shapes' and 'Giacometti': 1998 Hughes; 'collecting bones': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 23; 'quelled my squeamishness': 30 Sep 1973 RG to MG, p. 39. Jean Conron recalled the trip in a conversation with the author on 23 October 2006.



Black swans in flight, the white feathers in their wings clearly visible
Reproduced courtesy of the photographer, Geoffrey Dabb



Experiments with feathers glued on boards in the driveway at Anstey Street, c.1981.
Note the collection of old tree stumps
Image from author's archive

Rosalie's interest in feathers exploded when she chanced upon the bird sanctuary at Lake George in 1976. 'This was at Lake George before it all went shallow, and there were lots of swans [*Cygnus atratus*]. I walked along the banks and there were all these feathers and I am a natural picker-upper.' The bird refuge was located in the marshes where Butmaroo Creek joins the southern end of the lake. Rosalie made at least four trips to Lake George between 30 May and 18 June 1976 to gather feathers. What caught her eye was the white feathers which had dropped from underneath their wings, these lovely feathers 'all entangled with the blond rushes ... Some of them were full of mud and scungy, but I took them too, because I didn't mind.' Then they had to be washed, dried and sorted.¹⁰

She kept going back for more. 'It does guide you when you find a lot of something ... Now I am very conscious of the fact that when the hot weather comes, that those Lake George swans are dropping more beautiful feathers ... Sometimes you fear to go into feather country, because they are going to be irresistible.' In March 1977, when construction of *Pale landscape* 1977 was well under way, she wrote: 'I spent another day by the Lake on Friday — picked up nearly 1000 more feathers and now have 75 feathered sheets (and a stiff back)'. She aimed to have about 4000 feathers for the completed work. While she was picking up white feathers she discovered the feathers of the Australasian darter (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*). 'I couldn't resist them. I wasn't on about that but they were too good to leave.' They were 'black beautiful glossy [feathers] as if the birds had just undressed ... They're like the underside of mushrooms' and she used them to make *Feathered chairs*, which she finished in January 1978. In February 1978 she was still 'involved with Lake George and a great feather investigation ... The house is full of feathers ...' and in December 1978 it was: 'Tomorrow — hooray — I get to go down to Lake George with Monica [Freeman] [for] some clean feather pickups'. These endeavours resulted in *Feathered fence* 1978–79.¹¹

She tried new approaches: 'If you strip them, the spines are lovely curves — I keep thinking how Bob Klippel would like them — all that grasshopper agility. The feather part that one pulls off seems too good to waste and so I have experimented (à la tar and feathers) gluing it on to weathered boards [see *Feather studies 1–3*] 1978 and *Winter paddock* 1984]. James Gleeson said with delight "Just like a very old drawing". I remember Sofu [Teshigahara, the Japanese ikebana master] doing his vast dragon calligraphy and think that I could well do a visible

¹⁰ 'This was at Lake George': 1985 School of Art; 'four trips to Lake George': RG papers NLA; 'lovely feathers all entangled': 1998 Hughes; on Lake George birds see also Graeme Barrow *Magnificent Lake George: The biography* Dagraja Press, Canberra, 2012, p. 93 ff.

¹¹ 'It does guide you': 1980 Gleeson; 'I spent another day': c. 7 Mar 1977 RG to MG, p. 45; 4000 feathers: abt Mar 1977 RG to TG; 'I couldn't resist': 1985 School of Art; 'black beautiful glossy': 1982 North; 'involved with Lake George': 14 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53; 'tomorrow — hooray': 26 Dec 1978 RG to MG, p. 57.

WHISPER out of feathers — especially the peculiar grey ones that the mud has coloured.’ The stripped quills became part of *[Still life]* 1983 and her experiments with gluing come to mind with the silver gull (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) feathers from Lake Burley Griffin used in *Winter paddock* 1984: ‘I have painted them on to a piece of Masonite with a paint-brush, not stuck them down.’ In 1981 she also glued cockatoo feathers on boards to make the word ‘BIRD’ but the panels did not survive and are not catalogued.¹²

The swans stopped using the sanctuary when Lake George dried up, in 1986 (almost) and again in 2002 (completely). So there were no more feathers. But by then Rosalie’s interest had moved on.

Shells

Rosalie was a shell collector, not in the sense that she sought out examples of many different types of shells but rather in the sense that she loved the process of walking the beaches and picking up shells that caught her eye, as she had done in her childhood: periwinkles, scallops, limpets, pipis and cowries. When she first came to Australia she had only rare opportunities to visit the beach but in the 1970s (and after) seaside visits became an important if infrequent form of relaxation and she would spend a night or two at Batemans Bay with a friend, visiting different parts of the south coast. ‘I went to the coast for four days with Diana Woollard ... What a good idea. Beautiful weather. We walked the beaches and picked up thousands of shells.’ And two months later: ‘Am happily going down coast with Diana on Friday. More and more shells. A pleasant unpressurised break.’¹³

When collecting she would often focus on just one type of shell which she would bring home and store in containers. She was very deliberate in her selection: her shells had to have good colour and no chips. The studio and garage had boxes, bottles and even plastic bags full of one kind of shell or another. She had thousands of one small coloured cone-like shell which she would keep in open bowls in her sitting room so she could dip her hands in and let the shells run through her fingers, enjoying their tactile qualities and the beach memories they rekindled.

Rosalie made twelve works using shells. Of the shells she used in *Turn of the tide* 1983 (probably periwinkles, *Littorina littorea*), she said: ‘The shells seduced me. They were so beautiful and I had a lot of them.’ She was also keen on scallop shells from Tasmania (probably *Pecten fumatus*), which she got to know when visiting Toss in Hobart. She wrote to him asking for



Shells were carefully chosen, just one kind on each expedition, and later washed, sorted and stored in jars, tins and plastic bags. The screw shells were a particular favourite and Rosalie kept a large bowl of them in her sitting room, where she could run her fingers through them and recapture the sea and her childhood at Waiheke

Photograph by author

12 ‘If you strip them’: 14 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53; Sofu visited Canberra in 1967 and Rosalie helped him with an exhibition in the Academy of Science building, during which he did a large calligraphy ‘Dragon’ now in the ANU Menzies Library; ‘I have painted them’: 1985 School of Art.

13 Shell collecting in childhood: 1982 North; ‘I went to the coast’: Feb 1979 RG to MG; ‘am happily’: 30 Apr 1979 RG to MG.



Rocks found by Lake George in a 1977 arrangement on the bench in Rosalie's sitting room, the form of which she first used in *[River stone]* c. 1966–68 and returned to in *Set up* 1983–84

The 1977 arrangement was originally larger, about twice the length of that shown here. Rosalie described that first version thus: 'Meanwhile I am mostly working and feel I am getting up a new head of steam ... Have also done a work with birds [made] of Lake George stones about 5 ft long, still in the making, all beiges and grey with three slatted squares as background ... Question at moment is whether I could present it as a sort of installation and not try to stick down the very heavy bird forms. Mustn't let practicalities slow down the flow of art!' (11 Oct 1977 RG to MG, p. 51). Rosalie would later halve the length of the work so that the background comprised one and a half of the slatted squares, which is how it was photographed in August 1978.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Collections of pebbles and other materials in the courtyard at Pearce, c. 1985

Photograph by Anthony Browell from *Vogue Living* February 1985, reproduced courtesy of the photographer

some in 1982: 'And one last thing I have a set of shells from a Tasmanian beach and if you run across any such please gather them for me'. Her daughter-in-law responded with samples and a package sent back with Ben following one of his visits: 'If you want more this size we can get lots for you when next in Bridport [north-eastern Tasmania] because that's the main catch of the fishermen there. However it's fairly unlikely we'd find smaller ones.' Toss visited Rosalie in late 1984, bringing 'a non-Christmas present, which was a cardboard box full of those magnificent [scallop] shells ... I find them absolutely fascinating.' They came from Seven Mile Beach near Hobart airport, which Rosalie visited in September 1985 on a trip to Hobart, writing to Toss afterwards: 'The first day I came home I spread out all my shells and I am already planning a return trip to that beach. I'll bring a tent! Every light hour I will walk the beach and catalogue it. And I'll put all the shells in rows and decide (pleasurably!) which I want more of. How clever of you to organise me there.'¹⁴

Stone and gravel

Rosalie's interest in the round, smooth rocks she encouraged her children to search for during riverside picnics in the late 1940s and early 1950s had its genesis in her childhood summers on Waiheke Island, and she was always on the lookout for them whenever she visited the beaches north and south of Batemans Bay. She had used stones in her flower arrangements, one of which was even titled 'Blue metal industry' and presumably featured the crushed rock used on black-top roads. Smooth stones feature in two works, *[River stone]* c. 1966–68 and *Stonerack* 1980, and rough rocks from Lake George in two other (uncatalogued) pieces from 1977–78 (subsequently dismantled). On her country travels her eye was caught by the many colours and textures of the gravels on ant heaps and she took many samples, which she used in *Industrial area* 1982–84. The colours of the earth also lay behind the title of the ten panels she made with her stock of FSC-coated plywood formboard, *Earth* 1999, the last but one work she completed before her death.

Rusted farm iron

Rosalie began collecting rusted iron in a serious way in the mid-1960s, drawn on by her ikebana studies (see 'Ikebana' in the Biographical Note). Between the mid-1960s and 1973 Rosalie made at least twenty-one pieces using rusted iron (and possibly more because there are no records with details of some works exhibited at Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, in 1974). She began collecting the iron because of her ikebana studies, using it in her arrangements. 'I took that on as containers because it had the shape in it. There's some marvellous shapes you get.' Much of the iron in her works is from old machinery and tools. One source was the old mine at Captains Flat: 'I used to go up to Captains Flat mine with a bucket. I remember trudging across that mud plain, it was magic. The iron work used to be like Giacometti's iron. It's all eaten away by the nasty acids ... I used to get buckets of that. Didn't use it, but I got buckets of it.'¹⁵

She stopped making iron pieces in 1973. Three factors contributed to Rosalie's change of heart: a concern about what Ben's welding might lead to, queries about the merits of her metal figures, and her new interest in the artistic possibilities of old bones. Regarding Ben's welding, she explained: 'He got very carried away, and I thought that he was going to get into the act if I wasn't careful ... I felt he was getting into my world that

¹⁴ 'The shells seduced me': 1985 School of Art; 'and one last thing': c. Feb 1982 RG to TG; 'if you want more': 22 Feb 1982 Lyn Gascoigne to RG; 'non-Christmas present': 1985 School of Art; 'the first day I came home': 20 Sept 1985 RG to TG, also Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 12; 'Seven Mile Beach': 9 Jan 2014 Lyn Gascoigne to MG; Toss and Lyn would also visit Five Mile Beach, but less often.

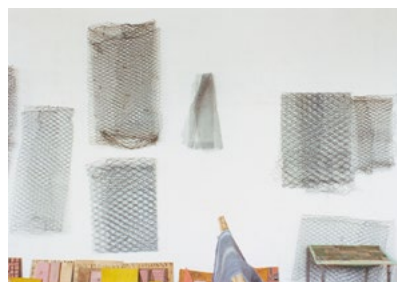
¹⁵ 'I took that on' and 'up to Captains Flat mine': 1998 Hughes.

belonged just to me, where what I said went. And it was the first time in my life that what I said went.' Two friends raised doubts about her figures, Vicki Mimms, who 'can't bear things that look like things e.g. king's head' and James Mollison, who reacted with disgust when he admired a new piece only to have Rosalie describe it as 'my elephant pot'. She would argue that in her medium her things have to look like things or they don't look like anything. But in retrospect she recognised that her iron figures were 'perilously close to that awful junk stuff people make'.¹⁶

Wire, wire mesh and cages

Rosalie was intrigued with the many different sorts of wire and wire mesh she encountered on building sites and in the country, and had a collection of rusted or weathered samples outside the studio. Some ended up in a display on one of the courtyard walls. The mesh included flywire gauze, chicken wire and steel mesh used to reinforce concrete slabs. Again, it was ikebana that first piqued Rosalie's interest in rusty wire, which she incorporated in her constructions in the mid-1960s, and then in *Bee* 1972. As Rosalie transitioned to assemblage, she used wire to string up her weathered bones (*Joie de mourir* 1973) and construction mesh to hold the bottles on their shelves in *Bottled glass* 1974. Transparent wire gauze was used to suggest early morning mist in *Norco* (after Gruner) 1974, contain her parrots in *Italian birds* 1975 or suggest a curtain in *Early morning* 1977. Later she would use chicken mesh embedded with thistle stalks and similar material (*Clean country* 1985). Mesh was also used metaphorically: it could 'contain' air, as in *Jim's picnic* 1975, *Crop [1]* 1976, *Crop 2* 1981–82 and, especially, *Plein air* 1994.

Rosalie was keen, too, on old wire cages as containers (as in *Angels* 1976 and *Winter order* 1978–79). In the latter part of 1978 she experimented with cage-like structures on her back lawn. There were at least two such structures with the stripped dried stalks of thistles and/or cow parsley threaded through the openings. One, less finished, made use of a fairly rough cage, and the other more finished piece used an old bird cage. Work was sufficiently advanced for RG to show them to Nick Waterlow when he came to see her in early October about exhibiting in the 3rd Biennale of Sydney in 1979. 'I have had a visit from Nick Waterlow who wants me to put something in Sydney Biennale next March ... He chose three things — two still unfinished ... likes my Feathered Fence and a thing I am doing with lots of horizontal grey sticks in various cages', which she also referred to in a letter to Waterlow in December: 'the one with horizontal sticks in cages looks best against



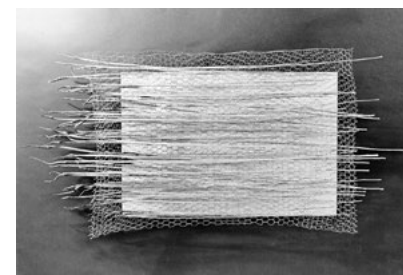
Some of Rosalie's collection of wire netting on the studio wall in September 1993; the piece at the top left was used in *Plein air* 1994

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Detail of *Plein air* 1994

Photograph by Gavin Handsford, courtesy of Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne



The piece Rosalie called *Going sideways* (dismantled, not catalogued), which she was working up in late 1978 for the 1979 Biennale of Sydney, but ultimately she abandoned the piece. The image on the top shows Rosalie's annotations on the image she sent to Nick Waterlow for the biennale. In 1985 she returned to the idea of stalks and wire in *Clean country* 1985 (detail, one of four panels)

Top: Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from the Biennale of Sydney archive at the Art Gallery of New South Wales Research Library, Sydney

Bottom: Photograph by Matt Kelso from author's archive

¹⁶ 'He got carried away': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20; 'Vicki Mimms': 10 Apr 1972 RG to MG; James Mollison: 16 Oct 1972 RG to MG, p. 38; 'perilously close': 1982 North.



Metal labels from the wooden cable reel spools dismantled and cut up for Rosalie's wood panels. But Rosalie clearly had another source for labels such as these as she used eight in *The colonel's lady* 1976

Image by the author



A collection of ceramic and glass insulators on the courtyard bench in 1976, with a stack of rusty metal in the foreground

Photograph by Matt Kelso from author's archive

the light', by then named *Going sideways*. In the end, a smaller, cage-like structure constructed on the back lawn (*Winter order* 1978–79) was exhibited and the others dismantled, but she would return to the idea of dried stalks/thistles and wire in *Clean country* 1985 and *Plein air* 1994.¹⁷

Found objects

Discarded objects of many kinds attracted Rosalie's eye and some ended up in her assemblages, especially in the 1970s. Importantly, she chose and used things 'for their look and their feel but never for their function'. For many things, such as the beer cans and rusted domestic enamelware, it was a case of looking past what the object was — naming the object — and recognising its visual qualities. She liked simple things. 'The problem is that people eschew simplicity. They feel they have to spend money. I have a range of tennis balls and coloured rubber balls in a box at the gallery [Macquarie Galleries, Canberra]. I found them near the Scrivener Dam, slipped from children's grasps. The children at the gallery like to pick them up. This is as it should be, people happy with art.' She also had a collection of copper floats (used in ballcocks), which she tried out in a bucket in 1975 but discarded the idea, although retained the copper floats, which were among the collections cleared from the courtyard at Anstey Street after she died. Many things caught her eye, but the three that stand out — because she had a lot — are plastic dolls, beer cans and enamelware. Other than for enamelware, however, from the late 1970s Rosalie gradually moved away from incorporating objects in her work, although the stockpiles remained.¹⁸

¹⁷ 'A visit from Nick': 12 Oct 1978 RG to MG, p. 56, also 7 and 21 Dec 1978 RG to NW.

¹⁸ 'Eschew simplicity': Rees 1974.

Plastic dolls

Rosalie made seventeen works using plastic dolls whole, or more usually, just part. The first work used a headless, limbless torso (*Japanese bathing* c. 1972–73), the next a head and one arm (*Parrot lady* 1973), and then a pair of legs (*Monument* 1974) and a head (*The cottage* 1974 and *Doll's house* 1975). The dolls were chance finds, washed away in the stormwater and found by the riverside, maybe picked up in a dump or, on one occasion (*Parrot lady* 1973), 'living under the station at Captains Flat a long time. She had terrible times. She had been through a lot. And I couldn't resist her expression ... She had grey hair and a wisp and startled eyes, she was very dramatic.' But not every doll would do: 'That doll's head worked for me, you can have fifty dolls heads and none of them work. One might.'¹⁹

The game changed when Rosalie discovered an abandoned fairground sideshow on the Bungendore tip in February 1976 and, among other memorabilia, came home with six varieties of kewpie dolls. 'I got over 300.' But what to do with them? In a discussion about the repeated image (which also took in Rosalie's use of beer cans) she explained:

It is very hard when you find say 300 assorted dolls to know what to say, and they are obviously saying 'dollies', and so the only thing really that you can do is order them, arrange them, so that the essence of dolliness comes out of them. I found that I could do this by sorting them in to different sizes, different colour eyes — some brown, some blue — and order them in boxes. Alas, I took all their arms off because their arms were reading away from that hardened image. I found that something like 150 dollies in boxes says 'dollies' unequivocally. I wanted to say 'dollies' because I had a lot of dollies, I had 300 plus dollies, and they were too good, they were very exciting ... and you wanted to sort of immortalise them into a work of art that wouldn't irritate you. It would have to be so tight and so firm and really so unsentimental that you just enjoy that dolliness of it.

This was *Dolly boxes* 1976.²⁰



Detail of *Parrot lady* 1973
Image courtesy of John Cruthers



Detail of *Dolly boxes* 1976
Image by Carl Warner, courtesy of the University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane

¹⁹ 'Dolls were chance finds': 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 44 ('Am also collecting dolls (pink) from the dumps'); 'living under the station' and 'worked for me': 1985 School of Art; 'grey hair and a wisp': 1997 Feneley.

²⁰ 'I got over 300': 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG; 'it is very hard': 1978 Lindsay, similar remarks 1985 School of Art and Janet Hawley 1997, which also has 'I ripped their arms off like Auntie Jack' (a reference to an ABC television comedy from the period).



Bucket of copper floats for ballcocks, c. 1975. The bucket had been used earlier, empty, in a multi-box installation photographed in early 1975 (see *Study: thistle stalks* c. 1974–75), and later as a container with plastic flowers (see *Bucket of flowers* c. 1976). Rosalie had about a dozen floats, one of which she used in *Germaine Greer* 1972 and the remainder were among the collections cleared from the courtyard at Anstey Street after she died

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Enamel ware 1974

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Enamelware

Rosalie's love affair with rusted domestic enamelware is reflected in seventeen works made over twenty years, from 1974 to 1993. Sometimes she simply used an enamel cup or a jug as a container, but other works were full-on celebrations of the material, such as *Enamel ware* 1974, *Triptych* 1975, *Sideboard piece* 1976, *The teaparty* 1980, *Habitation* 1984, *Set up* 1983–84 and *Skewbald* 1993.

Rosalie would find the enamelware in old dumps 'and it was absolutely mesmerising'. Once she found a 'marvellous broken-down enamel kettle, large, rich clear blue, and an orange tea pot' on top of the hill before one gets into Bungendore. The orange teapot was used in *The teaparty* 1980. Of the teapot in *Enamel ware* 1974 she said: 'I thought [it] was a very vulgar little teapot. I went three times to that dump and the wretched thing kept getting under my feet and in the end I thought "All right!" and it forced its way into my oeuvre'. Her son Toss gave her some 'very high class [pieces] ... collector's items, must be rare'. She remonstrated about a critic who said that enamelware can be found in any Australian dump. 'Got news for him. It can't. It can't, it's very hard to find.' Once she even offered some children money to pull things out of the bramble bushes. And by the 1990s she found that 'nowadays you get awful enamel from Taiwan which is lightweight' unlike the 'good old solid stuff' she had collected.²¹

Rosalie's word for enamelware was 'elegant': 'I had a thing about enamelware because I see it as being elegant. People see the holes in it. I was collecting brown and white at the time. To me it had the sort of elegance that a Dalmatian dog has, spotty, very elegant ... I go for the look of it and the feel of it.' She thought that 'sculpturally it was very beautiful' and in *Set up* 1983–84 she put it on blocks so 'you saw the actual shape of it'. She aimed for a classical feel in her arrangements: of *Triptych* 1975 she said, 'I was after that elegance of still life you can get with no sentimental overlays, [the] shapes and spaces reading in a classical way'. James Gleeson made a friend for life when he observed: "'Triptych" ... seems to me to have that kind of real classicism of spirit which you find in Chardin still life or Morandi'. Her scorn was palpable when recounting how she had once been asked if she was a feminist because it was kitchenware. Of her last enamel work, *Skewbald* 1993, Rosalie wrote: "'Skewbald" is the product of my perception in a world of Friesian cattle, magpies, Dalmatian dogs, Gerard Manley Hopkins' "Glory be to God for dappled things", cowhide, and all the animals on the veldt.' It was her last enamelware piece. 'I've said everything that needs to be said [about enamelware], or that I'm interested in.'²²

Beer cans

Rosalie used beer cans in four pieces made between 1976 and 1979, using both old and new cans. Some were steel cans, others possibly aluminium. The first work used a faded pink Cascade can and parts of a Flag ale can (*The colonel's lady* 1976). Toss in Hobart noticed the can and obtained from the Cascade Brewery a dozen empty pink ones, especially run off for her. 'Very pretty cans they are', she wrote back, 'standing two deep and four across with their grey brewery labels reading neatly and their clever trick tops (How did the beer get out?)'. Cascade sent her some more cans in 1978 and in her letter of thanks she congratulated Cascade 'on having one of the best designed beer cans in Australia'.²³

21 'Mesmerising': 1999 Auckland AG; 'marvellous broken-down': 1 May 1977 RG to MG, p. 47; 'orange teapot': 1985 School of Art; 'high class pieces': c. Sep 1977 RG to TG, the letter also refers to gifts from Ray Hughes; 'very hard to find' and 'offered children money': 1998 Hughes; 'from Taiwan' and 'good old stuff': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 51.

22 'I had a thing': 1985 School of Art; 'sculpturally ... beautiful' and *Set up*: 1999 Auckland AG; 'classical feel' and 'friend for life': 1980 Gleeson; 'feminist': 1999 Auckland AG; *Skewbald*: RG artist's statement 1 Jul 1993 (the Hopkins reference is to 'Pied beauty' 1877); 'said everything': 1998 Hughes.

23 'Very pretty cans': mid-Nov 1976 RG to TG; second gift of Cascade cans: 19 May 1978 RG Wilkins Tasmanian Breweries Pty Ltd to RG and c. late May 1978 RG's response.

After Rosalie made *The colonel's lady* she became 'a connoisseur of beer cans' and had 'no trouble in picking up hundreds of them along country roads around Canberra'. She was attracted by their faded beauty, and wrote about her interest in January 1977: 'I am combing the grassy gullies between Queanbeyan and Bungendore for good quality fade on beer cans ... Flag ale fades beautifully — with lovely pale Australian flags. I even found three more Swan lager with black swans on faded gold and red. However, it's a hard medium to make work.' In 1978 she told Robert Lindsay she preferred the old cans: 'with the sun and the rain and the way they live in the grass with part exposed to the sun and part exposed to the damp or dry underneath, they fade in such different, casual ways, and you get beautiful, casual effects out of them and you get very ancient, lyrical pale pinks and pale blues and I think real beauty of colouring with the fade. The newly minted one is a bit aggressive for my taste.' Looking back, Rosalie remembered the faded colours 'were as good as the faded Italian colours, the Piero della Francesca colours. Faded pink, faded blue, beautiful ... I made things out of beer cans ... just so people could look at the colour.'²⁴

She knew that in most peoples' eyes 'a beer can is a laughable object, and they cannot see past it ... But I feel whatever I use I have to be able to get something of dignity or beauty out of it.' She wanted to make what she felt was a definitive arrangement out of beer cans 'because it certainly inhabits the Australian environment ... I feel it's a challenge to take something with the image that a beer can has in most people's minds and turn it towards beauty so that perhaps people can accept that beauty lies in very ordinary places sometimes.'²⁵

One final point concerns the use of multiple beer cans. In 1978 Rosalie explained her thinking to Robert Lindsay: 'I do think sometimes you say a thing definitively by repeating it. It's that old, old thing of a rose is a rose is a rose and you get the rose feeling out of it. In the same way that if you take a lot of something — if you're working with bones for instance, as I have done — a lot of bones will surround you with that bone thing and make you feel the feel of bones. I think the same goes for the repeated image of the beer can. You can as it were topple one beer can and in some senses you can't topple fifty.'²⁶

Printed metal and the Lysaght lady

As well as beer cans, Rosalie used a variety of metal containers and images on metal in twelve works between 1975 and 1990. She had a great collection of old cigarette tins and metal pill boxes, used in works such as *Mosaic* 1976. Sometimes she cut the containers up and used just part of the printed image or text. The three *Flower tower* works of 1975 were made with piles of ten-gallon fuel drums. She saved printed metal labels, and had a stock of labels for barbed wire used on hardwood cable reels. Rosalie had a particular liking for the lady (Queen Victoria) stencilled on sheets of galvanised iron (q.v.) by the Lysaght steel company. 'They used to stamp it with the image of Queen Victoria and the year it was made. If you go out to the country now, you can sometimes see this Lysaght lady in the grass. She's fending off the bushfires with her chin.'²⁷



[Homage with Lysaght lady] c. 1990 (detail)
Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

²⁴ 'A connoisseur': late May 1978 RG to RG Wilkins; 'combing the grassy gullies': 4 Jan 1977 RG to TG; 'with the sun and the rain': 1978 Lindsay; 'faded colours': 1998 Hughes.

²⁵ 'Laughable object': 1980 Gleeson; 'definitive arrangement': 1978 Lindsay.

²⁶ 'I do think': 1978 Lindsay.

²⁷ 'They used to stamp': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 37, also 1998 Hughes and 1998 NGA.

Printed images

Rosalie collected a wide range of printed images, especially package branding, newspaper photographs and art postcards, and her interest extended to old engravings, cigarette cards and postage stamps. Her sense of the graphic qualities of the product logos on packaging, in particular, was informed by Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. She kept newspaper images she was particularly taken with in albums, filled old cigarette tins with collectors' cards and had plastic bags full of postage stamps. 'The cigarette cards came as a blessed diversion. I have continuing pleasure in arranging and rearranging and picking out my favourites. All upright, too. I'll mount this lot' (*Homage with five cricket cards*] c. 1982).²⁸

For one very brief period in the spring of 1973 Rosalie experimented with collage, gluing compositions of images cut from magazines into a large scrapbook. But she quickly gave collage on paper away in favour of three-dimensional assemblage works, of which the first was *Parrot lady* 1973. Rosalie cut around an image she wanted to use, and either glued the silhouette directly to the work or, if the image was from a packing box, she used the rigidity of the cardboard to give it the stability she needed. In late 1977 she acquired a jigsaw, which allowed her to mount the image on plywood and then cut around it. 'Much work with new jigsaw', she wrote in December 1977, and over the years she would acquire others. She would make up batches of silhouettes and there were many stashed away in boxes in her studio when she died.²⁹

All up, Rosalie used printed images in about 100 works between 1973 and 1984. Most employ package branding, newspaper images and art postcards (discussed below), but twenty works use old photographs, vintage postcards, road maps, botanical engravings and collectors' cards.

Package branding: Arnott's parrot, Norco cow and others

Rosalie clipped her branding images from the cardboard packing boxes she found in her local supermarket. The Arnott's parrots in their different forms came first. 'I find it very difficult to move out of a supermarket when they've been unloading the Arnott's Biscuits and all those lovely parrots. You have to stop yourself from taking 24 more cardboard boxes and cutting out the parrots.' But in 1980 she observed, regretfully: 'They haven't got the variety they used to have. You used to be able to get blue ones and red ones and I have had a great store of them ... I use them a lot.' She was talking with James Gleeson about the parrots in *Jim's picnic* 1975. Norco cows were another early obsession and she was collecting them in a big way at the start of 1974: 'Also got nice Norco Butter cardboard carton stamped with blue cows ... I think I'll go down later and climb J.B. Young's mountain of boxes and drag out a few spare cows. I like to have a lot.'³⁰

She used the parrots from Arnott's Biscuits in twenty-two works between 1973 and 1982, cows from Norco dairy products in thirteen works between 1974 and 1979, and Queensland pineapples in seven works in 1985. She also used a few cows from milk cartons and powdered milk cans, and cats (probably from cat-food containers).

²⁸ 'Cigarette cards': c. Feb 1982 RG to TG.

²⁹ 'Collage': Rosalie decided to try her hand at collage after seeing an exhibition of Michael Taylor's collages in October 1973; 'new jigsaw': mid-Dec 1977 RG to MG, p. 59 (incorrectly dated Dec 1979).

³⁰ 'I find it very difficult': 1980 Gleeson and others including 1998 Hughes; *Jim's picnic*: 1985 School of Art; 'Norco cows': 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 44; contrary to Vici MacDonald's claim (1998, p. 30), the first Norco cow work was not c. 1969 but 1974–75.

Rosalie's use of the Arnott's and Norco logos set the pattern for an important aspect of her practice. At first she used the whole bird and whole cow, but soon she began to cut them up and reassemble them as mythical or comic figures, exploring the full potential of her material. It was a practice that would stand her in good stead when she worked with soft-drink boxes (and later retroreflective road signs and cable reels), first using the whole boards of the boxes and then splitting or sawing them into strips or small squares, and later even sawing up and reassembling panels of strips she had glued to backing boards. At other times she resurfaced the cows with china chips, and once even found cow images sufficiently small to fit on a postcard of Eadweard Muybridge's *Ox trotting* 1887. But eventually she stopped: 'if my delight is still there, I can still make something else' but 'it's very hard to say anything different that's not been said before'.³¹

Newspaper images

There are thirteen works using images from newspapers, almost all made between 1974 and 1984. Three works have faces cut from newspapers and magazines, two used racehorses and eight involved football players or cricketers (seven of them in action). Rosalie had images of the English team from the Australian tour in 1974–75, the West Indies tour in 1975–76 and some as late as 1981. She loved the body language and left behind a collection of images with the figures painted over in white paint, or outlined in black, or sometimes she cut out the figure so it stood alone, all to emphasise their shapes. The use of newsprint images of cricketers reflected a wider interest Rosalie developed in newspaper sports photography in early 1976: 'Have just done a collage of rumps of racehorses kindly provided by the page spread in *The Age* [*Study: horses* 1976]. Am interested in all sports photographs so keep on keeping yr eyes open for me.' Rosalie told art students in 1985: 'Another thought if you are a regionalist is that part of your region is your daily newspaper and you see some magnificent sporting types in the sports pages. Wonderful body language ... The only way you can get a footballer looking as good as a footballer is to cut his picture out of the paper. Mount him on wood.' As with the cricketers, she also retouched the footballers. She returned to the sports pages in 1982–83 when she collected images of horseracing from her Sunday newspaper (*Study: horse races* 1983); the archive includes images of Gurner's Lane winning the 1982 Caulfield Cup and Sir Dapper winning the 1983 Golden Slipper, suggesting a time frame for her interest.³²



The Norco cow came in several sizes and shades of blue
Image by the author



Images of cricketers showing how Rosalie sought to emphasise the figures with gouache and outlining. Some she mounted on plywood cut to shape, as in [*Lillem and daffodils*] c. 1977–78
Image by the author



'The only way you can get a footballer looking as good as a footballer is to cut his picture out of the paper and mount him on wood.' As she also did with Braque's *Nu debout* (1908)
Image by the author

31 'If my delight': 1980 Gleeson; 'hard to say anything different': 1982 North.

32 'Collage of rumps': 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG; 'another thought': 1985 School of Art. In 1980 Ray Hughes wrote to Rosalie about a touring exhibition the Visual Arts Board had asked him to curate on the theme of collage and his letter referred, among other things, to 'the cricketer, footballer and racehorse pieces I have seen' (5 Mar 1980 RH to RG). The show did not eventuate.

Art images

Rosalie made twenty-four works incorporating images of works of art. One source was the Mary Martin Bookshop in Canberra where she bought remaindered books of reproductions, often in multiple copies. In the studio after she died there were dismembered copies of paperbacks on Fra Angelico, Piero della Francesca, the Western tradition of portraiture, and a Russian publication titled *Dionysus*. She would buy loose prints of works such as Pablo Picasso's *Family of saltimbanques* (multiple copies) and Gerard David's *The rest on the flight into Egypt*. She was keen on art postcards, carefully making her choices at gallery bookshops. Others came in bulk from Mary Martin Bookshop: 'I had just bought two packets [of Leonardo postcards] from Mary Martin. Was greatly impressed by the freshness of them. And the beautiful moulded quality of the mother and child. More a sculpture than a painting. It reminded me how little I have looked at his work.' She also had several postcard sets of Picasso and Goya published by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; a postcard book on the Basilica at Assisi and multiple copies of Raphael's *Portrait of Angelo Doni* 1506 used in *The gallery man* 1978. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's portrait *Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière* turns up in three works and the Louvre's Egyptian *Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti* in two. Rosalie ended up with hundreds of cards covering all periods and subjects from many cultures.³³



Australian National Gallery poster with Renior's *La loge*
Image by the author

In 1977 James Mollison gave Rosalie a lot of black and white photographs of Georges Braque's *Nu debout* 1908 while the debate raged about his thwarted plans to acquire it for the Australian National Gallery. She made several studies with the image, having cut out and retouched the figures as she had done with the cricket players, but in the end turned out just one completed work using them (*Down to the silver sea* 1977/81). Visiting blockbuster exhibitions were another source, especially once the gallery in Canberra opened in 1982. Rosalie had multiple copies of a poster with images of Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *La loge* (*The theatre box*) 1874, published in conjunction with *The Great Impressionists* exhibition at the national gallery in the winter of 1984, one of which she used in [*Homage with Renoir's La loge*] c. 1984–86.

Rosalie extended her practice of framing art works she admired to other images that caught her eye, including the merino rams in *Woolly wood* c. 1973, patterns on linoleum sheets in *Interior* 1989 and [*Vase of flowers*] 1992, images of the Lysaght lady in *Matriarch* 1983, and stencilled images on a hessian sack (*Pink kookaburras* 1984), wooden oil crates (*Shell 1* 1981, *Shell 2* c. 1981–84) and a tea chest ([*Homage: the cup*] c. 1993–95).

Newsprint

Printed newspaper was another material Rosalie had in quantity and she used it in five works between 1975 and 1984. This material was also one she described as 'elegant'. Explaining her use of newspaper in *Pale landscape* 1977, she said: 'I was terribly fond of newspaper because I think it is very elegant'. She was talking about newspapers that were printed only in black ink, and before the use of colour-printing technology became commonplace. She used them in wads (*Lying piece* c. 1975), in sheets threaded with feathers (*Pale landscape* 1977) and in many rows of thick sun-bleached squares (*Paper square* 1979–80 and *Harvest* 1981–82). Regarding the last, she told James Gleeson: 'what I have is newspaper cut into about six-inch squares in thick wads all aligned and I have nailed them ... over the whole surface, so you get rows and rows of paper squares, thick. Then I've weathered it so that the paper curls with the sun and goes yellow with the sun. And the whole thing takes on a sort of organic form. It's what the sun and the wind do to things. You see it doing it to trees and you see it

³³ 'Bought two packets': 28 Aug 1979 RG to MG; art books (some dismembered) in RG papers NLA: Luciano Berti *Fra Angelico* Thames and Hudson, 1968; Alberto Busignan *Piero della Francesca* Thames and Hudson, 1968 (at least four copies); Malcolm Warner *Portrait painting* Phaidon Press, 1979 (at least two copies); Valentin Bulkin (compiler) *Dionysus Masters of World Painting Series*, Aurora Art Publishers, Leningrad, 1982.

doing it to flowers and it takes on a living colour from the air. And I think (a) I like newspaper, (b) I like large plain statements, and (c) I like things that the weather has [changed].’ Rosalie tried two arrangements of stacked paper nailed to boards, one using squares and the other with somewhat larger rectangles (in photographs of her living room), before settling on squares as her format.³⁴

China shards, electrical insulators and glass

Rosalie worked with china shards and glass in various forms for about seven years, from 1971 to 1978. There are eight works with china shards, sometimes glued over another image such as a Norco cow, seven using broken glass (again, sometimes glued over a printed image), seven more with glass or ceramic insulators (whole or in part), seven with bottles and five with sheet glass. The glass or ceramics insulators were originally made to attach telephone, telegraph or powerlines to utility poles and transmission towers.

Rosalie was a china lover all her life and took great pleasure from her small collection of fine china teacups. When she was in Venice for the 1982 biennale, she ‘sat on the side of a canal where they were building the [Australian pavilion]. They were excavating, and they were digging up the most beautiful old china chips of Italian civilisation. I used to sit on the balustrade and place them all along (it).’ It was much the same with glass shards: talking about *Bottled glass* 1974 she said: ‘I made this piece for, I think, the first show I ever had. I was excited perhaps by the worn and broken glass. There was a lot of broken glass around Canberra those days before they started going hygienic and building trenches and burying all the good stuff. This is green glass. I collected purple, yellow and pink and green but the green was the only one that worked for me [in this piece].’ She liked the transparency of coloured glass and for this reason displayed works such as *[Glass insulators]* c. 1971, *Bottled glass* 1974 and *[Glass insulators in box]* 1974 against the light. She had a penchant for the rich blue bottles that held medicines and similar, and was happy to take home vintage bottles with a good colour or shape.³⁵

Linoleum

Linoleum was a very popular, inexpensive, cloth-based, water-resistant floor covering invented in England by Frederick Walton in 1855, although it was eventually superseded by other floor coverings, including a polyvinyl chloride (PVC) product also known (incorrectly) as linoleum. Rosalie used the PVC linoleum. ‘I’ve done quite a lot of things with lino, but you don’t see it much, it’s difficult to get. But people used to have it all over the place.’³⁶

The linoleum came in sheets and she found some of it in dumps: ‘I remember going out once to Captains Flat and finding a whole lot of very good quality linoleum that they’d apparently ripped up from the city hall or something, and I remember making one work. It just worked for me, that particular linoleum, but in most tips you see that’d be at the bottom of the ditch and burnt.’ She asked Toss about linoleum in Hobart: ‘By the way, can you really get that old fashioned lino in Hobart? Remember the grey with the pink and yellow rose I have stuck on planks over the fire place [*River banks* 1977]? That sort of stuff. I might like to buy some eventually — something subtly awful.’³⁷



[Glass insulators] c. 1971

Photograph from author’s archive



China shards were washed, sorted by colour and placed in old cigarette tins, and tins were also used to house images of early Italian renaissance paintings (detail of *Mosaic* 1976)

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

34 ‘Fond of newspaper’: 1985 School of Art; ‘what I have is newspaper’: 1980 Gleeson.

35 ‘Sat on the side of a canal’: 1998 Hughes; ‘I made this piece’: 1985 School of Art.

36 ‘I’ve done quite a lot’: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 56.

37 ‘I remember’: 1997 Feneley; ‘she asked Toss’: c. 10 Jun 1979 RG to TG. In her letter she mentioned buying some awful linoleum from Clark Rubber but she never used it.



Linoleum torn like shards of china
Rose pink 1992
 Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Rosalie made some fifty works with linoleum, with maybe fifteen different patterns. 'When I found linoleum first at a dump I found it was the nearest I could get to a drawing of anything, because if you can't draw you're slightly limited, and if you can't paint you're very limited. So you've just got to use what you are and what you've got.' She was attracted to the patterns and began isolating small motifs by tearing them out and gluing them to boards, much as she had used her china chips and glass shards in the mid-1970s. (She went on to adopt the tearing method for works made with Masonite board, such as *Clouds I, II and III* 1992 and *September* 1992.) In other works the linoleum was cut into regular squares or oblongs, which she glued to boards and sometimes mounted on blocks, and once she even used linoleum in its sheet form (*Cow pasture* 1992). It was a twenty-year love affair.³⁸

The first linoleum work was *River banks* 1977 where she glued torn pieces directly onto board. Rosalie described this linoleum as 'terrible stuff, really garish big flowers growing on pink'. She used the same linoleum in *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80, gluing it to plywood and cutting around the motif with her new jigsaw. Of *Blossom* 1982 it was a different story: she discarded the flowers and kept the background: 'I tore off the floral part and used the grey-white dotted background. To me — I always read things back to something I have seen — that is an old black almond tree breaking into white blossom.' Of the green and orange linoleum used in *First fruits* 1991, she said: 'That's green linoleum. Look at an apricot tree ... green leaves and apricots at various stages of ripening. That, to me, was straight out of nature.' As for the linoleum used in the *Sheep weather alert* 1992–93 series: 'Somebody gave me a lot of that lino. I couldn't stand the inferior red and green on it, which in theory were the colours, but the black and grey were good so I tore it by hand.' The works she made from linoleum had little to do with its domestic origins. As she said of *Step through*, 'Though linoleum is a household material this piece has nothing to do with domesticity. It is about outdoor places.' So were most of the others.³⁹

While a few of her linoleum pieces contain architectural allusions (*Interior* 1989, *Leadlight* 1991), many of Rosalie's titles allude to landforms, agriculture, gardening and the natural environment:

Landforms	Agriculture	Gardening	Natural environment
<i>River banks</i> 1977	<i>Cherry orchard</i> 1988	<i>Herb garden</i> 1982	<i>Blossom</i> 1982
<i>Shoreline</i> 1986	<i>First fruits</i> 1991	<i>Municipal gardens</i> 1983	<i>Deciduous</i> 1984
<i>Aerial view</i> 1988	<i>Lambing</i> 1991	<i>A rose is a rose</i> 1986/88	<i>Maculosa</i> 1988
<i>Archipelago</i> 1993	<i>Cow pasture</i> 1992	<i>Formal flowers</i> 1988	<i>Woodland</i> 1990
	<i>Sheep weather alert</i> 1992–93	<i>Maze</i> 1992	<i>Green piece</i> 1990–91
	<i>Vine</i> 1996	<i>Lily pond</i> 1993	<i>Letting go</i> 1991
		<i>Garlands</i> 1994	<i>Meadow-sweet</i> 1991
		<i>View of the garden</i> c. 1991/95	<i>Midsummer</i> 1992
		<i>Parterre</i> c. 1994/97	<i>Regeneration</i> 1994
			<i>Poplars</i> 1996/97

³⁸ 'When I found linoleum': 1999 Auckland AG.

³⁹ 'Terrible stuff', 'green and orange' and 'somebody gave me': Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 56, 58 and 60 (respectively); *Blossom*: 1985 School of Art; 'nothing to do with domesticity': 24 Feb 1987 R.G. to John McPhee (NGA file 75/1869-01).

Apiary and other boxes

Rosalie made about fifty works with boxes, the first in 1973 (not c. 1970 as Vici MacDonald wrote) and the last in 1984, but mostly in the period 1974 to 1978 (see also the later discussion on soft-drink boxes). She used many different sorts of boxes, a lot of them one-off finds. Boxes were used as a frame and gave stability. Sometimes the boxes were simply containers — for surveyors' pegs, balls, dolls or limpet shells. At other times the box effect was achieved using an old cupboard or other piece of carpentry. Sometimes Rosalie used only part of the box, removing one side from it to open it up as a theatre. In the homages Rosalie used part of a dismantled box to suggest a window. About half the boxed works used old apiary (beehive) boxes. She never made boxed works using the colourful painted soft-drink boxes.⁴⁰

The Biographical Note (p. 49) includes an account of how Rosalie began using old boxes she came across in the dumps to stabilise her assemblages, and the subsequent discovery of the abandoned apiary near Gundaroo in May 1975, which provided her with a new source. 'Had three trips out Gundaroo way, more bones. Then, miraculously, an abandoned apiary. Wooden crates, open-ended, piled under trees and mostly rotting. Faded pink, green, brown and white paint. Some unpainted in delectable shades of grey. Which to take?? I have 22.'⁴¹

Rosalie's first instinct was to use them all: 'first night I piled them nonchalantly in gallery between sitting-room and courtyard and was amazed at how good they looked ... Have now put them on terrace outside dining room. Not so good there. I think they need the confinement of the gallery and not so much sky. However, definitely a new look full of potential. The trick will be to get all the Covent Garden images (vegetables, not opera) subdued.' She did not go on with her multi-box trials then, although she returned to the idea in an uncatalogued installation in 1975 (using the boxes to hold enamelware and thistle stalks, see p. 166 illus. 093B) and again in *Habitation* 1984 and *Skewbald* 1993. She did not make her first works using the apiary boxes until early 1974. The tops of the apiary boxes sometimes came with (painted) metal sheets to help weatherproof them and these also found their way into Rosalie's work (as in *Turn of the tide* 1983 and *Grove* 1984).⁴²

Weathered wood

Rosalie used wood in many works, both as a component of the arrangement and as a background. It was always old, weathered, recycled wood, from dumps, building sites or recycling centres. Wood was special: unlike tin or aluminium 'it's nice to touch and it's a real living thing'. She had her favourites, notably surveyor's pegs, a dozen discarded pink-primed window frames, pink-primed carpenters' discards, fencing droppers and rails, and weathered plywood.⁴³

When Rosalie was using old wood she 'put the best side, or the most interesting side, and the more interesting shade of grey to the front'. She had a keen eye for grey wood: 'I can live with grey — I like bright colours but I always go back to the grey.' Her first wooden piece was *Cityscape* 1972, made with rows and rows of unpainted weathered wood blocks 'in various shades of good grey' found at Captains Flat. There were greys and greys: 'Somebody once heckled me and said, "Is there such a thing as a bad grey?" Certainly there is. That was a good grey patina on it.' In talking about *Graven image* 1982, she said: '[Grey] is a thing that I think everybody should

40 Incorrect dating of *Specimen box* 1975 (called *Moth box*): Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 25.

41 First use of boxes: 1982 North, also 1998 Hughes; 'abandoned apiary': 19 May 1973 RG to TG; Rosalie even bought some new, unpainted apiary boxes, which became bookcases and side tables, and she may have used a few in *Skewbald* 1993.

42 'First night I piled them': 16 May 1973 RG to MG, p. 41.

43 'Nice to touch': 1998 NGA.



'Good greys': *Graven image* 1982
Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne, and City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand



'Good greys' and pink: *Galahs rising* 1984
Image by Margund Sallowsky, courtesy of RMIT
University Art Collection, Melbourne

notice who does the Australian countryside ... Those are two good greys and actually they've both been exposed to the sun. And one of them was part of a butter box, the middle part, and the other part was a very good piece of grey [plywood] I found.⁴⁴

Rosalie used a lot of grey, weathered plywood in her works. The plywood came in many thicknesses, depending on its intended application. In some forms it is known as marine plywood, which usually comes in thicknesses varying from 3 to 18 millimetres. Despite its name (and popular misconception) marine plywood is not waterproof, although its glue lines are. Rosalie rarely used new plywood, other than to back works, although in a few cases in the mid-1990s she may have coated new plywood with white paint to use in some of her 'air' works (as she did with the new Masonite panels in *But mostly air* 1994–95). She also put paint on the browned-off rectangles in *Afternoon* 1996 and (possibly) the warped sheets in *Overland* 1996.

The grey woods she used included old fencing, used in five works between 1979 and 1995, and before that in her ikebana as early as 1962. 'I used to go out into the country and find beautifully greyed fence posts that didn't have holes drilled into them. I got some of the longer ones from a timber yard in Queanbeyan. They were very twisted — a carpenter's nightmare — so I took them all.' They ended up in *String of blue days* 1984.⁴⁵

The pink window frames were used in three works, and a couple of experiments, and pink-painted wood appears in another fourteen works (plus minor studies) made between 1974 until the late 1990s. In 1974 she was working with 'a great pile of (pink) builder's offcuts' on the dining room table. She loved 'building sites where there is pink wood — undercoat pink on discarded scraps of timber ... That pink undercoat on wood strikes me as a very beautiful colour.' She was talking about *Pink on blue* 1982–83. She must have had a stash of the wood then because it was a significant component in two other works made soon afterwards, *Galahs rising* 1984 and *Totemic* 1984, and she returned to the wood again in the mid-1990s in works such as *Pink perpendicular* 1996, *Rocky road I* 1993/96 and *Rocky road II* 1996.⁴⁶

44 'Put the best side': 1980 Gleeson; 'I can live with' and 'once heckled me': 1985 School of Art, also 1999 Auckland AG; *Cityscape*: 2 Jun, 16 Nov 1972 RG to MG, pp. 35, 39; *Graven image*: 1998 NGA.

45 'Beautifully greyed fence posts': 1996 Davidson, pp. 14–15. Re early use of fence posts, RG inscribed a 1962 image saying the fence post came from Lake George; there are also references in press reports by visitors to the house at Pearce in the *Canberra Times* 13 Nov 1968 and 17 Apr 1970, p. 10.

46 'Pink builder's offcuts': 1982 North; 'loved building sites': 1998 NGA.

Surveyor's pegs, either unpainted or daubed with yellow, white, red, blue or black paint, caught Rosalie's eye and the developing suburbs on the outskirts of Canberra were a happy hunting ground. The pegs had shape and colour, and turn up whole or in part in eleven works made between 1973 and 1989. 'I don't actually steal these surveyor's things. I found a whole pile of them in a mud pit over in Erindale where the grass had grown over and they'd obviously been left. But I dug, at some pain to myself, a whole lot of the things with my bare hands out of the mud.' She cut the black points off — 'they are very like the clouds of starlings' — fixed them to parrot heads and used some in *City birds* 1981. The pegs were 'such a good white and grey'. The first work with surveyors' pegs actually used yellow pegs — another favourite colour of Rosalie's: this was *Surveyor's pegs* 1973, the first of her works to be exhibited. About a year later she experimented with a mass of grey peg tips in a wire-mesh safe (photographed in early 1975) but later dismantled that piece.⁴⁷

Builders' or plywood formboard

The term 'formboard' in this catalogue refers to thick plywood coated with a synthetic (phenolic surface) film and used to contain poured concrete, ensuring the finished product has a smooth surface. The film is usually coloured black or brown and the coated product is sometimes referred to as FSC-coated plywood. Sometimes the discards Rosalie found were in sheets, but frequently there were pieces cut into eccentric shapes to accommodate columns or other building features.

FSC-coated formboard first turns up in *Pet sheep* 1976, where it is used as a base and a background in a box-like construction, but otherwise Rosalie did not begin to make serious use of shaped formboard as a design element until *High country [1]* 1986 and *Shoreline* 1986. She wrote in February 1987 about the discovery of an early source of FSC-coated formboard. 'My dining room floor is covered with builder's formboard in various shades of brown, dull purple, and tan. I made a killing at a new building site opposite National Library. Stepped daintily down to the manager's office in my Carla Zampatti linen and my social shoes and asked if I might have any spare bits. So now I know "John" who says I can cope with anyone hustling me by mentioning his name. I returned next day in my old pants and took a LOT. Enough??? Plenty to go on with anyway! I wonder that no other artist is using it. I keep scrubbing concrete off it and laying it all over the floor until such time as it tells me what it wants to become.'⁴⁸

Between 1986 and 1995 Rosalie used FSC-coated formboard to make fourteen works having a pictorial element in them suggestive of landscapes, and ranging in size from modest (*High country [1]* 1986, *Shoreline* 1986) to expansive (*Skylark* 1994–95, *Suddenly the lake* 1995). In all these works the formboard was combined with other types of wood, galvanised iron and Masonite board. However, in her *Earth* 1999 installation Rosalie restricted her palette to FSC-coated formboard alone, cut in squares and rectangles and glued to base boards. The raw material had been accumulating outside her studio and covered almost the whole of the courtyard for several years, where she watched it as the light of day changed and talked about the way the colours differed when wet or dry. The stockpile represented unfinished business; the completed work was a final, sombre meditation on the colours of the formboard.



'Starlings' in a cage c. 1976 (dismantled and not catalogued)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Formboard and cut-up cable reels spread all over the courtyard and up the wall, August 1996

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

47 'I don't actually steal': 1982 North; 'good white and grey': 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60, see also 2 Mar 1973 RG to TG about collecting at Kambah.

48 'My dining room floor': c. Feb 1987 RG to TG; the building site was the Questacon National Science and Technology Centre.

Galvanised iron

Rosalie used galvanised iron — either sheet or corrugated — in forty works between 1973/74 and 1998, usually as a compositional element but sometimes as a background. About thirty works used corrugated iron, and the remainder used galvanised iron sheeting. The works included boxed assemblages, floor pieces, single and multi-panel wall pieces, and two installations. Some of the pieces had been painted and used as the walls or roofs of sheds or similar buildings. Two pieces had been used as waterproofing on apiary boxes (*Turn of the tide* 1983 and *Grove* 1984) and the curved iron in *Swell* 1984 had been part of a water tank.

She was very keen on corrugated iron and thought it was very Australian and, once again, elegant. 'It hits the spot for me because I think it's indigenous to the country. It's a very honest material. To me it's got that Australian elegance I talk about that is straight from Corinthian pillars ... It's very elegant.' She came across a cowshed at Gundaroo which had 'been there since the year dot. And the woman [who] had bought the hobby farm painted it once, a sort of battleship grey or something, and it had faded and it was standing in the ground. It was absolutely lyrical.' Rosalie liked the 'vitality' of good corrugated iron, which was 'marvellous'. Another attraction was the Lysaght lady (previously discussed).⁴⁹

Collecting taught her that there were very different qualities of iron. The four pieces of iron in *Country air* 1977 had 'that very heavy quality and it had a very good sort of greeny painted tinge to it that gave it a sort of elegance and interest. The ordinary run of corrugated iron does not have [that superior quality].' Those four pieces 'came to be the real thing. It was beautiful tin. It was beautiful.' She took the two pieces of water tank used in *Swell* 1984 because they had 'an especially good bloom'. Ben would recall 'accompanying Rosalie on foraging expeditions, turning over hundreds of sheets to assess their merits. She looked at every individual sheet.' Good stuff was hard to find: 'you have to be very selective when you are picking up tin because there are pieces that do it and pieces that don't.' It was a case of: 'here a piece, there a piece. But for the amount of time I put into it, there wasn't all that much. But it collects over the years.' Many years might pass before Rosalie used her finds. It was almost twenty years before she found a satisfactory use for the triangular-shaped iron in *Rose red city* 2, 5 and 8 of 1992 and 1993 (there are photographs of it used with a window frame in about 1975, much as she did with *Pink window* 1975), and her use of wavy iron in *Rose red city* 10 1993 echoes the use of similar iron in *New wave* 1986.⁵⁰



Corrugated iron in the courtyard; note the wire pieces hanging on the wall

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne from author's archive

The iron was presented as found: she learnt that the secret was 'to choose the right piece of tin and leave it alone. Do minimal things with it. Let it have its own personality. And it does. I think it's wonderful.' Of the iron in *Rose red city* 1991–93 Rosalie wrote: 'The iron is screwed to timber backing but otherwise presented as found. I will spray small patches of rust sometimes with a car engine preservative, clip off an awkward corner or scrub things down but I really present the naked material.'⁵¹

When it came to creating a work with the iron, Rosalie 'wanted to make it large in people's imagination. Let them see the other thing about corrugated iron.' She had strong views on how to display her corrugated iron works. 'I still think that if you put corrugated iron down in a place that has good rugs, good furniture, good

⁴⁹ 'It hits the spot', 'cowshed' and 'vitality': 1998 Hughes, also 1998 NGA.

⁵⁰ 'Heavy quality': 1980 Gleeson; 'the real thing': 1982 North; 'especially good bloom': 1998 NGA; 'accompanying Rosalie': mid-2000 BG with Mary Eagle, pers. comm.; 'you have to be very selective': 1990 Ross; 'here a piece': 1998 Hughes, similar in 1998 NGA.

⁵¹ 'Wanted to make it large' and 'choose the right piece': 1998 Hughes; 'presented as found': 7 May 1993 RG to Tineke Fijn (who had written asking about her 'response to corrugated iron') (RG papers NLA).

everything then you're winning. If you put it down with other corrugated iron — junk, it can look like that ... If you put it down in poor surroundings you don't get the vitality out of it, and I think that anyone who is game enough to introduce corrugated iron into their house and give it space they can have wonderful vitality.⁵²

There were also other dangers for one who turned over sheets of iron to assess their merits: 'Everyone now tells me that I have been in the worst tiger snake country in the state — that the CSIRO goes there to milk venom and that when they want to lay traps for the snakes they put down sheets of corrugated iron for the snakes to crawl under'. This was on the edges of Lake George where Rosalie also collected feathers.⁵³

Soft-drink boxes

In the course of her career Rosalie made about 130 works in which wood from dismantled soft-drink boxes was the sole or major component of the work. They range in size from some of the biggest pieces she made to the most intimate, and account for about twenty per cent of her total production. For many years Rosalie got a lot of her soft-drink boxes from the Schweppes depot in Queanbeyan. The momentous first visit to the depot took place in July 1978 (see p. 89). While she was careful to make friends with the manager and obtain his permission to help herself to the waste pile, she found the yardman less willing to accommodate her because it was his job to burn the boxes. As time went on Schweppes gradually replaced the wooden boxes with plastic containers, which were of no interest to Rosalie: 'The last ones they had were yellow Schweppes boxes, which I used in an exhibition in Adelaide [in 1996].'⁵⁴

Writing shortly after her first visit to the factory, Rosalie described the outcome: 'At the moment the house is flooded with dismantled drink boxes ... it is like being washed over by a great rainbow'. Rosalie explored the new medium for the rest of 1978: 'Am trying to burst into new larger works with an eye to Pinacotheca next year ... Have done several pieces with unbroken wood — more like striped flags. Torn wood is something else. And I have a lot of coloured wood. Nice to have some clear space to try it out.' Two weeks later she wrote: 'I have been doing more moving about of my great stock of coloured wood ... I work under the wisteria [over the terrace outside her dining room] and think big'. This was five years before she got a studio.⁵⁵

By February 1979 she had finished her first piece (*March past* 1978–79). It took a lot of work: 'I had to unpick 160 boards with hammer and hacksaw to do it — not to mention paying a second visit to Queanbeyan drinks factory to get more boxes.' On that visit Rosalie 'spotted a line in blue Sydney boxes on discard heap, and can see I am in business again'. In March 1980 she was there again, on consecutive days, when she spent 'the morning getting a car load ... and reefed in a whole lot of white boxes for a new project'.⁵⁶

52 'I still think': 1999 Auckland AG (speaking about *White garden* 1995).

53 'Tiger snake country': 30 Mar 1977 RG to MG, p. 45. Rosemary Dobson remembered Rosalie wearing a bell attached to her belt to warn snakes of her presence (Rosemary Dobson 2004).

54 'The yardman' and 'plastic containers': 1998 Hughes; 'the last ones they had': 1996 Davidson, see also Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34.

55 'At the moment': 15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55; 'am trying to burst': 26 Dec 1978 RG to MG, p. 57; 'I have been doing': 12 Jan 1979 RG to MG, p. 57. There are several 1978 photographs showing RG's initial experiments with the boards from the soft-drink crates.

56 *March past*: Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 57; 'I had to unpick' and 'spotted a line': Feb 1979 RG to TG; 'white boxes': mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG.



Soft-drink box stacks

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



Rosalie with her stockpile of soft-drink boxes

Photograph by Richard Briggs/Fairfax Syndication (from the *Canberra Times* 13 June 1994)

Breaking the boxes up was hard, and the job was eventually delegated to studio assistants (but not until the late 1980s). 'What you find is you get broken boxes and you get one-of-a-kind boxes and what you have to do, hour after hour with a hacksaw, is cut them apart. Though they are wrecked they are very well made when it comes to hacksawing them.' Rosalie used all parts of the boxes: the individual boards, which she used whole, split or sawn, the ends, the broken boards and the sawn-off trimmings which 'were too good to waste'. She also saved the nails, their flat heads coloured with the paint used on the boxes ([*Nail study A*] and [*Nail study B*] c. 1979–80).⁵⁷

The first work used whole boards (*March past* 1978–79) but, even then, she also experimented with the jagged ends of boards, which found their way into *Parrot country* 1980, and slivers of broken boards, which were used as tail feathers in boxes with parrot cut-outs, such as *Parrots* 1980, *Side show parrots* 1981 and *City birds* 1981. She used small, regular sawn slivers of boards in *Reconstruction* 1980–81 and *Eighty-nine parrots* 1981. Towards the end of 1982 or early 1983 she experimented with split boards, making a small panel out of material left over from the boxes she had used for *Scrub country* 1981–82: this was the precursor for *Celebration* 1983 (made mid-year). As she exhausted the possibilities of using whole boards, Rosalie began to make more extensive use of split boards, beginning with *Daffodils* 1986 and, more so, *Prescribed text* 1986. Sometimes she used a tomahawk to split boards and at others a light bandsaw, but the game changed when she acquired a tradesman's bandsaw in November 1988 and she could easily slice the boards into whatever widths she wanted. *The marriage feast* 1988–89 and *Monaro* 1988–89 were two early products of this new tool.

The most memorable board works are arguably the ones made from yellow Schweppes boxes. There are yellow boards in works made as early as 1980 (*Parrot country* 1980), but it was not until 1985 that Rosalie made the first work using only yellow boards (*Honey flow* 1985). Then or shortly afterwards Rosalie must have discovered a big cache of the Schweppes boxes, enough to make *Plenty* 1986 (2.46 × 4.305 metres), with enough left over to make (in order) *Orchard*, *Prescribed text* and *Daffodils* (all 1986). Thereafter, wood sourced from Schweppes boxes dominated Rosalie's output of soft-drink box pieces (though not exclusively). Even the smallest offcuts were saved and stored, sorted by size and colour and drawn on as inspiration moved her. Rosalie began to exploit both the textures she could create with her small pieces, as in *Fragmentation [I]* 1991, and the black stencilled lettering on the boards, as in *Ledger* 1992, a lesson she took from *Monaro* 1988–89 and her road

⁵⁷ 'What you find': 1985 School of Art (talking about *Celebration* 1983); 'too good to waste': 1997 Feneley (talking about *Monaro* 1988–89).

sign works. She used most of her remaining stock of yellow wood over the summer of 1998–99 to make *Great blond paddocks* 1998–99, though when she died she left behind on her workbench two smaller, unfinished arrangements made with small, similar-sized trimmings from earlier works.⁵⁸

The studio contents in 1999 included boards from 23 brands of soft-drink boxes, reminders of the days when each country town of any respectable size had its own drink bottler and distributor. Some were the product of a trip to the Hopes Cordial depot at Goulburn with Peter Vandermark in 1990 (described in the essay *Rosalie's Country* in this catalogue). The National Gallery of Australia has a sample of each board in its study collection.⁵⁹

Brands of soft-drink boxes used by Rosalie in her artworks		
Blue Bow (Tooth's)	Hopes Cordials	Schweppes
Boorowa	Jewel	Sharpe Bros
Coca Cola	Knipes	Sheekey's Wagga
Cosmo	Loy's	Shelley & Sons Sydney
Cottee's	Miranda	Swing
Crystal	Newings	Tarax
Dale's	Opal	Woodroffe's
Goulburn Cordials	Pepsi	

Road signs

Rosalie made 108 works (including four studies) using plywood reflective road signs, and five more (including one study) made from hand-painted roadside signs advertising goods for sale. Before she could do anything with the road signs, she had to get them out of the metal frames: 'it's an agony to get them out: it kills you ... And then you [have to] cut them up.' Rosalie used both the retroreflective yellow and the reflective and non-reflective red signs. Some included arrows and a few red ones included figures warning that workmen were on the road. She never used metal signs because she did not like the material and, apart from anything else, they were too hard to cut up.⁶⁰

The first road signs she took home were, fortuitously, already cut up. They came from a roadside dump near Collector: 'Somebody had cut them into squares and they were all lying face downwards in the mud. Some of them had that white slash of paint on. Don't know what it was — very random. That is as many as I could get.' Once she began to use the signs in her work she would scour the highways for abandoned signs, and she had a list of contacts and phone numbers for the men in charge of the road maintenance depots between Goulburn in the north, Yass to the west and Cooma in the south. She resisted taking signs that were in use — it was a safety issue after all, tempted though she was occasionally: 'I find it very hard when I am driving — I see another two letters I could have had'. In 1995 she found a huge pile at Revolve, the recycling depot

58 Early in 1988, writing for the Biennale of Sydney catalogue, Mary Eagle asked Rosalie for the order in which she produced the yellow wood works. The order she recorded was: 1. *Plenty* 1986 (afterwards using the spare bits for works marked X), 2. *Orchard* 1986 (X), 3. *Prescribed text* 1986 (X), 4. *Daffodils* 1986 (X), 5. *Grasslands [1]* 1987, 6. *Thirty two* 1987, 7. unnamed work, 8. *Stubble field* 1988. The unnamed work was either *Golden wedge* 1987 or *Roadside* 1987 (small enough to hang over the fireplace). The list is incomplete, omitting *Honey flow* 1985, *Poor man's orange* 1987 and either *Golden wedge* 1987 or *Roadside* 1987.

59 'Cordial depot at Goulburn': Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 23.

60 'It's an agony': 1995 Topliss.



Road sign works on the studio wall, 16 March 1998 (and the bandsaw on the right). From left to right, top row, *Pentimento* 1997, *Cloud cuckoo land* 1998, *Medusa* 1998, *Ship's log* 1996/98 (soft-drink box wood), and *Canary bird* 1996, and below, *Shark* 1998, *Golden bamboo* 1997, *Reserve* 1997 above *Siesta* 1997 and *Please drive slowly* 1996. Other works can be identified in the stacks on the floor

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

in south Canberra. Her Sydney gallerists, Roslyn and Tony Oxley, would look out for discarded signs for her, and once her son Toss in Hobart sent her some. It got harder to get supplies as the wooden ones — 'a sound, sweet material' — were replaced with aluminium ones.⁶¹

The first yellow road sign work was *Highway code* 1985 followed by *Streetwise* 1986; the first red one was *Persimmon* 1986–87. 'I have been sawing up yellow road signs all day in case I want to show a group in Oct [1986 at Pinacotheca]. It is going to be this show or never to use up all that material. Have some orange too — unbelievably ugly.' Depending on supplies, Rosalie worked with road signs over fifteen years, using the last of her stock to make *Metropolis* 1999, her very last work and the only one to incorporate whole signs.⁶²

Rosalie thought road signs were 'pretty hideous when you see them in the flesh' and said that she 'would never have chosen in cold blood to use [them] ... I brought them home for the grandchildren to play with ... I kept some out in the courtyard and one day the rain washed down and they came up a glory.' It was the flash, the glint that did it for her. 'It took me on my blind side.' She spoke about the shine in *Highway code* 1985, then hanging in her house: 'This shines so that when you see it on the wall of a house and you're standing with the light behind you, it comes up like that. Electric. Liquid gold really. And only sometimes when the light comes through the window do you get it. But you certainly get it.' When it came to hanging a retroreflective road sign work Rosalie 'always liked the glint to be brought out. I don't want it to be dramatically lit, but I do want it to sometimes flash at you, as road signs do, and then go sullen, then flash, like a living thing.' But they still had to read without the retroreflective shine.⁶³

61 'Dump near Collector': 1985 School of Art (talking about *Highway code* 1985), see also 1995 Topliss, 1998 Hughes and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 35; 'I find it very hard': 1985 School of Art; 'Revolve': 1995 Topliss; 'harder to get supplies': 1998 Hughes.

62 'I have been sawing': [Sep] 1986 RG to TG. Early in 1988, Mary Eagle asked Rosalie for the order in which she produced the reflective road sign works: 1. *Pineapple pieces* 1985 and *Highway code* 1985, 2. *Shoreline* 1986 (incorporating pieces of retroreflective material), 3. *Streetwise* 1986, 4. *Persimmon* 1986–87, 5. *Flash art* 1987, 6. *Tiger tiger* 1987, 7. *Wind change* 1988, 8. *Court* 1988 (Mary Eagle 2007, p. 475, footnote 1). Regarding whole road signs, two works incorporate small, round handheld signs — *Red* 1992 (a 'stop' sign) and *Amber* 1992 (a 'slow').

63 'Hideous' and 'on my blind side': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 35 and 1997 Ross; 'would never have chosen': 1995 Topliss and 1988 Ewen McDonald; *Highway code*: 1998 NGA; 'always liked the glint': 1988 Ewen McDonald, see also 1997 Ross.

Rosalie also came to recognise something else about the road signs: they ‘say something of the country they came from. I think you do get a reflection of the sort of country you’ve become familiarised with.’ She told Ewen McDonald: ‘I go along through the landscape and I do indeed see a tiger crouching in the grass flashing at me’. The tiger reference is to *Tiger tiger* 1987: ‘two square heads, the right colours and the actual reflective road signs out in the grass, like the Australian tiger, crouching’, a work which took its name from William Blake’s poem ‘The tyger’.⁶⁴

As with her other materials, Rosalie explored every aspect of her road signs. In works in which whole words survived, the meaning of the words is largely irrelevant, because it was the ‘feel’ of the whole that mattered, although there were a few exceptions, as in *Sweet lovers* 1990, *Sweet sorrow* 1990 and *Please drive slowly* 1996 (with word fragments). On the other hand, it was the indecipherable pattern of the cut-up words that prompted the titles of *Highway code* 1985, *Conundrum* 1989–90 and *News break* 1994. As she did with her Schweppes boxes, Rosalie looked at the stencilled black lettering, and extracted all sorts of shapes and patterns from it (such that some such works have been likened to concrete poetry).⁶⁵ This was particularly noticeable in the mid-to-late 1990s, in works which made use of a single, recurring shape, as in *Loopholes* 1995, *Downbeat* 1997, *Medusa* 1998 and *Birdsong* 1999. Nor did the shapes on signs escape her attention, whether the black arrow that became the menacing *Shark* 1998 or the solid black balls that she used in the red *Float off* 1993. Not every work had lettering or shapes: some were monochromatic, including yellow works such as *Dandelion* 1990, *Fool’s gold* 1992 and *Grasslands II* 1998, and red ones such as *Love apples* 1992.

Rosalie played with the different reflectivities of the cut squares, some very bright, others with little or none, and sometimes used combinations of them in her works. She took to the surfaces of her signs, scraping the lettering and the retroreflective coating back to a ghost of the original: the title of *Pentimento* 1997 captures this precisely, and she described works such as *Wind change* 1988 and *Court* 1988 as ‘the rubbed ones’.⁶⁶ Sometimes she combined pieces of road sign with other materials, the unexpected glimmer in a complex assemblage imparting a frisson that brought an extra dimension to the work (as in *Gaudy night* 1992, *Skylight* 1993 and *Top of the morning* 1993–94). The reflective shine inspired the titles of works such as *Flash art* 1987, *All that glisters* 1989, *Fool’s gold* 1992, *Danegeld* 1995 and *Lasseter’s reef* 1993/1996–97. And she honoured the origins of her material in titles such as *Highway code* 1985 (again), *Streetwise* 1986, *Through road* 1990–91, *Traffic snarl* 1998 and *Directives* 1999. But who knows what alchemy of mind and matter prompted the titles of *Plainsong* 1988, *Vintage* 1990, *Canary bird* 1996, *Siesta* 1997, *Cloud cuckoo land* 1998 and others?

Rosalie’s eye was also caught by hand-painted signs used at roadside stalls to advertise goods for sale, from which she made four works and a study: *Legend* 1988, *Painted words* 1988, *Apricot letters* 1990, *Cockatoos* 1991 and *[Study with painted road signs A & B]* c. 1990–98. *Legend* was made from a sign selling cars, *Painted words* from a sign selling cherries and other fruit, and *Apricot letters* had sold peaches. She liked the elegance of the script and might have made more if she had had the material. ‘I was very taken with the elegance of lettering ... And so you cut out all the pieces that are applicable. It takes a long time ... to get out all the pieces that are going to say anything good, and then place them together in the right thing. But in the end you get quite an elegant looking script. I made several of those but not very many people seem to throw out road signs.’ Some of the script in *Cockatoos* 1991 is in Rosalie’s hand. *Honeybunch* 1993 and *Ensign* 1995 were made using black and white road signs, and also had lettering in Rosalie’s hand. Rosalie had experimented with calligraphy in *['Bird' studies]* c. 1991 when she painted the word ‘BIRD’ on boards.⁶⁷

64 ‘Something of the country’: 1998 NGA; ‘tiger’: Ewen McDonald ‘There are only lovers’ 1990, p. 12; ‘two square heads’: 1997 Feneley.

65 ‘Concrete poetry’: Gregory O’Brien ‘Plain air/plain song’ 2004, pp. 42–45.

66 ‘The rubbed ones’: 1988 RG with ME (pers. comm). For an excellent discussion on RG’s use of road signs see Mary Eagle 2007.

67 ‘Elegance of lettering’: 1998 NGA; *Cockatoos*: 1999 Auckland AG. Some of the road sign squares in *Honeybunch* 1993 are also scraped back.



Thermals 1998 (detail)
Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



Rose hips 1998 (detail)
Image from author's archive



Gay Gordons 1996 (detail)
Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



White city 1993–94 (detail)
Image courtesy of the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra

Cable reels

In 1993 Rosalie discovered another new material — the thick coarse hardwood used in cable reels, the large cotton-reel-like constructions around which electrical cables, copper wire and even barbed wire were wound. 'Some of them are double, some of them are single. You can get lovely wood off them that has been all weathered, if you're lucky.' The reels came in various sizes, and Rosalie was selective: 'The small ones are too thin, tinny. You've got to use strong material to get your message across. And the very thick ones are too heavy, unless you slice them in half, which you can do with a lot of labour.' It was a tough job, sometimes needing wood-splitting wedges, sledgehammers and pinch-bars. All metal labels were removed and retained: Rosalie had a collection of 75 labels, mostly for 'Waratah'-brand barbed wires of different kinds. Many of the reels came from the recycling centre, but in mid-1998 Rosalie's Sydney gallery purchased 22 reels on her behalf and shipped them to her.⁶⁸

The reels had other attractions. They were painted, often had numbers and letters stencilled or stamped on them and sometimes carried handwritten inscriptions. The first reels Rosalie worked with were painted white, with black and red-orange markings. 'Sometimes you get a good grubby white ... the grubbiness is part of it.' Rosalie spoke about almost having an all-white show in 1994 in which works from the reels would have played a big role: 'I was really turned on by white; white really does turn me on'. She also liked the black reels and pinky-red ones, and the egg-yolk yellow of the ones used in *Orangery* 1998 reminded her of the gym tunic she wore at school, but she turned down the blue ones she saw at Revolve, even though they had a lot of them.⁶⁹

Rosalie made 69 works from the cable reels (including nine studies). Mostly she cut the wood from the reels into fairly small pieces, which might be squares, rectangles or triangles. She enjoyed finding ways to use the enticing curves and holes in the reel wood: curves feature in eleven and the circular holes in another six. 'They make nice shapes', which she would exploit in her compositions (such as *Kaleidoscope* 1994, *Acanthus* 1995 and *Gay Gordons* 1996). And of their use in *But mostly air* 1994–95 she said: 'I was cutting up cable [drums] — I made a lot of white pieces — and those were the pieces left over and I sort of tossed them aside. The mouth of the bird, the circle, is in the middle of it, you see, and to me it was what happened when you get a flock of cockatoos and you frighten them and up they go screaming, screaming ... I did them for fun.'⁷⁰

Epilogue

By mid-1999, in a burst of creativity, Rosalie had used up all her stocks of yellow soft-drink boxes, reflective road signs and FSC-coated formboard to make *Great blond paddocks*, *Metropolis* and the *Earth* panels, respectively. In July 1999 she visited New Zealand to talk at the Auckland Art Gallery and when she returned her health was such that all she could do was supervise the preparation of works for her forthcoming solo show at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery in Sydney. She did not see the show because she was ill, made nothing more and died on 23 October 1999. Despite her efforts earlier in the year, there was still a vast accumulation of materials in the studio and the sheltered spaces outside. There was an initial cull in 2000, but in the aftermath of the 2003 bushfires that burnt the nearby suburbs and Mount Stromlo, her remaining stockpiles were seen as a real fire risk, so the family got rid of almost everything else. What little remained was disposed of when the house was sold in 2011.

68 'Some of them are double': 1998 NGA; 'the small ones are too thin': 1998 Hughes (although she used thin reels for their shape and colour to make *Airborne 1* and *Airborne 2* 1993); 'sometimes needing': Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 12; 'Sydney gallery purchased': receipt dated 31 Jul 1998 and statement of account dated 12 Nov 1998 (RG papers NLA); Ian North (1999, p. 16) has suggested that *Orangery* 1998 was one work made from the reels.

69 'Sometimes you get': 1998 NGA; 'all-white show': 1995 Topliss; 'egg-yolk yellow': see catalogue entry on *Orangery* 1998; 'blue ones': 1998 NGA.

70 'They make nice shapes' and 'I was cutting up': 1995 Topliss.



FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS, THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AND IKEBANA

Flower arrangements and arrangements of dried materials

These remarks on Rosalie's interest in flower arranging, the Academy of Science installations and ikebana extend the discussion on these topics in the Biographical Note and should be read with those remarks in mind (see pp. 32–33, 36–40 and 44–45).

Rosalie's interest in flowers and gardening was a product of her childhood in a household of like-minded women. It was an interest she took with her to Mount Stromlo, where she quickly established flowerbeds close to the house, gradually spreading further afield as her interest grew and time allowed. She liked to have fresh flowers in the house — things to feed the eye — and throughout her married life there was rarely a time when she did not have an informal arrangement of flowers at hand: flowers from her garden, that is, not purchased, although in winter she would sometimes buy a potted cyclamen to brighten the dining table or sitting room. In 1953 a neighbour on the mountain persuaded Rosalie to enter flower arrangements in the Horticultural Society of Canberra's Spring Flower Show and she won a second prize with a bowl of home-grown polyanthus. Rosalie continued to enter the society's competitions on a fairly regular basis for the next ten years, with a growing measure of success, and sometimes she participated in similar shows run by others, making quite a name for herself.

There are very few photographs of Rosalie's early flower arrangements, although the competition results for the Horticultural Society of Canberra's exhibitions give an indication — albeit incomplete — of her interests. Initially, for reasons of taste as well as the limited variety of flowers in her garden, she favoured modest arrangements, such as her simple arrangements for the bedside and breakfast tables. Gardening on Mount Stromlo was challenging — the soil was poor and it wasn't easy to escape the elements on the exposed mountainside. So it wasn't a big step for Rosalie to start using in her arrangements the material that she brought

The photograph of Rosalie at Anstey Street taken to illustrate an article on ikebana in Australia published in the Japanese press in 1969

Image courtesy of the National Archives of Australia (A1501, A9510)

home from her walks on the mountain, in the paddocks and by the river. She taught herself how to preserve the grasses and leaf forms that attracted her, and by the late 1950s she was using bold mixtures of flowers, grasses, driftwood and other materials in her arrangements for the flower shows, as well as making arrangements just with dried materials, which attracted a lot of interest at the time. In September and November 1958 she had her first wins with 'a modern arrangement with driftwood' (first and second place in November). Her September arrangement was the outstanding exhibit in the decorative section.¹

One of Rosalie's great strengths was in sections calling for more imaginative arrangements, rather than the more traditional sections such as 'arrangement for a hallway'. In about 1958 she showed a work (at a Country Women's Association show) called 'Cotter Road': named after the road that went past the foot of Mount Stromlo to the Cotter River, the work was made with rocks, dried grasses and an animal skull on a sheet of copper and it had a blue denim background. Her work 'Small arrangement of contrasts' (April 1961) included a sheep's skull with roses (its theme was life and death); her piece 'Representing a manufacturing industry' (no details) was champion exhibit November 1961; a year later, and in the same section, her 'Blue metal industry' won second prize (to 'Perfume'). Her works on the themes of 'A touch of Midas' (March 1962) and 'Forest fire' (champion exhibit March 1964) were both winners. She also had success in sections calling for an 'Oriental influence' (second place September 1961), and her 'Farewell to winter Oriental style' was declared champion exhibit in September 1964. That was Rosalie's last competition.

Her success on the show bench and skills as a lecturer led to many invitations to give demonstrations for women's groups and charitable organisations running fundraising events, duly reported in the local press. In 1960 she was making dried arrangements for sale by the Pan Pacific and South East Asian Women's Association. When the YWCA ran a course in flower arranging in 1962, Rosalie was invited to do a session on 'Party pieces', which included 'a sophisticated arrangement made of plastic flowers, dried leaves and seed pods sprayed in gold'. She gave Dame Patti Menzies private lessons in dried arrangements, and for many years the panelled private dining room at University House housed one of her large arrangements. Another decorated the lobby of the nurses' home at Canberra Hospital.²

¹ The archives of the Horticultural Society of Canberra (see Bibliography) contain show schedules and reports of the results. Show results were published in the *Canberra Times* until the mid-1960s.

² *Canberra Times* 11 Oct 1962, p. 5. The gold spray echoes Rosalie's use of kurrajong seed pods which she painted yellow and used to decorate her wartime Christmas trees. They also owed something to the English arranger, Constance Spry: Rosalie had read about her use of gold-painted material in arrangements done for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

Flower arrangements



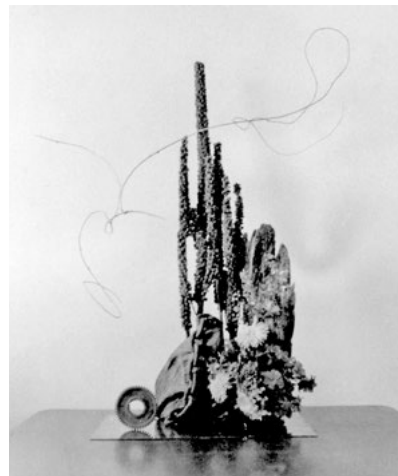
Modern arrangement with driftwood, September 1960. 'Mrs. Gascoigne's modern arrangement with driftwood was the outstanding exhibit in the decorative section. It was an excellent arrangement, simple in form but with a definite line. The driftwood was well chosen and pebbles were selected carefully for colour, and arranged to form the base of the whole design' (*Canberra Times* 29 Sep 1960)
Image from author's archive



Small arrangement of contrasts, 'Life and death', exhibited 22 April 1961. Rosalie sent a photo of the work to her mother, inscribed 'Can you bear this. Study of contrasts. Light-Dark, Rough-Smooth etc. Mine was Life-Death. Pink rose, mignonette and white & pink viburnum on very pretty grey stone. Skull nice & clean & white — if that makes it more palatable!'
Image from author's archive



Arrangement with grasses and unidentified flowers, 1962. The label indicates that the arrangement was by Rosalie Gascoigne of the Canberra Garden Club (formed earlier that year, with Rosalie one of the committee members) (*Canberra Times* 2 Aug 1962)
Image from author's archive



Arrangement c. 1960-62, with a copper sheet as base and incorporating a river stone, weathered wood, wisteria tendril, a few daisy-like flowers, a rusty cog wheel and some metal chain. The tall plant material is dried seed heads of verbascum
Image from author's archive



Arrangement with wood, leaves and pomegranates, c. 1962
Image from author's archive



'Forest fire' 1964. Champion exhibit at the Autumn Flower Show, which was illustrated in the *Canberra Times* 16 March 1964, p. 10. Note the use of a pair of triangular Ikebana vases to contain the arrangement
Image from author's archive

Dried arrangements

The first three images are noteworthy as early examples of Rosalie arranging a single material, found in the paddocks, in such a way as to highlight its shape and texture — bringing an innate sculptural sensibility to the otherwise very domestic tradition of flower arranging. As discussed in the Biographical Note, artists and sculptors of the period, including Margel Hinder, had also looked at and taken on board the natural world in their own endeavours. Ten years later, Rosalie's focus on the visual qualities of her materials would become a notable feature of her late ikebana practice and a key driver of her art, which would include the use of the thistles she first used in the late 1950s and early 1960s.



Rosalie with arrangement of blue devil (Carl Plate watercolour on wall), c. 1960
Image from author's archive



Arrangement with thistle heads, c. 1961
Image from author's archive



Arrangement of saffron thistle heads, c. 1961; photograph inscribed 'golden'
Image from author's archive



Dried arrangement, 1961. The photograph is inscribed verso 'BIG The lot' because of the great variety of dried material incorporated in the arrangement. It was grand pieces such as this that Rosalie installed at the nurses' home and in University House
Image from author's archive



Dried arrangement, 1961. The inscription on this photograph says it was done for a Horticultural Society show and also exhibited in the Academy of Science. The arrangement includes dried artichoke seed heads, onion seed heads, kangaroo grass, variegated thistle seed heads, verbascum seed heads and dried acanthus flowers arranged in a copper casserole dish
Image from author's archive

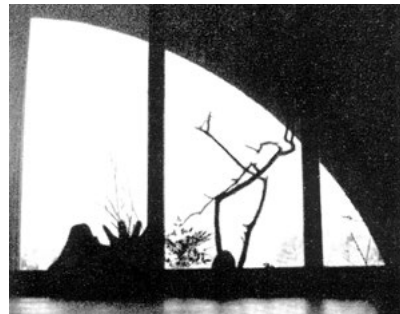
Academy of Science installations

Rosalie's involvement with the Australian Academy of Science, documented in the Biographical Note (pp. 36–37), began in 1959 and lasted until the early 1970s. Although Rosalie did not renew her original contract with the academy in 1962, she continued to provide installations of found objects, large dried arrangements, ikebana and more sculptural works on an occasional basis until 1974. Arrangements included a 'six-foot arrangement of thistle stalks' in 1970 (26 Oct 1970 RG to TG) and her tall bone piece *Last stand* 1972. She enjoyed the challenge of working with the large spaces and the muted contemporary interiors, which provided a sympathetic environment for her works.



Two c. 1961 installations in the west stair hall of the Australian Academy of Science: (left) installation with a large agave seed head and river stones, and (right) installation with old branches and other materials (photograph by Ken Nash)

Images courtesy of the Australian Academy of Science, Canberra



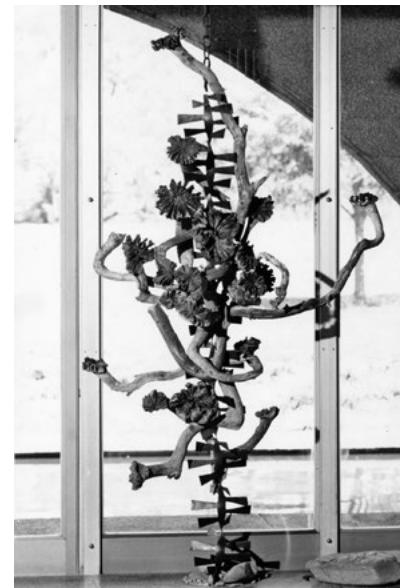
Ikebana arrangement with wood, everlasting daisies and dried material in the Fellows Room, Australian Academy of Science, November 1967

Image from author's archive



Ikebana of long-lasting materials in Academy of Science, c. 1969

Photograph by Ted Richards from author's archive



Long-lasting ikebana sculpture with rusted metal and mistletoe heads, reminiscent of Margel Hinder's four-metre-high, floor-to-ceiling *Abstract sculpture in steel and bronze* (later titled *Growth forms*) illustrated in Lenton Parr's *The arts in Australia: Sculpture* Longmans, Melbourne, 1961

Photograph by Ted Richards from author's archive



Ikebana sculpture c. 1969, made with four pieces of wood, some of which Rosalie burnt with a blow lamp, taking her lead from sculptures by the Japanese sculptor and ikebana master, Sofu Teshigahara

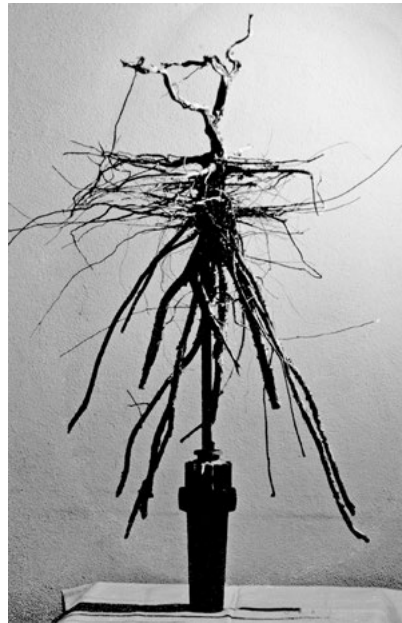
Photograph by Ted Richards from author's archive

Ikebana

Rosalie took ikebana lessons with Sydney-based teacher Norman Sparnon between 1962 and the end of 1971 (documented in the Biographical Note (pp. 37–39, 44–45)). Ikebana immediately influenced her entries in the Horticultural Society of Canberra floral art competitions, but she stopped competing in 1964 as ikebana took over. It also opened her eyes to the possibilities of using rusted metal and wire, which she incorporated in her pieces from the mid-1960s on (although she once used rusted metal in an earlier flower arrangement). Rosalie was awarded her ikebana teacher's certificate in November 1965 and gave lessons from 1966 to 1969 while still attending Sparnon's classes. She was also much in demand as a popular lecturer on ikebana for charity events, much as she had been earlier for her dried and decorative flower arrangements. As her ikebana career progressed she was commissioned to do large arrangements by the Japanese Embassy and by influential designers for events such as the opening of the National Library of Australia and the awards dinner of the Industrial Design Council of Australia, but she stopped accepting commissions when she decided to concentrate on her assemblages. By this time (1971–72) her ikebana had moved beyond capturing the feel of the natural world and taken on a much more abstract, sculptural look where she sought to emphasise the aesthetic qualities of her materials, as she would in her assemblages and sculptures, so much so that the boundary between the two types of work becomes indistinct at this time.



An early ikebana arrangement with Japanese anemones, exhibited as a 'Modern decoration' at the Horticultural Society of Canberra Autumn Flower Show on 24 March 1962. Rosalie had begun classes with Norman Sparnon in February 1962. She was not happy with the photograph, which she sent to her mother with the inscription: 'Ghastly. Stick not straight while anemone was close to stick. Won first prize as Modern Decoration. Stick was a bit of Lake George fence post.' The Lake George district was to be a very important source of inspiration and materials for Rosalie's art
Image from author's archive



An arrangement of dried branches and a rusted metal base, 1966–68. The label describes it as a work of the Sogetsu school
Image from author's archive

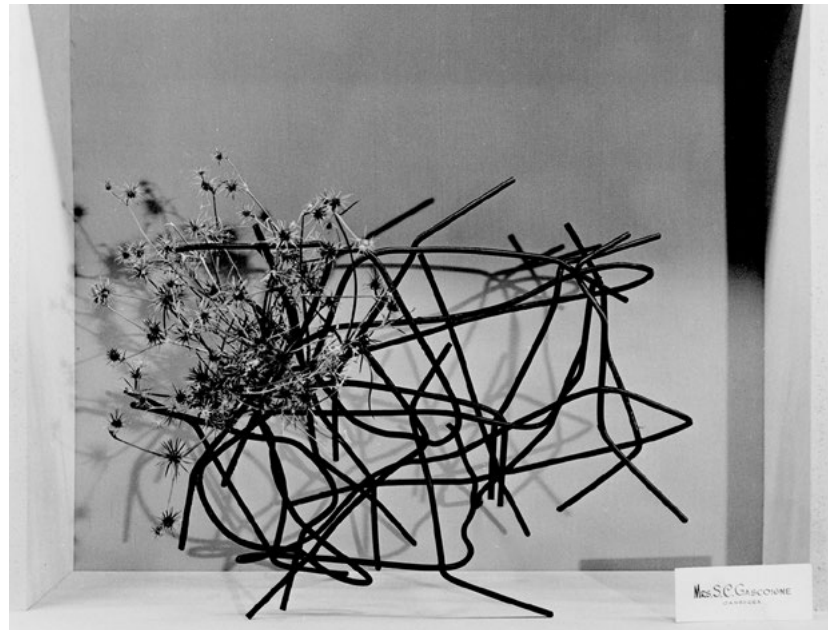


Modern arrangement c. 1968. This piece was included in an engagement book of ikebana published in c. 1968. It was described as 'a modern nageire arrangement of dried garlic heads grouped to form an abstract pattern over a cluster of dried grasses and small zinnias'. Attributed to Mrs. S. C. Gascoigne Canberra, ACT
Image from author's archive



Arrangement with two white roses, pine and branch of dried mistletoe, November 1968. An image was published in the *Canberra Times* 13 November 1968
Image from author's archive

The next two items both involve the use of rusted wire found on building sites or farm dumps. The wire mesh in particular is a good example of the sort of thing Rosalie was talking about when she described how Ikebana sharpened her eye to the sculptural possibilities of the things she saw in the paddocks and would previously have ignored. 'I remember once walking over a piece of rusty, ordinary fencing wire and [thinking] oh, that's only old wire ... And so I came back and I picked it up, humbly — a bit of humility doesn't hurt anybody — because it was a good shape. I should have picked it up in the first place' (1982 North). She had several pieces of the metal mesh, and as a sculptor in the mid-1970s used a piece of wire mesh as a metaphor for the air at a windy country picnic (*Jim's picnic* 1975). Both items attracted Norman Sparnon's eye, but his handling of them upset Rosalie and sowed a seed of dissatisfaction with his approach to Ikebana.



An arrangement using blue devil and rusted construction metal, exhibited in Sydney c. 1965. Norman Sparnon painted the rusted metal black, which upset Rosalie considerably. She spoke about the work with Ian North in 1982: 'I saw this piece of that squared off reinforcing iron that had been twisted. And it stood there, explicit, ... so I went and got it and it had lovely spaces and lovely closed bits and lovely wild spaces and it strained. And that blue devil thing that was growing ... that prickly weed that grows out in the paddock ... So I put that [with the mesh] and [Sparnon] said he'd like to show that in Sydney ... I will take it and put it up for you. And after it had been put up in the Blaxland Galleries I thought I'd go down and have a look. To my horror, in an alcove with my name on it is this damn thing, beautiful rusted [iron] sprayed a matt black. It was nothing ... and ... a nail in a coffin of my association with him. There it was. He said you can't just put a rusty piece of iron ... And I thought well, if he can make that, he is too scared ...' (1982 North). She made another arrangement using similar wire mesh with yellow everlasting daisies

Image from author's archive



A rusty scrap metal container made by Rosalie with an axle and a spring, with an arrangement by Norman Sparnon who failed to credit her when the photograph was published in his book *The magic of camellias: Creative ideas for Japanese flower arrangement*. Rosalie remembered: 'Norman Sparnon I think used me a lot ... when I was [putting] up these farm iron things and seeing the shape ... I had one down at the class once and he was writing his book on camellias ... and he said, "Can I borrow that container?" Sure. He put it in his book. There's no credit. And he credits others — people who have lent him flowers and things — and I thought that is a Japanese way of thinking anyway. You feed everything into the Master and you remain nothing. No dice on the Australian scene as far as I'm concerned' (1982 North, similar account in 1996 Davidson)

Norman Sparnon and EG Waterhouse *The magic of camellias: Creative ideas for Japanese flower arrangement* Ure Smith, Sydney, 1968, p. 42

Three ikebana for grand occasions



Arrangement with camellias for the inauguration of Japan Airlines flights to Australia, 1969. This was a big piece, about six feet (1.8 metres) high. In 1997 Ben recalled that Rosalie thought this was about the best she ever did

Photograph by Ted Richards from author's archive



Another big, semi-permanent arrangement, this one made with old wood stumps and branches from the country with wild everlasting daisies, for the opening of the Japanese Embassy's new chancellery in Yarralumla in August 1970 (illustrated in the *Canberra News* 24 Aug 1970). Rosalie was also commissioned by the embassy to do a large arrangement for the ambassador's dinner in honour of the Crown Prince and Princess of Japan in 1973, coming out of retirement to do so

Photograph by the *Canberra News* from author's archive



Sculptural arrangement for Industrial Design Council of Australia awards dinner at University House, 8 September 1971

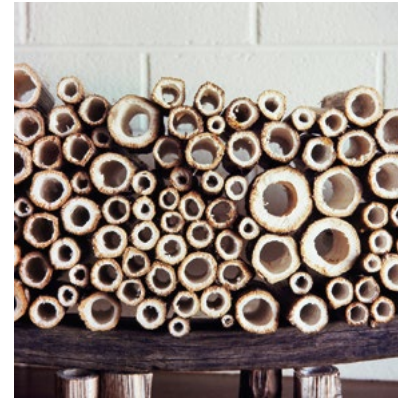
Image from author's archive

Late sculptural ikebana

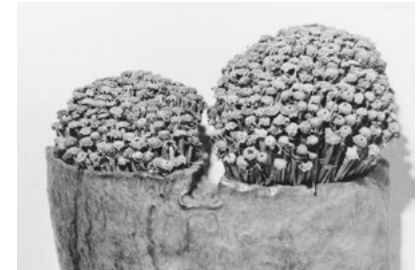
In October 1971 Rosalie helped arrange a large exhibition in Canberra of work by Norman Sparnon and his local students. It was the last time Rosalie participated in an ikebana exhibition. 'I did a large arrangement on floor with huge gum branch that mistletoe had grown on (wooden rose look). Some daft woman fell into it on last day' (19 Oct 1971 RG to TG). Her interest had been turning away from more naturalistic arrangements to works that were increasingly sculptural, so much so that in retrospect, and as discussed in the Biographical Note, it is hard to know where the ikebana ended and the sculpture started. Rosalie thought enough of these last pieces to have them photographed professionally (photographer unknown). She formally withdrew from Sparnon's classes in February 1972 and stopped giving talks and demonstrations. Thereafter she concentrated on her assemblage art.



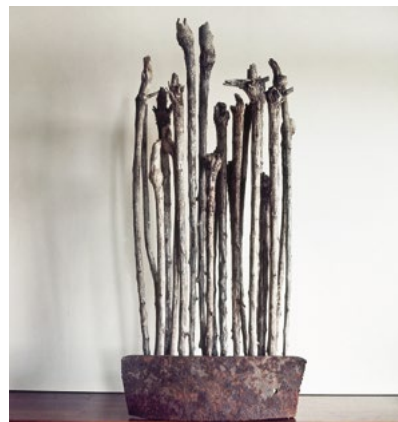
Rosalie's arrangements for an exhibition by Norman Spannon and Canberra ikebana practitioners, October 1971. If the large piece on the right represents the end of an era, the small piece with cut thistle stalks on a stand represents the start of a new one. A photograph showing a detail of this piece was included in Fay Bottrell's *The artist craftsman in Australia* (1972, p. 38) as an example of Rosalie's assemblage work. There was no mention of its ikebana origins
Image from author's archive



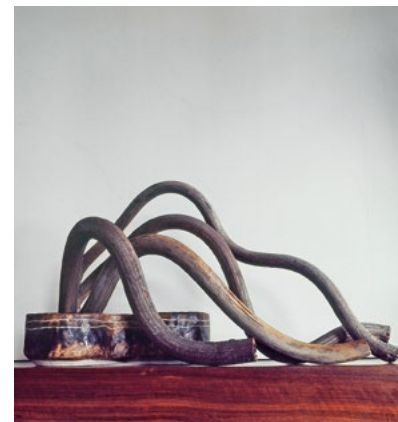
The source of the image used in Fay Bottrell's book. The caption read: 'Dried stems considered as forces in equilibrium' (not Rosalie's words). The same cut thistles were used in a sculpture, *Twig tidy* c. 1972–73, exhibited in 1974
Image from author's archive



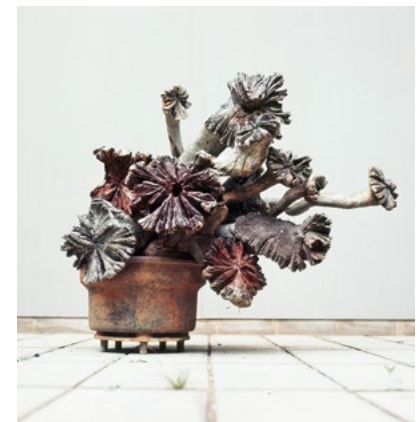
Sculptural arrangement using dried salsify heads, c. 1965–70. In another arrangement in the same vase she used tall blond grass. Rosalie used dried salsify seed heads in several of her assemblages, including *Standing piece* 1973/74, where the heads were placed in chicken wire in a vertical corrugated iron container, *Crop [1]* 1976 where the seed heads and stems were placed in chicken wire on top of a sheet of galvanised iron, and *Landscape [2]* 1976–77, where she filled a pair of milk separator bowls with the seed heads, much as in this arrangement
Image from author's archive



Arrangement with thistle stalks, 1971. In an earlier version, Rosalie made a very similar arrangement in the same bowl using long stems of the thistle's dried flowers
Image from author's archive



Arrangement with thistle stalks, 1971
Image from author's archive



Arrangement with mistletoe heads, 1971
Image from author's archive



THE CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ

Overleaf: *Ledger* 1992 (detail)

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

CATALOGUE ORGANISATION AND TERMINOLOGY

Catalogue entries are organised as follows:

- Title and year or years of construction
- Description of the work, including materials, dimensions and inscriptions
- Exhibition history
- References in the literature (including letters and talks by the artist)
- Collection (focusing on the first sale)
- Notes (including Rosalie Gascoigne (RG) remarks, construction history and notes on titles)

Listed works and omissions

The catalogue includes all works that were exhibited by the artist (including those she later dismantled) and a few works that were not exhibited, because they were either sold between exhibitions or given to friends, or because RG chose not to show them. Notable among the works not exhibited are those I have identified in the catalogue as homages, which she made for her personal pleasure.

Other works and works-in-progress known from photographs but never exhibited, or dismantled by the artist, are not catalogued. There are two exceptions. The first concerns some early, mostly metal, constructions made between the mid-1960s and 1972. Those that survive — either because RG kept them and others because she gave them to friends or sold them from her 1974 exhibition — would have been catalogued anyway. But she dismantled others, either in the move from Deakin to Pearce in 1969 or when she abandoned that line of work after her 1974 exhibition (including works that she had exhibited). Photographs of iron works displayed in her living room or garden in the late 1960s, contemporary press references and 35 mm slides taken in the early 1970s suggest the works were well regarded by the artist at the time and therefore warrant inclusion in the catalogue. Several were reproduced in Vici MacDonald's 1998 monograph with RG's agreement. The other inclusion concerns a few works made with animal bones in 1972–73, which do not survive because they gradually deteriorated due to the effects of exposure to the elements.

Catalogued studies essentially are small exercises by the artist in varying degrees of complexity, using whatever materials were at hand and caught her eye, including the trimmings of completed works. Sometimes RG might try studies as an element of a larger work (e.g. see *Palings* 1994/98 and [*White wood study #5*] c. 1995/98). They reflect her practice of working in units that she would assemble into larger works. None were exhibited in her lifetime and probably the artist herself would not regard them as finished works: she would tell her studio assistant that a work was not finished until it left the studio.¹ Nor were they ever conceived of as preparatory works for a larger work, which was contrary to her way of working. 'Studies' do not include pieces found in the studio that could be characterised as offcuts from completed works or the sawn-up remains of destroyed works.

The Biographical Note, Rosalie's Materials and catalogue entries include information about RG's work practices.

Early flower and dried arrangements, installations at the Academy of Science building and ikebana are not catalogued but references to them and images are included in the Biographical Note and in the photo-essay Flower Arrangements, the Academy of Science and Ikebana.

Chronological arrangement and numbering

Works are listed chronologically according to the year in which the work was completed (see 'Dates', below). Within each year, works are listed alphabetically. Works are numbered sequentially.

Illustrations

Wherever possible works are illustrated, even if the only image available is a poor one (but sufficient to give an indication of what the work looked like), so the colour might not always be accurate. There are no known images for some early works. The source for each image is credited. Where the term 'photograph' is used this means that the image has been sourced to a print or a negative rather than a digital image. Copyright of all images of RG's work is vested in the Rosalie Gascoigne Estate and managed by the Copyright Agency.

Titles

Titles used are those given by the artist, which are usually the title under which the work was first exhibited. If RG changed the title her preferred title is used, as in *Bottled glass* 1974 (changed from *Pickled glass*), but the catalogue entry includes a reference to the original. Alternative titles used in exhibitions or other records are included in the List of Works, cross referenced to titles used for cataloguing. Some works, usually those that were not exhibited, do not have titles given by the artist, but have been given one in the catalogue as an aid to identification, in which case the title is shown in square brackets, as in [Homage to ...] or [Wood study #1]. A rare reference in the form 'R.G. 21' or similar is a reference used in probate documentation for RG's estate. Capitalisation of titles follows Australian art-museum style for minimal initial capitals (also RG's practice, when listing works, though when inscribing works her practice varied, and many titles are inscribed all in capitals).

¹ 'Finished works': Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 25.

RG usually named her works when she was preparing them for exhibition. She preferred titles that were not prescriptive, leaving room for viewers to bring their own experience to bear (for example, see the notes on *Pale landscape* 1977). In an early statement, she put it this way: ‘My pieces can be looked at in different ways. I try to provide a starting point from which people can let their imaginations wander — what they discover will be a product of their own experience as much as of mine. My aim is to be both allusive and elusive.’²

RG put a lot of thought into the titles of her works, and her skill with words and their meanings played a big role. So did her poetic sensibility and the feelings that came to mind as she contemplated her pieces. Wordsworth’s ‘emotion recollected in tranquillity’ was a catchcry.³ But the imaginative leap behind the names of retroreflective works such as *Plainsong* 1988, *Vintage* 1990, *Cat’s eye* 1992–93, *Canary bird* 1996, *Siesta* 1997 and *Cloud cuckoo land* 1998, for example, can only really be explained in terms of the mystery that lies at the heart of her creative process: you see what she is getting at, but how did she get there? This holds for works across all categories of material. Many catalogue entries include comment on the title.⁴

Dates

Works are catalogued according to the year in which the work was finished, or the last year when a range is stated. A range ‘1980–81’ indicates continuous work, whereas ‘1980/81’ indicates two separate stages of interrupted work and ‘c. 1980–85’ indicates an unknown date within an estimated range. Dating of assemblages reflects the known or likely time frame in which the components were brought together in the assemblage, rather than the dates on which particular components might have been constructed (entries record instances where components are known to have been constructed earlier). Dating was determined by reference to inscriptions on the work itself, photographic records, exhibition catalogues, correspondence and RG’s talks. Catalogue dates do not always match the date inscribed by RG or the date given when she first exhibited the work. RG’s practice was to inscribe works when she was about to exhibit them, rather than when she had just completed them, not least because she might change her mind after watching the work for a while. Sometimes — but not always — RG dated works according to the year of completion rather than the time span in which the work was constructed, and for a few works there is evidence that the date RG inscribed on a work is incorrect. In both cases, the catalogue entry includes an explanation for the nominated date (usually in the form of a reference to photography or a letter). The backs of many works have not been examined, which might later lead to minor revisions to dating.

Description of works: Materials, dimensions and inscriptions

The second line of each catalogue entry describes the work, with details of the materials used, size and inscriptions. If there is no record of materials or dimensions (mostly in some early works) this is recorded as ‘no record of materials or dimensions’, as appropriate. Many works were not examined by the author; descriptions are based on BG’s records, or the records of public institutions, commercial galleries and auction houses.

² RG artist’s statement in Robert Lindsay *Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne* National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1978 (exh. cat.). For a late-career expression of her approach to titles see 1997 Ross.

³ ‘And suddenly there’s an association in your mind, or something you have had an emotion about. It’s that Wordsworthian thing about emotion remembered in tranquillity. Because you felt about various things in your life, and suddenly you’ve got these inanimate objects and ... you can plug into that’: 1980 Gleeson; the William Wordsworth quote is from his preface to *Lyrical ballads* (2nd ed.) 1800.

⁴ On titles see also Peter Vandermark and Marie Hagerty in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 26.

The description of materials usually includes its original use, as in ‘wood from soft-drink box’. Sometimes more detailed information on sources is included in the notes. I have not tried to identify the types of paints used, though in the case of found or recycled materials a starting assumption would be that the type of paint used reflected the common technology when the original item was made. Additional information on materials is included in the chapter on Rosalie’s Materials in this catalogue raisonné (see p. 99 ff.).

Terms used for materials:

- *Composition board*, also known as MDF (medium-density fibreboard), is a wood product produced in the form of a board or sheet, formed of cellulose fibres or particles derived from wood or other sources, and used principally as a building material. Sometimes referred to as particle board or craftboard (a brand name) in BG’s records. RG used composition board mostly as a backing or base for her constructions.
- *Masonite board* is a type of composition board made of steam-cooked and pressure-moulded wood fibres in a process invented by William H Mason. When finished with a protective (waterproof) coating, Masonite board is used as a building material.
- *Plywood* is made from thin sheets of veneer glued together with the grain of each sheet at right angles to the sheet below; it comes in different thicknesses, depending on its intended application. The variations in thickness are achieved by varying the number of sheets laminated together to make the board. This catalogue raisonné does not distinguish between the various types of plywood. In some forms it is known as marine plywood, which usually comes in thicknesses of 3–18 mm (BG sometimes referred to ‘marine plywood’ in his notes). Despite its name (and popular misconception), marine plywood is not waterproof, although its glue lines are. RG almost always used weathered or recycled plywood and rarely used new plywood, other than to back works; on the one or two occasions when she might have used new plywood (or Masonite) in her compositions she first coated it with white paint. In the absence of a positive identification, the term ‘plywood’ in this catalogue may also refer to a form of composition board with a timber veneer surface, usually known as sliced Pacific maple (SPM) or jarrah-based pine or particle board.
- *Plywood (or builders’) formboard* comes in different thicknesses, usually 12 mm or 27 mm, and is used to contain poured concrete. It is coated with a synthetic (phenolic surface) film to provide a smooth surface for finished concrete. The film is usually coloured black or brown and the coated product is sometimes referred to as FSC-coated plywood, including in this catalogue raisonné. (In BG’s notes the term formboard seems to have been used more broadly.)
- *Road signs*. This catalogue raisonné refers to three types of road sign: retroreflective plywood road signs, reflective plywood road signs and hand-painted road signs. A few works make use of wooden material from yellow-and-black road-safety barriers that might include reflective elements.
 - *Retroreflective plywood road signs* used by RG are usually made of plywood covered with stencilled reflective synthetic polymer film, though she once spoke of them as being made with Masonite board (which is probably not robust enough for most signs). In this catalogue, road signs are all termed ‘plywood’ to distinguish them from signs made of aluminium, which RG did not use. They are mostly yellow. Retroreflective surfaces send a high proportion of the light back to the viewer, rather than scattering it. There are several types and grades, giving different levels of retroreflection, effective view angles and life spans.
 - *Reflective road signs* do not have the same retroreflective brightness as the retroreflective road signs. They are usually orange or red, and again usually made with plywood or aluminium (the latter not used by RG).
 - *Hand-painted road signs* (usually plywood or Masonite board), made to advertise items for sale at roadside stalls, were also collected by RG.

- *Wood*. RG used weathered or recycled wood in many forms: crudely cut hardwood used for fencing, milled wood used in building (sometimes with undercoating) and wood from manufactured items such as soft-drink boxes or furniture. Where possible I have tried to be specific.
- *Plant materials* specify the common name as well as the botanical name of the material, where known, for example, 'dried grass (possibly African lovegrass *Eragrostis curvula*)'.
- *Insulators* are devices made of glass or ceramic used to attach telephone, telegraph or power lines to utility poles and transmission towers.

Where known, the description of a work includes details of the support or backing, usually plywood (new or recycled, in varying thicknesses) or composition board. Most panel constructions from 1980 onwards are braced with aluminium strip in varying thicknesses (although I have usually not mentioned this in individual entries).

Measurements are given in centimetres, height × width × depth. The term 'variable' has been used for some installation works to indicate that the layout of the work as a whole might be adjusted to take account of the specific circumstances of the display.

Signatures and other inscriptions are described where known. The backs of many works have not been examined and BG did not record inscriptions (in many cases works were inscribed just before they were exhibited, sometimes in the gallery as a show was being installed). If data for signatures and other inscriptions are available the details are transcribed. Slashes in the transcription indicate line breaks in the inscription. 'Rosalie Gascoigne' indicates a cursive signature; 'ROSALIE GASCOIGNE' or 'R.G.' indicates a name or initials written in capitals. If a work is known to be inscribed, but there is no transcription, the entry simply records that the work is inscribed — with RG's name or initials, title and date (if this is known, and as the case may be). If a work is not inscribed this is stated. If there is no record of an inscription, the field is left blank. RG usually inscribed works with a black fibre-tipped pen on the back or, sometimes, underneath. Where known, the location of the inscription is also recorded. Some works have additional markings indicating the sequence or orientation of the panels, and their spacing, and this information is also recorded.

Framing

RG exhibited her works unframed. In 1985 she made known her view on framing: 'I am very interested in the concept of not framing anything nor shutting anything in. I believe it is a thing that Colin McCahon in New Zealand has decided against — frames. I find it works for me. It gives the work the rangy look, the free look, not refining or restricting anything too much. More universal.'⁵

Exhibition history of works

Exhibition histories include displays by public institutions, commercial galleries and auction houses. RG exhibited most of her output other than her homages and studies. If a work is known not to have been exhibited the entry says 'not exhibited'. Solo exhibitions are cited in the catalogue entries by date (year only), title of exhibition, gallery, catalogue number (as [x] if not numbered) and price (where applicable), with notations regarding any alternative titles used and references or illustrations in the exhibition catalogue and

⁵ 'Not framing anything': 1985 School of Art.

catalogue essays. Group exhibitions are cited by date, title of exhibition and gallery, with notations on any alternative titles use, references or illustrations in the catalogue. Full exhibition details are in Appendix 1: Solo Exhibitions and Appendix 2: Selected Group Exhibitions. Details of exhibition reviews are included in the appendices and sources are not repeated in the Bibliography. Correspondence between RG and her dealers has sometimes provided additional information.

For auctions, the entry gives date, title of auction (if relevant), name of auction house, location (abbreviated S. — Sydney, M. — Melbourne), lot number and page references in the sale catalogue. Information is also included about works exhibited by commercial galleries, including any references or illustrations in the catalogues.

Literature and illustrations

References are arranged chronologically. The catalogue makes extensive use of family letters, which are cited by date then initials of author and recipient, as in c. Jan 1974 RG to TG. If the letter was published in Mary Eagle (ed.) *From the studio of Rosalie Gascoigne* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 2000 (exh. cat.), the reference is accompanied by a page number, as in 25 Jan 1974 RG to MG, p. 43.

Abbreviated citations are used for Rosalie's talks and interviews, in the form of the date and either name of interviewer or location of the talk (as in 1982 North and 1985 School of Art). If the extract is from a published talk a page reference is given. Full titles are listed in the Bibliography.

Citations for other references (such as books, and journal and newspaper articles) use the author–date format, for example, Vici MacDonald 1998. References occurring only once or twice are presented in full in the catalogue and are not repeated in the Bibliography.

Ownership of works

Provenance — or history of ownership — is usually not detailed, other than for the first sale. The primary objective is to document when a work first changed hands, from RG's to a new owner. Private owners usually prefer to remain anonymous so are not named (with a few exceptions). If a work is in a public collection this is stated, including year of acquisition and registration number; Appendix 3 contains a list of public collections and the works they hold. Where a work was part of RG's personal collection or her estate this is stated.

'Dismantled' indicates a work was dismantled by the artist; 'destroyed' indicates someone else was responsible (usually with an explanation).

Notes

Some catalogue entries include additional information, on matters such as the source of the materials, construction history and sourcing of the title. Comments by RG relating to a particular work may be drawn from family letters or from her talks and interviews, and are sourced with an abbreviated reference to the full citation in the Bibliography.

CATALOGUE ENTRIES

1966 to 1970



001

001 Adam and Eve c. 1966–68

Rusted metal (old machinery parts); two units each 26 cm high, together abt 14 cm wide; not inscribed

Exh: possibly 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, but not catalogued under this title (possibly untitled #31 or #49, both NFS); 13 Mar – 11 Jul 2010 *Tomorrow Today: Innovation and Change in 1960s Canberra* CMAG (as *Adam and Eve* 1968)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20, illus. p. 21; Kelly Gellatly 2008, illus. p. 9

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Photographed in the garden at Dugan Street, Deakin, before September 1968.

Photograph by Elinor Ward from author's archive



002

002 Conscription c. 1966–68

Rusted metal; abt 20 cm long; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20

Coll: dismantled

One early piece ... was Conscription, a mass of flat-headed spikes from the Captains Flat railway crammed into a small pierced metal slab, depicting a hurrying crowd of people. One spike had its head 'turned back' — a reluctant Vietnam conscript looking over his shoulder. Rosalie's second son was then of conscription age, though spared from Vietnam by a broken ankle: 'But all those poor blighters who had to go. Wicked ...' Conscription sat in Rosalie's window [at Dugan Street, Deakin] for some time, a reference to current events rather than a political statement: 'I never made a statement of any sort at all. If you've got a thought that will make a piece more valid, that's what you hang it onto' (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20).

Photograph by Elinor Ward from author's archive



003

003 Fountain c. 1966–68, reconstructed with modifications in 1969, further modified 1972

Rusted metal (including old machinery parts and a plough disk); abt 150 cm tall; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 20, 22, illus. p. 20; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 34

Coll: dismantled after 1978

Fountain c. 1966–68 was constructed in or before 1968; it sat on the western terrace at the Deakin house where it was photographed before September 1968. When the family moved to Pearce in 1969 *Fountain* c. 1966–68 was reassembled (with modifications) on the north-facing terrace; in March 1972 BG welded it together (with further changes), his first welding job. *I hired a little set for the weekend, and after a long battle with some most unfamiliar problems (especially rust, the rust I've scraped off old iron you wouldn't believe) I welded up the fountain, good and solid ... no more, I hope, of these dreadful balancing acts we have lived with for so long* (26 Mar 1972 BG to MG, p. 35).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

004 [River stone] c. 1966–68

Stone (granite) and weathered timber; 19 × 37 × 17.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

First photographed before September 1968 outside at Dugan Street, Deakin. The stone probably came from the Murrumbidgee River. Searching for attractive river stones was a family activity even in the late 1940s and early 1950s. RG used the same format of stone on timber for a collection of five rough stones on timber in 1977 (dismantled, not catalogued). RG's remark about the enamelware on bases in *Set up* 1983–84 is pertinent: *I was very pleased that if you stood a thing on a block you saw the actual shape of it* (1999 Auckland AG).

Photograph by author



004

005 [Three figures] c. 1966–68

Rusted metal (old machinery parts); three units, the tallest abt 15 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 20–21 (for discussion of early iron works)

Coll: dismantled

Photographed before September 1968. There were two versions, in one of which the three figures were enclosed in a halo of fine wires. BG noted on a print that the piece had been reproduced in an ikebana publication put together by Norman Sparnon.

Photograph by Elinor Ward from author's archive



005



006

006 **William Tell** 1970

Weathered wood (various sources, including inserts for telegraph-line insulators); abt 60 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #2, \$120

Lit: Jane Smith 1986, illus. p. 113; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 102; Kelly Gellatly 2008, illus. p. 12

Coll: dismantled (after 1985)

The dating comes from a reference to the work in a letter dated 11 December 1970, which included a sketch of the work. *David Walker is ANU Designer but is a silver-smith by trade. Was fascinated by [sketch of] William Tell and wants to swap me for a hand made silver THING as yet unknown. So I'm going to do a deal (11 Dec 1970 RG to TG)*. In the end, the swap did not take place and RG kept the work. BG sometimes referred to it as *Napoleon*. For many years the work was displayed on the bench in the artist's sitting room where it was photographed in 1975, but by 1985 it had found its way into the courtyard where it is visible in a photograph in *Vogue Living* (Jane Smith 1986, p. 113). The block of wood resting on the insulator inserts is a pair of the block in *[River stone]* c. 1966–68.

Photograph from author's archive

008 **Cityscape** 1972

Weathered wood; five units abt 85–95 cm long, max. height 10 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #4, NFS

Lit: 2 Jun 1972 RG to MG, p. 35 (part only); 16 Nov 1972 RG to MG, p. 39

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 destroyed (badly deteriorated)

The wooden blocks used in the construction of *Cityscape* 1972 came from Captains Flat. Construction of the work took place over several months. In June 1972 RG wrote about an involvement in some 300 wooden blocks *I collected at Captains Flat last Friday. I am making a sort of slum section out of them — rows and rows of unpainted wood in various shades of good grey, the tops squared off abt 3/4" × 3/4" and height ranging from abt 3" down to 1"*. Fascinating time-devouring experience on top of wrought iron table. *One block has a small tin plate with '70' on it on the front and I think if I can resolve the construction (base?) I can call it the 'The Address' or 'No 70' or 'Where it's At' (2 Jun 1972 RG to MG)*. Five months later she wrote: *I want to try my grey slum streets on him [Jim Mollison]. Blocks of wood in various grey weathered colours glued to five boards, abt 3 ft long and 1 1/2" wide. Can be read as mountain ranges. Your father is getting me some clever slippery stuff that can be glued on to bottom of each board so that new patterns can be made by sliding boards (16 Nov 1972 RG to MG, p. 39, with a sketch of the work).*

Photographed by author in 2000 with some blocks missing

009 **Dance of the sunflower**
c. 1971–72

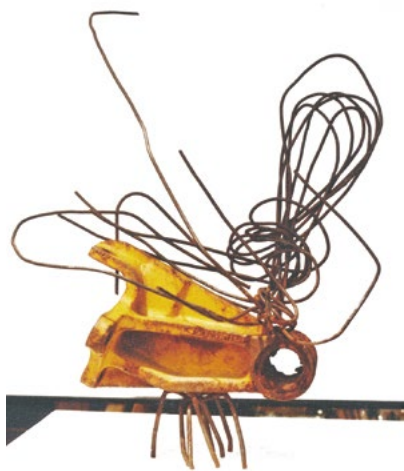
Rusted metal (old machinery parts), some with paint, abt 100 cm high

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #33, \$90

Coll: probably dismantled

The 'unsuitable' title was probably provided by the gallery proprietor (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions).

Photograph from author's archive



007



009

1971 and 1972

007 **Bee** 1972

Rusted painted metal (machinery part), rusted wire, welding; abt 40 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 25 Oct 1972 BG to MG, pp. 38–39; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20 (with illus.)

Coll: dismantled (after mid-1980)

According to Vici MacDonald, who would have drawn on information provided by BG, *Bee* 1972 was 'one of Ben's last — and trickiest — welding jobs ... a chunk of bright yellow iron tottering on spindly legs, with scribbled wire wings' (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20). He had done the welding by late October 1972, as he recorded: *Though she's gone cold on [welding] lately, as I thought she might ... that insect [Bee 1972] on the stump in the courtyard, the orange one, which I worked up in situ, has been a great success. She hasn't really digested the possibilities yet (25 Oct 1972 BG to MG, pp. 38–39)*. Photographs show two versions of the wings.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



008

010 **Eagle** 1972

Leather, rubber, rusted iron tools (including spanners), welding; abt 38 × 85 × 10 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #15, \$150; 7 May 2001 Sotheby's M., lot 88 (as *Spanner bird*) (illus. p. 101)

Lit: 6 Aug, 25 Oct 1972 BG to MG, pp. 37, 38–39; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20; Alan Roberts *A big, bold, simple concept: A history of the Australian Academy of Science dome*, Australian Academy of Science, Canberra, 2010, illus. p. 141

Coll: 1974 private collection

BG had welded up *Eagle* 1972 by July 1972: *I have been doing a lot of welding for your mother, her suspicions are at least allayed, or almost, she is almost coming to depend on it. Current opus is a Tucker-like bird, could be good, pity my best weld is going to be hidden from public view ...* (6 Aug 1972 BG to MG, p. 37). The head was removed in October 1972 (25 Oct 1972 BG to MG, p. 38) but put back or replaced shortly afterwards. *Eagle* 1972 was on loan to the Academy of Science in 1973–74.

Photograph courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



010



011

011 **Elephant** c. 1970–72

Rusted iron machinery parts, welding; abt 15 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #14, \$30

Coll: 1974 private collection

Photograph from author's archive

012 **Elephant pot** 1972

Rusted iron piping, welding, dried artichoke head; no record of dimensions; probably not inscribed

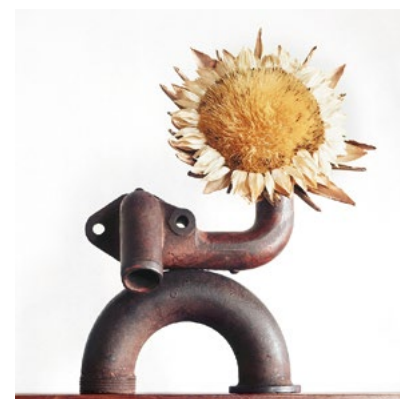
Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #17, \$60

Lit: 16 Oct 1972 RG to MG, p. 38; Kelly Gellatly 2008, illus. p. 12 (final version); Hannah Fink 'Sunflowers' in Bonhams *Important Australian art from the collection of Reg Grundy AC OBE and Joy Chambers-Grundy* Sydney, 2013, illus. p. 169

Coll: 1974 private collection

When first constructed RG used fine grass (unidentified), which she later replaced with an artichoke head. *Jim* [Mollison] came in late in evening after Frank [Watters] had gone ... For once Jim fronted up to my bench and said: 'What new goodies have you got?' He has real thing abt anything being anything. 'That's the best you've done of that sort', he said. 'Oh my elephant pot', I said. 'So it is', he said with deep disgust. I'll really have to take him up on that when I have thought out my argument properly. I'm pleased with that pot. I think it's better for being sketchily elephantine and yr father thinks it's witty (16 Oct 1972 RG to MG, p. 38, with a sketch of the work with grass instead of the artichoke).

Photograph from author's archive



012



013

013 **[Family group]** c. 1968–72

Rusted metal (old machinery parts); four units, abt 30 cm high; probably not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: dismantled

Photograph from author's archive

014 **Farmer's daughter** 1971–72

Rusted iron machinery parts; abt 30 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #8, \$30

Lit: 11 Jan 1972 RG to MG, pp. 34–35

Coll: 1974 private collection

Farmer's daughter is the work referred to as 'a drover's wife à la [Russell] Drysdale' by RG in a letter in which she described a burst of productivity after Christmas 1971 when she made ... *a drover's wife à la Drysdale, and a King of Id* (see 023 *The king*). *Then I cleared up the back bench and said enough ... I cleaned up the bank by the drive too* (11 Jan 1972 RG to MG, pp. 34–35).

Photograph by author



014

015 **Germaine Greer** 1972

Rusted scrap metal (including nails, mesh and pipes), copper ballcock; no record of dimensions or inscriptions (abt 100 cm high)

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 11 Jan, 2 Jun 1972 RG to MG, pp. 34–35, 37

Coll: 1972 Carl and Jocelyn Plate (gift of the artist)

Germaine Greer 1972 was made between Christmas 1971 and 11 Jan 1972, at which stage RG described it as: *a large woman waving her fists and railing against her obvious pregnancy (after all, it was a very large ballcock)* (11 Jan 1972 RG to MG, pp. 34–35). The letter included a small sketch. The Sydney artist Carl Plate and his wife Jocelyn (friends since the early 1940s) visited Rosalie in May 1972. *He stood in front of my Germaine Greer protest figure and laughed and laughed and said he thought it was marvellous. He wanted it, much better than the things Brett Whiteley was showing. Persisted in trying to get it from me but after thinking all night I said Not Yet ... I was still watching it* (2 Jun 1972 RG to MG, p. 37, also 10 Jun 1972 RG to TG). Later she did exchange the sculpture for one of Plate's paintings. In earlier letters she refers to feminist author Germaine Greer's visit to Australia and her appearance on TV with trade union leader Bob Hawke. The work as illustrated here has changed since constructed. The protruding piece on the left with the ballcock should be rotated to the left so it reads as a pregnant belly and not as the figure's buttocks.

Photograph in c. 2005 by Hannah Fink, from author's archive

016 **[Glass insulators]** c. 1971

Glass telephone-line insulators, wooden insulator inserts, rusted metal machinery parts; seven columns, abt 60 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 13 Dec 1971 RG to MG, p. 34 (with illus.); *Vogue Living* May–Aug 1972, p. 10; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 22

Coll: dismantled

In a letter dated 13 Dec 1971 RG thought fit to mention the interest of two friends in collecting telephone-line insulators: *I saw with interest that ... Hilary [Wrigley] has a long line of brown telephone insulators along her window sill. The [David] Walkers are collecting them too* (13 Dec 1971 RG to MG, p. 34). The *Vogue Living* photographs were probably taken in February 1971: *Had a ring from Vogue yesterday. Woman is coming to see me on Monday. Wants to see all my objects. This is Puss [Ward]. And house. Bringing camera* (4 Feb 1971 RG to TG). The *Vogue* author commented: 'Particularly intriguing, we thought, were a wall of glass transformers, avidly collected beneath the junction boxes of telegraph poles' (*Vogue Living* May–Aug 1972, p. 10).

Photograph from author's archive

017 **Hat rack** c. 1971–72

Rusted iron (12 units), screws, composition board with metal, wire and worn green felt; 17.5 × 17.5 × 8.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #43 (as *S.A. hat rack*), \$33

Coll: 1974 Rosemary Dobson

The base of *Hat rack* is possibly an old switchboard component.

Photograph from author's archive

018 **Last stand** 1972

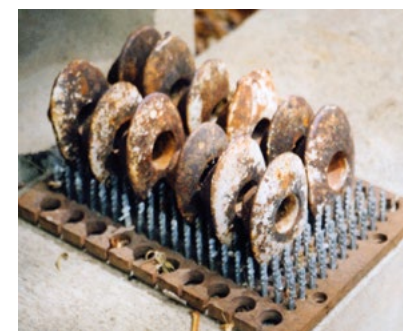
Weathered bones (cattle and sheep), rusted iron, steel rods; nine pieces, dimensions variable, up to 300 cm tall; not inscribed

Exh: 1973–74 Academy of Science, Canberra; 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #1 (dated 1972/1985) (illus.)

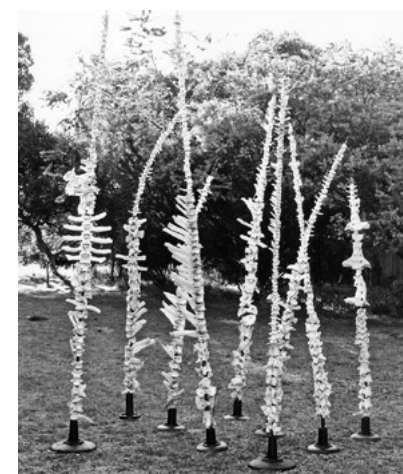
Lit: 16 Nov, 4 Dec 1972, 19 Apr 1973, 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, pp. 39, 40, 44; *The Australian* 28 Apr 1974, illus. (partial view); Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 23 (with illus.); Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 28 (partial view at Anstey Street, Pearce); Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, illus. p. 40

Coll: destroyed 2010

RG was collecting weathered cattle bones from country paddocks in 1972. *Last stand* 1972 is the second of several works made with bones between November 1972 and mid-1973. In December 1972 she wrote: *Meanwhile more and more accumulations are accumulating. I have a great line in old bones in courtyard. Harsh weed shapes is what I am aiming at — bones strung 6 ft high on iron rods. Could turn out to be something bigger than all of us!* (4 Dec 1972 RG to MG, p. 40). *Last stand* 1972 was installed in the foyer of the Roy Grounds—designed Academy of Science dome in February 1973 (12 Feb 1974 RG to MG; 2 Mar 1973 BG to MG), where it attracted a lot of attention, as BG wrote: *Last night it was Academy dinner for Prominent Canberra Citizens. I took James Mollison along, a successful guest he was too, and impressed by yr m.— 'how much she has improved' says James, never one for handing out bouquets. 'Those bones are GOOD.' Said bones are strung on rods in the Academy foyer, great conversation piece — 'I see the Academy has some backbone at last', 'That's Jack Deeble second from the left' and so on* (Apr 1973 BG to TG). When RG got *Last stand* 1972 back, she first kept it in her hallway, where it is visible in photographs taken in the autumn of 1976 (Mary Eagle 2000, p. 28). Later she moved it outside to her materials storage area where again it is visible in photographs from the early 1980s. RG restored *Last stand* in 1985 for her exhibition in Hobart that year and when it returned it was displayed in the courtyard until, as she put it, *It went mouldy and it looked dead, so it was dismantled* (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 23). After



017



018



015



016

her death it was re-erected in the courtyard but the remaining pieces were destroyed in 2010, having deteriorated badly.

In 1985, RG spoke about *Last stand* 1972 just before the work was sent to Hobart: *This is more environment. The tallest of those is three metres high. It takes quite a long time to find enough raw material — bones — because there are not all that many dead cows left lying in the paddocks until the bones bleach. Sheep bones were easier to get. I have built this piece up over the years, and to me it is more reminiscent of that rank weed — verbascum, I think — that grows and leans on the hills. You see quite a lot of it around Canberra* (1985 School of Art).

In 1998 she recalled: *There used to be a lot of these cattle bones around before they buried them and things. I think they're very beautiful and I think that any artist of any persuasion should be able to find plenty of inspiration about a bone. They're good. Nature is just so much better than we are ... I had a whole lot of them, about 10 of them I called 'Last Stand'. And you could thread them and thread them and thread them. The last lot I had I think were 10 feet tall ... And they come out so beautifully white. You've got to be fussy about which bones you get, mark you. And they're threaded on wire. My mechanics never were very good and they've got iron rods and big farm pieces of iron that stand them up* (1998 NGA; similar remarks 1998 Hughes and 1999 Auckland AG).

Last stand 1972, as restored in 1985 and photographed by Matt Kelso, from the author's archive

019 **Madonna and child** c. 1970–72

Rusted iron (tools and machinery parts);
40 × 33 × 13 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #40* (as *Madonna and child*), \$100; 13 Mar – 11 Jul 2010 *Tomorrow Today: Innovation and Change in 1960s Canberra CMAG* (as *Mother and child* c. 1968)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 20, 22

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The work was inspired by naive Portuguese devotional sculpture, which RG had seen when she accompanied BG to a conference in Portugal in 1970. *It was the sort of thing they had in churches with flowers in jam jars — very primitive* (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20). In Portugal she purchased a simple pottery nativity set which she brought out every Christmas.

Photograph by author

020 **Sir Bagby** c. 1970–72

Rusted iron machinery parts, welding;
22 × 20 × 29 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #22, \$30*

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20 (with illus.)

Coll: 1974 private collection; 1994 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (Acc no. 205.1994), gift of Mr & Mrs WJ Weeden

The title comes from a character in the popular daily newspaper comic strip *The Wizard of Id* created in 1964 by American cartoonists Brant Parker and Johnny Hart, and published in newspapers *Rosalie* and *Ben* subscribed to.

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

021 **Spine** 1972

Weathered cattle bones, welded rusted iron;
abt 50 cm high

Exh: Oct 1973 *Life Style 70s* Myer department store gallery, Adelaide; 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #37, \$90*

Lit: 16 Nov 1972, 30 Sep 1973 RG to MG, pp. 39, 42; Kelly Gellatly 2008, illus. p. 124

Coll: dismantled

Spine 1972 is the first of a group of bone works made between November 1972 and mid-1973: *Found a lovely line of good quality cattle bones on last trip. Have a beautiful 6-bone spine in good working order. It's a poem of engineering. Was so taken with it that I quelled my squeamishness and scraped intervening gristle off with the bread knife. Presentation of same is giving me pause. Wish you were here. I feel that the wonder is in it just as it is, and I am keen to keep it movable so that one can enjoy the clever mechanics (God's, not mine). At the moment I have it on piece your father welded — [two] iron uprights on iron base [drawing]. The idea is audience participation and involvement. Spine carefully threaded on Pole A can be unthreaded piece by piece and threaded, face down, on Pole B. Am toying with possibility of better poles — tactilely [sic] more pleasant* (30 Sep 1973 RG to MG, p. 39). *Spine* was one of two works by RG included in an exhibition of art/craft in Myer department store, Adelaide (16 Nov 1972 RG to MG, p. 42).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



019



020



021

022 **[Sunflowers and radiator]**
c. 1970–71

Rusted iron car radiator, three dried sunflower seed heads; no record of dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1971 [Fay Bottrell Studio Gallery] Sydney, \$95

Lit: 16 Nov 1971 RG to MG, pp. 33–34

Coll: destroyed 1972

[Sunflowers and radiator] was the first RG work exhibited in a commercial gallery. The work was selected by Fay Bottrell and Anthony Pardoe who visited RG on Friday 12 November 1971 to research a book published as *The artist craftsman in Australia* (Bottrell 1972). The visitors spoke of a gallery in Sydney where they were keeping samples of people's work to be seen by architects wanting stuff for their buildings. Rosalie reported: *They took my assemblage of iron [radiator] and sunflowers from Bungendore tip [offering \$95 for it] ... Am in a daze but wonder if I have a fortune at bottom of garden* (16 Nov 1971 RG to MG, pp. 33–34 and 16 Nov 1971 RG to TG; see also 2 Dec 1971 BG to MG). *[Sunflowers and radiator]* attracted the attention of the collector Margaret Carnegie, who wanted to buy it, but the piece was dropped at the gallery and destroyed.

NO IMAGE

023 **The king** 1972 (King of Id)

Rusted iron; abt 40 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 11 Jan 1972 RG to MG, pp. 34–35

Coll: c. 1974 Rosemary Dobson (gift of the artist)

In January 1972 RG wrote about a burst of productivity after Christmas during which she made several works including *a drover's wife à la [Russell] Drysdale* (see 014 *Farmer's daughter*), and *a King of Id*. Then I cleared up the back bench and said enough ... I cleaned up the bank by the drive too (11 Jan 1972 RG to MG, pp. 34–35). The title comes from a character in the popular daily newspaper comic strip *The Wizard of Id* created in 1964 by American cartoonists Brant Parker and Johnny Hart, and published in the newspapers Rosalie and Ben subscribed to. The title, *The king*, was used by Rosemary Dobson in letters to RG (dated 7 Sep 1975), in which she told RG she was proposing to move *The king* in her courtyard and sought her agreement to the move. The components are balanced, not welded.

Photograph from author's archive



023

024 **The miners** c. 1970–72

Rusted iron machinery parts (including drill bits), welding, wooden base; 18 × 24.1 × 7.3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #26, \$60; 26 Aug 2001 Christie's S., lot 74 (illus. p. 72)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 20

Coll: 1974 private collection

Leslie Gotto blew through Canberra last week and bought my iron miners from Anna's [Macquarie Galleries] just when I was going to repossess them. Actually they are so far from what I am doing now that I find it embarrassing to have them on public display (10 Nov 1974 RG to TG).

Photograph courtesy of Christie's



024

025 **The pram** c. 1970–72

Rusted iron machinery, welding; 15 × 14.1 × 8.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #27, \$30; 2007 Lasseter's Gallery, Canberra

Coll: 1974 private collection

Photograph by author



025

026 **[Three metal cups]** c. 1972

Metal (rusted iron?), nails; three units, overall abt 10 × 25.5 × 7.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: private collection (gift of the artist)

Photograph by Nat Williams from author's archive



026

1973

027 **Anemone box** c. 1971–73

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #38, \$66

Coll: probably dismantled

NO IMAGE

028 **[Bone sculpture]** 1973

Weathered cattle bones; abt 120 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: On RG's interest in bones see letters of 16 Nov and 4 Dec 1972, 19 Apr, 16 May and 21 Jun 1973 in Mary Eagle 2000, pp. 39–41, illus. p. 41; Jacqueline Rees 1974; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 23

Coll: dismantled



028

One of four bone works constructed between Nov 1972 and mid-1973. The only record of this work is a 35 mm slide dated Sep 1973. There is also an image of [*Bone sculpture*] on the lower lawn at Anstey Street, Pearce, with *Joie de mourir* 1973.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

029 Gay lady c. 1973

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #13, \$15

Coll: probably dismantled

NO IMAGE

030 Hanging yellow bird c. 1973

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #3, \$120

Coll: probably dismantled

NO IMAGE

031 Hydrant c. 1971–73

Rusted iron machinery parts, welding; 39 × 43.5 × 13 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #32, \$66; 2007 Lassetter's Gallery, Canberra

Coll: c. 1974 private collection

The 'unsuitable' title was probably provided by the gallery proprietor for the 1974 exhibition (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions).

Photograph by author

032 Japanese bathing c. 1972–73

Ceramic electrical insulator, rusted iron, galvanised iron and wood construction, plastic doll, wood; abt 40 cm high

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #18 (as *Jap bathing*), \$33

Coll: 1974 private collection

RG remembered her work thus: [Ray Hughes] had seen something of mine over in [Keith] Looby's who had bought my Japanese gentlemen having a bath. It wasn't ... funny. It worked visually, with an insulator, it was really quite nice, the colours ... After Ray Hughes saw *Japanese bathing* at the Looby's house he invited RG to participate in a group show called *Objects* he was planning to hold in early 1977 (1982 North).

Photograph by Helen Senbergs from author's archive

033 Joie de mourir 1973

Weathered sheep and cattle bones, rusted iron and wire, steel rods; abt 15 m long, dimensions variable; no inscriptions

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 16 Nov, 4 Dec 1972, 19 Apr, 16 May, 21 Jun 1973 RG to MG, pp. 39–41, illus. p. 41; Jacqueline Rees 1974; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 23 (with illus.); Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 40 (with illus.)

Coll: dismantled

The title comes from interviews RG did with Vici MacDonald and Robin Hughes (where it is spelt 'Joie de mourire'), meaning 'joy of death' and the opposite of 'joie de vivre' or 'joy of life' (as RG told Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 23).

Joie de mourir is the largest of four bone works made between November 1972 and mid-1973. Construction of *Joie de mourir* probably began in February or March 1973. BG reported in April 1973: *Yr m. has spent a happy morning in the scrap metal yard and then in Blackwood's the steel merchants, and a happy afternoon putting it all together on the croquet lawn, which some day I might get back, but I doubt it. But thank goodness she has learnt ... to buy proper steel in proper lengths and proper sizes* (7 Apr 1973 BG to TG). The work continued to grow and by 19 April there were: *now 18 yards of bone threaded on rod. Michael Taylor much impressed, in the dark. I am lying [in wait] for Jim [Mollison]* (19 Apr 1973 RG to MG, p. 40). She was still refining the work in mid-May: *I am still much concerned with bones and wld like a couple of free weeks to work through my ideas. Large looping bone sculpture on croquet lawn is waiting expectantly for Jim Mollison to visit it. He will be surprised* (19 May 1973 RG to TG; 16 May 1973 RG to MG, p. 41).

Looking back, RG remembered the work: *And so I made two bone things. One was a very tall thing called 'Last Stand' ... And also I did 'Joie de mourir' ... I threaded them on big pieces of wire and big pieces of broken pipe and, they started from a height and they were threaded on wire, and they went across the lawn and they danced everywhere. Sheep bones these were mostly ... they are part of the landscape, you see, and so I was drawn towards them. And it was actually rather beautiful. Especially if you got the same ones all together, all the vertebrae and all the thingos. But of course my mechanics were always bad, and is a nuisance when you wanted to cut the lawn. So you dismantled it and you put it up again. And in the end the bones, being out in the weather, rot a bit. And they won't thread because there's not a real hole. And so I dismantled them. I should have shown them really. Daniel Thomas looked at them once and said 'Have you ever shown those?' And I said nuh, nuh. But they were there, and they were lovely. And I've still got a lot of cattle bones* (1998 Hughes, slightly edited).



031



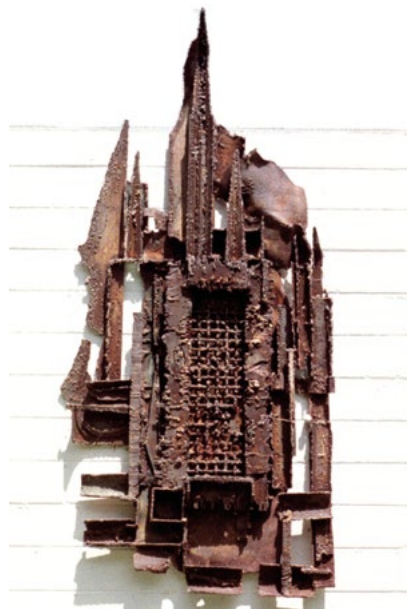
032



033



036



037



038

Much of *Joie de mourir* survived on the back lawn, albeit in different configurations, where it was photographed in May 1978 (see p. 90), but it seems to have gone by the end of 1979. Photograph from author's archive with Ben Gascoigne in background

034 Miss Neujean c. 1973

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #5, \$90

Coll: probably dismantled

The 'unsuitable' title was probably provided by the gallery proprietor (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). What the title signifies is unknown. NO IMAGE

035 Needle case c. 1972–73

'A flat rusted tin case a bit larger than a hand which had several small sheep bones resting on a hessian bed which had once been part of the case.'

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #39, \$75

Coll: 1974 Michael Taylor; destroyed

The description of the work was provided by Ben Taylor: *When we moved from Bredbo we went from owning two farm size places to a two bedroom flat in Canberra. By necessity Michael had a purge. Rosalie's work was left behind. A John Armstrong was also left behind* (Oct 2012 email BT to MG).

NO IMAGE

036 Parrot lady 1973

Weathered wooden box, corrugated galvanised iron, plastic doll's head and arm, rusted and galvanised metal pipe, printed cardboard images (Arnott's Biscuits logos from packing boxes), feathers; 51 × 44 × 24 cm; in 1994 signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: "PARROT LADY" Rosalie Gascoigne / c. 1974 / RESTORED XMAS 1994 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #20 (as *Parrot house*), NFS; 1995 *In the Company of Women* Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, WA, #52 (illus. p. 46); 12 Aug – 8 Oct 2000 *Side by Side* AGWA; 20 Oct – 15 Dec 2012 *Look, Look Again* Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, UWA (illus. p. 116)

Lit: 30 Dec 1973 RG to MG, p. 42; Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 25, 26, illus. pp. 24 (detail), 111; Review of books *The Australian* Aug 1999, illus. p. 26 (detail); David Bromfield *West Australian* 6 May 2000; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 36 (with illus.); *Into the light: The Cruthers Collection of Women's Art* UWA Publishing, 2012, illus. p. 116

Coll: c. 1975 Penny Coleing (from the artist); The Cruthers Collection (459/1989) (purchased from Utopia Art Sydney as 'Untitled assemblage' 1975); 2007 The Cruthers Collection of Women's Art, The University of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. CCWA 454), gift of Sir James and Lady Sheila Cruthers

Parrot lady was constructed in late 1973.

RG wrote about it at the end of the year: *I have a lovely mad woman in a box full of Arnott's Biscuit parrots that M[ichael] and R[ominie] [Taylor] admired yesterday. I feel a great flood of enlightenment every so often* (30 Dec 1973 RG to MG, p. 42). She would later recall: *I remember once making a box, and I had brought home a dolly's head that I had found under the railway station at Captains Flat and that doll had been through a lot. I just found her head, she had grey hair and a wisp and startled eyes, she was very dramatic, this dolly, so I put her into a box and I called it 'Parrot Box' [sic]. I stood it up on some iron and had some cardboard parrots cut out from the supermarket and whatnot. And I really thought when I saw it standing there, it was my, I really might make it. Just might make art you see ... I knew it was art, I knew it was better and somebody came and looked at it, I think it was Michael Taylor and said 'that's really very good'. Good* (1997 Feneley). *That doll's head worked for me, you can have fifty dolls heads and none of them work. One night* (1985 School of Art; similar references in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 26).

In 1994 RG inscribed the work, after securing several pieces that had come loose (7 and 15 Dec 1994 John Cruthers to RG).

Image courtesy of John Cruthers

037 [Shrine] c. 1972–73

Rusted metal and welding; abt 110 × 60 × 10 cm (irreg.)

Exh: No record, but possibly included in 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra

Coll: early to mid-1970s private collection (Canberra)

Photographed in the 1990s when curators from the National Gallery of Australia visited the owners (friends of RG's) to view their collection.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

038 Steam c. 1971–73

Steel and copper (from car radiator), dried grass (possibly African lovegrass, *Eragrostis curvula*), wood; 50 × 22 × 25 cm

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #12 (as *Steam jet*), \$50; 23 Mar – 15 Apr 2006 *Modern Australian Painting* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, #19 (illus.); 18 May – 9 Jun 2013 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Newcastle Art Gallery

Lit: *Artemis* [Newcastle Art Gallery Society magazine] vol. 41, no. 1, 2010, p. 8 (with illus.) and cover illus.

Coll: 1974 private collection; 2009 Les Renfrew Bequest, Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW

Image courtesy of Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW

039 Surveyor's pegs 1973

Painted wood surveyor's pegs, weathered painted wood or metal container; abt 50 × 30 × 25 cm

Exh: Oct 1973 *Life Style 70s* Myer department store gallery, Adelaide; 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #30 (as *Surveyor's peg*), \$75

Lit: 2 Mar 1973 RG to TG; 30 Sep 1973 RG to MG, p. 42

Coll: dismantled

Construction of *Surveyor's pegs* 1973 began in early 1973. RG wrote about her interest in the pegs and the work she was doing in a letter dated 2 Mar 1973: *Yr father and I drove around Kambah last weekend — the first suburb of satellite town of Tiggeranong. To coin a phrase, you just won't know this town when you see it again. It's amazing how quickly the countryside gets tamed. Surveyors sticks everywhere — mostly pine offcuts, richly daubed with flashes of yellow and blue paint. Actually, I am doing a nice line in surveyors' pegs at moment but I never steal a meaningful one ...* (2 Mar 1973 RG to TG). *Surveyor's pegs* 1973 was one of two works by RG included in an exhibition of art/craft in Adelaide (30 Sep 1973 RG to MG, p. 42). The container was possibly a battery box.

Image by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



039



041

040 The ballerina c. 1971–73

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #36, \$30

Coll: 1974 private collection

The 'unsuitable' title was probably provided by the gallery proprietor (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions).

NO IMAGE

041 Twig tidy c. 1972–73

Rusted metal (machinery part), dried, stripped and sawn thistle stalks (probably the variegated thistle, *Silybum marianum*); 64 cm high; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #42, \$100; 20 Jun 2018 Bonhams S., lot 16 (illus. p. 29)

Lit: Geoff de Groen *Canberra Times* 20 Jun 1974

Coll: 1974 private collection

Geoff de Groen described the work in his exhibition review: *No 42 consists of a very heavy steel section that is old and rusted (and may once have been used on a bullock wagon to carry massive logs) combined with dozens of lengths of thistle stalk stacked neatly between its uprights. The irony is obvious. Once, heavy loads exerted a force upon this massive steel. Now it is used to stack and keep tidy multi-diametered thistle sticks, so fragile they have been cut to equal lengths with a bread saw.*

Image courtesy of Bonhams

042 Two owls c. 1971–73

Rusted metal (machinery parts); two pieces each abt 8 cm high

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #9, \$30; 20 Jun 2018 Bonhams S., lot 15 (illus. p. 28)

Coll: 1974 private collection

Image (showing one of two) courtesy of Bonhams



042

043 Wired wool c. 1973

No record of materials (probably including sheep or cattle wool, wire mesh), dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #23, \$200 [\$20?]

Coll: probably destroyed

Probably related to, and possibly the same as, an otherwise unidentified wool work referred to in a letter dated c. 12 Feb 1974 (RG to MG) reflecting RG's interest in working with wool, which gathered on the barbed wire on fences where cattle scratched: *Jim* [Mollison] *had been out to* [Michael Taylor at] *Michelago to see large pictures for Theatre ... Said he had seen a nice wool thing of mine out there!*

The 'unsuitable' title was probably provided by the gallery proprietor (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions).

NO IMAGE

044 Woolly wood c. 1973

Collage of printed paper on plywood, weathered wood with stencilling; 74 × 44.2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #10, \$75

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 destroyed

RG became interested in collage in the second part of 1973 after meeting Michael Taylor and seeing his collages. The 'unsuitable' title was probably provided by the gallery proprietor (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



044

1974

045 **Back verandah** 1974

Weathered apiary box with weathered wood (including old furniture parts), galvanised metal brackets; 55.5 × 33.6 × 24.3 cm (irreg.); not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #7 (as *Back verandah*), \$140; 1975 *2nd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* Melbourne and Sydney (as *Untitled No 7* (wire, nails, hooks)); 1976 *3rd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* Adelaide (as *No. 7* 1974) (assemblage of wood inside a box, 58 × 33.5 × 24.5 cm); 1982 *The Philip Morris Arts Grant: Australian Art of the Past Ten Years* ANG (as *Untitled No 7* (1974)) (weathered softwood, galvanised steel sheet, wire, steel nails, hooks, 56.8 × 33.5 × 26 cm) (ref. p. 86 but probably not exhibited)

Coll: 1974 Philip Morris Arts Grant collection; 1982 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 83.3733), gift of the Philip Morris Arts Grant

Regarding the title, see the notes on the 1974 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions. The NGA worksheet has the title recorded as *Balcony* (crossed out) and replaced with *Untitled #7*. James Mollison did not like the titles given to works in the 1974 exhibition and simply called them *Untitled* (plus their exhibition catalogue number).

Photograph courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



045



047

046 **Balls** c. 1973–74

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #50, no record of price

Coll: probably dismantled

NO IMAGE

047 **Bath of balls** c. 1973–74

Weathered timber mitre box, rubber balls, willow (?) rods and twine/wire; abt 20 × 90 × 15 cm

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #1, \$45

Lit: Jacqueline Rees 1974, p. 3

Coll: dismantled

The problem is that people eschew simplicity. They feel they have to spend money. I have a range of tennis balls and coloured rubber balls in a box at the gallery (Macquarie Canberra). I found them near the Scrivener Dam [Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra], slipped from children's grasps. The children at the

gallery like to pick them up. This is as it should be, people happy with art (RG quoted in Jacqueline Rees 1974, p. 3).

Photograph from author's archive

048 **Bottled glass** 1974

Weathered wood box, glass shards and preserving bottles, rubber rings, weathered wood, metal label and reinforcing steel mesh; 50.9 × 35.2 × 14.2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #44 (as *Pickled glass*), \$150; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #1 (dated 1975) (ref., illus.); 29 Nov 2004 – 17 Apr 2005 *Kurt Schwitters Acquisition and Related Works from the Collection* AGNSW

Lit: c. Jan 1974 RG to TG; 25 Jan 1974 RG to MG, p. 43; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 15; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 25; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 37 (with illus.) (comparison with Joseph Cornell's *Untitled (Pharmacy)* 1950, The Menil Collection, Houston)

Coll: 1974 Gary Anderson (gift of the artist); 1991 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (Acc no. 338.1991), gift of Gary Anderson

Bottled glass was constructed in early January 1974. RG wrote about the new work later that month: *I bottled a box of glass last week. Bee box fitted with 2 shelves and 14 bottles (small Fowler) filled with shards of broken glass — all greens. Cool as a cucumber standing against light in sitting room. V.G. (c. Jan 1974 RG to TG; also 25 Jan 1974 RG to MG, p. 43). She later recalled: I made this piece for, I think, the first show I ever had. I was excited perhaps by the worn and broken glass. There was a lot of broken glass around Canberra those days before they started going hygienic and building trenches and burying all the good stuff. This is green glass ... Anyway I got all this green glass and at that time I wasn't conscious of [Joseph] Cornell or any of those people. I thought the only way to make glass viable is to make it safe because as we all know, glass cuts and scatters. So I bottled it. Those are just Fowlers jars. I put the pink rings on. That was an artistic concept. I put the pink rings on because they read. That is just a yellow label — it says something about rusting. I don't know where I got it from, it just looked right to me. That's one of the few first works where I actually bought something like Fowler jars because they were a good shape. No other reason. They showed off my glass the way I wanted it to be shown off* (1985 School of Art).

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



048

049 [Caged bird] c. 1973–74

Weathered wood apiary box, nails, string, parrot feathers, wooden inserts for powerline insulators; abt 80 × 20 × 10 cm; not inscribed

Exh: possibly 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 destroyed

There is a 35 mm colour slide dated March 1974 of this work, so possibly it was exhibited at Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, in RG's solo show there (as one of the untitled works). Destroyed in 2014 because it had disintegrated.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

050 Collection [1] 1974

Weathered wooden chair back, (rusted) metal containers (five or six units, assorted), painted or rusted iron nails, rubber bands; abt 40 × 10 × 10 cm

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #6 (probably as *Nail stack*), #66; 1975 *The Artists' Choice* Gallery A, Sydney, #30 (as *Collection* 1974), \$120

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 27

Coll: 1975 private collection

Catalogued as *Collection* [1] to distinguish it from a 1977 work with the same title. The metal containers come from country tips or old mining sites. The curved piece of wood is probably the same piece used as a platform supporting a stack of sawn thistle stalks in an ikebana construction in 1971. The 'unsuitable' title *Nail stack* was probably provided by the gallery proprietor for the 1974 exhibition (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). Inclusion of *Collection* [1] in the 1975 show at Gallery A was an opportunity for RG to rename the work.

Image courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (detail of installation view)

051 Deserted house 1974

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #45, \$150

Coll: probably dismantled

Regarding the title, see the notes on the 1974 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions. The works in apiary boxes were priced at either \$140 or \$150, which suggests that *Deserted house* was one such work or of a similar size. RG probably reworked or destroyed the piece; there is no obvious correlation between the 1974 title and later works with other titles.

NO IMAGE

052 Dunny door 1974

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #46, \$90

Coll: probably dismantled

The 'unsuitable' title was probably provided by the gallery proprietor (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). RG probably reworked or destroyed the piece; there is no obvious correlation between the 1974 title and later works with other titles. Going by price, *Dunny door* might have been about the size of *The cottage* 1974.

NO IMAGE

053 Enamel ware 1974

Weathered wood apiary boxes, rusted kitchen enamelware, nylon thread; 113.5 × 51.2 × 14.3 cm; signed and dated verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #30, \$450; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #13 (dated 1976) (ref.); 7–21 Oct 1982 *Australian Women Artists* Blaxland Gallery, Sydney (arranged by the Art Gallery Society of NSW), #29 (as *Enamelware* 1976); 10 Aug – 9 Oct 2005 *Wastelands: A Poetic Legacy* AGNSW; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #13 (incorrectly sized as 24.0 cm deep) (ref. pp. 42, 134, illus. p. 58)

Lit: 10 Nov 1974 RG to TG; Ken Scarlett *Australian sculptors 1830–1977* Thomas Nelson, Melbourne, 1980, illus. p. 214; Anne Kirker 1990, p. 18; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 14; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 106; Elaine Barker 1999; Daniel Thomas 2004, p. 16; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 42 (regarding Ken Whisson); Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view)

Coll: 1976 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (Acc no. 236.1976)

Dated on the basis of a letter dated 10 Nov 1974 in which RG described *Enamel ware* and included a sketch. Elsewhere, the letter also refers to the recent purchase of a Ken Whisson painting (*And what should I do in Illyria?* 1974) from Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, in October 1974. *Have a rather eye catching (!) piece on shelf in sitting room made of chipped enamel utensils in three bee boxes. You can't miss it, as the saying goes. Rather this: [sketch, which matches final work] some hung by nylon thread, some nailed to sides of boxes. A crumpled green pie dish, an aqua marine pot, a dreadful 2-tone tea pot, part-orange-flame and part white with round brown chipped spots. The big ever in top right box was a beautiful find in a paddock at Bungendore and just made up the set. The old enamel in the unchipped places still has a most elegant lustre. My first vision was to make a brown and white spotty collection but the frightful teapot and the green pie dish were so clamorous that I had to let*



049

050



053

them in, with solid wooden plinth it stands abt 4 1/2 ft high. I am waiting for Jim [Mollison] to pass a verdict (10 Nov 1974 RG to TG).

In 1985 RG recalled: *I had a thing about enamelware because I see it as being elegant ... I was very keen to make an elegant thing that was black and white. But in dumps things influence you. That teapot at the bottom I thought was a very vulgar little teapot. I went three times to that dump and the wretched thing kept getting under my feet and in the end I thought 'All right!' And it forced its way into my oeuvre ... As for that blue saucepan up there [the blue saucepan which is in the second layer], I am sure I got its placement directly from Ken Whisson, whose paintings I am terribly interested in. I suddenly realised I should put the shape across the work. That was a big departure for me. As I say, I started with no skills and very little awareness* (1985 School of Art; similar remarks about Whisson in 1999 Auckland AG). The Whisson work she had in mind was *And what should I do in Illyria?* 1974 (see Biographical Note).

In 2000 BG recalled the construction of *Enamel ware: A box in the AGNSW collection, with enamel cup, teapot. She wanted to have them hanging in mid air without visible means of support. I used transparent fishing wire, and to make the attachment invisible, drilled a hole smaller than diameter of a nail (from which I'd cut the head), pushed a wire through, and then hammered in the headless nail until it was flush with the surface. This was the invisible means of suspension* (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.).

Enamel ware was the work described in Elaine Barker's poem 'Mixed media' (Rosalie Gascoigne at the Art Gallery of New South Wales) (SMH 20 Nov 1999).

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



054

054 Friends and relatives 1974

Coloured glass shards, newsprint on wood panel; 21.8 × 22.0 × 11.3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #11, \$50

Lit: Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 44 (as *Friends and relations* c. 1974); Martin Gascoigne 2012, illus. front cover (detail)

Coll: 1974 private collection

A very similar work, *Friends* c. 1974–76, was exhibited 1976 Gallery A and 1977 Ray Hughes.

Photograph (with minor modifications) by author

055 [Glass insulators in box] 1974

Weathered wood apiary box, glass telephone-line insulators, weathered wood and wooden cement float, metal rests; 62 × 35 × 15 cm

Exh: possibly 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra



055

Coll: 1974 Canberra College of Advanced Education (cat. #101 asset no. G/488/26716) (written off in 1988)

Although *Glass box* 1974 is not identifiable in the 1974 exhibition list, a Macquarie Galleries statement dated 14 November 1974 records the sale of a work identified as (illegible) *Glass Box* \$150 to C.A.E. (Canberra College of Advanced Education, later University of Canberra). University records confirm that [*Glass insulators in box*] 1974 was the work.

Photograph from author's archive (from original in University of Canberra records)

056 Leaning piece 1974

Painted wood (builder's offcuts), rope, plywood; 28 × 80 × 5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1975 *The Artists' Choice* Gallery A, Sydney, #28, \$150; 29 Mar 2001 *01>01, A Centenary of Collecting* Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW Sydney; 2009 *Gallery A Sydney 1964–1983* Campbelltown Arts Centre and Newcastle Art Gallery (illus. p. 151); 2009–10 *Almanac: The Gift of Ann Lewis* AO MCA and touring (illus. pp. 19, 56)

Lit: Daniel Thomas *SMH* 8 May 1975; Nancy Borlase *The Bulletin* 17 May 1975, p. 55; Sandra McGrath *The Australian* 24 May 1975; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 27; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 41 (with illus.); Hannah Fink 2009, illus. pp. 151 (1975 installation view), 152

Coll: 1975 Ann Lewis; 2009 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Acc no. 2009.97), gift of Ann Lewis

Image (hung on wall rather than leaning) by Jenni Carter, courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney



056

057 Monument 1974

Weathered wood and metal construction, plastic doll's legs, broken ceramic electrical insulator with wire, nails; 42.5 × 22.8 × 13.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #24 (as *Leg room*), \$75

Lit: 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 44

Coll: 1977 private collection (gift of the artist)

In a letter dated 12 Feb 1974 RG wrote: *Am also collecting dolls (pink) from the dumps ...* (12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 44). The wood and metal construction was possibly part of a ventilator. *Boxer* 1976 makes use of a very similar ventilator. The 'unsuitable' title *Leg room* was probably provided by the gallery proprietor (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions).

Photograph by author



057

058 **Murrumbidgee Venus**

c. 1973–74

Weathered timber, wood, knitted wool garment, nails, toy plastic balls; 42 × 45 × 19 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #29 (as *Sweater girl*), \$90; 9 May 2007 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 20 (as *Murrumbidgee Venus* c. 1975) (illus. p. 47); 20 Apr 2011 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 33 (as *Murrumbidgee Venus* c. 1975) (illus. p. 77)

Coll: c. 1975 Murray Walker (gift of the artist)

The 'unsuitable' title *Sweater girl* was probably provided by the gallery proprietor (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). There is a 35 mm colour slide of the work dated March 1974.

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



058

059 **Norco (after Gruner)** 1974

Weathered wood apiary box, printed cardboard (Norco butter logos), wire gauze; 31 × 51 × 15 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #34, \$140

Lit: 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 44; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 30

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.472), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Also got nice Norco Butter cardboard carton stamped with blue cows. Am boxing them, with the front of box a cover of clever flywire, [made of] something synthetic, casts a blue haze like Gruner's cows in mist ... I think I'll go down later and climb J.B. Young's mountain of boxes and drag out a few spare cows. I like to have a lot ... [includes small sketch of a Norco cow] (12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 44). RG's reference to Elioth Gruner's 'cows in mist' is probably a reference to his large painting *Spring frost* (1919) AGNSW.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



059



060

060 **Pub** 1974

Weathered wood box, weathered wood, enamelware, sheep's wool, hand-coloured gelatin-silver photograph, wallpaper; 54.2 × 49.7 × 15.2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #21 (as *Lecherous O'Leary*), \$150; 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #47, \$350; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #2 (ref.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #1] (illus. p. 48, ref. p. 134)

Lit: 20 Jul 1977 RG to MG, p. 50; *Herald Sun* 19 Dec 2008, p. 75; *The Age* 16 Dec 2009, p. 20 (incorrectly captioned *The colonel's lady*)

Coll: 1976 Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, Tasmania (Acc no. QVM: 2001FS:29)

That one is a found photograph — somebody's uncle, somebody's relative, maybe the mafia, I'm not sure. I found that in a dump too. I found the actual old painted photograph interesting in itself, I wanted to take it home. Gradually it came to me — a man in a pub. I am very sympathetic towards those wooden country store pub places where you put your foot up on a rickety verandah and the wood is usually worn and there is an indifferent vine growing over the roof and nothing is terribly smart. So he stands there, either he is the barman or the shearer come to town, I don't know. He has got a found enamel mug full of foaming wool beer. I find that my works are finished for me once I can read back the feel that started me off in the first place. If I can be there, right! I can feel that wood under my feet, I can see that scraggly vine growing up there and I can see that sleeked-up man come to town to have his beer. That was an old box I happened upon. I find if I go out seeking for things, like I would like a box to do that, I don't ever find it or it's got no life in it. A new box never works for me (1985 School of Art).

The 'unsuitable' title *Lecherous O'Leary* was probably provided by the gallery proprietor for the 1974 exhibition (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). RG renamed the work before exhibiting it in 1976 at Gallery A. One country pub she knew that fits her 1985 description is an old pub at Gundaroo, now operating as Crowes Restaurant, which Rosalie had visited in the late 1960s when one of her sons had an interest in a house in the village.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

061 **Standing piece** 1973/74

Weathered corrugated iron, chicken wire, dried salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*) seed heads; 65.3 × 40.0 × 32.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: probably 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #16 (as *Harvest*), \$120; 1975 *The Artists' Choice* Gallery A, Sydney, #27 (as *Standing piece* 1974), \$250; 2009 *Gallery A Sydney 1964–1983* Campbelltown Arts Centre and Newcastle Art Gallery (illus. p. 151); 18 May – 9 Jun 2013 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Newcastle Art Gallery

Lit: Geoff de Groen *Canberra Times* 20 Jun 1974; Daniel Thomas *SMH* 8 May 1975; Sandra McGrath *The Australian* 24 May 1975; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 27; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 151 (1976 installation view)

Coll: 1974 private collection; 2011 Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW

Dated in part on the basis of a 1973 photograph which shows an earlier version of *Standing piece* that combines light and dark dried salsify seed heads. At some stage the dark heads were replaced with ones matching the lighter seed heads.

Image courtesy of Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW



061



062

062 **Tap** 1974

Weathered wood apiary box, metal objects of tin, brass, steel and lead; 51 × 35 × 15 cm

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #35 (as *Hard water*), \$140; 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #33, \$350

Lit: Mildred Kirk 'Assemblages as icons' 1976, illus. p. 163 (note, tap handle is turned 90 degrees); Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view)

Coll: 1976 private collection

The 'unsuitable' title *Hard water* was probably provided by the gallery proprietor for the 1974 exhibition (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). RG renamed the work before the 1976 Gallery A show. A mid-1975 photograph shows *Tap* on the mantelpiece in RG's sitting room.

Photograph from author's archive



063

063 **The cottage** 1974

Weathered wood box, metal cutlery, glass jar, plastic doll, feather; abt 55 × 30 × 10 cm

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #41 (as *Love in a cottage*), \$100; 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #10, \$300

Coll: 1976 private collection

RG's title in the working list for her 1976 exhibition was *Bredbo cottage*, an allusion to Michael and Rominie Taylor's house, but ultimately she decided on the simpler form, *The cottage*. The 'unsuitable' title *Love in a cottage* was probably provided by the gallery proprietor for the 1974 exhibition (see Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). A mid-1975 photograph shows *The cottage* on the mantelpiece in RG's sitting room, and a 1976 photograph shows it on the sitting room bench.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

064 **The cow** c. 1973–74

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #28, \$30

Coll: 1974 private collection

NO IMAGE

065 **The dredge** 1974

Weathered wood box, weathered wood, leather, cotton thread, metal sheet, nails, rubber balls; 82.2 × 38.7 × 17.7 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #25 (as *The dredge*), \$150; 1975 *2nd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* Melbourne and Sydney (as *Untitled*

No 25 (wood, leather, metal sheets, nails, steel buckle)); 1976 *3rd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* Adelaide (as *No. 25*); 1982 *The Philip Morris Arts Grant: Australian Art of the Past Ten Years* ANG (as *Untitled No 25* (1974)), weathered softwood, leather, cotton thread, metal sheet, steel buckle, nails, rivets, 82.2 × 38.7 × 17.7 cm; purchased Sep 1974) (ref. p. 86 but probably not exhibited)

Lit: 9 Jan 1974 RG to MG, p. 43 (with illus.); Nancy Borlase *The Bulletin* 15 Mar 1975, p. 52

Coll: Sep 1974 Philip Morris Arts Grant collection; 1982 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 83.3734 date 9.5.83), gift of the Philip Morris Arts Grant

Today has been notable, (1) for my new art work ... Very strong looking, evocative (of what?) and different from predecessors. I worked abortively all day yesterday ... this a.m. returned to my true loves and think I have pulled it off. Interesting to find that the finishing (conclusive) touch was something I got from your book [Seitz Assemblage] ... The base and the top piece are really due to [Joseph] Cornell's influence and change the whole concept. They are pieces of river-smooth wood — bits of broken cotton reel ... the twisted leather and irregularity of the buckets make it quite Bruegel-ish. Robust movement and the added colour of the [rubber] balls — not too bright — take on something of the colour of military decorations ... [letter includes a small drawing of the work] (9 Jan 1974 RG to MG).

RG also inscribed the back of a photograph of *The dredge* and included it with a letter to MG. The inscription reads: 2. shallower box than 1. Top and base added from pieces of giant cotton reel worn smooth by the river. Metal very blue-grey on black leather straps (old fertilizer spreader?) Two rubber balls fished out of river — one dull red and the other 1/2 blue and 1/2 yellow, placing of which is up to the viewer. For me they always end up as shown here. I think this box was used as chicken brooder — see nails down side where I tore sacking off.

Regarding the title, James Mollison did not like the titles given to works in the 1974 exhibition and simply called them *Untitled* (plus their exhibition catalogue number). The balls were lost when *The dredge* was exhibited in the *3rd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* at the 1976 Adelaide Festival (8 Apr 1976 RG to TG).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



065

066 **The politician** c. 1973–74

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #47, \$75

Coll: 1974 private collection

NO IMAGE

067 **Two lovely blue eyes** 1974

Weathered wood apiary box, weathered painted wood, rusted metal gardening fork, concreter's float; 80 × 20 × 10 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #19 (as *2 lovely blue eyes*), \$140; 25 Aug 2003 Sotheby's S., lot 255 (illus. p. 160); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[2] (illus. p. 49, ref. p. 134)

Coll: 1974 private collection

Vici MacDonald (1998, p. 25) records that RG: 'remembers the gallery owner frantically thinking up "unsuitable" names such as Baby Blue Eyes for documentation purposes'. The reference could be from English literature or popular music, and the end result might even conflate both. The literary source would have been Henry Fielding's novel *History of Tom Jones*, which includes the line: 'First, from two lovely blue eyes, whose bright orbs flashed lightning at their discharge, flew forth two pointed ogles; but, happily for our hero, hit only a vast piece of beef which he was then conveying into his plate, and harmless spent their force'. Looking at the work, it is hard to go past Fielding as the inspiration; nevertheless, the title could also be an allusion to the singer and actor Frank Sinatra, whose popular nickname was 'Ol' Blue Eyes' on account of his deep blue eyes. The allusion would have been prompted by the release in 1973 of Sinatra's highly publicised best-selling album 'Ol' Blue Eyes is Back'. If the title was chosen by Anna Simons, then this is the most likely explanation. A third and improbable source for the title is the song 'Two Lovely Blue Eyes' made for the Dutch market, which the Dutch singer and actor Marius Monkau had some success with in 1968.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

068 **Untitled #31** c. 1972–74

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #31, NFS

Coll: possibly dismantled

This work was one of three pieces in the exhibition listed as NFS (not for sale), presumably because the artist wanted to keep them. The others were *Parrot lady* 1973 and *Untitled #49*. Possibly *Untitled #31* (or *Untitled #49*) is the work subsequently known as *Adam and Eve* c. 1966–68, but in the absence of any details this can only be speculation.

NO IMAGE

069 **Untitled #48** c. 1972–74

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #48, no price recorded

Coll: probably dismantled

NO IMAGE

070 **Untitled #49** c. 1972–74

No record of materials, dimensions or inscriptions

Exh: 1974 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, #49, NFS

Coll: possibly dismantled

This work was one of three pieces in the exhibition listed as NFS (not for sale), presumably because the artist wanted to keep them. The others were *Parrot lady* 1973 and *Untitled #31*. Possibly *Untitled #49* (or *Untitled #31*) is the work subsequently known as *Adam and Eve* c. 1966–68, but in the absence of any details this can only be speculation.

NO IMAGE

071 **Woolshed** 1974

Weathered wood apiary box, weathered wood (some painted) (including hardwood fence dropper, steel nails); 50.8 × 35.4 × 14.4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1975 *2nd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* Melbourne and Sydney; 1976 *3rd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* Adelaide (as *Woolshed* 1975, 50.9 × 38.0 × 16.8 cm, wooden box containing other pieces of wood); 1982 *The Philip Morris Arts Grant: Australian Art of the Past Ten Years* ANG (as *Woolshed* 1975) (ref. p. 87 but not exhibited)

Lit: 10 Nov 1974, 8 Apr 1976 RG to TG

Coll: May 1975 Philip Morris Arts Grant collection (acquired from artist); 1982 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 83.3735), gift of the Philip Morris Arts Grant

Have also a very gentle green box with cross beams of fence posts (with holes) and sheep pens (as it were) made of bee box inner frames (for honey). Made after a visit to Yarralumla shearing shed (10 Nov 1974 RG to TG).

Woolshed was badly damaged when exhibited in the *3rd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* at the 1976 Adelaide Festival (8 Apr 1976 RG to TG).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

1975

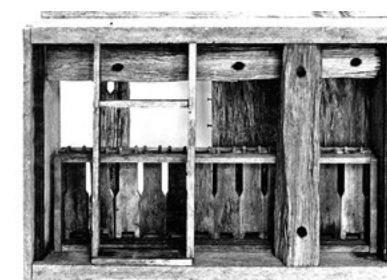
072 **Bird sanctuary** 1975

Weathered wood apiary box and other wood, steel construction mesh, metal gasket, glass jar with commercial birdseed mix, collage (including Arnott's Biscuits logos); abt 54 × 130 × 14 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #44, \$350; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #4 (dated 1976) (ref.); 14 May 2018 Shapiro S., lot 27



067



071



072



Lit: 15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55

Coll: 1978 Ray Hughes

Last week [was] full of decisions ... and packing things for Ray Hughes ... I sold him Bird Sanctuary (15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55).

There are photographs of *Bird sanctuary* on the bench in RG's sitting room in mid-1975 and 1976.

Images by Andy Stevens, courtesy of Shapiro Auctioneers and Gallery

073 Blocks 1975

Sawn timber, some with possibly bituminous linoleum remnants; two units (nine blocks on two plinths): (a) abt 125 × 15 × 30 cm, (b) 100 × 15 × 30 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #40, \$300

Lit: Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view)

Coll: dismantled

The blocks were later incorporated as bases for the linoleum shapes in *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80.

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

074 Blue flower tower c. 1975

Plastic flowers, rusted enamel jug, (oil) drums; abt 180 × 30 × 30 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #46, \$250

Coll: 1976 Michael Taylor; destroyed

Re dating, see *Flower tower 1* 1975.

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

075 [Bowls of balls] 1974–75

Weathered wood apiary box and other wood, rubber balls, rusted enamelled metal kitchenware, metal hooks, nails; 55.3 × 35.2 × 18.4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1975 *2nd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* Melbourne and Sydney (as *Untitled* 1975); 1976 *3rd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* Adelaide (as *Untitled* 1975, wooden box containing two enamelled dishes filled with rubber balls); 1982 *The Philip Morris Arts Grant: Australian Art of the Past Ten Years* ANG (ref. p. 87 but probably not exhibited)

Lit: Jacqueline Rees 1974; 24 Feb 1975, 8 Apr 1976 RG to TG — an unidentified review in a West Australian journal in 1975 included a large illustration of [*Bowls of balls*] 1974–75 labelled 'Assemblage' by Rosalie Gascoigne; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 25

Coll: 1975 Philip Morris Arts Grant collection; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 83.3736), gift of the Philip Morris Arts Grant

When James Mollison decided to acquire the work for the Philip Morris collection in early 1975, RG knew she had to make the work more secure, and in the absence of BG she called upon a neighbour to help: *Bob Gregory from next door came in and screwed up the box with saucepans and balls in it that Jim wants for Philip Morris collection* (24 Feb 1975 RG to TG). Despite her efforts, the balls were lost while the work was touring with the *3rd Philip Morris Arts Grant Annual Exhibition* at the 1976 Adelaide Festival (8 Apr 1976 RG to TG).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive; the balls were loose and later illustrations show them in different configurations

076 Doll's house 1975

Weathered wood (some painted/primed) and found objects, including ceramic insulators (?), china fragment, plastic doll's head and model cow; abt 70 × 60 × 30 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #31, \$400

Lit: 15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55; 12 Aug 1978 BG to MG; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view)

Coll: 1978 private collection

Ray came through and stayed one night ... Ray took 'Doll's House', too, to put in gallery. Wanted a few small pieces too but I demurred (15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55). *Ring from Ray Hughes yesterday* [11 August], *he had just unpacked the 'Doll's House', Ian Still walked in, said 'I'll have that', \$500 just like that* (Sat 12 Aug [1978] BG to MG).

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

077 Flight of parrots c. 1975

Printed cardboard (Arnott's Biscuits logos) on broken weathered painted and stencilled wooden roadside barrier; abt 115 cm long, width variable

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #6, \$150

Coll: dismantled

Dated on the basis of other 1975 works using cut-out parrots. In mid-1976 Matt Kelso photographed RG holding *Flight of parrots* in a country setting.

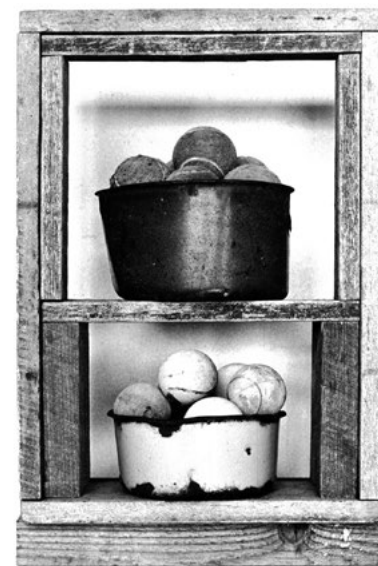
RG with *Flight of parrots*, photographed by Matt Kelso, from author's archive



073



074



075



076



077

078 Flower tower 1 1975

Plastic flowers, rusted enamel jug, (oil) drums; abt 175 × 30 × 30 cm variable

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #3, \$250

Lit: Hannah Fink 2009, illus. pp. 144–145, 146, 156 (1976 installation view)

Coll: dismantled

One of the two *Flower towers* is in a 1975 photograph with Michael Taylor at Anstey Street, Pearce (see p. 54). It is not clear which of the two *Flower towers* is illustrated or whether in fact it is a third tower; Matt Kelso photographed one of the towers in a country paddock in mid-1976.

Image (detail of an installation view of one of the flower towers at the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

079 Flower tower 2 1975

Plastic flowers, rusted enamel jug, (oil) drums; abt 160 × 63 × 76 cm variable

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #4, \$250

Lit: Hannah Fink 2009, illus. pp. 144–145, 146, 156 (1976 installation view)

Coll: dismantled

See note at *Flower tower 1* 1975.

Photograph by Matt Kelso from author's archive. A flower tower (detail) at Anstey Street in 1975 or 1976. Rosalie made several towers, varying the number and selection of drums and the flowers on top.

080 Heraldic beasts 1975

Printed cardboard (Arnott's Biscuits and Norco butter logos cut up and rearranged), weathered wood; abt 30 × 60 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #54, \$150

Coll: 1976 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

081 Interior decoration 1975

Weathered animal bones, weathered wood panel, nails; 35 × 56 cm; signed and dated verso l.l.: 'RG 76' and titled l.c.: 'Interior Decoration'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #20 (as *Bone board*), \$200; 1990 *Inland: Corresponding Places* Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, #6 (as *Interior decoration*) (illus. p. 11)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 27

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis of a mid-1975 photograph which shows *Interior decoration* 1975 by the fireplace in RG's sitting room. *Interior decoration* was RG's preferred title. The title *Bone board* used in the 1976 exhibition list and the dating of the work probably reflect the haste with which the list was compiled (see the notes on the 1976 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions). At Gallery A *Interior decoration* was hung on the wall (see image 078) but later it was displayed flat.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

082 Italian birds 1975

Weathered wood box and other wood (painted and split), wire mesh, metal backing and nylon thread, ceramic electrical insulator with wire (verso); 63.5 × 68.8 × 22.0 cm; signed and dated in black fibre-tipped pen on base at rear: 'R.G. 1976', and also inscribed verso on vertical edge of the box 'TAIL HOLDER'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #24, \$350 (dated 1976); 1977 *Acquisitions* Newcastle Art Gallery, #112; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #11; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #17] (ref. p. 134); 2009 *Gallery A Sydney 1964–1983* Campbelltown Arts Centre and Newcastle Art Gallery (illus. p. 159, image flipped); 18 May – 9 Jun 2013 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Newcastle Art Gallery

Lit: Anne Kirker 1990, p. 19; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 159

Coll: 1976 Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW (Acc no. 1976.050), purchased with the assistance of an Australian Government grant through the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council

Dated on the basis of a 13 Oct 1975 photograph. In a letter dated 23 Dec 1976 the Newcastle Art Gallery sought catalogue information and comment on the work or RG's aims as a sculptor. She replied: *I like nature and Art, and I make what I like to look at. 'Italian Birds' is made of pieces picked up over a period of time. The colours are as found, reminiscent to me of old Italian wall paintings and the shapes evoke the parrots at my bird table* (RG's draft response). RG spoke about the work in 1985: *That was a stylised thing, it was called 'Italian Birds'. The colours are very faded pinks, faded blues, faded greens, all found. I am never any good at putting paint on anything, it looks like paint put on. My colours are all there in the material before I start using them. I was looking at birds on my bird table in that sort of shape. There was a wire frame there, an old cupboard door or something* (1985 School of Art).

Photographic records show that the 'wire frame' was first used in another work in 1974–75.

Image courtesy of Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW



078



079



080



081



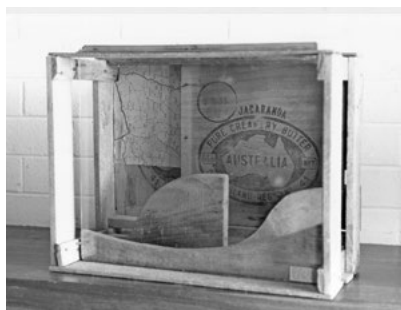
082



083



084



085



086

083 [It's time] 1975

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Norco butter logos), painted/primed wood; 9.5 × 52.6 × 4.3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: private collection

Dated on the basis of a mid-1975 photograph of RG's sitting room with the work on the floor under the bench.

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne

084 Jim's picnic 1975

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos), glass bottles, dried grass (possibly ryegrass, *Lolium perenne* or African lovegrass, *Eragrostis curvula*), wire netting, weathered timber; 44 × 75 × 22 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #25, \$350; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #21 (dated 1976) (illus.); 2006 *Blue Chip VIII* Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, #1 (illus. cover); 26 Jun 2013 *The Grundy Collection* Bonhams S., lot 25 (illus. p. 91); 15 Mar 2017 *The Gould Collection* Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 19 (illus. p. 71)

Lit: Mildred Kirk 1986, p. 513; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 15; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 31; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, illus. p. 23; Hannah Fink 'Jim's picnic' in Bonhams *Important Australian art from the collection of Reg Grundy AC OBE and Joy Chambers-Grundy* Sydney, 2013, pp. 90–93

Coll: 1976 James Mollison; 2006 The Grundy Collection

This one is called 'Jim's Picnic'. It was about a picnic and it was meant to be impractical, it was on a windy day on top of a mountain. This was an actual picnic. The wire netting I have used is a pretty sort of netting. It gives a good visual reading; in feel, it is mountain air. I was enclosing air with those spaces. The grass stuck in the bottles is as ephemeral as you can get, and it was to show this awful — it wasn't awful, it was a marvellous impractical picnic with the clouds coming over, the kangaroos hopping up and down. The kangaroos are the parrots, if you can bear the transition, but that was the life element in it and it was to capture the actual event. What are the parrots made of? You haven't been in the supermarket lately. You can get as many parrots as the kind girls in the check-out will let you by taking the Arnott's boxes. They haven't got the variety they used to have. You used to be able to get blue ones and red ones and I have had a great store of them and for me they're almost the animal in the landscape as Ned Kelly is to Nolan. I use them a lot (1985 School of Art).

James Mollison organised a picnic for Mrs John D. Rockefeller III, then president of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, who visited the ANG on Wednesday 16 April 1975 with members of MoMA's International

Committee. The picnic was in Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve outside Canberra. Rosalie was one of a few locals invited. Matt Kelso photographed the occasion (see Mary Eagle 2000, p. 30). Mrs Rockefeller and thirty-seven other committee members were in Australia for the opening of the MoMA exhibition *Modern Masters: Manet to Matisse* at AGNSW on 10 April 1975.

The original grass has been replaced twice, some time before 2006 and again in 2013. *Jim's picnic* can be seen on the bench in RG's sitting room in photographs taken in mid-1975 and in 1976.

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of John Cruthers and Bonhams

085 Landscape [1] 1975

Wooden box, glass, weathered wood, stencilled boards (from butter boxes), printed paper (map); abt 45 × 60 × 20 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #8 (as *Landscape*), \$350

Lit: Mildred Kirk 'Rosalie Gascoigne: A developing obsession' 1976; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 11

Coll: 1976 private collection (New York)

Catalogued as *Landscape [1]* to distinguish it from *Landscape [2]* 1976–77. Vici MacDonald (1998, p. 106) says it was briefly referred to as *Outback* (the title of a 1988 work).

Detail of a photograph by Matt Kelso from author's archive

086 Lying piece c. 1975

Weathered wood, broken ceramic telephone-line insulators, newspaper; 59 × 43 × 7 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1975 *The Artists' Choice* Gallery A, Sydney, #29 (dated 1974), \$150

Lit: Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 41 (with illus.); Hannah Fink 2009, p. 155, illus. pp. 151 (1975 installation view), 152

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The insulators rest on wads of newspaper, each made from a single page, folded. The newspaper includes *The Australian* of Friday 3 January 1975. Each of the twelve insulators is numbered in red on the reverse, with 1 being top right corner, 3 at bottom right, 10 top left and 12 at bottom left.

Image by Brenton McGeachie, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

087 Norco cows c. 1974–75

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Norco butter logos) on weathered wood panel; 44 × 73 cm; signed and dated verso 'R.G. '76' (there is also text from the original box)

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #37, \$175

Lit: 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 44 (original includes small sketch of a Norco cow); Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 30 (though her reference to 1969 refers to a work made much later — see [*Allowrie cows*] c. 1977; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view))

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.469), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Dated on the basis of photographic records. *Norco cows* does not seem to have been exhibited in RG's June 1974 exhibition so it was probably made after then but before mid-1975 when it was photographed in RG's living room. For many years *Norco cows* was displayed in the hallway at Anstey Street, Pearce.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



087



088



089

088 Peg rack 1975

Wooden pegs, weathered wood, galvanised iron; abt 20 × 36 × 5 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #12, \$60

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 26

Coll: 1976 private collection

Photograph from author's archive (detail of installation view)

089 Pink parrots c. 1974–75

Printed cardboard cut-out shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos) on weathered, painted board; abt 25 × 50 × 4 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #35, \$150

Lit: Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view)

Coll: 1976 Kym Bonython; 1983 destroyed *Pink parrots* was destroyed when Bonython's house near Adelaide was burnt down in the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires.

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

090 Pink window 1975

Weathered, painted corrugated galvanised iron on painted/primed wooden window frame; 116 × 104 × 10 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #39, NFS (as *Window*); 1977 *Rosalie Gascoigne* IMA; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #16 (illus.) (dated 1976); 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale* (uncatalogued) (ref. p. 51, illus. p. 68); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW; 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #[1] (ref., illus.); Dec 1994 *100 Percent Tracy* 24HR Art — Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin (ref. p. 2, illus. p. 18); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[3] (ref. p. 62); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[1] (ref. p. 37, illus. p. 57); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[5] (illus. p. 62, ref. p. 134); 2010 *Something in the Air* CMAG (ref. p. 9)

Lit: 'Exhibition Commentary' *Art and Australia* vol. 14, no. 2, 1976, illus. p. 138 (incorrectly captioned 'Window (1976)'); Pamela Bell *The Australian* 22 Apr 1977; 30 Mar, 28 Jun 1977 RG to MG, pp. 45, 49; Rod Carmichael *The Sun* 10 May 1978; Neville Weston *The Advertiser* 12 Jun 1982, p. 22; Ian North 1983; Elva Bett *The Dominion* [NZ] 5 Jan 1984; Ian Wedde *Evening Post* [NZ] 26 Jan 1984; JL Roberts *NZ Listener* 7 Apr 1984, p. 38, illus. p. 39; *Vogue Living* Feb 1986, illus. p. 113; Bob Lingard and Sue Cramer 1989, illus. p. 37 (1977 installation view); Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 16, 22; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 27; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 37; Robyn McLean *Dominion Post* [Wellington, NZ] 20 Feb 2004, p. B9; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view); *Art Monthly Australia* no. 232, Aug 2010, illus. p. 88

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

This is the first iron one I ever made. The pink and the shape and everything was actually as I found it, and I didn't do a thing to it. It was only after quite some months I realized it could sit on that window-frame. At the time I was on about the emptiness of the Australian landscape, and I kept thinking of a woman stuck out there on the plains standing at her window. She looks out, what does she see? Nothing. It spoke of loneliness or something ... and it got happier as time went on. The pink carries it ... the pink is very beautiful (1985 School of Art, also 1982 North).

RG associated the feelings of loneliness and emptiness with her early years on Mount Stromlo: *And the woman, left alone in her house, looking out to see if something was happening. Nothing. Absolutely nothing was happening. And there's a nothingness in the Australian landscape ... nothing happened on Stromlo a lot, you know. And people did sort of yearn for other places, familiar times, friends, all that (1998 Hughes: she talks about the early years on Mount Stromlo like this elsewhere in the interview).*



090

Pink window was usually displayed in RG's sitting room. Matt Kelso photographed RG and *Pink window* standing on the roof of the Anstey Street, Pearce, garage in mid-1976. Greg Weight photographed RG with *Pink window* in 1993 (Greg Weight, *Rosalie Gascoigne*, gelatin-silver photograph, collection National Portrait Gallery, Canberra (Acc no. 2004.110), gift of Patrick Corrigan AM). Similar window frames were used in *Takeover bid* 1981.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

091 Specimen box 1975

Weathered wood apiary box and other wood (some with paint), glass, metal, snail shells, nails, ceramic objects, wire, coloured engraving; 53 × 34 × 12 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 18 Oct 1975 *Capital Art* Anna Simons Gallery, Canberra; Dec 1975 *Artists for Labor* Anna Simons Gallery, Canberra; 27 Aug 1997 Christie's M., lot 207 (illus. p. 14); 22 Apr 2008 Sotheby's S., lot 44 (illus. p. 89); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[6] (illus. p. 49, ref. p. 134)

Lit: *Canberra Times* 22 Oct 1975, p. 15; Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 20, 25

Coll: 1975 private collection

Vici MacDonald refers to the work as *Moth box*, incorrectly dates it as 'about 1970', and incorrectly says it was the artist's 'first commercially shown artwork'. *Moth box* was a title sometimes used by BG. A very similar engraved sheet with plants rather than insects, and probably from the same source, was used in *Pet sheep* 1976.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



091

092 Straws 1975

Rusted iron ring, trimmed wild oat stalks (*Avena* spp.); 12 × 18 × 12 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #14, \$60

Coll: 1976 private collection

Image courtesy of Annette Larkin Fine Art, Sydney



092

093 [Study: thistle stalks] c. 1974–75

Weathered wooden box, sawn dried stalks of variegated thistle (*Silybum marianum*); 32 × 55 × 12 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: Fay Bottrell 1972, illus. p. 38 (for detail of cut thistle stalks used as in this work)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

[*Study: thistle stalks*] was once part of a larger arrangement of boxes with sawn stalks and other materials that was photographed in the hallway at Anstey Street, Pearce, in early 1975. Dated on the basis of photography of the large installation in early 1975 (at least some of which was constructed in late 1974). The installation was probably dismantled in 1975.

Image A from author's archive

Image B, photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive. [*Study: thistle stalks*] c. 1974–75, top right, in an installation in the hallway at Anstey Street, 1975



093A



093B

094 The Pepper Pot 1975

Weathered wood frame in shaped metal dish (weatherproof top of apiary box), weathered wood, some painted or primed, some split (including surveyor's pegs, old skirting and builder's offcuts), coloured printed postcards; 63.7 × 28.9 × 16 cm; signed and dated underneath in black fibre-tipped pen: 'R.G. 76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #11, \$300; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[9] (ref. p. 134)

Coll: 1987 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra (Acc no. 1987/0095)

Dated on the basis of a 1975 photograph of RG's sitting room with the work on the floor under the bench. The work incorporates a set of postcards depicting The Pepper Pot building and The Pepper Pot Inn, a popular nightclub in Greenwich Village at 146–150 West 4th Avenue, New York. The postcards date from the 1920s and were published by the Eagle Post Card Company. The Pepper Pot was well known for its Bohemian atmosphere. Legend has it that Al Jolson was discovered there. The Bridge Room on the third floor became home to Frank Marshall's chess club, where Marcel Duchamp used to play. Henry Miller's wife June Mansfield Miller worked at The Pepper Pot as a waitress in the mid-1920s and his novels include a number of references (referring to the club as The Caravan or Iron Cauldron).

In 2000 Ben Gascoigne recalled the construction of this work: *Pepper pot: a lot of components in a tall assemblage. I picked out the two main structural elements, explained to R what was entailed in selecting them as the determining structure, put them in place, and since other elements depended on those fixed elements, there were all sorts of minor changes* (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.).

Image courtesy of the Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra



094

095 Triptych 1975

Weathered wood apiary boxes and other wood, enamelled metal (incl. bicycle seat), corrugated galvanised iron, leather; overall 51.1 × 113.3 × 14.3 cm; signed and dated on each box underneath left front in fibre-tipped pen: 'R.G. "76"'

Exh: 18 Oct 1975 *Capital Art* Anna Simons Gallery, Canberra, #16, \$450; 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #16, \$450; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #12 (illus. incorrectly, with spout of white jug on right pointing outwards); Apr 1999 *Living in the Seventies* CMAG (illus.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[8] (panels incorrectly ordered) (ref. pp. 16, 134, illus. p. 59); 16 May – 13 Sep 2009 *Reinventions: Sculpture + Assemblage* NGA; 2010 *Something in the Air* CMAG

Lit: 12 Feb 1974 R.G. to M.G., p. 44; *Canberra Times* 22 Oct 1975, p. 15; John McPhee 1988, p. 60 (with illus.); *Canberra Times* Arts Extra 15 May 1999, illus.; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 154

Coll: 1976 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 76.582.A–C)

In 1980 R.G. spoke with James Gleeson about *Triptych*. The following is a slightly edited version of the transcript (pp. 7–9) (1980 Gleeson):

JG: *Triptych* ... seems to me to have that kind of real classicism of spirit which you find in Chardin still life or Morandi.

R.G.: *Well actually that's exactly what I was aiming at. I was aiming at dignifying that sort of material so that this air space is read ... And I was after that elegance of still life you can get with no sentimental overlays, but I suppose shapes and spaces reading in a classical way I think.*

JG: You mentioned that you had had some trouble with the way it had been exhibited in the past, that some of the boxes had been reversed, but there is only one right way for them to go isn't there?

R.G.: *Yes. That's right. And I have the three boxes in the Triptych are separate, so you put each one down separately. They have a front and a back. You can get a reading from the back of a box but that is not the right way. And I did at one stage have someone displaying it hanging on a wall, which tipped one of the shelves ... at an angle and it's the sort of piece that you do one thing wrong and the balance is upset. Yes. And so that is the right way as photographed here.*

JG: Now could we describe it?

R.G.: *These are discarded apiary boxes. And they have better sides, and worse sides. You don't want to change their weathered appearance you see. And so when I'm making anything like that and I'm using old timber, I put the best side, or the most interesting side, and the more interesting shade of grey to the front, and so to me I pick it up every time if anybody changes it.*

JG: So it's a very closely considered work.

R.G.: *Oh yes ... It's exactly as I meant it to be. Because when I was making it, you know, you make decisions. And I've got a red, white and blue colour scheme in it. And if you think ah, I will just put something in that coffee pot space and see, everything's wrong. If you change one element. And then suddenly it sets like concrete and that's it.*

R.G. wrote about her collection of bicycle seats in Feb 1974: *Am also collecting dolls (pink) from the dumps and any old bicycle seats* (12 Feb 1974 R.G. to M.G., p. 44). She knew and admired Picasso's bronze *Bull's head* (1942), cast from a bicycle seat and handlebars. When exhibited at the NGV in 1978 *Triptych* was displayed with the spout of the white jug on the right pointing inwards (correctly) but the catalogue image had the spout pointing outwards. When exhibited in 2008 at the NGV *Triptych* was displayed in the wrong sequence, although the catalogue image was correct.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

096 Vertical hold 1975

Weathered painted and stencilled wooden drink boxes, rusted enamelled kitchenware, old rubber/plastic balls; abt 176 × 22 × 42 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #5, \$250 (see p. 318)

Lit: Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 146 (1976 installation with side view of *Vertical hold*)

Coll: dismantled

Visible in mid-1975 and 1976 photographs of the bench in R.G.'s sitting room. Possibly the first work to incorporate soft-drink boxes — in this case a Sharpe Bros. box.

Photograph by Matt Kelso from author's archive. *Vertical hold* 1975 (detail); the outsides of the boxes were red and the bowls various shades of blue.

1976

097 Angels 1976

Rusted wire birdcage, plastic carnival sideshow dolls, feathers, ceramic electrical insulator on a weathered wood stand; 86.4 × 45.7 × 45.7 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #52, \$350

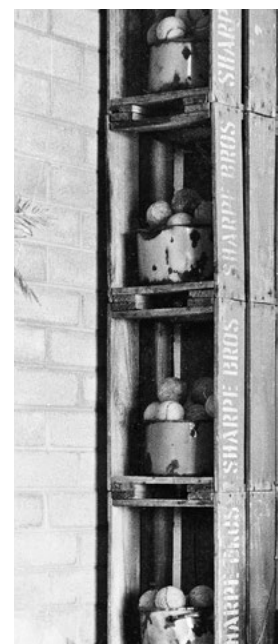
Lit: 8 Apr 1976 R.G. to T.G.; 30 Mar 1977 R.G. to M.G.

Coll: 1976 private collection (New York)

The birdcage looks very like the one R.G. found at the tip at Beechworth in north-east Victoria, which she had visited in late March 1976 while driving back from the Adelaide Festival: ... a bird cage of exactly the right proportions and decorated with a yellow motor-cycle N.S.W. number



095



096



097

plate (both last from the tip at Beechworth) (8 Apr 1976 RG to TG). At first the cage was used to house the iron sheep doorstop also found at Beechworth (see 8 Apr 1976 RG to TG; Matt Kelso photograph in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 64), but for Angels 1976 RG removed the number plate. The dolls came from an abandoned carnival sideshow found at the Bungendore tip near Canberra in the summer of 1976. Angels 1976 was photographed in mid-1976 in the hallway at Anstey Street, Pearce.

Photograph by Matt Kelso from author's archive

098 Black bird box 1976

Weathered wood cabinet frame and other wood, metal targets, leather; 77.6 × 50.8 × 21.2 cm; signed and dated verso: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #34, \$350; 1978 *Some Recent Acquisitions* ANG; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #8 (ref., illus.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[9] (illus. p. 50, ref. p. 134)

Lit: 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view)

Coll: 1976 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 76.585)

[This box is] *not romantic. I think the 'Tiepolo parrots' [1976] is romantic in concept. This I felt was more sternly sculptural ... I've got many visions of hens sitting on fences and things perching on things, and little groups of birds as they sit on wires and that sort of thing. And that's all I see. And actually that bird is from a sideshow shooting gallery. And he's terribly badly designed. I never thought of them as sinister. They're too chubby ... I think when I was doing that I was rather keen on having a no colour look. You know, sometimes you want to swing right into that grey ... Sort of tailored, a very tailored feeling* (1980 Gleeson).

The black birds came from an abandoned carnival sideshow RG found at the Bungendore tip near Canberra in the summer of 1976. *This also is a found object. It was a long leather strip with metal birds that people had been shooting at in a sideshow. I found it at the same time as the dollies and I cut them all up. I am so aware, especially in the Canberra winter, of the currawongs sitting explicit in each tree. There are black birds like that* (1985 School of Art).

Black bird box can be seen in a mid-1976 photograph of the bench in the sitting room at Anstey Street, Pearce; Matt Kelso photographed strips of the birds in a country setting c. mid-1976 (Mary Eagle 2000, end papers).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

099 Black birds 1976

Metal carnival sideshow targets and leather, corrugated galvanised iron strip, weathered wood; 13 × 16 × 14 cm; signed and dated verso: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #15, \$200; 25 Aug 2003 Sotheby's S., lot 265 (illus. p. 163)

Coll: 1976 private collection

See *Black bird box* 1976. The black birds were targets from a carnival sideshow which RG found dumped at the Bungendore tip in the summer of 1976. The curved wooden base is probably the backrest from a chair.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

100 Boxer 1976

Weathered wood and metal printer's plate; abt 42 × 23 × 10 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #50, \$200

Coll: dismantled

The printer's plate has an image of a boxer and was probably part of the trove from the dumped carnival sideshow found at the Bungendore tip in early 1976. The plate was in the studio in 2000. The wooden support might have been part of a ventilator: a very similar object was used in *Monument* 1974.

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



100

101 Bucket of flowers c. 1976

Plastic flowers, rusted enamel bucket; abt 50 × 50 × 50 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #22, \$150

Lit: 30 Mar 1977 RG to MG; 1 Jan 1978 RG to MG, p. 52 (referred to as 'Jim's flower bucket')

Coll: 1978 James Mollison

The flowers came from country tips. The bucket had been used earlier, empty, in a multi-box installation photographed in early 1975 (see p. 166 image 093B), and then as a container with copper ballcock floats.

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



101

102 Buttercups 1976

China shards, printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Norco butter logos), painted metal, weathered wood

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #43, \$250

Coll: 1976 private collection

Image from author's archive



102



098



099

103 **Carnival [1]** 1976

Plastic carnival sideshow dolls, rusted metal machinery parts, rusted polychrome metal container, wood; abt 50 cm high

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #2 (as *Carnival*), \$400

Lit: 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. pp. 144–145, 156 (1976 installation views)

Coll: dismantled

Catalogued as *Carnival [1]* 1976 because RG used the title again (*Carnival [2]* 1998/99). Its inspiration was an abandoned sideshow at the Bungendore tip in early 1976: *I have the house to myself for a fortnight and am busy sorting out my circus. Not quite, really, but there was this day in the Bungendore dump when I came upon a dismantled sideshow. Awe-inspiring! ... The place looks like sideshow alley at the Queanbeyan show. I suppose I ought to do one great circus piece — Jim suggested a whole show of just this stuff. Whatever I do, I'll have to quieten the whole thing down before yr father comes home* (8 Mar 1976 RG to TG). The family used to visit the Queanbeyan show in the mid 1950s.

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

104 **Cow** 1976

China shards, printed cut-out cardboard shape (Norco butter logo), unidentified material (possibly a broken ceramic insulator and rock); abt 15 × 15 × 10 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #9, \$60

Coll: 1976 private collection

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

105 **Cow antics** 1976

Printed cardboard shapes (cut-out and reassembled Norco butter logos) on wood panel; 35 × 51 cm; signed and dated verso l.r.: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #41, \$150; 25 Aug 2002 Deutscher Menzies M., lot 145 (illus. p. 162)

Coll: 1976 private collection

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

106 **Cows 4 ways** 1976

Printed cardboard (cut-out and reassembled Norco butter logos) on painted wood (primed builder's offcut); 130 × 56 cm; signed and dated verso u.l. corner (at right angle): 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #21, \$80

Coll: 1977 private collection (gift of the artist)

Displayed vertically in 1976 at Gallery A, but, as the title implies, the work can be displayed on any of its four sides.

Image from author's archive

107 **Cricketers [1]** 1976

Retouched newsprint on weathered wood; 15 × 91.5 cm; signed and dated verso: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #26, \$150; 3 Dec 2002 Shapiro S., lot 88 (as *Find the ball*) (illus.); [10 Jun] 2003 Shapiro S., lot 45 (as *Find the ball*) (illus.); 2009 *Gallery A Sydney 1964–1983* Campbelltown Arts Centre and Newcastle Art Gallery 105 (as *Cricketers (find the ball)*) ref. p. 229; 30 Nov 2017 Menzies S., lot 90 (illus. p. 178)

Lit: 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG

Coll: 1976 private collection

Catalogued as *Cricketers [1]* to distinguish it from another 1976 work with the same title. The images probably relate to the tour of Australia by the West Indies cricket team in the summer of 1975–76, although RG also had images from the 1974–75 tour by the English team. In March 1976 RG wrote to her son Toss: *Am interested in all sports photographs so keep on keeping your eyes open for me* (8 Mar 1976 RG to TG).

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

108 **Cricketers [2]** 1976

Weathered wood bottle-crate and other wood, retouched newsprint collage; 36 × 49 × 17 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG; 23 Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 58

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Catalogued as *Cricketers [2]* to distinguish it from another 1976 work with the same title. RG inscribed a photograph of the work (enclosure with letter of 23 Feb 1979): *I like [Cricketers [2] 1976]. Good clean weight and a real box.* She kept the work on a side table in the entrance hall at Anstey Street, Pearce.

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne from author's archive



103



106



104



105



107



108

109 **Crop [1]** 1976

Dried salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*) stalks with seed heads, galvanised wire mesh, galvanised iron sheet; 30 × 96 × 90 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #38 (as *The crop*), \$500; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #23 (ref.); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[1] (as *The crop* (1), illus. p. 9, ref. pp. 13, 16)

Lit: Janet Hawley 15 Nov 1997, illus. p. 44; Felicity Fenner 1999, p. 91; Daniel Thomas 2004, p. 17, illus. p. 18; Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view)

Coll: 1976 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (Acc no. 237.1976)

Catalogued as *Crop [1]* 1976 because RG made a second, slightly larger, version in 1981–82 for the Venice Biennale (*Crop 2*). She told Ian North: *you can just go out forever and find a good patch of salsify. You pick day and night ... You strip it down ... you cut ... It takes absolutely hours and the house is full of the waste products ... It means wide, horizontal landscape. Flat country. Flat, even grass growth or crop growth. Wire netting holding the air. That sort of thing. And it's about horizontals in the landscape, and I got that grey tin ... And this puts in ... another horizontal. I've got three horizontals in that thing. And this is the open paddock, really* (RG talking about *Crop [1]* and *Crop 2*, 1982 North).

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



109



110

110 **Dolly boxes** 1976

Weathered wood boxes (some painted), metal, plastic carnival sideshow dolls; 40 × 160 × 28.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #1, \$450 (see p. 58); 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #6 (ref.); 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #14; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[12] (illus. pp. 8 (detail), 57, ref. p. 134)

Lit: 12 Feb 1974 RG to MG, p. 44; 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG; Elizabeth Reeve 'Exhibitions' *Vogue Australia* Sep 1976, pp. 46–47, illus. p. 47 (detail); 28 Jun 1977 RG to MG, p. 49; *Acquisitions 1973–1983* UQAM 1983 (illus.); Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 25; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 48 (detail, see notes); Hannah Fink 2009, illus. pp. 144–145 and p. 146 (1976 installation view)

Coll: The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane (Acc no. 1979.04), purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council

RG found the dolls at the Bungendore tip in February 1976 (8 Mar 1976 RG to TG). Regarding the concept behind *Dolly boxes* 1976, and her method of working with them,

in 1978 RG told Robert Lindsay: *Well, I do think sometimes you say a thing definitively by repeating it. It's that old, old thing of a rose is a rose is a rose and you get the rose feeling out of it. In the same way that if you take a lot of something — if you're working with bones for instance, as I have done — a lot of bones will surround you with that bone thing and make you feel the feel of bones. I think the same goes for the repeated image of the beer can. You can as it were topple one beer can and in some senses you can't topple fifty ... I think one of the best examples I had of repeated images working for me was the time I found all the sideshow dollies in the dump. It is very hard when you find say 300 assorted dolls to know what to say, and they are obviously saying 'dollies', and so the only thing really that you can do is order them, arrange them, so that the essence of dolliness comes out of them. I found that I could do this by sorting them in to different sizes, different colour eyes — some brown, some blue — and order them in boxes. Alas, I took all their arms off because their arms were reading away from that hardened image. I found that something like 150 dollies in boxes says 'dollies' unequivocally. I wanted to say 'dollies' because I had a lot of dollies, I had 300 plus dollies, and they were too good, they were very exciting. When you saw a lot of dollies it was very, very exciting, and you wanted to sort of immortalise them into a work of art that wouldn't irritate you. It would have to be so tight and so firm and really so unsentimental that you just enjoy that dolliness of it* (1978 Lindsay).

In 1985 RG expanded on the thinking behind the work: *This is called 'Dolly Boxes'. The boxes can actually be moved. I never knew if I had people at the theatre, people at the football match, or whatever. They were the spectators and they were all encased in a very long box and I felt you could move them around the room and they could look different here and they could look different there ... Even the stove-in ones were very good. They knew a thing or two* (1985 School of Art; for similar remarks see Janet Hawley 15 Nov 1997, pp. 40–44).

Matt Kelso photographed RG with one of the boxes of dolls in a country setting in mid-1976. RG made several more boxes of dolls, using the same type of box, a detail of one of which is illustrated in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 48 (the dolls still have their arms) (caption incorrectly dates the box 1975). See [*Dolly boxes study A*] 1976 and [*Dolly boxes study B*] 1976.

Image by Carl Warner, courtesy of The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane

111 [Dolly boxes study A] 1976

Weathered painted wooden box, plastic carnival sideshow dolls; 14 × 31 × 10 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne from author's archive

112 [Dolly boxes study B] 1976

Weathered painted wooden boxes, plastic carnival sideshow dolls; two units 14.5 × 14.3 × 11.3 cm, 16 × 15 × 12 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.494), gift of Hester, Martin and Tess Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

113 Flora Galop 1976

Wooden cabinet with metal hinges, china shards and hand-coloured engraving; 43 × 36 × 10 cm; signed and dated verso u.r.: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #27, \$350; 1977 *Objects* Ray Hughes, Brisbane (as *Flora*), \$300; 20 Jun – 23 Aug 1998 *The Laverty Collection* MCA (ref.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[4] (dated 1975) (illus. p. 55, ref. p. 134); 2011 *Laverty 2* Newcastle Art Gallery (illus. p. 5); 24 Mar 2013 *The Laverty Collection* Bonhams S., lot 102 (illus. pp. 86, 167); 18 May – 9 Jun 2013 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Newcastle Art Gallery

Lit: 22 Aug 1977 RG to MG, p. 50; Mary Eagle 2000, illus p. 45 (dated 1975); Mary Eagle 'Flora Galop 1975–76' in Bonhams *The Laverty Collection* Sydney, 2013, pp. 166–167

Coll: 1977 Ray Hughes; Dec 1987 *The Laverty Collection*; Mar 2013 Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW

RG came across the printed image of the goddess Flora in an old music book she found at a dump. The music was titled *Flora Galop* and this was the source of the title for the work. *James Gleeson came to dinner last Wednesday ... This visit was a success. I gave him the music book that I got 'Flora Galop' [1976] from — he loved the engravings, which he [thinks of in terms of] collage. He is a very informed art talker (22 Aug 1977 RG to MG, p. 50).* A mid-1976 photograph shows *Flora galop* on the sitting room bench.

Image courtesy of Bonhams

114 Friends c. 1974–76

Printed images under glass shards on board; abt 10 × 50 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #49, \$100; 1977 *Objects* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, \$100

Lit: Pamela Bell *The Australian* 15 Mar 1977; 28 Jun 1977 RG to MG

Coll: 1977 private collection

Pamela Bell described the work thus: '*Friends*', for example is a chamfer board to which she has fixed, under fragments of old glass, small photographs of faces cut out from old newspapers and magazines. The glass fragments are subtly suggestive of personality or feature, or of some association with the face beneath (*The Australian* 15 Mar 1977). Images used included Leslie Walford, a fashionable Sydney interior decorator: *Jim said Pam Bell had bought my Friends and Relations [Friends c. 1974–76] from Brisbane — Leslie Walford and all (28 Jun 1977 RG to MG).*

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

115 Games table 1975–76

Assemblage of 21 objects made variously of metal, ceramic, plastic, shell, bone, printed paper and wood, wooden table; overall 87 × 74 × 45.5 cm; regarding construction and inscriptions, see notes

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #45 (as *Set table*), \$750; 27 Nov 2007 Sotheby's S., lot 42 (as *Table of found objects*) (illus. p. 79); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[13] (as *Games table*) (illus. p. 64, ref. p. 134, dated 1976)

Lit: 27 Nov 1978 RG to MG; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 47 (detail)

Coll: c. 1976 private collection (gift of the artist)

The desk drawer has a set of photographs and an 'Inventory' in the artist's handwriting, listing the 21 units on the tabletop, as follows: 1. Honey Flow, 2. Singleton Bridge, 3. Bird in Bush, 4. Party Piece, 5. Madonna, 6. Safety, 7. Vacancies, 8. Solitaire, 9. Scoreboard, 10. Counting Board, 11. Shells Tidy 1, 12. Shells Tidy 2, 13. Shells Tidy 3, 14. Lavender, 15. Hard Core, 16. Hard Tack, 17. Bone Tidy 1, 18. Bone Tidy 2, 19. Winkles, 20. Soup, 21. Betty's Butterfly Box.

Some of the units were initially displayed on the side table in the sitting room where they are just visible in a mid-1975 image (see p. 50). This probably prompted the final solution, after RG found the table used in the work. She gave the work to a friend who had helped transport and set up her 1976 exhibition. RG changed the title to *Games table* after it was exhibited in 1976.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



111



112



113



114



115

116 **Grey choices** c. 1976

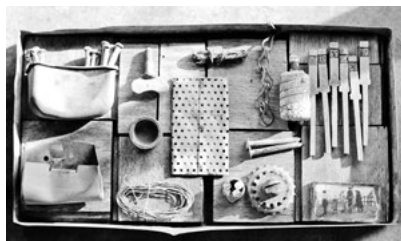
Found objects, weathered wood, metal tray;
abt 20 × 50 × 3 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney,
#51, \$150

Coll: dismantled

The objects include nails, a photograph, wire,
piece of chain, a cogwheel and weathered
wood builder's offcuts.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from
author's archive



116

117 **[High country cows]**
c. 1976

Pencil drawing on painted sawn wood (primed
builder's offcuts), wooden frame and backing;
30 × 50.5 × 6 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 30

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private
collection (by descent)

*I was doing the high country where the cattle go
up for the summer, then they're driven back down
for the winter. You just see these shadowy beasts.
Nothing there but grass and sun* (Vici MacDonald
1998, p. 30, who refers to cows that 'stroll
across pale pink fence planks'). RG hung the
work in the hall outside her bedroom.
The cow shape was drawn using a set of
stencils RG had found.

Photograph by author



117



118

118 **Joyful and triumphant**
c. 1976

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (cut and
reformed Arnott's Biscuits and Norco butter
logos), on weathered painted asbestos (?) sheet;
abt 20 × 56 × 1.5 cm (irreg.)

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: [26 Dec] 1978 RG to MG

Coll: c. 1978 private collection

In a December 1978 letter RG referred to
*my 'Joyful and Triumphant' cow panel I swapped
... for a work by John Davis, who had
proposed a swap when the two met at Davis's
show at Watters Gallery, Sydney, in July 1977
(26 Dec 1978 RG to MG). She admired his
exhibition (see 20 Jul 1977 RG to MG, p. 49)
and he admired her work. Dated on the basis
of similar works using reassembled logos.
The title comes from lyrics of the well-known
Christmas hymn 'O come, all ye faithful'
(also known as 'Adeste fideles').*

Image courtesy of Penelope Davis

119 **Mosaic** 1976

China shards, printed art reproductions, metal
cans, wood board; 83.3 × 51.0 × 2.5 cm;
not inscribed

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney,
#53, \$400; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #3
(ref., illus.); 29 Nov 2004 – 17 Apr 2005 *Kurt
Schwitters Acquisition and Related Works from the
Collection AGNSW*

Lit: 9 Nov 1977 RG to MG, p. 52; Janine
Burke 1990, illus. p. 36; Harriet Edquist 1993,
p. 13

Coll: 1976 private collection; 2001 Art
Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (Acc no.
459.2001), gift of Marie Sexton in memory of
Claire and Nano Kinsella

One source of the religious images was very
possibly *Fra Angelico* by Luciano Berti, a
Dolphin Art Book, Thames & Hudson 1968.
The copy in RG papers NLA has many small
excisions (NLA Acc 10.045 Box 20). Some of
the cans are probably cigarette tins. Sometimes
referred to by RG as 'Saints in sardine tins':
[there had been a] ... *letter from* [a friend in
Sydney] *who had just been to a 'hanging party'
[at a patron's new home]. My Saints in sardine
tins [Mosaic] a great success in this elegant house*
(9 Nov 1977 RG to MG, p. 52).

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery
of New South Wales, Sydney



119

120 **Parrot morning** 1976

Painted metal (including bicycle wheel),
weathered wood, printed cut-out cardboard
shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos); 71.9 × 66.6
× 59.7 cm; inscribed in fibre-tipped pen on
base: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney,
#32 (as *Tree tops*), \$400; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne*
NGV, #10 (dated 1977) (ref.); 7 Dec 1978
Selected Works from the Michell Endowment
NGV, #18; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #14
(illus. p. 52, ref. p. 134); 2010 *Something in the
Air* CMAG

Lit: Mildred Kirk 'Rosalie Gascoigne:
A developing obsession' 1976; 21 Apr 1977
RG to MG, p. 46; 30 Jan 1996 RG to John
McPhee (NGV artist file AO 157); Hannah
Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation view)

Coll: 1976 National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne (Acc no. 1996.108), Michell
Endowment 1976, transferred to the
permanent collection 1996

RG's preferred title was *Parrot morning*, although
the work was exhibited as *Tree tops* in 1976.
She corrected the title in 1977: *Last Thursday
I had Jennifer Phipps from Australian section of the
National Gallery of Victoria [after] sudden telephone
call and ensuing scuffle but a pleasant visit. She is
a gentle girl with pretty manners and I got [the title
of] 'Tree Tops' [in the NGV collection] changed
to Parrot Morning* (21 Apr 1977 RG to MG).



120

RG confirmed this in a 1996 letter to John McPhee (then a curator at the NGV) where she made the following additional comment: *I'd like to make one other point. I chose the blue bicycle wheel because of the strong blue paint. To me the spokes symbolise shafts of light striking through the trees. It is not meant to be (the wheel) a symbol of travel which is an interpretation put on it years ago by a senior curator. I remember choosing and using things for their look and their feel but never for their function* (30 Jan 1996 RG to McPhee). Photographed in mid-1976 in the dining room at Anstey Street, Pearce.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

121 Pet sheep 1976

Glass (car window?), painted cast-metal sheep (doorstop), engravings on paper, weathered plywood formboard, painted metal; 46 × 48 × 25 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #36, NFS

Lit: 8, 14 Apr 1976 RG to TG; 1987 Havyatt; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 64 (1st state); Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Constructed between April and August 1976, RG found the sheep in Bendigo and first placed it in an old birdcage found in Beechworth in north-eastern Victoria, as she described in a letter in April 1976: *We did Ballarat and Bendigo in some depth — Bendigo was the better town for junk. I bought a lovely sheep doorstop — genuine, not recent copy. It now is comfortably housed in a birdcage of exactly the right proportions and decorated with a yellow motor-cycle N.S.W. number plate (both last from the tip at Beechworth). Looks like a comfortable little convict sheep — a trusty because cleverly proportioned door of cage is rigidly ajar* (8, 14 Apr 1976 RG to TG). The work in this early state was photographed by Matt Kelso in mid-1976 (Mary Eagle 2000, back end papers). RG then tried again, resulting in the present work. It was BG who worked out how to hold the glass screen in place (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.). Saskia Havyatt visited RG on 24 April 1987 and recorded RG's remarks about the metal sheep: *It's one of the genuine ones, not a copy, and they had that paint on it, Rosalie tells me. I thought he was lucky he was allowed into the flower garden (... that's a page out of an old [botanical] dictionary behind him) ... a lot of sheep aren't!* A very similar engraved sheet of insects, probably from the same source, was used in *Specimen box* 1975.

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne from author's archive

122 [Seaside] 1976

Vintage postcard, weathered painted wood, weathered glass; 14 × 20 × 9.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1976 private collection (gift of the artist)

Printed photographic coloured postcard with imprint on lower edge: '2303. Le Heure du Bain' (l.l.) and 'LUC-sur-MER' and verso 'AQUA-PHOTO / L.V. & CIE Paris' (l.l. edge). Addressed with two-word text (illeg.) from Marthe to Mons. Gaston Deacony (?), 14 rue des Mimines / Paris, with stamp dated 13 31 07 from Caen Calvado (?).

Image courtesy of Warwick Reeder



121



122

123 Sideboard piece 1976

Dried flowers of the variegated thistle (*Silybum marianum*), rusted enamelled metal kitchenware, glass windscreen, metal brackets, weathered wood; abt 36 × 132 × 25 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #48, \$450

Coll: 1976 private collection

Image from author's archive



123

124 Small parrot 1976

Printed cut-out cardboard shape (Arnott's Biscuits logo), unidentified metal objects, lidded metal container for L. G. Russell's UK Hertzite crystals, ceramic beads, weathered wood; abt 15 cm high

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #19, \$60

Coll: 1976 private collection

The parrot is perched on the unidentified piston-like (?) metal objects and leans towards 'birdseed' beads in the opened container.

Image courtesy of Daniel Thomas



124

125 Strung up 1976

China shards, weathered wood; 16 × 21.8 cm; signed and dated verso: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #13, \$60

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Image from author's archive



125

126 [Study: horses] 1976

Newsprint, wooden board; 41.5 × 47 cm;
not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 destroyed

In March 1976 RG referred to her collage of horses: *Have just done a collage of rumps of race horses kindly provided by ... The Age. Am interested in all sports photographs so keep on keeping your eyes open for me* (8 Mar 1976 RG to TG). The images are from *The Age* 27 February 1976 *Yearlings sale supplement*, p. 6. [Study: horses] can be seen in a mid-1976 photograph stored under the bench in the sitting room.

Image from author's archive



126

127 The colonel's lady 1976

Wooden painted cabinet with found objects made of wood, metal, cardboard, plastic and printed paper (including beer can, plastic doll's head and body, shotgun cartridges, metal labels, shoe-polish cans); 39.1 × 59.7 × 8.8 cm; signed and dated verso u.l.: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #7 (as *Colonel's lady*) (dated 1975), \$350; 1978 *Some Recent Acquisitions* ANG; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #5 (as *The colonel's lady*) (ref., illus.); 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #2] (ref., illus.); 1984 *Australian Sculpture Now* NGV (catalogued, illus. p. 94, but probably not exhibited); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #2] (illus. p. 28); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #11] (illus. p. 56, ref. p. 134); 16 May – 13 Sep 2009 *Reinventions: Sculpture + Assemblage* NGA

Lit: TJ McNamara *NZ Herald* 2 Apr 1984; *Friends of Govett-Brewster Art Gallery Newsletter* no. 36, 1984, illus.; Mildred Kirk 1986, p. 513; Anne Kirker 1989, pp. 52–55; Anne Kirker 1990, p. 18; Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 14, 18; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 27; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 43; William McAloon 2004

Coll: 1976 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 76.583)

RG spoke with James Gleeson about *The colonel's lady*: *This I did to enjoy myself. And I think I wouldn't have done it if I hadn't happened upon that, it's a red first-aid box. And red isn't a colour I usually use a lot. But if you've got a red box, the only thing to do is go along with it ... I felt it's the Coles' [Funny] Picture Book approach. Sort of busy fingers. And you crowd, load, every raft with oars they say. And I found that I was getting a sort of semi-military overtone to it. And that sort of led me along to the rifle [shotgun] shells and even this man boxing, it was fairly belligerent, and this, these Kiwi boots, polished things, looking military, yes, and insignia, they've got that firm pattern. And so*

[the doll] *becomes the colonel's lady ... She's one of those well-groomed army wives, you know, and there's his, his military conformity there and she's being a good unthreatening army wife ...*

JG: You're not working on a literary concept? ... You didn't start off with the idea of making a box called 'The Colonel's Lady'?

No, no, no. I think if you do that, the whole thing gets very stolid and you push your point home. That's what [Francis] Bacon says, long diatribes through the brain, I hate them. I like allusion and elusiveness and I like change in the ground. I started off making a box that was crammed tight with pattern, you see, and I had these engaging postcards that people had sent me you see. And I had a lot of the Waratah labels ... I might as well enjoy myself. I mean I'm not going to be cold coolly classical like there. I'm going to enjoy myself. And that sort of thing is fun to do. [J.G.: The title came well after?] It was her blue eyes. And I thought well, a title, that's a good thing in a way to have ... (1980 Gleeson, slightly edited).

The title comes from a Rudyard Kipling verse — the final stanza of 'The ladies', first published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* 2 May 1895 (and first collected in *The seven seas* (1896)).

The stanza reads:

What did the Colonel's Lady think?

Nobody never knew.

Somebody asked the Sergeant's wife

An' she told 'em true!

When you get to a man in the case,

They're like as a row of pins —

For the Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady

Are sisters under their skins!

BG recalled that these lines were very well known in his youth (and hers). RG's reference to 'well-groomed army wives' may be a reference to the major general's wife who lived next door in Deakin. Concerning the Cascade beer can used in the work, RG began a letter to Tasmanian Breweries in Hobart: *The first beer can I ever used was a faded pink Cascade can, and the work in question was bought by the Australian National Gallery ... I must congratulate you on having one of the best designed beer cans in Australia* (c. May 1978 RG to LW Wilkins).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

128 The phone call 1976

Printed images under glass shards on weathered board; abt 15 × 15 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #17, \$100

Coll: possible gift of the artist to a private collector

The phone call 1976 is a small work similar to *Friends and relatives* 1974 and *Friends* c. 1974–76. Description based on MG's recollection of the work in the owner's house.

NO IMAGE



127

129 Tiepolo parrots 1976

Weathered wood boxes, printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos), weathered and stained wood, some stencilled, rusted nails; 61.2 × 56.4 × 23 cm; signed and dated verso: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #42, \$350; 1978 *Some Recent Acquisitions* ANG (ref.); 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #7 (as Tiepolo birds, ref., illus.); 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #[3] (ref., illus.); Apr 1999 *Living in the Seventies* CMAG (illus.); Apr 2008 *Treescape* NGA; 2009 *Gallery A Sydney 1964–1983* Campbelltown Arts Centre and Newcastle Art Gallery (as *Tiepolo's parrots*) (illus. p. 158)

Lit: James Mollison and Laura Murray (eds) *Australian National Gallery: An introduction* ANG, Canberra, 1982, illus. p. 265 (as *Tiepolo's parrots*); Elva Bett *The Dominion* [NZ] 5 Jan 1984; Donald Williams 1987, illus. p. 143; John McPhee 1988, illus. p. 60; Anne Kirker 1990, p. 18; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 13; Glenis Israel *Artwise: Visual arts 7–10* Jacaranda Press, Milton, QLD, 1997, p. 78; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 27, 106 (as *Tiepolo birds*); Helen Musa *Canberra Times* 15 May 1999; Hannah Fink 2009, p. 159

Coll: 1976 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 76.584)

Yes, these are the Arnott's [parrots]. I think I had been looking at a lot of books perhaps about Pompeii, and those walls ... the frescoes and the wall that has decayed and just these old faded paintings. And I'd seen the Tiepolo ceiling down at the [National] Gallery, and I was very much on about fade and those beautiful pink green blue Italian colours ... specially those Italian colours somehow ... and it's sort of that dimly perceived pattern. And so most of those parrots had been actually on [cardboard] boxes that had been out in the weather and they'd taken a fade. The ones on the top panel were a line of parrots that Arnott's used to put out that were blue. I don't think they put them out now. And I had a lot of those. And then I think I sort of worked it up and the top part I was also, I suppose, thinking a little bit about those biblical paintings, you know, loaves and fishes and things all crowding together. And what I went for was the feel, and I knew when I had a feel that made me feel that way and so that suddenly arrived. It had been, whatever it was, whatever it was, and nobody was saying what it was, it was an arrived statement. It was something You see what I mean. And I had a lot of trouble with the bottom part because I wanted to keep the flat feel. The whole thing was that you didn't want something coming out the front. It was about walls and things. But still I had that ledge at the bottom. That had actually two boxes, one put on another ... They're bolted there. I think it had come down the river, it had a very good weathering on it. And this unlikely piece here is an egg box ... [As for the text] what I like to think is that you don't have to read that. It just

happens to make an artistic statement with this: that is the right weight, the right pattern, the right fade ... Eventually it worked (1980 James Gleeson).

The Tiepolo ceiling RG refers to is Giambattista Tiepolo's *Marriage allegory* c. 1737–47, which the ANG bought in 1974 (Acc no. 74.377).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

130 Travelling hopefully 1976

Plastic flowers, honey can, wood, metal scooter; abt 300 × 300 × 20 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #28, \$250

Lit: Hannah Fink 2009, illus. p. 153 (1976 installation)

Coll: dismantled

Image (detail of an installation view of the 1976 exhibition) courtesy of the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

131 [Two blue cows] c. 1976

China shards, printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Norco butter logos), weathered painted wood (primed builder's offcut); 12 × 39 × 4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1977 private collection (gift of the artist)

Image from author's archive

132 [Two children] c. 1976

Photograph, glass sheet, painted Masonite pegboard, metal clip; 21 × 17.2 × 2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.477), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

The photograph was part of the trove of material from a travelling carnival sideshow that RG found at the Bungendore tip in 1976.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

133 Victoriana 1976

Dried salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*) flowers (petals retained) in a rusted metal container (probably a discarded flower pot made from tin cans, with curled legs from the same metal); overall 19 × 16 cm diam. (container 11.5 cm high); not inscribed

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #29, \$60

Coll: 1976 private collection

Image courtesy of Daniel Thomas



129



130



132



131



133



134



135



137A



137B



136



138

134 Winter morning 1976

Weathered painted/primed wood (builder's offcuts), printed cut-out cardboard shape (Arnott's Biscuits logo), plywood, rusted metal machinery parts; 20.5 × 48 × 16.5 cm; signed and dated verso l.l.: 'R.G. '76'

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #18, \$200; 29 Mar 2001 *01>01, A Centenary of Collecting* Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW Sydney (illus. p. 15, ref. p. 23 ff.); 2009 *Gallery A Sydney 1964–1983* Campbelltown Arts Centre and Newcastle Art Gallery (illus. p. 161); 2009–10 *Almanac: The Gift of Ann Lewis* AO MCA and touring (illus. p. 19, ref. p. 56)

Coll: 1976 Ann Lewis; 2009 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Acc no. 2009.98), gift of Ann Lewis

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

135 Yellow hand 1976

Found objects, including plastic flowers, metal signalling hand and storage containers for pesticide and saline; abt 50 × 15 × 15 cm

Exh: 1976 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Gallery A, Sydney, #23 (as *Yellow hand*), \$250; 1977 *Objects* Ray Hughes, Brisbane (as *Hand and flowers*) (illus. on poster)

Lit: Pamela Bell *The Australian* 15 Mar 1977; 30 Mar 1977 RG to MG

Coll: dismantled

RG's initial working title was *Welcome hand* and later she referred to it as *Hand and flower*. Ray got two nice photos of *Hand and Flower and Room with a View* done by his photographer. I am getting copies. He sent them off to Art and Australia who said they couldn't possibly print them as there had been two in last issue (30 Mar 1977 RG to MG).

Pamela Bell's review in *The Australian* included the following description of the work: 'In another exercise, a couple of old tins, a yellow hand (a vehicle turn indicator), a piece of wrist-shaped faded pink wood and a bunch of faded plastic flowers change in to a strange rubbish-dump icon' (*The Australian* 15 Mar 1977).

Image from Ray Hughes Gallery poster in author's archive, reproduced courtesy of Evan Hughes

1977

136 [Allowrie cows] c. 1977

Collage of printed metal on cut-out cardboard shapes (Norco butter logos), stencilled plywood, weathered wood; 62 × 42 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 30 (with illus.) (see notes)

Coll: c. 1981 private collection (United Kingdom) (gift of the artist)

Dated on the use of cut metal, which was also used in [*Homage to Ken Whisson's And what should I do in Illyria?*] 1977. The printed metal is from honey tins and the stencilled plywood from an Allowrie butter box. Vici MacDonald incorrectly dated the work 1969 and suggested it was the first use of cow images.

Image courtesy of Douglas Townsend

137 Blue water 1977

Weathered wood and mixed media, including ceramic electrical insulator, rubber, galvanised iron pipe, plastic, printed metal and nails; 20.7 × 56 × 12 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1977 *Objects* Ray Hughes, Brisbane (probably as *Blue waters*), \$250; 19 Jan 2011 *Autumn Exhibition: Important Works 1970s–1990s* Annette Larkin Fine Art, Sydney; 30 Nov 2011 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 45 (illus. p. 87)

Lit: [c. 7 Mar] 1977 RG to MG; Michael Bogle *Vogue Living* Mar 1989, illus. p. 84

Coll: 1977 private collection

The printed metal comes from Tooheys beer cans, a Capstan cigarette tin, Lysaght galvanised iron sheet and a fire extinguisher. The rubber is non-slip matting and the plastic hands are from fairground sideshow kewpie dolls. There is an undated photograph of an earlier version of the work, in which a pink doll's head was used instead of the flag at the left rear in the right-hand compartment (late 1976 or early 1977).

Image A courtesy of Menzies Art Brands
Photograph B (*Blue water* 1977, first version) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

138 [Bottle and fish] c. 1974–77

Glass bottle, nylon thread, painted metal (fish), postcard (from Hawaii); 24 × 9.3 cm diam.; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Displayed in RG's dining room for many years.

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne from author's archive

139 **Collection [2]** 1977

Weathered metal containers, broken glass, printed paper, raw wool, weathered painted wood; 14 × 38.3 × 3.2 cm; signed and dated on label verso: 'ROSALIE / GASCOIGNE / 1977'

Exh: 1977 *Objects* Ray Hughes, Brisbane (as *Collection*), \$100; 20 Jun 2018 Bonhams S., lot 105 (illus. p. 119)

Coll: 1977 private collection

Catalogued as *Collection [2]* to distinguish it from a 1974 work with the same title.

The metal containers are old pill or lozenge containers, or similar. RG experimented with images of butterflies in two other pieces in 1976, visible in mid-1976 photographs of the sitting room bench but subsequently dismantled. Image courtesy of Bonhams, Sydney

140 **Country air** 1977

Weathered painted corrugated galvanised iron, weathered wood, plywood; four panels, each abt 92 × 75 × 12 cm; panels numbered in sequence verso

Exh: 1977 *Rosalie Gascoigne* IMA (illus. 1st state, installation views); 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #17 (2nd state) (ref.); 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #15 (2nd state), \$2000; 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale*, #1 (dated 1978) (VAB cat. ref. pp. 51, 57, illus. p. 58; *Catalogue generale* ref. p. 82); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW (ref.); Apr 1999 *Living in the Seventies* CMAG

Lit: mid-Nov 1976 RG to TG; 7, 30 Mar 1977 RG to MG, p. 45; Pamela Bell *The Australian* 22 Apr 1977; 28 Jun 1977 RG to MG, pp. 48–49; 4 Jul 1977 RG to MG; Rod Carmichael *The Sun* 10 May 1978; Dianne Byrne *The Australian* 21 Jun 1979; Bob Lingard and Sue Cramer 1989, illus. p. 37 (1977 installation view); Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 11, 22; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. pp. 12 (2nd state), 13 (1st state)

Coll: 1979 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 79.2242.A–D)

In 1980 RG spoke with James Gleeson about *Country air* 1977 (and other works): *Well it's made up of four pieces ... they are sheets of very heavy galvanised iron I started with. And they'd been weathered and dented. I presented them exactly as I found them and they actually had come off the Canberra Brickworks. They were unpicking it ... I got four panels that were more or less the same size and they were the same quality of iron. You realise after you've been collecting galvanised iron for a while, there's very different qualities. That [had a] very heavy quality and it had a very good sort of greeny painted tinge to it that gave it a sort of elegance and interest ... What I was fascinated with was the way the weather had got into it and the treatment it had got, so that it took on the air of something blown in the wind. Like curtains, in a way ... it was too heavy to blow actually. I think what they'd done was they'd bumped heavy trucks into it and it's stove in here and it came out there.*

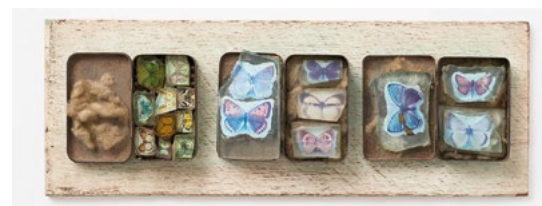
And then they'd thrown it down on to the clay and that's as it was. All I had to do really was scrub it ... It was very interesting-looking iron, and what I saw eventually in it was a row of windows as in a country place and the wind coming into the building, lifting the curtains, and in this building you could just see the landscape outside. So under each panel of tin [i.e. galvanised iron] I put another strip of tin [galvanised iron] in various colours, off-green and pink and something. So the curtains are lifting and you are looking out through this very humble shed and there is the landscape, the clover field and the green field and the curtains. And to me I could be standing in one of those calm places and I could smell it coming in the window ... Air always does something for me I think. And smells, country smells ... I suppose it's relaxing and gives you a great feeling of freedom you know. And I boxed the tin in the end. I boxed the tin in wood that I weathered so they're in shallow trays, four shallow trays and the iron, the two lots of iron are enclosed ... There is [a sequence]. Because you can see actually the curtain rising, and one curtain sucks, you know how the wind sucks it. And it's stove in in the middle. And to me they read logically in one way ... They're numbered at the back (1980 Gleeson).

RG found the galvanised iron in November 1976: *I am moving into the corrugated iron business art-wise. They are unpicking some of the old brick factory at Yarralumla and I got a few sheets from there one wet weekend (mid-Nov 1976 RG to TG). On 15 February 1977 the work had advanced sufficiently for RG to pay \$21.30 for timber backing for 'Clover field' (financial records RG papers NLA; see also 7 Mar 1977 RG to MG, p. 45 ref. to 'Wind from the clover').*

When displayed in Brisbane in March 1977 the window frames and corrugated iron were attached to the wall separately. After *Country air* came back, RG decided to enclose each panel in a shallow box. The problem was how to make a single unit of each window. *Your father has made a shallow tray for one [of them] — a sort of box frame of 3' ash on plywood so that the tin is fixed to the back and the frame hides the side elevation. I have painstakingly greyed two other frames and got a result pretty close to weathered wood. The tin certainly looks different — a bit of the first fine careless rapture gone, but I think it looks authoritative. Wish you were here [to give an opinion, but since you aren't] ... I will just put my head down and carry the idea through and then be prepared to dismantle them (28 Jun 1977 RG to MG, pp. 48–49; also 22 Jun 1977 BG to MG). A week later the job was done: *Your father and I spent the entire weekend framing the brickwork tin panels. I think they look very authoritative in their artificially greyed frames. Need to be taken seriously. Greying process was lengthy. Rub in dark stain, rub in white stain, rub in turps, sandpaper edges rounded, pour on bleach mixture, final look almost natural grey (4 Jul 1977 RG to MG).**

Image A courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Image B (first version — without frame — at IMA Brisbane) from author's archive



139



140A



140B

141 **Daffodil box** 1977

Wood and metal box or cupboard, glass bottles, cork, printed paper collage, plastic flower; 56.5 × 49 × 18 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #9 (ref.); 2 Mar 2010 *Blue Chip XII* Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, #9 (as *Spring: the daffodil* 1974–77), \$45,000 (illus. p. 17, with daffodil facing right); 16 Jun 2015 Bonhams S., lot 45 (as *Spring: the daffodil box* 1974–77) (ref. p. 88, illus. p. 89)

Lit: Mary Eagle 2000, p. 57, illus. p. 13 (installation at Anstey Street, Pearce, with daffodil facing left)

Coll: c. 1977 James Mollison (gift of the artist)

The collage includes a label from an Oak brand powdered-milk container. The cupboard had previously been used as the container for an earlier work photographed on the sitting room bench in mid-1975 and later dismantled. The alternative title *Spring: the daffodil* probably comes from James Mollison, as this extract from one of R.G.'s letters suggests: *Jim decided when he was sick recently that what would really cheer him up would be to have a box I have just made called 'Cloister', the one you like with beer cans [Early morning]; and, with the Daffodil box he already has, he would have Spring – the Daffodil, Winter – the 'Cloister', Autumn – the Beer cans, and then he would only need Summer. He is inordinately pleased with the idea. I temporised (27 Nov 1978 RG to MG, p. 57).*

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of John Cruthers and Bonhams



141



142



143

142 **Dovecot** 1977

Weathered wood bottle-box, with painted wood surveyor's pegs and builder's offcuts; 44 × 55 × 13 cm

Exh: 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #4, \$600; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #15] (ref. p. 134)

Coll: 1979 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

143 **Early morning** 1977

Weathered wood (including hinged box, painted builder's offcuts), wire gauze, tin-plated steel beer cans, nails; 61 × 53.5 × 29 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #15 (ref., illus.); 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #6, \$600; 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #4] (ref.); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #3] (illus. p. 13)

Lit: 22 Aug 1977 RG to MG, p. 50; 19 Nov 1977 RG to MG, p. 52; 1 Jan 1978 RG to MG, p. 52; Elva Bett *The Dominion* [NZ] 5 Jan 1984; Ian Wedde *Evening Post* [NZ] 26 Jan 1984; Anne Kirker 1989, p. 54; Anne Kirker 1990, p. 18 (with illus.); Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 30

Coll: 1984 Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, NZ, purchased by the National Art Gallery NZ with New Zealand Lottery Board funds

*I have just, with your father's help, finished beer can construction No 2. This time it's made with Tooheys cans — ones with hands on. Title 'Morning'. Chiefly blue tins and some faded to pink — rosy-fingered dawn [Homer *The Illiad* xix.1]... Sixteen cans in box [drawing of it]. Frame over, with cross bar. Piece of curled fly-wire, blond with brick dust, over tins, sort of many voile curtain frayed at edge. All grey morning light, tinged with pink (side leaning board is pink) (22 Aug 1977 RG to MG, p. 50). It's a very shallow box, really only a beer can deep (19 Nov 1977 RG to MG, p. 52). The pale beer cans [Early morning] are sitting on corner of mantelpiece ... and it looks very good to me (1 Jan 1978 RG to MG, p. 52.) In 1999 she gave her reading of the work: *I thought it was sort of early morning at the beach cottage, you know, that sort of feeling and the very skimpy curtain they leave in the cottage you hire. It was just that* (1999 Auckland AG).*

Image from author's archive

144 **[Envelope studies]** 1977

Seven units, materials and dimensions as listed, not inscribed:

A. used window envelope with plastic film, red ink franking, printed card (Norco cow heads); 9 × 15 cm

B. used window envelope with plastic film, red ink franking, printed card (cows); 9 × 15 cm

C. used window envelope with plastic film and postage stamp, black ink franking, printed image; 9 × 14.5 cm

D. used window envelope with plastic film and postage stamp, black ink franking, printed image; 9 × 14.5 cm

E. used window envelope with plastic film, red ink franking, printed image; 9 × 17.6 cm

F. used window envelope with plastic film, red ink franking, postage stamps; 9.3 × 17 cm

G. used window envelope with plastic film, printed images (parrots); 8.8 × 17.6 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The envelope contents are not secured in place. Four envelopes are from Heffers, a United Kingdom bookshop from which BG bought books.

Image A three cow heads

Image B two cows

Image C & D two envelope studies (faces)

No image E; the enclosed face is similar to 144C & D

Image F Hong Kong queen

Image G two parrots, Airmail

Images from author's archive



144A



144B



144C&D



144F



144G



145

145 Grass rack 1977

Weathered timber, dried rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), wire; 58 × 84.5 × 11 cm

Exh: 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #22 (ref., illus.); 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #12, \$600; 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #[5] (ref.); 15 Aug 2000 Sotheby's S., lot 28 (illus. p. 46)

Lit: 20 Jul 1977 RG to MG, p. 49; 15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55; 12 Nov [1978] RG to Ann Lewis; Gertrude Langer *Courier Mail* 27 Jun 1979; Mildred Kirk 1986, p. 513; Janine Burke 1990, illus. p. 35; Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 17, 26

Coll: c. 1979 private collection

Grass rack 1977 is one of four pieces made with dry grasses in 1977. On 20 July 1977 RG wrote: *I am amassing a series of golden grass pieces along the bench in front of tin window [Country air 1977] ... I must say the golden grass [harvested in summer] looks marvellous in winter time — really holds the summer — scarcely believable at this time of year. Think I can have at least five grass pieces* (20 Jul 1977 RG to MG, p. 49). In July 1978 she sent the four grass pieces to Gallery A but they were returned in December 1978 after she asked for them back (15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55; 12 Nov [1978] RG to Ann Lewis).

Talking about the grass used in *Grass rack* 1977 RG said: *This is beautiful grass ... It was stiff grass, really quite firm, like a brush, and to me it is what the country says. I am a real grass watcher and I think if you want one of the most relaxed features of the Australian countryside around the Monaro — which is about all I know — it is that grass theme. To me it is lyrical* (1985 School of Art). *It was rye grass that came up in a great flood in the early summer and what you did was painstakingly take all the little white pieces off, the flowers, and those pieces stayed like whisks, you know the Swedish whisks you can whisk eggs with; it is quite hard, quite firm* (1999 Auckland AG). She described the wooden frame as an *old grey bookcase that I found at a dump was just the right thing to hang it on* (1999 Auckland AG). *I'm sorry you can't see the quality of the grey of the wood. It's a very good grey* (1985 School of Art).

The hanging format of *Grass rack* 1977 harks back to the late 1950s and early 1960s when RG was making arrangements of dried materials, which she would prepare by hanging bundles of grasses (and other plant material) upside down under her house (a process described in her talk 'Dried arrangements' c. 1960). The format also recalls John Armstrong's *Tag rack* 1973 (now in the Newcastle Art Gallery illus. p. 356), which RG saw at his 1973 exhibition at Watters Gallery in Sydney and which she displayed in her house after MG bought it (27 May 1973 RG to MG, p. 41) (illus. p. 50).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

146 [Homage to Ken Whisson's *And what should I do in Illyria?*] 1977

Printed metals, weathered wood; 9.2 × 12.7 × 2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[1] (illus. p. 54, ref. p. 62)

Lit: Mary Eagle 2000, pp. 53–56; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 42

Coll: 1978 private collection (gift of the artist)

Regarding RG's friendship with Whisson, see the biographical note in this catalogue raisonné. The image is based on Ken Whisson's *And what should I do in Illyria?* 1974 (see Biographical Note), which RG bought in October 1974. She referred to the homage work in a letter of 15 Dec 1977: *I am enclosing a small token. I find it reads quite well from distance and hope it intrigues you* (c. 15 Dec 1977 RG to MG; also end Jan 1978 RG to MG). Some of the metals used came from old containers such as pill boxes, cigarette tins and drink cans found in country dumps. The wood used is milled timber, possibly discarded building material.

Images from author's archive



146

147 [Homage with Eadweard Muybridge's *Ox trotting* 1887] c. 1976–77

Collage on postcard of Eadweard Muybridge's *Ox trotting* 1887, perspex frame; 13 × 18 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Displayed in the artist's dining room. The collage elements include Norco butter logos.

Images from author's archive



147

148 Husbandry 1977

Wooden cupboard, weathered wood, stencilled galvanised iron sheet, glass containers, grass (probably rye grass, *Lolium perenne*), 45 × 60 × 14 cm; not inscribed but there is a notation on the base 'VAB/346/80'

Exh: 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #20 (ref., illus.); 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #2, \$600

Lit: 15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55; Janine Burke 1979, illus. p. 315; Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 11, 18, 23

Coll: 1980 Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council; 1984 Benalla Art Gallery, VIC (Acc no. 1984.05), gift of the Visual Arts Board Contemporary Art Collection



148

The galvanised iron bears the Lysaght logo (profile of Queen Victoria). *Husbandry* 1977 is one of the four works sent to Gallery A in July 1978 (15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55) but returned at RG's request in December 1978.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

149 Landscape [2] 1976–77

Dried salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*) seed heads, metal (including two milk-separator bowls and shelving); abt 28 × 91 × 37.6 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #24 (ref., illus.); 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #13, \$600

Lit: Mary Eagle *The Age* 2 May 1978; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 13 (single bowl, early state on RG's sitting room bench, before March 1977)

Coll: dismantled (later recreated)

Called *Landscape [2]* to distinguish it from a box construction with the same title exhibited at Gallery A in 1976. In her 1978 review, Mary Eagle referred to 'simple, strong statements such as two milk-separator pans filled with clumps of dried salsify heads (No. 24)' (*The Age* 2 May 1978). At least one of the bowls of dried salsify seed heads in *Landscape [2]* might have been made in 1976 with leftovers from *Crop [1]* 1976, because it is in an early (pre-March) 1977 photograph. Later recreated as *Landscape [3]* c. 1987–96 (q.v.), but with a blond grass (possibly African lovegrass, *Eragrostis curvula*) instead of the dried salsify seed heads.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



149



150

150 Pale landscape 1977 (reconstructed 1983)

Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) feathers, newspaper (90 sheets); abt 400 × 730 cm (variable)

Exh: 1977 *Rosalie Gascoigne* IMA; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #18 (ref., illus. 1977 installation view); 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #[6] (ref.); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[2] (ref. pp. 13, 14, illus. pp. 20–21)

Lit: c. 7, 30 Mar 1977 RG to MG, p. 45; [late Mar] 1977 RG to TG; Gertrude Langer *Courier Mail* 3 Apr 1977; Pamela Bell *The Australian* 22 Apr 1977; 1 May, 28 Jun 1977 RG to TG, pp. 47, 49; Mary Eagle *The Age* 2 May 1978; Mary Eagle *The Age* 6 Jan 1979, p. 18; Janine Burke *Art Network* no. 3 & 4, 1981, p. 28; Elva Bett *The Dominion* [NZ] 5 Jan 1984; Ian Wedde *Evening Post* [NZ] 26 Jan 1984; [T] McNamara *NZ Herald* 2 Apr 1984; Ian Wedde *New Zealand Art News* vol. 1, no. 1, 1984; Anne Kirker 1989, pp. 52–55; Bob Lingard and Sue Cramer 1989, illus. p. 37; Janine Burke 1990, illus. p. 36 (1978 installation at NGV); Ewen McDonald 'There are only lovers' 1990, illus. p. 12 (detail); Louise Pether 1990 (exh. cat.), pp. 18, 24–25, 46, illus. p. 24 (detail); *Conversions* 1992 (exh. cat.); Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 11, 12, illus. p. 11 (detail); John McDonald *SMH Spectrum Arts* 29 Nov 1997, p. 16; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 46 (1977 installation at IMA); Felicity Fenner 1999, p. 91; *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, 2004 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 38 (1977 installation view)

Coll: 1984 Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, NZ (Acc no. 1984–0013–1), gift of the artist to the National Art Gallery NZ

The feathers came from a bird refuge at the southern end of Lake George, where RG discovered them in May 1976 (see Rosalie's Materials). *Pale landscape* was constructed in early 1977. RG took her cue for the format from the small sheets of paper threaded with pins she had used in her sewing (1999 Auckland AG). She used newspaper because she had a lot of it: *I was terribly fond of newspaper because I think it is very elegant. So I started threading a few sheets with feathers — I will tidy this lot up, you know that sort of feeling — and I threw one sheet down on the floor, and I threw four down, and then I thought 'My goodness!!!' and it started moving away from me (1985 School of Art). Work continued: I spent another day by the Lake on Friday — picked up nearly 1000 more feathers and now have 75 feathered sheets (and a stiff back) ... I spread all my feathers and newspaper on back lawn this pm. I am aiming at about 5 metres by 6 metres and of course am now filled with doubt. (Of course it would look different in open air. I only hope it won't be a non-event.) ... Piles of daunting feathered paper on floor (c. 7 Mar 1977 RG to MG, p. 45).*

Later that month she wrote: *I only hope my environment arranges itself at the first attempt. One has to battle with different light and diff. floor colour. I aim to have 6 metres × 5 metres of floor spread with newspaper threaded with swans feathers — abt 4000 of them ... ([late Mar] 1977 RG to TG). Upon returning to Canberra after the show at the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane she wrote again: The feathers went down pretty well. I still didn't really like the yellow floor and in the large area the whole piece tends to flatten — the width by height problem, but a careful walker-around will get a reading (30 Mar 1977 RG to MG, p. 45).*

The pale landscape of the title is *the winter landscape around Canberra which goes back to its bones. Canberra is very frost ridden and the paddocks all go back to their bones, you can see the shape of the land, and everything, and that, to me, was a pale landscape (1999 Auckland AG). (There are similar statements in 1982 North, 1988 Ewen McDonald and 1998 Hughes.)*

RG reconstructed *Pale landscape* 1977 for her show in Wellington, NZ, in December 1983. She wrote to Tony Mackle at the National Art Gallery in Wellington: *This piece has been shown twice before ... It is a piece I set great store by. I re-made it on new paper for Wellington. I would be very happy to make a gift of this piece to New Zealand. It is obviously of an ephemeral nature and I feel that if it had maximum exposure in various places over a limited period it could fittingly disintegrate in its own time. (The Dying Swan?) (RG to Tony Mackle 20 Feb 1984).*

Although RG spoke of the work as an image of the winter landscape she was open to other readings. Describing an encounter with some women when she was installing the work at the NGV in 1978, she recalled: *As I was doing it they paused and huddled together, puzzled. I said, 'Well, when I did this I was collecting swan's feathers from around Lake George, and this is really about the levels of the lake: it's very flat country, but of course it could be in the winter landscape ... or, if you've been in an aeroplane and you've seen the clouds, or, if you go down to the South Pole ...' Well, there you are, you bring your experience to it. And I can't tell you how they cheered up! They stood further apart, their overcoats got shorter ... but, you know, it let them in which is very important* (1988 Ewen McDonald; 1999 Auckland AG). And on another occasion at the NGV: *I was terribly pleased because a little crocodile of children came through, very reluctant, you know, surveyors of art, they don't like it. And this little boy leant ... knelt down on his knees and said: 'It's just like the sea'. And I could have hugged him. And I thought well if you can communicate to people like that, that's great* (1998 NGA).

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

151 River banks 1977

Weathered wood palings, torn and cut patterned linoleum; five planks each 151.5 × 14.5 × 2.5 cm, overall 151.5 × 92 × 2.5 cm; panel 1 signed, dated and titled verso: 'RG 1981 / RIVER BANKS / (5 PANELS)', tape label 'HUNG ON / 5 NAILS / 7½" APART' and each panel numbered verso '1' to '5' respectively

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #16, \$1200

Lit: 11 Oct, 8, 19 Nov 1977, 1 Jan 1978 RG to MG, pp. 51–52; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 56 (with illus.) (dimensions cited as 153 × 90 cm and incorrectly dated 1981)

Coll: 1981 James Mollison

This is the first linoleum piece I ever made. It was terrible stuff, really garish big flowers growing on pink. I've done quite a lot of things with lino, but you don't see it much, it's difficult to get. But people used to have it all over the place (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 56). The first reference to *River banks* is in a letter dated 11 Oct 1977: *I am mostly working and feel I am getting up a new head of steam. Enclosed [is a] photo of river planks and lino [River banks] over fire-place, which I feel works well* (11 Oct 1977 RG to MG, p. 51).

Regarding dating, the work was photographed in 1977 so the inscription dating the work 1981 is clearly wrong. RG probably signed the work just before exhibiting it in 1981, hence the date. The linoleum may have come from Captains Flat, which she visited in the 1970s: *I remember going out once to Captains Flat and finding a whole lot of very good quality linoleum that they'd apparently ripped up from the city hall or something,*

and I remember making one work. It just worked for me, that particular linoleum, but in most tips you see that'd be at the bottom of the ditch and burnt (1997 Feneley; see also *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80, which uses the same linoleum).

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of John Cruthers and Bonhams

152 Room with a view 1976–77

Weathered wood apiary boxes and builder's offcuts, tin-plated steel beer cans; 58 × 102 × 26 cm

Exh: 1977 *Objects* Ray Hughes, Brisbane (as *A room with a view*), \$450; 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #14 (dated 1977) (ref.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #17] (dated 1977) (illus. p. 60, ref. p. 134)

Lit: 4 Jan 1977 RG to TG; Gertrude Langer *Courier Mail* 12 Mar 1977; Pamela Bell *The Australian* 15 Mar 1977; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 29; Mary Eagle 2000, pp. 49, 50; Ray Edgar 2009, illus. p. 40

Coll: 1977 Ray Hughes; 2016 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (Acc no. 2016.213), gift of Ray Hughes through the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art Foundation, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

Construction of what became *Room with a view* began in late 1976: *I have a small work of Cascade cans — nine on a block of wood in grey B-box with an old window frame leaning against front. Turns into a view from an old Paddington window. Simple but neat* [accompanied by small pen sketch] (4 Jan 1977 RG to TG). This became the central panel for *Room with a view*. (There is also a late 1976 photograph of the panel.) After Gertrude Langer saw *Room with a view* in Brisbane she wrote: 'It has to be seen to be believed that she can create a thing of visual poetry with a weathered wooden box (she may have found it in a farm yard), containing an arrangement of Tooheys Bitter Ale tins' (*Courier Mail* 12 Mar 1977). Pamela Bell described it as a work 'of strange authority' (*The Australian* 15 Mar 1977).

RG spoke about the work several times: *That piece was made when I was on about beer cans ... These are Flag Ale cans. I called it 'Room with a View'; to me it was the view you get from the windows of the Art Gallery of New South Wales [looking onto Sydney Harbour]. In the faded cans on the left joining the grey of the sea, there you see the fleet flying its flags. These cans are less faded. And the middle section is made from Cascade cans from Tasmania. These have a grey factory on them and that was the Paddington houses to me, as seen from the Gallery's eastern window. And I could almost feel the feel that I got looking out those windows. Some people, of course, cannot get past the beer cans* (1985 School of Art; similar comments in 1982 North and 1999 Auckland AG).



151



152



153



154



155

Although RG's interest in beer cans at this time had been piqued by the classical faded blues and pinks of empty Flag Ale beer cans gathered from the roadside, the Cascade cans used in *Room with a view* were new. The cans came from the brewery in Tasmania, a gift organised by her son Toss then living in Hobart. In 1978 she wrote to the brewery: *Cascade tins are in short supply though last year I was indebted to your brewery when you ran me off a dozen empty pink tins ('How did you get the beer out?' is a common question). I used some of these cans in a work called 'Room with a view' ... (c. May 1978 RG to LW Wilkins, in response to another gift of cans). The title alludes to EM Forster's 1908 novel *A room with a view*, which was the subject of a Merchant Ivory film in 1985.*

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

153 Storage 1977

Weathered wood (Moo-Kow-Milk) box, dried stalks of wild oats (*Avena* spp.), rusted metal, rubber bands (later replaced with string); 65 × 31.5 × 16.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #19 (ref.); 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #11, \$600; 28 Jun 2002 *Exploring Outback: Artists' Responses to Life on the Land* QAG (travelling until 7 Sep 2003) (incorrectly titled *Grass rack*, see notes)

Lit: 20 Jul 1977 RG to MG, p. 49; 15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55; Dianne Byrne *The Australian* 21 Jun 1979; Gertrude Langer *Courier Mail* 27 Jun 1979; QAG *Annual report 1996–97*, illus. p. 2; Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 205 (as *Grass rack* 1979)

Coll: c. 1979 private collection; 1997 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (Acc 1997.120a-mm), purchased by the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation

Storage 1977 is one of four pieces made using grasses in 1977: *I am amassing a series of golden grass pieces along the bench in front of tin window [Country air 1977] ... I must say the golden grass [harvested in summer] looks marvellous in winter time — really holds the summer — scarcely believable at this time of year. Think I can have at least five grass pieces* (20 Jul 1977 RG to MG, p. 49). *Storage 1977* is also one of four grass pieces RG sent to Gallery A in July 1978 (15 Jul 1978 RG to MG), returned at her request in 1978 because she did not want them shown in a mixed exhibition (12 Nov [1978] RG to Ann Lewis). For some time *Storage* was incorrectly referred to in QAG publications as *Grass rack*. The straws in the metal ring on top of the box are very like those in *Straws* 1975.

Image courtesy of Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane

1978

154 Bailed up 1978

Weathered wood (fruit?) boxes, plastic bags, dried grass (possibly ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, windmill grass *Chloris truncata* or African lovegrass *Eragrostis curvula*); three units, each 129 × 27 × 28 cm

Exh: 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #25 (ref.)

Coll: dismantled

The title is a play on words that alludes to Tom Roberts's painting *Bailed up* 1895, 1927 (AGNSW).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

155 Cloister 1978

Weathered apiary box and other painted wood (including polo balls), printed paper (images of Piero della Francesca's *Senigalla Madonna*); 61.1 × 34.8 × 15.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #5, \$600; 1987 *Ten by Ten* Gertrude Street, Melbourne (as *Cloisters* 1976) (ref. p. 5); 15 Oct 1992 *The Angelic Space: A Celebration of Piero della Francesca* Monash University Gallery, Melbourne (dated 1979) (ref. p. 55); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #20 (illus. title page, ref. p. 134)

Lit: 12 Oct, 27 Nov 1978, 23 Feb, 11 Apr 1979 RG to MG, pp. 56–58; Dianne Byrne *The Australian* 21 Jun 1979; Robert Rooney *The Australian Weekend Review* 7–8 Nov 1992, illus. p. 13; *Art and Australia* vol. 30, no. 4, 1993, illus. p. 467 (wrong size); Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 13, illus. p. 20; Hannah Fink 1997, illus. p. 205; Mary Eagle 2000, pp. 56–58, illus. p. 56

Coll: 1979 James Mollison; 1999 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (Acc no. 1999-402), gift of James Mollison AO

That one is called 'Cloister'. I am not above using an image from somewhere else. That is a very grey Australian box — also a bee box — added to at the bottom, added to at the top. Somebody's croquet balls I found by the lake [Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra] and I put them in for their sculptural quality and their matching greyness. I called it 'Cloister' and I felt it was enigmatic as to whether it was fallen masonry or a quiet game of croquet the nuns played in the courtyard. It was sort of contemplative; you could read what you liked into it (1985 School of Art).

Made in spring 1978. The balls are polo balls, not croquet balls, as RG described at the time: [James Mollison] *admired new box — very grey and quiet with two Piero della Francesca ladies stuck in it and three battered polo balls* (12 Oct 1978 RG to MG, p. 56). Possibly the image is a postcard published by Mondadori International c. 1973 printed in Italy and copyrighted 1973 (as with *The gallery man*

1978). Otherwise the reproduction could be from *Piero della Francesca* by Alberto Busignan, Dolphin, T&H 1968, of which RG had several copies (see RG papers NLA Acc 10.045). Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

156 Feathered chairs 1978

Weathered painted steel chairs, Australasian darter (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) feathers; two units, each 110 × 50 × 50 cm (irreg.); not inscribed

Exh: 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #17, \$1200; 1991 *Off the Wall in the Air: A Seventies' Selection* Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne (28 Jun – 4 Aug) and Monash University Gallery, Melbourne (3 Jul – 10 Aug), #51 (as 2 feathered chairs 1979) (illus. p. 35); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #14 (illus. p. 25, refs pp. 35, 56); 18 Jul 2007 *Backward Glance: Important Work from the 1980s* John Buckley Gallery, Melbourne; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #181 (illus. p. 70, ref. p. 134); 13 May 2014 *The John Buckley Collection* Mossgreen M., lot 7 (ref. p. 18, illus. p. 19); 30 Nov 2017 Menzies S., lot 50 (illus. p. 127)

Lit: 28 Jan, 23 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53; Dianne Byrne *The Australian* 21 Jun 1979; Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 11, illus. p. 53; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, pp. 35 (on birds in RG's art); Richard Kalina 2005, illus. p. 85; Ray Edgar 2009, illus. p. 40; *Sunday Canberra Times* 6 Nov 2009, illus. p. 7

Coll: c. 1980 private collection

Feathered chairs was made in January 1978 and described, with sketches, in a letter written that month: *Two of those reddish iron chairs decked with racks of black feathers* [Feathered chairs]. *Accidental juxtaposition really ... About 100 feathers in each rack and it reads right. Has presence. Two chairs make a set. Mildred [Kirk] sees them as two thrones. James Gleeson laughed delightedly* (28 Jan 1978 RG to MG, p. 53).

In 1982 RG described her discovery of the cormorant feathers at Lake George: *And then I came to this place where there were all these ... black birds, you know, cormorants. And a shattering of black beautiful glossy [feathers] as if the birds had just undressed. I thought, I've got to have those, those are good. But I wasn't on about them. And that's where I made Feathered Chairs ... They're beautiful feathers. They're like the underside of mushrooms. You know ... the quill. And I had those chairs which I had found discarded from the CSIRO ... I did the feathers in racks* (1982 North; similar remarks in 1985 School of Art and 1998 Hughes).

More likely, the feathers were from Australasian darters, which nested at Lake George. The racks for holding the feathers are the same as those used in *Feathered fence* 1978–79 and were devised by Ben Gascoigne (2000, p. 11). The chairs were found in a dump (1999 Auckland AG).

Image courtesy of the City Gallery Wellington, NZ

157 [Feather study 1] 1978

[Cockatoo? (*Cacatua galerita*)] feathers and paint on painted plywood; dimensions not recorded (abt 35 × 30 cm); not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 14 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 destroyed

RG experimented with feathers from Lake George: *Am involved with Lake George and a great feather investigation ... The house is full of feathers. If you strip them the spines are lovely curves — I keep thinking how [sculptor] Bob Klippel would like them — all that grasshopper agility. The feather part that one pulls off seems too good to waste and so I have experimented (à la tar and feathers) gluing it on to weathered boards. James Gleeson said with delight 'Just like a very old drawing'* (14 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53).

In this study the feathers were mixed with the paint applied as an impasto. Destroyed in 2014 because of poor condition.

NO IMAGE

158 [Feather study 2] 1978

Cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*) feathers and paint on weathered plywood; 14.5 × 25.4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 14 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.50), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

See notes on [Feather study 1].

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

159 [Feather study 3] 1978

Cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*) or swan (*Cygnus atratus*) feathers and paint on painted plywood; two panels, each 60 × 37 cm, overall abt 60 × 76 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: 14 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.504), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

See notes on [Feather study 1].

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



156



158



159

160 [Homage with a cricket team] c. 1976–78

Weathered wood (source unidentified), retouched newspaper image; 20.5 × 23 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.476), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



160

161 [Homage with Dennis Lillee] c. 1977–78

Weathered wood (some painted), cut-out retouched newspaper images on plywood, plasticised tape measure segments, rusty nails; 36 × 28 × 4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dennis Lillee was a much admired and very successful Australian fast bowler, who played test cricket from 1971 to 1984. In March 1976 RG referred to her interest in images of sportsmen: *Am interested in all sports photographs so keep on keeping yr eyes open for me* (8 Mar 1976 RG to TG). The board with the tape measure numerals was first used in a 1975 work RG later dismantled, but the Lillee figure was probably cut with the jigsaw acquired in late 1977. Displayed in the sitting and dining rooms at Anstey Street, Pearce.

Image from author's archive



161

162 [Lillee and daffodils] c. 1977–78

Retouched cut-out newsprint (images of Dennis Lillee and printed cardboard (Daffodil margarine logos) on plywood, sawn wood; 29 × 57 × 17 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[2] (as *Lillee* c. 1975) (ref. pp. 59, 62)

Lit: 8 Mar 1976 RG to TG; mid-Dec 1977 RG to MG, p. 59 (incorrectly dated Dec 1979); Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 34 (with illus.)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2013 private collection (by descent)

In March 1976 RG referred to her interest in images of sportsmen: *Am interested in all sports photographs so keep on keeping yr eyes open for me* (8 Mar 1976 RG to TG). Her 1985 comment is also apposite: *Another thought if you are a regionalist is that part of your region is your daily newspaper and you see some magnificent sporting*



162

types in the sports pages. Wonderful body language (1985 School of Art, albeit talking about a footballer).

Dennis Lillee was a much admired and very successful Australian fast bowler, who played test cricket from 1971 to 1984. Those familiar with the cricketing world of Lillee's time might detect RG's love of wordplay in the title, finding in the daffodils an allusion to the cricketing joke about 'Lillian Thompson' (a reference to the bowling duo of [Dennis] Lillee and [Jeff] Thompson). Displayed in the sitting and dining rooms at Anstey Street, Pearce. RG had been working with similar daffodils in December 1977: *Meanwhile, for fun, I have done an exercise with plaster nativity cow I bought in Brisbane. Have sat it on a green bowl and surrounded it with varied slices of those squared-off daffodils from cartons. They sit, also like table tops on little wooden blocks all around the cow. Reads well. Sitting cow in deep flowery meadow. Again it is the horizontal daffodil level above the green base level — it is the space that makes it work somehow.* RG destroyed that piece soon after and it is not catalogued. The letter also refers to a 'new jig saw' which would have been used to cut the figures glued on plywood to shape (mid-Dec 1977 RG to MG, p. 59).

Image from author's archive

163 The gallery man 1978

Weathered wood apiary box and other wood including painted surveyor's pegs, printed postcard of Raphael's *Portrait of Angelo Doni* 1506 (detail); 73.5 × 36.5 × 14.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #1, \$600; 1987 *Ten by Ten* Gertrude Street, Melbourne (as *Gallery man* 1976) (ref. p. 5, illus. p. 12); 13 Aug 2000 Christie's S., lot 2 (illus. p. 7); 26 Aug 2014 Sotheby's S., lot 13 (illus.)

Coll: 1979 private collection

This one is called 'The gallery man'. And actually, seeing we are in such informed circles, I will say it was in the likeness of James Mollison [director of the National Gallery]. I made him like a playing card, and I was a bit annoyed at something at the time and I made some holes and some sharp bits and James was delighted (1985 School of Art). RG had multiple copies of the postcard used in this work. The card was published c. 1973 by Mondadori International and printed in Italy (copyrighted 1973). An August 1978 photograph shows a precursor: the apiary box has the two coloured survey pegs on top, as in *The gallery man*, but the box contains an abstract arrangement of wood from various sources and the work has a thinner base. Regarding RG's relationship with Mollison see especially p.53–54

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



163

164 Waterfront 1978

Weathered wood apiary box and other wood (builder's offcuts), printed aluminium (Tooheys beer can), painted corrugated asbestos; 60.5 × 35 × 14 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #9, \$600; 16 Jun 1991 *Works from MOCA Brisbane* Sotheby's M., lot 2 (dated 1979) (illus.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[19] (illus. p. 61, ref. p. 134)

Lit: late Aug 1977, 23 Feb 1979 RG to MG, pp. 50, 58

Coll: 1979 private collection (MOCA Brisbane)

A photograph from August 1978 shows several Flag Ale cans on cylindrical plinths in an apiary box on its side. One of those cans on its plinth made it into *Waterfront* 1978. RG included a photograph of the completed work (and others) in a letter on 23 Feb 1979, accompanying this comment: '*Waterfront*' depends on the corrugated asbestos. Can't get much starker than that! (23 Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 58).

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

1979

165 Feathered fence 1978–79

Swan (*Cygnus atratus*) feathers, galvanised wire mesh, metal wing nuts, weathered wood, painted composition board; seven units on four base panels, overall 64 × 750 × 45 cm; the feathered units are numbered 1–7 and the bases numbered 1–4; not inscribed

Exh: 1979 *3rd Biennale of Sydney* (ref., illus. p. 26 (detail)); 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale, #2* (dated 1979) (VAB cat. ref. pp. 52, 57, illus. p. 59 (detail); *Catalogue generale* ref. p. 82); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW (ref.); 1992 *Conversions 4: Rosalie Gascoigne* Canberra Contemporary Art Space, #1; 1996 *Now—Then* NGA; 1996–97 *Spirit+Place* MCA (illus. p. 29 (detail), ref. pp. 29, 41, 146); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[3] (ref. p. 13, illus. p. 22); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[21] (early version and detail illus. pp. 30, 71, ref. p. 134); 24 Apr–12 Jul 2009 *Soft Sculpture* NGA

Lit: 14 Feb, 12 Oct 1978, 23 Feb, 20 Mar, 11 Apr 1979 RG to MG, pp. 53, 56, 58; 7, 21 Dec 1978 RG to Nick Waterlow (Sydney Biennale archive AGNSW); Nancy Borlase *SMH* 14 Apr 1979; Sandra McGrath *Weekend Australian Magazine* 14–15 Apr 1979, p. 8; Elwyn Lynn *Art International* Summer 1979; Nick Waterlow *European dialogue: A commentary* 1979, p. 26; Nick Waterlow 'Biennale of Sydney' *Flash Art* [Italy] no. 90–91, 1979, illus. p. 16; Graeme Sturgeon *Meanjin* vol. 39, no. 2, 1980, p. 220; Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times*

27 Jun 1992; Nick Waterlow 1992 (comment with installation view); Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 22 (with illus.) (detail); Janet Hawley 15 Nov 1997, pp. 40–44, illus. p. 44 (detail); John McDonald *SMH Spectrum Arts* 29 Nov 1997, p. 16; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 47 (with illus.) (installation and detail); Ewen McDonald 2000, p. 168; Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 11, illus. pp. 8 (early version), 11 (detail); Deborah Hart 2002, p. 324; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004 (for an extended discussion on ornithological themes in RG's work); Sasha Grishin 2014, illus. p. 437 (whole and detail)

Coll: 1994 National Gallery of Australia (Acc no. 94.256 A–R date 27.4.94), gift of the artist

Nick Waterlow was very keen on the 'Feathered Fence', he took it for a Biennale [Sydney 1979], it was just — it was the drowning fences of Lake George. You could see where the tide comes in and drowns the fences. The optimistic farmers put their cattle there and then the lake rises again and the fences go, drowned into the lake. And it's all about levels, you see. The levels of the lake are like that, and the levels of the country are like that, and it's very pure. And that's where the 'Feathered Fence' came from. And even gallery guards say 'I do like your cockies'. So I politely say they are not cockies. Cockatoo feathers are shorter and they don't have this lilt along them. And they've got yellow on them too. So I say that (1998 Hughes).

The construction of *Feathered fence* 1978–79 goes back to early 1978, when RG had accumulated supplies of the white feathers used in the work. On 14 Feb 1978 she wrote: *Am involved with Lake George and a great feather investigation. Also horizontals, like lake water, and clean air and pallor ... Actually interviewing the lake strengthens my artistic arm. I need all the 'feel' of it that I can get (14 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53).* BG devised a method for holding the feathers, clamping the stems between two batons from deconstructed apiary boxes.

Between the slats I inserted the quill ends of about a hundred white swan-feathers [underwing feathers on black swans], and tightened the nuts so that they were held parallel to each other, more or less perpendicular to the slat. When I showed it to Rosalie she took one look, seized it and marched off. We had our own means of communication: I knew I had scored a bull's-eye. She made another six rows of feathers, then positioned them end-to-end so that they would appear to float about a foot above the floor with a minimum of visible means of support. Tubes of chicken wire were tried and found wanting, and thin steel supporting rods was hopelessly obtusive. I then tried soldering together the strands of the chicken wire (which is fine wire-netting) wherever they crossed. It strengthened them enough to take the weight, and that was that (Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 11). [The wire mesh in fact has a coarser grid than that usually associated with chicken mesh.]

RG showed *Feathered fence* to Nick Waterlow when he came to see her in early October about exhibiting in the 3rd Biennale of



164



165A



165B



165C



165D



166

Sydney in 1979 (12 Oct 1978 RG to MG, p. 56). What she showed Waterlow were the seven units of clamped feathers on their wire bases (but without the final, unifying platform), probably arranged in a line in her garden, much as BG photographed them in late 1978 (Mary Eagle 2000, p. 8; Deborah Clark 2008, p. 30). In response to a follow-up letter from Waterlow, she wrote back on 7 Dec 1978: *regarding floor space available at the Biennale: 'Feathered Fence', which you saw at my house, is a long narrow piece and needs air around it. Do you think you can accommodate it? I want it to read like one of those half-drowned fence lines stretching out into the lake — very pure and uncluttered with a lot of air. In the main my pieces look best in an area with natural light, the one with horizontal sticks in cages looks best against the light* (7 Dec 1978 RG to Waterlow).

With the biennale looming in early April, RG returned to *Feathered fence* in February 1979, keen to see what it would look like in a big gallery space, not least so she could finalise a base for the seven feathered units. *Jim phoned. [Rosalie mentioning her need of] space to set up my Feathered Fence ... thirty foot ... He said 'bring it down here' ... Which I did. Useful. I have five pieces of pineboard 6ft x 2ft. Gets to be a heavy handling job ... Guy Joyce has offered some carpentry ... to raise my 30ft of plank about two inches off the ground* (23 Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 58). A month later it was almost finished: *Busy days, with Biennale looming. Your father put in a solid weekend for me ... long awaited, and Feathered Fence is within an ace of being finished ... I bet someone says something about Christo's fence when I show it. Am hoping the base will read right in the NSW gallery — it's been a long haul getting it together and I still have to buy Guy Joyce a batch of lottery tickets by way of thanking him for nailing it all up* (20 Mar 1979 RG to MG, p. 58). The baseboard has holes drilled in it to match each wire stand. After installing her work at the biennale RG expressed her satisfaction: *My things are saying what I meant them to — all pale country air ...* (11 Apr 1979 RG to MG, p. 58).

Thinking about the dialogue he was hoping the biennale would set up between Australian and European artists, Nick Waterlow would later recall: *The Australian representation did however achieve this and I remember very well the impact. One work for example, Feathered Fence by Rosalie Gascoigne, epitomised for the visiting Europeans the psyche of the Australian landscape and it helped them understand it more effectively* (Nick Waterlow in Ewen McDonald 2000, p. 168).

Image A courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Photograph B by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive. *Feathered fence* 1978–79 in the garden at Anstey Street in December 1979, before the wooden base was added; this was one of the four photographs Rosalie sent to Nick Waterlow that month.

Photograph C (the drowned fence at Lake George, c. 1976) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

Photograph D (detail of Ben's stand showing the steel rod support that was discarded) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

166 Footballers 1978–79

Weathered wood apiary box and other wood, retouched cut-out newsprint images on plywood cut to shape, metal brackets and leaves, copper wire, ceramic electrical fitting; 62.5 × 24.3 × 14.3 cm, not inscribed

Exh: 1979 Rosalie Gascoigne Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #3, \$600

Lit: 15 May 1978, 23 Feb 1979 RG to MG, pp. 54, 58

Coll: 1981 Wollongong Art Gallery, NSW (Acc no. 1981.001)

Another thought if you are a regionalist is that part of your region is your daily newspaper and you see some magnificent sporting types in the sports pages. Wonderful body language. They tell me that is Peter Moore on top of the box [Footballers]. I painted his hair yellow. To me it was a bit like a Rousseau footballer skipping in the autumn leaves. The leaves at the top there are green and it was sort of decorative. The only way you can get a footballer looking as good as a footballer is to cut his picture out of the paper. Mount him on wood (1985 School of Art).

RG had been watching the televised broadcasts of the European Cup soccer in May 1978, which inspired the work: *I can see I must do a 'Football Piece'* (15 May 1978 RG to MG, p. 54). She later decided to trim the original base of the work so it did not extend beyond the sides of the box, *because I don't like the (inverted T) shape* (23 Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 58). Peter Moore played for Collingwood from 1974 until 1982, when he transferred to Melbourne. He won the Brownlow Medal in 1979 and 1984, and was captain of Collingwood in 1981 and 1982. The Rousseau reference is to Henri Rousseau's *The football players (Les joueurs de football)* 1908 in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. In 1981 BG observed: *Yr m. has become a passionate Collingwood supporter and has had a highly emotional passage through the VFL finals, never thought I'd see the day* (30 Sep 1981 BG to TG).

Photograph by Bernie Fischer, courtesy of Wollongong Art Gallery, NSW

167 [For Ray] 1979

Painted, weathered wood, printed card, plastic (dolls' hands), perished rubber non-slip matting; 10.1 × 13.5 × 9 cm; signed and dated verso: 'FOR RAY / JUNE 16 1979 R.G.'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1979 Ray Hughes (gift of the artist)

RG gave the work to Ray Hughes when she had her solo show at his gallery in Brisbane in 1979. *Once I had a thing here, it was only a little thing and it had a fish postcard all in pink and a whole lot of little hands coming up. And it was a little bit like the [New Testament] loaves and the fishes and ... it sort of tugged at your memories. And it worked. It was a nice little thing he was keen on. And so when I went up to stay with him the last time [1979], I thought, here's a little house present I've done it for you. [He put it] with his funky things. After a few days I said 'you should put it over there' ... a set of three very nice teapots and something else and it was quiet and sober. And this little thing could sort of spread its little web out and look real. And even (though) I've had shows with him, he couldn't see the difference between them [and the] funky objects. And I'm not funky. I just am not funky, nor am I nostalgic (1982 North).*

Image from author's archive

168 Forty-acre block 1977/79

Weathered wood soft-drink box and painted wood, printed cut-out cardboard and paper (including Norco butter and Arnott's Biscuits logos), plywood, painted metal; 32.4 × 40.0 × 26.4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #7, \$600; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[16] (as *Forty acre block* 1977) (illus. p. 53, ref. p. 134)

Coll: 1979 private collection

Forty-acre block is a reconstructed version of an older work: in 1979 BG inscribed a photograph of the final version: *11 Forty-acre block / Been ordered by Diana Woollard at ANG. You may recognise most of it, it's an old one rebuilt.* In 1977 images of the earlier version, the box has been rotated 90 degrees so the handles are at the top, the Tarax board is clearly visible at the rear above the top edge of the box, and instead of the cut-out cows there is a wooden ramp descending from the base of the tree image at the rear to the floor of the box near the front.

Image by Brenton McGeachie, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

169 March past 1978–79

Weathered painted wood (from soft-drink boxes), on plywood or formboard backing; 20 units, each 28 × 48 × 3.5 cm, overall 134 × 294 × 3.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #16, \$1800; 1981 *Australian Perspecta* AGNSW (ref. p. 78, illus. p. 79); 1982 *The Philip Morris Arts Grant: Australian Art of the Past Ten Years* ANG (illus. p. 25, ref. p. 87); 1995 *Australian Art 1940–1990 from the Collection of the National Gallery of Australia* Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu, Japan; Apr 1999 *Living in the Seventies* CMAG (illus.)

Lit: 15 Jul, 26 Dec 1978, 12 Jan, undated Feb, 23 Feb, 11 Apr 1979 RG to MG, pp. 55, 57–58; Dianne Byrne *The Australian* 21 Jun 1979; Gertrude Langer *Courier Mail* 27 Jun 1979; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 32–33; Helen Musa *Canberra Times* 15 May 1999

Coll: 1979 Philip Morris Arts Grant collection; 1983 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 83.1607 A–T date 9.5.83), gift of the Philip Morris Arts Grant

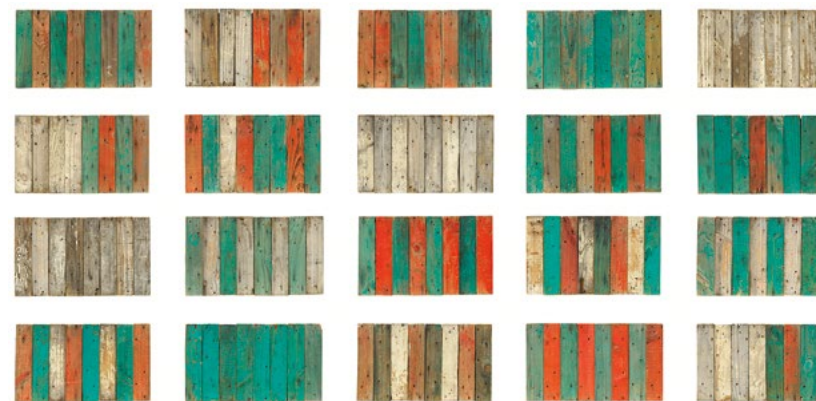
This one was when I first got the Schweppes crates. There used to be a Schweppes factory over the other side of the railway bridge into Queanbeyan and they had an enormous pile. And so I sweet-talked the yard man and, oh yes, I could have them. And so I took them and I did that. Because I had been in Melbourne and I'd seen unwontedly the Melbourne ANZAC Day March and all those serried ranks. I never deliberately go out to see it, but there it was outside the National Gallery [of Victoria]. And you saw those serried ranks of men, especially the over fifties and sixties. And sort of reality had set in to them. You don't see many people glorifying war in an ANZAC Day March. You really don't. And if you get them sideways their faces are very telltale. And the other thing you noticed in Melbourne on that day was the clink of medals. Every tram which you jumped on, there was this clink of metals and these high-spirited old men jumping on to trams and things. And to me it encapsulated that ANZAC Day March. And then people ask me, why did you call it 'March Past'? Well I would have thought it was fairly obvious, wouldn't you. I mean what else would it be. I don't know. Anyway it stood the test of time and of course it's been very much weathered by sun and rough handling of drink crates, and it seems almost permanent. It took a long time to put the pieces together, not to say unpick the boxes (1998 NGA).

The momentous visit to the Schweppes factory at Queanbeyan took place in July 1978. Writing shortly afterwards, RG described the outcome: *At the moment the house is flooded with dismantled drink boxes ... At the moment it is like being washed over by a great rainbow* (15 Jul 1978 RG to MG, p. 55, and see the essay 'Gascoigne Country' in this catalogue raisonné). In December she was busy exploring the medium: *... am trying to burst into new larger works with an eye*



167

168



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170



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172

to *Pinacotheca* next year ... *Have done several pieces with unbroken wood — more like striped flags. Torn wood is something else. And I have a lot of coloured wood. Nice to have some clear space to try it out* (26 Dec 1978 RG to MG, p. 57). Two weeks later she wrote: *I have been doing more moving about of my great stock of coloured wood ... I work under the wisteria and think big* (12 Jan 1979 RG to MG, p. 57). In February 1979 it was finished. After a visit to the beach she reported: *Came back and got stuck into my art piece, 10' x 4' above bench in sitting room. Twenty units made of Schweppes boxes. Aptly called 'March Past'. Thought it might be needed for Biennale in Sydney. It isn't, space allocation strict. Will do for Ray Hughes or Melbourne next year. Good to have it finished. I had to unpick 160 boards with hammer and hacksaw to do it — not to mention paying a second visit to Queanbeyan drinks factory to get more boxes* (Feb 1979 RG to TG; also Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 57 with sketch). In April James Mollison chose it for the Philip Morris collection (11 Apr 1979 RG to MG).

In 2000 BG recalled the construction of *March past*. *First she made 9 panels in 3 rows. Hung it on the wall and asked us how big do you think it should be? I suggested five rows of four because it would look best if the total shape related to the shape of each unit* (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. com.).

I remember watching the ANZAC Day march with RG in 1978, in St Kilda Road near the NGV, when she was on her way to meet Robert Lindsay to start setting up his exhibition *Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne* (1978 NGV).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

170 [Parrots on fencepost] 1979

Weathered wood, printed cut-out cardboard shape (Arnott's Biscuits logo) on plywood cut to shape; abt 110 cm tall

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1979 private collection (gift of the artist)

The wooden post is probably an old fence dropper. The owner was a friend who worked at the ANG and at the time was living on a farm near Gundaroo; they would visit the coast together. Dated on the basis of a 1979 photograph.

Photograph (detail) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

171 Private beach 1979

Weathered wood (some painted, various sources), periwinkle (*Littorina littorea*) shells; 58 x 38 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne Pinacotheca*, Melbourne, #10, \$500

Lit: Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 58

Coll: 1981 private collection

I go to the coast sometimes. I met a challenge once. I had found that bottom piece of wood there, an old chair seat. It had gone a very good grey and there was a semi-circular contour in the wood. I am very turned on by little bays at the coast, and though I had a real resistance to sticking on shells, thinking of the lampstands Auntie made, and shell boxes, I think I got away with it there. The shells actually are lavender and the top is a weathered piece of wood, which is apricot and lavender. I called it 'Private Beach', for one of those little faded beaches that only you know about and where the shells that have been lying around in the sun for a long time have gone pale (1985 School of Art).

Private beach 1979 was constructed in the late summer or early autumn of 1979. RG had visited Batemans Bay with Diana Woollard for four days in February where they walked the beaches and picked up thousands of shells ... very relaxing ... Got back to Canberra. All those shells!!!! (Feb 1979 RG to MG, p. 58; Feb 1979 RG to TG). The work was the result of a challenge from James Mollison, as BG's inscription on the back of a photograph taken in early 1979 indicates: *Private Beach. A notable success, NFS. James saw this old chair seat and said 'I'll bet you can't do anything with that'. So she very triumphantly did.*

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

172 The white sun 1979

Weathered painted wood (various sources), glass bottles with inserted labels printed on clear plastic; 37.6 x 50 x 25 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'May 79 / THE WHITE SUN / Rosalie Gascoigne '79'

Exh: 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne Ray Hughes*, Brisbane, #8, \$600; 1987 *Ten by Ten* Gertrude Street, Melbourne (as *White sun* 1976) (ref. p. 5); 2003 *Home Sweet Home* NGA and touring (ref. pp. 41–42, illus. p. 42); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne NGV, #22* (illus. p. 51, ref. p. 134); 16 May – 13 Sep 2009 *Reinventions: Sculpture + Assemblage* NGA; 2010 *Something in the Air* CMAG (illus. p. 15)

Lit: Robert Rooney *The Australian* 13 Dec 1987

Coll: 1979 private collection; 2005 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2005.842), gift of Peter Fay

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

173 **Winter order** 1978–79

Rusted metal (fabricated mesh containers), weathered wood slats, plywood, cut and pasted printed cardboard (logos); 32.5 × 71.5 × 42.5 cm; signed, dated and titled on base: 'Winter order / R.G. 79'

Exh: 1979 *3rd Biennale of Sydney* (ref. p. 26); 1979 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes, Brisbane, #10, \$600

Lit: 12 Oct, 26 Dec 1978, 11 Apr 1979 R.G. to M.G., pp. 56–58, illus. p. 58; 23 Mar 1979 B.G. to M.G., p. 58

Coll: Queensland University of Technology Art Collection, Brisbane (Acc no. 1980.030)

Work on *Winter order* began in the latter part of 1978, when R.G. was experimenting with cage-like structures on her back lawn, and was photographed in late 1978. Work was sufficiently advanced for R.G. to show it to Nick Waterlow when he came to see her in early October about exhibiting in the 3rd Biennale of Sydney in 1979. *I have had a visit from Nick Waterlow who wants me to put something in Sydney Biennale next March ... He chose three things — two still unfinished ... likes my Feathered Fence and a thing I am doing with lots of horizontal grey sticks in various cages* (later dismantled, but see *Clean country* 1985 and *Plein air* 1994) (12 Oct 1978 R.G. to M.G., p. 56).

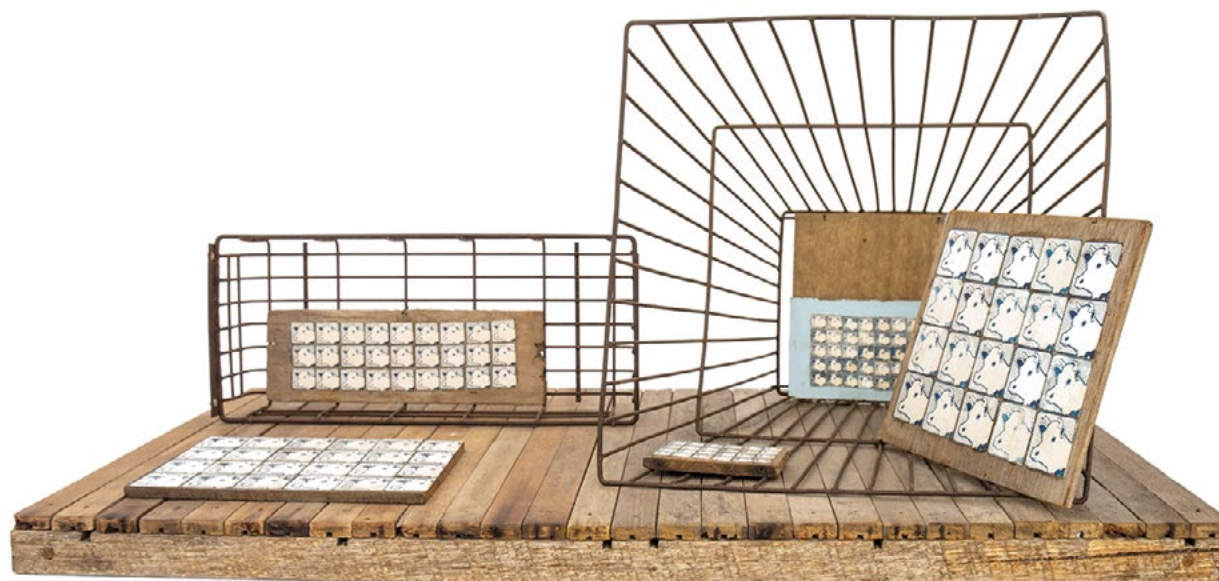
The 1978 photograph shows three units set in a large, improvised, wooden framing container. By mid-December she had reduced it to two units, a cage on top of a box (Thursday 21 [Dec 78] R.G. to Nick Waterlow, with sketch), which she further tightened up by removing the box and placed what remained on a shallow wooden plinth. The completed work had been photographed by early February 1979. In a March letter Ben commented: *That winter landscape [Winter order] is good, a quite new look, and also pleasingly easy to photograph* (23 Mar 1979 B.G. to M.G., p. 58). After visiting Sydney in April 1979 to supervise installation of her works in the biennale, including *Winter order* 1978–79, R.G. wrote: *My things are saying what I want them to — all pale country air* (11 Apr 1979 R.G. to M.G., p. 58).

Image A by Carl Warner, courtesy of The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane

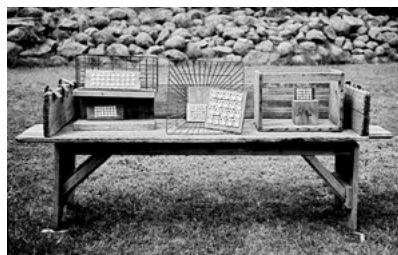
Photograph B (first version) on garden bench, November 1978, by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

Image C sketch by the artist of *Winter order* 1978–79 (second version), 21 December 1978, from letter in National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

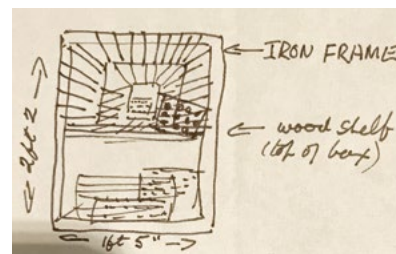
Photograph D *Winter order* 1978–79 (third version), c. early January 1979 (before cages were rearranged), by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



173A



173B



173C



173D



174

1980

174 [Bow ties] c. 1978–80

Seashell fragments on weathered wood panel; 62 × 22 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated primarily on the basis of R.G.'s visits to the south coast of NSW with her friend Diana Woollard in 1979 and 1980. A further indication of an early date is the wooden strip nailed verso top for hanging the panel. R.G. displayed the panel in her bedroom for many years.

Image from author's archive

175 Dove grey 1980

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; signed, dated and titled verso: 'R.G. / DOVE GREY / 1980'

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #1, \$1500

Lit: mid-Mar 1980 R.G. to T.G.; 24 Mar 1980 R.G. to M.G., p. 61

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dove grey was probably made with wood from the white boxes the artist collected in mid-March 1980: *This a.m. I spent getting a car load of drink boxes at Schweppes factory in Queanbeyan — as I did yesterday, only more so ... Of course I got derailed from my course at the bottle factory and reefed in a lot of white boxes for a new project. Fortunately we have a new sharp blade in the hacksaw (mid-March 1980 R.G. to T.G.). If so, it was put together very quickly because R.G. was to write on 24 March: ... piece made of all white boxes. Smaller. I find it quite beautiful and restful. Almost a blue bloom on the grey white paint. Like doves (24 Mar 1980 R.G. to M.G., p. 61).* At the time (March 1980), *Dove grey* was hanging above the bench in R.G.'s sitting room. In 2000 B.G. recalled the construction of *Dove grey*: *One of the very first flat ones. [The boards] had to be screwed to a back support, with screws no one could see. We had a lot of trouble working out a solution. Eventually we glued them on [to a plywood backing], then screwed. At first we used screws that were too big, and she was not strong enough to do the work. I did it. With these screws she would make the work in its entirety and I had a hand in putting it together from behind (mid-2000 B.G. to M.E., pers. comm.).*

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



175

176 [Homage with Botticelli's Birth of Venus] c. 1980

Printed paper or card (with Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*), painted wood (from soft-drink box); abt 15 × 27 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.479), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

177 [Homage with Botticelli's Birth of Venus and shells] c. 1980

Wood (cigar box), printed paper or card (with Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*), scallop shells; dimensions not recorded; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1982 private collection (gift of the artist)

R.G.'s gift to her friend recognises a mutual interest in visits to the coast and shell collecting; there are references to their visits to Batemans Bay in letters in 1979 (February and April) and in 1980 (February and March). The owner told M.G. in 2006 that she thought the shells were some of those gathered during those visits.

NO IMAGE

178 Ikon 1980

Printed paper or cardboard (image of Piero della Francesca's *Saint Apollonia* 1454–69) in frame of weathered painted wood from soft-drink boxes; 61 × 38 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #24, \$500

Coll: 1981 private collection

That is called 'Ikon'. It is a Piero della Francesca lady, and what I was trying to prove there was the faded colours in the Australian landscape — those are of soft-drink boxes, absolutely as found — are as beautiful as any colours you find in old world art. They are all here if you will only accept a bit of battered drink crate (1985 School of Art). Saint Apollonia is in the Frick Collection, New York. The reproduction could be from Piero della Francesca by Alberto Busignan, Dolphin, T&H 1968, of which R.G. had several copies (see R.G. papers NLA Acc 10.045).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



176



178

179 [Nail study A] c. 1979–80

Weathered metal containers (assorted), nails with rust and paint; six units, various sizes, overall abt 20 × 15 × 7 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The colours of the paint on the nails, and the type of nails used, suggest the nails came from dismantled soft-drink boxes, which suggests a date of c. 1979–80. [*Nail study A*] was sometimes displayed in the dining room window.

Image from author's archive

180 [Nail study B] c. 1979–80

Weathered metal container, nails with rust and paint; 5 cm (irreg.) × 10 cm diameter; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1980 private collection (gift of the artist)

The colours of the paint on the nails, and the type of nails used, suggest the nails came from dismantled soft-drink boxes, which suggests a date of c. 1979–80.

Image from author's archive

181 Paper square 1979–80

Cut newspaper and nails on composition board; eight panels, overall 244 × 244 cm

Exh: 1980 *Drawn and Quartered* AGSA, #9 (with RG statement); 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #3, NFS

Lit: 26 Jul 1978 RG to MG; 16 Nov 1979, 24 Jan 1980 RG to MG, pp. 59, 60; 14 Feb, 3 Mar 1980 RG to MG; early Mar 1980 RG to TG; Matt Abraham *The Advertiser* 28 Feb 1980; Jeffrey Makin *Sun News-Pictorial* c. 6 Mar 1980; Nancy Borlase *Weekend Australian* 8 Mar 1980, p. H8; Robert Rooney *The Age* 6 May 1981; Alan McCulloch *The Herald* [Melbourne] 7 May 1981; Mildred Kirk 1986, p. 515, illus. p. 513; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 11; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 106

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 destroyed

The work was made with 256 wads of newsprint, each 15 cm square, nailed to eight panels of composition board. Destroyed in 2014 because it had deteriorated severely. RG provided an artist's statement for the *Drawn and Quartered* exhibition catalogue:

I like simple material.

I like using something there is a lot of.

I like newspaper — pale, elegant, plentiful.

I like order.

I like random effects produced by exposure to weather.

I like referring back to the landscape.

This piece throws back the light as the grass lands do in a dry December.

In a 26 July 1978 letter RG reported that she had been asked to put a paper work in to [the 1980] Adelaide Festival by the Art Gallery of S.Aust. Something that explores the properties of paper rather than a work ON paper. They had seen my 'Pale Landscape' at [1978 NGV] Survey show (26 Jul 1978 RG to MG). Construction began in about October 1979 and included building two maquettes to test her ideas, one of which became the basis for the final work. RG never did preliminary drawings and this is a rare example of the artist making a maquette. She hung the completed work on the sunny, north-facing wall of the courtyard attached to her house, and BG photographed it there at least twice, weeks apart, to record the effect of the sun on the paper. By mid-November she was ready to show it to James Mollison. *Jim came in with Vincent ... I told him I would like his eye on my paper work [Paper square] for Adelaide Festival ... he described it ... as opulent ... I have been weathering [my paper piece 8 ft × 8 ft] on the courtyard wall. How crumpled wind-blown and how golden I need it to be I am not sure, and am prepared for the possibility of having to start the whole thing over again* (16 Nov 1979 RG to MG, p. 59).

RG shipped the work to Adelaide in early February 1980 and followed at the end of the month to install it (24 Jan 1980 RG to MG, p. 60; also 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG). She reported back: *Was in Adelaide Tues and Wed last week hanging 'Paper Square'. Just as well! Many workmen on the job. Cldn't screw the whole thing into the wall. Got it bent. Got it crooked. Then it had to be properly lit. Fortunately lighting man had a great battery of lights ... It certainly has pride of place being opp stairs and lift. Martin Sharp has three offerings in next area and I am happy to see his big (till you see mine!) collage of Elvis Presley news sheets in massive metal frame in no way dominates Paper Square. Rule for mixed shows: Hit it once, hit it hard and hit it simple. Alison Carroll is curator of prints and drawings in Adelaide. She says my piece will worry a lot of local opinion. I suppose the ordinary material and method (nails) cldn't be seen to be art by some* (early Mar 1980 RG to TG; for similar account see 3 Mar 1980 RG to MG).

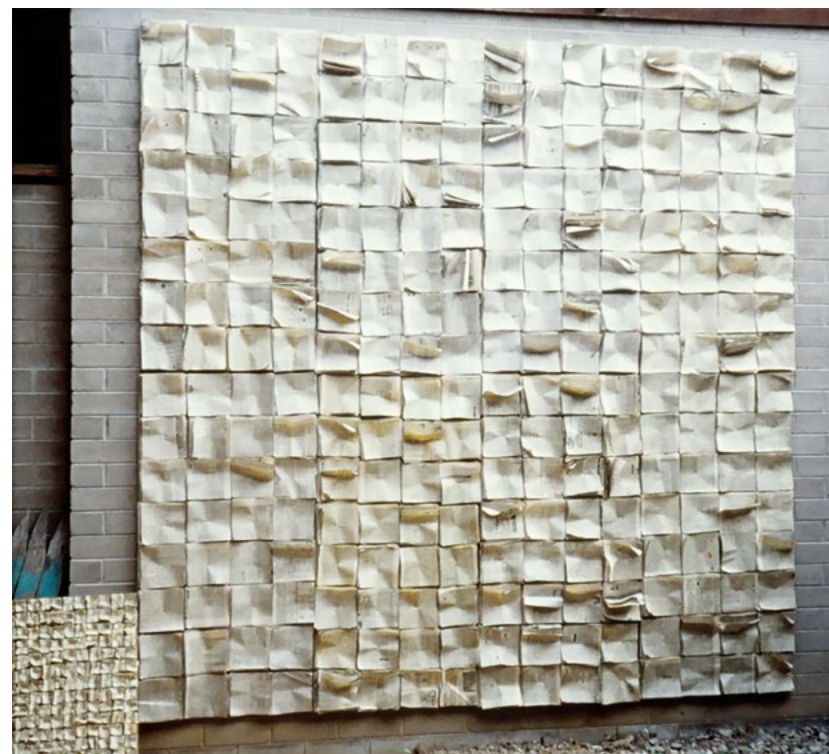
In 1982 RG spoke with Ian North about the work. *I did 'Paper square' before ... the Adelaide Festival [in March 1980]. And the reason I did that is that they wanted something about properties of paper. They didn't want works on paper, they were very explicit about that. They didn't want works on paper. What did they get? And so I thought, well I know about, I like newspaper. I think you always have to start on something you like or you get a sort of cold academic sort of thing ... And it's always, if you're asked to join one of those shows, you must harness something you've thought about before. You get a sort of deeper work or something. It's got to be realer. So I have been on about bunches of*



179



180



181

faded pink paper that looked like roses, about pink paper, stuck it on like that. And then I thought well, mixed shows, you've got to be big. You've got to be simple ... don't fiddle around. So I thought my little rose coloured paper things I could now expand and I could use my lovely newspaper, which I had cupboards full. All the Sunday supplements. All the Saturday supplements. The Age mark you. And paid for too. So I started doing that in panels 4 feet by 2 feet because it was easy to handle. And it seemed to me the thing to call it in this context was as faceless a name as you could get and call it what it was. And call it something with paper in, because it was called The Paper Show ... So it seemed a fairly dignified title to say 'Paper square' and that was it. And of course I hung it on this wall out here [in the courtyard]. I pulled it in and I pulled it out — out of the rain, out of the wind. When asked by North if she had sprayed it with something, she responded: Nothing. Nature did the lot, you see. And so it takes on the form of its nature then. At the time I was doing it, it was December, and it was very hot. And all the hillsides here were throwing off this electric light. You could have run the whole electrical system off it. I mean, who needs a hydro electric scheme (1982 North, lightly edited; for similar remarks see 1980 Gleeson and 1985 School of Art).

In 2000 BG recalled the construction of *Paper square*: *The problem there was to make the joins between the panels invisible so that the work in total did not appear as an assemblage of panels (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.).*

RG made a copy of *Paper square* in 1981–82 for the 1982 Venice Biennale where it was exhibited as *Harvest* 1981–82 (q.v.).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive. *Paper square* hanging on courtyard wall with maquette lower left

Construction of *Parrot country* probably began in early 1980, although photographs taken a year earlier show RG had been experimenting with broken boards from soft-drink boxes assembled in two columns, much as the edges in *Parrot country*. Initially RG made a single panel, which was completed by mid-February 1980. When James Gleeson saw it he responded very positively. James [Gleeson] admired my 'Parrot Country' made of drink boxes, but this time with screaming yellow in it. It's so good to show things to James G. I was asking him how he thought about using a name as a sort of extra dimension. Valid? Yes! The piece is 3ft × 4ft, four rows of narrow boards starting with a block of red, then yellow (4 boards deep) and then green eight boards deep. Like parrots with red heads and yellow breasts. Down each side are superimposed nine wider boards with jagged broken edges blue, white, green and red. It looks rather like Morris Louis curtain opening up a void in centre. Ah, said James G happily, 'The parrot is the country.' 'It screeches', I said ... And he said 'Albert Tucker TRIED to do that' (14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, pp. 60–61).

Two weeks later, encouraged by Gleeson's response and back from installing *Paper square* 1979–80 at the Adelaide Festival, RG decided to extend the work: *Just back from Adelaide. Today (still hot) I have confronted another pile of drink boxes in Queanbeyan Schweppes factory and come home with car full ... six green boxes on my clever roof rack as well. Am extending a work called 'Parrot Country' much admired by James Gleeson. Came home from Adelaide and decided it would have great power if three times as big (3 Mar 1980 RG to MG, p. 61; also mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG). By 24 March she had done so: Am all in the big wood thing — a proliferation of Schweppes boxes contributing. Multiplied my 'Parrot Country' (red, green and yellow wood) by three, taking up the whole width of the white alcove in sitting room. Very dashing — all sideways flight but I felt quite ill sitting in the room with it — definitely a gallery piece. Needs spacing (24 Mar 1980 RG to MG, pp. 61).*

When *Parrot country* 1980 came back from the 1981 Pinacotheca exhibition, the panels were stacked outside, amid all the other materials RG had accumulated (illus. p. 90). RG would later take it apart and use the parts to make *Parrot country II* 1980/83.

Image A (*Parrot country* 1980 at Pinacotheca in 1981) from author's archive

Photograph B (*Parrot country* precursor study 1979) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



182A



182B

182 Parrot country 1980

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on wooden batons; three panels, each abt 102 × 112 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #20, \$2500

Lit: 14 Feb, 3 Mar, 24 Mar 1980 RG to MG, pp. 60–61 (illus.); mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 103; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 57 (installation at Pinacotheca)

Coll: dismantled c. 1982

*That [Parrot country] was stylised birds again. It is a fairly big piece and it's made of natural coloured Schweppes boxes. We were getting Eastern rosellas on our bird table. It's meant to screech at you, and it does. Later in the same talk RG also said of parrots: for me they're the animal in the landscape, as Ned Kelly is to Nolan (1985 School of Art). (She described the parrots in *Jim's picnic* 1975 as the kangaroos in the landscape.)*

183 Parrots 1980

Painted and stencilled wood from surveyor's pegs and soft-drink boxes, printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits parrot logos) on plywood; 64 × 33 × 10 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #13, \$800; 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale*, #3 (VAB cat. ref. pp. 50–51, 57, illus. p. 60; *Catalogue generale* 1982, ref. p. 82); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW (ref.)

Lit: *The Australian* 18 Feb 1983, illus. p. 14; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 30; Barbara Anderson in *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, 2004 (exh. cat.), p. 56

Coll: 1981 private collection

What led to [the parrot pieces later chosen for Venice in 1982] was that I had all these broken pieces of wood from the drink boxes ... I was always on about these [parrot] tails and when I'm moving around amongst the wood, I'd see it again and again. Anyway, I think I made the one called 'Parrots' first. And I wanted that. You see so many things about birds when you've got birds in cages, which of course I'm dead against. You see their tails coming down and the head and stuff like that and the shadow. And then I'm conscious too of the gestures of parrots ... I was very much into the greys. It's always a thing I go back to and I had some white, painted white, I think they are surveyor's pegs. And I had a lot of those. So I thought, well I'll put this on a brighter background to see, and that of course was a mental decision. And that was the first one. And it's got a grey frame and white across, stripes. And I thought the number on one of the whites gave another element to it. It really was a fairly straight picture to me of what parrots are, except if you're being really straight, you'd find there are a lot of anomalies ... I still wasn't through with my feeling ... I'm still unfortunately not through with my feeling for parrots tails. And I am sure I will have to do some more to satisfy myself (1982 North).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

184 Pond 1980

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes; 102 × 142 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #7, \$1200

Lit: c. Jan 1981 RG to TG; Mary Eagle 2000, p. 57 (installation at Pinacotheca 1981)

Coll: dismantled

Interesting to see things in different milieu and out of factory situation. All the drink-box ones look good in [Martin's] house especially green number now called 'Pond' (after Monet and his water lilies) (c. Jan 1981 RG to TG).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



183



184

185 Rain forest 1980

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes on plywood backing; 210 × 152 cm; signed, dated and titled verso centre in black: 'R.G. 1981 / RAIN / FOREST' and inscribed u.c. in white: 'TOP'

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #5, \$2000; 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[5] (ref. p. 62)

Lit: 3 Mar 1980 RG to MG, p. 61 (green boxes); Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 40 (with illus.); Kate Sands 2001, p. 43

Coll: c. 1982 private collection (gift of the artist)

*It's when I first got into Schweppes boxes. I don't think it was Schweppes who made these, but they were drink boxes and this piece came off the end of them. I was very inexperienced and I made a certain length and thought, 'Oh, I can make it a bit longer' — so it's got a join. It's all green, in various shades of fade. It looks like a rain forest, really (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 40). Some of the wood may have come from the Schweppes factory at Queanbeyan on 3 Mar 1980 (also used in *Parrot country* 1980). I have confronted another pile of drink boxes in Queanbeyan Schweppes factory and come home with car full ... six green boxes on my clever roof rack as well (3 Mar 1980 RG to MG, p. 61).*

Dated on the basis of 1980 imagery. Originally the lower panel was attached by hangers to the upper panel. In 2000 the two pieces were joined using aluminium strip.

Photograph from author's archive



185



186

186 Step through 1977/c. 1979–80

Torn and cut patterned linoleum on shaped plywood mounted on sawn timber blocks; 15 units, overall abt 28 × 93 × 370 cm (variable):

1. 32.5 × 40.0 × 27.8 cm
2. 35.5 × 66.2 × 24.1 cm
3. 29.6 × 38.5 × 23.2 cm
4. 32.6 × 51.1 × 25.0 cm
5. 36.4 × 64.5 × 20.8 cm
6. 21.9 × 36.0 × 18.1 cm
7. 38.0 × 64.0 × 20.3 cm
8. 31.4 × 37.5 × 20.9 cm
9. 23.0 × 48.5 × 20.0 cm
10. 26.5 × 34.2 × 25.1 cm
11. 33.3 × 42.5 × 17.7 cm
12. 42.2 × 50.2 × 20.0 cm
13. 39.5 × 42.0 × 19.9 cm
14. 30.9 × 66.5 × 17.3 cm
15. 38.7 × 54.2 × 20.7 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #21 (as *River crossing* (*Step through?*)), \$2000; 1982 *The Philip Morris Arts Grant: Australian Art of the Past Ten Years* ANG (as *River crossing* (*Step through*)) 1980) (ref. p. 87); 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #[8] (illus., ref.) (dated 1980); 1984 *Australian Sculpture Now* NGV (catalogued, illus. p. 94, but probably not exhibited); 1990 *L'été Australien* Montpellier, France; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[23] (illus. p. 81, ref. p. 134)

Lit: mid-Dec 1977 RG to MG, p. 59 (incorrectly dated 1979); c. 29 Mar 1979 RG to MG; c. 10 Jun 1979 RG to TG; TJ McNamara *NZ Herald* 2 Apr 1984; Manawatu Art Gallery *Quarterly* Apr–Jun 1984, illus.; Auckland Art Gallery *News Letter* no. 13, Apr/Jun 1984, illus.; Graeme Sturgeon *Australian sculpture now: Second Australian sculpture triennial* NGV, 1984 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 94; 24 Feb 1987 RG statement for NGA (NGA file 75/1869–01 Rosalie Gascoigne f. 181) (part quoted in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 48, incorrectly dated 1981); Anne Kirker 1989, p. 55 (with illus.); *Identities: Art from Australia* Taipei, 1993 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 8; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 14; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 48 (with illus.); Judith White 2000, illus. p. 55; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 57 (installation at Pinacotheca 1981); Daniel Thomas 2004, p. 18; *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, 2004 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 84

Coll: 1981 Philip Morris Arts Grant collection; 1982 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 83.1606 A–O date 9.5.83), gift of the Philip Morris Arts Grant

Though linoleum is a household material this piece has nothing to do with domesticity. It is about outdoor places. When I made it I was thinking of the unkempt empty blocks in built-up city areas which one is sometimes tempted to step through as a short cut. In my experience such places are

usually covered in rank grasses and flowering weeds, the odd discarded garden flower (read the artless flowers on the lino), rubble, old tins, and bottles. One steps through them gingerly and, with possible snakes in mind, lifts one's knees up high. It is not purely a visual work. The act of stepping through, as exhorted by the title, is crucial to the full experience of the piece. I would like people to be able to do this, gallery conditions permitting. It is an unexpectedly strange sensation. The units should be placed random in a rough rectangle like a city block. They should be spaced to allow people to step over the blocks without disturbing them. When I first showed 'Step Through' various people read lily ponds and river crossings into it. I am quite happy for them to bring their own experience to mine, but I would like to place on record the original thinking behind the piece (RG statement for NGA 24 Feb 1987, NGA file 75/1869-01 Rosalie Gascoigne f.181 and RG papers NLA box 21).

Construction of *Step through* began in late 1977, concurrently with or shortly after *River banks* 1977. The first reference is in a letter from mid-December 1977: Jim [Mollison] back from a trip which culminated in the Cezanne [exhibition at MoMA] in New York ... I was glad to impress him with my new concept. I have backed a lot of the same grey floral lino with plywood. Irregular shapes maybe 2 ft long at most, squarish, pear-shaped, triangular. And I put them on those big blocks of wood that used to be under the Michael Taylor in the hall. Nine of them, like tables. Beautifully horizontal because of wood backing. Much work with new jig-saw. I had to put them out for Jim as they take up a lot of floor. So he watched, 'You have to step in and out of them', I said. So he did. And he got it. Felt it, rather. 'Very strange', he said, 'Like that little bronze chair [by Claes Oldenburg] we have' ... I call it 'Short cut' at moment, stepping through the vacant allotment sort of thing. The floral pattern helps. You get the feeling of stepping from one plane to another. Full of possibilities (with sketch, mid-Dec 1977 RG to MG, p. 59 extract incorrectly dated).

In c. 1979–1980 RG expanded *Step through* from the original nine platforms to fifteen. Three things were in play. In late 1978 she was thinking about working on a larger scale: *Am ... trying to burst into new larger works with an eye to Pinacotheca next year. Meanwhile the [1979 Sydney] Biennale lurks threateningly ... things I haven't finished* (26 Dec 1978 RG to MG, p. 57). In March 1979 the theme of layered space and movement underpinning *Step through* came up in remarks she wrote about wanting to ask people to dress in bathing suits and pretend to dive into, swim in, the long summer grass of a paddock hemmed by fences (29 Mar 1979 RG to MG). In June 1979, writing about what she might do with a new stock of floral linoleum: *I can reline the kitchen cupboards if worst comes to the worst. And before I do that I can cut lavishly into it and make a large step-through artwork* (10 Jun 1979 RG to TG). New tools would help: in mid-year

she sold a lot of work from her show at Ray Hughes in Brisbane and used the proceeds to buy a new jigsaw (22 May 1979 BG to TG).

The blocks of wood used to support the platforms in *Step through* were the nine blocks used in *Blocks* 1975 exhibited at Gallery A, Sydney, in 1976. The linoleum used is the same as that used in *River banks* 1977, which she spoke about in 1997: *I remember going out once to Captains Flat and finding a whole lot of very good quality linoleum that they'd apparently ripped up from the city hall or something, and I remember making one work [probably River banks 1977]. It just worked for me, that particular linoleum, but in most tips you see that'd be at the bottom of the ditch and burnt* (1997 Feneley).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

187 Stonerack 1980

Weathered timber rack, pebbles; 43 × 43 × 8 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #12, \$500

Coll: dismantled

Photograph from author's archive

188 The teaparty 1980

Weathered wood apiary box, plastic carnival sideshow dolls and wings, rusted enamelled metal utensils; 82 × 35 × 19 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[4] (version B) (as *The teaparty*, illus. p. 36 (version A), ref. p. 62); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[5] (version B) (ref. p. 33, illus. p. 34 (version A)); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[24] (illus. p. 58 (version B), ref. p. 134); 24 Jul – 27 Sep 2015 *Storm in a teacup* Mornington Peninsula Regional Art Gallery, VIC (ref. pp. 16, 23, illus. p. 17)

Lit: 1 May 1977 RG to MG, p. 47 (orange teapot); Gregory O'Brien 'Of magpie song' 2004, illus. p. 20

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Photography reveals two versions: initially (before April 1981) with the top teapot on the right and its spout pointing right (version A); later photographs show the top teapot on the left with spout pointing right (version B). The mug and the teapot on top of the box were only glued down c. 2000; before then, whenever the work was moved, the two loose pieces were lifted off and put back in positions that best suited the new location. RG displayed *The teaparty* 1980 at Anstey Street, Pearce, in the hallway opposite the entrance and on the mantelpiece in the sitting room.

I did [the Dollies' teaparty] in a very light-hearted mood because I found two teapots the same, miles apart [in] different dumps. I thought 'Oh, those dollies, they're having a ... very joyful ... picnic. They're ... in the paddock, they've got all these old things ... they've sat down on the teapots and waved their wings around (1987 Havyatt).

The dolls used in *The teaparty* were part of the great cache RG found at the Bungendore tip in the summer of 1976 (see *Dolly boxes* 1976). Very possibly, one of the orange teapots in the work was the one found in the autumn of 1977: *we stopped on the way [to Lake George] and did a cluster of old huts, wattle and daub and kerosene-tinned, on top of the hill before one gets into Bungendore. Used to have a fierce old man and fiercer leg-biting dogs. Some interesting dumps there. Alas. I found a marvellous broken-down enamel kettle, large, rich clear blue, and an orange tea pot. Had to take them* (1 May 1977 RG to MG, p. 47).

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

189 [Twelve squares of six] c. 1980

Painted wooden surveyor's pegs on backing board; 89 × 120 cm; inscribed verso: 'Untitled (12 squares of 6) / Certificate that this is a work by Rosalie Gascoigne / Martin Gascoigne / 6 April 2004'

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #11 (as *Untitled (12 squares of 6)* 1980-81), \$130,000 (incorrectly sized as 90 × 199.5 cm)

Lit: 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2011 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

RG was keen on surveyor's pegs (see p. 116 Materials) and looked to add to her collection, as she wrote in 1980: *The heat of the afternoon. I spent two hours this morning out in the ghost suburb of Erindale [in Tuggeranong, south Canberra] — roads and crescents and circles and places but no houses. The grasses are magnificent, all the lovely old weeds [which are] fast disappearing in our immediate environment. I actually went out yesterday needing a sense of space and was of a mind to take the odd illicit surveyor's peg for my collection (such a good white and grey)* (14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60).

Regarding dating, the reference to surveyor's pegs in the February 1980 letter and the simple wooden batten screwed to the rear of the work for hanging the work suggest a date of c. 1980 (i.e. before aluminium strip was used on the backs of panelled works in January 1981).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



187



188



189



190



191



192

190 Venus 1980

Weathered, stencilled wood (some from dismantled Shell crate), postcard image *Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti*; 58.6 × 34 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #9, \$500; 6–31 Mar 2007 *Blue Chip IX* Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, #26; 27 Aug 2007 Sotheby's M., lot 48 (illus. p. 107)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 32

Coll: 1981 private collection

RG first mounted the postcard on a board from a discarded soft-drink box but replaced the board with a plainer, lighter panel.

Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti New Kingdom 18th Dynasty is in the Egyptian Antiquities collection of the Louvre — an image also used in [*Homage with Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti*] c. 1980–84.

Image courtesy of Christie's Australia

191 [White and grey A] 1980

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on composition board backing; 101 × 73 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra (ref. p. 62), #[7] (catalogued as *Untitled* c. 1981 (RG 69)) (not displayed)

Lit: mid-Mar 1980, Monday c. Jan 1981 RG to TG

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

[*White and grey A*] was possibly made with wood from the white boxes RG collected in mid-March 1980: *This a.m. I spent getting a carload of drink boxes at Schweppes factory in Queanbeyan — as I did yesterday, only more so ... Of course I got derailed from my course at the bottle factory and reefed in a lot of white boxes for a new project. Fortunately we have a new sharp blade in the hacksaw* (mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG). Nine months later she reported: *Martin has smaller white one in his house at moment. Interesting to see things in different milieu and out of factory situation. All the drink-box ones look good in his house* (Monday c. Jan 1981 RG to TG).

RG displayed the work above the side table in the entrance hall at Anstey Street, Pearce.

Image from author's archive

192 [White and grey B] 1980

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; three panels, each 71 (one 70.5) × 25.5 cm, overall 71 × 80 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: mid-Mar 1980, Monday c. Jan 1981 RG to TG

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

[*White and grey B*] was possibly made with wood from the white boxes RG collected in mid-March 1980: *This a.m. I spent getting a carload of drink boxes at Schweppes factory in Queanbeyan — as I did yesterday, only more so ... Of course I got derailed from my course at the bottle factory and reefed in a lot of white boxes for a new project. Fortunately we have a new sharp blade in the hacksaw* (mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG).

Image from author's archive

1981

193 Bird house 1981

Wood (some painted), cut-out printed cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos), plywood; 55 × 38.5 × 14.5 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #14, \$800; 27 Nov 1981 *Recent Acquisitions* Burnie Art Gallery, TAS, #15 (illus., ref.); 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale*, #5 (as *The bird house*) (VAB cat. ref. pp. 50–51, 57, illus. p. 62; *Catalogue generale* ref. p. 82, illus. p. 84); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW (ref.)

Lit: *The Mercury* 18 Dec 1981, illus. p. 9

Coll: Burnie Regional Art Gallery, purchased with Tasmanian Arts Board funds

The wood includes a board from an apiary box (the 'door') and boards from soft-drink boxes.

Sometimes you get obsessed with a subject. But it's very hard to say anything different that's not been said before. And you don't realise that you've come to end of the expression of it. So I decided I would like to make a thing with one bird. I'm always doing three ... so I started off ... I will now make a conglomerate you see, harder. In the end I made a [bird], it suddenly looked as if it had a home. But this one is a more three-dimensional one. And looks as if it had its place. It had a door, and somewhere to sit. And that was all right ... There wasn't enough there, but you don't want to upset the balance. And you don't want to draw the eye but you've got to have something. And so I put this little note rather flat against the wall and at the bottom. And it got so domestic you wouldn't believe it. And so I called it 'Bird house'. It was a house. It got very domestic with that (1982 North).

Image from author's archive

194 [Cat study 1] c. 1981

Carpenter's mitre box, cut-out printed paper shapes (from cat-food packaging) on shaped plywood; 17 × 22 × 7 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

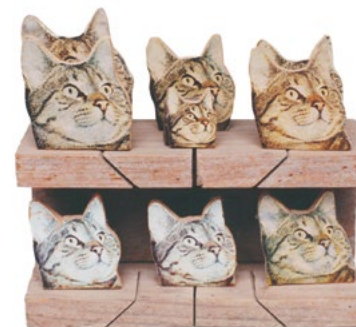
Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis of a strip of negatives dated 10 December 1981, which includes an image showing the cats on the sitting room bench. The cats were probably cut with the jigsaw acquired in 1979.

Image from author's archive



193



194

195 [Cat study 2] c. 1981

Cut-out printed paper shapes (from cat-food packaging) on shaped plywood, sawn wood; 12 pieces, largest 8.5 × 7.5 × 2.7 cm, smallest 3.8 × 3 × 2.6 cm, overall dimensions variable; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: private collection (gift of the artist)

Dated on the basis of a strip of negatives dated 10 December 1981, which includes an image showing the cats on the sitting room bench. The cats were probably cut with the jigsaw acquired in 1979.

Image from author's archive

196 City birds 1981

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes and surveyor's pegs, printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos), plywood; 53 × 41 × 13 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #15, \$800; 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale*, #6 (VAB cat. ref. pp. 50–51, 57, illus. p. 63; *Catalogue generale* ref. p. 82, illus. p. 85); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW (ref.)

Lit: Ronald Millen *Art and Australia* vol. 20, no. 3, 1983, illus. p. 331

Coll: 1981 private collection

I don't actually steal these surveyor's things. I found a whole pile of them in a mud pit over in Erindale [in Tuggeranong, south Canberra] where the grass had grown over and they'd obviously been left. But I dug, at some pain to myself, a whole lot of the things with my bare hands out of the mud. I cut the points off and I had all these black points. They are very like the clouds of starlings that go over, grapeshot. Like that. So I fixed these cleverly on to my parrot heads and of course they weren't parrots anymore. They were common little city birds more like the starling or the sparrow. But then of course the thing got away from me, and I had a bit of rainbow wood. I'd made a slight rainbow with bits of the same old box, and I had this spare bit — I thought, that's a nice bit. So I fixed it cleverly on to one bird, on the bottom ledge and of course it immediately changed into an iridescent pigeon with this nesting thing on the bottom ledge. And so I put all the others on top in this, and it was to me, those birds you see, all over, the pigeon ... And I didn't want people to think they were parrots. And they certainly weren't parrots in the field. So I called that 'City birds' and it seemed to make a different look (1982 North; see also 1985 School of Art).

Image from author's archive

197 Down to the silver sea

1977/81

Wood drink box, wooden mitre box, cloth on corrugated galvanised iron, plastic doll's leg, printed paper cut-outs (images of Georges Braque's *Nu debout*) on plywood cut to shape; 41 × 42 × 38 cm

Exh: 2003 *Home Sweet Home* NGA and touring (illus. p. 15, ref. pp. 41–42)

Lit: 30 or 31 Dec 1977 RG to MG, p. 52 (incorrectly dated 1 Jan 1978); Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 53 (early version); John Cruthers *Art and Australia* vol. 40, no. 4, 2003, p. 641; Sonia Barron *Canberra Times* 8 Nov 2003, illus. p. 20

Coll: 1993 private collection; 2002 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2002.129), gift of Peter Fay

In 1977 RG made at least two studies using images of Braque's *Nu debout* supplied by James Mollison, who had wanted to buy it for the Australian National Gallery in 1976 but the Fraser government quashed the plan — the controversy was at its height in August 1977. One study does not survive (illus. 197B). The other one, which was eventually incorporated in the completed work, involved a group of three Braque figures mounted on a carpenter's mitre box with small pieces of corrugated iron and a plastic leg (illus. 197C). RG used her new jigsaw to cut out the figures of the *Nu debout*; the saw was acquired towards the end of 1977. She referred to the work in a letter in late December 1977: *Am struggling with a piece I hope to call 'Down to the Silver Sea'. Been at it for weeks. It's mainly cut-out Grand Nus [Nu debout] and corrugated iron and a few plastic dolls legs (fat) and I keep nearly getting it. But I can't seem to tighten it enough (30 or 31 Dec 1977 RG to MG, p. 52).* RG probably didn't solve the problem of tightening the work until c. 1981, and did so by mounting it in a partly dismantled soft-drink box (the same type of box and format she settled on for *Forty-acre block* 1977/79). The first photograph of the completed work dates from January 1982, which suggests completion in 1981. For an account of the *Grand nu* saga, see Michael Lloyd and Michael Desmond *European and American paintings and sculptures 1870–1970 in the Australian National Gallery* ANG, Canberra, 1992, pp. 23–27. See also Wednesday [Sep] 1977 RG to TG referring to a 'very good article pro-Braque' in the *National Times* on 12 September.

Image A courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Photographs B & C of precursors by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



195



196



197A



197B



197C



198



199



200A



200B

198 Eighty-nine parrots 1981

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos), sawn painted wood (from soft-drink boxes), plywood backing; 73.5 × 55 × 3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #23 (as *Eightynine parrots*), \$800; 22 Oct – 21 Nov 1998 *Ways of Being* Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW Sydney and touring NSW and QLD in 1999 (Tamworth, Dubbo, Moree Plains, Toowoomba, Gold Coast City, Penrith art galleries) (illus. p. 21)

Coll: 1982 Artbank, Sydney (Acc no. 2012)

This is the supermarket parrot. That is only a detail of a large thing I called 87 [sic] parrots because, yes, there were 87 [sic] of them in it. And the background is actually labour-intensive. The background wood is strips I cut from coloured boxes. It took me a long time to cut those strips and glue them on. But you do it because you want to do it ... You don't mind (1985 School of Art). *Eighty-nine parrots* possibly owes something to Richard Larter's *Pause for thought* (July) 1973, which RG saw in 1973: *When I was in [Watters] Gallery in morning I saw Larter against wall ... About size of your [Robert] Hunter. Postage stamped over with portraits of Mrs Larter — head and neck, mouth open, shut, sideways etc. Query: would one want to live with it?* (27 Aug 1973 RG to MG).

Image courtesy of Artbank, Sydney

199 Four days by the sea 1981

Wooden boards, some painted (from soft-drink boxes); four panels, each abt 56 × 33 cm, overall abt 56 × 140 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #8, \$800

Coll: dismantled

Image from author's archive

200 Piece to walk around 1981

Saffron thistle (*Carthamus lanatus*) stalks; installation comprising 20 squares, each abt 80 × 80 cm arranged in 5 × 4 grid, overall 1.5 × 380 × 480 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1981 *First Australian Sculpture Triennial* Melbourne, #26 (artist's statement and illus. p. 38); 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #18, \$2000; 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, # [10] (ref.); 1984 *Australian Sculpture Now* NGV (catalogued, illus. p. 94, but probably not exhibited); 5–29 Oct 1994 *Reinventing the Grid* Robert Lindsay Gallery, Melbourne (illus. (detail), ref.); 1996 *ACAF 5* Melbourne; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), # [4] (pp. 13, 14, illus. p. 24 and detail p. 25); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, # [6] (ref. p. 45, illus. p. 46 (detail)); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, # [28] (illus. p. 69 (detail), ref. p. 135); 2015 *The*

Daylight Moon Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW, #1 (illus. front cover (detail), pp. 11, 30)

Lit: 14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60; *La Trobe University Record* vol. 15, no. 1, Feb/Mar 1981, illus. p. 12; Janine Burke *Art Network* no. 3 & 4, 1981, illus. p. 26; Graeme Sturgeon *Australian sculpture now: Second Australian sculpture triennial* NGV, 1984 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 94 (detail); Anne Kirker 1990, pp. 19–21; Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 14, 22; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 49 (detail), 112; William McAloon 2004; Janet Hughes *New Zealand Books* vol. 14, no. 3, Aug 2004; Deborah Edwards 2016, p. 142, illus. p. 143

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2011 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, gift of the Gascoigne family, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

Regarding the thistles used in the work:

The heat of the afternoon. I spent two hours this morning out in the ghost suburb of Erindale [in Tuggeranong, south Canberra] — roads and crescents and circles and places but no houses. The grasses are magnificent, all the lovely old weeds [which are] fast disappearing in our immediate environment. I actually went out yesterday needing a sense of space ... became aware of the magnificent stands of grey [saffron] thistle stalks (the thistle candelabra style) and since I chased that particular and noxious specimen much further afield last year with little success, I started cutting. Came home in a lather of sweat at 12 o'clock with great grey armfuls. I have my eye on an installation of some sort. I have it clean and piled in the passage between the courtyard and the sofa I now write on. The light runs along it — a beautiful metallic light grey (14 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60). (Note: The inserted reference to *Takeover bid* 1981 in the published text is incorrect.) RG used the same thistle in her dried arrangements in the late 1950s, and spoke about them in a talk on dried arrangements she gave in c. 1960 (see the note on Rosalie's Materials).

At the First Australian Sculpture Triennial, *Piece to walk around* 1981 was included in the section 'Processes/Installations/Environments'. In the catalogue RG explained her concept: *This is a piece for walking around and contemplating. It is about being in the country with its shifting light and shades of grey, its casualness and its prodigality. The viewer's response to the landscape may differ from mine, but I hope this picture will convey some sense of the countryside that produced it: and that an extra turn or two around the work will induce in the viewer the liberating feeling of being in the open country* (*The first Australian sculpture triennial* 1981 (exh. cat.), p. 38).

RG spoke about the work in 1985: *It is called 'Piece to Walk Around', and I wanted people to walk around it because the light changes. You get a grey square and then a brownish square in just the way the colours change when you walk out in the country. To me it is actual notes of the countryside*

I know. It produces things in abundance. It is careless. It has got glancing greys, and what I hoped was — I think I said it in a catalogue — if you take an extra turn or two around it maybe you will get some sense of the countryside which produced it (1985 School of Art).

Image A by Jenni Carter, courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

Image B detail courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

201 Reading left to right 1981

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes; three panels: 93 × 140 cm, 93 × 106 cm, 93 × 87.5 cm, overall 93 × abt 338 cm (with spacing)

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #17, \$2500; 1983 *Continuum '83* Tokyo #4 (as *Blue bands*) (ref.)

Lit: Mary Eagle 2000, p. 57 (installation view at Pinacotheca)

Coll: dismantled

Image from author's archive

202 Reconstruction 1980–81

Weathered sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on weathered plywood; three panels, overall 59 × 130 cm; each panel signed, dated, titled and numbered (respectively) verso centre in black: 'R.G. 1981 / RECONSTRUCTION / PANEL 1', 'RG 1981 / RECONSTRUCTION / PANEL 2', 'RG 1981 / RECONSTRUCTION / PANEL 3'

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #2, \$1100

Lit: Jane Smith 1986, illus. p. 110 (panels in order 3, 1, 2); Michael Bogle *Vogue Living* March 1989, illus. p. 85; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34

Coll: c. 1989 private collection

Re dating: in 1985 RG told Jane Smith that *Reconstruction* was inspired by the New York skyline, and was made after she returned from her visit there in May–June 1980 (Jane Smith 1986, p. 110; see also Vici MacDonald p. 34). It was time-consuming work to cut, arrange and glue the slivers of sawn boards. On the back of each panel is a simple wooden baton for hanging them (rather than the aluminium strip introduced in c. January 1981). Panel 2 has two such hanging batons, one at the top and one at the bottom, and there is an image of the whole work in the sequence 1, 3, 2 with panel 2 hung upside down. But if there were issues with the display, they were sorted by the time RG inscribed the panels, probably just before the work was exhibited in April 1981. A fourth panel was found in the artist's studio in 2000 (see [*Reconstruction 2*] 1980–81).

Image from author's archive

203 [Reconstruction 2]

1980–81

Sawn painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on weathered plywood; 58 × 40.6 cm; no inscriptions

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

See notes on *Reconstruction* 1980–81.

Image from author's archive

204 Sharpe Bros horizontal

1979/1980–81

Painted wood boards from soft-drink boxes; 100 × 204.5 cm; five panels, not inscribed but the panels are labelled verso, in black, respectively: 'E, D, C, B, A'; label on reverse u.r., '3'

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #6, \$1200; 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #[9] (dated 1981) (ref.); 1985 *Selected Works from the Last Two Decades* at Pinacotheca Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #3, \$2200; 1989 *What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden (illus. p. 42) (incorrect measurements)

Lit: mid-Mar 1980, Monday c. Jan 1981 RG to TG; TJ McNamara NZ *Herald* 2 Apr 1984; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 41 (with illus.)

Coll: 1985 Geelong Gallery, VIC (Acc no.1985.12), purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council

RG found white-painted soft-drink boxes in 1978 and by February 1979 had laid boards from them out in a rectangle comprising three columns of eight boards (the completed work is five columns of nine boards). A comparison of images of the precursor and the finished work suggests the precursor may have been taken apart and the panels reused in the completed work, along with some of the white boards referred to in a mid-March 1980 letter: *This a.m. I spent getting a carload of drink boxes at Schweppes factory in Queanbeyan — as I did yesterday, only more so ... Of course I got derailed from my course [working on Parrot country 1980] at the bottle factory and reefed in a lot of white boxes for a new project. Fortunately we have a new sharp blade in the hacksaw (mid-Mar 1980 RG to TG). The work was probably assembled in December 1980 (when Toss visited Canberra) and finished off with aluminium strip in January 1981, when RG reported back to him: *Life has seemed rather like a succession of week ends lately. However much carpentry has been done. Yr father has discovered aluminium strips and we have been playing unpick, unpick, unpick followed by join up, join up, join up. Result is lighter and much more professional looking. Next piece to be done is the white-board number you helped with [Sharpe Bros horizontal]* (Monday [Jan] 1981 RG to TG).*

Image courtesy of Geelong Art Gallery, VIC



201



202



203



204



205



206

205 Shell 1 1981

Stencilled and painted wood from various sources (including discarded soft-drink box, discarded cupboard door and box for 4-gallon kerosene tins), with backing of new plywood; 60 × 40 cm; signed, dated and titled verso centre in black: 'SHELL 1 / 1983 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #26 (as *Shell board I* dated 1983), \$750; 24 Nov 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 19 (as *Shell*)

Coll: 1985 private collection

Dated on the basis of a strip of negatives dated 10 December 1981, on which there was an image with part of *Shell 1* visible along with several other pieces on the sitting room bench.

A very similar work, *Shell 2* c. 1981–84, was also exhibited at Pinacotheca in 1984.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

206 Side show 1981

Wood from soft-drink boxes and surveyor's pegs (some painted and stencilled), other weathered wood, plastic doll's head; 45 × 43 × 28 cm

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #21, \$1000; 2000 *From the Studio ANU Drill Hall Gallery*, Canberra, #[8] (illus. p. 56, ref. p. 62); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[27] (as *Sideshow*) (illus. p. 14, ref. p. 135)

Lit: *ANU Reporter* vol. 31, no. 14, 6 Oct 2000, illus. (image reversed); Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 43

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Side show 1981 is made from a partly deconstructed soft-drink box, three surveyor's pegs and other found wood. In 2000 BG recalled the construction of *Side show*: 'It was difficult to get the doll post at the precise erect angle, and the surveyor's pegs jutting in from the right at the precise angle that expressed the force she wanted' (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.). *Side show* was probably made after R.G.'s April 1981 exhibition; it was first photographed in c. January 1982. R.G. kept *Side show* in her sitting room.

Image by Brenton McGeachie, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

207 Side show parrots 1981

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos) on plywood cut to shape, painted and unpainted wood, painted wood numbers and wooden polo ball; 63.5 × 48.2 × 10.1 cm; signed, dated and titled on base: 'R.G. 1981 / Side Show Parrots'

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #16, \$800; 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale*, #4 (VAB cat. ref. p. 57, illus. p. 61; *Catalogue generale* ref. p. 82, illus. p. 85); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW (ref., illus.); 4–20 Nov 2010 *Abstraction 9* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, #37 (illus.); 24 Mar 2013 *The Laverty Collection* Bonhams S., lot 182 (illus. pp. 270 (detail of back of work), 271)

Lit: Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 43 (with illus.); Mary Eagle 'Side show parrots 1981' in Bonhams *The Laverty Collection* Sydney, 2013, p. 270

Coll: 1981 private collection; Dec 1987 The Laverty Collection

The painted wood is from soft-drink boxes, the background from a fruit box or similar, the plinth is building material, the numbers were made by RG and the ball is probably a polo ball.

What led to [the parrot pieces shown at Venice in 1982] was that I had all these broken pieces of wood from the drink boxes ... And I thought, I'm going to work that up into something acceptable someday ... I was always on about these (parrot) tails and when I'm moving around amongst the wood, I'd see it again and again. Anyway, I think I made the one called 'Parrots [1980]' first ... So that was all right. I still wasn't through with my feeling ... I'm still unfortunately not through with my feeling for parrots' tails. And I am sure I will have to do some more to satisfy myself ...

I'd been seeing things about Picasso. I'd been in New York [in June 1980] when the Picasso show was on [at MoMA]. Not that I'd seen it, but I mean there was a publication out ... And I get the feeling about Picasso that he didn't give a damn. He made it work, however unlikely ... He knew he was a master and he just made it work ... I'd thought of Picasso anyway, before. And his sportiveness, his enjoyment, you know, this sort of thing. And so instead of being fussy, particularly about the pieces I chose, I thought right, and with my very positive hand I did these parrots and I accepted that one going the wrong way. And I got a very different quality, I thought. I called it 'Side show parrots' because it had that battered look. And of course the faded quality of circus things has always rather intrigued me ... I had a couple of old wooden boards and then I had a very clever bandsaw and I'd found a whole lot of metal numbers in an antique shop, but I don't like the metal numbers ... and my things were getting very woody at that stage



207

and I felt if I get anything in that wasn't wood, I lost the homogeneity. It had to be wood, breathe wood, you see. So on my clever bandsaw I just got a piece of crate and I cut out a yellow 5. You can only cut the numbers that were whole ... So I've got two figures there, a 5 and (a 3) ... and I put them on and it read to me as if it came from a very different predicament or something ... they had the quality for me of circus or sideshow things, a bit careless but pretty gutsy in that they've got that red-blooded, unrefined look about them. And also the piece is fairly battered in itself, I think. I did it on the end of a packing case ... And in the end it seems to reach a point where — it's like trying to stand an egg up on its end, and it reaches that point of balance and you can feel it. So I did that one (1982 North).

In the early to mid-1950s the family would go to the annual Queanbeyan agricultural show, then held in February. There are echoes of those trips in *Side show parrots*, as RG explains: *The numbers indicate that if you get number three you get this nice crystal cut glass and if you get number five you get something else. I purposely wanted shabbiness, I like shabbiness. The sort of tat that you get at the Queanbeyan sideshows* (1985 School of Art). I remember that Ben and Rosalie hosted a party in c. 1958 at which one of the guests demonstrated his skill in balancing eggs, so the reference in the School of Art talk may have its origin there (MG recollection).

Regarding RG's interest in the circus, see notes on *Travelling circus* 1981.

Image courtesy of Bonhams, Sydney

208 Takeover bid 1981

Painted window frames, dried thistle (probably the variegated thistle, *Silybum marianum*) stalks; four units, overall abt 200 × 350 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #22, \$1500; 1990 *Sense of Place* Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery UMelb (only three panels), #[1] (illus. p. 27, ref. p. 62); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[6] (illus. p. 57, ref. p. 62); 1 Apr – 14 Jun 2015 *21st Century* Heide Heide MOMA

Lit: Christopher Allen *SMH* 7 Jul 1990; Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 14–15 Jul 1990; Paul McGillick *Australian Financial Review* 20 Jul 1990; Ewen McDonald 'There are only lovers' 1990, illus. p. 10

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent); 2015 Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, gift of Charles, Thom and Toss Gascoigne

This was called 'Takeover Bid'. It is weeds invading the cottage as one sees out in the country — the weeds are moving in and the cows are moving through. The thistle stalks are just propped up against the window frames — grey and pink. I think I have a series of grey things. This is one of my favourite colours in the Australian landscape. Very hard to get good weathered material to go in grey pieces because most things have been burnt deliberately or by bushfires (1985 School of Art).

The thistle stalk used in this work is probably the variegated thistle, which is much larger than the saffron thistle used in *Piece to walk around* 1981. An installation view of the 1981 exhibition at Pinacotheca shows *Takeover bid* and other works (see p. 323).

Image courtesy of Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

209 The fall 1981

Painted and stencilled wooden boards from soft-drink boxes on plywood backing; 218 × 137 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'R.G. 1981 / THE FALL'

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #4, \$2000; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[25] (illus. p. 90, ref. p. 135)

Coll: 1981 private collection; 2004 private collection

The fall 1981 was made just before the April 1981 Pinacotheca show: *Yr mother's stuff leaves for Melbourne a week today, how thankful I will be to see it go. It'll include the great 84 × 55 inch last minute inspiration which was knocked up in record time, and is supposed to mark a new direction [The fall]. Sold already, to one of the Gallery people. It looks good tho, and incredibly original against so much of what you see and read about* (Wed 15 Apr 1981 BG to TG).

The title of the work is, among other things, an allusion to Mrs Jean Thomas (1899–1990), who visited her son Daniel Thomas in Canberra around 1980. That is when RG first met her. Mrs Thomas was then about 80 and sometimes used a stick when walking. In 2004 John McPhee told Daniel: *Rosalie told me that the painting was called The fall after an encounter with your mother. She had seen her making her way from the shops in Kingston to our flat and seemed to be making a tough task of it. She picked her up and drove her home. The title was more a reference to age and our fall from youth, grace, etc, rather than a real fall. Autumnal years I suppose* (pers. comm. D Thomas to MG Apr 2004). My thanks to Daniel Thomas and John Cruthers for their help in cataloguing this work.

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



208



209

210 The players 1981

Weathered wood (some painted and stencilled), printed paper or card (photograph of Picasso), wooden polo ball, doll's head; 55.7 × 75.0 × 16.5 cm

Exh: 1981 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #11, \$900; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[26] (illus. p. 34, ref. pp. 43, 135)

Lit: 29 Mar 1983 RG to Erika Price; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 43

Coll: 1982 The University of Melbourne Art Collection (Acc no. 1982.0174)

The wood includes two discarded apiary boxes, boards from Schweppes soft-drink boxes, sawn surveyor's pegs and an unidentified turned wooden object, possibly from a piece of furniture, as well as the polo ball and doll's head.

*When I made this piece I was thinking of circuses. It turned out to be a rather sad circus but for me it was still a circus with shabby tired performers. Picasso's face has no more significance than that it worked because it is a strong image with the right look of experience in the eye — in short, the feel I needed. The fact that it is Picasso may give an extra fillip to those who recognise him, maybe, too, recognise the fact that he could be called a Player. (Query: can you accept that what you see as a bishop's mitre might as well be a clown's hat?) I chose the title because it is a fairly general word and so doesn't impose one concept on the viewer. It allows him to see the game of chess, the local Rep [theatre], the circus, the game of life or whatever. I think people should be allowed to day-dream in works such as this and not be limited by one interpretation. It's a more expanding exercise — the chance of a bigger world and a more personal one. When confronted by *The Players* my husband, a chess player, immediately thought of chess, as you did. What you have written shows clearly what 'The Players' means to you. Which is valid because everyone is entitled to their own adventure with an art work. But, as you have seen, 'The Players' does not mean that to me and I am not happy that you close peoples' options with that statement (29 Mar 1983 RG to Erika Price).*

Regarding RG's interest in the circus, see notes on *Travelling circus* 1981.

Image courtesy of The University of Melbourne Art Collection

211 Travelling circus 1981

Weathered wood box with weathered wood (some stencilled or painted, including panel from Norco butter box), collaged printed images on plywood, found wooden objects; 46 × 50 × 28 cm; signed, dated and titled verso centre: 'TRAVELLING CIRCUS 1981 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE' and signed again (in black) 'Rosalie Gascoigne' (see notes)

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #23, \$1000

Lit: Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 43, illus. p. 14

Coll: 1987 private collection

The wood in *Travelling circus* 1981 includes most of a weathered soft-drink box, the side of a Norco butter box and broken pieces from painted soft-drink boxes. The collaged figure is from Picasso's *Family of saltimbanques* 1905. The found wooden objects are a polo ball and a shoe last. *Travelling circus* 1981 was probably made after RG's April 1981 show; it was first photographed in January 1982. (*Side show* 1981 on the same theme was made at the same time.) The second signature was added in 1998 (email dated 9 Oct 2012 from Harry Geddes). In 2000 BG recalled the construction of *Travelling circus*: *Nearly drove me bananas trying to meet the demands of the angles of direction. Any deviation away from the forcefield she established in her concept weakened the work* (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.).

The circus and the carnival sideshow was a recurring theme in R.G.'s work. The attraction had to do with the weathered, battered look of circus people and things: *And of course the faded quality of circus things has always rather intrigued me* (1982 North, on *Side show parrots* 1981) ... *I was thinking of circuses. It turned out to be a rather sad circus but for me it was still a circus with shabby tired performers* (29 Mar 1983 RG to Erika Price on *The players* 1981). A number of works from the mid-1970s were built around the remains of a failed sideshow found on the Bungendore tip in February 1976 and there was an even earlier work, a 'pink circus' — a precursor to her boxed works in 1973 — but it did not survive (1982 North; see also 1984 Wood Conroy and 1998 Hughes). There is also something of the circus in her *Parrot lady* 1973. Whereas the circus element in the mid-1970s works had a lot to do with their materials, reworked through RG's poetic imagination, *Travelling circus* 1981 and two other works from 1981, *Side show parrots* and *The players*, also owe something, subliminally anyway, to four artists who shared her interest in the circus and with whom she engaged at the time: Alexander Calder, Fred Williams, Peter Booth and Pablo Picasso. Visiting New York in 1980, RG had been much taken by *Calder's circus* 1926–31 in the Whitney Museum. Also in 1980, she bought one of Fred Williams's etchings of musical hall performers (Fred Williams *The song* 1955–56), which she admired for the way Williams had captured the body language of its subjects. She knew Peter Booth's works from exhibitions in Sydney and Melbourne. Meeting Booth at Pinacotheca in Melbourne in 1978, they talked about 'mystery in painting — a quality good painting should have' (24 Sep 1978 RG to MG, p. 56). She visited his house and over time acquired several of his works. In 1989 she wrote an appreciation of Booth for an exhibition of his drawings: 'I have come to believe that the import of depicted monsters and situations



210



211

is distanced in fantasy and like fantasy holds no permanence of threat ... He likes circuses. Small people with the solidity and bounce of india-rubber, endearing grotesques in colours sometimes so lyrical that the works sing with beauty. Again and again I enjoy the body language — the finely pointed toe, the elan of the lifted arms so well observed and delighted in' (Rosalie Gascoigne 'Peter Booth' 1989).

And then there was Picasso, one of the very few artists who were consistently high in her estimation. She knew of his circus folk from reproductions and gallery visits in London, Paris and the United States. She had multiple copies of his *Family of saltimbanques* 1905. The 'shabby tired performers' she referred to when speaking about *The players* 1981 (q.v.) have much in common with Picasso's pierrots, harlequins and saltimbanques. She included an image of one in *Travelling circus* 1981 and picked up on the chequered costumes they wore when she named *Harlequin* 1994–95 and *Carnival [2]* 1998/99.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

1982



212

212 Blossom 1982

Torn patterned linoleum on weathered wood boards; 5 units, each 116.9 × 13 cm, overall abt 118 × 73 cm (abt 2 cm spacing); panel 1 signed, dated and titled verso l.c. in white paint: 'BLOSSOM / RG 82' and each panel numbered verso u.c. (in white paint) (left to right) '1' to '5' respectively

Exh: 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring, #[11] (ref.)

Lit: Ian North 1983

Coll: 1982 Art Gallery of Ballarat, VIC (Acc no. 1982.27 a–e), purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council

Next is another linoleum piece I made differently. I tore off the floral part and used the grey white-dotted background. To me — I always read things back to something I have seen — that is an old black almond tree breaking into white blossom. I called it 'Blossoming' (sic) (1985 School of Art).

Image courtesy of Art Gallery of Ballarat, VIC

213 Crop 2 1981–82

Dried salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*) stalks with seed heads, galvanised wire mesh, galvanised iron sheet; 36 × 126 × 90 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale*, #8 (dated 1978) (VAB cat ref. pp. 51, 53, 57, illus. p. 66; *Catalogue generale* ref. p. 82); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW (dated 1978); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[29] (illus. p. 68, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 11, 22

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2009 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (Acc no. 2009.202), gift of Ben Gascoigne AO, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

Crop 2 was made in the summer of 1981–82 for the Venice Biennale in 1982. An earlier, slightly smaller, version (*Crop [1]* 1976) was exhibited in 1976 at Gallery A, Sydney, when it was acquired by the AGNSW. R.G. preferred *Crop* as the title, not *The Crop*. Talking of *Crop 2* she said: *Well you can just go out forever and find a good patch of salsify. You pick day and night ... You strip it down ... you cut ... It takes absolutely hours and the house is full of the waste products ... What does it mean to me? It means wide, horizontal landscape. Flat country. Flat, even grass growth or crop growth. Wire netting holding the air. That sort of thing. And it's about horizontals in the landscape, and I got that grey tin ... And this puts in ... another horizontal. I've got three horizontals in that thing. And this is the open paddock, really ... And it's the low colour weight of the open paddock* (1982 North).

Photograph (in 1982 for the Venice Biennale) by John Delacour from author's archive



213

214 Graven image 1982

Weathered wood (from discarded butter box) on weathered plywood; 105 × 89 × 9 cm; signed and dated verso u.l.: '1983 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #14 (dated 1983), \$1600; 1984 *Australian Sculpture Now* NGV (catalogued but probably not exhibited); 1990 *Sense of Place* Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery UMelb, #[2] (dated 1983) (illus. p. 27, ref. p. 62); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[6] (dated 1983) (illus. p. 28); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[12] (ref. p. 62); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[7] (illus. p. 60); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[31] (dated 1982–83) (illus. p. 92 (upside down), ref. p. 135)

Lit: c. Dec 1982 RG to TG; *Australian Perspecta* AGNSW 1983 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 117; Ewen McDonald 'There are only lovers' 1990, illus. p. 13; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 32

Coll: 1982 private collection



214



215



216



217

Regarding dating, the first reference to *Graven image* is in December 1982: *Mary ... is snatching a new piece off my wall. All grey made of two pieces — both rare finds. Alas I wd like to keep it. It is what you might call a felicity ... Anyway it will be in a good home and intelligent visitors will see it* (c. Dec 1982 RG to TG).

RG spoke about the work in 1985: *Here I have two happy finds. I had to fiddle them a bit and cut them a bit. I called that 'Graven Image'. I can live with grey — I like bright colours but I always go back to the grey* (1985 School of Art). Then in 1998: *That is a thing that I think everybody should notice who does the Australian countryside and that is grey. Those are two good greys and actually they've both been exposed to the sun. And one of them was part of a butter box, the middle part, and the other part was a very good piece of grey [plywood] I found ... I always name things in the end and not before I do them. I sort of know I'm working towards something. But I called that 'Graven Image' and somebody said did you name it because it was grey. And I said, well I probably did actually. But it seemed to be right. It was sort of New Guinea mask or something* (1998 NGA; similar remarks 1999 Auckland AG).

Image (photographed in 1982 for the Venice Biennale) from author's archive

215 **Harvest** 1981–82

Cut newspaper, nails, plywood backing;
246 × 240 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale*, #9 (dated 1982) (VAB cat. ref. pp. 52, 57, illus. p. 67; *Catalogue generale* ref. pp. 82, 83); 1982 *Australians at Venice* NGV; 1983 *Project 40* AGNSW (ref.); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[10] (as *Paper Square* [2] 1982) (ref. p. 62); 2002 *The First Twenty Years* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney; 4–8 Aug 2010 Roslyn Oxley9 at *Melbourne Art Fair*

Lit: Mildred Kirk 1986, p. 515, illus. p. 513; Lynette Fern 1989, p. 181; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 22; Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times Panorama* 16 Sep 2000, p. 11; Stephen Naylor 'Getting into the Giardini di Castello: Australia's representation at the Venice Biennale' *Art and Australia* vol. 40, no. 4, 2003, pp. 594–601, illus. p. 599

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2010 private collection

Harvest 1981–82 is a reconstructed version of *Paper square* 1979–80, differing slightly in size and in the choice of backing board. There are 256 wads of newsprint, each 15 cm square, nailed to a plywood base (not pineboard, as in Venice Biennale documentation).

Regarding the title: *I think it's a good idea that I call it 'Harvest' for this show [Venice Biennale] ... I want to get it into the context and not think of an academic title. Because I think ... it would fit better with the 'Crop' title* (1982 North).

Regarding dating, *Harvest* was constructed 'before Christmas' 1981 and then left to weather, a process that was not completed until early 1982, at which stage the work was regarded as finished.

Photograph (in 1982 for the Venice Biennale) by John Delacour from author's archive. For another view, see the entry on the 2000 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions

216 **Herb garden** 1982

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on wooden blocks, painted wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 82 × 102 × 10 cm; signed, dated and titled verso, top, in black: 'HERB GARDEN / 1982 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1983 *Continuum '83* Tokyo #3 (illus., ref.); 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #9, \$1600; 20 Mar – 22 Apr 1991 *Important 20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney (illus.); 20 Mar – 22 Apr 2001 *Important 20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #2, \$110,000 (illus. p. 2); 25 Jun 2002 Christie's M., lot 63 (illus. p. 63); 26 Aug 2003 Christie's M., lot 101 (illus. p. 123)

Lit: *Art Network* no. 13, 1984, illus. p. 44

Coll: 1987 private collection

Regarding the inspiration for the work, RG said: *I also happened to go down to Heide [in Melbourne], and I saw the herb garden that Sunday Reed had made. I don't know if anybody else has been there but when I saw it it was full of lovely small sprawling flowers, a pretty pattern out in the hot paddocks among the gum trees. I already had that linoleum. It was all I had, which in fact governed the size of the piece. I called it 'Herb Garden'. The linoleum pieces are blocked out from the back* (1985 School of Art).

Image courtesy of Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney

217 [**Homage with Arnott's parrot**] c. 1980–82

Weathered wood, nails, printed cardboard (Arnott's Biscuits logo); 26.6 × 26 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.480), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

218 [Homage with five cricket cards] c. 1982

Printed card (with images of cricket players), painted wood (primed builder's offcuts); five units, dimensions and sequence variable, max. height 11 cm, overall abt 39 cm: (W Carkeek) 11.3 × 9 × 4.4 cm, (WB Bansford) 8.9 × 7 × 7.4 cm, (JC Barnes) 8 × 7.2 × 4.4 cm, (RJ Hartigan) 8 × 10.2 × 4.5 cm, (WW Armstrong) 6.1 × 5.5 × 2.8 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: Friday c. Feb 1982 RG to TG

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.478), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Dated on the basis of an early 1982 letter, in which RG wrote: *The cigarette cards came as a blessed diversion. I have continuing pleasure in arranging and rearranging and picking out my favourites. All upright, too. I'll mount this lot* (Friday c. Feb 1982 RG to TG). RG kept cigarette cards and postage stamps that came her way, but this is one of only two surviving examples of their use in an artwork. The cards are all from the 1911 Wills cricket card series.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

219 [Numbers for Patrick] c. 1982

Polychrome aluminium numbers, nails, wooden board; 10.2 × 43.3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1982 private collection (gift of the artist)

RG made the board for Patrick North, who was the young son of Ian North. The Norths lived in Canberra in the early 1980s and Ian wrote about RG for her shows at the Venice Biennale in 1982 and *Sculpture Australia* 1983.

Image from author's archive

220 [Parrot and ball] c. 1980–82

Weathered wood box and other wood, nails, printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logo) on shaped plywood; 31 × 19.2 × 6 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The wood includes boards from soft-drink boxes, a painted wooden ball and part of a wooden frame or box. RG displayed *[Parrot and ball]* in her bedroom.

Image from author's archive

221 [Parrots for Ian North] 1982

Wood, some painted, from soft-drink boxes, printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Arnott's Biscuits logos); 31 × 26.5 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1983 private collection (gift of the artist)

Ian North lived in Canberra in the early 1980s and he wrote about RG for her shows at the Venice Biennale in 1982 and *Sculpture Australia* 1983.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



218



220



219



221

222 **Scrub country** 1981–82

Weathered painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, with aluminium-strip backing; nine panels, 144 × 376 cm overall; not inscribed, but most columns and boards are numbered (see notes)

Exh: 1982 *Australia: Venice Biennale, #7* (dated 1981) (VAB cat. ref. pp. 52, 57, illus. pp. 64–65, cover (detail), VAB exhibition poster; *Catalogue generale* ref. pp. 82, 83); 1982 *Australians at Venice NGV*; 1983 *Project 40 AGNSW* (illus.); 1983 *Continuum '83 Tokyo #5* (dated 1982) (ref.); 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #19* (dated 1982), \$4000; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne AGNSW* (and 1998 NGA), #[5] (ref. pp. 13, 14; illus. pp. 26–27); 1999 *Toi Toi Toi Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #63* (ref. p. 74); 11 Oct – 1 Dec 2002 *The Big River Show: Murrumbidgee Riverline Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, NSW* (ref. pp. 42–43, 82, illus. p. 44, detail p. 45); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne Wellington, NZ, #[8]* (illus. pp. 58–59); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne NGV, #[30]* (dated 1982) (illus. pp. 84–85, ref. p. 135); 26 Jun 2013 *The Grundy Collection Bonhams S., lot 80* (illus. p. 255, detail p. 257, under construction p. 256)

Lit: Anne Kirker 1990, p. 19; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 11; Joanna Mendelsohn *The Australian* 21 Nov 1997; John McDonald *SMH Spectrum Arts* 29 Nov 1997, p. 16 (with illus.); Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 6 Dec 1997, p. 16; Vivienne Webb 'Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as landscape' *State of the Arts New Zealand* Dec 1997 – Mar 1998, illus.; Felicity Fenner 1999, pp. 90–91; Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 11; Georgina Safe *The Australian* 13 Apr 2004, illus. p. 12; William McAloon 2004; *Canberra Times Panorama* 27 Dec 2008, illus. p. 17; Deborah Clark 'Scrub country' in *Bonhams Important Australian art from the collection of Reg Grundy AC OBE and Joy Chambers-Grundy Sydney, 2013*, pp. 254–257

Coll: c. 1984 James Baker; 2006 The Grundy Collection

Soon after completing *Scrub country* RG told Ian North: '*Scrub country*' means to me very explicitly the scrub ... It's the product of the experience of standing on lightly wooded country where things are self-sown and there's a lot of air between the trees and gentle grass and these things grow up as they will. With that colour weight of grey, and brown and black oven-stick, which I think — the writing on the boards — reads very nicely as the black note in the landscape. And the ... foliage, that is blue-grey. It is [a beautiful colour], it is almost the *pulverulenta* [*Eucalyptus pulverulenta* or powdered gum] that you can see through here [in the artist's garden]. And yellow wattle. Or even yellow flowers in the grass. It's the first spring colour you see amongst that khaki look, that yellow look. That sort of feeling you get in the country, to me a lyrical quality of acceptance, of taking things as they come, and accepting the perfect with the imperfect. That feel. You know, you get the perfect

branch and you get the scruffy one. And you get the one that falls down and the one that stays up. And that lightly balancing look of the scrub. And a lot of air again (1982 North).

In 1985 she put it another way: *That was a big piece, it was thirteen feet long, I had it in Venice and I called it 'Scrub Country' because to me it had the randomness and the relaxed air and the quality of colour ... which I think is much more typical of the Australia I know than any of those ochres and oranges so often used. I have let air through it because we see a lot of filtered light, random pattern and carelessness in the Australian landscape* (1985 School of Art; similar remarks in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 42).

RG started constructing *Scrub country* in late spring 1981. Initially there were seven columns, which were hung separately, and they were photographed like this on the courtyard wall on 10 December 1981. Shortly afterwards RG rearranged many of the columns and added two more (making nine). The work was completed by mid-February 1982 when it was photographed for the Venice Biennale catalogue and packed for shipping to Venice.

When rearranging the work, RG moved individual boards from column to column or within columns, and she replaced others to get a better colour mix. After she settled on the final order, but before the boards were secured, each board was numbered on the reverse (usually in u.l. corner, from the top, except column 7) to indicate its place in its column (some carry more than one number, indicating a change of heart); on many the centre line was marked; most columns were also numbered (except 2 and 3). Note: in column 1, there is no board 15; column 2 includes boards 15 and 15a; column 4 includes two boards between numbers 2 and 4, and 5 is not numbered; column 5 has one unnumbered board between 11 and 12; in column 7 the boards are numbered from the bottom, with 15 not numbered; in column 8 boards are numbered in the centre and 2 and 5 have been swapped.

'*Scrub Country*' is made of battered uneven slats from soft-drink boxes, mounted horizontally in nine columns. Behind each column are two vertical pieces of wood to which the slats are attached. One wintry Sunday afternoon Rosalie made a trial assembly of one column, fixing the slats only temporarily. It looked promising and she decided to go ahead, a job which fell to me. So I laid out the verticals (on the bench in the living room), measured the centres of each slat and made sure they were accurately lined up, not only that but properly squared on and evenly spaced, then glued and screwed them up. The transformation from the rough assembly was extraordinary (Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 11).

Image A courtesy of John Cruthers and Bonhams

Photograph B (*Scrub country* under construction 10 December 1981) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



222A



222B



223

223 Spring 1 1981–82

Painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes on plywood; 147.5 × 122 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.r.: 'SPRING © / 'Rosalie Gascoigne '82'

Exh: 1983 *Continuum '83 Tokyo #1* (as *Spring 1982*, 147 × 122 cm); 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #24* (as *Spring 1982*), \$2000; 3–28 Jun 1986 *Selected Sculpture since 1960*, 312 Lennox Street, Richmond Melbourne, #7 (as *Spring 1982*), \$3000; 7 Feb – 7 Mar 1993 *On Our Selection* Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, WA; 23 Jul – 19 Sep 1999 *Sense of Place: Works from the Holmes à Court Collection* Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, UWA (as *Spring 1 1982*); 25 Feb – 4 Jun 2000 *Rosalie Gascoigne Tribute AGWA*; 25 Aug – 8 Oct 2006 *Assembled: Works from the Holmes à Court Collection* Holmes à Court Gallery, Perth (as *Spring 1*)

Lit: ABC *Limelight Magazine* Sep 2006, illus. p. 111; *The West Australian Weekend Extra* 23 Sep 2006, illus. p. 13

Coll: c. 1986 private collection; 1990 Holmes à Court Collection, Perth

It was once six panels wide, the sides of boxes. It was when I had a lot of those boards, it's very early. One of the boxes was green and had yellow writing — Loys — on it. And to me it was like dandelions, very fresh. It used to sing in my hall. In the end I thought, 'Well, that's stupid, just for bigness. I'm saying as much with half of it as with all of it.' So I divided it into two: 'Spring 1' and 'Spring 2'. They are almost the same ... the boards are just different (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 44).

In 1981 the panels hung on the wall above the sitting room bench, where the bottom of *Spring 1* is visible in a photograph taken on 10 December 1981 (hence the dating). *Spring 1* is slightly wider than *Spring 2*, and the dimensions given in exhibition records for 1983, 1984 and 1986 all point to *Spring 1* as the work exhibited. So does the photographic record, which includes colour slides dated March 82 and February 83 for *Spring 1* (before it travelled for exhibition in Japan) but there is nothing for *Spring 2* until 1984. The work was exhibited as *Spring* until at least 1986, but by 1990 it was referred to as *Spring 1* (in a memorandum recommending its acquisition to Janet Holmes à Court, presumably because of the inscription), and this name has continued in use in the Holmes à Court Collection. (*Spring 2* 1982 has also been illustrated as *Spring* and *Spring 1*.)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

224 Spring 2 1981–82

Painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes on plywood; 147 × 121 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l. in black: "'SPRING' / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE / 1982'; additional inscriptions by the artist immediately underneath, in black fibre-tipped pen, possibly added later, 'Rosalie Gascoigne' 'Spring' '©'

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #111 (as *Spring [1]* c. 1982) (ref. p. 62; catalogue incorrectly states it was first exhibited at Pinacotheca, Melbourne, in 1984)

Lit: Jane Smith 1986, p. 113 (illus. as *Spring*); Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 44 (illus. as *Spring 1*); Jason Grant 2007, p. 28 (illus. as *Spring 1*)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent); 2014 Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, gift of Charles and Thom Gascoigne

See notes on *Spring 1*.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

225 [Study: Tarax logos] c. 1978–82

Painted wood (from Tarax soft-drink boxes) and weathered plywood; 44 × 21 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Image from author's archive

226 [Twelve bunches of grapes] c. 1979–82

Printed metal, nails, painted wood from soft-drink box; 28 × 16 × 2.4 cm; not inscribed by artist, but inscribed verso centre 'Certificate that this / work is by Rosalie / Gascoigne / Martin Gascoigne / 19 April 2004'

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #25 (as *Untitled (12 bunches of grapes)* c. early 1980s), \$20,000

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2004 private collection

The printed metal possibly came from cans for olives. RG also used cut metal in [*Homage to Ken Whisson's And what should I do in Illyria?*] 1977 and [*Allourie cows*] c. 1977. The use of a yellow board from a Schweppes crate in [*Twelve bunches of grapes*] suggests a later date, hence the range assigned here.

Image from author's archive



224



225



226



227



228



229



230

1983

227 [Beach] c. 1983

Periwinkle (*Littorina littorea*) shells, weathered wood (various sources), plywood; 50 × 35 (× 3.4) cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[9] (as [Beach] c. 1981) (ref. p. 62)

Lit: Jane Smith 1986, illus. p. 113

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis that RG used similar materials in a similar construction, *Turn of the tide* 1983. RG displayed [Beach] in her bedroom.

Photograph by Toss Gascoigne from author's archive

228 Blue Madonna c. 1982–83

Weathered painted apiary box and other painted wood, printed card (reproduction of Gerard David's *The flight into Egypt* c. 1580); 55 × 33 × 12 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The painted wood includes boards from soft-drink boxes. RG had multiple copies of the David reproduction and there were still several in the studio when she died. The original of the David painting is in the National Gallery Washington DC. RG displayed *Blue Madonna* in the sitting room at Anstey Street, Pearce, from at least 1984.

Photograph by Toss Gascoigne from author's archive

229 Celebration 1983

Sawn and split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes on backing board; 130 × 92 cm

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #5, \$1700

Coll: 1985 private collection

I called this one 'Celebration' because to me it was ribbons and balloons and gala occasions and all those things. And actually, when you put a thing like that down in a fairly civilised setting — not that my setting is terribly civilised — but when you put them down isolated from other things of similar material they have a real presence (1985 School of Art).

This is the first work made solely with split boards from soft-drink boxes. It was first photographed in August 1983. A precursor study using split boards was photographed in late 1982 or early 1983: it used split boards in the same colours as the boards in *Scrub country* 1981–82.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

230 Club colours 1983

Painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 172.5 × 129.5 cm; signed, dated and titled with printed name verso: 'CLUB COLOURS 19843 [the 4 is crossed out] / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #8, \$2200; 1990 *Sense of Place* Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery UMelb, #[4] (dated 1984) (ref. pp. 30, 62, illus. p. 30)

Lit: Thursday late Jun 1983 RG to TG; 28 Jun 1983 (new studio) BG to TG; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 44; Maudie Palmer 2008, illus. p. 177

Coll: 1984 private collection; 2009 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC (Acc no. 2009.038), gift of Eva Besen AO and Mark Besen AC, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

That was the first thing I made in the new studio (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 44). *It is rather fun thinking of names that fit and in the end I called that 'Club Colours'. I kept seeing football socks and things. And that was very big, that one* (1985 School of Art; similar remarks in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 44). The studio was finished in June 1983: *New studio is putting a different complexion on large carpentry pieces. And it's light and warm. Yr father helped me finish a gaudy new piece today* (Thursday late Jun 1983 RG to TG; see also the discussion on the studio in the Biographical Note).

Photograph by John Brash, courtesy of TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC

231 **Matriarch** 1983

Weathered timber from soft-drink box, stencilled image on galvanised iron sheet; 31 × 26 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Matriach' [sic]

Exh: 28–29 Apr 1998 Sotheby's M., lot 414

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 37

Coll: 1989 private collection (through Pinacotheca Gallery)

The iron sheet in *Matriarch* 1983 was manufactured by Lysaght's and is dated 1938. *They used to stamp it with the image of Queen Victoria and the year it was made. If you go out to the country now, you can sometimes see this Lysaght lady in the grass. She's fending off the bushfires with her chin* (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 37). The idea of the Lysaght lady battling with the elements is a key element in *Hill station* 1989. Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

232 **Municipal gardens** 1983

Torn or cut patterned linoleum and painted stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 122.3 × 92.7 cm; signed, dated and titled l.r. verso: 'MUNICIPAL GARDENS 1983 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #1, \$1700

Lit: Maudie Palmer 2008, illus. p. 176

Coll: 1984 private collection; 2001 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC (Acc no. 2002.031), gift of Eva Besen AO and Mark Besen AC, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

Regarding the title: *The next piece also has linoleum in it. Very hard to find linoleum these days, I might tell you. I called that 'Municipal Gardens', I thought it was like a park, say at Ballarat — bed of zinnias, bed of salvia, bed of marigolds. It is about 4 feet by 3 feet* (1985 School of Art). R.G. visited Ballarat and Bendigo in the summer of 1976, driving back from the Adelaide Festival (8, 14 Apr 1976 R.G. to T.G.).

Photograph by John Brash, courtesy of TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC

233 **Parrot country II** 1980/83

Painted stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes on wooden slats and aluminium strip; four panels, each 102 × 100 cm; the four panels are inscribed verso in black and reflect the use of components from the dismantled 1980 version:

Panel 1: column 1 — '①' / an arrow pointing upwards / 'PANEL 2' (with a large cross through it) / 'RG 1980 / PARROT / COUNTRY'; column 2 centre — 'REWORKED / 1983 / PANEL 1'

Panel 2: column 1 — '②'; column 2 — an arrow pointing upwards / 'RG 1980 / PARROT / COUNTRY / REWORKED / 1983 / PANEL 2'; column 3 (at top) — 'TOP R'

Panel 3: column 1 — '③'; column 2 — an arrow pointing upwards / 'RG 1980 / PARROT / COUNTRY / RIGHT PANEL' with a cross through it / 'REWORKED / 1983 / PANEL 3'

Panel 4: column 1 — '④'; column 2 — 'TOP / PARROT COUNTRY / PANEL 4 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring (as *Parrot country (mark II)* 1980) (ref.); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ (as *Parrot country* 1983), #[9] (illus. pp. 26–27)

Lit: Ian Wedde *Evening Post* [NZ] 26 Jan 1984; Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 61 (*Parrot country* 1980 is illus. pp. 57, 60); Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, pp. 21–35 (includes an extended discussion on bird themes in R.G.'s work); *PN Review* 159, vol. 31, no. 1, Sep–Oct 2004, cover illus. (detail); Kelly Gellatly 2008, illus. p. 16 (whole work and detail)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2004 Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, NZ (Acc no. 2004-0030-1)

That [Parrot country II] was stylised birds again. It is a fairly big piece and it's made of natural coloured Schweppes boxes. We were getting Eastern rosellas on our bird table. It's meant to screech at you, and it does. Later in the same talk she said of parrots: for me they're the animal in the landscape, as Ned Kelly is to Nolan (1985 School of Art).

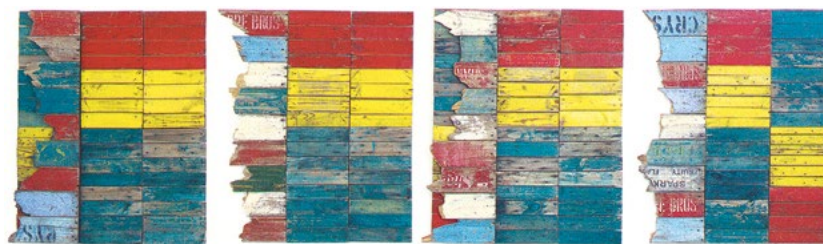
Parrot country II 1980/83 is an extensively reworked version of *Parrot country* 1980 (q.v., especially for the early history), which she had abandoned to her stockpile of materials after exhibiting it in Melbourne in 1981 (illus. p. 90). R.G. was prompted to revisit the work after she accepted an invitation for a solo show at the National Art Gallery, Wellington, NZ (1983–84 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, and touring). Completion of her new studio in June 1983 provided both the space and the opportunity to review the 1980 version.

R.G. began by dismantling the 1980 work, which comprised three panels each with four columns of whole boards and two columns of broken boards superimposed. She reassembled the columns of whole boards into four panels of three columns, repositioning many panels in the process. The other significant change involved the columns of broken boards. Whereas the 1980 version had six columns using broken boards, the 1983 version has only four such columns. In the first version, columns of broken boards were superimposed on the side columns of each of the three panels, with their broken edges pointing to the centre of the panel. In the revised version, each



231

232



233

panel has a single column of broken boards on the left side, with the broken edges pointing outwards, sometimes in silhouette, recalling the wing tips and tails of parrots in flight.

The reworking was extensive. Columns were moved and some were inverted. For example, the third column in the first panel of the 1983 version was originally from the second panel of the 1980 version (see inscriptions). Some panels were inverted, such as the first column in the third panel. Others were inverted and moved, so the fourth (right-hand) column on the first panel in the 1980 version ended up inverted and as the last column on the fourth panel in 1983; the left-hand column in the first panel of the 1980 version ended up inverted and as the first column of the third panel in 1983; and the fourth column in the third panel of 1980 ended up inverted and as the first column in the second panel of 1983. Some broken boards were replaced or rearranged: for example, in the fourth panel the board in the top left corner stamped CRY5 was not in the 1980 version, and the red board second from the bottom in the same column was originally second from the top in the top right corner of the second 1980 panel, with different neighbours.

The revisions were finished by August 1983 when the work was photographed. According to an inscription by RG on one of the colour prints sent to a friend, it was the first work to be photographed in the studio.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

234 **Pink on blue** 1982–83

Painted / primed wood (discarded building materials) and painted, stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes; 101 × 87 × 4 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'PINK ON BLUE / 1982–83 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #13, \$1600; 3–28 Jun 1986 *Selected Sculpture since 1960*, 312 Lennox Street, Richmond Melbourne, #5, \$2500; 12 Sep 2007 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 34 (illus. p. 65); 25 Mar 2009 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 43 (illus. p. 89); 25 Jun 2015 Menzies M., lot 28 (illus. p. 45)

Lit: undated letter late May/early Jun 1983 RG to BG; Daniel Thomas *Outlines of Australian art: The Joseph Brown Collection* 3rd ed., Macmillan, Melbourne, 1989, p. 71, illus. p. 363

Coll: 1986 Joseph Brown Collection

Another thing I get turned on by is building sites where there is pink wood — undercoat pink on discarded scraps of timber — and I was collecting a lot of pink wood. The background is made of Crystal boxes. I remember when I was naming that. Sometimes you get very sporty when you have got it in the house. You think, well I must call it something because I can never identify the piece



234

afterwards if I don't. Eventually, I thought, I know what that is, of course it's skinny-dipping. You can see those people with their arms tight by their sides because it is so cold. And in they jump, and then you have the 'Cry' repeated in the 'Crystal', if you want to have a shriek in it. But I would never let it go public with that title on it. That is leading the witness, and in the end I used a title I don't like but which identifies it: 'Pink on Blue'. I showed it to the man I show with in Melbourne [Bruce Pollard, Pinacotheca], and he said 'Well it is obviously the landscape at a certain time of day'. So I wasn't going to argue, I thought I had better make it open to him and other people. If they are skinny-dipping that is fine for them (1985 School of Art; similar remarks in 1998 NGA). Pink on blue was made before June 1983: Took 'Skinny Dipping' down to Martin and Mary on Sunday morning. Very confirming — and strong (undated letter late May/early Jun 1983 RG to BG).

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

235 **[Sheep yard]** c. 1982–83

Sheep droppings, weathered plywood, wood, nails; abt 50 × 30 × 3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 destroyed

Dated on the basis of similar arrangements of shells on boards done in 1982–83. Originally framed in weathered wood, RG removed the frame before mid-1988 (a mid-1989 colour slide shows the frameless panel displayed above the mantelpiece in RG's sitting room). There was a large plastic bag of sheep droppings in the studio when RG died. Destroyed in 2014 because of severe deterioration.

Image from author's archive



235

236 **Sparkling fruity flavours** 1983

Stencilled and painted wood from various sources, including soft-drink boxes and a discarded frame, on plywood backing; 64 × 21 cm; signed, dated and titled centre verso in black: 'SPARKLING FRUITY / FLAVOURS / 1983 ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #6, \$750

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 32; Women's Art Register *Bulletin* Melbourne, Jan 2000, illus. front cover

Coll: 1984 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



236

237 Stained glass 1983

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 119.3 × 95 × 3.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Stained Glass / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1983'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #11, \$1600; 6 Mar – 7 Apr 1992 *Artists from Canberra and District in the Parliament House Art Collection* Parliament House, Canberra; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[32] (illus. p. 93, ref. p. 135)

Coll: 1985 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra (Acc no. 1985/0286)

Image courtesy of the Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra

238 [Still life] 1983

Three metal containers: (left to right) (a) milk-separator bowl with stripped quills (probably swan (*Cygnus atratus*) feathers), (b) weathered galvanised iron bucket with dried blue devil (*Eryngium ovinum*), (c) milk-separator bowl with dried salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*) seed heads; dimensions variable; not inscribed

Exh: 1997 *Still-Life Still Lives* AGSA (illus. p. 35, ref. p. 39)

Coll: 1984 private collection (gift of the artist)

The quills were probably left over when RG remade *Pale landscape* 1977 for her *Sculpture Australia* show in New Zealand in December 1983. In 1978 RG had experimented with feathers from Lake George: *The house is full of feathers. If you strip them, the spines are lovely curves — I keep thinking how Bob Klippel would like them — all that grasshopper agility* (14 Feb 1978 RG to MG, p. 53). Blue devil features in photographs of RG's dried arrangements in the late 1950s and her ikebana in the 1960s.

Image from author's archive

239 [Study: horse races] 1983

Newsprint images, painted board; two panels, each abt 19.4 × 71.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.476), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

In March 1976 RG referred to her collages of horses: *Have just done a collage of rumps of race horses kindly provided by the page spread in The Age. Am interested in all sports photographs so keep on keeping yr eyes open for me* (see [Study: horses] 1976) (8 Mar 1976 RG to TG).

[Study: horse races] is dated 1983 on the basis of a studio photograph developed in January 1984, which shows numerous panels of horserace boards propped against the studio wall. Some well-known horses are featured in the surviving boards: Red Anchor won

the Champagne Stakes, Caulfield Guineas, Cox Plate and VRC Derby in 1984 and was voted Australian Horse of the Year 1984–85. Emancipation raced 1982–84 and was a very good middle distance (mile) horse; Street Café won the VRC Sires Produce Stakes in 1984. Just a Dash had won the Melbourne Cup in 1981. The newsprint images probably came from the *Sun Herald* (Sydney).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

240 Turn of the tide 1983

Periwinkle (*Littorina littorea*) shells, weathered plywood, galvanised iron (from apiary box); 56 × 40 × 4 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #29, \$900; 25 Aug 2003 Sotheby's S., lot 120 (incorrectly sized as 61 × 47 cm); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[10] (ref. p. 47, illus. p. 60); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[33] (illus. p. 67, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Mildred Kirk 1986, illus. p. 516; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 11 (detail), 110; *Herald Sun* 19 Dec 2008, illus. p. 75

Coll: 1984 private collection; 2003 private collection

This next piece uses the same shell [as Private beach 1979], I called it "Turn of the Tide". The shells seduced me. They were so beautiful and I had a lot of them. It is divided down the middle, the shells face left on the left-hand side and right on the right, and the tin at the top is a piece of tin tray they put on bee boxes to stop the rain getting in to the honey or similar (1985 School of Art). These are beautiful shells from a beach near Mossy Point. They'd been there for seasons and were beautifully faded (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 10).

Image courtesy of City Gallery Wellington, NZ

241 Wattle strike 1983

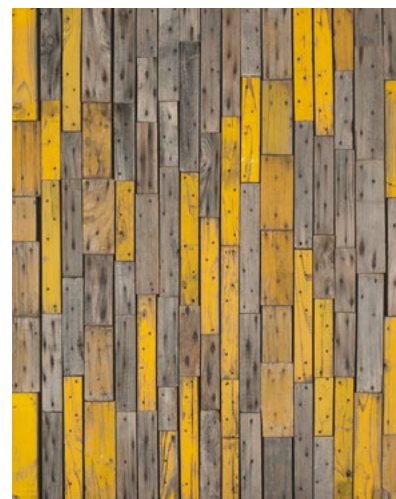
Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 119 × 95 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Wattle strike / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1983'

Exh: 1983 *Continuum '83* Tokyo #2 (ref.); 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #15, \$1600; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[7] (illus. p. 29, ref. p. 61)

Lit: *Art and Australia* vol. 21, no. 2, 1983, illus. p. 198; *Art and Australia* vol. 23, no. 4, 1986, illus. p. 515; *SMH Good Weekend* 15 Nov 1997, illus. p. 44; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 64 with quote; *Stephen Banham Monument* no. 23, 1998, p. 97; Daniel Thomas 2004, p. 18

Coll: 1984 private collection

That one is called "Wattle Strike". I am always fascinated when I think how the first settlers must have felt when suddenly a dark hill lit up unexpectedly, randomly, with the wattle when they had not seen it before. I think in Canberra particularly we are always very conscious of the wattle lighting



237



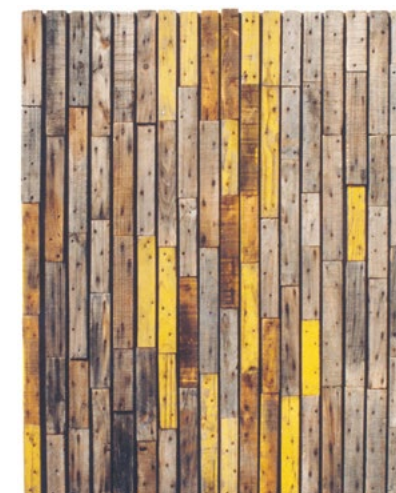
238



239



240



241

up. There is a good one that is full out and there is another, and there is one over there. I found that the nails that are actually in the boxes give me a reading I had not planned on (1985 School of Art; similar remarks in 1998 Hughes).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

1984

242 Balance 1984

Weathered plywood; 105 × 74.5 × 5.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l.: 'BALANCE / 1984 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #16, \$1500; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[34] (illus. p. 74, ref. p. 135); 20 Apr – 11 May 2013 *Vista* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, #20, \$35,000; 18 Oct 2014 *Spring/Summer 2014* Justin Miller Fine Art, Sydney, \$65,000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34

Coll: 1984 Graeme Sturgeon

Vici MacDonald includes a comment that suggests RG was working with one of the wooden shapes later incorporated in *Balance* 1984 when Denise Levertov visited Canberra in 1981: 'In 1981 the renowned American poet Denise Levertov spent an afternoon at Rosalie's home, which inspired a poem called "Two Artists", the first part of which, "Rosalie Gascoigne", compares Rosalie's work-room to a temple full of small shrines, presided over by an "escutcheon ... cut for forgotten purpose". Rosalie reveals that this is about the shield-shaped wood of *Balance* 1984 whose "forgotten purpose" was probably a latrine lid; she returned the compliment by naming a gentle pinky-yellow Schweppes piece *May morning* 1992 after her favourite Denise Levertov poem, "The May Mornings"' (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34).

In 2000 BG recalled the construction of *Balance*: *She had the two elements in relation, she knew in her head that there was an optimum relationship. I understood it was the point of actual physical balance, so I manipulated them until the upper egg-shaped outline balanced on the lower curved piece of wood. Given the fact the lower elliptical-shaped board was already fixed to the support, and only one eligible part of the upper shape that would look good, the rounded curve, then there was only one point on the lower curve and only one on the upper that would balance. She said, that's right. It was only a matter then of fixing the elements on the support (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.). BG gave a similar explanation at the opening of the 2008 NGV exhibition.*

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



242

243 Checkpoint 1984

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 124 × 124 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Checkpoint / 1984 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #2, \$1800; 24 Nov 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 15 (illus.); 13 Aug 2000 Christie's S., lot 70 (illus. p. 69)

Lit: *Australian Financial Review* 13–14 Dec 1997, illus. p. 23

Coll: 1987 private collection (United States of America)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



243

244 Deciduous 1984

Torn patterned linoleum on wood, on plywood backing; 119 × 82 cm; signed and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / Deciduous'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #31, \$1500; 24 Nov 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 1 (illus.); 3 May 2017 Sotheby's S., lot 43 (illus.)

Lit: *Art and Australia* vol. 23, no. 4, 1986, p. 516 (with illus.)

Coll: 1987 private collection (United States of America)

Image courtesy of Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney



244

245 Galahs rising 1984

Painted wood (primed builder's offcuts) and weathered plywood; 128 × 84 × 5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'GALAHS RISING / 1984 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #12, \$1500; 2014 *Revelations: Sculpture from the RMIT University Art Collection* RMIT Gallery, Melbourne (illus. p. 17)

Lit: Sue Cramer *The Age* 17 Oct 1984, p. 14; Kelly Gellatly 2008, p. 12, illus. p. 13; Harriet Edquist and Elizabeth Grierson 2008, illus. p. 119; Harriet Edquist and Elizabeth Grierson 2012, illus. p. 129

Coll: 1984 Phillip Institute of Technology, Melbourne; 1992 RMIT University Art Collection, Melbourne (following the amalgamation of Phillip IT with RMIT)

Image by Margund Sallowsky, courtesy of RMIT University Art Collection, Melbourne



245

246 **Grove** 1984

Weathered painted galvanised iron sheet and painted/primed wood on weathered plywood; 145 × 71 × 10 cm; signed and dated verso: '1984 Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #10, \$1600; 1990 *Sense of Place* Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery UMelb, #[5] (illus. p. 29, ref. p. 62); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[8] (ref. pp. 15, 16; illus. p. 33); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[35] (illus. p. 75, ref. p. 135)

Lit: John Hawke *Art Monthly Australia* no. 33, Aug 1990, pp. 19–20; *Look* [Art Gallery Society of NSW magazine] Nov 1997, illus. p. 12; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 36 (detail), 115

Coll: 1984 private collection

Things that lie by the roadside weather nicely. Those I think are electric cable markers or something. But I don't pull them out of the ground. I take the discarded ones. Also, they are a better yellow. On the back of that are three faded pink tins from the top of beehives, and I called that 'Grove'. It is about the gentle countryside where you look up a hill and there are three lovely smooth-trunked trees growing together. I see that a lot (1985 School of Art; similar remarks in Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 35–36).

Image from author's archive

247 **Habitation** 1984

Seven compartmented wooden boxes and 32 weathered enamel mugs; each unit 45 × 28 × 24 cm, overall dimensions variable; not inscribed

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #18, \$2000; 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[13] (ref. p. 62); 2002 *The First Twenty Years* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[11] (ref. p. 34, illus. p. 61)

Lit: Gregory O'Brien 2005, p. 77; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 38 (with illus.)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent); 2018 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, and Tate, London, gift of Martin Gascoigne and Mary Eagle, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

The wooden boxes were used for transporting and storing bottles.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

248 **[Homage with Arshile Gorky's *The artist and his mother*] c. 1984**

Painted weathered wood and plywood, postcard of Arshile Gorky's *The artist and his mother* 1926 – c. 1936, enamelled metal cup, rusted metal (machinery part); 36.4 × 22.7 × 8 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

RG saw and was much taken with Arshile Gorky's painting when she visited the Whitney Museum in New York in 1980. Dated primarily on the basis of photographs, the homage was photographed in 1984 and a 1984 image of the sitting room shows *[Homage with Arshile Gorky's The artist and his mother]* hanging above the mantelpiece (also in images from April 1987 and 1989). RG later moved it to her bedroom where it remained until her death. Companion piece to *[Homage with Colin McCahon's Angel of the Annunciation]* 1984. My thanks to Deborah Clark for help in identifying the Gorky.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

249 **[Homage with *Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti*] c. 1980–84**

Wood from soft-drink box, printed card (postcard of *Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti*); 30.3 × 25.8 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti New Kingdom 18th Dynasty is in the Egyptian Antiquities collection of the Louvre. A 1984 photograph shows *[Homage with Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti]* in a group of similar homages above the mantelpiece in the sitting room. The same wooden construction was used to frame *Matriarch* 1983. RG also used the image in *Venus* 1980.

Image from author's archive



246



247



248



249



250



251



252

250 [Homage with Colin McCahon's *Angel of the Annunciation*] 1984

Weathered wood (including painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes), rusted enameled metal, (metal?) numbers, printed card (image of Colin McCahon's *Angel of the Annunciation* 1947); 39.5 × 27 × 5.3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 48, illus. p. 49

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

One of the wooden pieces is possibly an old chair backrest. The postcard was published by the Friends of the National Art Gallery, Wellington, NZ, and was probably acquired when RG visited Wellington in December 1983 for the opening of her exhibition at the National Gallery there. During the visit she bought a painting by Colin McCahon from his dealer, Peter McLeavey. A 1984 photograph shows [*Homage with Colin McCahon's Angel of the Annunciation*] displayed above the mantelpiece in her sitting room, and it was still in the sitting room in 1999. The Biographical For additional information about RG's admiration of Colin McCahon, see pp. 74–75.

Image from author's archive

251 [Homage with figure from Titian's *Sacred and profane love*] c. 1980–84

Collage of printed paper (with part-image of Titian's *Sacred and profane love*) on painted wood from soft-drink box; 27.5 × 16.5 × 1.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The screw hole in the central figure suggests that this panel was once part of a larger work. Titian's *Sacred and profane love* (c. 1514) is in the Galleria Borghese in Rome.

Image from author's archive

252 [Homage with granddaughter] 1984

Polaroid photograph, scallop (*Pecten fumatus*) shells, stencilled and weathered wood (various sources) with rusty nails; 29 × 21 × 5.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1984 private collection (gift of the artist)

The subject is RG's granddaughter, Hester Mary Blanche Gascoigne, born 15 November 1984. The polaroid photograph was taken in Canberra Hospital soon after her birth. The

scallop shells are from Hobart (see *Red beach* 1984). The stencilled wood is from a Shell packing case, the other wood is from soft-drink boxes.

Image from author's archive

253 [Homage with Lady Arabella Stuart, aged 23 months] c. 1982–84

Wood and nails (from soft-drink boxes), printed paper (image of *Lady Arabella Stuart, later Duchess of Somerset (1575–1615) aged 23 months*) on plywood; 25.5 × 25 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Re dating, a 1984 photograph shows [*Homage with Lady Arabella Stuart, aged 23 months*] in a group of similar homages in RG's sitting room. RG used similar frames for images in 1982 and 1983. The image, an Elizabethan or Jacobean portrait, is believed to be of Lady Arabella Stuart and is at Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire. It is by an unknown artist, oil on canvas, 559 × 415 mm and dated 1577. I wish to thank Angus Trumble for identifying the portrait, which RG probably found in a picture book of portraits.

Image from author's archive



253

254 *Industrial area* 1982–84

Gravels and newsprint; 42 piles of newsprint, each abt 30 × 20 cm, arranged in a 7 × 6 grid, overall abt 210 × 120 cm

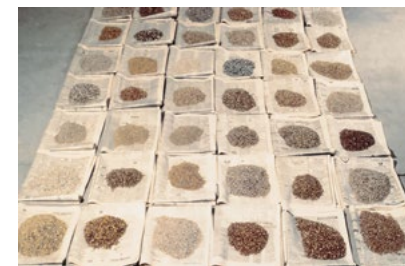
Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #4 (not priced)

Lit: Sue Cramer *The Age* 17 Oct 1984, p. 14 (incorrectly refers to the work as *Smoko*); Ronald Millar *The Herald* [Melbourne] 18 Oct 1984

Coll: dismantled

RG collected the gravels (much of it from ant heaps and similar excavations) during her forays into the countryside around Canberra. *Industrial area* 1984 recalls Nikolaus Lang's assemblage *Samples of earth colours and paintings* 1978–79 (NGA), which has 336 raw earth samples heaped on sheets of paper on the floor. RG knew Lang's work, which was shown at the Biennale of Sydney in 1979 (where she also exhibited) and in Canberra in 1980–81 (*Landscape — Art: Two Way Reaction*, an Australian National Gallery exhibition at the ANU). RG kept the gravels in jars in the studio after she dismantled the work.

Image (at Pinacotheca in 1984) from author's archive



254

255 Last of the summer wine 1984

Painted metal advertising sign, torn patterned linoleum, painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, Masonite pegboard; 61 × 54 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Last of the Summer Wine / 1984 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #30, \$900; 24 Nov 1998 Sotheby's M., lot 111 (as *Last of the south west*); 26 Aug 2001 Christie's S., lot 25 (illus. p. 28)

Coll: 1984 private collection

The title probably comes from a long-running BBC television comedy, 'Last of the Summer Wine', created and written by Roy Clarke and broadcast from 1973 to 2010. It was also broadcast in Australia.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

256 [Moth] c. 1984

Polychrome wood assemblage, rusty nails; 17.5 × 27.5 × 8 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[15] (ref. p. 62) (as *Untitled [Moth]*)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The wood includes pieces of dismantled soft-drink boxes and builder's offcuts. *[Moth]* is one of three such constructions, one of which was incorporated in *Summerhouse* 1984 and the other is *[Moth study]* c. 1984.

Photograph by Toss Gascoigne from author's archive

257 [Moth study] c. 1984

Paint and stencilling on weathered wood, rusty nails; 15.5 × 31 × 4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.475), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

The wood includes pieces of dismantled soft-drink boxes and builder's offcuts. *[Moth study]* c. 1984 is one of three such constructions (the others are *[Moth]* c. 1984 and part of *Summerhouse* 1984).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

258 Piece to walk on 1983–84

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes; 315 × 192 cm (variable)

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #6 (ref., illus. plate 6) (dated 1984); 1992 *Conversions 4: Rosalie Gascoigne* Canberra Contemporary Art Space, #3 (ref.)

Lit: Dick Bett *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985; Mildred Kirk 1986, illus. p. 514; Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 27 Jun 1992; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34, illus. p. 50

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2011 private collection (by descent); 2018 The University of Melbourne Art Collection, gift of Martin Gascoigne and Mary Eagle

That is a piece I am going to show in Hobart in a couple of weeks and it is called 'Piece to Walk On' ... To me it is the paddock. The paddocks in spring in Canberra come out with an awful lot of colour, little yellow flowers, little blue flowers, little pink flowers. I have a yellow streak in the middle of this piece, I have variations of blues and reds, and a lot of grey there that isn't reading, and what I want people to do is actually walk on it. If it is put down on a wooden floor it clacks as you walk, which makes it very pleasurable. I have seen people walking on it and sort of smiling to themselves and then coming back again. And I want people to feel the colour under their feet, if you see what I mean (1985 School of Art).

Dated in part on the basis of photography. RG had been experimenting with different arrangements of soft-drink box boards in late 1983, probably before she went to Wellington, NZ, in mid-December for her exhibition there. The arrangements can be seen in studio images dated January 1984 (see p. 69). One includes an early version of *Piece to walk on* (the primary difference being the placement of the colours) and another is an early version of *Set up* 1983–84. She was clearly enjoying her new studio.

BG recalled that when *Piece to walk on* 1983–84 was laid out on the floor at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space in 1992, *A little boy [Frazer Clark Bull] was standing alongside with his father who said, 'you mustn't walk on that'. And Rosalie said, 'No, it's meant to be walked on'. This little boy had a wonderful time! As you walk on them, the wooden boards go clack, clack, clack — very subtle. But you've got to rearrange them afterwards* (quoted in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 50). Dick Bett picked up on the sound: 'Two new elements have been added to Gascoigne's art vocabulary — the use of sound and reflected light. In *Piece to walk on* 1984, the viewer is invited to walk upon and experience the tactile and auditory response' (*The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985).

Image A from author's archive

Photograph B (an early version, in the studio) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



255



256



257



258A



258B



259



260

259 Pink kookaburras 1984

Weathered wood and printed hessian;
85 × 45 × 7 cm

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #7, \$900; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #18, \$70,000

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

*This is another window piece, using the sack left behind by my builder. I have never before seen one with pink kookaburras on it. This ... is a view from a country place. You look out and there are the kookaburras (pink) sitting on the tree. Called it, naturally, 'Pink Kookaburras' (1985 School of Art). The reference to the builder relates to the construction of RG's studio, completed in June 1983. RG displayed *Pink kookaburras* in her bedroom.*

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

260 Red beach 1984

Scallop (*Pecten fumatus*) shells on wooden blocks, painted wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 92 × 69.5 × 8 cm; not signed, dated or titled but inscribed verso in black, 'TOP' with an arrow underneath pointing up

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #7 (as *Red Beach*, X'mas) (illus. cover, ref.); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #16 (as *Red Beach Christmas*) (ref. p. 62); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #36 (illus. pp. 65 (detail), 66, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Anne Kirker 1989, p. 54 (with illus.); Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 11, 22; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 12, illus. p. 10

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

That is called 'Red Beach'. Those are Tasmanian scallop shells, unregional maybe, but I have a son in Hobart and he came up with a non-Christmas present, which was a cardboard box full of those magnificent shells. Apparently you can pick up stacks of them on the beaches near Hobart and I find them absolutely fascinating. When I was titling I thought the obvious title is not Red Beach, it is Rose Bay. But that is far too Sydney-side so I didn't do it. Those shells are blocked out from the back (1985 School of Art). The shells came from Seven Mile Beach near Hobart airport, which the family used to visit (9 Jan 2014 Lyn Gascoigne to MG).

Photograph by Matt Kelso from author's archive

261 Set up 1983–84

Painted wooden boards (148 pieces) from soft-drink boxes, 17 weathered enamelled metal containers (kitchen utensils), 17 wooden blocks; installation overall 50 × 270 × 270 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1984 *Australian Sculpture Now* NGV, #16 (illus. p. 95); 1992 *Conversions 4: Rosalie Gascoigne* Canberra Contemporary Art Space, #2 (illus. installation view); 1993 *Art of This World* MCA (illus. p. 2 (installation view), ref. p. 24); 1993–94 *Identities: Art from Australia* Taipei (as *Set-up*) (ref. pp. 73, 158, illus. p. 75); 1995 *Island to Island* South Korea (illus. twice) (*Set up* 1983–84 was awarded the Grand Prize); 6 Jun – 27 Jul 1997 *Still-Life Still Lives* AGSA (illus. p. 30); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #9 (illus. p. 30); 2001 *MCA Unpacked* MCA; 2003 *Image & Object: Contemporary Still Life in New Zealand* Pataka Porirua Museum of Arts & Cultures, Porirua, NZ; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #12 (ref. p. 17, illus. p. 35); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #37 (illus. p. 72, ref. p. 135); 2011 *Tell Me, Tell Me: Australian and Korean Art* MCA and Seoul, South Korea

Lit: Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 27 Jun 1992; Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 14, 22, illus. p. 24; Ewen McDonald 1994, illus. p. 68; Hannah Fink 1997, p. 205 (with illus.); Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 51; Ken Scarlett 1998, pp. 86–87; Rebecca Rice 'Alive and kicking' *Art New Zealand* no. 111, 2004, pp. 54–57, illus. p. 54 (installation view), 57; Gregory O'Brien 'Of magpie song' 2004, illus. p. 19 (detail); Deborah Edwards 2016, p. 142, illus. p. 143 (detail)

Coll: 1995 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Acc no. P1995-266)

Dated in part on the basis of photography. RG had been experimenting with different arrangements of soft-drink-box boards in late 1983, probably before she went to Wellington, NZ, in mid-December for her exhibition there. The arrangements can be seen in studio images dated January 1984. One includes an earlier version of *Set up* 1983–84, another *Piece to walk on* 1983–84 (see p. 69). She was clearly enjoying her new studio.

I saved a lot of this enamel. I think it's elegant by itself, but I've lost it all now ... I put them up so they'd read sculpturally and you'd see the air around them. It came out clean (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 51; similar remarks in 1997 Ross). I had found the enamelware as usual, and I put it up on stands because sculpturally it was very beautiful. If you see the colanders ... they've taken the wind in them and they are a shape. I used to find that all the Japanese tourists used to go around the MCA and take photographs, little pieces standing up, and I was very pleased that if you stood a thing on a block you saw the actual shape of it. Somebody asked me if I was a feminist because it was kitchenware, you see, and no no no it's not (1999 Auckland AG; similar remarks in 1997



261A



261B



261 (Detail)

Ross). For the first object set on a block, see [River stone] c. 1966–68, an idea she returned to in 1977 (see p. 105 (top illus.)).

Image A and detail courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

Photograph B (under construction in the studio) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

262 Shell 2 c. 1981–84

Stencilled and painted wood (various sources), plywood backing; 50 × 35 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'SHELL 2 / 1984 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #27 (as *Shell board II* dated 1984), \$650

Lit: Women's Art Register *Bulletin* Melbourne, Jan 2000, illus. back cover

Coll: 1984 private collection

Dated on the basis of its use of materials similar to those used in *Shell 1* 1981 (re-dated from 1983) and [*Homage with granddaughter*] 1984.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

263 Smoko 1984

Weathered wood (nine discarded fence droppers), dried grass (possibly African lovegrass, *Eragrostis curvula*); 125 × 125 × 30 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #3, \$1200; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[38] (illus. p. 73, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Daniel Thomas 2004, p. 18

Coll: 1984 private collection

This one was called 'Smoko' ... There is a fence-post and very fluffy, puffy grass. I am rather keen on this lackadaisical air you get both in the landscape and in a lot of Australian attitudes and for me that [work] is about it. You lean and you stay where you lean and you don't arrange yourself too much. Sort of relaxing (1985 School of Art). Hannah Fink said laconic, like workmen leaning, smoking. Entirely R., nothing requiring assistance from me (mid-2000 BG with ME, pers. comm.).

Image (at Pinacotheca in 1984) from author's archive

264 String of blue days 1984

Installation comprising three units of stencilled and painted wood from soft-drink boxes and 10 weathered wood rails (discarded fencing); overall abt 225 × 1100 × 530 cm, dimensions variable. The three units comprise (a) four wall panels each of 16 stencilled painted boards, (b) a single leaning panel of abt 30 plain painted boards and (c) a floor piece of 228 painted boards arranged in six rows of 38 boards, on which is superimposed a grid of 10 weathered wood fencing rails

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #17, \$5000 (for installation view see Kate Davidson and Michael Desmond 1996); 1986 *Four Sculptors* Wollongong City Gallery, NSW, #7 (dated 1985); May – 19 Jun 1994 *Pride of Place: New Acquisitions* AGWA; 1996 *Islands: Contemporary Installations* NGA (illus. pp. 13 (detail), 15); 17 Oct – 19 Dec 2004 *Clouded Over: Representations of Clouds in Art* Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, UWA (ref.)

Lit: Kate Davidson and Michael Desmond 1996, pp. 14–15

Coll: 1992 State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. 1992/0291.1–240)

RG spoke about the work with Kate Davidson in 1996:

KD: The title of your work — 'String of blue days' 1984 — summons up an image of Canberra's clear winter skies.

RG: *Yes, we were having weather like this; everything you looked at was cast against a background of blue. I would go out into the country and there would be the sheep yards, with grey rails surrounding them, sometimes on the top of a hill, enclosing the blue of the sky. Each cow had a bit of blue sky to stand against. At that time I went to Melbourne by coach. During the journey I couldn't get over the appearance of that great blue sky, going on and on. It was absolutely miraculous — there was a real string of blue days.*

KD: The word Crystal that is painted on the timber pieces seems to be representative of your way of working: the structure of a crystal is based on a series of rectangular, repeated planes; and, when something crystallises, it is transformed from an abstract or indeterminate form into something solid. Was that word the basis for the structure of the work?

RG: *When I do a piece, if I can stand with it and feel what I felt initially, then for me the work has arrived. It denotes the experience that inspired it. Not everyone has had that experience, so it has got to work as art. The work is a platform, and I take my journey off it; but anyone can take another journey that is perfectly valid. If the basis is solid, it can be like interpreting poetry. The materials I used in the piece were originally drink crates. I found them in a factory in Queanbeyan ...*

I found the boards of the 'Crystal' crates so beautiful in themselves, with their differing shades of blue. The crates are very well made, they stand up to the weather. They are painted with cheap paint which is sometimes worn through. I unpick them and often discover other colours where the paint has not reached or where they have been repainted. The builders of these crates were haphazard — it is very useful when somebody else has been haphazard — and they used any blue that was to hand, so there was great variation. Chance is a wonderful thing and nature is full of it. Nature is so much better than we are. I like chance, and the odd scarring on things, because then they have more vitality.



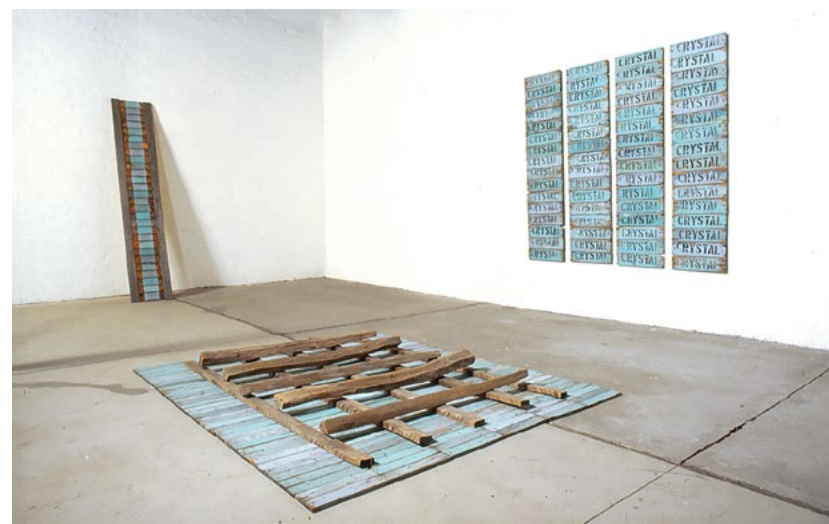
262



263



264A



264B



265



266



267



268

KD: The bottom cross-members of the floor piece are milled timber and the top ones are warped and angular. Are these all found materials?

RG: *They were fence posts. I used to go out into the country and find beautifully greyed fence posts that didn't have holes drilled into them. Grey is one of the good Australian colours; beach grey is just marvellous. I got some of the longer ones from a timber yard in Queanbeyan. They were very twisted — a carpenter's nightmare — so I took them all.*

KD: It is quite architectural, like the framework for a building.

RG: *Yes. The image of sheep yards was stuck in my mind, their grey wood and the blue sky through the rails. It had to be very artless though* (1996 Davidson)

Images A & B (at Pinacotheca in 1984; detail) from author's archive

265 [Study: limpet shells] c. 1983–84

Weathered wooden box, limpet shells; dimensions not recorded (abt 36 × 45 × 10 cm); not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 destroyed

Dated primarily on the basis of other shell works such as *[Beach]* c. 1983, *Turn of the tide* 1983 and the scallop shell works of 1984–85 *[Yellow beach]*, *Red beach* and *[Twenty-five scallop shells]* c. 1984–86. Destroyed in 2014 because it had disintegrated.

Image from author's archive

266 [Study: stencilled boards] c. 1981–84

Weathered wood with coloured stencilling; 46.2 × 24.4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.495), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

The stencilled boards are from crates used to transport containers of products such as oil or kerosene. Dated on the basis of its use of materials similar to those used in *Shell 1* 1981 (re-dated from 1983) and *[Homage with granddaughter]* 1984.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

267 Summerhouse 1984

Weathered wood apiary box, wooden frames, painted wood from soft-drink boxes, postcard (reproduction of Ingres's *Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière* 1806), nail; 70 × 45 × 12 cm

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne Pinacotheca*, Melbourne, #22, \$1000; 3–28 Jun 1986 *Selected Sculpture since 1960*, 312 Lennox Street, Richmond Melbourne, #6, \$1800 (dimensions differ: 68 × 33 × 16 cm); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne NGV*, #[39] (as *Summer house*) (illus. p. 54, ref. 135)

Lit: *Vogue Living* Mar 1989, illus. p. 80

Coll: c. 1986 private collection

Ingres's painting *Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière* is in the Louvre museum, Paris.

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

268 Swell 1984

Weathered corrugated galvanised iron (from a water tank), weathered wood; 77 × 148 × 21 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l. in fibre-tipped pen: 'SWELL 1984 ROSALIE GASCOIGNE', inscribed verso u.c. 'TOP'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne Pinacotheca*, Melbourne, #25, \$1600; 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne Pinacotheca*, Melbourne, #11, \$2500; 1988–89 *The Great Australian Art Exhibition: 200 Years of Australian Art 1788–1988*, a Bicentennial Authority travelling exhibition (illus. p. 162); 1990 *Sense of Place* Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery UMelb, #[3] (illus. p. 28, ref. pp. 48, 62); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne AGNSW* (and 1998 NGA), #[10] (ref. p. 16, illus. p. 32); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne NGV*, #[40] (illus. p. 63, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Ewen McDonald *Art review* ABC Radio National, 20 Oct 1986 (unpublished transcript 20 Nov 1986); *Treasures* AGSA, 1988, p. 38 (with illus.); Ewen McDonald 'Roadworks' 1990, p. 48; Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 14–15 Jul 1990; John Hawke *Art Monthly Australia* no. 33, Aug 1990, pp. 19–20; Jenny Zimmer *Sunday Herald* [Melbourne] 26 Aug 1990; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 38; Felicity Fenner 1999, illus. pp. 88–89 (installation view)

Coll: 1987 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (Acc no. 877S6), d'Auvergne Boxall Bequest Fund

It is quite large ... The corrugated iron was from a water tank, so the pieces are curved. I find they are sophisticated, those pieces, and as beautiful as anything anybody ever crafts. They swell out. In a private house that piece had real presence. I had it hanging in my hall for a long time. I called it 'Swell' in the end. I tried to get a name that doesn't lead the audience too much and it is very hard. You put a specific name on it and they can't match their experience with yours. People don't really need your experience, they need their own (1985 School of Art).

I found two pieces of old tank at the end of the Collector dump I think it was. It was outside the fence and somebody had just dropped it. And it has a very good bloom on it and it was two pieces of tank. You see two pieces of tank wouldn't work for you except this had an especially good bloom. And you're sort of lucky; you have to look at a lot of things before you can get one that really works for you. And that to me when I pull it all together just like that, had something of a Swedish brooch, you know, that sort of look. Nothing much. Nothing much, but everything there that you need ... But the trouble is, you see an awful lot of corrugated iron that doesn't work (1998 NGA) (similar remarks on the beauty of corrugated iron in 1998 Hughes and 1999 Auckland AG).

RG's reference to a Swedish brooch is a reference to a piece of jewellery BG had bought for her in Sweden on one of his overseas trips. In 2000 BG recalled the construction of *Swell 1984: Again, R wanted invisible support, but she was not certain at first how great the swell was to be. I turned the outer corners of each sheet of iron inwards, the turn minimal, then I drilled a hole through the bit I'd turned in, and threaded a bolt through it and through a hole drilled in the support. To give the leeway R wanted while she was working out the degree of swell she wanted, I drilled a series of holes through the support making for a tighter or larger curve. My contribution was to invent solutions to the practical problems that arose for R in trying to achieve her vision (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.).*

Image courtesy of the Art Galley of South Australia, Adelaide

269 Totemic 1984

Painted wood (primed builder's offcuts), weathered wood; 155 × 66 × 8 cm

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #20, \$1600

Coll: dismantled

The weathered wood may be a piece of discarded fencing (as used in *String of blue days* 1984). In 2000 BG recalled the construction of *Totemic 1984: Tricky to construct because the pink boards had to be attached to the vertical plank in such a way that the energy was strong and no slack. R later destroyed this work. She should not have done so (mid-2000 BG to ME, pers. comm.).*

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

270 Winter paddock 1984

Weathered and painted wood, painted plywood, silver gull (*Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*) feathers; 114.5 × 62.5 × 5.2 cm; signed, dated and titled u.c. in red fibre-tipped pen: 'Winter Paddock / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1984'

Exh: 1984 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #28, \$1400; 6 Mar – 7 Apr

1992 *Artists from Canberra and District in the Parliament House Art Collection* Parliament House, Canberra (as *Winter paddocks*) (illus.)

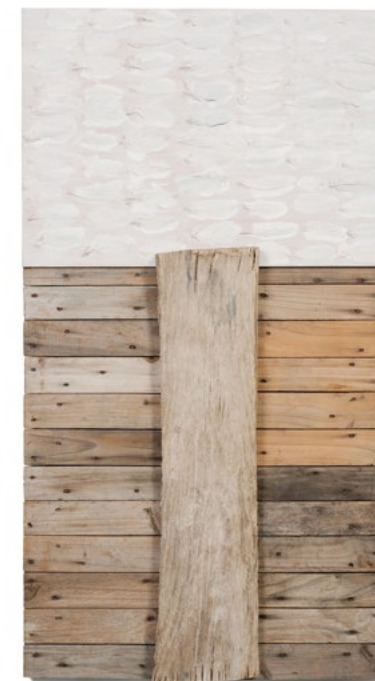
Coll: 1985 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra (Acc no. 1985/0225)

*This is 'Winter Paddock'. That is a colour weight I return to all the time. To me it is the winter paddock when it is bare and the colours are pale — rather drab, but beautiful. The top section is made of feathers. There is ambivalence as to whether this is to be read as birds or whether it is meant to be the quality in the winter sky. They are actually seagull feathers picked up around the lake here [Lake Burley Griffin], and I have painted them on to a piece of Masonite with a paint-brush, not stuck them down. That is the quality of a winter's day to me, and for me it is right. Have you felt the quality of a winter day here? (1985 School of Art). The painted wood is from soft-drink boxes and the weathered piece is probably old fencing (see *String of blue days* 1984 and *Totemic* 1984). In the summer of 1978 (and again c. 1981) RG had experimented with feathers from Lake George, gluing them to weathered boards. See [*Feather studies 1–3*] 1978.*

Image courtesy of the Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra



269



270

271 [Yellow beach] 1984

Scallop (*Pecten fumatus*) shells, painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; diptych: 65 × 48 × 4 cm, 64 × 47.8 × 4 cm, overall abt 65 × 100 × 4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

See notes on *Red beach* 1984 regarding the shells used in this work.

Image from author's archive



271

1985

272 Clean country 1985

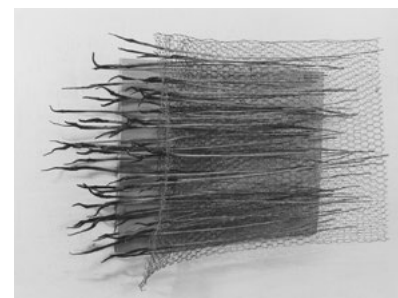
Dried stripped stalks (possibly saffron thistle, *Carthamus lanatus*), wire netting, weathered wood; four pieces, each abt 46 × 110 cm

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #4 (ref., illus. (detail) plate 4)

Lit: Mildred Kirk 1986, p. 516, illus. p. 513 (detail); Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 17 (detail, incorrectly shown as a vertical work)

Coll: dismantled

I did have this son in Tasmania, and I went down and I had a show there [1985], and I had a piece called 'Clean Country' because in Canberra the frosts are so severe that the country goes back to its shape — the grass gets bare and the fences get bare, and everything — because it's a very thin time of the year. And it's very beautiful. And I did this



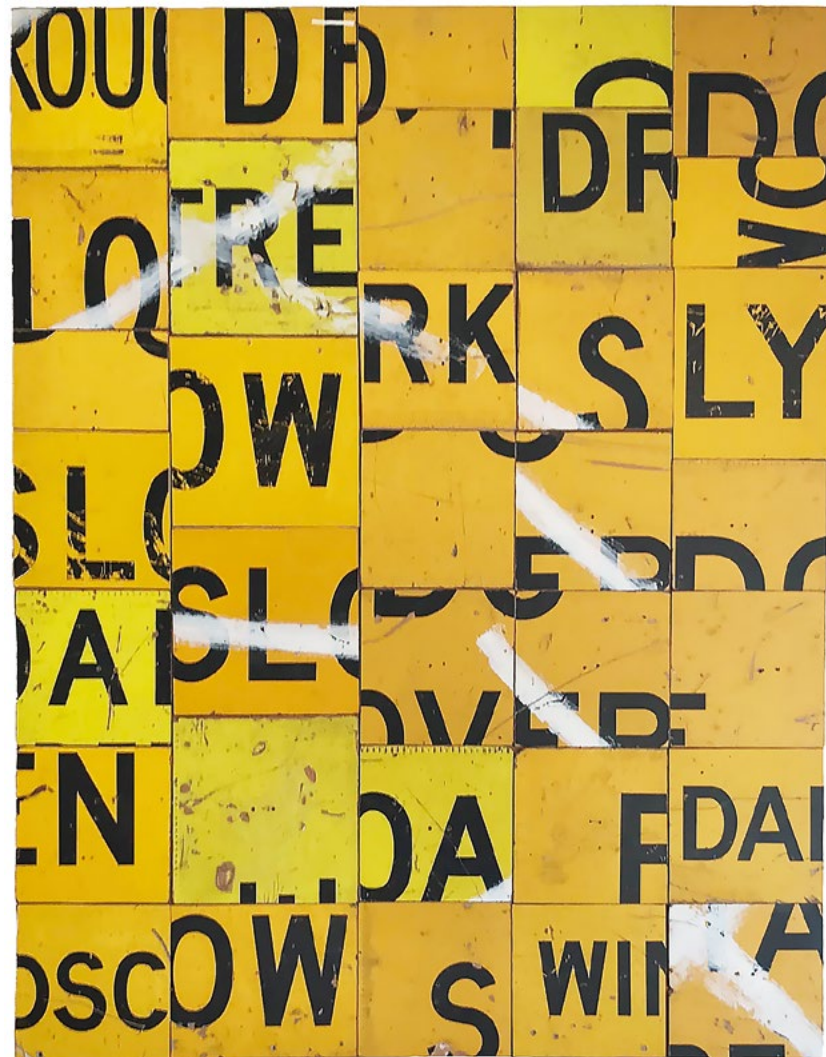
272



273A



273B



274

'Clean Country' bit, which was the sort of sticks and wire netting and [weathered plywood] ... all grey. And the people in Tasmania said: 'What does she mean, clean country?' But it was very appropriate for here, but not for there. And I realised how regional I was. Because what speaks to you is what gets into your art. And it only speaks to you if you're familiar with it, I think (1998 Hughes; similar remarks 1998 Desmond).

There is no record of how the four panels were displayed, whether in a line or grid. RG had experimented with grey sticks and wire cages in 1978 in a piece tentatively called *Going sideways* (illus. p. 106), which she planned to show in the 3rd Biennale of Sydney in 1979 but did not do so and she dismantled the work. She later revisited the open country theme in *Plein air* 1994 using wire netting on plywood, among other materials.

Photograph (detail) by Matt Kelso from the author's archive (another version p. 106)

273 Flight 1985

Dried stalks of variegated thistle (*Silybum marianum*), wooden block and plywood bases; installation of seven units, varying lengths and widths (not recorded), overall abt 5 × 4 metres

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #2 (ref., illus. plate 2)

Lit: Mildred Kirk 1986, pp. 514–516

Coll: dismantled

This is a new material. They are very white thistle sticks. It is very hard to find anything of that whiteness in the landscape. There was a place over near Wee Jasper this year where for some reason the thistles still stood at the end of the season. They had gone quite white. In the slide it is one piece short. It is a difficult thing to photograph, and it is called 'Flight', the migration or something, flocks of birds all rushing off over there (1985 School of Art).

RG's remark that 'this is new material' suggests she was introducing a new material in her talk because she had used the thistle in *Takeover bid* 1981. The thistles in *Flight* 1985 were probably found near the intersection of Wee Jasper Road and Mountain Creek Road, about 25 km south of Yass. There is a 1985 photograph of *Flight* under construction in the studio. On 10 July 1985 Rosemary Dobson sent Rosalie a poem which included a reference to the thistles, and in the accompanying letter wrote: 'I'd been brooding over a poem on Age and in particular that passage from Ecclesiastes (King James Version, NB) and I'd also wanted to put in the pallor of your old timbers and thistle-stalks, which you led me to see, and other pallors in a poem — and the two came together ... I don't know that it is OK to send anyone — except I do owe you the timbers and thistle-stalks.' The poem was titled 'The white of the almond-tree', dated July 1985, and subsequently retitled 'The almond-tree in the King James version'. The first two lines read:

'White, yes, pale with the pallor of old timbers, Thistle-stalks, shells, the extreme pallor of starlight'

(Rosemary Dobson, *Collected*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 2012, p. 249. My thanks to Robert Bolton for permission to quote the letter and the poem.)

Images A & B from author's archive (*Flight* 1985 in Hobart 1985, with *Last stand* 1972, *Honey flow* 1985 and *Highway code* 1985)

274 Highway code 1985

Sawn and painted plywood, retroreflective road signs, on plywood; 166 × 131 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black: 'HIGHWAY CODE / 1986 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #5 (ref., illus. plate 5); 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #10 (dated 1986), NFS; 1990 *The Readymade Boomerang* AGNSW, #168 (ref. p. 475); 1993–94 *Identities: Art from Australia* Taipei (illus. p. 74, ref. p. 158); 1997 *In Place (Out of Time)* MOMA, Oxford, UK (illus. p. 32, ref. pp. 41, 50); 1999 *Tōi Tōi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #64 (illus. p. 80); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney* (exh. but not listed); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #18] (ref. p. 62)

Lit: Dick Bett *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985; Ewen McDonald *Art review* ABC Radio National, 20 Oct 1986 (unpublished transcript 20 Nov 1986); *Art Monthly Australia* no. 10, May 1988, illus. front cover; Anne Kirker 1989, pp. 52 (with illus.), 55; Anne Kirker 1990, p. 19, illus. p. 20; *Artlink* vol. 10, no. 4, 1990, illus. p. 17; *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie Berlin and QAG, 1992 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 18 (installation view); Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 23, illus. p. 16; Maggie Pai *China News* 12 Dec 1993; Laura Cumming *The Observer* [UK] 3 Aug 1997; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 72; *Arena Magazine* no. 52, Apr–May 2001, illus. back cover; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, illus. p. 24; Mary Eagle 2007, pp. 198–205, illus. p. 200; Jason Grant 2007, illus. p. 23

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

This is what is called making art out of nothing ... I can't really take credit for having made a lot of decisions in this piece, because I found those boards in a dump which shall be nameless and which I now find more productive than any other neighbouring dump. Somebody had cut them into squares and they were all lying face downwards in the mud. Some of them had that white slash of paint on. Don't know what it was — very random. That is as many as I could get. I had to fake up a few and cut up a few larger boards to get the number I wanted. That was all the white ones there were. I called it 'Highway Code' and it's about six feet tall. The interesting thing about it is that it's retroreflective, and if you have it in the studio and you go in

at night with the light behind you the whole thing lights up eerily, like one of those luminous mushrooms. I feel that in a private place you could position it so that people coming in the front door got quite a surprise ... See that DR at the top right-hand corner, that has got no luminous paint on it, it reads like a solid block (1985 School of Art).

The dump she would not identify was the dump at Collector. This was the first time RG used retroreflective road signs. Regarding the white paint, RG remarked: *That sign had white flashes on it that cancelled it out. When you drive around the country the white cockatoos fly up, like porpoises in front of a ship. I've always seen the cockatoos going up ... They're untidy and their wings are every which way and they're shrieking. So I left the white on* (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 72).

On dating, although the work was exhibited in 1985, RG did not sign and date it until it was exhibited commercially in 1986 (hence the inscribed 1986 date, as with *Moonrise* 1985). RG displayed *Highway code* 1985 in the hallway at Anstey Street, Pearce. She used an image of the work as a basis for *Highway to heaven* 1994.

The title plays on 'code', meaning either the rules of the road or a message hidden in the jumbled squares of the cut-up signs.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



275

275 Honey flow 1985

Painted and stenciled wood, nails, on plywood backing; 108 × 84 × abt 7 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l. in black: 'HONEY FLOW / 1985 R.G.'

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #3 (ref., illus. plate 3); 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #1, \$2500; 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[17] (ref. p. 62)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

This is a recent work. I called it 'Honey Flow'. We all look at road signs an awful lot, and they do get into the consciousness. Here we have soft-drink boxes, or rather the side boards from them, and two of those street barricade things that are nicely faded (1985 School of Art).

This is the first piece constructed primarily of wood from yellow Schweppes soft-drink boxes. RG also used the title *Honey flow* for the first of the 21 units in *Games table* 1975–76.

Image from author's archive

276 Moonrise 1985

Sawn or split wood, some painted and stencilled, from soft-drink boxes and apiary boxes; abt 224 × 125 cm

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #2 (dated 1986), \$4000

Coll: 1986 private collection

Dated on the basis of the mid-1985 photograph.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



276

277 Pineapple pieces 1 1985

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (pineapple logo) (possibly with retouching by the artist) on shaped plywood, weathered wood (some painted); abt 60 × 35 cm; probably signed, dated and titled verso: 'PINEAPPLE PIECES 1 / 1985 / R.G.'

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #8 (as one of six items in *Pineapple pieces* 1985) (ref.)

Lit: *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985, illus. p. 18 (image of the six works on the wall, captioned 'Pineapple pieces')

Coll: unknown (probably dismantled)

It is not clear whether RG collected the pineapple images when she was collecting Arnott's Biscuits and Norco imagery in the mid-1970s, or whether she found them later. A heap of cut-out pineapples can be seen on the studio floor in photographs taken in late 1983 or early 1984 so they may well date from that time. RG later broke up the group shown in Hobart, having concluded that the retouching did not work.

Image from author's archive (*Pineapple pieces* in Hobart, 1985; top left to bottom right — no. 3, no. 4, no. 5, no. 2, no. 6, no. 1)



277

278 Pineapple pieces 2 1985

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (pineapple logo) (possibly with retouching by the artist) on shaped plywood, weathered wood, sawn plywood retroreflective road sign, rusted metal; 39 × 36 × 7 cm (box only, 40 × 40 × 7 cm with the metal rods); signed, dated and titled verso: 'PINEAPPLE PIECES 2 / 1985 / R.G.'

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #8 (as one of six items in *Pineapple pieces* 1985) (ref.)

Lit: *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985, illus. p. 18 (image of the six works on the wall, captioned 'Pineapple pieces')

Coll: 1986 private collection (gift of the artist)

See notes on *Pineapple pieces 1* 1985 and image 277.

279 **Pineapple pieces 3** 1985

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (pineapple logo) (with retouching by the artist) on shaped plywood, weathered plywood and sawn retroreflective road sign (originally displayed with a rusted wire grill superimposed, later detached); 27.2 × 25.0 × 3.3 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in black fibre-tipped pen: 'PINEAPPLE PIECES / 3 / 1985 / R.G.'

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #8 (as one of six items in *Pineapple pieces* 1985) (ref.)

Lit: *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985, illus. p. 18 (image of the six works on the wall, captioned 'Pineapple pieces')

Coll: 1991 private collection (gift of the artist) (without mesh screen — see notes)

See notes on *Pineapple pieces 1* 1985 and image 277.

Some time after being exhibited in Hobart, *Pineapple pieces 3* lost its mesh screen (it hung on the courtyard wall at Anstey Street, Pearce, unrecognised, until the house was sold in 2010 (illus. p. 119)).

280 **Pineapple pieces 4** 1985

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (pineapple logo) (possibly with retouching by the artist) on plywood, weathered wood (from soft-drink crate), sawn retroreflective road sign, plywood backing; 32 × 27 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'PINEAPPLE PIECES / 4 1984 R.G.'

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #8 (as one of six items in *Pineapple pieces* 1985) (ref.)

Lit: *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985, illus. p. 18 (image of the six works on the wall, captioned 'Pineapple pieces')

Coll: 1991 private collection (gift of the artist)

See notes on *Pineapple pieces 1* 1985.

After the group was broken up, the positions of the two pineapples in *Pineapple pieces 4* were swapped.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

281 **Pineapple pieces 5** 1985

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (pineapple logo) (possibly with retouching by the artist) on shaped plywood, sawn retroreflective road sign, weathered wood; 31.5 × 25 cm; signed, dated and titled verso bottom: 'Pineapple Piece 5 1985 R.G.'

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #8 (as one of six items in *Pineapple pieces* 1985) (ref.)

Lit: *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985, illus. p. 18 (image of the six works on the wall, captioned 'Pineapple pieces')

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.471), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

See notes on *Pineapple pieces 1* 1985.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



280



281

282 **Pineapple pieces 6** 1985

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (pineapple logo) (possibly with retouching by the artist) on shaped plywood, sawn retroreflective road sign, weathered wood; 16.7 × 28.6 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l.: 'Pineapple Piece 6 1985 R.G.'

Exh: 1985 *Rosalie Gascoigne* UTas, #8 (as one of six items as *Pineapple pieces* 1985) (ref.)

Lit: *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985, illus. p. 18 (image of the six works on the wall, captioned 'Pineapple pieces')

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.468), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

See notes on *Pineapple pieces 1* 1985.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



282



283

283 **Pineapple pieces 7** 1985

Printed cut-out cardboard shapes (pineapple logo) (possibly with painted retouching by the artist) on shaped plywood, sawn plywood retroreflective road sign, weathered wood; 24.5 × 15 × 6 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l.: 'Pineapple Pieces 7 1985 R.G.'

Exh: 22 Apr – 8 May 2004 *Modern Australian Painting* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, #2 (illus.)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2004 private collection

See notes on *Pineapple pieces 1* 1985.

Image from author's archive



284

1986

284 **Banner** 1985–86

Painted, stenciled wood from soft-drink boxes on backing; 131 × 85 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in black: 'BANNER / 1986 R.G.'

Exh: 11 Jun – 17 Jul 2011 *Wood from the Trees* Lismore Regional Gallery, NSW

Coll: 1987 private collection (through Pinacotheca Gallery)

Dated partly on the basis of images of the studio taken in 1985 which show working arrangements of boards very like those in *Banner* 1985–86 (see *Vogue Living* Feb 1986, pp. 110, 114). The work was not included in RG's exhibition at Pinacotheca in October 1986. The owners first saw it in RG's house when they visited in late 1986 and when RG probably signed and dated the work.

Image from author's archive

285 Daffodils 1986

Weathered and sawn or split painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 133 × 86.5 cm; signed verso: 'R.G.'

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #7, \$2700; 1990 *Acquisitions 1984–1990* UQAM; Dec 2000 – 24 Feb 2001 *Monochromes* UQAM

Coll: 1987 The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane (Acc no. 1987.02)

In 1988 RG told Mary Eagle that *Daffodils* 1986 incorporated leftover boards from *Plenty* 1986.

Image courtesy of the University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane

286 High country [1] 1986

Weathered FSC-coated plywood formboard and sawn painted wood (builder's offcuts); 46.5 × 55.5 × 5.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'High Country / 1986 / R.G.'

Exh: 1995 *In the Company of Women* Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, WA, #53 (as *High country*) (ref. p. 68); 30 Mar – 1 May 1999 *Blue Chip II* Niagara Galleries, Melbourne; 26 Aug 2001 Christie's S., lot 58 (illus. p. 57)

Lit: c. Feb 1987 RG to TG

Coll: 1987 The Cruthers Collection (through Pinacotheca Gallery)

Catalogued as *High country [1]* to distinguish it from a 1999 work with the same title. The formboard may have come from the building site for the future Questacon building opposite the National Library in Canberra. Probably made towards the end of 1986; in a letter from c. Feb 1987 RG wrote about her stock of recently acquired formboard: *I keep scrubbing concrete off it and laying it all over the floor until such time as it tells me what it wants to become. I am getting a great Colin McCahon influence in my work these days* (c. Feb 1987 RG to TG). See also *Shoreline* 1986, the first of the fourteen landscape works that share a sensibility with some of Colin McCahon's landscapes.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

287 [Homage with Matisse's *Le luxe II*] c. 1982–86

Weathered and sawn painted wood (including builder's offcuts) and plywood, postcard image of Matisse's *Le luxe II* 1907–08; 29 × 14.5 × 3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.473), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Le luxe II 1907–08, casein painting by Henri Matisse, is in the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

288 [Homage with Matisse's *Nono Lebasque* 1908] c. 1986

Weathered and sawn or split painted wood with stencilling (from soft-drink boxes), postcard image of Matisse's *Nono Lebasque* 1908, on plywood; 24.7 × 25.9 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Matisse's *Nono Lebasque* 1908 is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum, New York. RG may have seen it when she visited New York in 1980, and certainly saw it in Canberra when it was exhibited at the ANG in *20th Century Masters from the Metropolitan Museum of Art New York* (1 Mar – 27 Apr 1986), which would be when she bought the postcard. Made before April 1987, when it appears in a photograph of the studio. Displayed in RG's sitting room.

Image from author's archive

289 [Homage with Renoir's *La loge*] c. 1984–86

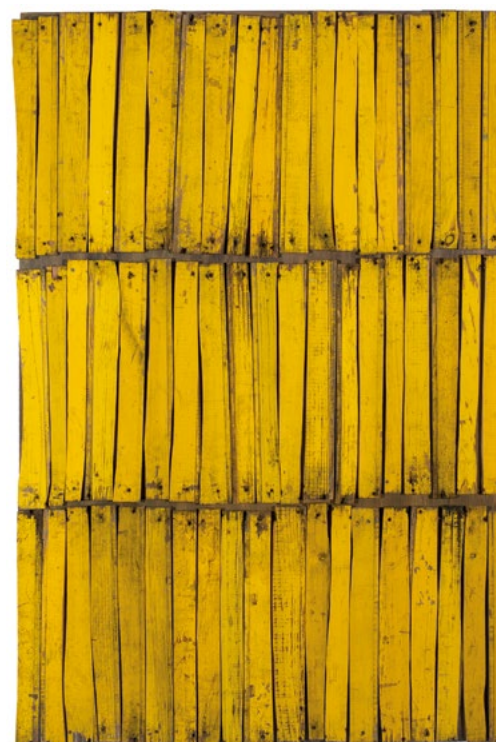
Weathered painted wood and nails (from soft-drink boxes), printed paper (image of Renoir's *La loge* (*The theatre box*) 1874) on wood backing; 29 × 25 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

RG had multiple copies of the image of Renoir's *La loge* (*The theatre box*) 1874, which comes from publicity materials for *The Great Impressionists* exhibition at the ANG in Canberra, 2 Jun – 5 Aug 1984 (illus. p. 113). *La loge* 1874 was one of the works in the exhibition. An early version of [*Homage with Renoir's La loge*] without its striped frame can be seen in a c. 1984 photograph of RG's sitting room. Sometime after RG died the central image was replaced with a detail of the same image more closely focused on the barmaid.

Image from author's archive



285



286



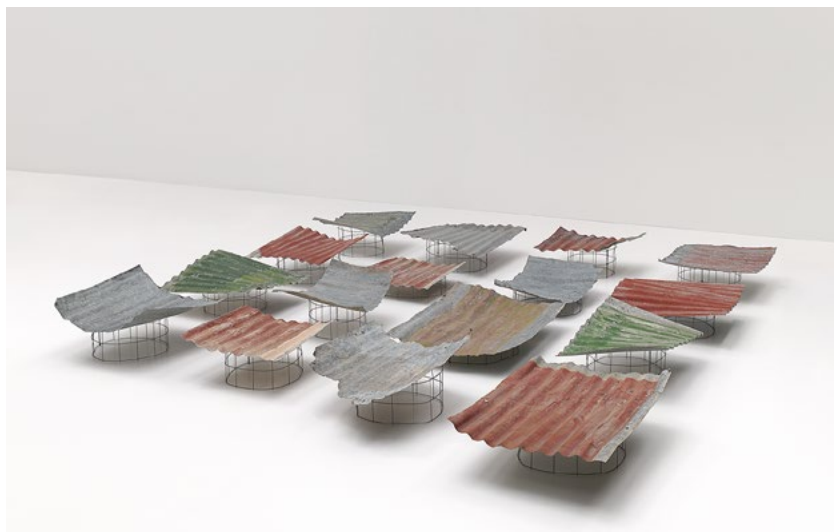
287



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290 Inland sea 1986

Weathered painted corrugated iron sheet with wire mesh support; (a–ee) 39.1 × 325 × 355.5 cm (variable) (installation of 16 units); not signed, dated or titled, but units are numbered underneath and centre of each corrugated sheet in fibre-tipped pen as follows:

- (a) '1' (vertically)
- (c) '2' (line above 2) (vertically)
- (e) '3' (vertically)
- (g) '— 4' (vertically)
- (i) '5' (line above 5) (vertically)
- (k) 'LOW / 6' (vertically)
- (m) '7 — / LOW' (vertically)
- (o) '8 —'
- (q) '— 9'
- (s) '10' (line above 10) (inverted)
- (u) '10 — / LOW' (inverted)
- (w) '12 —'
- (y) '13' (line above 13)
- (aa) '14 /'
- (cc) '15 —'
- (ee) '16 —'

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #13, \$5000; 1990 *Strange Harmony of Contrasts* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney and touring (ref.); 1993 *Creators and Inventors: Australian Women's Art in the NGV* NGV (ref., illus. p. 37); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[9] (ref. pp. 14, 16, illus. p. 31); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[42] (illus. p. 77, ref. p. 135); 2010–12 *Spirit in the Land* McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery, Langwarrin, VIC, then touring nationally (illus.); 2013 *Mix Tape 1980s: Appropriation, Subculture, Critical Style* NGV

Lit: Ewen McDonald *Art review* ABC Radio National, 20 Oct 1986 (unpublished transcript 20 Nov 1986); Christopher Allen *SMH* 2 Feb 1990; Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 3–4 Feb 1990, p. 11; Jacques Delaruelle *Art Monthly Australia* no. 28, Mar 1990, pp. 14–15; Catherine Lumby *Tension* no. 20, 1990, illus. p. 60 (installation view); *Art & Text* no. 36, 1990, illus. p. 150; Ewen McDonald *Art and Australia* vol. 28, no. 1, 1990, illus. p. 53; Anne Kirker 1990, p. 18; Harriet Edquist 1993, pp. 22–23, illus. p. 25; Donald Williams and Colin Simpson 1996, illus. p. 175; Joanna Mendelssohn *The Australian* 21 Nov 1997; Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 6 Dec 1997, p. 16; Felicity Fenner 1999, pp. 88–89 (installation view); Ray Edgar 2009, illus. p. 40

Coll: 1993 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (Acc no. S4.a–ff 1993)

An NGV memorandum dated 29 October 1997 has an installation plan used by AGNSW in 1997; the plan is based on an installation photograph taken by the NGV 'and the numbering system applied by the artist on the underneath of each corrugated sheet'.

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

291 [Letter to a grandson]

c. 1986

Collaged letter with printed images (including unidentified Renaissance portrait), cockatoo feathers, ribbon, ink on paper; 31.5 × 22 cm; signed 'From Grandmother', not dated

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1986 private collection

In the letter RG writes about a neighbour's talking cockatoo, which had a repertoire limited to 'hullo Charlie', this also being RG's grandson's name.

Image from author's archive

292 New wave 1986

Weathered painted corrugated iron sheet in strips, metal clamps, weathered plywood; 77.7 × 83.4 × 11.7 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l.: 'New Wave / 1986 R.G.'

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #12, \$2000

Coll: 1987 Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra (Acc no. 1987/0004)

The title alludes to a group of French film makers in the 1950s and 1960s (the metal resembling film strips), as well as to hair styling.

Image courtesy of the Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra

293 Orchard 1986

Weathered and sawn or split painted wood with minor stencilling (from soft-drink boxes), on hardboard; 137 × 117 × 6.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #6, \$3000; 15 Jun 2005 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 34 (illus. p. 67)

Coll: 1986 private collection

In 1988 RG told Mary Eagle that *Orchard* 1986 incorporated leftover boards from *Plenty* 1986.

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands, Melbourne

294 Plenty 1986

Weathered and sawn painted wood (from soft-drink boxes) on plywood; 246 × 430.5 cm, comprising 28 panels arranged in seven columns of four panels

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #9, \$7000; 1987 *A New Romance* ANG (at ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra) (ref.); 1990 *L'été Australien* Montpellier, France (as *Abundance*) (illus.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[41] (illus. pp. 96–97, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 26; Daniel Thomas *The Australian* 29 Oct 1999, p. 18; Judith White 2000, illus. p. 56

Coll: 1987 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 87.562 A–B)

It's the countryside around Canberra when the yellows are out — yellow daisies, gorse — and it's like a great unmade bed. Terrific. When I started making that, I thought, 'It's got to be big enough for a horse to roll in'. And it was (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 65). In 1988 R.G. told Mary Eagle that leftover boards from *Plenty* 1986 were incorporated in subsequent works (*Orchard* 1986, *Prescribed text* 1986 and *Daffodils* 1986).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

295 Prescribed text 1986

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood (from soft-drink boxes) on plywood backing; 139.5 × 122 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'PRESCRIBED TEXT / 1986 R.G.'

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #5, \$3000; 27–28 Nov 2000 Christie's M., lot 22 (illus. front cover, p. 27); 24 Aug 2004 Sotheby's S., lot 2 (illus. front cover (detail), p. 9)

Lit: *Australian Art Collector* no. 15, Jan–Mar 2001, illus. p. 71; Roger Dedman 2007, illus. p. 25

Coll: 1986 private collection

Prescribed text 1986 was the first work to be made wholly of split boards from Schweppes crates. In 1988 R.G. told Mary Eagle that *Prescribed text* 1986 was one of three works that incorporated leftover boards from *Plenty* 1986.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

296 Promised land 1986

Weathered painted and stencilled wooden boards (from soft-drink boxes) on plywood backing; 110.5 × 249 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'PROMISED LAND / 1986 / R.G.'

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #4, \$4000; 1987 *Ten by Ten* Gertrude Street, Melbourne (dated 1985) (ref. p. 5, illus. p. 13); 27 Sep 1992 Sotheby's M., lot 109 (illus.); 2 May 2000 Deutscher-

Menzies M., lot 11 (illus. p. 37); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[43] (illus. pp. 86–87, ref. p. 135); 12 Mar – 15 May 2016 *Panorama Part One* TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC

Lit: *Art and Australia* vol. 30, no. 3, 1993, illus. p. 93; Roger Dedman 2007, illus. p. 25 (incorrectly, as a vertical work); TarraWarra Museum of Art *Introductory booklet* (2nd ed.) Nov 2009, p. 45

Coll: 1986 private collection; 2001 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC (Acc no. 2002.023), gift of Eva Besen AO and Mark Besen AC

The title alludes to the biblical promise of land to the descendants of Abraham (Genesis 15:18–21 and elsewhere). In modern contexts the image of a promised land is also associated with the idea of salvation and liberation.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

297 Shoreline 1986

Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs, torn linoleum, FSC-coated plywood formboard, on backing board; 53.5 × 107.5 cm (irreg.); signed, dated and titled verso: 'Shoreline / 1986 / R.G.'

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #8, \$1600; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[12] (illus. p. 34, ref. p. 61) (with incorrect measurements); 3 Apr 2001 Christie's M., lot 12 (illus. p. 23)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 42 (with incorrect measurements)

Coll: 1986 Bruce Pollard

That's the first of those I did. It was a happy accident because it grew on the floor, I kept dropping another piece of broken wood. This linoleum, it was just the right blue, gave you the sea back ... it was evocative to me of the beach down at Guerilla Bay. There's an island in the middle of it, and surf. I hate surf because I'm a New Zealander, I like calm seas — I'm terrified of that Australian surf. And the light, which is brilliant down there, brilliant. The light kills you here, you know, if you're born somewhere else (Vici MacDonald 1998 p. 80).

Shoreline 1986 is the first of fourteen landscape works that share a sensibility with some of Colin McCahon's landscapes. Probably made towards the end of 1986: in a letter from c. Feb 1987 R.G. wrote about her stock of recently acquired formboard: *I keep scrubbing concrete off it and laying it all over the floor until such time as it tells me what it wants to become. I am getting a great Colin McCahon influence in my work these days* (c. Feb 1987 R.G. to TG). Guerilla Bay is 13 km south of Batemans Bay on the south coast of NSW. Regarding R.G.'s interest in McCahon, see pp. 74–75.

Image from author's archive



294



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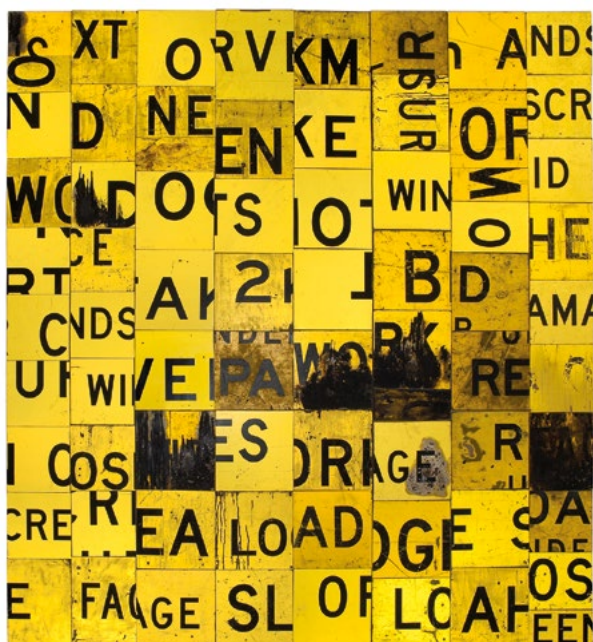
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302

298 **Streetwise** 1986

Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs on composition board; four panels, each 135.5 × 100 cm, overall abt 135.5 × 430 cm (with spacing); each panel signed, dated and titled verso: 'STREETWISE / 1986 RG'; panel 1 also inscribed 'FL1', panel 2 'ML 2' and panel 3 'MR3'

Exh: 1986 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #3, \$6000; 1987 *Contemporary Art in Australia* MOCA Brisbane (inaugural exhibition) (incorrectly hung as a single panel rather than four panels) (illus. pp. 28–29 as a single panel); 8 Sep 2002 *BP Collection* Sotheby's S., lot 12 (illus. pp. 16–17) (overall dimensions incorrect)

Lit: Terry Smith *Times on Sunday* 19 Jul 1987; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 39; *The Australian Way* [Qantas inflight magazine] Aug 2002, illus. pp. 77–79 (detail); *Business Review Weekly* 19 Dec 2002, illus. p. 97

Coll: 1986 James Baker, Museum of Contemporary Art, Brisbane; c. 1994 BP Collection; 2002 Garangula Gallery

When asked about the order in which the early retroreflective works were created, RG told Mary Eagle in 1988 that *Streetwise* 1986 was the second such work she made. RG wrote to MOCA on 2 December 1987 about the correct way to display the work, as four panels and not as a single unit as it had been when MOCA opened (8 Dec 1987 James Baker to RG).

Image from author's archive

299 **[Twenty-five scallop shells]**
c. 1984–86

Scallop (*Pecten fumatus*) shells, wooden blocks, sawn timber boards; 55 × 56.5 × 7 cm; not inscribed by RG, but inscribed: 'Certificate that this work / is by Rosalie Gascoigne / Martin Gascoigne / 19 April 2004'

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #13 (as *Untitled (25 scallop shells)* c. 1984–1985), \$85,000

Lit: Patricia Anderson *The Australian* 11 May 2004, p. 14 (with illus.)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

An earlier version of this work, with four rows of four shells on the studio floor, is illustrated in Jane Smith 1986 (pp. 112, 115). The shells came from RG's son in Hobart in 1984, and were the same as those used in *Red beach* 1984 and *[Yellow beach]* 1984.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

1987

300 **Blue bows** 1985–87

Weathered painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 137.5 × 121 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #14, \$5500 (dated 1987); 24 Nov 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 44 (illus.)

Coll: 1988 private collection

Regarding dating, photographs of the studio taken in late 1985 for *Vogue Living* (Jane Smith 1986, pp. 110, 115) show construction of *Blue bows* well under way, with three columns each of four boards assembled as a single panel. Possibly some of the boards were later swapped around and an extra row added before final assembly. This probably explains RG's dating of the work 1987.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

301 **[Cat study 3]** c. 1985–87

Printed paper (from cat-food packaging), on FSC-coated formboard; abt 40 × 15 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

In the summer of 1984–85 RG acquired a black-and-white kitten she called 'Harry' and the images probably come from the wrappings on his cat food. Hence the dating.

Image from author's archive

302 **Flash art** 1987

Tar on sawn plywood retroreflective road signs; 244 × 213.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / FLASH ART 1987'

Exh: 1987 *Third Australian Sculpture Triennial* NGV (illus. p. 83, ref. p. 106); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[45] (illus. p. 103, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 66 (with illus.); Mary Eagle 2007, pp. 204, 205

Coll: 1987 private collection (Melbourne) (through Pinacotheca Gallery); 2010 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (Acc no. 2010.4), purchased with funds donated by the Loti and Victor Smorgon Fund

Flash art 1987 was made for the Third Australian Sculpture Triennial, September 1987. The title owes something to the magazine *Flash Art*, which RG bought occasionally at this time. *It's the most blasting of the retro-reflectives I ever did, because it was eight feet by eight feet, it had road tar on it, and when it lit up, boy, it was every bush fire* (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 76).

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

303 **Golden wedge** 1987

Sawn and split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes; 122 × 168 cm

Exh: 1988 *From the Southern Cross* AGNSW and NGV (ref. p. 278)

Coll: c. 1988 private collection (through Pinacotheca Gallery)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

304 **Grasslands [I]** 1987

Sawn and split weathered painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 92 × 214 cm

Exh: 1987 *Third Australian Sculpture Triennial* NGV (as *Grasslands*) (ref. p. 106)

Coll: 1987 Bruce Pollard

Titled *Grasslands [I]* 1987 to distinguish it from another work exhibited with the same title (see *Grasslands II* 1998). *That's from looking at horse paddocks that are full of grass. They're just brilliant ... I had to cut all that wood with a bandsaw, breathing in dust, and then I had to glue it all, and then I had to know what I was going to do with it all, because I started cutting an awful lot before I did* (24 Apr 1987 RG to Saskia Havyatt). The bandsaw referred to was a lighter model than the tradesman's Toolmac 14 RG acquired in November 1988.

Image from author's archive

305 **[Linoleum study (Tasmania)]** c. 1986–87

Torn or cut patterned linoleum, weathered plywood formboard; 20.7 × 16.7 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.486), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Dated on the basis of a 1987 photograph. In 1996 [*Linoleum study (Tasmania)*] was incorporated in a larger work, which RG later dismantled.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

306 **Persimmon** 1986–87

Sawn reflective plywood road signs, with plywood backing; 148 × 126 cm

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne Pinacotheca*, Melbourne, #15, \$6000 (dated 1987)

Coll: c. 1988 private collection

Re dating, when asked about the order in which the early reflective road sign works were created, RG told Mary Eagle in 1988 that *Persimmon* was the third such work she made: *I made it just after the last Pinacotheca show* [in October 1986] (RG to ME 1988). *Persimmon* was completed by 27 April 1987 when a visitor photographed it in the house. It was the first red reflective road sign work.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

307 **Poor man's orange** 1987

Weathered painted and stencilled wood (from soft-drink boxes) on three plywood panels joined with aluminium strip; 193 × 130 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'ROSALIE GASCOIGNE / 1987 / POOR MAN'S ORANGE'

Exh: 1987 *Australian Masters* Solander Gallery, Canberra, #17, \$6000

Lit: Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 30 Sep 1987, p. 24

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

RG displayed *Poor man's orange* 1987 in her dining room. The title refers to a citrus fruit, poor man's orange, also known as poorman's orange or New Zealand grapefruit, which is related to the pummelo (*Citrus maxima*) or shaddock family. Rosalie would have remembered it from her childhood, and her mother may well have had one in her garden (where she grew citrus trees). The poor man's orange was imported into New Zealand by Sir George Grey by 1855 and reputedly got its name because it was a prolific cropper. *Poor man's orange* is also the title of a novel by New Zealand author Ruth Park; set in Sydney, it was published in 1949.

Image from author's archive



303



304



305



306



307



308



309A



310



309B



311



308 Roadside 1987

Weathered painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing with aluminium strip; 129.5 × 118 cm, signed and dated verso l.r.: '1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *From the Southern Cross* AGNSW and NGV (dated 1988) (illus. p. 133, ref. pp. 132, 278; incorrectly sized as 125 × 122 cm); 1989 *What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden, #15 (ref. pp. 17–18, illus. p. 49); 22 Aug – 28 Sep 1991 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #76 (dated 1988), \$14,000 (illus.; incorrectly sized as 125 × 122 cm); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[13] (dated 1987–88) (illus. p. 36, ref. pp. 12, 13, 15, 61)

Lit: Anne Kirker 1989, p. 53; Anne Kirker 1990, illus. p. 15 (dated 1988); Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 11; Hannah Fink 1997, p. 208; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 65 (dated 1987–88)

Coll: 1988 private collection (through Pinacotheca Gallery)

Although RG dated *Roadside* 1988, the photographic record shows it was completed by Christmas 1987.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

309 [Studies of 'cloud' shapes] 1987

Painted plywood, FSC-coated plywood, five units, some mounted on blocks; dimensions variable (largest, on plywood square, is 29.7 × 36.1 × 5.5 cm); not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.505), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

The five shapes were part of a group of seven used with FSC-coated plywood and the wooden fence rail from *Totemic* 1984 in a 1987 work subsequently dismantled. The white shapes can be read in several ways and were not necessarily conceived of as clouds.

Image A courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Photograph B ('cloud' shapes in an untitled construction) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

310 Thirty two 1987

Weathered and sawn or split painted and stencilled wood (from soft-drink boxes) on backing board; 130 × 110 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'THIRTY TWO 1987 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1987 *Third Australian Sculpture Triennial* NGV (ref. p. 106); 29 Jun – 13 Aug 1988 *Gallery Artists* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #10, \$4500; 15 Jun 2005 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 28 (illus. p. 55)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 107; *SMH Spectrum* 11–12 Jun 2005, illus. p. 32

Coll: c. 1988 private collection

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands, Melbourne

311 Tiger tiger 1987

Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs with plywood backing; two panels, each 110.5 × 111.5 × 2 cm, overall abt 110.5 × 230 × 2 cm (with spacing); both panels signed and dated verso l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / December 1987'

Exh: 1988 *From the Southern Cross* AGNSW and NGV (ref. pp. 132, 278); 1995 *The Loti and Victor Smorgon Gift of Contemporary Australian Art* MCA (illus. pp. 2, 104); 2001 *MCA Unpacked* MCA; 2003 *MCA Unpacked 2* MCA (ref. pp. 33, 36–37, illus. p. 59); 2009 *Avoiding Myth & Messages: Australian Artists in the Literary World* MCA; Jun 2012 *Volume One: MCA Collection* MCA (illus. p. 10)

Lit: Dan Cameron 1988, illus. p. 10; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 73; Anne Kirker 1999, p. 75; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004 (for extended discussion on poetry in RG's work, see pp. 41–44); Mary Eagle 2007, pp. 198–205; *SMH* supplement 4–5 Apr 2009, illus. p. 26 (left hand panel only); Deborah Edwards 2016, p. 142, illus. pp. 144–145

Coll: 1988 Loti and Victor Smorgon (through Pinacotheca Gallery); 1995 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Acc no. 1995.166 A–B), gift of Loti Smorgon AO and Victor Smorgon AC

When I was doing 'Tiger Tiger' — the recent work — I do them in the studio and then bring them inside and I just like to watch them, when they're not watching me, and vice versa ... and it was there, standing up against the table, and I went past it and it just said 'Tiger Tiger', and I just knew that was its name. It was the squareness, and the yellow flashing tiger crouching in the grass with grass all over its face, a sort of threat ... as roadsigns are, and, to me, it was the right name ... I've always liked the glint to be brought out. I don't want it to be dramatically lit, but I do want it to sometimes flash at you, as roadsigns do, and then go sullen, then flash, like a living thing (1988 Ewen McDonald; similar comments in 1997 Feneley, 1998 Hughes and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 73).

According to BG's records, *Tiger Tiger* 1987 was made in December 1987. The title comes from William Blake's poem 'The tyger' (sometimes 'The tiger'), first published in 1794, which begins:

TIGER, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

Blake, William, 'The tiger', in Arthur Quiller-Couch (ed.), *The Oxford book of English verse: 1250–1900*, 1919, p. 489.

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

1988

312 **Aerial view** 1988

Torn and cut patterned linoleum on weathered plywood; 75 × 112 × 3.8 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in black fibre-tipped pen: "AERIAL VIEW" / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #21, \$4000; 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #11, \$5500

Lit: Kelly Gellatly *The Heide Collection* Heide MOMA, Bulleen, VIC, 2011, p. 99 (with illus.)

Coll: c. 1989 private collection; 1992 Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne (Acc no. 1992.49), Baillieu Myer Collection of the 80s

An undated photograph shows *Aerial view* 1988 in a very early stage of construction.

The top left and top right linoleum-covered forms are placed on a piece of FSC-coated plywood formboard lying on the studio floor, along with a third piece with the same linoleum and a fourth panel covered with white linoleum chips. The two pieces used in *Aerial view* 1988 are aligned much as they are in the finished work.

Image courtesy of Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

313 **A rose is a rose** 1986/88

Torn and cut patterned linoleum on plywood; two panels, each 62 × 58 cm, overall 62 × 116 cm; each panel signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black: (a) '(2 PARTS) / A ROSE IS A ROSE © / 1986–88 / Rosalie Gascoigne', (b) '2 PART / © A ROSE IS A ROSE / 1986–88 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #10 (with pink panel on the left and a gap of about 5 cm between the two), \$6000; 1995 *In the Company of Women* Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, WA, #55; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #144 (illus. p. 80 (pink panel on left, separated), ref. p. 135); 20 Oct – 15 Dec 2012 *Look, Look Again* Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, UWA (illus. p. 33)

Lit: *Into the light: The Cruthers Collection of Women's Art* UWA Publishing, 2012, illus. p. 33

Coll: 1989 The Cruthers Collection; 2007 The Cruthers Collection of Women's Art, The University of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. CCWA 482), gift of Sir James and Lady Sheila Cruthers

This was roses shedding their petals, and I tore up linoleum for ever to do it (1999 Auckland AG). The title comes from Gertrude Stein's poem 'Sacred Emily', written in 1913 and published in 1922 in *Geography and plays*:

Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose
Loveliness extreme.
Extra gaiters,
Loveliness extreme.
Sweetest ice-cream.
Page ages page ages page ages.

Regarding the title, RG's 1978 remark is apposite: *Well, I do think sometimes you say a thing definitively by repeating it. It's that old, old thing of a rose is a rose is a rose and you get the rose feeling out of it. In the same way that if you take a lot of something — if you're working with bones for instance, as I have done — a lot of bones will surround you with that bone thing and make you feel the feel of bones. I think the same goes for the repeated image of the beer can. You can as it were topple one beer can and in some senses you can't topple fifty* (1978 Lindsay). At one stage the right-hand panel was mounted on a larger panel, which was later incorporated in *First fruits* 1991.

Image by Victor France, courtesy of Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, The University of Western Australia, Perth



312

314 **Big yellow** 1988

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs on plywood backing; three panels: (a) 171.6 × 90.2 cm, (b) 171.5 × 90 cm, (c) 171.6 × 90 cm, overall 171.5 × 270 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l. in fibre-tipped pen: (a) "'BIG YELLOW" PANEL 1 (OF THREE) / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne', (b) '2', (c) '3'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #17, \$12,000; 14 Jul – 25 Aug 1991 *Cross Currents: Contemporary New Zealand and Australian Art from the Chartwell Collection* Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton NZ (ref. pp. 36–37, illus. p. 7 (in original format) and p. 77, but an installation image shows the revised arrangement, with the two end panels swapped); 1994 *Aussemblage!* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ; 1999 *Home and Away: Contemporary Australian and New Zealand Art from the Chartwell Collection* Auckland Art Gallery and touring NZ (illus. p. 39); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #13 (illus. pp. 52, 62); 19 Jun – 3 Oct 2004 *Everyday Minimal* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ; 1 Nov 2010 – 26 Mar 2011 *Where Are We? Lopdell House Gallery, Auckland, NZ*

Lit: Gregory O'Brien 'Of magpie song' 2004, illus. p. 21; Robyn McLean *Dominion Post* [Wellington, NZ], 20 Feb 2004, illus. p. B9; *Art Monthly Australia* no. 167, Mar 2004, illus. p. 36

Coll: 1988 Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, NZ (Acc no. C1994/1/298.1–3)

RG probably only settled on the sequence of the panels and inscribed the work shortly before it was exhibited at Pinacotheca in 1988, in accordance with her usual practice. In its original configuration, the two end



313



314

panels (1 and 3) were swapped over and it was photographed in this state in the studio in 1988. In 1999 RG was photographed at the Auckland Art Gallery in front of the work in its revised configuration.

Panel 2 verso also carries an imprint from the plywood manufacturer u.l. cnr, upside down: 'AUSTRALIA ... illeg. / EXTERIOR / AC.A ... illeg. / AS 2271 / ... illeg. / LYWOOD'. This indicates that the backing board was an exterior plywood manufactured to comply with Australian Standard AS 2271.

Image by John McIver, courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery, NZ

315 [Bones under glass]

c. 1984–88

Old (rabbit) bones, weathered sawn wood (builder's offcuts and plywood) (six units), FSC-coated plywood formboard and glass sheet; 48 × 60 × 7 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 destroyed

For many years RG displayed *[Bones under glass]* on a low table in the entrance hallway at Anstey Street, Pearce. Dated primarily on the basis of photographs from 1985 and 1987 showing similar arrangements of pebbles, china shards and shells on small boards (see illus. p. 105) and also RG's renewed interest in bones (reconstruction of *Last stand* 1972) in 1985. Destroyed in 2014, by which time the work had deteriorated considerably.

Image from author's archive



315



316

316 [Cat with glass eye]

c. 1986–88

Weathered painted galvanized sheet metal (cut in the shape of a cat), glass marble, weathered painted wood, wood panel with perforated zinc insert; 27.5 × 45.5 × 3.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The cat was a rustic bird-scare. Dated primarily on the basis of photographic records. RG displayed *[Cat with glass eye]* in the sitting room above the mantelpiece where it can be seen in an image from 1989 and where it still was in 1999.

Image from author's archive

317 Chart 1988

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs on painted plywood; 69 × 49 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: "Chart" / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #3, \$2000

Coll: 1995 private collection (acquired directly from the artist)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



317

318 Cherry orchard 1988

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on weathered plywood and copper sheet, on plywood backing; 104 × 70 cm

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #12, \$4000 (dated 1987); 1989 *What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden, #16 (ref. pp. 17–18, illus. p. 43, upside down, dated 1988)

Coll: 1988 private collection

Dated on the basis of pers. comm., RG with ME early 1988, who remembers talking with RG in early 1988 about her titles, when she explained that titles were usually very much an afterthought, *though sometimes, as in Cherry Orchard, I know at the start and all through I harness [the evolving image] to the idea* (pers. comm.).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



318

319 Close owly 1988

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs on plywood backing; 82.5 × 53.7 cm (mean); not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[20] (ref. p. 62)

Lit: *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie Berlin and QAG, 1992 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 2; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 32, illus. p. 31 (detail)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

'In discussing *Close owly*, which in certain lights shows a gleaming thicket of scratches, Rosalie mentions the abstract calligraphy of Cy Twombly' (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 32). RG displayed *Close owly* 1988 in the galley/dining room at Anstey Street, Pearce; it was the source of the image used for a colour photo screenprint of the same name made in 1990 (see *Close owly* 1990).

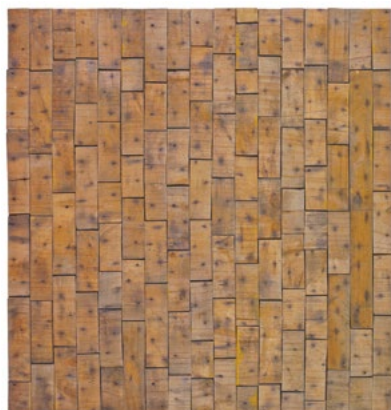
Image from author's archive



319



320



321



322

320 Court 1988

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs on plywood; 131 × 135 cm

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #4, \$2000

Coll: 1988 Allen, Allen & Hemsley

Early in 1988, RG in conversation with Mary Eagle referred to *Court* 1988 and *Wind change* 1988 as 'the rubbed ones'.

Image from author's archive

321 Deep shade 1988

Sawn wood from soft-drink boxes on plywood; 80 × 72 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'DEEP SHADE / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 14 May 2013 Sotheby's M., lot 47 (illus. p. 115)

Lit: David Hansen 'Deep shade' Sotheby's M., 14 May 2013, p. 114

Coll: c. 1988 private collection (Amsterdam) (acquired directly from the artist)

When photographed in the studio the work was placed horizontally. Later RG rotated it 90 degrees to the left.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

322 Formal flowers 1988

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on weathered plywood FSC-coated formboard; 87 × 52 cm

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #16, \$2500

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 57

Coll: 1988 private collection

The backing board was first used in conjunction with the creamy central panel of *A rose is a rose* 1986/88.

Image from author's archive

323 Golden mean 1988

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, plywood backing; 122 × 98 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #8, \$7000; 1992 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #99 (illus.); 20 Mar – 22 Apr 2001 *Important 20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #1, \$145,000 (illus.)

Lit: Lynette Fern 1989, illus. p. 185; *The readymade boomerang* 1990 (exh. cat.), p. 193 (incorrectly captioned *All that glisters*); Martin Seel *Aktive passivität: Über den spielraum des denkens, handelns und anderer künste* [Active

passivity: About the scope of thought, action and other arts] S Fischer 2014, Frankfurt, Germany, illus. cover (detail)

Coll: 1989 private collection

The golden mean of the title is a reference to a mathematical ratio first identified by the ancient Greeks and also known as the golden section or golden ratio. RG may have encountered the concept during her university studies, which included mathematics, Latin and ancient Greek. The work itself does not embody the golden mean.

Image courtesy of Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney

324 [Homage with a Virgin and Child] c. 1985–88

Weathered painted wood from soft-drink boxes, printed card or paper (with image from unidentified Renaissance painting); 27.6 × 25.6 (top) × 4t 4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis of photographic records. Displayed in the artist's sitting room.

Image from author's archive

325 Last leaf 1988

Weathered painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; two panels: left 80 × 77 cm, right 79.7 × 77 cm, overall 80 × 156 cm (with spacing); left panel signed, dated and titled verso l.l. in black: 'LEFT PANEL "LAST LEAF" / Rosalie Gascoigne 1988', and left side marked 'OUTSIDE', right 'INSIDE'; right panel signed, dated and titled verso in black: 'RIGHT HAND PANEL "LAST LEAF" / Rosalie Gascoigne 1988', left side marked 'INSIDE', right 'OUTSIDE'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #11, \$5000; 18 Feb – 9 Mar 1997 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, \$14,000 (illus. as one panel); 2005 *Art and Artists: Portraits by Greg Weight* Gold Coast City Art Gallery, QLD; 2009–2011 *Twelve Degrees of Latitude* Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville, QLD, and touring QLD (illus. p. 45 as one panel)

Coll: 1989 private collection; 1997 Gold Coast City Art Gallery, QLD

Image from author's archive



323



324



325



326

326 Legend 1988

Sawn, painted, hand-lettered Masonite board road sign, on plywood backing; 118 × 75 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: "LEGEND" 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #5, \$4000; 1990 *Sense of Place* Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery UMelb, #[6] (ref. pp. 19, 47, 62, illus. p. 32); 2011 *Laverty 2* Newcastle Art Gallery; 2012 *The Colin and Elizabeth Laverty Collection: A Selection* Geelong Gallery, VIC; 24 Mar 2013 *The Laverty Collection* Bonhams S., lot 51 (illus. pp. 86, 89)

Lit: *Australian Art Education* vol. 14, no. 2, Aug 1990, illus.; *Artemis* [Newcastle Art Gallery Society magazine] vol. 42, no. 1, 2011, p. 11; Mary Eagle 'Legend 1988' in Bonhams *The Laverty Collection* Sydney, 2013, p. 88

Coll: 1988 private collection; Aug 1991 The Laverty Collection

... by this time I was out in the dumps looking for more variety of stuff. I was very taken with the elegance of lettering. And this was saying 'Holden for sale' or something like that. And so you cut out all the pieces that are applicable. It takes a long time. This is why you have all this solitude. It takes you a long time to get out all the pieces that are going to say anything [i.e. look] good, and then place them together in the right [arrangement]. But in the end you get quite an elegant looking script. I made several of those but not very many people seem to throw out road signs ... You take what you can get and you can't make anything unless you've got the stuff to make it with (1998 NGA; similar remarks 1999 Auckland AG).

It is possible to make out the words 'Holden' and 'apply within' from the pieces of the sign used in *Legend*.

Image courtesy of Bonhams, Sydney



327

327 Maculosa 1988

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on weathered painted wood; five panels, each 134 × 17 cm, overall 134 × 90 cm (with spacing); panel 1 signed, dated and titled verso l.l. (following the length of the board) in white paint: 'MACULOSA 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'; each panel numbered verso u.c.: '1 OF FIVE' or 2, 3, 4, 5 as appropriate

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #9, \$5000; 1989 *What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden, #12 (ref. pp. 17–18, illus. p. 46); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #14] (ref. pp. 12, 13, 15, 61, illus. p. 37); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #46] (illus. p. 78, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 30 Oct 1999, illus. p. 15

Coll: 1989 private collection

The back of each panel also has stuck to it synthetic polymer tape inscribed 'MTAB Transport & Spedition / Box 4121 S-171 04 Solne, Sweden'.

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



328

328 Market garden 1988

Painted, stencilled sawn and split wood from soft-drink boxes on plywood backing; 129 × 114 cm

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #3, \$8000

Lit: Michael Reid *Weekend Australian* 10–11 Aug 2002, p. 36

Coll: 1989 Allen, Allen & Hemsley
Image from author's archive



329

329 On a clear day 1988

Weathered sawn plywood shapes and weathered galvanised iron sheet, on plywood; 132 × 91 cm

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #19, \$5000

Coll: c. 1988 private collection
Image from author's archive

330 Outback 1988

Painted, stencilled sawn and split wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 129 × 114 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'OUTBACK / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #4, \$8000; 8–9 Sep 2004 Deutscher-Menzies M., lot 27 (illus. p. 51, back cover)

Lit: Terry Ingram *Art and Australia* vol. 42, no. 3, 2005, illus. p. 449; Michael Reid *SMH Good Weekend* 9 Dec 2006, illus.

Coll: 1989 private collection

Outback 1988 was made at the same time as the panels for *Monaro* 1988–89, the wood sawn with the Toolmac 14 bandsaw bought on 21 November 1988. RG thought about incorporating this panel in *Monaro*, but decided not to.

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands



330

331 Painted words 1988

Sawn-up hand-lettered Masonite board roadside notice, on plywood backing; 82.5 × 52 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'PAINTED WORDS / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #10 (as *Painted word*), \$5000; Nov 2005 Christie's M., lot 18 (illus. p. 23); 9 Aug 2011 Webb's Auckland NZ, lot 44; 28 Nov 2012 Webb's Auckland NZ, lot 70

Coll: 1999 Greenaway Art Gallery (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

See notes on *Legend* 1988 for RG's comment on her use of roadside notices.

Image from author's archive



331

332 Party piece 1988

Sawn plywood reflective road signs, plywood backing; 108 × 83.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #13, \$4000; 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #12, \$5500; Nov 1993 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #80 (illus.); 1999 *Toi Toi Toi Museum* Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #65 (illus. p. 77); 2000 *Drive: Power – Progress – Desire* Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, NZ

Lit: Christopher Allen 1989, pp. 18–19; Ilana Snyder *Hypertext: The electronic labyrinth* Melbourne University Press, Carlton South, VIC, 1996, illus. front cover; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 86 with quote; Kelly Gellatly 2008, illus. p. 22

Coll: 1989 private collection; 2000 private collection (Wellington, NZ)



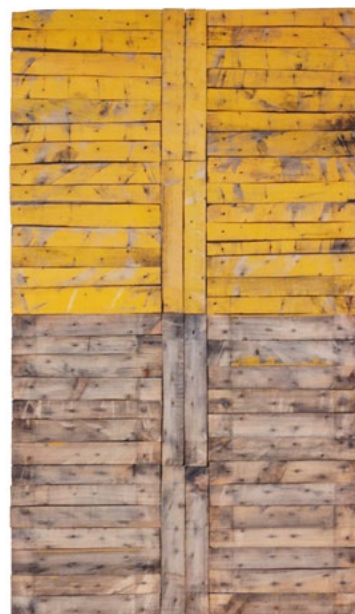
332



333



334



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336



337

That's got a lot of holes. It's faded and torn, it's like a New Year's party where everyone's got loose and spilt drink all over the floor and thrown streamers (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 86).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

333 Past glories 1988

Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs, plywood backing; 125 × 90 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in white paint: "PAST GLORIES" / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #1, \$4500; 1995 *In the Company of Women* Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, WA, #54; 20 Oct – 15 Dec 2012 *Look, Look Again* Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, UWA

Coll: 1988 The Cruthers Collection; 2007 The Cruthers Collection of Women's Art, The University of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. CCWA 431), gift of Sir James and Lady Sheila Cruthers

Image courtesy of John Cruthers

334 Plainsong 1988

Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs, plywood backing; 145 × 88 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'PLAINSONG' / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #6, \$5000; 1989 *What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden, #14 (ref. pp. 17–18, illus. p. 45) (incorrectly described as made of linoleum); 1990 *The Readymade Boomerang* AGNSW, #171 (ref. p. 475); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #19 (illus. p. 7, ref. p. 62); Nov 2002 – Feb 2003 *Fieldwork: Australian Art 1968–2002* NGV (illus. p. 109)

Lit: Mary Eagle 1988, p. 132; *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie Berlin and QAG, 1992 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 18 (installation view *The Readymade Boomerang*)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The title on the reverse side was originally written as two words but R.G. clearly indicates that she wanted it to be a single word.

Image courtesy of the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra

335 Plantation 1988

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 110 × 64 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1988 Bruce Pollard

The work was in Melbourne in time for R.G.'s 1988 exhibition at Pinacotheca but was not shown. A Pinacotheca Gallery statement is inscribed by BG: 'he [Pollard] didn't want to show it'.

Image from author's archive

336 Plaza 1988

Sawn reflective plywood road signs, plywood backing; 148 × 84.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: "'PLAZA'" / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #2, \$5000; 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #7, \$7000; 25 Aug 2015 Sotheby's S., lot 7 (ref. p. 38, illus. p. 39)

Lit: Christopher Allen 1989, pp. 18–19

Coll: 1989 private collection

Image from author's archive

337 Press 1987–88

Stencilled and painted wood from sawn and split soft-drink boxes on plywood backing; 58 × 136 cm

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #18, \$4000

Coll: 1988 private collection

Image from author's archive



338



339



340



341

338 Stubble field 1988

Painted and sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 98 × 83 cm

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #22, \$4000 (dated 1987); 1989 *What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden, #11 (ref. pp. 17–18, illus. p. 44) (dated 1987)

Coll: 1988 private collection

I want it, 'Stubble Field', to have that tight-packed crop look, rather rough, you know (1988 Ewen McDonald). Dated on the basis of pers. comm., RG with ME early 1988.

Image from author's archive

339 Sun and shadow 1988

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 122 × 286 cm

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #20, \$10,000; 1989 *What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden, #13 (ref. pp. 17–18, illus. p. 47)

Coll: 1988 private collection

Image from author's archive

340 [TWG] c. 1988

Sawn retroreflective plywood road sign; 27.6 × 37.9 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: private collection (gift of the artist)

The three letters are the initials of RG's grandson Thomas (Thom) William Gascoigne.

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne from author's archive

341 Twofold Bay 1988

FSC-coated plywood formboard; 55 × 95 cm; signed, dated and twice inscribed with title verso: 'Two Fold Bay / 1988 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #8 (as *Twofold Bay*), \$5000; 21 Aug 1996 Christie's M., lot 272

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 12, 81, illus. p. 81

Coll: 1988 private collection; 2008 State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. 2007/0256), gift of Sue and Ian Bernadt

That was one of the first things I used marine ply for. I love these bays, twofold bays. That to me was very satisfactory and very Chinese. It's an absolute nothing but you read these pure lines. I keep seeing bays, it's my New Zealand childhood I think (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 81). The title of the work is drawn from Twofold Bay on the south coast of NSW, near Eden. The bay with its double curve was named by George Bass when he sailed passed it during his voyage to Bass Strait in 1797–98.

Image from author's archive

342 Wind change 1988

Sawn reflective plywood road signs, plywood backing; 109 × 107 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 1988 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #7, \$4500; 1990 *Sense of Place* Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery UMelb, #[7] (ref. p. 46, illus. pp. 31, 47, 62); 28 Apr 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 25 (illus., incl. frontispiece)

Lit: John Hawke *Art Monthly Australia* no. 33, Aug 1990, pp. 19–20

Coll: 1988 private collection

Early in 1988, RG in conversation with Mary Eagle referred to *Wind change* 1988 and *Court* 1988 as 'the rubbed ones'.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



342

1989

343 Acacia 1989

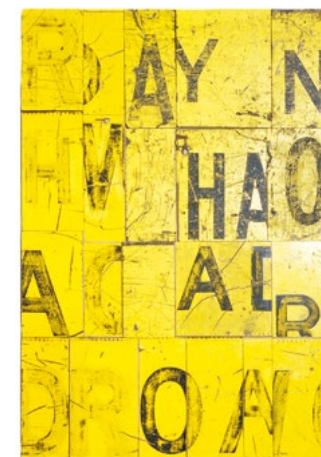
Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs, plywood backing; 108 × 73.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'ACACIA 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #14, \$5500; 1990 *Art with Text* Monash University Gallery, Melbourne, #8 (illus.)

Lit: Ewen McDonald 'There are only lovers' 1990, illus. p. 11; Harriet Edquist 1993, p. 23; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 76

Coll: 1989 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



343

344 All that glisters 1989

Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs, plywood backing; 129.5 × 109 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'ALL THAT GLISTERS / 1989 / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #5, \$8000; 1990 *The Readymade Boomerang* AGNSW, #167 (ref. p. 475, catalogued but not exhibited); 9 May 2007 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 14 (illus. p. 35, back cover)

Lit: Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 11–12 Nov 1989, illus. p. 10; Christopher Allen 1989, p. 19 (with illus.); Mary Eagle 2007; Gabriella Coslovich *The Age* 11 May 2007, illus. p. 17

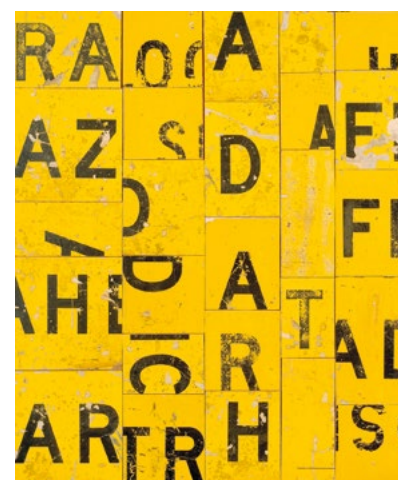
Coll: 1989 private collection

The title is drawn from William Shakespeare, *The merchant of Venice*, act 2, scene 7:

PRINCE OF MOROCCO.

O hell! what have we here?

A carrion death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll? I'll read the writing.
*All that glisters is not gold,
Often have you heard that told.*



344

Regarding illustrations, the image captioned *All that glisters* in *The Readymade Boomerang* 1990 (exh. cat.), p. 193, is *Golden mean* 1988. The image identified as *All that glisters* in *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie Berlin and QAG, 1992 (exh. cat.), p. 18, is an installation view of RG's works in the 1990 biennale showing *Blue streak* and *Marmalade*.

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

345 All that jazz 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 131 × 100 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'ALL THAT JAZZ / 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1989 *What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden (ref. pp. 17–18, illus. p. 48); 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #6, \$7500; 22 Aug – 28 Sep 1991 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #77, \$14,000 (illus.); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #14] (illus. p. 68); Mar 2006 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 21 (illus. cover, p. 45); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[47] (illus. p. 100, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Christopher Allen 1989, pp. 18–19; Jacques Delaruelle *Sydney Review* Dec 1989, p. 16; *Art & Text* no. 36, 1990, illus. p. 151; Ewen McDonald 'There are only lovers' 1990, illus. p. 13; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 45; *Alumni News* [University of Auckland] vol. 12, no. 1, 2002, illus. cover (detail), p. 2; William McAloon 2004; *Art and Australia* vol. 43, no. 3, 2006, illus. p. 450 (installation view in Pat Corrigan's house); Roger Dedman 2007, illus. p. 24; Jason Grant 2007, illus. p. 29

Notwithstanding the title of this work, and others with a musical allusion, RG was not at all musical and had no interest in listening to music.

Coll: 1989 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

346 Autumn 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 92 × 83.5; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'AUTUMN 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne', there is also an arrow inscribed verso u.c. pointing to the top edge

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #15, \$5000; 26 Jun 2013 *The Grundy Collection* Bonhams S., lot 8 (illus. p. 39)

Lit: John Cruthers 'Autumn' in *Bonhams Important Australian art from the collection of Reg Grundy AC OBE and Joy Chambers-Grundy* Sydney, 2013, pp. 38–39

Coll: 1989 The Grundy Collection

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of John Cruthers and Bonhams

347 Cat tracks 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 60.2 × 54.7 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'CAT TRACKS / 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #18, \$3000; Nov 2002 Christie's M., lot 39 (illus. p. 59)

Coll: 1989 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

348 City west 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 43.5 × 8.5 cm

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #19, \$2500; 1990 Roslyn Oxley9 at *ACAF 2* Melbourne (illus. p. 96)

Lit: *Art & Text* no. 36, 1990, illus. p. 151

Coll: c. 1990 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

349 Daisy 1989

Painted sawn wooden surveyor's pegs with stencilling, plywood backing; 73 × 59.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #17, \$3500; 24 Nov 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 49 (illus.)

Lit: Lynette Fern 1989, p. 180, illus. p. 184; Anna Johnson *Art & Text* no. 36, 1990, p. 151

Coll: 1989 private collection

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

350 Folded blue 1989

Weathered, painted corrugated iron on weathered plywood; 89 × 57.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #16, \$4000; 24 Nov 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 10 (illus.)

Lit: Lynette Fern 1989, illus. p. 182; Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 11–12 Nov 1989, p. 10; Anna Johnson *Art & Text* no. 36, 1990, p. 151

Coll: 1989 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



347



348



349



350



345



346



351



352

351 Gaudeamus 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 105 × 81 cm

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #13, \$5500

Lit: Christopher Allen 1989, pp. 18–19; Jacques Delaruelle *Sydney Review* Dec 1989, p. 16

Coll: 1989 private collection

The title comes from *De brevitare vitae* ('On the shortness of life'), more commonly known as *Gaudeamus igitur* ('So let us rejoice') or just *Gaudeamus*, often performed at university graduation ceremonies. The first two lines in an 18th century version of the song (CW Kindleben, 1781) read:

'Gaudeamus igitur.
Iuvenes dum sumus.'

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

352 Hill station 1989

Sawn FSC-coated plywood formboard and stencilled galvanised iron sheet, plywood backing; 130 × 98 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'HILL STATION / 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1990 *Adelaide Biennial* AGSA (illus. p. 97); 18 Mar – 19 May 1991 *Diverse Visions* QAG (ref. p. 14); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[22] (ref. p. 62); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[15] (illus. p. 47)

Lit: Peter Ward *Weekend Australian Magazine* 10–11 Mar 1990, p. 9; Ian North *Artlink* vol. 10, no. 4, 1990, pp. 25–26; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 83 (with illus.); Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 39 (on Colin McCahon's influence; similar remarks in Martin Gascoigne 2012, ref. and illus. pp. 244–245)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

I suppose it [Hill station 1989] mostly was inspired by the New Zealand landscape. And I remember my sister who was farming in the North Island, she died, and I had pieces — you've got to have the stuff to make it. It's no use having the idea without the stuff to make it — And I had one piece of form board ... And she farmed in a place where you had to — well it was fertile ground — but you had to work hard. And she was very strong-minded and she pitted herself against the landscape. And I had a piece of tin with the Lysaght lady's head on it. You know, it was the type of corrugated — no, it wasn't corrugated, it was just iron that they made — and they used to appear on the side of barns and things. I saw fighting the elements on this farm. I had the hills, you see, already made of formboard and so I made that.

And I remember I showed it in a Biennale in South Australia ... to Ron Radford, who's the director there ... And he said too Colin McCahon. And I thought, I looked at the same hills as Colin McCahon did, and I suppose to people it looks more New Zealand orientated. I think they mostly don't see the faded Lysaght lady, which is like all Lysaght ladies, bush fire come what's it. She was there on the side of the barn and she repelled it. Rather like Ned Kelly in the landscape here. And I did that one. But it was because I happened to have the thing, and I was thinking of course of my sister then, too (1998 Hughes; similar remarks in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 80 and 1998 NGA).

RG's sister, Daintry McMeekan, died on 11 February 1989. RG had visited her at the farm in November 1988 while in New Zealand to see the Colin McCahon retrospective in Auckland.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

353 Interior 1989

Patterned linoleum framed in sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 60 × 44 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1989 / INTERIOR'

Exh: 1996 Greenaway Gallery at *ACAF 5* Melbourne, \$3500

Coll: 1996 private collection

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

354 Lamplit 1989

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, plywood backing; 183 × 183 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.l. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'LAMPLIT / 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1990 *Strange Harmony of Contrasts* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney and touring (ref., illus.); 19 Dec 1990 – 24 Feb 1991 *Reference Point: New Acquisitions in Context* QAG; 1991 *Diverse Visions* QAG (illus. pp. 14, 15); 1991 *Women Artists* QAG, #12; 16 Apr – 30 Jun 1994 *Reference Points III: The Immediate Past* QAG; 14 May – 18 Jul 1999 *People, Places, Pastimes: Challenging Perspectives of Ipswich* Ipswich Arts Gallery, QLD; 2000–01 *Terra Cognita: The Land in Australian Art* QAG and touring QLD

Lit: Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian Magazine* 3–4 Feb 1990, p. 11; Jacques Delaruelle *Art Monthly Australia* no. 28, Mar 1990, pp. 14–15; Catherine Lumby *Tension* no. 20, Mar 1990, p. 60; Hannah Fink 'The regional modernism of Rosalie Gascoigne' 2000; Mary Eagle 2007, pp. 198–205, illus. pp. 5, 198

Coll: 1990 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (Acc no. 1990.482), Mrs JR Lucas Estate in memory of her father, John Robertson Blane



353



354

The work is not really about the drama of headlights on a sign, it is about seeing glimpsed poppies along the roadside on an evening drive to Bungendore. The work is meant, like road signs in daylight, to glance and smile at you, then sulk and go away ... remain a transient, living, pulsing thing (from notes made by Christopher Saines of R.G.'s comments to him on how the work should be hung, c. March 1990 QAGOMA records). The 'poppies' were probably evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*).

Image courtesy of the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane

355 Landfall 1989

Weathered, painted and FSC-coated plywood formboard and other wood (builder's offcuts), on plywood; 112.4 × 77.8 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'LANDFALL / 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1991 *Diverse Visions* QAG; 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #15, \$7000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 82 (with illus.); Diana Simmonds *The Bulletin* 26 May 1998, illus. pp. 72–73; *Landfall 199* Dunedin, 2000, illus. cover; *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, 2004 (exh. cat.), p. 47, illus. p. 48; Martin Gascoigne 2012, p. 242 (with illus.)

Coll: 1992 private collection; 1997 Macquarie University Art Collection, Sydney

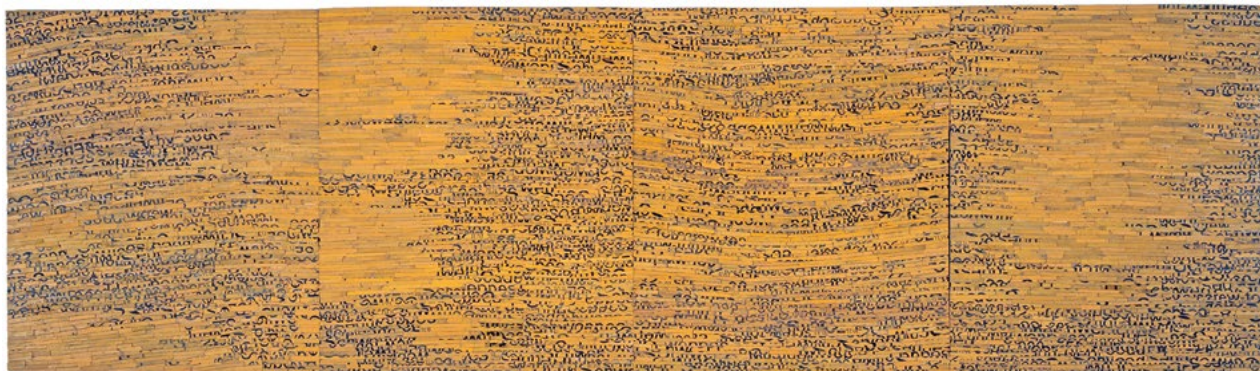
R.G. wrote to Bruce Pollard, probably in 1989 (the letter is dated 'Sunday'), with a photograph of *Landfall* and commenting: *It bears some relationship to Shore line [1986] but it is more in the nature of what Captain Cook saw than the south coast [of NSW].*

I had a lot of curved wood and it reminded me of old tales we used to hear a lot in New Zealand. Captain Cook sailed around New Zealand and what did he see but bays and bays and bays and beauty and colour and bays. And everywhere he'd see an empty beach; the Maoris didn't show themselves too much. I called it Landfall because it was the explorer and these colours, the greys and the blues, it seemed to work (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 82).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



355



356

356 Monaro 1988–89

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; four panels: 130.6 × 114.2 cm, 130.8 × 114.3 cm, 130.6 × 114.2 cm, 130.8 × 114.7 cm, overall 130.8 × 457.4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #1, \$23,000 (dated 1989); 1990 *Adelaide Biennial* AGSA (ref. p. 12, illus. pp. 42–43, dated 1989); 1990 *Sense of Place* Ivan Dougherty Gallery UNSW Sydney and Ian Potter Gallery UMelb, #[8] (ref. pp. 21, 62, illus. p. 26); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[15] (ref. pp. 14, 15, 62, illus. pp. 38–39); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[16] (ref. p. 19, illus. pp. 64–65); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[48] (illus. pp. 98–99, ref. p. 135); 2010 *Spirit in the Land* McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery, Langwarrin, VIC (illus. p. 35); 2013 *Australia* Royal Academy London (ref. p. 178, illus. pp. 260–261). Note: although *The Readymade Boomerang* 1990 lists *Monaro* as one of the exhibits, it was still in Adelaide at the time

Lit: John McDonald *SMH* 11 Nov 1989, p. 88; Christopher Allen 1989, pp. 18–19; Michael Desmond 1990, pp. 42–43; Peter Ward *Weekend Australian Magazine* 10–11 Mar 1990, p. 9; Elizabeth Cross *The Age* 3 Apr 1990; Anna Johnson *Art & Text* no. 36, 1990, p. 151; Ian North *Artlink* vol. 10, no. 4, 1990, pp. 25–26; Christopher Allen *SMH* 7 Jul 1990; Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 14–15 Jul 1990; John Hawke *Art Monthly Australia* no. 33, Aug 1990, pp. 19–20; *The Readymade Boomerang* 1990 (exh. cat.), pp. 166, 192, 475, illus. p. 192; *Cross currents: Contemporary New Zealand and Australian Art from the Chartwell Collection* 1991, pp. 36–37; Hannah Fink 1997, illus. pp. 200–201; Gary Dufour (ed.) *State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia* AGWA, Perth, 1997, pp. 53, 54 (with illus.); Christopher Allen *Art in Australia: From colonization to postmodernism* Thames and Hudson, London, 1997, p. 210, illus. p. 205; John McDonald *SMH Spectrum Arts* 29 Nov 1997, p. 16; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 66, illus. pp. 66–67; Ken

Scarlett 1998, pp. 86–87; Anne Kirker 1999, p. 75; Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 13; William McAloon 2004

Coll: 1989 State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. 1989/0277 a–d)

Monaro is the grasslands, partly grass, partly scrub, partly cut-down trees, which stretch all the way down to the sea. Somebody said, 'What on earth did you call it after a car for?' But it is the country down that way. It was very labour-intensive, those were little pieces of wood. First you have to cut up the wood, and that takes time. Placing it takes time — you have to place it on the floor, because nothing's going to balance. Then you've got to glue it and keep it in the right order, and this takes time — three weeks or something. At one stage I had two panels together and they looked very good. But in the end I needed four (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 66; also 1999 Auckland AG).

I started off 'Monaro' — it's in four panels — I started off because I had a lot of those small oblong pieces left over from something I was working on, and they were too good to waste, which is a common cry you hear with me, and so I put them in a row on the floor you see, and then I thought I was putting them in straight lines, and then I found that the idiosyncrasies of the cut made them go crooked, so quick as a flash you emphasise the crookedness, and I remember doing two, and no that's not enough, three, and then four. I remember thinking I need a great patch of yellow grass in the middle, so I kept the ones with the black writing aside ... You get more knowing as you go along you see but you hitch onto some experience or some knowledge of the place that you've had and you make it more so (1997 Feneley).

The first panels were made in late 1988, using the Toolmac bandsaw bought in November 1988. R.G. made five panels but in the end settled for four; the fifth became *Outback* 1988. She experimented with the positioning of the panels: studio photographs from September 1989 show the work with the panel on the far right inverted. See also Ben Gascoigne (2000, p. 13) concerning the construction of *Monaro*. The title is taken from the name of a region in southern New South Wales stretching from the area near Michelago south of Canberra to the Snowy River National Park in north-eastern Victoria. *Monaro* 1988–89 picks up the patterns of open and vegetated areas along the Monaro Highway linking Canberra with Cooma, which R.G. travelled on frequently on her country excursions.

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth



357

357 Plain living 1989

Weathered, painted and sawn or split wood from soft-drink boxes, on weathered plywood; 109.5 × 100 cm

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #9, \$6500

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 12, illus. p. 10; Michael Reid *Weekend Australian* 10–11 Aug 2002, p. 36; Felicity Fenner in *The Macquarie Group Collection: The land and its psyche* NewSouth Publishing, Sydney, 2012, p. 82, illus. p. 83

Coll: 1989 private collection; 1991 The Macquarie Group Collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



358

358 Tesserae 1 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 46.5 × 36 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'TESSERAE 1 / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1989'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #20, \$1800; 24 Nov 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 22; Aug 1998 Christie's S., lot 1100; 2005 *Contrasts within the Charles Sturt University Art Collection* Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery, NSW (illus. p. 18)

Lit: Women's Art Register *Bulletin* no. 25, Melbourne, May 1996, cover illus.

Coll: 1989 private collection; 1998 The Charles Sturt University Art Collection, Wagga Wagga NSW

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



359

359 Tesserae 2 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 46.5 × 36 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'TESSERAE 2 / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1989'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #21, \$1800; 24 Apr 2013 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 22 (illus. p. 55)

Lit: Lynette Fern 1989, illus. p. 183

Coll: 1989 private collection

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



360

360 Tesserae 3 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 46.5 × 36 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'TESSERAE 3 / 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #22, \$1800

Coll: 1989 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

361 Tesserae 4 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 46.5 × 36 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'TESSERAE 4 / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1989'

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #23, \$1800; 9–26 Sep 1993 *Contemporary Australian Paintings: Works from the Allen, Allen & Hemsley Collection* Melbourne International Festival, Victorian Arts Centre (illus. p. 26); 1994 *Circle, Line, Square* Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW, then touring (ref. p. 18, illus. p. 30)

Coll: 1989 Allen, Allen & Hemsley

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



361

362 Tesserae 5 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; abt 46.5 × 36 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l.: 'TESSERAE 5 / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1989'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1989 private collection (gift of the artist)

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne from author's archive



362

363 Tesserae 6 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; abt 46.5 × 36 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'TESSERAE 6 / 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1990 private collection (gift of the artist)

Photograph by Nat Williams from author's archive



363

364 The marriage feast 1988–89

Painted, stencilled sawn and split wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 117 × 106 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'THE MARRIAGE FEAST / 1989 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[21] (ref. p. 62)

Coll: 1989 private collection; 2010 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2010.559)

This was the first work made with wood that had been sawn with the Toolmac 14 bandsaw purchased on 21 November 1988. Titled *The marriage feast* because it was a wedding present.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



364



365

365 Wheat belt 1989

Painted and stencilled sawn or split wood from soft-drink boxes, on weathered plywood; four panels: 94 × 91.5 cm, 94 × 67.1 cm, 94 × 66 cm, 94 × 52 cm, overall 94 × 276.6 cm

Exh: 1989 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #2, \$14,000; 16 May – 13 Sep 2009 *Reinventions: Sculpture + Assemblage* NGA

Lit: John McDonald *SMH* 11 Nov 1989, p. 88; Lynette Fern 1989, illus. pp. 180–181; *Foundation annual report 2005–06* NGA, 2006, illus. pp. 28 (detail), 55

Coll: 1990 private collection; 2005 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2005.951.A–D), gift of Pauline Hunter

RG wrote to Bruce Pollard, probably in 1989 (the letter is dated 'Sunday'), saying, *Enclosed is a photograph of Wheat Belt which I think you will agree has that very desirable quality 'rigour'. It actually measures 37 inches × 110 inches.*

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

1990

366 Across town 1990

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 40.5 × 75 cm

Exh: possibly exhibited at Arts d'Australie, Paris

Coll: 1996 private collection (Paris)

Across town 1990 was the source of the image used for the screenprint *Across town* 1991 made for *Art Monthly Australia*.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

367 Apricot letters 1990

Sawn painted plywood from hand-lettered roadside advertising sign on backing board; 112 × 80 cm; signed and dated verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne 1990'

Exh: 21 Jul – 19 Aug 1990 *Canbrart: A Selection of Works by Artists from the ACT and District* NGA (at the ANU Drill Hall Gallery,

Canberra); 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #17, \$5500; 2–3 Sep 2003 Deutscher-Menzies M., lot 27 (illus. p. 41, back cover); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #17] (illus. p. 63)

Lit: Tracey Aubin *The Bulletin* 30 Apr 1991, pp. 110–111; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 4 (detail), 113; Philippa Kelly *Art Monthly Australia* no. 126, Dec 1999, p. 4, illus. front cover

Coll: 1991 private collection

I found a lot of things that had script on them ... I made ... one out of apricot letters. It was very beautiful and I got it from a bewildered man who was selling fruit at the side of the road, and I said: 'I'll buy that from you ...' And he said 'Oh, you can have that'. And of course, I sold it for a lot of money, which I didn't tell him, but it was in a ditch. Certainly you've got to shuffle it round, it doesn't just work any old time. That would take a lot of shuffling around to make it read for me (22 Jul 1999 at Auckland AG; also 1998 NGA).

RG told Philippa Kelly and Tracey Aubin that the original sign said PEACHES FOR SALE and that she found it at the Fyshwick Markets in Canberra. So the title embodies both the idea of fruit and the colour of the paint (see Philippa Kelly *Art Monthly Australia* no. 126, Dec 1999, p. 4).

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

368 Beach house 1990

Sawn or split painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 102 × 89 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'BEACH HOUSE / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990'

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #9, \$5500; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #149] (illus. inside cover (detail), p. 91, ref. pp. 21, 135); 11 May 2016 Sotheby's S. (illus. p. 59, back cover)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 12

Coll: 1990 private collection

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

369 Blue streak 1990

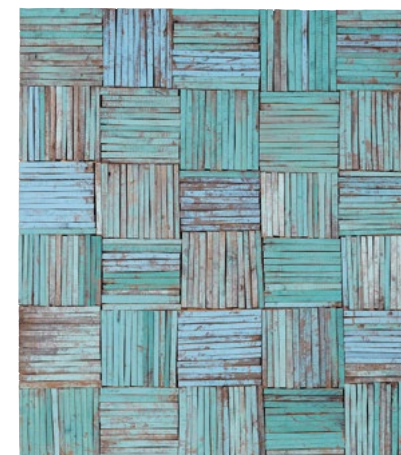
Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 203 × 168 cm

Exh: 1990 *The Readymade Boomerang* AGNSW, #170 (ref. p. 475); 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #24, \$18,000

Lit: *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie Berlin and QAG, 1992 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 18 (installation view, incorrectly captioned *All that glisters* 1989); Mary Eagle 2007, pp. 198–205 (for discussion on the retroreflective works)

Coll: c. 1991 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



368



369

370 **Checkerboard** 1990

Sawn plywood reflective road signs, plywood backing; 123 × 102 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'CHECKERBOARD / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990'

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #20, \$7000; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[18] (dated 1996) (ref. p. 45, illus. p. 76); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[50] (illus. p. 111, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 87; Gregory O'Brien 'Of magpie song' 2004, illus. p. 24; *Art News New Zealand* vol. 24, no. 1, 2004, p. 37; Robyn McLean *Dominion Post* [Wellington, NZ], 20 Feb 2004, illus. p. B9 (as *Checkers*); *Herald Sun* 19 Dec 2008, illus. p. 75; *Canberra Times Panorama* 27 Dec 2008, illus. p. 17

Coll: 1991 private collection

Images of *Checkerboard* were widely used by the NGV to publicise its Rosalie Gascoigne retrospective exhibition in 2008–09.

Image by Brenton McGeachie, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

371 **Close owly** (from *The Readymade Boomerang* suite) 1990

Colour photo-screenprint: collaborators: Basil Hall and Gary Shinfield, printed by Basil Hall and Gary Shinfield, Studio One Printmaking Workshop, Canberra; sheet 104 × 70 cm; image 75.8 × 48.3 cm (mean); Edition A of 60 prints numbered 1/60 – 60/60 in portfolios of 20 prints by 20 artists. Inscribed in pencil l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne '90' and editioned lower left corner, all in pencil; Edition B, 45 copies numbered I/XLV – XLV/XLV signed and dated l.r. 'Gascoigne '90' and editioned l.l. and with Studio One chop mark. Plus several artist's proofs

Exh: 1990 *The Readymade Boomerang Print Portfolio: 8th Biennale of Sydney*; 12 Nov 1990 – 3 Feb 1991 *The Readymade Boomerang Print Portfolio* QAG (illus.); 17–27 Jan 1991 *The Readymade Boomerang* Daadgalerie Kurfurstenstrabe 58, Berlin (illus.); 18 Apr 1994 Christie's M., lot 310; 28 Apr 1997 Sotheby's M., lot 80; 2001 *Colin McCahon: A Time for Messages* NGV; 9 May 2001 Deutscher-Menzies M., lot 191; 8 Sep 2002 Sotheby's S., lot 110; 7 Dec 2004 Webb's Auckland NZ, lot 76; 19 Sep 2006 Shapiro S., lot 260; 6 Jun 2017 Mossgreen M., lot 74; 22 May – 30 Jul 2017 *Aviary* CMAG (illus.)

Lit: *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie Berlin and QAG, 1992 (exh. cat.), pp. 73, 90, 94, 101 (artist's statement), illus. cover; Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 202; *Reflections* CMAG Nov/Dec 2008, illus. p. 69; Betty Churcher and Lucy Quinn

Treasures of Canberra Halstead Press, Canberra, 2013, p. 105, illus. p. 104 (as *Close Owly*); Basil Hall 2015, pp. 20–21, illus. p. 21

Coll: artist's personal collection (ed. 39/60), then Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. 2004/0082), gift of Ben Gascoigne; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (ed. 20/60); Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (ed. 15/60) (Acc no. 1990.429.007); Queensland University of Technology Art Collection, Brisbane (ed. XXXI/XLV) (Acc no. 1991.034); National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (ed. 19/60) (Acc no. P7.7–1991), purchased through the Art Foundation of Victoria with the assistance of Mr Philip Russell; Griffith University Art Collection, Brisbane; Canberra Museum and Art Gallery (studio proof acquired 2000)

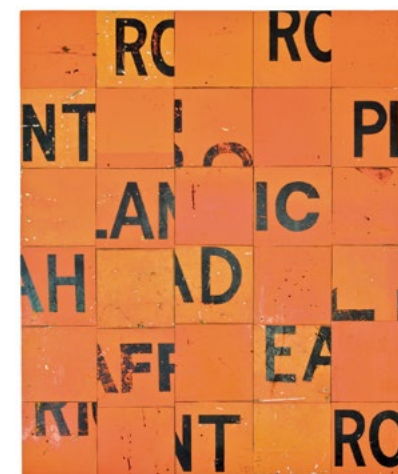
Listed in *The Readymade Boomerang* portfolio catalogue as '3 Colour silkscreen', although according to RG seven colours were involved.

I used Close Owly [1988] as the subject for my print in René Block's portfolio so that my contribution to the *Readymade Boomerang* would be homogenous. The four large works that hung in the Biennale of Sydney are made of retro-reflective road signs — a material in which I am currently interested.

The main thrust of my art is in constructions and installations made from material discarded in the country around Canberra. I have never before supervised the making of a print from my work.

Studio 1 — the Canberra print workshop supplied all the expertise and provided a seven-colour screenprint. They tried to capture some of the retro-reflective aspect of the piece and to reproduce scratching and markings. I made side-line decisions (RG artist's statement in *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie Berlin and QAG, 1992, p. 101).

Basil Hall recalled in 2015: 'Rosalie often said to me that she "wasn't a mark-maker", but agreed to oversee printmaker, Gary Shinfield, and me as we attempted to reproduce the moment a car's headlights hit one of her retroreflective sign works. I photographed an existing piece for the key screen and we printed numerous semi-transparent yellow-gold layers of rich oil-based screen ink under it to get it to shine. *Close Owly* is, of course, an original screenprint, but after one of her sculptural works, signed by Rosalie herself and with the Studio One chop mark in the bottom corner to acknowledge the printer. As many of the other prints in the Biennale portfolio were offset reproductions, I was pretty happy with our glossy gold piece. It was made in a time-honoured collaborative way and it smelt of real ink, but in days gone by it would have said: *Sculpsit and Imperavit* Basil Hall & Gary Shinfield after Rosalie Gascoigne' (Basil Hall 2015, pp. 20–21, illus. p. 21).



370



371



372

Close owl was printed at the ANU School of Art because Studio One didn't have any screenprinting equipment (Basil Hall to Megan Hinton 13 Sep 2016). *The Readymade Boomerang Portfolio* was for sale during the biennale for \$8000 and afterwards for \$10,000.

The Readymade Boomerang Portfolio

Edition A signed 'René Block'. René Block, editor

1. Dennis Adams (b. 1948 Des Moines, Iowa, USA); 2. Barbara Bloom (b. 1951 Los Angeles, USA); 3. KP Bremmer (b. 1938 Berlin, Germany); 4. Janet Burchill (b. 1955 Melbourne, Australia); 5. John Cage (b. Los Angeles, USA); 6. Tony Cragg (b. 1949 Liverpool, UK); 7. Rosalie Gascoigne (b. 1917 Auckland, NZ); 8. Richard Hamilton (b. 1922 London, UK); 9. Ilya Kabakov (b. 1933 Dnjepropetrowsk, USSR); 10. Allan Kaprow (b. 1927 Atlantic City, USA); 11. Bjorn Norgaard (b. 1947 Copenhagen, Denmark); 12. Nam June Paik (b. 1932, Seoul, South Korea); 13. Sarkis (b. 1938 Istanbul, Turkey); 14. Julian Schnabel (b. 1951 New York, USA); 15. Rosemary Trockel (b. 1952 Schwerte, Germany); 16. Peter Tyn dal (b. 1951 Australia); 17. Ken Unsworth (b. 1931 Melbourne, Australia); 18. Ben Vautier (b. 1935 Naples, Italy); 19. Boyd Webb (b. 1947 New Zealand); 20. Lawrence Weiner (b. 1942 New York, USA); 21. Emmet Williams (b. 1925 Greenville, USA).

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

373 Dandelion 1990

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs on backing board; 99 × 91 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990 / DANDELION'; also inscribed with a black square

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #8 (as *Dandelions*), \$5500; 15 Mar 2004 *The WMC Collection* Sotheby's M., lot 19 (illus. p. 13); 14 Oct – 7 Nov 2009 *Spring Exhibition* Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland NZ, #27 (illus.); 25 Mar 2010 *Art+Object*, Auckland NZ, lot 48 (ref. pp. 2, 50, illus. p. 51)

Coll: c. 1991 Western Mining Corporation Collection

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

374 Denim 1990

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, plywood backing; 104 × 81 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #1, \$5500

Coll: 1991 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

375 Far view 1990

Sawn stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; three panels, overall 89 × 221 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #16, \$10,000; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #16] (ref. pp. 13, 14, illus. pp. 40–41); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #51] (illus. pp. 88–89, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Christopher Heathcote *The Age* 1 May 1991; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 96

Coll: 1991 private collection

The title harks back to RG's early years on Mount Stromlo: *All I had was this mountaintop that was covered with pine trees. I used to spend time looking at the far view right across the paddock and think surely Rangitoto is somewhere, somewhere, and it wasn't, it never was, and so you had to look at everything very hard* (1999 Auckland AG). Rangitoto Island is a volcanic island in the Hauraki Gulf near Auckland, NZ.

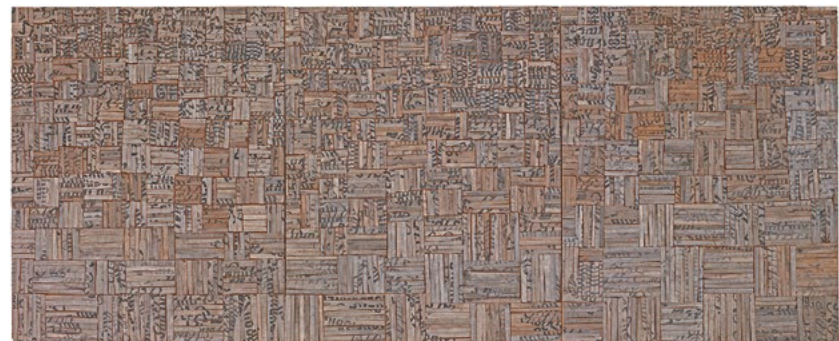
Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



373



374



375

372 Conundrum 1989–90

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 182.5 × 152.5 cm; signed, dated 1990 and titled verso

Exh: 21 Jul – 19 Aug 1990 *Canbrart: A Selection of Works by Artists from the ACT and District* NGA (at the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra) (dated 1990); 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #22 (dated 1990), \$15,000; Sep 1998 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #28 (dated 1990) (illus.)

Lit: *Australian House and Garden* Mar 2002, illus. pp. 42, 44 (installation views); *SMH Essential Home* 23 Aug 2007, illus. pp. 24–25 (installation views)

Coll: 1995 Michael Buxton Collection; 2018 The University of Melbourne Art Collection, gift of Michael and Janet Buxton, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program.

Regarding dating, *Conundrum* was photographed in late November 1989 with *Lampit* 1989 but without the left-hand strip (i.e. with LY at top and S at bottom), which was added later.

Image courtesy of Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney

376 [Homage with Lysaght lady] c. 1990

Galvanised iron sheet stencilled with Lysaght's logo, weathered wood and nails from soft-drink box; 27.5 × 24.2 × 4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2003 *Home Sweet Home* NGA and touring; 5 Apr 2007 *Gifts to the MCA Collection* MCA (as *Untitled 1992 [Lysaght lady]*), collaborative work with Narelle Jubelin)

Coll: 1992 private collection; 2006 Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Acc no. 2006.38A–B), gift of Peter Fay

The Lysaght logo is dated 1955. RG displayed [*Homage with Lysaght lady*] in the sitting room at Anstey Street, Pearce, where it is visible in a portrait of the artist published in *The Bulletin*, 30 April 1991, p. 110. RG subsequently gave the work to Peter Fay and it became one half of a collaboration with Narelle Jubelin. In 2006 Jubelin provided the following account of the collaboration via email to the MCA: 'As for the work with Rosalie it was a commission after a visit ... we had talked over the Queen Victoria "scrap" which at that point was part of material she had collected and deposited in her studio. And if I remember correctly was the brand mark for a flour mill (my father has an identical remnant so I'd recognised the source) ... A little later, Peter Fay asked Rosalie to work the fragment up as a piece while at the same time I sewed the metal-like rendition of the Queen Victoria portraits from the negative spaces of the Jubilee Fountain, based on photographs Eric Riddler had sent me ... so in a sense the collaboration, if you could call it that, was really a discursive response, a trace of partial conversations.' The Museum of Contemporary Art has catalogued Jubelin's piece as follows:

Narelle Jubelin

Jubilee Fountain, 1992 (after Eric Riddler 1991). Rendition produced Sydney 1992, Tramp art frame purchased New York 1990 signed and dated and titled verso 28.5 × 35.5 cm (overall)

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

377 Lantern 1990

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 102.6 × 77 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'LANTERN / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990'

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #3, \$5250; 3 Apr 2001 Christie's M., lot 69 (illus. p. 73); 24 Oct – 29 Nov 2009 *Treasures from TarraWarra Museum of Art* Ellenbrook Gallery, WA (illus.)

Lit: *Weekend Australian* 13–14 Oct 2001, illus. pp. 1, 35; Maudie Palmer 2008, illus. p. 184; TarraWarra Museum of Art *Introductory booklet* (2nd edition) 2009, p. 50, illus. p. 53



376



377

Coll: 1991 private collection; 2001 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC (Acc no. 2002.030), gift of Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC

The back also carries an inscription 'R-R: CMS 635.1'.

Image by John Brash, courtesy of TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC

378 Loose leaf 1990

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 151 × 138 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'LOOSE LEAF / 1990 / Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: 1991 *Diverse Visions* QAG (ref. p. 14); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[23] (dated 1991) (illus. pp. 15 (studio view), 16, ref. p. 63)

Lit: Kate Sands 2001, p. 44; Milton Cameron 2012, p. 140

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Image by Matt Kelso, courtesy of the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra



378

379 Marmalade 1989–90

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 152 × 14 cm

Exh: 1990 *The Readymade Boomerang* AGNSW, #169 (dated 1990, on Masonite) (ref. p. 475)

Lit: *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie Berlin and QAG, 1992 (exh. cat.), p. 18 (incorrectly captioned *All that glisters* 1989)

Coll: 1990 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Dated on the basis of studio photographs taken in late November 1989. The right-hand edge of *Marmalade* is visible in a stack of yellow works next to *Lamplit* 1989. *Marmalade* is inverted and has an additional strip of material along the top edge, which was later removed. The removed panel was used to make *Vestiges* 1990.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



379

380 **Night watch** 1990

Sawn reflective plywood road signs, on plywood backing; 112 × 110 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'NIGHT WATCH / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990'

Exh: 21 Jul – 19 Aug 1990 *Canbrart: A Selection of Works by Artists from the ACT and District* NGA (at the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[52] (illus. p. 112, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Kate Davidson and Michael Desmond 1996, p. 14 (studio view); Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 33 (studio view); Ray Edgar 2009, illus. p. 39

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The title alludes to Rembrandt's painting *The night watch* 1642, in the collection of the Amsterdam Museum but displayed in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. RG probably knew the painting from reproductions but never visited Amsterdam so never saw it.

Image by Brenton McGeachie, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



380

381 **Old gold** 1990

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 131 × 88 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #21, \$7000

Coll: 1993 private collection

The work was first photographed c. March–April 1990, but by August 1990 RG had made three changes: she replaced the third panel from the top on the left-hand side (to read AD), the top central panel (to read CLO) and the second panel from the top on the right-hand side (to read ED). The revised work was hanging in RG's sitting room when she was filmed there in an interview with Peter Ross broadcast by the ABC on 12 August 1990 (see Bibliography).

Image courtesy of Annette Larkin Fine Art, Sydney



381

382 **Sleeper** 1990

Sawn weathered wood from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 74 × 77 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992 / SLEEPER'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #18, \$5000 (dated 1992)

Coll: 1992 The Macquarie Group Collection

Dated 1990 on the basis of March 1990 photographs.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



382

383 **Spring tides** 1990

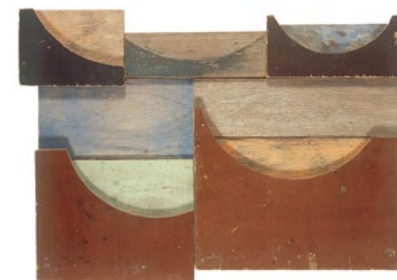
Painted wood from soft-drink boxes and sawn FSC-coated plywood formboard, on plywood backing; 58 × 82 × abt 8 cm (irreg.); signed verso

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #10, \$3750; 23 Aug – 10 Sep 2000 *A Selection of Important Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #5 (illus.)

Coll: 1991 private collection

[Probably talking about *Spring tides*]: *This was the same sort of place where I found the other mountain shapes. But these were all cut to accommodate pillars. You know when they're making a new building and they put pillars in it and they put a circle and they pour the concrete in. And this was ... so like the neap tides, the spring tides we had, in Australia, or we have anywhere at the beach. And they were different colours. It was a very sunny ... here's pale orange and blue and green up there. And this tilted thing. I used a lot of that [formboard], but there's a limit to what you can do with a piece shaped like a bay. You try and see how many things you can come up with. I see lots of full bays in those things* (1998 NGA).

Image courtesy of Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney



383

384 **Summer stack** 1990

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 91.5 × 69 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'SUMMER STACK / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990' and also inscribed '92 × 69 cm'

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #7, \$4500; 1994 *Circle, Line, Square* Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW, then touring (ref. p. 18); 16 Jun 2004 *Deutscher-Menzies S.*, lot 56 (illus. p. 73); 26 Aug 2015 *Deutscher Hackett S.*, lot 20 (ref. p. 38, illus. cover, p. 39)

Lit: Alan McCulloch, Susan McCulloch and Emily McCulloch Childs *The New McCulloch's Encyclopedia of Australian Art* Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 2006, illus. p. 453

Coll: 1991 private collection

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



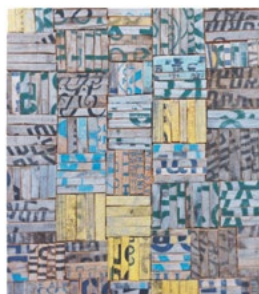
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386



387

385 Sweet lovers 1990

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 105 × 79.5 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #16, \$7000; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[53] (illus. p. 102, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 35; Janet Hawley 2012, illus. between pp. 224–225 (incorrectly captioned *Plainsong* 1988)

Coll: 1992 private collection

The title comes from a song by William Shakespeare in *As you like it*, act 5, scene 3, the last two lines of the refrain reading:

‘When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding; Sweet lovers love the spring.’

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

386 Sweet sorrow 1990

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 120 × 80 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in black: ‘SWEET SORROW 1990 / Rosalie Gascoigne’ and also inscribed ‘120 × 79 cm BR.’

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #13, \$7000; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[54] (illus. p. 102, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Lynette Fern *SMH* 20 Apr 1992; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 35; Gregory O’Brien ‘Of magpie song’ 2004, illus. p. 22; Gregory O’Brien ‘Plain air/plain song’ 2004, p. 43 (for discussion of concrete poetry); Eleanor Heartney 2009, illus. p. 68

Coll: 1992 private collection; 2006 State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. 2006/006), gift of Sue and Ian Bernadt

The title comes from William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, act 2, scene 2:

JULIET.

‘Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say — good night, till it be
morrow.’

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

387 Tesserae A 1990

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 43 × 37.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: ‘TESSERAE A / 1990 / Rosalie Gascoigne’

Exh: 21 Aug 2001 Deutscher-Menzies M., lot 18 (illus. p. 35)

Coll: 1990 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author’s archive

388 Tesserae B 1990

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 42.5 × 37.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: ‘TESSERAE B / 1990 / Rosalie Gascoigne’

Exh: 1994 *Circle, Line, Square* Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW, then touring (ref. p. 18); 28 Aug 2006 Sotheby’s S., lot 23 (illus. p. 23)

Coll: 1990 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Image courtesy of Sotheby’s Australia

389 Tesserae C 1990

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 43 × 37.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: ‘TESSERAE C / 1990 / Rosalie Gascoigne’

Exh: 19 Mar 2004 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 86 (illus. p. 121); 16 Oct 2006 Leonard Joel Fine Art M., lot 44; 1 Apr 2007 Elders Fine Art Adelaide, lot 153

Coll: 1990 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

390 Tesserae D 1990

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 43 × 37.5 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1990 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author’s archive

391 Tesserae Y 1990

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 43 × 36 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #41, \$2000

Coll: 1997 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

392 Tesserae Z 1990

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 43 × 38 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 15 Oct – 2 Nov 2002 *Abstraction II* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, #8 (illus.); 25 Aug 2008 Sotheby’s M., lot 11 (illus. p. 27)

Coll: 1990 private collection (gift of the artist)

Image courtesy of Sotheby’s Australia



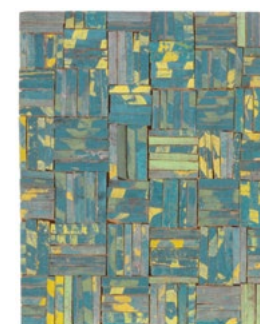
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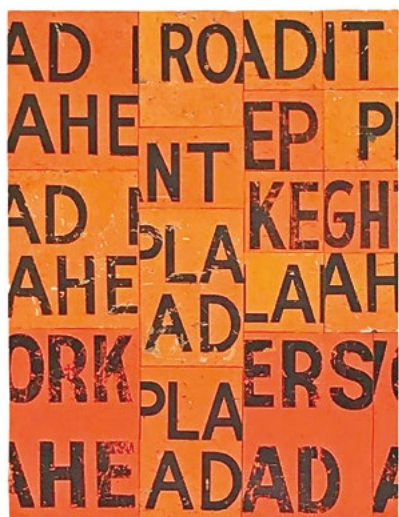
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395

393 Top brass 1990

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs and tar, on plywood backing; 142 × 141 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #23, \$10,000; 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #7, \$10,000

Coll: c. 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

394 Vestiges 1990

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood; five pieces, each abt 30 × 28 cm, overall abt 30 × 144 cm; each panel signed, dated and titled verso l.l.: 'VESTIGES / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990'; panel 5 is not dated; in addition, each panel is numbered in sequence, and the number is enclosed in a circle after the title followed by /5, as in ①/5

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #12, \$3500; 26 Aug 2014 Sothebys S., lot 61 (illus.)

Lit: Christopher Heathcote *The Age* 1 May 1991

Coll: c. 1991 private collection

The central panel of *Vestiges* was originally the bottom left corner of *Marmalade* 1989–90 before it was trimmed, and the other panels were also part of the trimmed strip (done after November 1989). The title (from the Latin *vestigium*) is further confirmation: 'A mark, trace or visible sign of something which no longer exists or is present; a piece of material evidence of this nature; something which remains after the destruction or disappearance of the main portion' (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary).

Photographs (before March 1990) show RG tried out several arrangements of the panels, varying the order and inverting some panels.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

395 Vintage 1990

Sawn plywood reflective road signs, on composition board; 131 × 101 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black: 'VINTAGE / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990' and also inscribed '131 × 101 cm'

Exh: 1991 *Diverse Visions* QAG (ref. p. 14); 1996 Roslyn Oxley9 at *Art27'96 Fair* Basel, Switzerland; 2010–12 *Spirit in the Land* McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery, Langwarrin, VIC, then touring nationally

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 88

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

This one puts a glow in the room, but it doesn't retro-reflect ... these things look different when you see them in real life (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 88).

Image from author's archive

396 Woodland 1990

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on plywood; 58 × 72.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'WOODLAND / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990'

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #6, \$3500; 16 Jun 2015 Bonhams S., lot 11 (illus. p. 27)

Coll: 1991 private collection

Image courtesy of Bonhams, Sydney



396

1991

397 Across town 1991

Colour screenprint; 30.5 × 56 cm (image size); signed in pencil l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne' [and numbered xx/99]; printed by Basil Hall and Louise Maurer, Studio One, Canberra, in an edition of 99 (plus proofs)

Exh: 11 Apr 2000 Lawsons S., lot 568; 30 Jul 2001 Phillips de Pury S., lot 81 (ref. p. 53); 20 Aug 2001 Deutscher-Menzies, lot 158 (ref. p. 160); 16 Mar 2005 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 234 (illus. p. 179); 24 May 2005 Christie's S., lot 85 (illus. p. 71); 15 Jun 2005 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 1 (illus.); 15 Mar 2006 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 312 (illus. p. 202); Dec 2006 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 5 (illus. p. 20); 26 Nov 2008 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 165 (illus.); 3 May 2009 Shapiro S., lot 12 (illus.); Nov 2009 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 160 (illus.); 16 Aug 2012 Lawson-Menzies M., lot 93 (illus. p. 52); 13 Sep 2016 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 98 (illus.)

Lit: *Art Monthly Australia* no. 38, Mar 1990, illus. (full size) front/back cover

Coll: 1993 Griffith University Art Collection, Brisbane (Acc no. 00606); 2006 University of NSW Art Collection, Sydney (ed. 16/99), presented by Mr Michael Hobbs through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program; Canberra Museum and Art Gallery (studio proof acquired 2000)

The image was taken from the 1990 work of the same title. The prints were made for *Art Monthly Australia* for sale at \$200 plus postage. RG donated the image. This was the first *Art Monthly Australia* print. *Across town* was printed at the ANU School of Art because Studio One didn't have any screenprinting equipment (13 Sep 2016 Basil Hall to Megan Hinton).

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands



397

398 ['Bird' studies] c. 1991

Synthetic polymer paint on wood and plywood panels; six panels, largest 41.2 × 28 cm (three units painted on both sides); not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.490 A-1), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Dated on the basis of similar lettering by the artist in *Cockatoos* 1991 and *Honeybunch* 1993. In 1981 RG made five panels with the word 'BIRD' on them, using cockatoo feathers glued to the board. The panels were later destroyed by the artist and are not catalogued.

Image (the largest panel) courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

showing it in Bruce Pollard's [Pinacotheca 1991] and he said: 'you've got a nerve' or something like that, 'but it is so wonderful that I think I will just put it in pride of place'. And he did, and then he put it in his back room where it stayed for a long time. To me it was linked with the personal experience of driving through the country, scrubby old paddocks, and suddenly the cockatoos go up, and they are absolutely wonderful. Strap-like white leaves — wings — all going in different directions and squawking. This is very noisy, everybody has said that who has seen it. And you can see those cockatoos. It's not that it is a picture of cockatoos, it's the feel of cockatoos, to me. And I thought I'd arrived at it. That brown is very much the brown of the grasses that grow in Canberra (1999 Auckland AG).

Image courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand



398



399

399 Bright and beautiful
1990–91

Patterned linoleum and sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 83 × 83 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #24, \$5000

Coll: dismantled

The title alludes to the popular hymn 'All things bright and beautiful', with words by Cecil Frances Alexander and first published in 1848 in her *Hymns for little children*.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

401 Firebird 1991

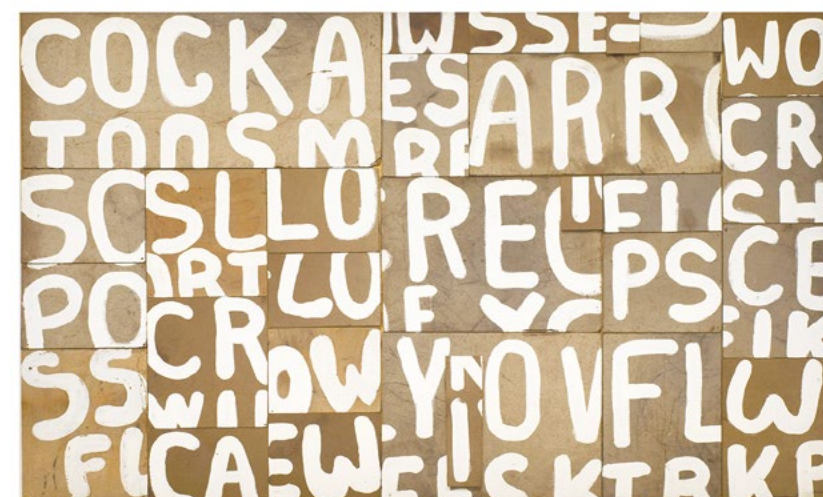
Sawn plywood reflective road signs, plywood backing; 135 × 103 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991 / FIREBIRD'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #8, \$9000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 90

Coll: 1993 Arts Victoria (Bank of Melbourne Regional Art Collection); 1997 Latrobe Regional Gallery, Bank of Melbourne Regional Art Collection through the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



400

400 Cockatoos 1991

Sawn, painted hand-lettered hardwood roadside notice (with painted additions by RG), on backing board, 123.5 × 205 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen and ink: 'COCKATOOS / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991'

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #14 (dated 1990), \$14,000; 1999 *Toi Toi Toi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #66 (illus. p. 85); 23 Nov 2002 – 16 Feb 2003 *Birds: Arrivals and Departures* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #19 (dated 1990) (illus. p. 20)

Lit: *Art New Zealand* no. 92, spring 1999, illus. p. 48; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 42 (for extended discussion on birds in RG's art)

Coll: 1999 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, NZ (Acc no. 1999/29), gift of the Patrons of the Gallery

I found a piece — now there is a double 'S' over in that [lower left] corner, and it was that sort of 'S' and that sort of way of the paintbrush with that 'S', and that brown background, which is whatever it is. I found some more of the background, and I had a paintbrush, so I made some letters. I remember

402 First fruits 1991

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on weathered painted plywood; two panels, one superimposed on the other, 79.1 × 52.1 cm

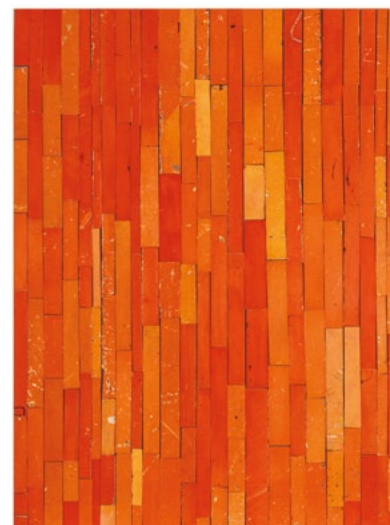
Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #5, \$3500; 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #27, \$4500

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 58 (with illus.); Diana Simmonds *The Bulletin* 26 May 1998, illus. pp. 72–73

Coll: 1992 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Acc no. 1992.344.13), anonymous gift

That's green linoleum. Look at an apricot tree ... green leaves and apricots at various stages of ripening. That, to me, was straight out of nature. Leafage (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 58). RG's comment might be a recollection of the espaliered apricot tree at the family house in Deakin in the 1960s. BG also planted several fruit trees at the Pearce house (but no apricot trees). The larger rear board was first used as the background for the right-hand panel in *A rose is a rose* 1986/88.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



401



402

403 [Four linoleum tesserae]

c. 1990–91

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on plywood blocks (varying thickness), on backing board; four panels, each 20.5 × 15 × 1.5 cm, overall 20.5 × 65.5 × 1.5 cm; not inscribed by artist, but the panels are inscribed verso as follows: panel 1: '(RG Studio 27) / Panel 1 of 4', panel 2: '(RG Studio 28) / Panel 2 of 4', panel 3: '(RG Studio 25) / Panel 3 of 4', panel 4: '(RG Studio 26) / Panel 4 of 4 / Certificate that this work is by Rosalie Gascoigne / Martin Gascoigne / 20 April 2004'

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #23 (as *Untitled (four linoleum tesserae)* 1994–95), \$55,000

Lit: Patricia Anderson *The Australian* 11 May 2004, p. 14

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2004 private collection

The dating is based on two lines of evidence. RG employed the idea of tesserae from 1989 to 1991, making small panels using tiles of wood offcuts and then adopted the approach for her linoleum offcuts. There is also 1991 photography: two panels of [Four linoleum tesserae] were photographed together by (March) 1991, showing panel 2 inverted and panel 4.

The four panels were grouped for exhibition in 2004, on the basis of the grouping in *View of the garden* c. 1991/95.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

404 *Fragmentation [I]* 1991

Sawn painted wood and nails from soft-drink boxes on plywood backing; 121.9 × 83.6 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #12, \$7500; 18 May – 9 Jun 2013 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Newcastle Art Gallery

Coll: 1992 private collection

The title *Fragmentation* 1991 was also used for a different work exhibited at Pinacotheca in 1991 and subsequently retitled *Fragmentation [III]* 1991.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

405 *Fragmentation [II]* 1991

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs and torn or cut patterned linoleum on FSC-coated plywood formboard; abt 117 × 74 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #4 (as *Fragmentation*), \$5500

Coll: dismantled

Titled *Fragmentation [III]* to distinguish it from another 1991 work with the same title. The backing panel is in the same style and materials as *Letting go* 1991. The centre panel of *Fragmentation [III]* was subsequently incorporated, upside down, in *Southerly buster* 1995.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

406 *Full stretch* 1991

Sawn plywood reflective road signs on backing board; 115.5 × 114 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #15, \$7000; 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #11, \$7500

Lit: Lynette Fern *SMH* 20 Apr 1992; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 89; Diana Simmonds *The Bulletin* 26 May 1998, illus. pp. 72–73

Coll: 1992 private collection

I made quite a series of those as I found retroreflective red signs ... It's a very dreary little sign actually. It says 'Men at work'. And there's a horrible little man with a round head and he's digging a nasty little pile of dirt. But the colours faded beautifully. You see that light orange piece, it's just the same colour only faded. And if you could disguise it and make it come alive as a pattern, then you could work it. But it's never been the sign I would have reached for first. I made quite a number of those (1998 NGA; similar remarks in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 89).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

407 *Green piece* 1990–91

Torn or cut patterned linoleum and sawn stencilled wood from soft-drink crates, on plywood backing; 105 × 92 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'GREEN PIECE / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991'

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #19, \$6000; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[55] (illus. p. 79, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Tracey Aubin *The Bulletin* 30 Apr 1991, pp. 110–111; Christopher Heathcote *The Age* 1 May 1991

Coll: 1991 private collection

The zigzag arrangement of wood from soft-drink boxes was constructed by July 1990 and initially mounted on a backing board. This first version can be seen in a filmed interview in which Peter Ross spoke with RG for the ABC's 'Review' program shown on 12 August 1990 (the interview probably took place in late July 1990). The linoleum was added later. RG first used the zigzag pattern in *Reconstruction* 1980–81.

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



403



404



405



406



407

408 Lake 1991

Sawn weathered plywood (some shaped or painted); seven panels, 29.6 × 64.7 cm, 55.6 × 70.5 cm, 49.5 × 91.6 cm, 53.7 × 60 cm, 45.3 × 64.5 cm, 32 × 81.9 cm, 53.2 × 64.4 cm, overall 56 × 654 cm; panel 1 signed and dated verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991' and each panel titled verso l.l.: 'LAKE'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #4, \$20,000; 1992 *Conversions 4: Rosalie Gascoigne* Canberra Contemporary Art Space, #7 (dated 1992); 1993 *Clemenger Triennial* NGV, #3 (dated 1992); 1996 Wollongong City Art Gallery (long-term loan); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #17 (ref. p. 14, illus. pp. 42–43); 12 Dec 1998 – 11 Apr 1999 *Suddenly the Lake, Weereewa: Lake George* CMAG; 6–31 Mar 2007 *Blue Chip IX* Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, #11 (illus. pp. 16–17, ref. p. 74); 18 Mar 2008 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 34 (ref. pp. 76–79 with illus. twice); 23 Jun 2011 Menzies S., lot 42 (ref. pp. 88–91 with illus.)

Lit: Lynette Fern *SMH* 20 Apr 1992; Nick Waterlow 1992, illus. (installation view); Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 27 Jun 1992; *Art and Australia* vol. 43, no. 3, 2006, p. 451 (installation view in Pat Corrigan's house)

Coll: 1992 private collection; 2011 Garangula Gallery, NSW

Lake 1991 is one of several large works inspired by the landscape surrounding Lake George, about 50 km north of Canberra on the Federal Highway to Sydney. *Lake 1991* was made soon after RG's exhibition at Pinacotheca in May 1991. She described its construction: *I remember that I had an empty studio because I just had a show and I had all this lovely space and I had all these curved boards that were made from form board. I think builders had been pouring concrete, in round shapes and all these things. I'd spent quite a lot of time down on the end of Lake George that is near Bungendore and which is a bird sanctuary. And you see the lake going like that and the levels of the lake, very level lake country ... But to me, to be by the lake and to see that — which you don't see of course because it isn't like that, the lake, but it gives me the feeling of the lake. And there's nothing else there, but levels. And the curve. And nature says it all without saying too much. And this is what I've tried to latch on to. It's what I feel and doing it in the way I can. How else can I do it? I can't paint. Well I can't ...* (1998 Desmond; similar remarks in Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 84; 1998 NGA and 1999 Auckland AG)

Images courtesy of Menzies Art Brands



408



408 (Detail)



409

409 Lambing 1991

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on painted plywood, composition board backing; 120.2 × 191.2 cm; signed and dated verso l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #6, \$12,000; 1993–94 *Identities: Art from Australia* Taipei (ref. pp. 73, 159); 2015 *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW (illus. pp. 13, 30)

Lit: Lynette Fern *SMH* 20 Apr 1992

Coll: 1994 Wollongong Art Gallery, NSW (Acc no. 1994.074), purchased with assistance from the Office of the NSW Minister for the Arts

I was very keen on sheep and sometimes it was shearing time in the Canberra countryside and there were sheep everywhere. In the hills, in the back of the truck, in the shearing yard, they were everywhere, and so I did sheep (1999 Auckland AG).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

410 Leadlight 1991

Torn or cut patterned linoleum (three styles), painted wood from soft-drink boxes, sawn wooden retroreflective road sign; 110 × 29 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #11, \$3500

Coll: 1991 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



410



411



411 (LG 1)



411 (LG 2)



411 (LG 3)



411 (LG 4)



411 (LG 5)



411 (LG 6)



411 (LG 7)



411 (LG 8)

411 Letting go 1991

Installation of torn or cut patterned linoleum on weathered/recycled plywood and FSC-coated formboard, some of which is painted, all on plywood backing (except LG 2, which is on composition board); eight units, installed dimensions variable; not signed, each unit inscribed as noted below:

1. five panels (1(a)–(e)), overall 123 × 245 cm: 1(a) 123 × 51 cm, inscribed verso centre: 'LETTING GO / 1991'; 1(b) 123 × 41.5 cm, inscribed verso u.c.: '1991 LETTING GO'; 1(c) 123 × 55.5 cm, inscribed verso u.c.: '1991 / LETTING GO'; 1(d) 123 × 49 cm, inscribed verso u.l.: '1991 LETTING GO'; 1(e) 123 × 48 cm, inscribed verso u.c.: '1991 LETTING GO'

2. one panel (three bands), 115.5 × 94 cm, composition board backing, inscribed verso u.l.: '1991 LETTING GO'

3. two panels, hung approx. 7 cm apart: 3(a) 122 × 43.5 cm and 3(b) 122 × 51 cm, both inscribed verso u.c.: '1991 / LETTING GO'

4. one panel (three bands), 144 × 61 cm, inscribed verso u.c.: 'LETTING GO / 1991'

5. three panels (5(a)–(c)), overall 109 × 224.5 cm: 5(a) 109 × 62 cm, inscribed verso u.c.: 'LEFT (FACING) 1991 LETTING GO'; 5(b) 109 × 96.2 cm, inscribed verso u.c.: 'CENTRE / 1991 / LETTING GO'; 5(c) 109 × 66.3 cm inscribed verso u.c.: 'RIGHT FACING / 1991 LETTING GO', with arrows to indicate how they joined

6. one panel (two unequal bands), 147.5 × 83.5 cm, inscribed verso u.c.: '1991 / LETTING GO'

7. one panel (two unequal bands), 191.5 × 114 cm, inscribed verso u.c.: '1991 / LETTING GO'

8. one panel, 162 × 73 cm, inscribed top centre verso: 'LETTING GO / 1991'

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #18 (as a 15-piece installation), \$45,000; 1996 *ACAF 5* Melbourne

Lit: John McDonald *SMH* 12 Oct 1996, p. 14S; Deborah Hart 'The art of giving' *Artonview* [NGA magazine] no. 92, summer 2017, pp. 18–21

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent); 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.938.1.A–E), gift of Hester Gascoigne in honour of her mother Rosalie Gascoigne, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

Letting Go. The trees let go their leaves. Obedient to season they hold up their arms and let go. The air is full of falling leaf — a compliant quiet downward trend. A parable? (20 Aug 1996 RG fax to Paul Greenaway to use when exhibiting *Letting go* at *ACAF 5*).

As with other multi-panel works, RG arranged the panels to best suit the location. The numbers given to the *Letting go* panels do not indicate a display sequence; rather, they were BG's means of identifying each panel in his records. When *Letting go* was exhibited at Pinacotheca in 1991 it was installed on the four walls of one of the central galleries, in the order (clockwise, from the left as you entered): 8 / 6, 2 / 7 door 5 / 4, 1 / 3. In LG1 the panels were hung (a), (c), (b) (inverted), (d) (inverted) and (e), and in LG5 panel 5(c) was inverted (as in studio images). The order of hanging at *ACAF 5* is not recorded, though from an image of part of the display they appear to have been hung in a line: LG6, LG1 (a, b, c, d, e), LG2, either LG4 or LG8.

Letting go incorporates linoleum with seven different patterns. The panels were photographed in the studio in March 1991 and also sometime later (but before they were exhibited at Pinacotheca). The later images show that RG had added several pieces of linoleum to the top right corner of the centre panel of LG5 (later rotating the two large new pieces 180 degrees). She also changed the sequence of LG5, swapping the side panels. Aluminium strip was added to the backs of the panels in October 1996, after *ACAF 5* and several years after RG inscribed them. On 18 October 1996 Paul Greenaway wrote to RG that 'the aluminium extrusion is here ready to be attached to the panels'. Many of the strips obscure parts of the inscriptions.

Regarding RG's remark that the title suggests a parable, the idea of letting go, of putting the past behind to move forward, and the liberating effects of doing so, is a recurring theme in RG's life and thought. It was at the heart of advice she gave young artists, based on her own experience, of putting others to indicate how they joined. Regarding RG's remark that the title suggests a parable, the idea of letting go, of putting the past behind to move forward, and the liberating effects of doing so, is a recurring theme in RG's life and thought. It was at the heart of advice she gave young artists, based on her own experience, of putting others to indicate how they joined. *You have to forget all those things others told you about yourself, projecting their lives and expectations on to yours. But you have to do it if you are to be honest with yourself and in your art. And it can take you a long time* (1997 Ross; 1990 Ross and others). Rosalie was drawing on her own experience and the expectations of her youth when she said: *I could never have been an artist in New Zealand* (1997 Ross).

'Letting go' was a lesson RG learnt after returning home from New Zealand in the summer of 1948–49, realising that her life was now firmly rooted in Australia, on Mount Stromlo, and that she had better come to terms with that, and in the process she found that she was free to do what she wanted. It was something that she took from ikebana, when she realised its rules were meant to be broken and that she had the freedom to do what she wanted. And it is what she found in her art practice: *this art thing lets you free to be yourself, regardless of what anybody thinks, and I think that's probably what I needed to be*

because you get rather sick of being always a little bit out of step (1978 Lindsay). All of which suggests the autobiographical nature of the thought behind the title of *Letting go* 1991. See also the notes on *But mostly air* 1994–95 regarding her sense of personal freedom in the Australian landscape, and the many references to freedom in the Biographical Note in this catalogue, beginning with her childhood trips to Waiheke.

Images courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

412 Meadow-sweet 1991

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on sawn plywood reflective road signs, on backing board; 83.1 × 80.7 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l. in black: 'MEADOW-SWEET / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #17 (as *Meadow-Sweet*), \$5500

Coll: c. 1992 private collection

Meadow-sweet (1530). A roseaceous plant, *Filipendula ulmaria*, 'common in moist meadows and along the banks of streams, growing with erect, rigid stems to a height of about two feet [60 cm], with dense heads of creamy white and highly fragrant flowers' (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

413 Nuggets 1991

Sawn plywood reflective road signs on FSC-coated plywood formboard; five panels: 1. 20.1 × 22 × 2.5 cm (variable), 2. 23 × 28 × 4 cm (variable), 3. 21.7 × 21 × 2.5 cm (variable), 4. 23.2 × 15.1 × 2.4 cm (variable), 5. 22.3 × 20 × 2.5 cm (variable), overall 23 × 148 cm; each panel signed, dated, titled and numbered verso in black:

Panel 1. centre: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991 / NUGGETS / 1 / (FIVE PARTS)'

Panel 2. l.r.: 'NUGGETS / 1991 2'

Panel 3. l.c.: 'NUGGETS / 1991 3', also inscribed u.c. in chalk: '3'

Panel 4. l.c.: 'NUGGETS 4 / 1991', also inscribed centre in chalk: 'IV'

Panel 5. l.c.: 'NUGGETS / 1991 5'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #29, \$4000; 20 Jun 2018 Bonhams S., lot 106 (illus. pp. 120–121)

Coll: 1992 private collection

Photography from c. 1992 shows RG tried the five panels mounted on a recycled timber panel, but she decided against this and exhibited the panels without any backing.

Image courtesy of Bonhams, Sydney

414 Regimental colours A 1990–91

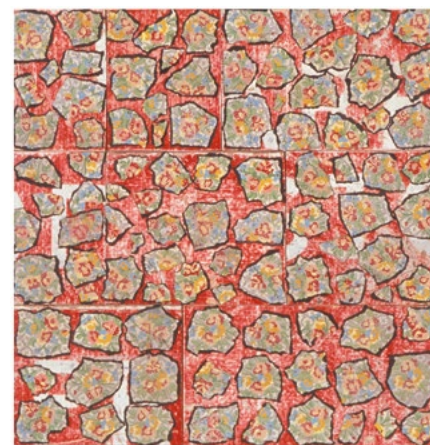
Sawn, painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 51 × 34 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1990–91 / REGIMENTAL COLOURS / (A)'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #36, \$2200

Coll: 1992 private collection; 1995 New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale, NSW, gift of Michael Ball

For the companion piece see *Regimental colours B* 1990–92.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



412

415 [Single linoleum tesserae] c. 1990–91

Torn or cut patterned linoleum, weathered plywood (varying thickness), on backing board; 20.6 × 15 × 1.5; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Re dating see [*Four linoleum tesserae*] c. 1990–91.

Image from author's archive



413

416 Standard 1990–91

Sawn stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 46.5 × 110.5 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #26, \$5000

Coll: 1994 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



414



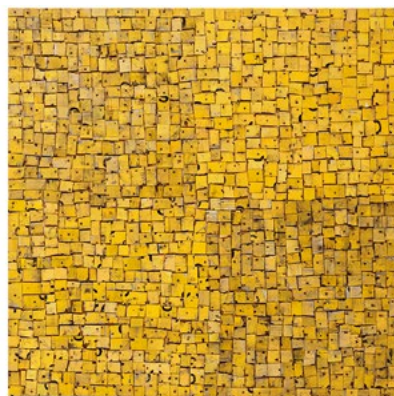
415



416



417

417 **Sunflowers** 1991

Sawn painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; diptych, each panel 122 × 122 cm; overall 122 × 259 cm (incl. 15 cm separation); left panel signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991 / SUNFLOWERS (2 PARTS) / A'; right panel signed, dated, titled and inscribed verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991 / SUNFLOWERS B / 6 INCH SEPARATION'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #5, \$16,000; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #18] (ref. pp. 12, 13, 15, 16, illus. p. 44); 26 Jun 2013 *The Grundy Collection* Bonhams S., lot 51 (illus. pp. 170–171)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34, illus. p. 68; Hannah Fink 'Sunflowers' in Bonhams *Important Australian art from the collection of Reg Grundy AC OBE and Joy Chambers-Grundy* Sydney, 2013, pp. 168–171

Coll: 1992 The Grundy Collection

It was having a lot of that yellow stuff which I still find beautiful, because yellow is a classical colour to me and I really like it. And I had seen fields of sunflowers here and they were very tight packed. I love that tight-packed, prolific look that nature has (1997 Feneley). I was reminded of Van Gogh's Sunflowers when I did it. And I remember sorting out the dark ones with the light ones. This takes a lot of time (1998 NGA). The little black dots are nail holes. At the end of a box you get into the decayed element, they're broken off and hardened in the weather. I like things crammed up, like a pomegranate's seeds, thick, thick ... (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 68).

Image by Jenni Carter, courtesy of John Cruthers



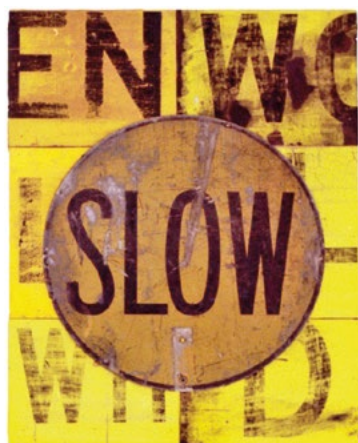
418



419



420



421

418 **Survey** 1991

Torn or cut patterned linoleum on plywood, mounted on weathered plywood formboard; 58 × 96 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991 / SURVEY'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #22, \$5000

Coll: 1992 Artbank, Sydney (Acc no. 7707)

Image courtesy of Artbank, Sydney

419 **Target** 1991

Sawn plywood reflective road signs, on backing board; 83 × 73 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #2, \$4500

Coll: dismantled

Dismantled (after February 1994) and recycled: four panels with the black lettering scrubbed back were used in *Top End* 1994–95.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

420 **Tesserae W** 1991

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 43.5 × 36 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'TESSERAE W / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #40, \$2000; 27 Nov 2001 Christie's M., lot 21 (illus. p. 31)

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image from author's archive

421 **Testudo** 1991

Metal reflective road sign, sawn reflective plywood road signs, on backing board; abt 73 × 60 cm

Exh: 1991 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #13, \$3500

Coll: 1992 private collection

Testudo is Latin for tortoise.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

422 **Through road** 1990–91

Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs, composition board backing; 51.2 × 59.1 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'THROUGH ROAD / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #32, \$3500 (dated 1991); 17 Feb – 19 Mar 1995 *Waste Not Want Not* Lopdell House Gallery, Titirangi NZ; 1999 *Toi Toi Toi* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ (only) (illus. in exhibition brochure but not catalogued)

Coll: 1992 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, NZ (Acc no. 1992/10)

A larger version of *Through road* can be seen on the studio wall in a filmed interview in which Peter Ross spoke with RG in late July 1990 for the ABC's *Review* program shown on 12 August 1990. A strip about 15 cm deep was later removed from the top of the work, before it was exhibited.

Image courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand



422

423 [Two linoleum tesserae]

c. 1990–91

Torn or cut printed linoleum, weathered plywood (varying thickness), on backing board; two panels: left 22.7 × 16.6 × 1.5 cm, right 21.4 × 16.4 × 1.5 cm; not inscribed by artist, but both panels inscribed verso: 'Certificate that this / work is by Rosalie / Gascoigne. / Martin Gascoigne / 19 April 2004'

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #24 (as *Untitled (two linoleum tesserae)* 1994–95), \$30,000

Lit: Patricia Anderson *The Australian* 11 May 2004, p. 14

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Re dating: three panels very similar to those used in [*Two linoleum tesserae*] were photographed by March 1991. These two panels were grouped for exhibition in 2004, on the basis of the grouping in *View of the garden* c. 1991/95.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



423



424



425

426 **Banner 1** 1992

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs and patterned linoleum on plywood, on composition board backing; 79.8 × 55.3 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in fibre-tipped pen: 'BANNER 1 / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #3, \$3600; 2009 *Cubism and Australian Art* Heide MOMA (ref. with illus. p. 233)

Coll: 1994 Benalla Art Gallery, VIC, gift of the artist

Image courtesy of Benalla Art Gallery, VIC



426

427 **Banner 2** 1992

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs and patterned linoleum on plywood, on composition board backing; 80 × 55 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #4, \$3600

Coll: 1994 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



427

428 **Beaten track** 1992

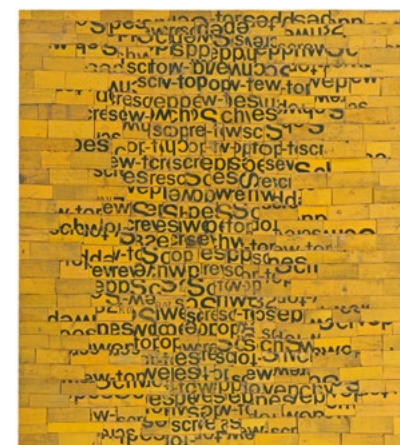
Sawn, painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood, 122.5 × 110 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992 / BEATEN TRACK'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #10, \$8500; 1999 *Tōi Tōi Tōi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #67 (illus. p. 84); 24 May 2005 Christie's S., lot 85 (illus. p. 37)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 69

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



428

1992

424 **Amber** 1992

Metal reflective road sign and sawn retroreflective plywood road signs, plywood backing; 62 × 54.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'AMBER / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #8, \$3000; 10 Dec 2008 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 26 (illus. p. 41); 24 Mar 2011 Menzies S., lot 47 (illus. p. 89); 26 Mar 2015 Menzies S., lot 50 (illus. p. 117)

Coll: 1993 private collection

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

425 **Apothecary** 1992

Sawn stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 107.3 × 84.1 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #14, \$7000; 18 Sep – 13 Oct 2001 *Spring Exhibition* Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland NZ, #48 (illus. p. 39); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[20] (illus. pp. 44 (detail), 66); 6 Apr 2017 *Art+Object*, Auckland NZ, lot 96

Lit: Lynette Fern *SMH* 20 Apr 1992

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney



429



430



431

429 **Clouds I** 1992

Weathered painted composition board on FSC-coated plywood formboard; five panels, hung separately: 124 × 67 cm, 123.7 × 62.3 cm, 124.3 × 78.5 cm, 123.3 × 64.5 cm, 123.7 × 89.8 cm, overall 124 × 390 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #1, \$23,000; 1992 *Conversions 4: Rosalie Gascoigne* Canberra Contemporary Art Space, #4 (ref., illus.); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[19] (illus. pp. 46–47); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[21] (illus. p. 67); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[56] (illus. p. 82, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 27 Jun 1992; *The Art Gallery of New South Wales collections* AGNSW 1994, illus. p. 237; *Look* magazine [Art Gallery Society of NSW] Nov 1997, illus. p. 13; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 52–53; Felicity Fenner 1999, illus. pp. 88–89; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, pp. 38–39

Coll: 1992 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (Acc no. 123.1992.a–e), purchased with the Rudy Komon Memorial Fund

This is what people line their kitchens with — you can break it and some of the pieces come out very nice and dirty. I use a lot of this stuff. It [Clouds I, II, III] was meant to show as a triptych; the middle one [Clouds II] was rather a Rothko (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 52).

This one the New South Wales Gallery has got. I was very interested in using what was there and ... I suppose in a way it might have been a bit of a reflection from Colin McCahon. He's very good on the dark on the white, on the white on the dark. And that gave enough contrast. I remember, too, he said once, to paint is to contrast. I'm a great devotee of Colin McCahon and whether it's beginning to show I don't know. But I can look at it as sky in the summer and feel that feel. I mean the clouds obviously don't look like that. But if it gives you memories of all those things you've seen that's winning I think (1998 NGA; similar remarks in 1999 Auckland AG).

Clouds I was conceived of and initially displayed as one of three elements in an installation (along with *Clouds II* and *Clouds III*) at the 1992 Roslyn Oxley9 show (see Solo Exhibitions for image). They were displayed as a group in the angle of a corner, with *Clouds I* / corner / *Clouds II* and *Clouds III* and priced individually as well as a single work (institution price for *Clouds I, II, III* \$40,000). The three works were also shown together in 1992 in the installation art series *Conversions* at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space. The AGNSW Trust awarded RG the 1992/93 John McCaughey Prize for *Clouds I*. The prize was awarded for the best picture of the year painted by an Australian artist and hung either temporarily or permanently in the AGNSW.

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

430 **Clouds II** 1992

Weathered painted composition board on FSC-coated plywood formboard; 137 × 100.5 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #2, \$9000; 1992 *Conversions 4: Rosalie Gascoigne* Canberra Contemporary Art Space, #5 (illus.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[57] (illus. p. 83, ref. p. 135)

Lit: Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 27 Jun 1992; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 53

Coll: 1998 private collection

I use a lot of this stuff. It was meant to show as a triptych; the middle one [Clouds II] was rather a Rothko (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 52).

See notes on *Clouds I* 1992.

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

431 **Clouds III** 1992

Weathered painted composition board on FSC-coated plywood formboard; four panels (a–d), 75.4 × 362.2 cm (installation); not inscribed

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #3, \$16,000; 1992 *Conversions 4: Rosalie Gascoigne* Canberra Contemporary Art Space, #6 (ref., illus.); 1992 Roslyn Oxley9 at ACAF 3 Melbourne; 1993 *Clemenger Triennial* NGV (as *Clouds 111*); 28 Sep – 6 Dec 1998 *The Infinite Space: Women, Minimalism, and the Sculptural Object* Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne (ref. pp. 19–20 (with illus.), 32); 2001 *Colin McCahon: A Time for Messages* NGV (illus.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[58] (illus. p. 82, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 27 Jun 1992; Hannah Fink 1997, p. 207; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 52–53; Bernard Smith *Two centuries of Australian art* Thames & Hudson with NGV, 2003, illus. p. 155

Coll: 1993 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (Acc no. A8.a–d-1993)

See notes on *Clouds I* 1992.

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

432 **Cow pasture** 1992

Weathered, painted corrugated iron sheet and patterned linoleum on composition board; 171.5 × 137.4 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. on stretcher in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992 / COW PASTURE'

Exh: 1993 *Clemenger Triennial* NGV (illus.); 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[20] (illus. p. 45); 14 May – 18 Jul 1999 *People, Places, Pastimes: Challenging Perspectives of Ipswich* Ipswich Arts Gallery, QLD (ref., illus. p. 59); 2000 *Federation: Australian Art and Society 1901–2001* NGA and travelling nationally until 2002 (illus. p. 66)

Lit: Robert Rooney *Weekend Australian* 10 Apr 1993, p. 13; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 62; Hannah Fink 'The regional modernism of Rosalie Gascoigne' 2000; Denis McLean *The prickly pair: Making nationalism in Australia and New Zealand* University of Otago Press, Dunedin, NZ, 2003 (illus. cover)

Coll: 1993 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 93.1476) (through Pinacotheca Gallery)

This was a very good piece of tin, I wrenched it off a cow byre. And that's linoleum which I found. It looked like cow pasture — cow parsley and things. A bit of manure there too. If you go through cow paddocks watching where you tread, and there's a lot of flowers around, that's exactly what I see there (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 62).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



432

433 **Fool's gold** 1992

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on composition board; 158.7 × 161 × 5.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso on support l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Fool's gold / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992'

Exh: 1993 *Clemenger Triennial* NGV; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[21] (ref. p. 15, illus. p. 48); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[59] (illus. p. 101, ref. p. 136). Note: listed in the catalogue for *12th Biennale of Sydney* 2000 but not exhibited

Lit: Hannah Fink 1997, p. 208, illus. p. 206; Joanna Mendelssohn *The Australian* 21 Nov 1997; John McDonald *SMH Spectrum Arts* 29 Nov 1997, p. 16; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 78

Coll: 1995 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 95.719) (through Pinacotheca Gallery)

This one is all different yellows, and if the light shines on it — as in any normal building the light will shine on it one day — it reflects different yellows, different oranges, and what's more, it puts a lovely shadow on the floor, which is totally accidental, but who am I to discard accidents? Not me, not me (1997 Ross).



433

Regarding the title, fool's gold — or pyrite — is a mineral with a superficial resemblance to gold on account of its metallic lustre and pale brass-yellow hue.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

434 **Gaudy night** 1992

Painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, torn or cut printed linoleum, sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, plywood backing; 79.5 × 76 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #20, \$5000; 2000 *My Favourite Gold Coast* City Art Gallery, QLD, #18

Coll: 1992 private collection

A gaudy day (or night) was a time of grand feasting and entertainment, and used (17th century) in connection with an annual college dinner (Oxford English Dictionary). The term is related to the Latin *gaudeamus* indicating college students' merrymaking (and the title of a 1989 work by RG). *Gaudy night* was also the title of a mystery novel of the same name by Dorothy Sayers, published in 1935, and the tenth in her popular series featuring Lord Peter Wimsey as the aristocratic sleuth.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



434

435 **High density** 1992

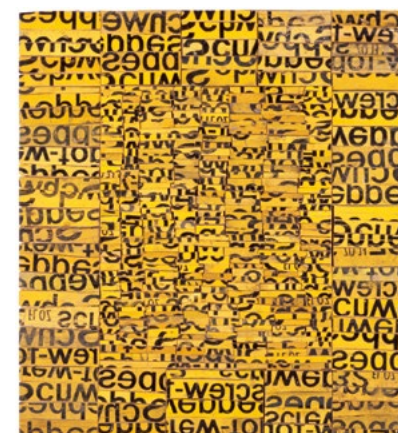
Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 79 × 72.2 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #25, \$5000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 107

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



435

436 **High water mark** 1992

Sawn painted wood (mostly from soft-drink boxes) and sawn FSC-coated plywood formboard, on plywood; 68 × 61.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992 / HIGH WATER MARK'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #21, \$5000; 23 Aug 2011 Sotheby's S., lot 29 (illus.)

Coll: 1992 private collection

[I was] brought up in Auckland, with sea both sides of you. You've no idea how you miss the sea when you go into another environment. I would always see these round bays and the sea, and the colours of the tides and everything, and to me it was very reminiscent of those. And as for the writing up there,



436



437

I thought it needed the writing, the piece. It needed the brown strips but you don't sort of analyze what they are (1999 Auckland AG).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

437 [Homage with Ingres's Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière] c. 1984–92

Paper or card (image of Ingres's *Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière* 1806) with multilayered wooden mount of sawn painted and stencilled wood, some from soft-drink boxes, and FSC-coated plywood formboard; 36 × 31 × 6.6 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[13] (as *Untitled* c. 1984) (ref. p. 62)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis of 1984 and 1992 evidence. RG was clearly taken with the Ingres image and used it several times, first in *Summerhouse* 1984. The image used in the current work is a cut-down version of those used in the 1984 and other works. The first photograph with [*Homage with Ingres's Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière*] dates from February–March 1992. A photograph from July 1996 shows the work incorporated as part of a larger piece, subsequently dismantled. The wooden mount includes wood from dismantled soft-drink boxes and builder's formboard.

Ingres's painting *Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière* is in the Louvre museum, Paris.

Image from author's archive

438 Honey bee 1 1992

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 39.4 × 30.8 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #33, \$2000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34, illus. p. 68

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

439 Honey bee 2 1992

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 39.5 × 30.5 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #34, \$2000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34, illus. p. 68

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

440 Honey bee 3 1992

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 39.5 × 30.5 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #35, \$2000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 34, illus. p. 68

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

441 Ledger 1992

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 80.7 × 43 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992 / LEDGER'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #30, \$4000; 26 Oct 1998 Phillips de Pury S., lot 106; 3–24 Jun 2000 *Annual Collector's Exhibition* Lauraine Diggins Fine Art, Melbourne, #63 (illus.); 15 Mar 2017 *The Gould Collection* Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 18 (illus. p. 69, back cover)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 34; Kelly Gellatly 2008, illus. p. 20

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

442 [Linoleum study (chart)] c. 1992

Torn or cut patterned linoleum and sawn stencilled plywood, plywood backing; 40.5 × 42.5 × 2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[25] (as *Untitled* c. 1992) (ref. p. 63); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #22 (as *Untitled (chart)* 1992–93), \$55,000

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis of its similarity to *Pursuit* 1992. The stencilled plywood may be from discarded tea chests.

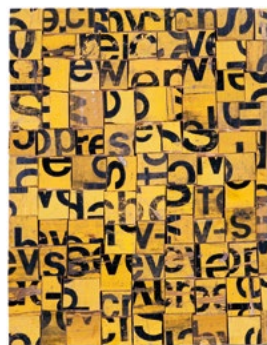
Image from author's archive



438



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443 Love apples 1992

Sawn plywood reflective road signs on plywood; 128.3 × 106.6 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #9, \$9000; 1999 *Toi Toi Toi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #68 (illus. p. 76); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[60] (illus. p. 111, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 52

Coll: 1994 private collection

Regarding the title: *It's like the skin of taut tomatoes. They're called love apples in France* (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 91; similar comments in 1999 Auckland AG). Images of *Love apples* were used by Objects Gallery to publicise RG's 2000 biennale exhibit there.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

444 May morning 1992

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 81 × 66.6 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #23, \$5000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 35, illus. p. 34 (shown turned, on its left side)

Coll: 1992 private collection

The title, *May morning*, comes from a poem by the American poet Denise Levertov, 'The may mornings'. It was RG's favourite poem by Levertov, whom Rosemary Dobson brought to visit RG in 1981. Shortly afterwards Levertov wrote her poem 'Two artists', the first part of which was about RG. Both poems appear in Levertov's collection *Candles in Babylon* 1982 (see Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 34–35 and notes on *Balance* 1984).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

445 Maze 1992

Torn or cut patterned linoleum, sawn reflective plywood road signs; 82 × 73 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #21, \$4500; 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #24, \$7500; 1994 *Circle, Line, Square* Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW, then touring (ref. p. 18)

Lit: Ewen McDonald 1994, illus. p. 67

Coll: 1997 private collection (United States of America)

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

446 Midsummer 1992

Torn or cut patterned linoleum, sawn plywood road signs, plywood backing; 68.5 × 61 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #20, \$3500; 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #27, \$7000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 59

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

447 Port of call 1992

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood and FSC-coated plywood formboard, plywood backing; 70 × 46.9 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #31, \$4000; 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #27, \$3000

Lit: Mary Eagle 2000, illus. p. 22

Coll: 1999 private collection

The stencilled wood may be from an old tea chest.

Image courtesy of the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra

448 Pursuit 1992

Torn or cut patterned linoleum, painted and stencilled plywood, coated Masonite, plywood backing; diptych, each panel 61.5 × 44.5 cm; each panel signed, dated and titled verso (respectively): 'PURSUIT 1 / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992' and 'PURSUIT 2 / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #22, \$4250; 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #28 (as *Pursuit 1 and Pursuit 2*, priced as one lot at \$7000); 25 Jun 2002 Christie's M., lot 108 (as *Pursuit 1 and Pursuit 2*) (illus. p. 101)

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



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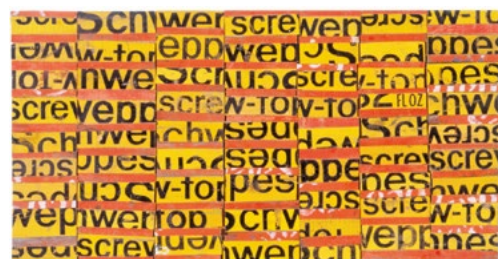




449



451



450



452



453



454

449 **Red** 1992

Reflective metal and sawn plywood
retroreflective road signs, plywood backing;
61.5 × 54.5 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca,
Melbourne, #7, \$3000

Coll: 1997 private collection

I use a lot of those STOP signs and GO signs; they're made of tin. And that was the only pucey pink one I had ever found. I found that on a dump at Collector. I was absolutely fascinated because it had that clove pink in it. And the yellow of course will shine. It reads quite nicely against the wall and I called it Red, because I thought well, I'm going to confuse the witness and you're going to call it Red because it says STOP and they are all going to think it should be called Pink or something. You know, little games you have ... But it's very hard actually naming things. It's very hard naming a name you haven't chosen before (1998 NGA).

Image courtesy of Shapiro, Sydney

450 **Red rag** 1992

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from
soft-drink boxes, plywood backing;
40.5 × 78.5 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9,
Sydney, #28, \$4000

Coll: 1995 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,
Sydney

451 **Regimental colours B**
1990–92

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-
drink boxes, on plywood backing; 51 × 34 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9,
Sydney, #37, \$2000

Coll: 1992 private collection

The companion piece is *Regimental colours A*
1990–91.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,
Sydney

452 **Rose pink** 1992

Torn or cut patterned linoleum, sawn reflective
plywood road signs, plywood backing; 83 ×
81.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l.:
'ROSE PINK / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca,
Melbourne, #19, \$4800; 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne*
Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #23, \$8000; 2011
Laverty 2 Newcastle Art Gallery; 5 Apr 2017
The Laverty Collection Part III Deutscher and
Hackett S., lot 19 (illus. pp. 66–67)

Lit: Christopher Heathcote *The Age* 12 May
1993; Anne Loxley *SMH* 15 Apr 1994, p. 19;
Bonhams *The Laverty Collection* Sydney, 2013,
illus. p. 86 (installation view)

Coll: Aug 1998 The Laverty Collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,
Sydney

453 **Rose red city 5** 1992

Weathered painted and cut corrugated
galvanised iron sheet on weathered plywood;
85 × 198.8 cm; signed, dated and titled verso
(at right angle to top): 'ROSE RED CITY /
Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992' and inscribed u.c. ©

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca,
Melbourne, #13, \$9500; 1 Dec 2011 – 4 Feb
2012 *Group Show* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney;
2015 *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional
Art Gallery, NSW (illus. pp. 15, 30)

Coll: 1995 private collection; 2018 Art Gallery
of South Australia (Acc No 20185S12), gift of
an anonymous donor through the Australian
Government's Cultural Gift Program.

First exhibited as part of a suite of ten works
titled *Rose red city* 1991–93 (q.v.), which was
later split up. *Now* [corrugated iron] is a thing
that is very dear to my heart and it's very Australian
... I want to produce the [corrugated iron] as
an elegant material, the same as the columns in
Corinthian Athens. It is elegant material in itself,
why make it into something else. The person who
bought that ... [has] got it in her flat in New York
or somewhere, and I like to think that Australian
corrugated iron, poor as it is, untouched as it is,
can speak to people of other nationalities. And ...
it was actually as found. You present what is there
(1999 Auckland AG).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,
Sydney

454 **September** 1992

Torn or cut painted Masonite board on painted
plywood, composition board backing; 105
× 127 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.:
'SEPTEMBER / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992'

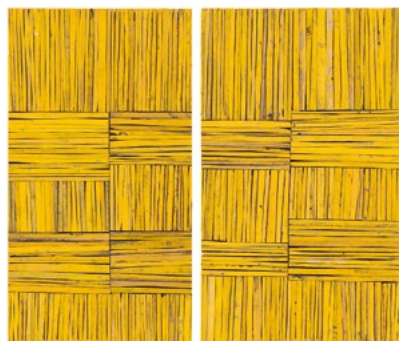
Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca,
Melbourne, #6, \$7500; 2000 *From the studio*
ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[24]
(illus. p. 55, ref. p. 63)

Lit: Christopher Heathcote *The Age* 12 May
1993; *Canberra Times Panorama* 16 Sep 2000,
illus. p. 11; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists'
2008, p. 42 (with illus.)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private
collection (by descent)

RG displayed *September* 1992 in various rooms
at Anstey Street, Pearce; it was in her bedroom
in 1999. The vertical shape in the lower
right recalls a similar shape in Ken Whisson's
And what should I do in Illyria?. On her
interest in Ken Whisson, see p. 61 and Martin
Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 42.

Image courtesy of the ANU Drill Hall Gallery,
Canberra



455

455 **Stooks** 1991–92

Sawn or split painted wood from soft-drink crates, on backing board; diptych, each panel 61 × 119 cm; both panels signed, dated and titled verso in pen: left panel 'STOOKS I Rosalie Gascoigne 1991–92', right panel 'STOOKS II Rosalie Gascoigne 1991–92'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #25, \$3000; 8 Sep – 2 Oct 2010 *Spring Exhibition* Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland NZ, #37 (illus.); 31 Aug 2011 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 29 (illus. p. 71)

Coll: 1993 private collection

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



456

456 **Sun silk** 1992

Sawn, stencilled wood from soft-drink crates on plywood; 40 × 30.1 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #39, \$2000

Coll: 1995 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



457

457 **Text** 1992

Sawn, stencilled wood from soft-drink crates on plywood; 40.2 × 29.9 cm

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #38, \$2000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 96

Coll: 1992 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



458

458 **[Three studies: linoleum on red]** c. 1992

Torn and cut patterned linoleum on sawn plywood road sign, composition board backing; (a) 20.5 × 19.2 cm, (b) 18.7 × 19 cm; (c) 20.5 × 20.9 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.479), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Dated on the basis that very similar squares of red road sign covered with torn linoleum were used in works such as *Midsummer* 1992 and *Rose pink* 1992.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

459 **[Vase of flowers]** 1992

Patterned linoleum framed in weathered painted wood with nails; 50.7 × 34.8 cm; signed and dated verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992'

Exh: 14 Nov – 11 Dec 2003 *Abstraction III* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, #9 (as *Untitled*) (illus.); 1–22 Oct 2009 *Little Pictures* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Image from author's archive



459

460 **Wattle and daub** 1992

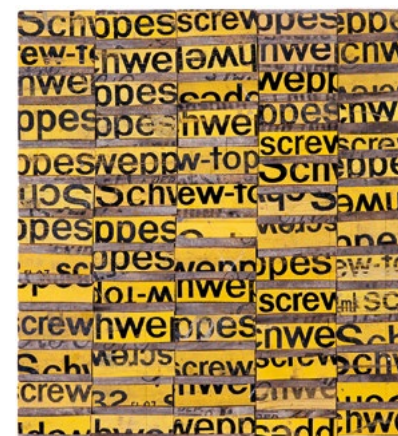
Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 71.5 × 76 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'WATTLE AND DAUB / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992'

Exh: 1992 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #19, \$5000; 8 Feb – 10 Mar 2002 *GOULDmodern* Gould Galleries, Melbourne and 16 Mar – 14 Apr 2002 Gould Galleries, Sydney, #29 (illus.)

Coll: 1995 private collection; 2012 Gus Fisher Gallery, The University of Auckland, New Zealand

Regarding the title: in building construction, wattle and daub is a method of constructing walls in which vertical wooden stakes, or wattles, are woven with horizontal twigs and branches, and then daubed with clay or mud. This method is one of the oldest known for making a weatherproof structure (source: Britannica.com).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



460

461 **[Yellow wood study #1]** c. 1991–92

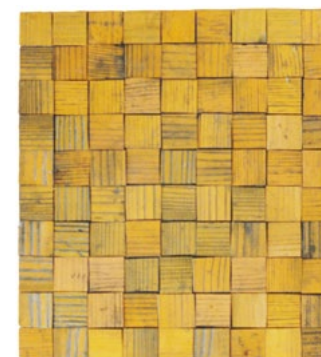
Sawn painted wood on plywood; two panels, each abt 43 × 23 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

[Yellow wood study #1] was originally constructed as a single piece (photographed c. 1992), but RG later cut it in half vertically. The wood has grooves and its original use is not clear.

Photograph (original panel) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



461



462A



462B



463



464

1993

462 **Age of innocence** 1993

Painted wood and FSC-coated plywood formboard, on composition board backing; 61.5 × 83.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / The Place 1993' and also titled verso 'Age of innocence'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #24, \$4000 (listed in some catalogues as *The Place*); 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #25, \$7500; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #122] (illus. p. 35, ref. p. 62); 28 Nov 2000 Sotheby's M., lot 19 (illus. p. 42); 2003 *GOULDmodern, GOULDtraditional, GOULDcontemporary* Gould Galleries Melbourne and Sydney, #35; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #61] (illus. p. 76, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Martin Gascoigne 2012, p. 202, illus. p. 203

Coll: 1994 private collection

I had the pieces, I had the brown piece, and it was sort of a postcard from home — 'wish you were here' and that sort of stuff. I found hills and bits of sky and bits of everything. I've forgotten what I called it. It was a time when I was busy with that stuff, form board. The builders hack off pieces and they cut them into lots of shapes. I've made quite a lot (1999 Auckland AG; similar remarks in 1997 Ross).

While the title might be drawn from Edith Wharton's 1920 novel of the same name, RG may have been thinking of her childhood visits to Waiheke Island near Auckland. The work closely resembles a photograph of Waiheke Island's coastline in the 1920s. RG described the Waiheke holidays as *one of my great influences* (1982 North). *It was the freedom that made our time at Waiheke so different from now, so different from our everyday life then ... We could do what we wished. No one could say to us yea or nay. We loved the house and the deserted beach* (see 1982 North and 1997 Frost).

Image A courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Image B of an early 20th century postcard of Waiheke Island from author's archive

463 **Airborne 1** 1993

Painted plywood (some from cable drums) and treated Masonite board on backing board; 117.4 × 42.9 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'AIRBORNE 1 / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1993'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #2, \$4000; 2009 *The Contemporary Collage: Australian Collages and Assemblage* John Buckley Gallery, Melbourne, #7; 23 Nov 2016 Sotheby's S., lot 22 (illus.)

Lit: Barbara Anderson in *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, 2004 (exh. cat.), p. 56

Coll: 1993 private collection

RG used the term 'airborne' to describe the effect she sought from art: *I always judge art by if it gives me a blow to the solar plexus ... For me it's the journey, you get airborne, you get airborne on it. I want other people to get airborne [when looking at her art]. And later, in the same interview, she spoke about why James Mollison mattered to her: I thought he dreamt the dream ... I think you need someone who can get airborne on art and see a sort of truth* (see 1997 Ross). Or as Marie Hagerly recalled: 'She'd say you have to be "airborne". Your work should breathe something larger than itself' (Mary Eagle 2000, p. 22).

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

464 **Airborne 2** 1993

Painted plywood (some from cable drums) and treated Masonite board; 116.5 × 42.5 cm

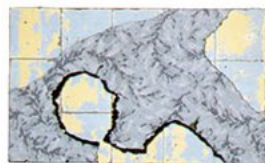
Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #26, \$4000; 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #26, \$7500

Lit: Ewen McDonald 1994, illus. p. 68

Coll: 1998 private collection

Regarding the title, see notes on *Airborne 1* 1993.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



465

465 Archipelago 1993

Torn and cut patterned linoleum on treated Masonite panels, composition board backing; five panels, each 30.5 × 50.5 cm, overall 31.5 × 342 cm; left-hand panel signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in red: 'ARCHIPELAGO / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1993' and also inscribed l.l. '⊙' and 'LEFT AS FACING WALL'; the other panels are inscribed l.l. with the numbers '⊙' to '⊙' respectively

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #5, \$5250; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #12, \$130,000

Lit: Patricia Anderson *The Australian* 11 May 2004, p. 14

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2011 private collection (by descent)

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

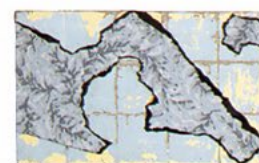
466 [Archipelago studies A & B] 1993

Torn and cut patterned linoleum on treated Masonite panels; each 30.5 × 50.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.502), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



467 Billboard 1992–93

Sawn plywood road signs, on plywood and composition board; 100 × 71.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992–1993 / "BILLBOARD"'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #22, \$8000; 1994 *Circle, Line, Square* Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW, then touring (ref. p. 18); Dec 1996 Olsen Gallery, Woollahra NSW; 7–10 Sep 2017 Olsen Gallery at *Sydney Contemporary Art Fair*

Coll: 1996 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



466

468 Bush yellow 1993

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, composition board backing; 121.5 × 91.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1993 / BUSHYELLOW'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #19, \$11,000; Sep 1998 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #27 (illus.); 23 Nov 2010 Sothebys S., lot 30 (illus.)

Lit: Anne Loxley *SMH* 15 Apr 1994, p. 19; Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 23–24 Apr 1994, p. 13

Coll: 1994 private collection

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



467

469 Cat's eye 1992–93

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood or composition board; 82.7 × 77.6 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'CAT'S EYE / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992–93'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #23, \$4750; 7 May 2000 Christie's M., lot 18 (illus. p. 27)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 35; Louise Bellamy *The Age* 8 May 2000, illus.; Peter Fish *SMH* 15 May 2000, illus. p. 35

Coll: 1993 private collection

Image from author's archive



468



469



470



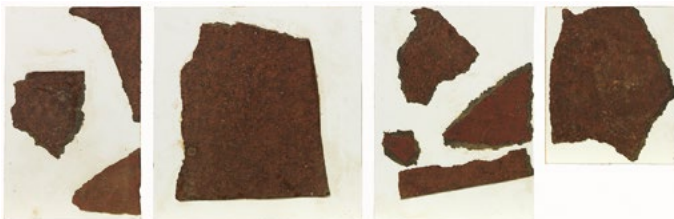
472



471



473



474

470 Float off 1993

Sawn plywood reflective road signs, on composition board; 91 × 82 cm; signed and dated verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne 1993'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #21, \$8000; 18 Sep – 13 Oct 2001 *Spring Exhibition* Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland NZ, #47 (illus. p. 38)

Coll: 1994 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

471 Flute 1993

Cut corrugated, galvanised iron sheet on weathered plywood; 100 × 54 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #11, \$7000; Dec 1994 *100 Percent Tracy* 24HR Art — Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin, #RG2

Lit: Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 23–24 Apr 1994, p. 13; *ACAF 4* Melbourne, 1994 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 96

Coll: 1997 private collection (United States of America)

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

472 Honeybunch 1993

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood road signs with additional hand-painted lettering, composition board backing; 109 × 82 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1993 / HONEYBUNCH' and inscribed verso u.c.: 'TOP'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #7, \$11,000; 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[26] (ref. p. 63); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[22] (illus. detail pp. 44, 69)

Lit: Ewen McDonald 1994, illus. p. 69; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. cover (detail), p. 109; Gregory O'Brien 'Of magpie song' 2004, illus. p. 22 (detail); Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 43 (for extended discussion on concrete poetry); Gregory O'Brien 2005, p. 74; Jason Grant 2007, illus. p. 27

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

RG did some of the calligraphy. *I'm always keen on letters ... and I rubbed back the white ones because the white was too shiny. I like that grey and white, and suddenly I called it Honeybunch. My husband was aghast. He said, 'Why are you calling that Honeybunch?' and I said, 'Well, it looks very good in the sitting room, as it does, with a bowl of flowers under it.' Honeybunch, I don't know why. Anyway, it works for me. I've got it. And I like grey and white and black. And the shapes of the letters, that 'B' in the middle is nice. You do it a lot by eye. You've got to find the stuff, and then*

by eye you've got to make it more so and more so and more so until you're pleased with it, and then nobody can argue with you, though they do of course (1999 Auckland AG).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

473 Lily pond 1993

Painted plywood and patterned linoleum on plywood, composition board backing; 114.5 × 80.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1993 / "LILY POND"'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #20, \$10,000; 1994 *Circle, Line, Square* Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW, then touring (ref. p. 18); 20 Aug 2001 *Deutscher-Menzies M.*, lot 36 (illus. p. 63)

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

474 [Masonite studies] c. 1993

Torn and cut Masonite board, on painted plywood; four pieces, 25 × 18.8 cm, 25 × 24.4 cm, 15.3 × 18.4 cm, 15.7 × 24. cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.493), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Dated on the basis of *Skewbald* 1993, for a similar use of Masonite board, but on a much larger scale.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Rose red city 1991–93

Installation of ten units (separately listed) constructed in the period 1991–93, made variously of recycled painted corrugated iron, painted hardwood (from cable drums for barbed wire) and weathered plywood. The common element was the colour — variations on a dull rich red-brown.

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #9–18

And another thing that I was doing, a 'Rose Red City', because there was a lot of the rose red tin around, and I had this rose red city half as old as time. The man who sold it [Bruce Pollard at Pinacotheca] unfortunately broke it up, it was meant to be an installation. One of the pieces [Rose red city 5 1992] was bought by [John] Kaldor's wife. And she's taken it to America, and I'm very pleased with this because it's putting corrugated iron into a class of its own. It is itself — it's elegant, it's Australian, and the vitality is just marvellous (1998 Hughes; similar remarks 1999 Auckland AG).

The title of the installation is from Dean John William Burgon's poem 'Petra' 1845 (Newdigate prize). BG remembered that the poem appeared in popular anthologies such as the *Golden treasury* when RG was at school.

It seems no work of Man's creative hand,
By labor wrought as wavering fancy
planned;
But from the rock as if by magic grown,
Eternal, silent, beautiful, alone!
Not virgin-white like that old Doric shrine,
Where erst Athena held her rites divine;
Not saintly-grey, like many a minster fane,
That crowns the hill and consecrates the
plain;
But rose-red as if the blush of dawn,
That first beheld them were not yet
withdrawn;
The hues of youth upon a brow of woe,
Which Man deemed old two thousand
years ago.
Match me such marvel save in Eastern
clime,
A rose-red city half as old as time.

Rose red city 1–10 was presented as an installation at Pinacotheca in 1993. The installation was broken up when several pieces were sold. Some pieces were later reworked and exhibited as *Frontier I–V* 1998. The title is as inscribed by RG, without the hyphen, although the poem uses the form 'rose-red city'.



475



476

475 *Rose red city* 1 1992–93

Weathered, painted galvanized iron on weathered painted plywood or FSC-coated plywood formboard; 150 × 120 cm; signed, dated 1992–1993 and titled verso

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #9, \$10,000; 20 Apr 1998 Deutscher-Menzies M., lot 210; 3 Aug 1999 Goodman's S., lot 68; 26 Nov 2002 Sotheby's M., lot 26 (illus. p. 39)

Coll: 1993 private collection

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

476 *Rose red city* 2 1993

Weathered, painted corrugated galvanized iron on weathered plywood; 120 × 52 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #10, \$4000

Coll: dismantled

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

477 *Rose red city* 3 1992–93

Weathered painted corrugated galvanized iron on weathered plywood; 150 × 84.4 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #11, \$7000

Coll: 1997 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



477

478 *Rose red city* 4 1991/93

Weathered painted hardwood boards on backing board; diptych, hung as a single piece 123.5 × 179.5 cm overall, left-hand panel 123 × 122 cm, right-hand panel (comprising the last eight columns) 123 × 61 cm; left-hand panel signed, dated and titled verso: 'ROSE RED CITY / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1991–93'; right-hand panel signed, dated and titled verso: 'ROSE RED CITY / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1993'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #12, \$12,000; c. 1995 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #47; May 2001 *Australian Art: The 60s till Now* Kaliman Gallery, Sydney (as *Rose red city*); 28 Aug 2002 Deutscher-Menzies M., lot 26 (illus. p. 45); 24 Aug 2004 Sotheby's S., lot 30 (illus. p. 47)

Lit: *Australian Art Market Report* no. 24, winter 2007, illus. cover

Coll: 1993 private collection

The hardwood comes from spools for barbed wire (see notes on *Rose red city* 7). *Rose red city* 4 was constructed as two panels but later hung as a single unit. The left-hand side has sixteen columns and the right-hand side contains eight columns.

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands



478

Rose red city 5 (see 453 *Rose red city* 5 1992)

479 *Rose red city* 6 1992–93

Weathered painted corrugated galvanized iron on weathered painted plywood or FSC-coated plywood formboard; 150 × 120 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #14, \$10,000

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



479



480



482



481



483



484

480 Rose red city 7 1993

Weathered painted hardwood boards on backing board; 85.5 × 78 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #15, \$4800; 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #16, \$30,000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 92

Coll: 1999 private collection

This was my Rose Red City, half as old as time ... what's the name of the city? Petra. It's got a sort of presence when you see it ... It's a good red. That's very hard wood, it comes off those things that farmers put barbed wire around to mend the fences (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 92). The same wood was used in *Rose red city 4*.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

481 Rose red city 8 1993

Weathered painted corrugated galvanised iron on weathered plywood; 116 × 120 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #16, \$7500

Coll: dismantled

RG reworked *Rose red city 8* in 1998. The reworked piece was exhibited as *Frontier V* 1998 (q.v.).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

482 Rose red city 9 1993

Weathered painted corrugated galvanised iron on weathered painted plywood or FSC-coated formboard; 108 × 75 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #17, \$5500

Coll: dismantled

RG reworked *Rose red city 9* in 1998. The reworked piece was exhibited as *Frontier IV* 1998 (q.v.).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

483 Rose red city 10 1993

Weathered painted corrugated galvanised iron on weathered plywood; 77 × 110 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #18, \$5500

Coll: dismantled

Rose red city 10 was dismantled and reworked in 1998, and the result exhibited in 1998 as *Frontier II* 1998 (q.v.).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Sheep weather alert 1992–93

A series of eight works (see separate listings) displayed as a group when shown in 1993 at Pinacotheca; see also *Lambing* 1991 for an earlier, related work

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #28–35

Somebody gave me a lot of that lino. I couldn't stand the inferior red and green on it, which in theory were the colours, but the black and grey were good, so I tore it by hand. It turned out in a way like sheep shapes, if you saw a mass of them. 'Sheep weather alert' is what they say on the weather report. It's a good name. It meant you jolly well get your sheep or you're going to lose a lot in the cold — it's a bitter winter climate here. This is a misted-over one [referring to Sheep weather alert 5]: they're washed over, and it reads like shapes looming in the mist. When you have shearing time round Canberra, the yards are full of sheep, the trucks are full of sheep, the hills are full of shorn sheep — sheep, sheep, sheep — you're just surrounded by it. That was what I was after (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 60).

The misting effect, achieved with a wash of white paint, was also used in *Sheep weather alert 1*. After the works were exhibited in Melbourne in 1993 RG reworked or dismantled most of them, including SWA 2, 4 and 8. Either SWA 3 or SWA 6 was stripped of its linoleum and used as the backing board for an abandoned work in the *Frontier* 1998 series. A remnant of SWA 4 (most of the lower right panel) was stolen from RG's house, auctioned at the *1st Annual Christmas Auction* Goodmans S., 5 Dec 2000 (as lot 397 *Abstract* undated 46 × 40 cm), and later exhibited as *Sheep weather alert IV* c. 1990 in *Modern Australian Painting 3–26 May 2001* at Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne. The piece was eventually recovered by the artist's estate in 2003 (and the thief was successfully prosecuted).

484 Sheep weather alert 1 1992–93

Torn patterned linoleum, paint and weathered plywood; two panels, overall 70 × 120 cm; left panel signed, dated and titled verso l.c.: 'SHEEP WEATHER ALERT / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992–1993' and inscribed with a '⓪' and an arrow pointing to the right edge; right panel inscribed verso with '⓪' and an arrow pointing to the top edge, and also inscribed u.r. with '⓪'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #28, \$5500

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

485 Sheep weather alert 2

1992–93

Torn patterned linoleum and weathered plywood; two panels, overall 119 × 153 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'SHEEP WEATHER ALERT / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1993' and inscribed above the title with '©'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #29, \$10,000

Coll: 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (right-hand panel only) (Acc no. 2015.470), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

RG cut the left panel up.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

486 Sheep weather alert 3

1992–93

Torn patterned linoleum and weathered plywood formboard; 71 × 118 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #30, \$5500

Coll: destroyed

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

487 Sheep weather alert 4

1992–93

Torn patterned linoleum, paint and weathered plywood; four panels in a quadrant, overall 80 × 108 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'SHEEP WEATHER ALERT / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992–1993' and inscribed above the title with '©'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #31, \$5500

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

After SWA 4 was exhibited in Melbourne, RG reworked it. She replaced the bottom right panel (4d): we know this was after the Melbourne exhibition because the discarded panel 4d bears a label on the rear 'Woollahra Art Removals, To Gascoigne'. RG added some smaller yellowish pieces of linoleum to the new panel 4d, and also to the three other panels. The discarded panel, minus the narrow strip on the right-hand side, was stolen from the house in mid-1997 and later exhibited as *Sheep weather alert IV* (see introductory remarks on the series).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

488 Sheep weather alert 5

1992–93

Torn and cut bitumen-based printed linoleum, paint and weathered plywood; two panels, overall 77.5 × 240 cm; left panel signed, dated and titled l.r.: 'SHEEP WEATHER ALERT / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992–1993' and also inscribed '5A'; right panel signed, dated and titled u.r., upside down: 'SHEEP WEATHER ALERT / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992–1993' and also inscribed '5B'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #32, \$10,000; 18 Jun 2008 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 23 (illus. p. 339); 23 Nov 2008 Mossgreen M., lot 12 (illus.); 5 May 2009 Sotheby's M., lot 212 (illus. pp. 22–23); 5 Jun – Jul 2010 *Blue Chip: The Collector's Exhibition* Niagara Galleries at Liverpool Street Gallery, Sydney; 2015 *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW (illus. pp. 17, 30, inside back cover (detail)) (exhibited incorrectly, framed); Oct–Nov 2016 *Spring 2016* Justin Miller Art, Sydney (illus.); 7–10 Sep 2017 Justin Miller Art at *Sydney Contemporary Art Fair*

Coll: c. 1993 private collection

This is a misted-over one [referring to Sheep weather alert 5]; they're washed over, and it reads like shapes looming in the mist. When you have shearing time round Canberra, the yards are full of sheep, the trucks are full of sheep, the hills are full of shorn sheep — sheep, sheep, sheep — you're just surrounded by it. That's what I was after (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 60). The placement of the signatures suggests RG changed her mind about the placement of the right-hand panel.

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands

489 Sheep weather alert 6

1992–93

Torn and cut bitumen-based printed linoleum and weathered plywood; 71 × 118 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #33, \$5500

Coll: dismantled

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

490 Sheep weather alert 7

1992–93

Torn and cut bitumen-based printed linoleum, synthetic polymer paint and weathered plywood; 78 × 89 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'SHEEP WEATHER ALERT / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992–1993' and also inscribed with '©' above the title

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #34, \$4800

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 destroyed

Destroyed in 2014 because it had severely deteriorated.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



485



486



487



488



489



490



491



492A



493



494

491 **Sheep weather alert 8** 1992–93

Torn patterned linoleum, synthetic polymer paint and weathered plywood; four units in two panels, overall 59 × 209 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'SHEEP WEATHER ALERT / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1992–1993' and also inscribed with '©'

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #35, \$7000

Coll: dismantled

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

492 **Skewbald** 1993

Installation of two wall pieces and six floor pieces with rusted enamelware, apiary boxes (some painted), torn or cut Masonite board and FSC-coated plywood formboard; dimensions variable, overall abt 152.5 × 427 × 122 cm

Exh: 1993 *Confrontations* Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW Sydney (illus. in part and with artist's statement); 1994 *Aussemblage!* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ (dated 1994) (ref.); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[23] (illus. p. 29)

Lit: Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 11–12 Sep 1993, p. 13

Coll: 1994 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, NZ (Acc no. 194/12/1) (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Artist's statement dated 1 July 1993 in 1993 *Confrontations* catalogue:

I agree with American David Smith, who wrote: 'Perception through vision is a highly accelerated response', and 'a work of art must be seen and perceived, not worded'.

'Skewbald' is the product of my perception in a world of Friesian cattle, magpies, Dalmatian dogs, Gerard Manley Hopkins' 'Glory be to God for dappled things' [see below], cowhide, and all the animals on the veldt. To understand the work, should they wish to, viewers must bring their own perception to it.

'Pied beauty' 1877

GLORY be to God for dappled things,
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow,
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout
that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls, finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced, fold, fallow
and plough,
And all trades, their gear and tackle
and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange,
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows
how?)

With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim.
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past
change;
Praise him.

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–89)
Poems 1918

RG first explored the idea of enamelware and multiple apiary boxes in a 1975 construction that filled the hallway of her house but was soon demolished (see 093B [*Study: thistle stalks*] c. 1974–75). Photographs show she tried several arrangements of the units in *Skewbald*. Most of the apiary boxes were unused, Rosalie having bought them.

Image courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand

493 **Skylight** 1993

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs and coated Masonite board on backing board; 122 × 91 cm

Exh: 1993 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca, Melbourne, #1, \$6500; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[23] (ref. pp. 15, 62, illus. p. 49.); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[62] (illus. p. 107, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Hannah Fink 1997, illus. p. 204; Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 6 Dec 1997, p. 16

Coll: 1993 private collection

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

494 **[Study with linoleum on reflective board]** 1992–93

Torn and cut printed linoleum on retroreflective road sign, plywood backing; 27 × 27 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Image from author's archive

1994

495 **Bread and butter** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on composition board; 62.5 × 50.5 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #17, \$6000

Coll: 1994 private collection

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



495



496



497

496 **Chatting up** 1994

Sawn wood (primarily from cable reels) with paint, stencilling and fibre-tipped pen inscriptions, and printed cut-out images on cardboard (Arnott's Biscuits logos), composition board backing; 35 × 29 × 7 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / "CHATTING UP"'

Exh: 2003 *Home Sweet Home* NGA and touring (illus. p. 6); 21 Mar – 8 Jun 2009 *Silently Stirring* NGA

Lit: *Artonline* [NGA newsletter] issue 121, 2009, illus.

Coll: 1994 Peter Fay (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery); 2005 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2005.843), gift of Peter Fay

More than likely the parrot cut-out was made much earlier, by c. 1982. RG kept her offcuts and spares, including her many cut-outs of logos and sporting figures.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

497 **Compound** 1994

Sawn painted wood (mostly plywood) on composition board; 102.5 × 92.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / "COMPOUND"'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #8, \$8000; 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 4 May 2016 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 44 (illus.)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 62 and back cover (detail)

Coll: 1995 private collection

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

498 **Down town** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels on composition board; 104 × 97 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #10 (as *Downtown*), \$10,000

Coll: 1996 private collection

Dated on the basis of 1994 photographs.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



498

499 **Foreign affairs** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels on composition board; 77.8 × 77.2 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / "FOREIGN AFFAIRS"'

Exh: 29 Sep – 2 Oct 1994 Roslyn Oxley9 at *ACAF 4* Melbourne, #11, \$7500; 17 Jun – 9 Jul 1995 *New Works New Directions: Recent Acquisitions by the Chartwell Collection* Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton NZ; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[24] (illus. p. 71); 16 Oct 2004 – 24 Jul 2005 *Local Atlas: Contemporary New Zealand and Australian Art* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ; 3 Sep 2011 – 7 Apr 2013 *Whizz Bang Pop (Land and Environment)* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ

Coll: 1994 Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, NZ (Acc no. C1995/1/4)

Image courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand



499

500 **Garlands** 1994

Patterned linoleum and sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes on composition board; 102 × 75 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / "GARLANDS"'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1998 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Image from author's archive



500

501 **Gazette** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels on backing board; 77.5 × 59 cm; signed and dated verso l.l. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / ...'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #14, \$7000; 2009 *Cubism and Australian Art* Heide MOMA (illus. p. 233)

Lit: Anne Loxley *SMH* 15 Apr 1994, illus. p. 19; Sue Cramer 'Post-cubism 1980–2009' in Lesley Harding and Sue Cramer *Cubism & Australian Art* Miegunyah Press, Carlton, VIC, 2009, p. 233; Jason Smith 'Rosalie Gascoigne Milky Way', *ibid.* p. 255

Coll: 1996 private collection; 2011 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (Acc no. 18.2011), bequest of Mollie and Jim Gowing

This was one of R.G.'s 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



501

502 **Highway to heaven** 1994

Acrylic paint, washi paper and bamboo, kite, collaborator Basil Hall, constructed by an unidentified Japanese kite-maker; 167 × 131 cm

Exh: 1994–95 *Art Kites: Pictures for the Sky* 26 Dec 1994 at Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre with kite fly-out 7–8 Jan 1995 at Centennial Park, Sydney

Coll: 1994 Art Kite Museum, Detmold, near Kassel, Germany

My kite is a facsimile of a work called 'Highway Code' [1985] ... since I am totally inexperienced in painting I decided to go along with what I know and have worked with. I find the kite project fascinating and applaud an idea that can be at the same time both light-hearted and serious.

I hope eventually my kite will fly. I have all faith in the master kitemakers of Japan, but my part of the work is a real challenge, albeit an exciting one. I have had to employ expertise from Basil Hall, the director of Studio 1 in Canberra. My ignorance of procedure extends even to what sort of brush and paints I should buy. However I am caught up with the poetry of your plan and am determined to make a kite that will be a triumph of desire and goodwill over ignorance (5 Aug 1994 R.G. to Paul Eubel, director, Goethe Institute Turin).

Basil Hall remembers helping: 'We worked from one of her existing pieces, painted up the separate squares in various yellows and then painted on the black lettering. Rosalie did all the splatters over the top.' (22 Jan 2015 Basil Hall email to MG). The kite had been commissioned by the Goethe Institute Turin (curator Ikuko Matsumoto) for the Art Kites Festival, which included an exhibition at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre



502

from 26 December 1994 to 29 January 1995 and a kite fly-out in Centennial Park, Sydney, on 7–8 January 1995. The exhibition was the opening event for the 1995 Festival of Sydney. R.G. attended the kite fly-off.

The exhibition catalogue included this explanation: 'This exhibition centres on the kite as an object of contemporary artistic design, of creation. Over one hundred artists from twenty countries have offered original contributions. Skilled Japanese artisans have turned these into objects capable of flying'.

Image from author's archive

503 **Imperial measure** 1993–94

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes on sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, composition board backing; 82 × 60 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #12, \$7000

Coll: 1995 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



503

504 **Jotter** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels on backing board; 54 × 46.5 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #18, \$5000

Coll: 1994 private collection

This was one of R.G.'s 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



504

505 **Kaleidoscope** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels on composition board backing; 77 × 78 cm

Exh: 29 Sep – 2 Oct 1994 Roslyn Oxley9 at ACAF 4 Melbourne, #10, \$7500; 30 Nov 2016 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 47 (illus. p. 67 and endpapers)

Lit: *Art and Australia* vol. 32, no. 3, 1995, illus. cover (detail)

Coll: 1996 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



505

506 **News break** 1994

Sawn plywood road signs, some retroreflective, on backing board; 130.5 × 95 cm: signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / News Break'

Exh: 2–31 Jul 1994 *Romantisystem* Canberra Contemporary Art Space; 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #15, \$11,500; 29 Aug 2007 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 9 (illus. p. 29)

Lit: Peter Haynes *Art and Australia* vol. 32, no. 3, 1995, p. 443; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 77; *Alumni News* [University of Auckland, NZ] vol. 12, no. 1, 2002, illus. p. 7

Coll: 1995 private collection

After the work was photographed between 23 January and 8 May 1994 RG added more pieces, which show up in a photograph taken on 10 June 1994. The additions include the 'OI' square in the bottom left and the 'SU' square at centre left (which replaced another square reading PAIR).

Some of it isn't reflective. You can tell by the writing. The stuff which is non-reflective is hand-done lettering. And the rest is machine-done lettering, it's good. So sometimes it gets almost a cross across it (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 77).

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



506



507

507 **Out of Africa** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood primarily from soft-drink boxes on backing board; 82 × 93 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #5, \$12,500

Coll: 1998 private collection

RG briefly visited South Africa in 1963 while returning by sea from a six-month stay in Britain when BG was on sabbatical at the Royal Observatory Herstmonceux in Sussex, UK. The ship stopped in South Africa (possibly Durban) where she visited the Zulu market and bought three large bowls. There is a passing reference to the visit in Vici MacDonald (1998, p. 21). The title comes from Karen von Blixen-Finecke's memoir published in 1937 (under the pen name of Isak Dinesen) and which was the basis for a 1985 film of the same name with Robert Redford and Meryl Streep.

Image from author's archive

508 **Piece work** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels on composition board backing; 77.7 × 77.2 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / PIECE WORK'

Exh: 29 Sep – 2 Oct 1994 Roslyn Oxley9 at *ACAF 4* Melbourne, #12, \$7500; 17 Jun – 9 Jul 1995 *New Works New Directions: Recent Acquisitions by the Chartwell Collection* Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton NZ; 16 Oct 2004 – 24 Jul 2005 *Local Atlas: Contemporary New Zealand and Australian Art* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ; 3 Sep 2011 – 7 Apr 2013 *Whizz Bang Pop (Land and Environment)* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ

Coll: 1994 Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, NZ (Acc no. C1995/1/6)

Image courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand



508

509 **[Pink offcuts]** c. 1986–87, 1994

Sawn painted (primed) wood on weathered plywood; 61 × 51.5 × 4 cm; not signed or dated by artist, but inscribed verso: 'Certificate that this work is / by Rosalie Gascoigne / Martin Gascoigne / 19 April 2004'

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[37] (as *Untitled* n.d.) (ref. p. 63); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #20 (as *Untitled (pink offcuts)* 1994), \$70,000

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The wood is primed building timber. The central, unframed part of *[Pink offcuts]* is visible in an April 1987 photograph. A studio photograph shows it was still without a frame in September 1993. *[Pink offcuts]* was photographed in its final form in early 1994. Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



509



510

510 Plain view 1 1994

Painted plywood and Masonite board,
on composition board; 71 × 66 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #15, \$5000; 27 Aug 2007 Sotheby's M., lot 48 (illus. p. 108); 31 Oct 2017 Art+Object, Auckland NZ, lot 60

Coll: 1996 private collection

*That was a very minimalist one I did [either Plain view 1 or 2]. I was doing a thing about air. Just the variations of the grey and the white made it read for me. Somebody has actually bought that by itself. It hangs by itself in a room, very peaceful, very quiet, but actually it can say more if you let it say more to you. If you are amenable to it in the first place, then you can dwell with it as it were (1999 Auckland AG). Very possibly RG applied some of the paint (see *But mostly air* 1994–95).*

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



511

511 Plain view 2 1994

Painted plywood and Masonite board, on
composition board; 101.5 × 83.5 cm; signed,
dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne,
PLAINVIEW 2 / 1994'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #10, \$7000; Aug 2011 *Spring and Summer Exhibition* Annette Larkin Fine Art, Sydney; 8 May 2012 Sotheby's S., lot 40 (illus.); 2015 *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW (illus. front cover (detail), pp. 19, 31)

Lit: Peter Haynes *Canberra Times* 13 Jul 2015 (ref., illus.)

Coll: 1994 private collection

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340). Also see notes on *Plain view 1*. Very possibly RG applied some of the paint (see *But mostly air* 1994–95).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

512 *Plein air* 1994

Installation of 38 pieces comprising 9 wall pieces, 25 leaning panels (abt 12 metres total) and 3 freestanding pieces; painted wood or plywood, Masonite board and composition board, galvanised mild steel wire and wire netting, and steel:

Nine wall pieces (1–9/38):

1/38 Wire netting (two sections abt 45 × 110 cm each) on single panel of painted Masonite board, on composition board; 122 × 91.5 cm

2/38 Painted Masonite board (30 panels, each abt 40 × 29 cm) on composition board; 202.5 × 179 cm

3/38 Wire netting on two plywood panels (the left panel painted, the right unpainted), on composition board; 120 × 114 cm

4/38 Wire netting fitted across two painted Masonite panels, on composition board; 122 × 182 cm

5/38 Two painted Masonite panels on composition board; 91.5 × 122 cm (one stacked on top of the other)

6/68 Three painted panels (two of Masonite board, bottom one of plywood), on composition board; 71.5 × 120 cm

7/38 Two painted Masonite panels on composition board; 119.5 × 81 cm

8/38 Wire netting on painted plywood; 113 × 85.5 cm

9/38 Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes on plywood, on composition board; 123 × 57 cm

Twenty-five floor/wall pieces (10–35/38), sawn or split painted wood from soft-drink boxes mounted on weathered plywood; overall abt 12 metres:

10/38	60 × 34 cm	23/38	48 × 61 cm
11/38	60 × 36.5 cm	24/38	66 × 53 cm
12/38	56 × 15 cm	25/38	50.5 × 30.5 cm
13/38	56.5 × 31 cm	26/38	51 × 28 cm
14/38	55 × 33 cm	27/38	51 × 32 cm
15/38	53.5 × 38 cm	28/38	48.5 × 40.5 cm
16/38	62 × 52.5 cm	29/38	47 × 34.5 cm
17/38	50.5 × 40 cm	30/38	47 × 34 cm
18/38	48 × 32 cm	31/38	48.5 × 76 cm
19/38	48 × 24 cm	32/38	46 × 36 cm
20/38	26 × 48.5 cm	33/38	48.5 × 36 cm
21/38	46 × 34 cm	34/38	54.5 × 68 cm
22/38	47.5 × 53.5 cm	35/38	53 × 77.5 cm

Three floor pieces (36–38/38):

36/38 Wire netting on wooden frame 63 × 50 × 40 cm, on painted plywood panel 80 × 100 cm supported on wooden box 15 × 60 × 60 cm

37/38 Wire netting on weathered plywood base; 61 × 167 × 30 cm

38/38 Wire netting; 52 × 52 × 48 cm on painted plywood base; 95 × 56 cm (two panels joined)

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #1, \$30,000; 2003 *Rosalie Gascoigne: Plein Air* Gow Langsford Gallery, Sydney; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[25] (illus. pp. 36 (detail), 74); 2009 *Rosalie Gascoigne: Plein Air* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne

Lit: Anne Loxley *SMH* 15 Apr 1994, p. 19; Elwyn Lynn *Weekend Australian* 23–24 Apr 1994, p. 13; Ewen McDonald 1994, p. 66; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 38 (detail); Anne Loxley *SMH* 22 Jan 2002, p. 15; *SMH Metropolitan* 25–26 Jan 2002, illus. p. 13; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 37; David Hansen 'Prescribed text: Rosalie Gascoigne in Melbourne' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 220, Jun 2009, pp. 30–34 (two installation views)

Coll: 1994 private collection; 2007 State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth (Acc no. 2010/0018), gift of Sue and Ian Bernadt

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

I did a lot of white. I had this real fling and I wanted to have a white show and I did an installation called 'Plein air'. You go out in the country and you see this high sky and its marvellous width of the land and fences. It's beautiful, it was just air — air's a fairly beautiful thing. I remember trying to get this installation working and I knew that what I needed was just some air on the walls. It's very hard to paint or manufacture air, I'll tell you. It's a very hard thing to do (1995 Topliss). See also Ewen McDonald (1994, p. 69): 'It is an attempt to "do air", says Gascoigne, but it's hard to capture the "nothingness" of the countryside, those wide open spaces ... the "great Unsaid".'

RG had been looking at wire netting for a while. She had at least nine pieces hanging on the studio wall in September 1993, some of which were used in *Plein air*, and the wire cage on the floor (item 36/38) sounds very like the rickety chicken wire and wood construction in her courtyard that she spoke about in 1990: *Every time I go past that thing [chicken wire on wooden frame] I think how nice that is. Look at the gestures it is making, look at its body language. All air, all light, all space, all understatement, gentle. It says something to me very understated that is profoundly of the spirit of the country (1990 Ross).*

Image A courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Photograph B (detail) by Gavin Handsford, courtesy of Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne

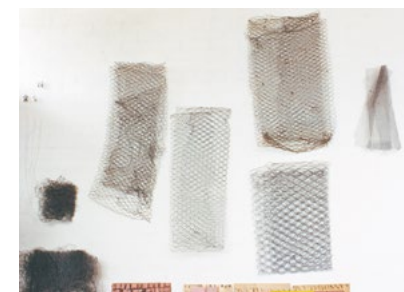
Photograph C (wire on the studio wall, September 1993) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



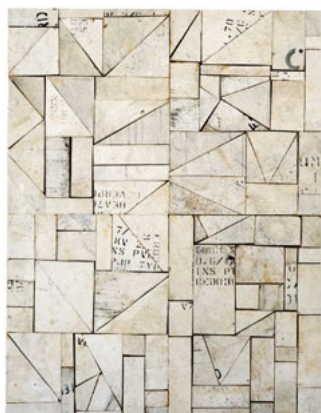
512A



512B



512C



513

513 Real estate 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, composition board backing; 72 × 55.5 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #16, \$7000

Coll: 1994 private collection

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



514

514 Regeneration 1994

Torn and cut patterned linoleum on painted wood, backing board; 122 × 99 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #3, \$10,000; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[63] (illus. p. 78, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Ewen McDonald 1994, illus. p. 69; Donald Williams and Colin Simpson 1996, illus. p. 178; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 63

Coll: 1995 private collection

It's the bushfires, the regeneration powers. When the gums burn, you get sprouts like that. The bush fire went through here, and it was heady stuff; it's beautiful, it glows at night. But the roar of the fire was something terrible. After the flames had died down it was amazing to see what was standing and what was burnt to a cinder. All of the gums looked shattered, but you get those blue-green shoots after, it's very gentle (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 63).

Image by Christian Markel, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



515

515 Steel magnolias 1994

Painted corrugated iron on plywood; 104.5 × 98.5 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #2, \$12,000; Dec 1994 *100 Percent Tracy* 24HR Art — Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin, #RG3; 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[26] (illus. p. 70); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[64] (illus. p. 116, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Hannah Fink 1997, illus. p. 203; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 100; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, pp. 39, 41 (with illus.)

Coll: 1995 private collection

This is also corrugated iron ... it was a piece called 'White magnolia' [Steel magnolias] I called it after I made it. And it's strips of corrugated iron, but it was beige-y pink and white. It's very hard to see there. And this woman [in Sydney] ... had this thing. It was in a white dining room and on the

table there was a white bowl with not 20 tulips in it but 86, you know that sort of real tulips. And this on the wall, it looked magnificent. I couldn't believe it. I even wrote to her afterwards and said anybody should be so lucky to get their thing hung in a place like that. And if you use stuff like that, you have to divorce it from anything else that came as it were from the dump or a waste yard, or anything like that. And if you put them down with good furniture and good rugs, they can look so vital and exciting that I would put them up against much more carefully made art as being a way of succeeding (1998 NGA).

The title comes from the 1989 film of the same name featuring Dolly Parton and Shirley MacLaine, among others.

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of the City Gallery Wellington, NZ

516 [Study: four blue items] c. 1993–94

Printed linoleum, printed cut-out cardboard shapes (Norco dairy logo), painted plywood on plywood; 43.6 × 24.2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.501), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Re dating: the linoleum used in the strip here was also used in *Lily pond* 1993 and *Garlands* 1994. The cut-out Norco dairy cows date from the mid-1970s.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



516

517 TAB 1994

Reflective metal numbers, painted sawn wood from cable reels, composition board backing; 57 × 46 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1994 private collection (Auckland, New Zealand) (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

The work was sent to Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery on 8 June 1994 (i.e. after RG's April 1994 exhibition) and sold before the 1995 show.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



517

518 **Top of the morning**

1993–94

FSC-coated plywood formboard, sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, painted Masonite board, on composition board; four panels spaced 3 cm apart: (1) 53.4 × 28.4 × 2.5 cm, (2) 53.3 × 32.2 × 4.1 cm, (3) 53.4 × 29 × 2.8 cm, (4) 54 × 31.8 × 2.8 cm, overall 54 × 130 cm; each panel signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / 'TOP OF THE MORNING' / PANEL 1, 2, 3, 4' (as appropriate); panel 1 also inscribed verso u.c.: '4 PANELS SPACED 3 CM APART'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #9, \$8000 (dated 1994); 2009 *Summer 2009–10* Annette Larkin Fine Art, Sydney; 2015 *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW (illus. pp. 21, 31, back cover (detail))

Coll: 1994 private collection

Some parts of this work were first used in a different arrangement photographed on 28 September 1993 and dismantled after 10 January 1994. The left-hand panel, the bottom of the third panel and the fourth panel all come from that earlier work.

Image A courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Photograph B (precursor, September 1993) by Ben Gascoigne, from author's archive

519 **Tree of life** 1994

Sawn painted plywood from cable reels, weathered plywood and painted wooden boards from soft-drink boxes, on composition board; 133 × 84 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / "TREE OF LIFE"'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #5, \$10,000; Sep 1998 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #30 (illus.); 25 Aug 2015 Sotheby's S., lot 70 (illus. p. 137); 28 Apr 2016 Lawsons S., sale 8193, lot 580; 7–10 Sep 2017 Gow Langsford Gallery at *Sydney Contemporary Art Fair*

Coll: 1994 private collection

The title of the work alludes to the religious or mythological concept of the sacred tree. The work may owe something to Matisse's cut-outs and his designs for the Chapel of the Rosary at Vence, French Riviera. RG saw the cut-outs when visiting New York and Washington DC in 1980, and knew of the chapel designs through photographs and reproductions.

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

520 **Web** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on craftboard; 77 × 77.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994 / WEB'

Exh: 29 Sep – 2 Oct 1994 Roslyn Oxley9 at *ACAF 4* Melbourne, #9, \$7500; 17 Jun – 9 Jul 1995 *New Works New Directions: Recent Acquisitions by the Chartwell Collection* Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton NZ; 16 Oct 2004 – 24 Jul 2005 *Local Atlas: Contemporary New Zealand and Australian Art* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ; 3 Sep 2011 – 7 Apr 2013 *Whizz Bang Pop (Land and Environment)* Auckland Art Gallery, NZ

Coll: 1994 Chartwell Collection; 1995 Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, NZ (Acc no. C1995/1/5)

Image courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand

521 **White city** 1993–94

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on composition board; 110 × 108 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / WHITE CITY / 1993–4'

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #4, NFS; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[24] (ref. pp. 14, 15, 62, illus. p. 50); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[27] (illus. p. 24, ref. p. 63)

Lit: Ewen McDonald 1994, p. 66; *Art and Australia* vol. 33, no. 2, 1995, illus. p. 159; Hannah Fink 1997, illus. p. 202; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 98; Kate Sands 2001, p. 44; Jason Grant 2007, illus. p. 25

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

White city 1993–94 was the first of the white works made from dismantled cable reels. *And this one I've called 'White city' and I've kept that because it was different from what I had been doing and usually if something is different I keep it. But that is — we have in Australia and I suppose you do too — those cotton reels that electrical coils are put on. They are like tables or mushrooms. So if you painstakingly unpick them — it takes forever — and then you cut them and then you balance them and you get that. It will take you some time* (1999 Auckland AG; similar remarks in 1997 Topliss and Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 98). For RG's comments about her 'white works', see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

White city was displayed in RG's sitting room. The title may allude to the White City tennis courts in Paddington, NSW, not far from Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, which RG would have known of but not visited.

Image courtesy of the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra



518A



518B



520



519



521



522

522 **White out** 1994

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on composition board; 82 × 59 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #13, \$7000

Coll: 1994 private collection

I was doing a lot of white at the time. That was 'White out' I think, or something like that. Somebody bought in it Sydney who's got a very white dining room and I'm surprised how good it looked in her white dining room (1999 Auckland AG).

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



523

523 **Wind and weather** 1994

Painted Masonite board and sawn painted timber on weathered plywood; three panels: 54.5 × 40.5 cm, 54.4 × 36.7 cm, 54.5 × 32.3 cm

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #19, \$7000

Coll: 1999 private collection

The clouds recall the clouds in Ken Whisson's *And what should I do in Illyria?* 1974, which RG bought in 1974. On her interest in Ken Whisson, see p. 61.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



524

524 **Witness** 1994

Painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on composition board; 122 × 80 cm

Exh: 1994 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #6, \$10,000; 1994 *Circle, Line, Square* Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW, then touring (ref. pp. 10, 18, illus. p. 31); 22 Oct – 21 Nov 1998 *Ways of Being* Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW Sydney and touring NSW and QLD in 1999 (Tamworth, Dubbo, Moree Plains, Toowoomba, Gold Coast City, Penrith art galleries) (illus. p. 21)

Coll: 1994 Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW

This was one of RG's 'white works'. For her comments about these works, see the notes on the 1994 exhibition in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions (p. 340).

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

525 [Wood study with orange and black markings] 1994



525

Sawn plywood with synthetic polymer paint and stencilling (from dismantled cable reels) mounted on composition board; 54.5 × 26 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Re dating: photography shows the study incorporated in an early version of *Palings* 1994/98 (q.v. for illus.).

Image from author's archive

526 [Wood study with orange markings] 1994



526

Sawn plywood with synthetic polymer paint and stencilling (from dismantled cable reels) mounted on composition board; 26 × 35.1 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Re dating: photography shows the study incorporated in an early version of *Palings* 1994/98 (q.v. for illus.).

Image from author's archive



527

527 [Yellow wood study #2] 1994

Sawn plywood with synthetic polymer paint (from soft-drink boxes) mounted on composition board; 26.2 × 48 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Re dating: photography shows the study incorporated in an early version of *Palings* 1994/98 (q.v. for illus.).

Image from author's archive

1995

528 *Acanthus* 1995

Sawn painted plywood from weathered cable reels, on painted plywood; 109.5 × 68 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / *Acanthus*'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #11, \$7500; 9 Oct 1999 – 27 Feb 2000 *Mapping Our Countries* Djamu Gallery, Australian Museum (at Customs House), Sydney; 26 Nov 2007 Sotheby's S., lot 18 (illus. p. 33, back cover); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, # [66] (illus. p. 118, ref. p. 136)

Coll: 1995 private collection; 1998 The Laverly Collection

The title is a reference to the flowering plant *Acanthus*, which grew in RG's garden in Deakin. Having studied ancient Greek at university, RG would also have known *Acanthus* as an ornament in classical architecture and as a Greek mythological figure, *Acanthus* or *Acanth*.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



528

529 *A certain smile* 1994–95

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on composition board; 94 × 77 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994–95 / *A Certain Smile*'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #17, \$8500; 17 Nov 2010 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 5 (illus.)

Coll: 1995 private collection

The title comes from Françoise Sagan's novel of the same name, published in 1956 and made into a film released in 1958 with Rossano Brazzi and Joan Fontaine as the leads. It was also the title of a Johnny Mathis song.

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



529

530 *Africa* 1995

Painted boards (some from soft-drink boxes), on backing board; 83 × 93 cm; titled and dated verso: 'AFRICA 1995', not signed but has certificate of authenticity by MG

Exh: 3–21 Jun 2003 *Modern Australian Painting* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, #16 (illus.); 8–9 Sep 2004 Deutscher–Menzies M., lot 36 (illus. p. 69); 25 Mar 2010 Deutscher–Menzies S., lot 57 (illus. p. 115); 21 Mar 2013 Menzies S., lot 30 (illus. p. 49); 11 May 2017 Menzies S., lot 65 (illus.)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2003 private collection

A photograph dated 8/5/95 is inscribed 'Africa 84 × 96 ½ cm'. The right-hand side was trimmed after the photograph was taken.

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands



530

531 **But mostly air** 1994–95

Installation of four elements (I–IV)
(details below), comprising 102 pieces;
overall dimensions variable; not inscribed

I. painted Masonite board; three panels
(pieces 1–3), each 122 × 244 cm, hung as one,
overall 366 × 244 cm; middle panel inscribed
verso u.c.: 'MIDDLE' plus arrow, and with
sketch illustrating position; bottom panel
inscribed verso u.c.: 'BOTTOM' with arrow
and sketch illustrating position

II. six sheets of painted plywood (pieces 9–14),
each 120 × 107 cm (placed with spaces
between), and 87 weathered wood fence posts
(droppers) (pieces 15–102), sizes variable,
overall abt 120 × 650 cm

III. sawn painted wood from cable reels, on
painted wood; three panels (pieces 6–8) hung
as one, two pieces 89 × 92 cm, one piece
89 × 96 cm, overall 89 × 280 cm

IV. sawn painted wood and Masonite board,
on composition board; two panels (piece 4
left and piece 5 right), each abt 140 × 107 cm,
hung with space between; both inscribed u.c.:
'TOP'

Exh: 1995 *Perceived Differently* ANU Drill Hall
Gallery, Canberra (ref. pp. 3, 16, listing BMA
II with only five panels); 11–28 Oct 1995
An Installation by Rosalie Gascoigne Pinacotheca,
Melbourne; 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway,
Adelaide, \$45,000; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne*
AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[26] (ref. pp. 12,
14–16, 62, illus. pp. 52–53); 2008 *Rosalie*
Gascoigne NGV, #[65] (illus. p. 119, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Adelaide Festival Visual Arts program
Mar 1996 (illus.); SR [Stephanie Radok]
Adelaide Review c. Mar 1996; *Islands:*
Contemporary installations NGA, 1996
(exh. cat.), illus. detail pp. 16, 17; Hannah
Fink 1997, p. 207; Deborah Edwards
In place (out of time) 1997 (exh. cat.), p. 41;
John McDonald *SMH Spectrum Arts* 29 Nov
1997, p. 16; Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 54–55
(with illus.); Ken Scarlett 1998, pp. 86–87;
Jason Smith *But mostly air* ANU School of Art
Gallery, Canberra, 2013 (exh. cat.), p. 5

Coll: 1996 Art Gallery of South Australia,
Adelaide (Acc no. 965S31[1–102]),
Government of South Australia grant

RG spoke at length several times about the
inspiration, construction and installation of
But mostly air (BMA). The work was triggered
by an invitation to participate in an exhibition
of sculpture sponsored by the ANU Drill Hall
Gallery as its contribution to the Canberra
National Sculpture Triennial in April 1995.
Asked in February 1995 if she was producing
new work for the show, RG responded:
I've got something. I think it's going to be part of
my installation. It's going to be mostly about air.
As I say air is the thing that's here; I've got more
air than anybody else I reckon. I'm always surprised
that the height of the sky doesn't get more into
Australian art ... [Russell] Drysdale of course

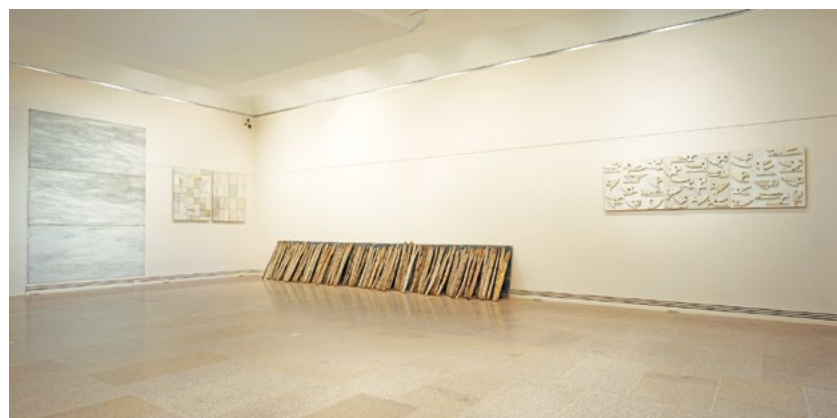
did; there is that sense of towering sky. Eve Langley
... wrote about the gigantic Australian afternoon
(1995 Topliss).

Looking back, in 1997 she remembered: *I was*
given pride of place in the [Drill Hall], which made
me shudder because I really hadn't got anything very
concrete at the time. And so you go back to being
honest with yourself, and when I'm honest, I think
well, what is it that I really like about this going
out business. And what I like of course, is the sense
of personal freedom, no phone, no nothing. Nobody
can get you, you don't have to do your housework.
You go, you see, it's a nice fine day and the country
is there waiting for you. And so I went on one
of my favourite drives, my favourite routes, which
is through Gundaroo, up over the hill, down to
Collector ... it's the place that I always take visitors.
That's what Australia's like, the distance, the height,
the clarity, and the fact that there's nothing there,
but everything is there. Everything is there that you
could possibly need. And the sky towers above you.
Lake George slides away to the right and a flight of
white cockatoos goes over, and the place is splendidly
ornamented — ornamented — but it's not trying,
it's not standing on its ear putting everything in, if
you see what I mean. There's enough there. And the
sense that I get of that place ... is lots of air and
freedom. And you've got to have the towering sky.
And I think people who paint Australia and don't
put in the towering sky, are missing out one of the
real factors of Australia, the personal freedom of it
and the big sky. And as I say, the grey fence posts,
the cockatoos, the whiteness, the nothingness, the
everythingness of it, you see (1998 Hughes; similar
remarks in 1996 Davidson and 1997 Ross).

And she remembered Shakespeare: *What's that*
Shakespeare quote of Macbeth?: 'This castle has a
pleasant seat; the air nimbly and sweetly recommends
itself unto our gentle senses' (Macbeth act 1, scene 6)
(1997 Feneley).

RG had made the three panels that make up
BMA III by 26 February 1995 (illus. p. 96),
when she told Helen Topliss: *I was cutting up*
cable [drums] — I made a lot of white pieces — and
those were the pieces left over and I sort of tossed
them aside. The mouth of the bird, the circle, is in the
middle of it, you see, and to me it was what happened
when you get a flock of cockatoos and you frighten
them and up they go screaming, screaming ... I did
them for fun; they were the scraps of something else.
It was certainly a very accidental ... you know, you
throw it down and you think, goodness ... it slightly
amuses you and then you make some more ... I'm
going to put it in an installation thing I've got, about
the country atmosphere here. You get a lot of that
out in the country, the birds go up and it's absolutely
marvellous, and the scream (1995 Topliss; similar
remarks in 1998 Hughes). [White wood study:
Cockatoos] c. 1994–95 is also a product of this
activity and possibly a study for the screaming
birds.

The other elements followed. *And so I thought*
well, air's pretty hard to do, especially when you
can't paint and you can't draw and you can't do
anything ... but you want the air. And so I was fairly
desperate. I had to show up at the old ... Drill Hall



531A



531B

and do my stuff, and amongst all these people who had been taught how to do it properly and what not. And so I got some big sheets of Masonite, which were — I think 8 feet by 4 feet [BMA I]. And I wanted a lot of air, just a little bit is not enough. But a lot. So if you get three sheets of [8] feet by 4 feet and you put them up like that, like that and they go right up to the [ceiling] — presuming you've got a 12 foot ceiling — well you can do a tower of air and then you can read it into the rest of the gallery if you want, just because it's 8 feet long, it doesn't mean it stays 8 feet long. It takes up the whole gallery, you see. And I thought, well I'd better paint them white, sort of nothingness. And I had ... an artist [friend Marie Hagerty] and ... she said, 'Oh, why don't you put it on with a rag?' because I was doing it on with a brush. I don't know anything you see. I don't know how to dip a brush in paint, or which brush to get. And so I got an old towel and went like this. And so with the brown Masonite it comes out grey-white, with the brown reading through. And anything goes, I found, with a rag. And you wipe it over the ... 8 foot by 4, and you get strong youths to put it up [on] the wall. It's very hard to do the mechanics of it, because you can't reach high enough (1998 Hughes, similar remarks in 1997 Ross). She bought some of the Masonite board for BMA on 27 February and another piece on 7 March (1994 financial records).

So I had a long panel of that, and then I had some grey fence posts and some, four pieces of, or five pieces I think, of blue wood that I got from Revolve [a recycling depot]. Big packing-case lids I think they were. You leaned them, you leaned the wood against them [BMA II]. And then you made some smaller [panels], which are white wood, different shades of white and cream, and you fill the space [BMA IV] (1998 Hughes). Regarding those (two) panels: I had found a series of signs — I think they had 'Blackberries Poisoned' on them — so I took them in, not knowing what I would do with them. Then I found, if you turned them over — it was only Masonite — it had a terribly cream and grey and white look. I joined them all together and that was air right there. And then I thought, maybe if I got some white paint ... I could paint some ... (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 54).

As with other multi-panel works RG arranged the panels to best suit the demands of the location in a way that remained true to the theme of 'air'. The first time *But mostly air* was installed (at the ANU Drill Hall Gallery), the four units were placed in a square gallery, one on each wall facing each other. At other times the work has been displayed in different configurations depending on the space available (Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. pp. 54–55 and 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, illus. p. 119). When the work was displayed at AGNSW in 1997 the top panel in Part 1 was replaced by a slightly narrower one to fit the lower ceiling; she gave this panel to AGSA as a 'spare'.

Installation image A courtesy of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

Image B (detail) (BMA II) courtesy of Greenaway Gallery, Adelaide. For illus. BMA III, see p. 96

532 Danegeld 1995

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on composition board; 63 × 57.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / DANEGELD / DANEGELD'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #18, \$6500; 2003 *A Selection of Twentieth Century and Contemporary Australian and New Zealand Art* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #10 (illus. back cover); 13 Sep 2007 Lawson–Menzies S., lot 233 (illus.); 10 Dec 2008 Deutscher–Menzies S., lot 36 (illus. p. 69); 22 Mar 2012 Menzies S., lot 49 (illus. p. 105 and front endpapers); 21 Nov 2013 Lawson–Menzies M., lot 600 (illus. p. 53); 11 May 2017 Menzies S., lot 61 (illus.)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 78

Coll: 1995 private collection

That is a much smaller one and I called it Danegeld ... which is the money that people used to pay the Danes for keeping out of England? ... It means Dane gold, it was the gold you paid to them, money. But you can get quite an abstract pattern out of it. And that too will shine when the light comes in a certain window or something. I don't think you want the solid shine so that it always shines, but if you catch the light as it comes into your house; and sometimes you go down a passage as I do in my house and it will shine you see. And this is a good omen. It's a terribly good omen to see a shine coming out of a picture and then it just sulks and the sun goes round (1998 NGA).

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands



532

533 Eden 1995

Painted or primed wood (old building materials), plywood and Masonite board, on composition board; 41 × 129 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / "EDEN"'

Exh: 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[25] (dated 1994) (illus. p. 35, ref. p. 62)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 9, illus. p. 107

Coll: 1995 private collection (gift of the artist)

The title *Eden* alludes to the landscaping work MG was doing at Anstey Street, Pearce, while RG was working on this piece, and which prompted the gift. Vici MacDonald (1998) suggests other possible allusions.

Image from author's archive



533



534

534 Ensign 1995

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs and paint on composition board; 136 × 120 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / Ensign'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #13, \$13,000; 9 Jun – 17 Jul 2001 *Leaping Boundaries: A Century of New Zealand Artists in Australia* Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney (ref.)

Lit: John McDonald *SMH Spectrum* 2 Sep 1995, illus. p. 14A; *25th anniversary spring catalogue* Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland NZ, 2012 (illus.)

Coll: 1996 The Laverty Collection

RG probably painted the white letters.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



535

535 Full flower 1995

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on composition board; 55 × 32 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1998 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Full flower was briefly incorporated in a larger work subsequently dismantled.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



536

536 Gentlemen of Japan 1995

Sawn plywood road signs, some retroreflective, on composition board; 122 × 87 cm

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #16, \$11,000

Lit: Donald Williams and Colin Simpson 1996, illus. p. 177

Coll: 1995 private collection

*This was when I was getting to the end of some of my retroreflective things. When you use retroreflective [material] it comes in waves, because that sort of retroreflective is off the market now. They're making them all on aluminium, as you can see if you look at any of the signs down the road. I can tell at 50 paces whether they're aluminium or Masonite. If they're Masonite you can cut them. I always name my names afterwards. And I think I must have been thinking of [Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta] *The Mikado* because I called it *Gentlemen of Japan*. And when it stood apart from the others it read like *Gentlemen of Japan*. It was the first one to go; I was really surprised. It's quite big. It's about 5 feet tall I think (1998 NGA; similar remarks in 1999 Auckland AG).*

In an illustrated talk at AGNSW on 13 November 1997 RG spoke about this work along the following lines: *I had some red pieces of reflective material, and I'd just been at the Japanese kite-flying festival, and that read to me as the gentlemen of the Mikado* (notes by M. Asprey, an audience member). The kite festival was the Art Kites Festival and took place in Centennial Park, Sydney, on 7–8 January 1995 (see *Highway to Heaven* 1994). RG's reference to the festival suggests the work was made in early 1995.

Regarding RG's reference to Masonite road signs, most if not all of the retroreflective road signs she used were made of plywood. Masonite board would not normally be sufficiently robust for the task, so possibly RG's reference was a slip of the tongue.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

537 Harlequin 1994–95

Sawn painted wood with inscriptions and ink stamps (from cable reels) on weathered plywood; 105 × 103 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994–1995 / HARLEQUIN'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #6, \$10,000; Sep 1998 *20th Century Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #29 (illus.)

Coll: c. 1995 private collection

The title reflects RG's interest in Picasso and his paintings of circus people (see the Biographical Note in this catalogue raisonné). RG had multiple copies of his *Family of saltimbanques* 1905, which includes a standing figure wearing a diamond-patterned costume. Regarding RG's interest in the circus, see notes on *Travelling circus* 1981 (p. 202).

Image courtesy of Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney



537

538 [Homage: the cup]

c. 1993–95

Weathered stencilled image on plywood mounted in weathered painted hardwood (from cable or barbed wire reels); 30.3 × 30.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the use of red-painted hardwood (see *Rose red city* 1991–93, *Wild strawberries* 1995). The image of the cup suggests the plywood was from a tea chest.

Image from author's archive



538

539 **Hung fire** 1995

Sawn plywood road signs, on composition board; 209 × 176 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne, 1995, "HUNGFIRE"'

Exh: 1995 *Perceived Differently* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra (ref. p. 3, illus. p. 4 (detail)); 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #2, \$25,000; Aug–Sep 1998 *Landscape, Rubbish and Poetry* International Art Space, Kellerberrin WA; 25 Feb – 4 Jun 2000 *Rosalie Gascoigne Tribute* AGWA; 2002–04 *Sublime: 25 Years of the Wesfarmers Collection* AGWA and touring nationally (illus. opposite preface (detail), p. 68); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[67] (illus. p. 110, ref. p. 136); 2013–2016 *Luminous World: Contemporary Art from the Wesfarmers Collection* Charles Darwin University Art Gallery, Darwin and touring nationally (illus. pp. 133, 164)

Lit: 'Designer hangups' *SMH Domain* 21 Nov 1996, illus. (with Tina Engelen and Ian Moore); Peter Ward *Weekend Australian Magazine* 4–5 Jan 1997, illus. p. 30; Hannah Fink 1997, illus. p. 207; Courtney Kidd *Australian Art Collector* no. 8, Apr–Jun 1999, pp. 22–23, illus. p. 22; *Artoview* [NGA magazine] no. 28, summer 2001–02, illus. p. 35; Kate Fagan *The long moment* Salt, WA, 2002, illus. cover; Mary Eagle *Australian Book Review* May 2004, p. 36 (with illus.)

Coll: 1997 The Wesfarmers Collection of Australian Art, Perth

They had a huge pile of road signs down [at Revolve, a recycling depot] the other day. This is what makes me ... I'm doing this big 6 × 7 [foot] red one, a beautiful faded red. It's an agony to get them out of their iron frames; it kills you (1995 Topliss).

Image courtesy of The Wesfarmers Collection of Australian Art, Perth

540 **Iron bark** 1994–95

Painted corrugated galvanised iron on backing board; 112.5 × 75 cm signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994/5 / "IRON BARK"'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #12, \$7500; 16 Apr 2008 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 1 (illus. p. 13)

Lit: *The Age* 17 Apr 2008, illus. p. 22

Coll: 1998 private collection

The title alludes to the 'ironbark', a common name for a number of species of eucalyptus that have dark, deeply furrowed bark. The bark accumulates on the trees, forming fissures, unlike many other eucalyptus species, which shed their dead bark annually. The bark is resistant to fire and heat and protects the living tissue within the trunk and branches from fire.

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

541 **Loopholes** 1995

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on composition board; 121 × 119 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / LOOPHOLES'

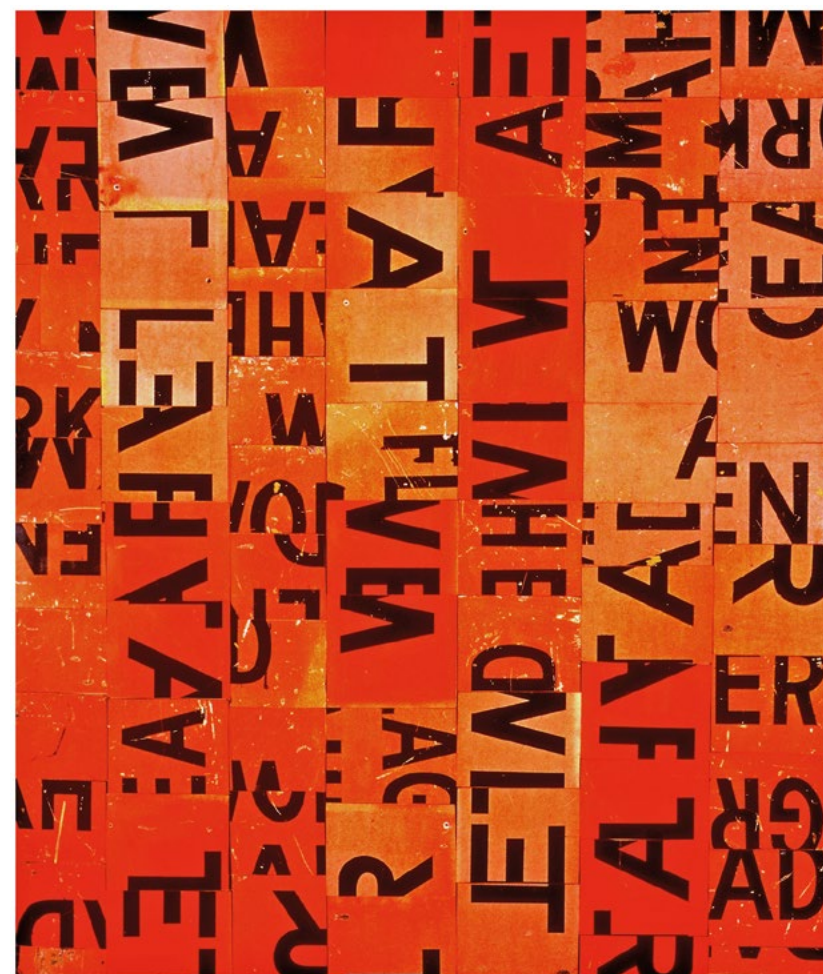
Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #3 (dated 1997), NFS; 1999 *Toi Toi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #71 (dated 1996) (illus. p. 81); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney* (dated 1996); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[32] (dated 1996) (illus. p. 24, ref. p. 63)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 79; Jason Grant 2007, illus. p. 22

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

I cut off all the 'O's. I had to cut off a few 'D's too, because I didn't have enough 'O's. It's called Loopholes, something that is fairly open. I see Roman viaducts in it, but other people see different things. I sit and look at a piece after it's made, and think, 'What can I call it?' — without leading the witness too much. In the end I called this Loopholes, because it just seemed loopy enough. It definitely didn't need a specific name (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 79). RG displayed *Loopholes* in her sitting room. Dating was determined on the basis of photographic records.

Image from author's archive



539



540



541



542



543



544

542 Milky Way 1995

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels with ink markings, on composition board; 110 × 114 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / MILKY WAY'

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #8, \$12,000; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[68] (illus. p. 114, ref. p. 136); 2009 *Cubism and Australian Art* Heide MOMA (ref., illus. p. 255)

Lit: Maudie Palmer 2008, illus. p. 185

Coll: 1996 Eva and Marc Besen; 2009 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC (Acc no. 2009.039), gift of Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

Milky Way is one of two works that refer directly to an astronomical subject (and one that figured largely in Ben Gascoigne's research) (see also *Star chart* 1995). BG remarked a number of times after Rosalie's death that she never looked through any of the telescopes on Mount Stromlo, notwithstanding the opportunities she had to do so. In a 1980 letter she wrote about how she had been trying to do a 'star one for ages' and described a new boxed work made with some astronomical photographs, which she called *The dark side of the moon*, but she soon dismantled it and it is not catalogued (see 5 Feb 1980 RG to MG, p. 60).

Image by John Brash, courtesy of TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC

543 Mud brick 1995

Sawn painted and stencilled wood (probably from cable reels) on plywood backing; 91 × 69 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / MUD BRICK'

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #7, \$6000; 25 Jun 2002 Christie's M., lot 81 (illus. p. 79); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[69] (ref. p. 136)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

544 Shabby summer 1994–95

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on composition board; 73 × 93.5 cm; signed and dated verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne 1994/5'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #5, \$10,000; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[27] (ref. pp. 14, 62, illus. p. 51, sized 73 × 95.5 cm)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 93; Ken Scarlett 1998, p. 86

Coll: 1995 private collection

That was a copper reel, a red one ... (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 93). The title comes from the novel *Shabby summer* by Warwick Deeping (Cassell, London, 1939), which RG had been reading. BG's photographic records suggest that the work may initially have been larger: he recorded the size as 94 × 103 cm for images taken on 12 and 23 January 1995 but when exhibited later at Roslyn Oxley9 in 1995 it was sized at 73 × 93.5 cm.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

545 **Skylark** 1994–95

Painted wood and Masonite board, and FSC-coated plywood formboard, with plywood and/or composition board backing; ten panels (1–10), overall dimensions variable (see below); each panel signed, dated and titled verso l.l.:

'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994/5 / SKY LARK'
and inscribed l.c.: 'ten pieces'

1. FSC-coated formboard and painted Masonite board, 21.5 × 41 cm
2. FSC-coated formboard, painted Masonite board and painted timber, 36 × 28 cm
3. FSC-coated formboard, painted Masonite board and painted timber, 23.5 × 16.5 cm
4. FSC-coated formboard, painted Masonite board and painted timber, 29.5 × 43 cm
5. FSC-coated formboard and painted Masonite board, 22 × 34.5 cm
6. FSC-coated formboard and painted Masonite board, 19 × 42.5 cm
7. FSC-coated formboard and painted Masonite board, 19.5 × 22.5 cm
8. FSC-coated formboard, painted Masonite board and painted timber, 32 × 31.5 cm
9. FSC-coated formboard and painted Masonite board, 14 × 41 cm
10. FSC-coated formboard, painted Masonite board and painted timber, 35 × 26.5 cm

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #4, \$12,000; Jun–Sep 1996 *Now–Then* NGA; 1997–98 *Other Stories: Five Australian Artists* (Asialink Centre, Melbourne) Asian tour to Bangladesh Biennale, National Academy of Fine and Performing Arts, Dhaka; then Kathmandu, Nepal; Colombo, Sri Lanka; Hanoi, Vietnam; Lahore, Pakistan (ref. p. 8, illus. pp. 2, 9 (detail)); 2–6 Oct 2002 Roslyn Oxley9 at *Melbourne Art Fair*; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[27] (dated 1994) (ref. p. 35, illus. pp. 30–31); 12 Dec 2008 – 24 Jan 2009 *Lucky Town* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney; 19–22 Sep 2013 Roslyn Oxley9 at *Sydney Contemporary Art Fair*

Lit: John McDonald *SMH Spectrum* 2 Sep 1995, illus. p. 14A; Joanna Mendelsohn *The Australian* 8 Sep 1995, p. 14; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 35; Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 39

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2013 private collection (New Zealand)

It is clear from the photographic record that all the components were completed by 30 August 1994, including an eleventh panel R.G. later discarded from the sequence. She only settled on the final sequence in August 1995, when she tried out the work in the NGA, away from the clutter of her studio.

There is an allusion in both the title and the form of *Skylark* 1994–95 to Colin McCahon's *The song of the shining cuckoo* 1974, suggesting the work is about a journey, in RG's case her travels through the landscape. McCahon's work traces the cuckoo's flight across five panels of cloudy seaside skies, and incorporates the Roman numerals I–XIV, a reference to the Stations of the Cross (and another journey). There are also literary allusions in the title, the Eurasian skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) being a frequent subject in British poetry, by authors such as Percy Bysshe Shelley (*To a skylark*), George Meredith (*The lark ascending*) and Ted Hughes (*Skylarks*), among others. The skylark — a small, nondescript brown bird well known for its song — was introduced into south-eastern Australia in the 19th century. The skylark is found in the Canberra area, usually where there are more heavily grazed pastures.

Image A courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Photograph B (eleven *Skylark* panels in the studio, 20 August 1994) by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive (third panel from right in top row later removed)



545A



545B



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547



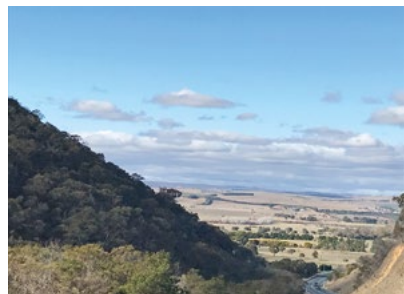
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550A



550B

546 Southerly buster 1995

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on composition board; 117 × 115 cm; signed and dated verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #14, \$11,500; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), # [28] (ref. pp. 15, 16, 62, illus. p. 56)

Lit: *Look* [Art Gallery Society of NSW magazine] Nov 1997, illus. cover; Janet Hawley 15 Nov 1997, pp. 40–44; Stephen Banham *Monument* no. 23, 1998, p. 97; Felicity Fenner 1999, illus. p. 91; *ABC Radio 24 Hours* Jan 2001, illus. pp. 18–19 (detail); Jason Grant 2007, illus. frontispiece, p. 24; George Alexander 'Text appeal: Australasian text in images' *ArtAsiaPacific* no. 58, May/June 2008, illus. cover (detail), p. 139

Coll: 1995 private collection (Sydney)

Regarding the title, according to the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, a 'Southerly Buster' (or 'Southerly Burster') is the term Sydneysiders have adopted for an abrupt southerly change that can charge up the New South Wales coast, mostly between October and February. In RG's words: *That was called Southerly buster, it's the wind coming in from South Australia — from the sea ...* (1999 Auckland AG).

The panel in the bottom right-hand corner was originally exhibited, upside down, as the centre panel of *Fragmentation [III]* 1991.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

547 Star chart 1995

Sawn painted plywood from cable reels, with ink inscriptions, on weathered plywood; 120 × 90 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / Star Chart / 1995'

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #9, \$10,000; 27–28 Nov 2000 Christie's M., lot 80 (illus. p. 75, dimensions 118 × 90.2 cm); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, # [70] (illus. p. 115, ref. p. 136)

Coll: 1996 private collection

Star chart is one of two works that refer directly to an astronomical subject (see notes on *Milky Way* 1995).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

548 [Study: white wood boards] c. 1995

Painted wood (from cable reels?) on plywood backing; 114.3 × 87 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis that the same kind of boards were used in *Mud brick* 1995 and because several other works at this time share design features with [*Study: white wood boards*], including the blocks of boards used at right angles.

Image from author's archive

549 [Study with formboard shape] c. 1988–95

FSC-coated plywood formboard, weathered wood (some painted) and metal crimps; 44.5 × 35.5 × 4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, # [28] (as *Untitled* c. 1995) (ref. p. 63)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The wood includes building materials with primer and weathered boards possibly from apiary boxes.

Image from author's archive

550 Suddenly the lake 1995

FSC-coated plywood formboard, painted galvanised iron sheet, painted plywood; four panels: 129.1 × 69.7 cm, 129.5 × 78.9 cm, 130.3 × 118.5 cm, 129.5 × 93.8 cm; each panel signed and dated verso l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995'; each panel titled verso u.c.: 'Suddenly the lake' and numbered '1' to '4' respectively

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #1, \$30,000; Jun–Sep 1996 *Now–Then* NGA; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), # [29] (illus. pp. 54–55, ref. p. 62); 12 Dec 1998 – 11 Apr 1999 *Suddenly the Lake, Weereewa: Lake George* CMAG (ref. p. 2, illus. p. 3); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, # [28] (illus. pp. 72–73); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, # [71] (illus. p. 28, ref. p. 136)

Lit: John McDonald *SMH Spectrum* 2 Sep 1995, p. 14A; John McDonald *SMH Spectrum Arts* 2 Nov 1997, p. 16; Hannah Fink 1997, p. 205; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 107; Sonia Barron *Canberra Times* 2 Feb 1999, p. 10 (with illus.); Helen Musa *Canberra Times* 27 Feb 1999; Daniel Thomas 'Suddenly the lake' in Anne Gray (ed.) *Australian art in the National Gallery of Australia* NGA, Canberra, 2002, pp. 390–391, illus. p. 390 (incl. detail of panel 3); Daniel Thomas 2004, pp. 18–19; Sasha Grishin 2014, illus. p. 438

Coll: 1996 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 96.255 A–D), given by the artist in memory of Michael Lloyd

Responding to a comment that works such as *Suddenly the lake* border on the pictorial, RG said: *Well they do. Every time I go down the Federal Highway, before you go down to Lake George, suddenly there's that water; that straight*

line, it's absolutely miraculous, it's breathtaking to me, every time I see it. And so that was a real case of emotion recollected. I want to say the universal I think, and I want to say the feel. That's why when I do a thing like 'Suddenly the lake' that is dictated by what I've got, of course, and my experience down the road ... I've had people say 'but that's Gearys Gap' ... They recognise it because everybody gets that feel as they go down towards the lake and they're just big hills and there's a lot of big hills and water in a landscape, it's a very strange thing ... I found a big Ellsworth Kelly piece and it was a beautiful piece, it ballooned you know, and the hills do that for me and I had the grey tin ... You've got to get a work of art with the material you've got and that's a big thing, because you don't find things as readily as that. And so you've got to use what you've got and you've got to fake it and fake it and fake it, until suddenly you personally see it. And whether anybody else sees it is of course immaterial (1997 Feneley, edited and rearranged; similar remarks 1999 Auckland AG).

While the shapes in the panels have much in common with the slopes and curves of the escarpment where it looms over the highway near Gearys Gap, the view represented in the third panel of *Suddenly the lake* most closely approximates the view as the road from the Federal Highway to Bungendore descends from the escarpment of the Lake George range at Smiths Gap. The curved piece of formboard RG described as the 'Ellsworth Kelly' shape came from a recycling depot: *And once I found [at Revolve] that great big round piece in that piece called Suddenly the lake. And it was beautiful. But I had to wait for ages and ages, months, years, before I got it into anything. But it was graphic* (Desmond 1998). In referring to Ellsworth Kelly RG had in mind Kelly's *Orange curve* 1964–65 (NGA Acc no. 77.794), which she had seen soon after James Mollison purchased it for the National Gallery, and it had impressed her: *Jim invited me down to see an Ellsworth Kelly before it went into storage for two years. I was glad I could respond to it, having felt fairly cold in presence of his [Kenneth] Noland. Big orange curve on white [sketch]. Not symmetrical. Rather the shape of a rain drop about to leave a fence wire. Pregnant in the broadest sense. I was impressed by the feeling content in it* (28 Oct 1977 RG to MG, p. 51 (letter incorrectly dated 11 Oct 1977)).

Regarding RG's gift to the NGA, she was a friend and admirer of Michael Lloyd, who was a long-serving staff member of the NGA and assistant director when he died in May 1996. In an undated letter (about Jul 1996) to Tim Fisher of the NGA she wrote: *As I have said before, I am delighted to donate the work which is part of my vision of the Canberra district and I believe part of Michael's too. I will be really pleased to see it hung in the Gallery* (NGA file 75/1869–02).

Image A courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Image B of Smiths Gap, with Bungendore on the far left, from author's archive

551 Summer divided 1995

Painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on composition board; 114 × 112 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / SUMMER DIVIDED'

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #12, \$12,000

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 71

Coll: 1996 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



551

552 Summer fat 1995

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood; 120 × 128 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / SUMMER FAT'

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #1, \$14,000; 3 May 2017 Sotheby's S., lot 37 (illus. cover and with entry)

Coll: 1996 private collection

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



552

553 Summer sprawl 1995

Sawn or broken painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 120 × 120 cm

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #2, \$14,000

Coll: 1998 private collection

The materials I used in the piece were originally drink crates. I found them in Queanbeyan. They were pink, green and white drink crates, and I got them home on the car roof racks. The factory finally burnt all the crates. The last ones they had were yellow Schweppes boxes, which I used in an exhibition in Adelaide. I purposely made all my works in that gold for the Adelaide show, because of the summer heat there (Kate Davidson and Michael Desmond 1996, p. 18).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



553

554 Summer swarm 1995

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 114 × 111 cm; signed, dated and titled verso

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #3, \$12,000; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[72] (illus. p. 95, ref. p. 136); 7 Nov 2011 *The Estate of Ann Lewis* Mossgreen S., lot 80 (illus. p. 81, installation views pp. 15, 58)

Lit: *Art and Australia* vol. 34, no. 1, 1996, p. 62; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 70 (dated 1996); Margaret Marsh, Michelle Watts and



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Craig Malyon *ART: Art, research, theory* Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1999, p. 199; Ray Edgar 2009, illus. p. 40

Coll: 1996 Ann Lewis

That was called Summer swarm. You name things afterwards and there was a show about summer. So I had to have a summer in it and so when I finished it I thought well that's a swarm. It's like bees clinging to a tree or something. And that was made out of Schwepes boxes (1998 NGA).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

555 The Apple Isle 1994–95

Painted and stencilled wood with ink inscriptions from cable reels, on composition board backing; 85 × 84.3 cm

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #7, \$8500

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 93

Coll: 1995 private collection

Tasmania was known as the Apple Isle and R.G. visited Hobart several times when her son Toss lived there from the mid-1970s until the early 1990s.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



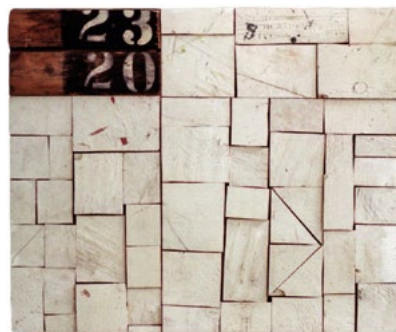
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556 [Three studies with red road sign boards]

c. 1991–95

Sawn plywood road signs, composition board backing; 17 × 18.2 cm, 21.4 × 15.4 cm, 18.2 × 19.8 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis of sawn red road sign works using rectangles, such as *Hung fire* 1995 and *Top End* 1994–95. Each piece has a hanging device verso.

Image from author's archive

557 Top End 1994–95

Sawn plywood road signs and painted stencilled wood from cable reels, on weathered plywood; four panels: 54 × 38.5 cm, 53.5 × 40 cm, 53.5 × 40 cm, 53.5 × 39 cm, overall abt 54 × 220 cm (with spacing)

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #8, \$8000 (dated 1995)

Coll: 1995 private collection

The red road sign pieces used in *Top End* 1994–95 come from a dismantled work, *Target* 1991, with the black stencilling scrubbed back. The four panels of *Top End* 1994–95 were originally hung as a single unit but R.G. exhibited the work as four separate panels

after replacing the backing boards on the first and third panels. The title is a popular name for the tropical northern part of Australia. R.G. visited Darwin and Kakadu in December 1994 where she had been invited to participate in an exhibition marking the anniversary of Cyclone Tracy. Judging by the photographic record, she completed *Top End* 1994–95 shortly after her visit (and before 12 January 1995). She made another work on the same theme, *Kakadu* (also photographed on 12 January 1995), later dismantled and not catalogued.

I'm an East Coast type of person, and I look very hard at what's here ... I don't think I can relate to desert, because I don't know about it. I really never lived in it, real sandy type desert. And Darwin was frightfully hot and I came out in a prickly rash, and I'm not very keen on that. And also I think it's a place for men, Darwin, it's not a place for women somehow (1998 Hughes).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

558 View of the garden

c. 1991/95

Patterned linoleum rectangles on four backing boards and weathered plywood; abt 27.5 × 76 cm (possibly displayed vertically)

Exh: 1995 Canberra Contemporary Art Space

Coll: 1995 private collection

The four panels of linoleum squares were constructed in c. 1991 (one is in a 1991 photograph, and see [*Four linoleum tesserae*] c. 1990–91), but the grouping of four did not take place until 1995 when R.G. was asked to contribute to a fundraising auction for the Canberra Contemporary Art Space.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

559 Weighed and divided 1995

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on composition board backing; 66 × 79.6 cm

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #20, \$7000

Coll: 1998 private collection

The title comes from the Old Testament story of the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's Feast (Book of Daniel, chapter 5). At the feast a hand appears and writes on the wall. Daniel, renowned for his wisdom, reads the message and interprets it: God has numbered Belshazzar's days, he has been weighed and found wanting, and he will lose his kingdom.

Daniel 5:25 And this is the writing that was inscribed: 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Parsin', translated as 'numbered, numbered, weighed and divided'.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

560 **White garden** 1995

Painted corrugated galvanised iron sheet, on painted composition board; 177 × 184 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #3, \$22,000; 1997 *Rosalie Gascoigne* AGNSW (and 1998 NGA), #[30] (ref. pp. 12, 13, 14, 62, 101, illus. p. 57); 1999 *Tōi Tōi Tōi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #69 (illus. p. 85); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[29] (ref. p. 39, illus. p. 75); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[73] (illus. p. 117, ref. p. 136); 2015 *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW, #7 (illus. pp. 23, 31, inside front cover (detail), with incorrect measurements)

Lit: Janet Hawley 15 Nov 1997, illus. p. 44; Joanna Mendelsohn *The Australian* 21 Nov 1997; Ken Scarlett 1998, pp. 86–87; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 101; Hannah Fink 'The regional modernism of Rosalie Gascoigne' 2000, p. 59; Eleanor Heartney 2009, illus. p. 68 (pictured sideways)

Coll: 1995 private collection

It's only old tin but I think it's got a real presence. It's beauty when you don't expect to find it ... unless the work has a presence, like a giraffe has a presence, then there's nobody home (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 101).

[Corrugated iron] *hits the spot for me because I think it's indigenous to the country. It's a very honest material. To me it's got that Australian elegance I talk about that is straight from Corinthian pillars and what not. It's very elegant ... And I'm sort of striving after it. I have placed two or three pieces in houses. One has been bought in Sydney that I called 'White garden' because it was beautiful whitey-grey tin, marvellous. And I had seen a cowshed out at Gundaroo, it'd been there since the year dot. And the woman [who] had bought the hobby farm painted it once, a sort of battleship grey or something, and it had faded and it was standing in the ground. It was absolutely lyrical. And I found this whitish tin, so I made it into a biggish piece called 'White garden'. I thought that would look wonderful in a place that had good rugs, good chairs, not other things from the dump. Please don't put them with other things from the dump, because they'd look like things from the dump. But if this was put down in an elegant room, the sense of vitality it would have ... [It] didn't say anything much, it was the material that did it. And it did go to a very nice house, in Potts Point I think, in Sydney. And I was very pleased with that* (1998 Hughes; similar remarks 1999 Auckland AG).

The title is probably an allusion to Vita Sackville-West's famous white garden at Sissinghurst Castle, Kent, in south-east England. Rosalie knew of the garden and visited it in 1963 when she and Ben were living in Hailsham, about 40 kilometres from Sissinghurst. In 2005 *Australia Post*

used a detail of *White garden* 1995 on the cover of a booklet of stamps on the theme of corrugated iron.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

561 **[White wood study: cockatoos]** c. 1994–95

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, and weathered plywood; 29 × 42 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.474), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Probably a study for one of the panels in *But mostly air* 1994–95 (see the entry on *But mostly air* for an account of the 'bird' shapes).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

562 **Wild strawberries** 1995

Sawn painted wood from cable reels, on composition board; 75 × 93.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / WILD STRAWBERRIES'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #10, \$8000; 6 Apr 2011 Shapiro S., lot 26 (illus. cover); 18 May – 9 Jun 2013 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Newcastle Art Gallery

Lit: Joanna Mendelsohn *The Australian* 8 Sep 1995, p. 14; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 94; Hannah Fink 'Wild strawberries 1995' *Artemis* [Newcastle Art Gallery Society magazine] vol. 43, no. 2, 2012–13, pp. 2–3, illus. cover, p. 2

Coll: 1995 private collection (Sydney); 2011 Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW, purchased with the assistance of Robert and Lindy Henderson, Les Renfrew Bequest, Newcastle Art Gallery Foundation and Newcastle Art Gallery Society
It's off those small copper reels — I pick off the two sides. They're very heavy. It's hairy stuff, hairy wood as against other wood (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 94).

Wild strawberries is the title of a 1957 Swedish film by Ingmar Bergman.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



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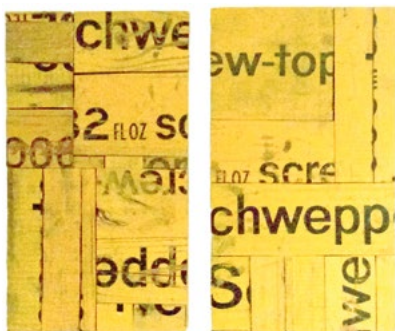
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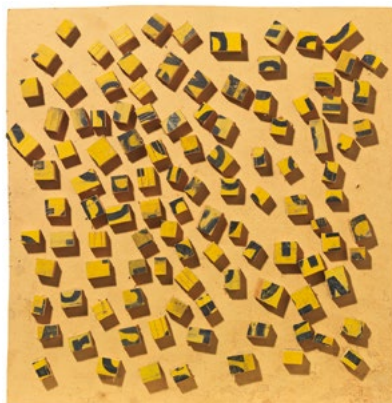
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563 **Wool clip** 1995

Sawn painted wood, plywood on composition board backing; 71.5 × 93 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1995 / WOOL CLIP'

Exh: 1995 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #9, \$8000; 2015 *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW (illus. pp. 25, 31)

Lit: Joanna Mendelssohn *The Australian* 8 Sep 1995, p. 14; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 95

Coll: 1995 private collection

This one was a pair to Wild Strawberries [1995], they were hung together. I found a whole set of these down in Bungendore, long pieces of wood like stakes. You know how a stake is shaved off at the end? Well this was the ends. I cut those all off and then I found they had a good reading to them. I called it 'Wool clip' because it looks kind of woolly (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 95).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

564 **[Yellow wood study #3]**

c. 1995

Sawn or broken painted and stencilled wood (fragments of soft-drink boxes), on plywood; two panels: 40 × 23 cm, 40 × 23 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2010 private collection (by descent)

Catalogued as a single work but not necessarily planned as a pair. The right-hand panel of *[Yellow wood study #3]* was included as a component of a work photographed in July 1996 and subsequently dismantled (and hence not catalogued).

Image from author's archive

565 **[Yellow wood study #4]**

c. 1995

Sawn or broken painted and stencilled wood (fragments of soft-drink boxes), on plywood; 40.7 × 31 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.484), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Similar broken boards were used in *Summer sprawl* 1995. *[Yellow wood study #4]* was included as a component of a work photographed in July 1996 and subsequently dismantled (and hence not catalogued).

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

566 **[Yellow wood study #5]**

c. 1995

Sawn or broken painted and stencilled wood (fragments of soft-drink boxes), on plywood; 39.4 × 35.6 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.488), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

567 **[Yellow wood study #6]**

c. 1995

Sawn or broken painted and stencilled wood (fragments of soft-drink boxes), on plywood; abt 38.5 × 39.5 cm (irreg.); not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.489), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

1996

568 **Afternoon** 1996

Paint on weathered plywood, on backing boards; two panels, each 117 × 144 cm, overall 117 × 288 cm; both panels signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne 1996 / AFTERNOON', left panel also inscribed 'A' (in a circle) followed by '2 pieces'; right panel also inscribed 'B' (in a circle) and followed by '(2 pieces)'

Exh: Jun–Sep 1996 *Now–Then* NGA; 1997 *In Place (Out of Time)* MOMA, Oxford, UK (ref. pp. 41, 42, 50, illus. cover, p. 108); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*; 19 May – 31 Jul 2016 *Panorama Part Two* TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC

Lit: Laura Cumming *The Observer* [UK] 3 Aug 1997; *Flash Art* [Italy] Nov–Dec 1997, p. 74; Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 108

Coll: 1998 Eva and Marc Besen; 2008 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC (Acc no. 2008/004), gift of Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program
That was one I made to go with a set of things [for 1997 MOMA Oxford exhibition]. I needed something big. And I'm absolutely amazed at the clouds in Canberra ... But that to me was the afternoon. We get a lot of afternoons and Eve Langley, who wrote The Pea-pickers ... wrote about 'the gigantic Australian afternoon', and that's exactly what I used to see standing on the top of Stromlo. This enormous sky, and clouds and nothing else, just vast emptiness. And that is what I saw there. That is fairly big, and I was scraping around to get enough brown boards to go under it and I'm just using a paintbrush with white paint (1999 Auckland AG).

Afternoon was completed between end May and end June 1996, in time for an exhibition of contemporary art at the NGA. In NGA correspondence in May 1996 it was referred to as *Clouds*, but this was corrected by the end of the month.

Image by John Brash, courtesy of TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC

569 **All summer long** 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; six panels, overall 122 × 518 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #5, \$40,000; 1996 Greenaway Gallery at *ACAF 5* Melbourne; 1997 *In Place (Out of Time)* MOMA, Oxford, UK (ref. pp. 41–42, 50, illus. p. 42); 9 Sep – 17 Oct 1998 *Every Other Day* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney; 3 Jun – 22 Jul 2006 *Tainted Love: Contemporary Developments in Landscape* Bendigo Art Gallery, VIC

Lit: Laura Cumming *The Observer* [UK] 3 Aug 1997; Victoria Gurvich 'All summer long (1995)' *The Age* 4 Oct 2003, illus.; 'Public works: Rosalie Gascoigne' *The Australian* 4 Jun 2011, illus.

Coll: 1998 Bendigo Art Gallery, VIC

It was a thing I put in the [Greenaway] gallery at the time of the [Adelaide] Festival, and it was an all-yellow show. Adelaide gets very yellow and sunburned. I had these boxes and I called it 'All summer long' because in Adelaide you get this long, long summer and the yellow was very good. Yellow always reads to me (1999 Auckland AG).

Image courtesy of Bendigo Art Gallery, VIC



568



569



570



571



572

570 Black tulip 1996

Sawn painted plywood from cable reels, on painted plywood; 120.5 × 78 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / BLACK TULIP'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #3, \$15,000; 11 Sep – 18 Oct 1999 *Towards a Society for All Ages: World Artists at the Millennium* UN New York (ref., illus.); 19 Feb – 28 Mar 2009 *Adventures in Collecting: Gems from the Reg and Sally Richardson Collection* National Art School, Sydney (dated 1998) (ref.)

Coll: c. 1999 The Reg and Sally Richardson Collection

Referred to as *Black orchid* in BG's photographic log.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

571 Canary bird 1996

Sawn plywood reflective road signs, on backing board; 75 × 60 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #17, \$10,000

Lit: Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

572 Checkers 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on composition board backing; 52 × 49 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / CHECKERS'

Exh: See notes. 5 Dec 2000 Goodmans S., lot 396; 14 Feb – 18 Mar 2001 *Modern Australian Art* Gould Galleries, Sydney, #19 (illus.); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[30] (illus. p. 86)

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 97; Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 45

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

RG had intended to include *Checkers* in her August 1998 exhibition at Greenaway Art Gallery, Adelaide, but the work was one of two items stolen from her house just prior to the show. It resurfaced at a Goodmans Sydney auction on 5 December 2000, lot 396 (provenance 'Private Collection, ACT') when it was bought by Gould Galleries. The thief was subsequently identified; a builder's labourer working on bathroom renovations at Pearce, he was successfully prosecuted in March 2003 and the work was returned to the artist's estate.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

573 City block 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on weathered painted plywood; 88 × 77 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / CITY BLOCK'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #12 (as *City blocks*), \$11,500

Lit: Vici MacDonald 1998, illus. p. 8 (under construction); John Neylon *Adelaide Review* Sep 1998

Coll: 1998 private collection

In the first half of 1996 William Yang photographed RG at work on *City block* (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 8 (detail)).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

574 Continuing fine 1996

Sawn painted wood from soft-drink boxes and painted plywood, on plywood backing; diptych: left 102 × 67 cm, right 102 × 59 cm, with abt 6 cm separation; left panel signed, dated and titled l.l.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / CONTINUING FINE / 2 PIECES'

Exh: Jun–Sep 1996 *Now–Then* NGA

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Photograph by Lyn Gascoigne from author's archive

575 Drawing board 1996

Sawn painted, stencilled and inscribed plywood from cable reels, on composition board backing; 62 × 51 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / DRAWING BOARD' (title on a panel of white paint)

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #14, \$8500; 1–4 Oct 1998 Greenaway Gallery at *ACAF 6* Melbourne

Coll: 1999 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

576 Flock 1996

Painted plywood from cable reels, on weathered painted plywood; 69 × 45 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / FLOCK'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Image from author's archive



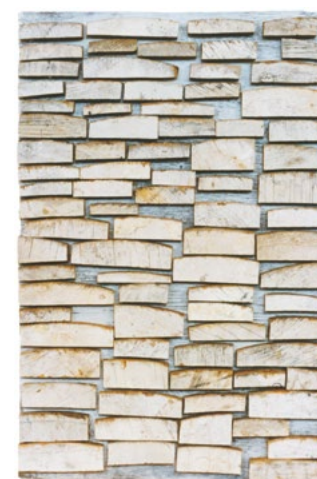
573



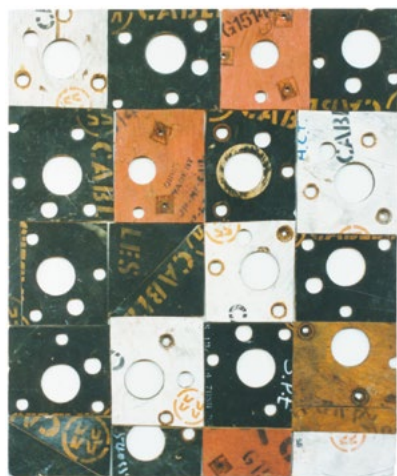
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575



576



577

577 Gay Gordons 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on painted composition board; 99 × 84 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / GAY GORDONS'

Exh: 1996 Roslyn Oxley9 at *Art27'96 Fair* Basel, Switzerland

Coll: 1997 private collection

The title is a reference to a Scottish country dance.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



578

578 Goldfield 1996

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs and painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 75 × 63 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1996 private collection (Switzerland) (purchased from the artist's studio)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



579

579 Gold rush 1996

Sawn retroreflective plywood road signs and painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 77 × 60 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / GOLD RUSH'

Exh: 1996 Greenaway Gallery at *ACAF 5* Melbourne, \$6000; 1 Sep 2010 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 5 (illus.)

Coll: 1996 private collection

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

580 High summer 1996

Sawn plywood reflective road signs, on backing board; 142 × 73 cm

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne Greenaway*, Adelaide, #6, \$10,000

Lit: Kate Davidson and Michael Desmond 1996, illus. p. 18

Coll: 1996 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



580

581 Indian summer 1996

Sawn plywood reflective road signs and painted plywood, on backing board; 83 × 72 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / INDIAN SUMMER'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #12, \$10,500; 25 Jun 2002 Christie's M., lot 26 (illus. p. 31)

Coll: 1998 private collection

In this work RG has scraped back the black lettering from the old road signs (as she did in *Morning glory* 1996). Regarding the title, 'Indian summer' is a term used to describe a period of unseasonably warm, dry weather that sometimes occurs in autumn.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



581

582 Landscape [3] c. 1987-96

Metal milk-separator bowls, African lovegrass (*Eragrostis curvula*) (?), rustic wood table with stencilling; overall abt 105 × 60 × 45 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

This is a reworked version of *Landscape [2]* 1976-77, which employed dried salsify heads instead of fine grass in very similar bowls, and was exhibited as *Landscape* in 1978 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV. The empty bowls and cabinet were photographed on 24 April 1987 in the dining room where they still were, with bowls filled, in 1999. See also *[Still life]* 1983, which includes similar bowls and a bucket, but with dried salsify, stripped feather quills and blue devil, and was exhibited in *Still-Life Still Lives* AGSA 1997.

Image of *Landscape [3]* on the bush table where RG displayed it in her dining room, from author's archive



582



583



584



585

583 Morning glory 1996

Sawn plywood reflective road signs and painted plywood, on backing board; 64 × 82.5 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #16, \$10,000

Lit: Sebastian Smee *SMH Metro* 2 Apr 1998, p. 11

Coll: 1998 private collection

In this work RG has scraped back the black lettering from the old road signs (as she did in *Indian summer* 1996). The title is ambiguous in that it can be read as a celebration of morning light but might also refer to the flowering creeper known as morning glory (family Convolvulaceae).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

584 Night and day 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes and cable reels, on two backing boards joined verso with aluminium strip; 55 × 34 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / NIGHT AND DAY'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1996 private collection (through Greenaway Gallery)

One of several works sent on consignment to Greenaway Gallery, Adelaide, following RG's March 1996 exhibition there. RG was not musical but probably knew the popular Cole Porter song of the same name, which he wrote for his 1932 musical *Gay divorce* and which Fred Astaire sang in the 1934 movie version (*The gay divorcee*). RG was a moviegoer in her youth.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

585 Overland 1996

Painted weathered, warped plywood and wooden blocks; installation of 25 panels and 16 wooden blocks, overall 420 × 360 cm; the warped boards are inscribed verso u.c. in black fibre-tipped marker: '1' to '25' respectively, the numbers on panels 8, 9 and 19 are underlined and panels 3, 4, 9 and 19 are also inscribed with an upwards-pointing arrow; the wooden blocks are numbered variously in white paint and black marker, as follows:

Block 1: front, c. '1' in white paint, u.c. '1' in black marker

Block 2: front, c. '2' in white paint

Block 3: front, c. '3' in white paint

Block 4: front, c. '4' in white paint

Block 5: front, c. '5' in white paint, verso c. '5' in black marker

Block 6: front, c. '6' in white paint, verso c. running top to bottom: '6' in black marker

Block 7: front, c. '9' in white paint, u.c. '9'; in black marker

Block 8: front, c. '11' in white paint

Block 9: front, c. '13' in white paint, u.c. '13' in black marker

Block 10: front, c. '14' in white paint

Block 11: front, c. '16' in white paint, verso c. running top to bottom: '16' in black marker

Block 12: front, c. '17' in white paint

Block 13: front, c. '19' in white paint

Block 14: front, c. '21' in white paint, verso c. running bottom to top: '21' in black marker

Block 15: front, c. '24' in white paint, u.c. '24' in black marker

Block 16: front, c. '25' in white paint

See notes for explanation of numbering system.

Exh: 1997 *In Place (Out of Time)* MOMA, Oxford, UK (ref. pp. 41, 42, 50, illus. p. 43 (installation at NGA)); 1998 *Expanse* University of South Australia Art Museum, Adelaide (as *Outback II* in an installation with *Frontiers I-IV* 1998 and *Frontier V* 1993/98) (ref. pp. 11, 12, illus. p. 19); 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney*

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (Acc no. 2014.327a-oo), gift in memory of Rosalie and Ben Gascoigne through the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art Foundation, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

I want to know if I can have a room where I can display very little. I want to create a feeling of infinite space and air. And I would also like some natural light. I have a white floor-piece measuring variably 360 × 290 cm. This I am going to try out in the National Gallery of Australia in late January, so that I can really see it. It will only be up for a day. It is called provisionally Open Country (16 Dec 1996 RG to Rob Bownam, MOMA Oxford).

In December 1996 she prepared instructions regarding the display of *Overland*: *Warped white boards are numbered 1-25. All numbers go to top of the arrangement. The sixteen brown supports go under the white boards. Numbers on brown supports match numbers on white boards. In finished piece there are small gaps between white boards* (RG's notes describing the work and its display).

When she had finished *Overland* she installed it in the NGA Canberra so *I could see what it looked like ... and the thing that went with my floor piece, strangely enough, was Tony Tuckson [White over red on blue c. 1971]. It was the only one that spoke of a wide country, personal freedom and endlessness* (1997 Ross). At least some of the panels were probably painted by RG.

Image courtesy of the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane



586

586 Pink perpendicular 1996

Sawn painted wood (primed building material), on composition board; 65 × 58 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / PINK PERPENDICULAR'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



587

587 Please drive slowly 1996

Sawn plywood reflective road signs, on backing board; 102 × 86 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #8, \$14,000; 1999 *Toi Toi Toi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #70 (illus. p. 79)

Lit: Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

588 Polka 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on backing board; 86 × 79 cm

Exh: 1996 Roslyn Oxley9 at *Art27'96 Fair* Basel, Switzerland

Lit: *Art and Australia* vol. 43, no. 3, 2006, p. 450 (installation view)

Coll: 1997 private collection

The title is both a play on words relating to the polka dot-like circular cut-outs of the work and a reference to the mid-19th century central European dance.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



588

589 Regatta 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood with inscriptions from cable reels, on backing board; 84 × 58 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #15, \$10,000

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



589

590 Rocky road I 1993/96

Sawn painted wood (primed builder's offcuts), on weathered plywood; 46 × 44 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / ROCKY ROAD I'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #16, \$7000 (dated 1996)

Coll: 1998 private collection

The top of *Rocky road I* under construction is visible in a September 1993 photograph of the studio. *Rocky road I* was photographed by itself in February/March 1994 and again on 14 March 1994 (on a plywood panel and measuring 62 × 52 cm), but the plywood panel had been removed by the time the work was photographed a third time, on 15 July 1996.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



590

591 Rocky road II 1996

Sawn painted wood (primed builder's offcuts), on weathered plywood; abt 46 × 44 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'ROSALIE GASCOIGNE / 1996 / Rocky Road II'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #17, \$7000; 1-4 Oct 1998 Greenaway Gallery at *ACAF 6* Melbourne; 22 Nov 2005 Christie's M., lot 51 (illus. pp. 60 (detail), 61); 5 Dec 2007 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 65 (illus. p. 125); 19 Sep - 10 Oct 2008 *Spring Exhibition* Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland NZ, #34; 25 Mar 2010 Art+Object, Auckland NZ, lot 49; 31 Aug 2011 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 52 (illus. p. 97)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Christie's catalogue November 2005, p. 60, is incorrect in saying the work was exhibited at Greenaway in March 1996 and acquired in 1996. It is listed in the Greenaway Gallery exhibition catalogue for RG's 1998 exhibition there, and a gallery statement shows the date of purchase was 3 August 1998.

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



591



592

592 Roundelay 1996

Sawn painted and stamped plywood from cable reels, on weathered painted plywood; 60.5 × 48 cm

Exh: Nov 1998 *Contemporary Collection Benefactors Art Auction* AGNSW

Coll: 1998 private collection (from AGNSW fundraising auction)

A roundelay is a short, simple song having a line or phrase repeated at regular intervals, but the term is sometimes also used for a circle dance (Oxford English Dictionary).

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



593

593 Sleep 1996

Sawn painted plywood from cable reels, on painted plywood; 122 × 81 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #4, \$15,000; 1–4 Oct 1998 Greenaway Gallery at *ACAF 6* Melbourne

Coll: 1998 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



594

594 Snowdrop 1996

Sawn painted wood from cable reels, on painted weathered plywood, on plywood board; 74 × 54 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / SNOWDROP'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: Nov 1996 private collection (through Greenaway Gallery)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

595 Strictly ballroom 1996

Sawn painted wood from cable reels, on backing board; 82 × 71 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / STRICTLY BALLROOM'

Exh: 1996 Roslyn Oxley9 at *Art27'96 Fair* Basel, Switzerland; 4 May 2004 Sotheby's M., lot 9 (illus. p. 19); 24 Aug – 18 Sep 2004 *Spring Exhibition* Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland NZ, #30 (ref. p. 36, illus. cover, p. 37)

Coll: 1999 private collection

The title alludes to the popular 1992 Australian movie of the same name made by Baz Luhrmann, which RG had enjoyed.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



595

596 [Study: four pink rectangles] c. 1993–96

Painted (primed) plywood, on composition board; 41 × 51.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.498), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



586

597 [Study: six yellow strips] c. 1995–96

Sawn retroreflective road sign on plywood; 22.5 × 25 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.499), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

The study originally had nine rows and was incorporated in a composite work later dismantled. The study has a wood hanging device verso.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



597

598 [Study: two pink squares] c. 1993–96

Painted (primed) plywood on weathered wood board; 36 × 33 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.497), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



598

599 **[Studies with linoleum
and retroreflective board
A & B]** c. 1993–96

Torn and cut patterned linoleum, sawn plywood retroreflective road sign, on plywood backing; (A) 16.4 × 22.2 × 0.8 cm, (B) 16.2 × 22.0 × 0.8 cm; not signed or dated by artist but both inscribed verso: 'FROM THE STUDIO OF / ROSALIE GASCOIGNE / 2000' and labelled (A) 'RG Studio 21 / 22.2 × 16.4 / Top Not Known / MBG 27.2.00' and (B) 'RG Studio 22 / 22 × 16.2 / Top Not Known / MBG 27.2.00'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2000 private collection (acquired at Capital Arts Patrons' Organisation, Canberra, fundraising auction)

Image from author's archive



599

600 **Tally** 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels and soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing boards; five panels, variable heights, overall abt 29 × 143 cm (with spacing); each panel signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / TALLY'

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #4 (as 29 × 143 cm overall), \$4000; 13 Jun 2007 Deutscher-Menzies S., lot 29 (as *Tally I-V*, 29 × 160 cm) (illus. pp. 50–51)

Coll: 1996 private collection

Image courtesy of Greenaway Gallery, Adelaide



600

601 **[Three landscape studies]**
c. 1993–96

Painted or primed wood and plywood building materials, FSC-coated plywood board; three panels: top 23 × 70 × 6 cm, centre 16 × 61 × 6 cm, bottom 18.5 × 62 × 6 cm, overall 72 × 70 × 6 cm (with spacing); not signed or dated by artist but top panel inscribed verso: 'Studio 53(a) / (one of three panels) / Certificate that this / work is by / Rosalie Gascoigne / Martin Gascoigne / 19 April 2004'; centre panel inscribed verso: 'Studio 53(b) / (one of three / panels)'; bottom panel inscribed verso: 'Studio 53(c) / (one of three panels)'

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #16 (as *Untitled (three landscapes)* c. 1993–95), \$80,000

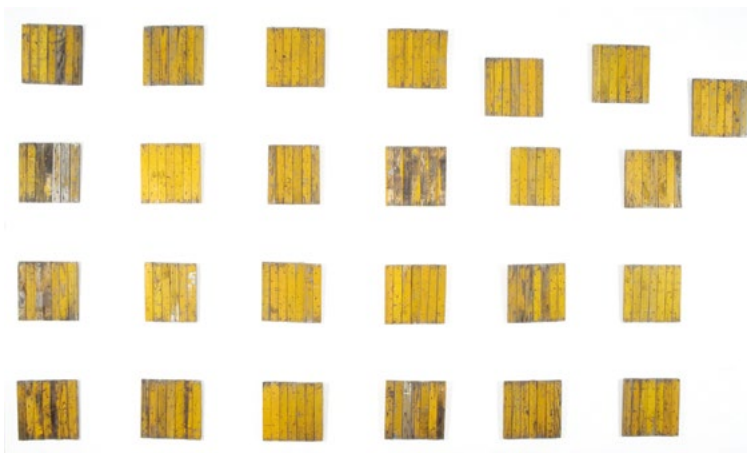
Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The panels were displayed in RG's dining room. The landscape motifs, use of sawn pink offcuts and economy of means strongly suggest that this work was made in the mid-1990s.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



601



602



603



604



605

602 Tidy summer 1996

Painted wood boards from soft-drink boxes, on plywood backing; 25 units, of which 23 are abt 31×31 cm and two abt 31×26 cm, overall dimensions variable (see notes); bottom right panel signed, numbered and titled verso in black: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / BOTTOM RIGHT OF 25 PANELS / "TIDY SUMMER"'

Exh: 1996 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #11, \$20,000; 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #6, \$30,000; 22 Jun – 22 Jul 2012 *Revealed: Inside the Private Collections of South Australia* Anne and Gordon Samstag Museum of Art, University of South Australia, Adelaide

Lit: *The Advertiser* 26 Aug 1996, p. 102 (illus. with RG); John Neylon *Adelaide Review* Sep 1998

Coll: 1998 private collection

When arranged in the studio and exhibited at Greenaway Gallery in 1998 the arrangement was fairly loose (as illustrated). When exhibited at the Samstag Museum of Art in 2012 (well after her death) the panels were arranged in a formal grid (very much as *March past* 1979), and someone drew in pencil on the back of panel 25 a five-row grid, in which the panels were numbered 1–25 in individual squares, with '1' being the bottom left square in the grid and '25' the top right. Further, each panel was inscribed in pencil verso with a circle containing the panel number, '1' to '24' respectively.

Image courtesy of Greenaway Gallery, Adelaide

603 Vine 1996

Patterned torn linoleum strips on painted and/or weathered plywood; four panels: 119×43 cm, 119×56 cm, 119×42 cm, 119×43 cm, overall abt 119×190 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / VINE'

Exh: May 2001 Sotheby's M., lot 15 (illus. p. 35)

Coll: 1997 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

604 [White cloud] c. 1993–96

Torn or cut painted Masonite board and painted wood (building materials); $30 \times 45.5 \times 3.5$ cm; not signed or dated by artist but inscribed verso u.r.: 'RG Studio / 62' and on a label attached verso l.r.: 'Certificate that this work / is by Rosalie Gascoigne. / Martin Gascoigne / 19 April 2004'

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #21 (as *Untitled (white cloud)* 1993–95), \$65,000

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Displayed in RG's bedroom in 1999. The landscape motif, economy of means and materials employed suggest that this work dates from the mid-1990s.

Image from author's archive

605 [Yellow wood study #7] c. 1996

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, weathered plywood, rusty nails; 56.8×29.2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Similar small pieces of sawn soft-drink boxes were used in *Gold rush* 1996 and *Goldfield* 1996. [*Yellow wood study #7*] can be seen on the studio wall in photographs of the artist by William Yang made in 1997.

Image from author's archive

1997

606 **Byzantium** 1997

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 78 × 82 cm; signed, dated and titled verso u.r. (upside down): 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / BYZANTIUM'; also inscribed with an arrow indicating the top of the work (see notes)

Exh: 20 Sep 2017 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 13 (illus. p. 47 and endpapers (detail))

Coll: 1998 private collection (acquired from the artist)

RG reworked the original, as her studio assistant, Peter Vandermark, describes: 'I remember her deciding to cut *Byzantium* down the centre, then cutting one of those halves in two, then swapping the halves, and reassembling the panel. Even after that satisfying change — and she signed it — she kept looking at *Byzantium* and eventually reversed the orientation of its display' (Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 25; May 2008 PV to MG). The reconstruction and reorientation account for the inscribed signatures: on the verso side an earlier signature at the bottom has been painted over, and a second signature inscribed top right but upside down.

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

607 **Downbeat** 1997

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 122 × 79 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / DOWNBEAT'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #5 (dated 1998), \$17,000; 4 Jun 2003 Deutscher-Menzies M., lot 22 (illus. p. 35); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[75] (as *Downbeat* 1998) (illus. p. 106, ref. p. 136); 1 Sep 2010 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 18 (illus.)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Regarding the title, 'downbeat' is the term widely used to indicate the beginning of a piece of music.

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

608 **Easy street** 1996–97

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood with inscriptions (from cable reels), on backing board; triptych, each panel 86 × 77 cm, overall abt 86 × 240 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #2 (dated 1997), \$18,000

Lit: 'Australia's fifty most collectable artists' *Australian Art Collector* no. 7, (Jan–Mar) 1999, illus. p. 36

Coll: 1998 private collection

On dating, photographic records show construction of the right-hand panel began in late 1996; RG later refined the panel by replacing most of the column on the left-hand side.

RG's studio assistant observed that RG 'had no preconception of whether to produce a single panel, or a work comprising several panels ... I remember her wondering whether *Easy street* was one work or three' (Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 25).

Regarding the title, *Easy street* was the title of a short comedy film made by Charlie Chaplin in 1917. More generally, it is an idiomatic English term indicating a condition of financial security.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

609 **Full fathom five** 1997

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on painted backing board; 84 × 80 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #10 (dated 1998), \$11,500

Lit: Sebastian Smee *SMH Metro* 2 Apr 1998, illus. p. 11

Coll: 1998 private collection

The title is a recurring phrase in English-language culture and derives from the second stanza of 'Ariel's song' in William Shakespeare, *The tempest*, act 1, scene 2:

'Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong.
Hark! now I hear them, — Ding-dong, bell.'

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

610 **Golden bamboo** 1997

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 46 × 50 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #20, \$7500; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[74] (illus. p. 105, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Sebastian Smee *SMH Metro* 2 Apr 1998, illus. p. 11; Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Rosalie grew fine-stemmed bamboos in her garden, including a golden-stemmed one in the main courtyard (removed in the mid-1970s) and a black-stemmed one next to the back terrace.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



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611 **Good news** 1997

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on painted backing board; 43.7 × 26.1 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / GOOD NEWS'

Exh: 25 Jun 2002 Christie's M., lot 159 (illus. p. 129); Dec 2011 *Summer Annette* Larkin Fine Art, Sydney

Coll: 1997 private collection (acquired at Capital Arts Patrons' Organisation, Canberra, fundraising auction) (donated by the artist)

Image courtesy of Christie's



611

612 **Hollyhocks** 1997

Weathered painted corrugated galvanised iron strips, on weathered plywood; diptych: left panel (A) 74 × 45 cm, right panel (B) 74 × 42 cm; left panel signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'HOLLYHOCKS-A / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997'; right panel dated and titled verso 'HOLLYHOCKS-B / 1997'; each panel is also inscribed with a horizontal arrow at the centre of its inner edge indicating where the panels join

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #14, \$80,000

Lit: Patricia Anderson *The Australian* 11 May 2004, p. 14

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



612

613 **[Homage with footballers 1]** c. 1984–88/
c. 1997

Weathered painted wood from soft-drink boxes, painted metal numeral, retouched newspaper images on sawn plywood; 31.4 × 27.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

The only way you can get a footballer looking as good as a footballer is to cut his picture out of the paper. Mount him on wood (1985 School of Art).

One of a pair of works probably begun in the mid-1980s, when RG combined cut-out figures from her stockpile with wood from dismantled soft-drink boxes, which she used as backgrounds and, eventually, to frame the figures. Similar unframed works with footballers are just visible in photographs taken in 1985 (see *Vogue Living* Feb 1986, p. 112) and 1988. The yellow framing dates from c. 1997. The retouched image of the footballer on sawn plywood probably dates from c. 1978–79 (see *Footballers* 1978–79). See also *[Homage with footballer 2]* c. 1984–88/1998).

Image from author's archive



613

614 **Lasseter's reef**

1993/1996–97

Sawn plywood retroreflective road sign, on backing board; 83.7 × 122 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996–97 / Lasseter's Reef'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #6 (dated 1996/97), \$16,000; 1999 *Tōi Tōi Tōi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #73 (dated 1997, illus. p. 83); 13 Aug 2000 Christie's S., lot 51 (illus. cover, p. 52)

Lit: Michael Reid *Weekend Australian* 12–13 Aug 2000, illus. p. 36

Coll: 1998 private collection

Lasseter's reef went through three versions: with a yellow panel on top (still in the studio when RG died), with a plain panel on top (similar to *Indian summer* and *Morning glory*, both 1996) and as a single panel without additions (its final form). The first photographs were taken in September 1993, then in December 1996 and May 1997. The first photograph of *Lasseter's reef* in its final form is from March 1998. The title is a reference to the mythical gold reef that Harold Bell Lasseter claimed to have found in central Australia in 1897. He died in 1931 on an expedition looking for the reef.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



614

615 **Parterre** c. 1994/97

Patterned linoleum on plywood retroreflective road sign superimposed on painted wood from soft-drink boxes, on composition board; 61 × 61.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1994/97 / PARTERRE'

Exh: see notes

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

On dating, photographs show that the background of *Parterre* was used with two yellow wood studies in a 1996 work photographed in July 1996 and subsequently dismantled. The central linoleum panel was constructed c. 1992–94: there is a very similar panel of linoleum and retroreflective board in the centre of *Gaudy night* 1992. The two units were probably put together as *Parterre* in 1997. They were exhibited separately in 2000 *From the Studio* (Eagle 2000, p. 63) as *Parterre* 1996 #[29] and *Untitled [Roses]* 1996 #[30], 39.6 × 39.7 cm, but were subsequently reunited.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



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618

616 Pavement I 1997

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on composition board; 66 × 51 cm; signed, dated and titled verso in black: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / PAVEMENT I' (over white patch); there is also an arrow u.c. pointing upwards

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #7, \$8000 (illus. on invitation)

Lit: John Neylon *Adelaide Review* Sep 1998

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

617 Pavement II 1997

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on plywood backing; 66 × 50.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / PAVEMENT II'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #13, \$8000 (illus. on invitation); 8 Feb – 10 Mar 2002 *GOULDmodern* Gould Galleries, Melbourne and 16 Mar – 14 Apr 2002 Gould Galleries, Sydney, #30 (illus.); 26 Aug 2015 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 43 (ref. p. 74, illus. p. 75); 10 May 2017 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 42 (ref. p. 82, illus. p. 83)

Lit: John Neylon *Adelaide Review* Sep 1998

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

618 Pentimento 1997

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 96 × 68 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.l.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / PENTIMENTO'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #9, \$13,000; 26 Nov 2008 – 11 Jun 2009 *Paintings from the Laverty Collection* (3rd hang) Union Club, Sydney

Lit: Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998)

Coll: Aug 1998 The Laverty Collection

The title refers to an Italian word used by art historians and conservators to refer to changes made by an artist in the course of painting, and picks up on the faded or rubbed lettering in the old road signs used in the work. Very likely R.G. worked the surface to create or emphasise the faded look, as with *Indian summer* 1996 and *Morning glory* 1996.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

619 Poplars 1996/97

Patterned linoleum and sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on composition board backing; 60.5 × 62 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996/7 / POPLARS' (see notes)

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #15, \$80,000; 2015 *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW (as *Poplars 19* 1996–97) (illus. pp. 27, 31)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2004 Eva and Marc Besen; 2009 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC (Acc no. 2009.040), gift of Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

Poplars 1996/97 was constructed using part of a cut-down work called [*Ziggurat*] c. 1996–97 to which R.G. glued the linoleum strips some time after July 1996. There are two annotations verso relating to the earlier work: a patch of white paint hiding the title of the larger original work, and an arrow to show the top of the original work.

Lombardy poplars (*Populus nigra* 'Italica') are a prominent feature by the road from Canberra to Cooma, especially between Michelago and Cooma. They can also be seen along the highway between Collector and Goulburn.

R.G. knew both roads very well. The poplars also grow in older parts of Canberra.

Image by John Brash, courtesy of TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC



619

620 Reserve 1997

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 35 × 56 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'RESERVE / Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #21, \$7000; 17 Nov 2010 Deutscher and Hackett S., lot 15 (illus.)

Lit: Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



620

621 Siesta 1997

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on composition board; 27 × 36 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / SIESTA'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #22, \$5000; 23–24 Aug 2004 Christie's S., lot 69 (illus. p. 79); Dec 2013 – Jan 2014 *Summer 2013–2014* Annette Larkin Fine Art, Sydney

Lit: Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



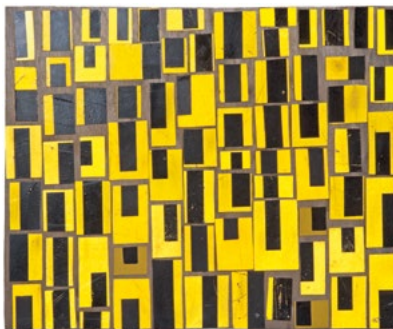
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625

622 Solitude 1997

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on backing board; 106 × 89 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #7, NFS; 1999 *Tōi Tōi Tōi* Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany and Auckland Art Gallery, NZ, #72 (illus. p. 75); 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[33] (illus. p. 21, ref. p. 63)

Lit: *ArtAsiaPacific* no. 23, 1999, illus. p. 24

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

When you've got a lot of material you want to do something different. So I did something different and I called that 'Solitude'. It looks sort of like that, solitude ... (1999 Auckland AG).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

623 Tidal 1997

Sawn painted plywood from cable reels on painted plywood; 45 × 56 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1997 / TIDAL'

Exh: 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #19, \$70,000

Lit: Patricia Anderson *The Australian* 11 May 2004, p. 14

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2004 private collection
Image from author's archive

624 Trumpet voluntary 1997

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs on plywood; 50 × 62 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #18, \$8000

Lit: *ACAF 6* Melbourne, 1998 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 14

Coll: 1998 private collection

The title alludes to the well-known composition by English musician Jeremiah Clarke written in c. 1700 and known as the 'Prince of Denmark's march'.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

625 [White wood study #1]

c. 1995–97

Sawn painted wood on weathered FSC-coated formboard; 18 × 26 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Lit: *NGA Foundation annual report 2014–15* Canberra, illus. p. 64

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.481), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

626 [White wood study #2]

c. 1995–97

Painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, weathered painted plywood; 33.5 × 21 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.482), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne
Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



626

627 [White wood study #3]

c. 1995–97

Painted wood with ink inscriptions, some from cable reels, weathered painted plywood; 19.7 × 33.4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.483), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne
Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



627

628 [White wood study #4]

c. 1995–97

Sawn painted and stencilled wood with ink inscriptions from cable reels, and weathered plywood; 29.5 × 38.5 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.484), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne
Image from author's archive



628

629 [White wood study #6**(with Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière)]**

c. 1995–97

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, part postcard of Ingres's *Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière* 1806 and painted Masonite board, on composition board backing; 51.3 × 40.3 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Ingres's painting *Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière* is in the Louvre museum, Paris.

Image from author's archive



629

630 [White wood study #7]

c. 1995–97

Sawn painted and stencilled wood with ink inscriptions from cable reels, Masonite board and weathered plywood; 25 × 37.2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.485), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

631 [White wood study #8]

c. 1997

Sawn painted plywood from cable reels on weathered plywood; 65.5 × 40 cm; not signed or dated by artist but inscribed verso with certificate that this was a work by Rosalie Gascoigne (and signed Martin Gascoigne)

Exh: 2002/03 Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne (as *Untitled ? 1997*)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2002/03 private collection

Dated on the basis of similarity with materials in *Tidal 1997*. [White wood study #8] is partly visible in studio photographs taken on 15 and 16 March 1998.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

632 [Ziggurat] c. 1996–97

Sawn painted and stencilled wood roadside barriers and retroreflective plywood road sign, composition board backing; 67 × 89.5 × 5 cm; not titled, part signature and part date (see notes)

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis of a work using similar sawn-up road safety material to *Poplars 1996/97*. *Ziggurat* was first used as a title for a 1996 work photographed on 14 July 1996. RG later cut it down, added linoleum strips to one of the parts, and called it *Poplars 1996/97*. The signature and date on the back probably relate to the larger version of [Ziggurat] c. 1996–97. The title alludes to a form of temple built in ancient Mesopotamia as a terraced stepped pyramid of successively receding storeys or levels.

Image from author's archive

1998

633 Banana yellow 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on plywood backing; 70 × 63 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / BANANA YELLOW'

Exh: 2 May 2012 Deutscher and Hackett M., lot 3 (illus.); 24 Sep 2015 Menzies M., lot 31 (illus. p. 54, ref. p. 55); 30 Aug 2017 Bonhams S., lot 6

Coll: 1998 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett

634 Citrus 1998

Sawn painted plywood from cable reels, on weathered painted plywood; four panels: 89 × 81 cm, 89 × 81 cm, 89 × 81 cm, 89 × 76 cm; overall 89 × 315 cm (with spacing) (but see notes)

Exh: 1–4 Oct 1998 Roslyn Oxley9 at *ACAF 6* Melbourne

Coll: private collection

When photographed in the studio the four panels were spaced and BG recorded the measurement overall as 89 × 339 cm; Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery hung the panels closer together, and the measurement overall was given as 88 × 315 cm.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

635 Cloud cuckoo land 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on composition board; 128 × 100 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / CLOUD CUCKOO LAND'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #4, \$18,000; 12 Mar – 15 May 2016 *Panorama Part One* TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC

Lit: Sebastian Smees *SMH Metro* 2 Apr 1998, illus. p. 11; Terry Ingram *Australian Financial Review* 7 Sep 1999, illus.; Suzanne Brown *The Age* 27 Oct 1999 (obit.), illus.; Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998); *Sunday Canberra Times* 6 Nov 2009, illus. p. 7

Coll: 1998 private collection; 2013 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC (Acc no. 2013.078), gift of Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC, donated through the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program

I was lucky that I had different sized letters (1999 Auckland AG).

The term 'cloud cuckoo land' indicates a state of absurdly over-optimistic fantasy (Oxford English Dictionary) and has its origins in Aristophanes's play *The birds*, in which the



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world's birds are persuaded to create a new city in the sky to be called Nubicuculia or Cloud Cuckoo Land.

Image by Andrew Curtis, courtesy of TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC



636

636 Effervescence 1998

Sawn painted stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 30.5 × 29.5 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / EFFERVESCENCE'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #15, \$4500; 16 Mar 2005 Deutscher-Menzies S. (illus. p. 17)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Menzies Art Brands



637

637 Embers I & II 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on backing board; diptych, each unit 37 × 37 cm (hung separated)

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #1 (as *Embers I and II*), \$11,000

Coll: private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



638

638 Flagged down 1998

Sawn painted wood from cable reels, on backing board; 120 × 115 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #10, \$40,000; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[31] (illus. p. 77)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



639

639 Flamingo 1998

Sawn plywood road signs, on backing board; 72 × 46 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1998 private collection (acquired at Capital Arts Patrons' Organisation, Canberra, fundraising auction) (donated by the artist)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

640 **Frontiers I, II, III, IV** 1998

Weathered painted corrugated galvanised iron, on plywood backing; four panels, each abt 110 × 80 cm; overall abt 110 × 330 cm (with spacing)

Exh: 1998 *Expanse* University of South Australia Art Museum, Adelaide, #2 (illus. p. 19, as a single unit in an installation)

Coll: 2000 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Frontier II is a reworked version of a work exhibited at Pinacotheca in 1993 as *Rose red city 10* 1993, which was displayed horizontally (probably on a different backing board). The order of the iron panels was also changed: the top row of *Frontier II* was originally the fourth column of *Rose red city 10*, the second row was originally the fifth (right) column, the third row was originally the first (left) column, the fourth row was originally the third column and the fifth row was possibly the second column in the original.

Frontier IV is a reworked version of a work exhibited at Pinacotheca in 1993 as *Rose red city 9* 1993. The second row of *Frontier IV* was originally the fourth row of *Rose red city 9*, the fourth row was originally the second, and the bottom row was originally the top row, inverted. The two other rows are new material.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

641 **Frontier V** 1993/98

Weathered painted corrugated galvanised iron, on plywood backing; 116 × 129 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / Frontier V / 1998'

Exh: 1998 *Expanse* University of South Australia Art Museum, Adelaide, #2 (illus. pp. 5, 19 (installation view))

Lit: Sarah Thomas 'Expanse: Different ways of seeing landscape' *Art and Australia* vol. 36, no. 4, 1999, illus. p. 485

Coll: 2000 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Frontier V is a reworked version of a work exhibited at Pinacotheca in 1993 as *Rose red city 8* 1993. The top and bottom squares on the left-hand side were swapped, and the old top, now the bottom left-hand square in *Frontier V*, was also inverted.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

642 **Grasslands II** 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 135 × 166 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / Grasslands II'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #1 (as *Never never*), \$25,000; 8 May 2012 Sotheby's M., lot 40 (illus.)

Lit: *Tōi Tōi Tōi* 1999 (exh. cat.), illus. p. 82

Coll: 1998 private collection

Although the 1998 Roslyn Oxley9 exhibition catalogue lists this as *Never never*, the gallery statement of account dated 30 April lists it as *Grasslands*. Titled *Grasslands II* to distinguish it from a 1987 work with the same name.

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



640

643 **[Homage with footballer 2]**
c. 1984–88/1998

Weathered painted wood from soft-drink boxes, retouched newspaper image on plywood cut to shape, plastic doll's leg, metal nail, painted metal numeral; 31 × 26 × 11 cm; signed verso l.l.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1998 private collection (gift of the artist)

One of a pair of works probably begun in the mid-1980s, when RG combined cut-out figures from her stockpile with wood from dismantled soft-drink boxes, which she used as backgrounds and, eventually, to frame the figures. An early version, unframed, with the same blue background piece can just be seen on the studio wall in a photograph taken in late 1985 (see *Vogue Living* Feb 1986, p. 112). RG added a second figure and the revised work can be seen in a photograph of the studio taken in 1988. The additional figure was later removed and a plastic leg superimposed on the right leg of the original figure (a leg was used in the same way in *Down to the silver sea* 1977/81). The yellow frame was added after 10 March 1998. The silhouette cut figures probably date from c. 1977 when RG made several works using such figures, as in *Footballers* 1978–79 and *[Lillee and daffodils]* c. 1977–78; she made more than she used at the time and there were still some in the studio when she died.

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



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644 Magpie 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled wood with inscriptions from cable reels, on backing board; 55 × 54 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #19, \$18,000

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

645 March 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 26 × 50 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #11, \$6500

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image from author's archive

646 Medusa 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs on backing board; 70 × 70 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #14, \$10,000; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[76] (illus. p. 104, ref. p. 136)

Lit: Sebastian Smee *SMH Metro* 2 Apr 1998, illus. p. 11; Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998)

Coll: 1998 private collection

The title is a reference to a Greek mythological figure usually described as having the face of a hideous human female with venomous snakes in place of hair.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

647 Memorial 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 39.5 × 25 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Image from author's archive

648 Orangery 1998

Sawn painted wood from cable reels, on backing board; triptych, 106 × 83 cm, 107 × 82 cm, 107 × 80 cm, overall abt 107 × 274.5 cm; each panel inscribed verso l.r. as follows: (panel 1) 'OVERALL LENGTH OF PIECE / 2745 mm / (ONE OF THREE PANELS) / Rosalie Gascoigne / ORANGERY I / 1998', (panel 2) 'ORANGERY / (TWO ofTHREE) / R.G. / 1998', (panel 3) 'ORANGERY / (THREE OFTHREE) / R.G. / 1998'

Exh: 1999 *3rd Clemenger Triennial* Heide MOMA (ref. p. 16, illus. p. 17); 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #3, \$60,000; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[32] (illus. pp. 78–79) (incorrectly sized)

Lit: Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 47

Coll: 1999 The Fletcher Trust Collection, NZ

RG told Peter Shaw (curator of the Fletcher Trust) in 1999 that the yellow-orange colour of the wood in this work reminded her of the colour of the skirt she had worn at Epsom Girls Grammar School (EGGS) (27 May 2016 P Shaw to MG). There are similar comments in Ian North (1999, p. 16) (with a reference to a 'gym smock') and Gregory O'Brien ('Plain air/plain song' 2004, p. 47). Christine Black, the archivist at EGGS, advised Shaw in September 2017 that there was no gym smock as part of the uniform in the years 1930–1934 and suggested that the 'skirt' Rosalie spoke of to him in 1999 was probably part of a hockey uniform that was formally introduced in 1938 but could very likely have been part of the dress code earlier. Rosalie played both tennis and hockey when at EGGS, where she was a student until the end of 1934 (and her mother a teacher until 1942).

Image by Kallan McLeod, courtesy of Peter Shaw, The Fletcher Trust Collection, Auckland, NZ

649 Origami 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on weathered painted plywood backing; 81 × 76 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne 1998 / ORIGAMI'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #2, \$11,000

Coll: 1998 private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

650 **Palings** 1994/98

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on composition board backing; 80 × 89 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996–1998 / PALINGS' and also inscribed verso u.c. 'TOP' with arrow

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #8, \$12,500 (dated 1998)

Coll: 1998 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (Acc no. 98758), gift of Helen Brown

Photographs show that *Palings* 1994/98 was largely constructed of components made in 1994 and incorporated in two uncatalogued precursors (identified here as *Precursor A* and *B*), both photographed on 12 January 1995 but later dismantled. The format used in 1998 is an inverted version of the format used in the two 1994 precursors (and in *Out of Africa* 1994). The eleven vertical boards that make up the lower right part of *Palings* 1994/98 were originally in the middle of *Precursor A*; further, on the fifth and sixth boards from the right the original orange markings have been sanded off or painted over. The remainder of the boards making up the lower panel (except for the panel on the edge) originally were the unit at the top right of *Precursor B* (minus the two right-hand columns). The panel in the top left corner was originally part of the top right panel of *Precursor A* with the top cut off and the two right panels removed. The two precursors also incorporated three wood studies from 1994 (see [*Wood study with orange and black markings*], [*Wood study with orange markings*] and [*Yellow wood study #2*]). The first photograph of the final version of *Palings* 1994/98 was taken in August 1998.

Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

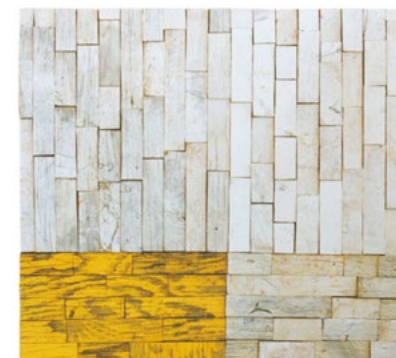
Photographs of the two precursors, A and B, showing how the artist interchanged her units or 'studies' in a larger work, by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



650



650A



650B



651

651 Pavement [III] 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood with inscriptions, from cable reels, on backing board; 69 × 52 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / PAVEMENT'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #19 (as *Pavement*), \$7500; 20 Jun 2018 Bonhams S., lot 138 (illus. p. 146)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Pavement [III] was the third work with the *Pavement* title but the first to be exhibited.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



652

652 Rain and shine 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 120 × 122 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #5, \$30,000

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

653 [Red squares] 1998

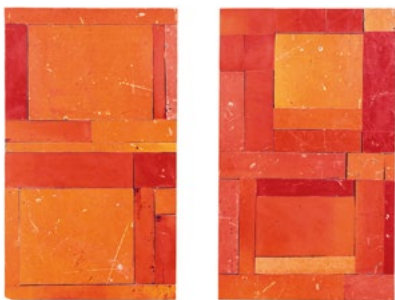
Sawn plywood road signs on backing board; two panels, each 64 × 37.5 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #18 (as *NYT (Red squares)*), \$30,000

Coll: 1999 private collection

One of three works in RG's 1999 exhibition that she did not get around to naming because she was too ill to visit Sydney to supervise the hanging or see the show. 'NYT Red squares' was the gallery's means of identifying the work (NYT = not yet titled and 'Red squares' is a description). The right-hand panel is visible in studio photographs taken on 16 March and 5 August 1998 (there is no sign of the other panel).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



653



654

654 Rose hips 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on weathered plywood backing; 88 × 66 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1998/99 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

In the early years on Mount Stromlo I remember RG once made rose-hip jam with hips picked from wild plants.

Image from author's archive

655 Ruby rose 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on plywood backing board; 110 × 90 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / RUBY ROSE'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 private collection (through Greenaway Gallery)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



655

656 Semaphore 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood with inscriptions from cable reels, on weathered plywood backing; 83 × 73 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / SEMAPHORE'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive



656

657 Shark 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs on plywood, on backing board; abt 34 × 32 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / SHARK'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #23, \$5000; 2006 *Found Out* Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery, NSW; 2008 *Blue Chip X* Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, #40 (illus. p. 50); 23 Oct 2012 *A Private Collection* Mossgreen S., lot 1 (illus.)

Lit: *Art and Australia* vol. 43, no. 3, 2006, p. 450 (installation view); Mary Eagle 2007, illus. p. 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998); Martin Gascoigne 'Shark' *Blue chip X* Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 2008 (exh. cat.), p. 66

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



657

658 Ship's log 1996/98

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes on backing board; 59 × 92 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #13 (dated 1997/98), \$10,500

Lit: Mary Eagle 2007, p. 205, illus. pp. 201, 204 (in studio 16 Mar 1998)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Photographs show that the left-hand side was constructed in 1996. There is no image of the right-hand side by itself. The first image of the two units brought together is in March 1998.

Image courtesy of Deutscher and Hackett



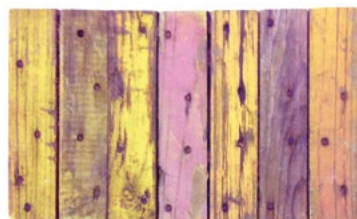
658



659



660



661



662

659 Slow burn 1998

Sawn painted, stencilled and inscribed plywood from cable reels, on weathered plywood backing; 52 × 30 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #18, \$6500

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image from author's archive

660 [Study: seven coloured boards A] c. 1990–98

Painted wood boards with nails from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 18.5 × 32 cm; signed verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne'

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: c. 1998 private collection (The Netherlands) (gift of the artist)

Image from author's archive

661 [Study: seven coloured boards B] c. 1990–98

Painted wood boards with nails from soft-drink boxes, plywood backing; 18.5 × 31.2 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.567), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

Image from author's archive

662 [Study with FSC-coated wood] 1998

Weathered and sawn FSC-coated plywood formboard, on plywood backing; 58 × 47 × abt 4 cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[34] (as *Untitled* c. 1998) (ref. p. 63)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Dated on the basis of a March 1998 photograph of the studio (with *[Study with FSC-coated wood]* on the floor, under construction).

Image from author's archive

663 [Study with painted road signs A & B] c. 1990–98

Painted weathered plywood; diptych; 36.3 × 38.3 cm, 36.6 × 38 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.491), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne

The central squares might be part of a sawn roadside notice, but very possibly RG did some of the lettering.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



663

664 [Study with retroreflective letter R] c. 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on weathered wood; 23.7 × 46 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2015 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2015.492), gift of Hester, Martin and Toss Gascoigne
Dated on the basis of 1998 photographs of the studio.

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



664

665 Swarm I 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 29 × 29 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / SWARM I'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #9, \$4500; 17 May 2011 Sotheby's M., lot 23 (illus.)

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia



665

666 Swarm II 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 29 × 28 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1998 / SWARM II'

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #10, \$4500

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image from author's archive



666

667 Tartan 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from cable reels, on backing board; 91 × 93 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #13, \$35,000 (illus. on invitation); 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[77] (illus. p. 113, ref. p. 136)

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image by Carl Warner, courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



667



668



669



670

668 **Thermals** 1998

Sawn painted, stencilled and inscribed wood from cable reels, on backing board; 84 × 77 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #11, \$10,500

Coll: 1998 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

669 **Torch** 1998

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 50 × 26 cm

Exh: 1998 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway, Adelaide, #19, \$6500; 1–4 Oct 1998 Greenaway Gallery at *ACAF 6* Melbourne

Coll: private collection

Photograph by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

670 **Traffic snarl** 1998

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 122 × 121 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #4, \$30,000

Lit: *Art/Text* no. 65, (May/Jul) 1999, illus. p. 3; Julie Ewington 'Junk turns to truth, Rosalie Gascoigne 1917–1999' *The Bulletin* 9 Nov 1999 (obit.), illus. p. 101

Coll: Jul 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

671 **Tribal** 1996/1997–98

Sawn painted plywood from cable reels, on plywood backing; 75.2 × 47.5 × 2.3 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r.: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1996 / TRIBAL' (see notes)

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[31] (dated 1996) (illus. p. 26, ref. pp. 25, 63); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #17 (dated 1996), \$75,000

Lit: Peter Hill *SMH Spectrum* 24–25 Apr 2004, illus. p. 9; Patricia Anderson *The Australian* 11 May 2004, illus. p. 14

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2004 private collection

The shortened signature came about when RG cut a 12 cm wide strip from the left-hand side of the original (before August 1998). She kept the offcut, which is visible in a view of the studio taken on 5 August 1998. The original version was 75.5 × 59 cm when photographed on 20 May 1997 and was never exhibited.

Regarding the resizing of *Tribal*, RG's studio assistant recalled: 'Her works, no matter at what stage of completion, were open to reformation. When she edited *Tribal* by cutting a narrow strip off the left, where the composition had folded back on itself, she made it bigger than itself: it was no small improvement' (Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 25).

Photograph A by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive

Photograph B (1st state, before cut) by Ben Gascoigne, from author's archive

672 **Western plains** 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood from cable reels, on backing board; 102.5 × 89 cm

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: Sep 1999 private collection (New Zealand) (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



671A



671B



672

673 [White wood study #5]

c. 1995/98

Sawn painted and stencilled plywood with inscriptions from cable reels and weathered plywood (three panels), on composition board backing; 36 × 63 cm; not inscribed

Exh: not exhibited

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

RG displayed the work in her sitting room.

Image from author's archive



673

674 [Yellow wood cubes] 1998

Sawn painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes and/or cable reels, on backing board; 46 × 48 cm; signed and dated verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne 1998'

Exh: 3–21 Jun 2003 *Modern Australian Painting* Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, #17 (as *Title unknown inscribed Studio #14 1998*) (illus.)

Coll: 1999 artist's estate; 2003 private collection

Dated on the basis that several other works using small pieces of yellow soft-drink boxes were also made in 1998: see particularly *March*, *Swarm I* and *Swarm II*.

Image from author's archive



674



675

1999

675 Birdsong 1999

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 122 × 90 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1999 / BIRDSONG'

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #7, \$45,000; 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Wellington, NZ, #[33] (illus. p. 32)

Lit: Gregory O'Brien 'Plain air/plain song' 2004, pp. 35, 42 (for extended discussion on bird themes); William McAloon 2004; Gregory O'Brien 2005, illus. p. 76

Coll: c. 1999 private collection (New Zealand)

Image courtesy of Justin Miller Fine Art, Sydney

676 Carnival [2] 1998/99

Sawn painted wood (some from cable reels), on plywood; 84 × 77 cm; signed, dated and titled verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1999 / CARNIVAL'

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #17, \$30,000 (dated 1998); 19 Feb – 28 Mar 2009 *Adventures in Collecting from the Reg and Sally Richardson Collection* National Art School, Sydney (dated 1998)

Coll: 1999 private collection

Re dating, first photographed mid-1998 with a backing of weathered plywood and size recorded as 100.5 × 71 cm (irregular), but ultimately exhibited without the background, squared up, and sized as indicated. Regarding RG's interest in the circus, see notes on *Travelling circus* 1981.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



676

677 Cumquats 1999

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 68 × 51 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #15, \$30,000

Coll: 1999 private collection

A cumquat tree grew outside the kitchen at Pearce where it thrived until dying suddenly. RG made marmalade from the fruit and sometimes preserved the fruit in brandy.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



677

678 Directives 1999

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 111 × 88.5 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #12, \$38,000

Lit: John McDonald 'A life littered with pure talent' *SMH* 27 Oct 1999, illus. p. 13

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



678



679



679 (Panel 1)



679 (Panel 2)



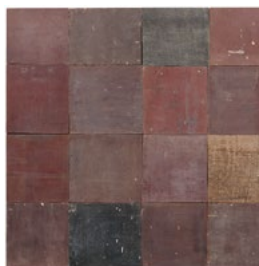
679 (Panel 3)



679 (Panel 4)



679 (Panel 5)



679 (Panel 6)



679 (Panel 7)



679 (Panel 8)



679 (Panel 9)



679 (Courtyard)



679 (Panel 10)

679 Earth 1999

Weathered FSC-coated plywood formboard on backing board; installation of ten panels (E1–E10): E1 118 × 107 cm, E2 117 × 95 cm, E3 113 × 88.5 cm, E4 126 × 102 cm, E5 106.5 × 97.5 cm, E6 135 × 132.5 cm, E7 112 × 86 cm, E8 107 × 97 cm, E9 152 × 104.5 cm, E10 100 × 88 cm, overall dimensions variable; not signed or dated by artist, but each panel inscribed verso with title and number and also with the following: ‘Certificate that this work is by Rosalie Gascoigne April 2004 Martin Gascoigne’

Exh: 2000 *From the Studio* ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, #[36] (illus. p. 14 (E10 and E6), p. 18 (E9), p. 22 (precursor), ref. p. 63); 2004 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #1–10; 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[78] (ref. pp. 23, 136, illus. p. 120 (E1 and E4), p. 121 (E6 and E9))

Lit: Paul Greenaway 1999 (obit.), p. 75; Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 14; Peter Vandermark and Marie Hagerty in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 25; Sasha Grishin *Canberra Times* 16 Sep 2000; Merryn Gates ‘Reflections on Rosalie’ *Muse* [Canberra] Oct 2000, illus. (E6); Kate Sands 2001, p. 44; *Australian Art Market Report* Apr 2004, illus. p. 24 (E8); Patricia Anderson *The Australian* 11 May 2004, p. 14; Jenny Sages ‘Artist’s choice: Rosalie Gascoigne — Earth 9’ *Art and Australia* vol. 44, no. 1, 2006, p. 44, illus. p. 45 (E9); Judith Keller 2007, illus. (E3) facing p. 315; Martin Gascoigne ‘Rosalie Gascoigne: Earth’ 2008, pp. 38–41, illus. p. 38 (precursor), p. 39 (E4), pp. 40–41 (installation view E1–E10); Laura Murray Cree ‘Rosalie Gascoigne eternal verities’ *Art World* Dec 2008 – Jan 2009, illus. p. 81 (E9)

Coll: 1999 artist’s estate; 2008 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra (Acc no. 2008.7.1–10), gift of Ben Gascoigne AO and family

Earth is made from thick, FSC-coated plywood formboard. In 1996 RG tried arrangements of the straight-cut wood in the courtyard outside the studio. A photograph taken in August 1996 shows squares of formboard set out on the paving in the courtyard and a large panel made of formboard rectangles similar to *Earth* leaning against a wall.

Earth was constructed with help from Ben Gascoigne and Peter Vandermark. Both later gave accounts of their involvement and the construction process. BG wrote: *The last works I helped Rosalie with were from the penultimate group, for which her working title was Earth ... The components were glued on with ‘liquid nails’, a glue new to me, which was extruded from a large tube rather like toothpaste, except that it required considerably more effort than toothpaste, the effort being supplied by me. So I extruded the glue on to the bases and the backs of the rectangles, Rosalie put the rectangles in place, and slid them around until they were properly positioned. The glue hardened within fifteen minutes, leaving no time to waste,*

and the whole process was quite exhilarating, especially if one of the rectangles turned up in the wrong place (BG 2000, p. 14).

Peter Vandermark remembered thus: *She would never pre-empt the size of a work. The fact that the Earth panels are such different sizes is typical of Rosalie’s intuitive approach. When she began, it was never going to be ten or eleven separate works. She treated them as one. As it happened she did not finalise the number or sequence or way of displaying the Earth panels. She wanted to see them away from the studio, in a clean art environment, but time ran out ... The sides of that work are perfectly square, cut to instructions. And Earth [9] was cut to instructions too. She wanted those effects ... She knew the material and making those Earth panels it was almost as if she did not need to look at a piece of formboard to know its colour quality and precisely what would happen between the boards when she put them side by side. By this time I believe she knew the whole gamut of possibilities of the formboard and threw herself upon that knowledge. Also, I’d notice how she would orient the rectangles of wood so that the grain went one way, then another: they’d refract the light differently. When you think about it, for the last ten years, she worked most successfully in a restrained palette and achieved colour effects through minimal means. Just think of the quiet Earth, the contrast with the dizzy Parrot Country of 1980 (Peter Vandermark in Mary Eagle 2000, p. 25).*

The numbers given to the *Earth* panels do not indicate a display sequence; rather, they were BG’s means of identifying each panel in his records. His photographic records give an indication of the construction sequence: E4, E5 and E6 were photographed on 18 April 1998; E1, E2, E7, E9 and E10 were photographed between 1 and 9 June, and E5 (again) and E8 before 29 June. All photographs were in the studio; the one exception was E3, probably because it was hanging in the house. As with other multi-panel works (e.g. *Letting go* 1991), RG would have arranged the panels to best suit the demands of the location.

Paul Greenaway remembers visiting Rosalie just after she had completed ‘a major new work’. She described it to him as being ‘from the Earth’, saying prophetically, ‘it looks like death, where do I go from here?’ (Paul Greenaway 1999, p. 75). RG made no final decision about how the works should be exhibited. But she had given some thought to the question, deciding against including it with the many yellow retroreflective road sign and soft-drink box works that she exhibited at Roslyn Oxley9 in 1999.

Images of installation and *Earth* panels courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra Photograph of FSC-coated formboard squares in the courtyard at Anstey Street, Pearce, 1996, by Ben Gascoigne from author’s archive

680 Fiesta 1999

Sawn painted wood from cable reels,
on backing board; 61.5 × 51 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9,
Sydney, #20, \$18,000

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,
Sydney



680



681

681 Fishbowl 1999

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs,
on backing board; 32 × 37 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9,
Sydney, #21, \$10,000

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,
Sydney

682 Grassfest 1999

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from
soft-drink boxes, on backing board; 106.5 ×
101 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie
Gascoigne / 1999 / Grassfest'

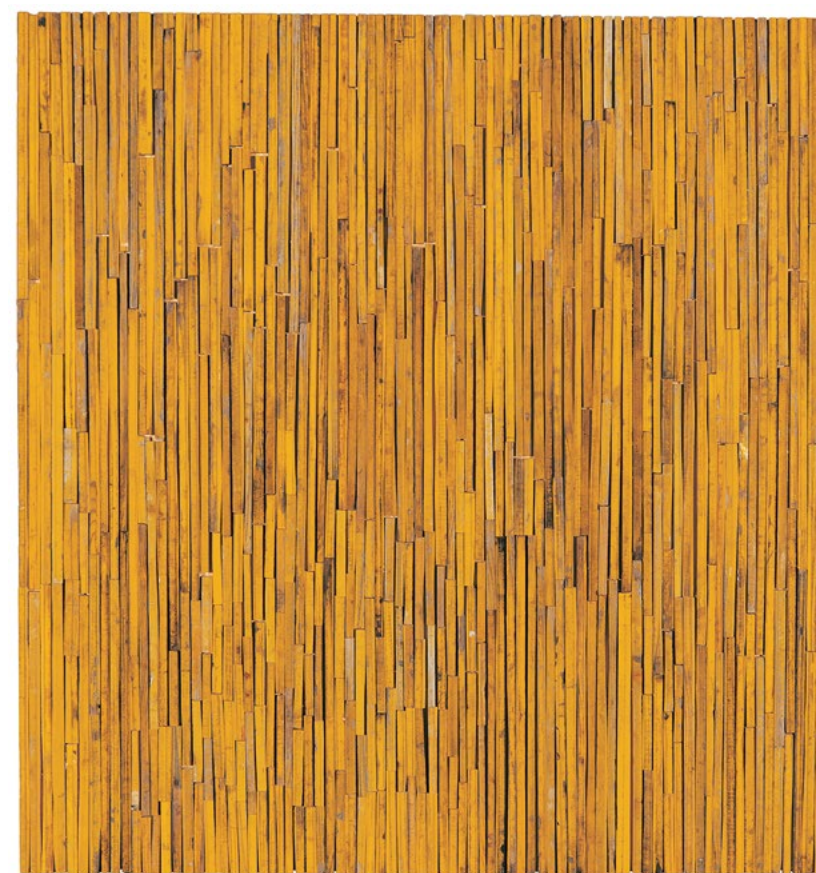
Exh: 2008 *Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV, #[79]
(illus. p. 94, ref. p. 136)

Lit: *QUT Art Museum handbook* 2000,
illus. p. 21

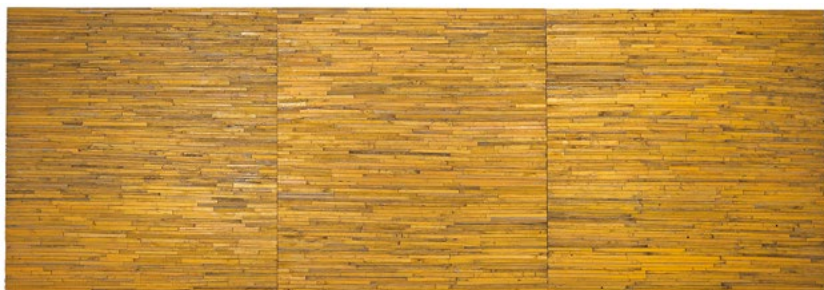
Coll: 1999 Queensland University of
Technology Art Collection, Brisbane (Acc no.
1999.007) (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery)

Regarding the title, so taken was Rosalie
with the summer grass around Canberra she
once proposed that Canberra should host
a grass festival: *I always have the feeling, it would
be very nice in Canberra some time, instead of
having a lilac festival [as Goulburn did], to have
a celebration of the grass, because I think our grass
is magnificent. Whenever I talk of grass festivals
everybody immediately thinks that people can sit
around smoking marijuana. But I wouldn't mind
that. I think we ought to celebrate our grass, that
is, the ordinary ryegrass [Lolium perenne], there
is an awful lot of it* (1985 School of Art).

Image courtesy of the Queensland University
of Technology Art Collection, Brisbane



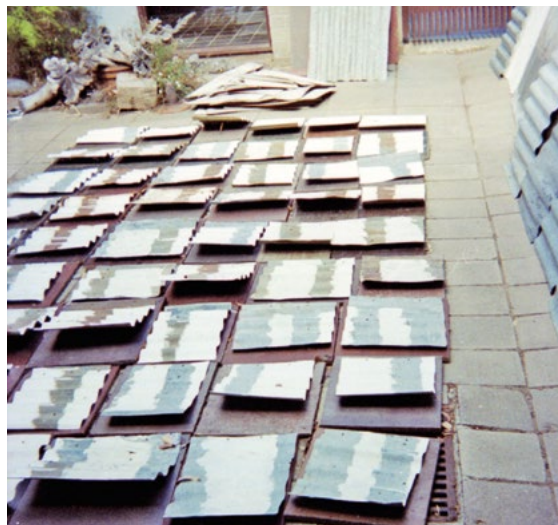
682



683



684A



684B

683 Great blond paddocks 1998–99

Sawn or split painted and stencilled wood from soft-drink boxes, on composition board backing; three panels hung as one: 122.2 × 115.1 cm, 120.5 × 115.1 cm, 119.9 × 120 cm; overall 122.2 × 350.2 cm; left panel signed, dated, titled and numbered verso l.r. in black fibre-tipped pen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1999 / GREAT BLONDE / PADDOCKS / 3 PIECES NO 1'; centre panel signed, titled and numbered verso l.r.: 'GREAT BLONDE PADDOCKS / No. 2 / R.G.'; right panel signed, titled and numbered verso l.r.: 'GREAT BLONDE PADDOCKS / NO. 3 / R.G.'

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #2, \$60,000

Lit: Deborah Edwards 'Made from the land' *Look* [Art Gallery Society of NSW magazine] Oct 1999, pp. 20–21 (with illus.), illus. cover (detail); Bronwyn Oliver 'Artist's choice: Rosalie Gascoigne — Great blond paddocks' *Art and Australia* vol. 37, no. 4, 2000, pp. 537–538 (with illus.); Sebastian Smee 'Going bush (Bronwyn Oliver)' *SMH* 12 Jan 2000, p. 8 (with illus.); Ben Gascoigne 2000, p. 13; Leigh R Davis 'Notes on yes and no' *Journal of New Zealand Literature* no. 18–19, 2000/2001, pp. 55–57

Coll: 1999 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (Acc no. 55.1999 a–c), purchased with funds provided by the Art Gallery Society of NSW

RG changed the spelling of the title to 'BLOND' in discussion with Vivienne Webb (AGNSW file note dated 8/6/99) and told her that the title was a quote from David Campbell's poem 'In summer's tree', the last two lines of which read 'And the great blond paddocks / Come down from the hill' (quoted by arrangement with the licensor, David Campbell Estate, c/- Curtis Brown (Aust) Pty Ltd). When RG had finished the panels she had them photographed in the studio between 23 December 1998 and February 1999, first with a gap of about 5 cm between the units and with the first and second panels swapped and then as a single unit with the panels in their final arrangement. *Great blond paddocks* 1998–99 was sent to Sydney on 16 March 1999.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

684 High country [2] 1999

Weathered painted corrugated iron, on painted plywood backing; 134 × 121 cm; signed, dated and titled verso: 'Rosalie Gascoigne / 1999 / HIGH COUNTRY'

Exh: 1 Dec 2011 – 4 Feb 2012 *Group Show* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney; 13–17 Aug 2014 Roslyn Oxley9 at *Melbourne Art Fair* 2015; *The Daylight Moon* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW (illus. pp. 29, 31)

Lit: *Art Monthly Australia* no. 126, Dec 1999, illus. p. 51; Peter Haynes *Canberra Times* 13 Jul 2015 (ref., illus.)

Coll: 1999 private collection (through Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery); 2018 Art Gallery of South Australia (Acc No 2018S513), gift of an anonymous donor through the Australian Government's Cultural Gift Program.

Catalogued as *High country [2]* to distinguish it from a 1986 work with the same title. Photographs of the courtyard at Pearce taken in 1998 show a much larger grid of the iron used in *High country [2]* placed on squares of formboard.

Image A courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Photograph B by Ben Gascoigne from author's archive (corrugated iron squares in the courtyard at Anstey Street, Pearce, April 1998)



686



687



688



689

686 Parasol 1999

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 123 × 106.5 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #6, \$50,000

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

687 Printed circuit 1999

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs, on backing board; 96 × 95 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #11, \$40,000

Lit: *The Bulletin* 7 Sep 1999, illus. p. 111; *Object No 1*, Object Gallery, Customs House Sydney, 2000

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

688 [The still of the night] c. 1998–99

Weathered corrugated galvanised iron and FSC-coated plywood formboard, on plywood backing; 82 × 84 × 7 (variable) cm; not inscribed

Exh: 2000 *12th Biennale of Sydney* (as *Construction 1999*); 2000 *From the Studio ANU Drill Hall Gallery*, Canberra, #[35] (as *Untitled 1999*) (ref. p. 63)

Coll: artist's personal collection; 2014 private collection (by descent)

Displayed in R.G.'s sitting room in 1999.

Image from author's archive

689 [Untitled (Little one)] 1999

Sawn plywood road signs, on backing board; 30.5 × 36 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #22 (as *NYT (Little one)*), \$10,000

Coll: 1999 private collection

One of three works in R.G.'s 1999 exhibition that she did not get around to naming because she was too ill to visit Sydney to supervise the hanging or see the show. 'NYT Little one' was the gallery's means of identifying the work (NYT = not yet titled and 'Little one' is a reference to its size — the smallest work in the exhibition).

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

690 [Untitled (SRTO)] 1999

Sawn plywood road signs, on backing board; 61 × 121.5 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #14 (as *NYT (SRTO)*), \$35,000; 27 Jun 2006 Webb's Auckland NZ, lot 45 (illus.)

Coll: 1999 private collection

One of three works in R.G.'s 1999 exhibition that she did not get around to naming because she was too ill to visit Sydney to supervise the hanging or see the show. 'NYT SRTO' was the gallery's means of identifying the work (NYT = not yet titled and 'SRTO' is four of the letters in the work). Webb's catalogue says the work is 'title inscribed, signed and dated 1999 verso' but in the circumstances the title at least would appear to have been by another hand, and not the artist's.

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

691 Valentine 1999

Sawn plywood road signs, on backing board; 106 × 106 cm; signed and dated verso

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #9, \$45,000; 23 Aug – 10 Sep 2000 *A Selection of Important Australian and New Zealand Paintings* Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney, #9 (illus.)

Coll: 1999 private collection

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

692 Windows 1999

Sawn plywood retroreflective road signs and coated/painted Masonite board, with backing board; 121.5 × 89.5 cm

Exh: 1999 *Rosalie Gascoigne* Roslyn Oxley9, Sydney, #8, \$45,000

Coll: 2000 private collection

See *Skylight* 1993 for similar use of the same materials and theme.

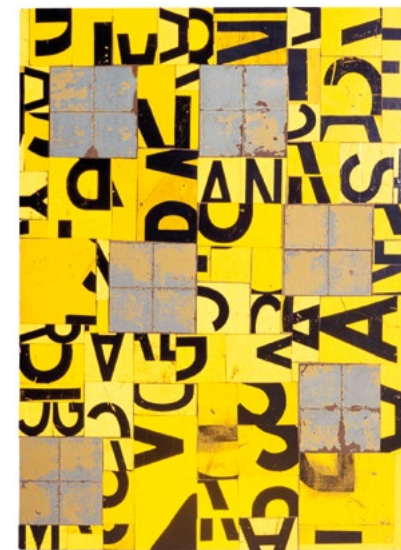
Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



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APPENDICES

Overleaf: National Gallery of Victoria 2008: the gallery of yellow works (left to right) *Skylight* 1993, *Medusa* 1998, *Golden bamboo* 1997, *Downbeat* 1997, *Fool's gold* 1992, *Plenty* 1986 and *Monaro* 1988–89

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

APPENDIX 1: SOLO EXHIBITIONS

This listing of Rosalie's solo exhibitions includes two joint exhibitions: with Peter Booth as the official Australian entry at the 1982 Venice Biennale and with Colin McCahon in *Sense of Place* 1990 at the Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW Sydney, and the Ian Potter Gallery, University of Melbourne. Where the names or dates of works listed in an exhibition vary from those used in this catalogue raisonné, a cross-reference is included, either in the list or in the exhibition comments. Exhibition documentation listings do not include correspondence with the gallery involved, mostly regarding sales; such correspondence is accessible in the RG papers, National Library of Australia, Canberra. Documentation includes references to images of the exhibition displays. Regarding Notices, the title of the notice might not refer to RG's exhibition if more than one exhibition was discussed. Extracts from notices are quoted, sufficient to indicate the flavour of the reviewer's response, but not always the full review. Exhibition comments also include comments by RG in correspondence with family members and in her talks and interviews.

1974

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE ASSEMBLAGES, Macquarie Galleries, Furneaux Street, Forrest, Canberra, 15–26 June 1974. 50 works listed.

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- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Bath of balls \$45 | 12. Steam jet [Steam c. 1971–73] \$50 | 20. Parrot house [Parrot lady 1973] NFS |
| 2. William Tell \$120 | 13. Gay lady \$15 | 21. Lecherous O'Leary [Pub 1974] \$150 |
| 3. Hanging yellow bird \$120 | 14. Elephant \$30 | 22. Sir Bagby \$30 |
| 4. Cityscape NFS | 15. Loan from Academy [Eagle 1972] \$150 | 23. Wired wool \$200 [\$20?] |
| 5. Miss Neujean \$90 | 16. Harvest [Standing piece 1973/74] \$120 | 24. Leg room [Monument 1974] \$75 |
| 6. Nail stack [Collection [1] 1974] \$66 | 17. Elephant pot \$60 | 25. The dredge \$150 |
| 7. Back verandah \$140 | 18. Jap[anese] bathing \$33 | 26. The miners \$60 |
| 8. Farmer's daughter \$30 | 19. 2 lovely blue eyes [Two lovely blue eyes 1974] \$140 | 27. The pram \$30 |
| 9. Two owls (pair) \$30 | | 28. The cow \$30 |
| 10. Woolly wood \$75 | | 29. Sweater girl [Murrumbidgee Venus c. 1973–74] \$90 |
| 11. Friends and relatives \$50 | | |

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 30. Surveyor's pegs \$75 | 38. Anemone box \$66 | 44. Pickled glass [Bottled glass 1974]
\$150 |
| 31. (no title) NFS | 39. Needle case \$75 | 45. Deserted house \$150 |
| 32. Hydrant \$66 | 40. Madonna and child \$100 | 46. Dunny door \$90 |
| 33. Dance of the sunflower \$90 | 41. Love in a cottage [The cottage 1974]
\$100 | 47. The politician \$75 |
| 34. Norco (after Gruner) \$140 | 42. Twig tidy \$100 | 48. (no title) (no price) |
| 35. Hard water [Tap 1974] \$140 | 43. S.A. hat rack [Hat rack c. 1971–72]
\$33 | 49. (no title) NFS |
| 36. The ballerina \$30 | | 50. Balls (no price) |
| 37. Spine \$90 | | |

Exh. handwritten list of works; exh. inv.

NOTICES: Geoffrey de Groen 'Prints of classical brilliance' *Canberra Times* 20 Jun 1974, p. 10; see also Jacqueline Rees 'Dried flowers to bones' *Canberra Times* 20 Jun 1974, p. 3 (photo of R.G)

Geoffrey de Groen: 'Rosalie Gascoigne in her first one-man exhibition shows she is equipped to tackle the problems of assemblage. Occasionally there are lapses of taste or judgment but generally her efforts are interesting and sometimes very good indeed ... There are some delightful surprises and some unlikely situations. The only criticism I have is that there is no major piece and that there are far too many on view in the gallery itself ... I personally think it is an exhibition worth visiting. Although it is not profound it is quite an achievement for a first one-man show.'

COMMENT: The exhibition included works made of welded metal, dried grasses and in boxes. The catalogue did not list dimensions or materials and there are no other records of some of the exhibits. R.G had had little time to prepare because the show was scheduled at short notice to fill an unexpected gap in the gallery's program, but she was not concerned because she had a lot of work on hand. Many works were titled by the proprietor, Anna Simons. R.G 'remembers the gallery owner frantically thinking up "unsuitable" names such as Baby Blue Eyes for documentation purposes'. James Mollison had told her 'not to be too proud to show her roots', but she later came to regard that as bad advice. She had 'just got into the boxes, which I really began to believe in more than all the iron figures and things that I had done' and she later wished she had concentrated on showing the boxes. 'The gallery was stuffed, you couldn't see a thing. [The gallery] got people like [the poet] David Campbell and establishment Canberra people in. And what they all rushed and bought were the iron figures. They left the boxes, which I think were \$150, and some of them were good, they really were good ... Geoff de Groen was pretty patronizing ... Said some of it was very good indeed but filled me with patronage everywhere else ... And then James moved in and said: "I want three of these for the Philip Morris [Arts Grant collection]". Glory again, surprise, surprise. So then I felt I was real, so if anybody had a go at me I could say Philip Morris ... you needed ... a little bit of identity.' R.G later destroyed most of the iron works that did not sell.¹

¹ 'R.G remembers': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 25; 'James Mollison', 'just got into boxes' and 'the gallery was stuffed': 1982 North. James Mollison purchased two works for the Philip Morris Arts Grant collection of 'young, bold and innovative artists' in September 1974 and two more in early 1975. The collection was donated to the ANG in 1982 (see 22 Sep 1974 BG to TG, 24 Feb 1975 RG to TG and *The Philip Morris Arts Grant: Australian art of the last ten years* ANG, Canberra, 1982, p. 82).

1976

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE ASSEMBLAGE, Gallery A, 21 Gipps Street, Paddington, Sydney, 11 September – 2 October 1976. 54 works listed.

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- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Dolly boxes \$450 | 19. Small parrot \$60 | 37. Norco cows \$175 |
| 2. Carnival [1] \$400 | 20. Bone board [Interior decoration 1975] \$200 | 38. The crop [Crop [1] 1976] \$500 |
| 3. Flower tower 1 \$250 | 21. Cows 4 ways \$80 | 39. Window [Pink window 1975] NFS |
| 4. Flower tower 2 \$250 | 22. Bucket of flowers \$150 | 40. Blocks \$300 |
| 5. Vertical hold \$250 | 23. Yellow hand \$250 | 41. Cow antics \$150 |
| 6. Flight of parrots \$150 | 24. Italian birds \$350 | 42. Tiepolo parrots \$350 |
| 7. Colonel's lady [The colonel's lady] \$350 | 25. Jim's picnic \$350 | 43. Buttercups \$250 |
| 8. Landscape [1] \$350 | 26. Cricketers [1] \$150 | 44. Bird sanctuary \$350 |
| 9. Cow \$60 | 27. Flora Galop \$350 | 45. Set table [Games table 1975–76] \$750 |
| 10. The cottage \$300 | 28. Travelling hopefully \$250 | 46. Blue flower tower \$250 |
| 11. The Pepper Pot \$300 | 29. Victoriana \$60 | 47. Pub \$350 |
| 12. Peg rack \$60 | 30. Enamel ware \$450 | 48. Sideboard piece \$450 |
| 13. Strung up \$60 | 31. Doll's house \$400 | 49. Friends \$100 |
| 14. Straws \$60 | 32. Tree tops [Parrot morning 1976] \$400 | 50. Boxer \$200 |
| 15. Black birds \$200 | 33. Tap \$350 | 51. Grey choices \$150 |
| 16. Triptych \$450 | 34. Black bird box \$350 | 52. Angels \$350 |
| 17. The phone call \$100 | 35. Pink parrots \$150 | 53. Mosaic \$400 |
| 18. Winter morning \$200 | 36. Pet sheep NFS | 54. Heraldic beasts \$150 |
-

Exh. typed list of works; exh. inv.; Daniel Thomas 2004; Hannah Fink 2009 (with installation views); Kelly Gellatly 2008 (exh. cat.), p. 125 (two installation views); 35 mm slides of display at Gallery A archive, AGNSW

NOTICES: Nancy Borlase 'Thai sculpture' *SMH* 17 Sep 1976; Sandra McGrath 'Top of the barnyard school' *The Australian* 19 Sep 1976; Eneide Mignacca 'White lies in the landscape' *Nation Review* 17–23 Sep 1976, p. 1196; ER [Elizabeth Reeve] 'Exhibitions' *Vogue Australia* Sep 1976, pp. 45–46 (with illus., detail of *Dolly boxes* 1976); 'Exhibition commentary' *Art and Australia* vol. 14, no. 2, 1976, p. 138 (illus. of *Pink window* 1975 captioned 'Window 1976')

Sandra McGrath: 'If ever there was an exhibition designed to lift the spirit, capture the imagination and astound, it is Rosalie Gascoigne's at Gallery A in Sydney ... It is ethnic art, folk art perhaps — but organised with such a sophisticated sense of form and with such an unerring eye for texture and detail that it escapes completely being in any way provincial or primitive ... I am reminded of Judith Wright's acute remark that if Australian art is any good it's because it is regional, and that it is this regionalism that adds depth, steadiness, provides a point of view, and a way of saying things.' (Years later RG would quote the first part of the remarks attributed to Wright, but cite Fred Williams as the source: 1985 Canberra School of Art.)

Nancy Borlase: 'Rosalie Gascoigne trips the light fantastic back to the early sixties, to the days of Imitation Realism [neo-Dada assemblages work by collaborative trio Mike Brown, Ross Crothall and Colin Lanceley]. There is, however, no hint of Dada, no element of anti-art or irresponsible nihilism in these ingenuous and tasteful assemblages.'

Eneide Mignacca: 'Luckily, these necrophiliac assemblages manage to radiate something more than funereal fantasies. Once they are nailed and glued together, the assorted components concur in reciting affable folksy tales of biographic and social superstitions.'

COMMENT: On 7 May 1975 Gallery A had invited RG to have a solo exhibition at the gallery, following her success at its *The Artists' Choice* exhibition (see Appendix 2: Selected group exhibitions), which had opened four days before (3 May). The gallery had wanted the solo show to take place in July 1975 but RG did not have the work and eventually a date in 1976 was agreed upon. RG signed and dated works while the exhibition was being installed, others were inscribed during the exhibition and some were not inscribed at all. A number of works inscribed '1976' were in fact made in the previous year(s), as photographic records show. The exhibition also included a painted canvas fairground banner for Bell's Touring Stadium. The banner was hung opposite the front door and was visible from the street. 'All the men from the pub down the road ... came up and they thought this was art. They really knew this was art, because they could associate with the boxers. They knew who the boxers were, a lot of them ... And it hit the Sydney people, I think, by surprise. Because it was accessible ... it was nice to get the ordinary public involved. They'd seen art for the first time, these men from the pub. It was lovely.' Five public collections bought works from the show: ANG (NGA), AGNSW, NGV, Newcastle Art Gallery and the Queen Victoria Art Museum and Gallery in Launceston.²



View from the entrance of Gallery A, with the Bell's sideshow banner flanked by two flower towers, and *Dolly boxes* 1976 and *Carnival* [1] 1976 on the bench in front
Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales Research Library, Sydney



The front room at Gallery A: *Vertical hold* 1975 (left) and *Flower tower 1* 1975 (right). On the back wall (left to right): *Flora Galop* 1976, *Cows 4 ways* 1976, *Landscape* [1] 1975, *Cow* 1976, *Flight of parrots* c. 1975, *The cottage* 1974 and *The Pepper Pot* 1975. On the bench: *Peg rack* 1975, *Strung up* 1976, *Straws* 1975 (obscured), *Black birds* 1976, *Triptych* 1975, *The colonel's lady* 1976, *Small parrot* 1976 and an unidentified work. On the floor in front: *Yellow hand* 1976 and *Bucket of flowers* c. 1976. On the side wall: *Interior decoration* 1975
Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales Research Library, Sydney

² Invited to show: 7 May 1975 Julie Mayer to RG (RG papers NLA); date in 1976: 8 Apr 1976 RG to TG; 'all the men from the pub': 1998 Hughes, see also Mon [27 Sep] 1976 RG to TG and 1982 North.

1977

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE: A NEW WORK, Institute of Modern Art, 24 Market Street, Brisbane City, 28 March – 20 April 1977. 3 works.

1. Pale landscape 1977
2. Country air 1977 [1st state]
3. Pink window 1975



Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 1977: *Pale landscape* 1977 (detail) and *Pink window* 1975
Image from author's archive

Exh. poster/inv.; installation photograph in Robert Lindsay 1978 (exh. cat.) and in Bob Lingard and Sue Cramer 1989, p. 37; installation images in author's archive

NOTICES: Gertrude Langer 'Swan feathers create lake' *Courier Mail* 3 Apr 1977; Pamela Bell 'Personal visions' *The Australian* 22 Apr 1977

Pamela Bell: 'Rosalie Gascoigne ... confounds our preconceptions with unlikely associations of swan feathers, newspapers and old iron. By threading dozens of sheets of newspaper with double rows of quills in various stages, from pristine gloss to skeletal bedraggle, then spreading and layering the sheets in subtle relationship across the upper floor of the institute, she has made an insecure and magic carpet. It gives the illusion of being about to float off with the slightest breeze. She has fixed to two flanking walls a series of "windows" — one a faded pink frame with a breeze-blown "curtain" of galvanised iron, the other a series of single sheets of iron with flattened ridge-cap sills. The feather carpet responds to every nuance of light with its pearly quality of feather and quill and the subtle permutations of shadow on newsprint.'

Gertrude Langer: 'Only two weeks ago I expressed my enthusiasm for Rosalie Gascoigne's "objects". Now she shows a large environmental work at the Institute of Modern Art. Over the seasons, around Lake George, she has collected thousands of swan feathers; these she has slotted through folded-out newspapers and made a floor piece about 13 ft. by 24 ft. The curved up feathers and overlapping sheets catch the varying lights of day. It sounds simple, but who has ever thought of such an idea? Just watch and you might forget about news sheets and feathers and contemplate a silvery, rippling lake.'

1978

SURVEY 2: ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 29 April – 4 June 1978.
Curator Robert Lindsay. 25 works.

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- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Bottled glass 1975 [1974] | 10. Parrot morning 1977 [1976] | 19. Storage 1977 |
| 2. Pub 1974 | 11. Italian birds 1976 [1975] | 20. Husbandry 1977 |
| 3. Mosaic 1976 | 12. Triptych 1976 [1975] | 21. Jim's picnic 1976 [1975] |
| 4. Bird sanctuary 1976 [1975] | 13. Enamel ware 1976 [1974] | 22. Grass rack 1977 |
| 5. The colonel's lady 1975 [1976] | 14. Room with a view 1977 [1976–77] | 23. Crop [Crop [1] 1976] |
| 6. Dolly boxes 1976 | 15. Early morning 1977 | 24. Landscape 1977 [Landscape [2] 1976–77] |
| 7. Tiepolo parrots 1976 | 16. Pink window 1976 [1975] | 25. Bailed up 1978 |
| 8. Black bird box 1976 | 17. Country air 1977 [2nd state] | |
| 9. Daffodil box 1977 | 18. Pale landscape 1977 | |
-

Exh. cat. with illus. of RG and 12 works; *Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne*, video produced by the Media Resource Centre, NGV, 1978; Janine Burke 1990, p. 36 (installation view); there are more installation images in author's archive

NOTICES: Mary Eagle 'Assemblage transforms "shopping souvenirs"' *The Age* 2 May 1978; Rod Carmichael 'Don't scrap the "junkies"' *The Sun* 10 May 1978, p. 30; Memory Holloway 'Newsome's intimacy and humour' *Melbourne Times* 31 May 1978, p. 9; Sid Somerville-Smith 'Beer cans at the National Gallery' *Toorak Times* 24 May 1978, p. 8; Janine Burke 'Survey spotlights the new faces in art' *National Times* 14 Oct 1978

Mary Eagle: 'Survey 2 is a brilliant exhibition by an artist who works at a level of attention concentrated on the way things look, down to the most minute details, and so makes other assemblages look clumsy ... The most apparent development in Gascoigne's short career is away from tight, iconic arrangements of many bits and pieces to opened-out works like Pale landscape, or simple, strong statements such as two milk separator pans filled with clumps of dried salsify heads (No. 24)'.

Memory Holloway: 'With entirely different means, Rosalie Gascoigne and Mary Newsome point out how the familiar can startle and how everyday objects can be infused with visual poetry ... Gascoigne captures the quintessential qualities of these found objects in her subtle and witty combinations of them.'

Janine Burke: 'Rosalie Gascoigne, a Canberra sculptor previously unknown in Melbourne, showed mainly small-scale works in a box format. The objects contained in the frames are like mementos, lovingly collected and arranged with infinite care and precision. Often found objects like beer cans or bottles, the detritus of a consumer society, they are juxtaposed sometimes with images culled from advertisements or magazines that transform their function and make beautiful what once was beneath the scope of art.'



National Gallery of Victoria 1978, installation view: (left to right) *Country air* 1977 (2nd state), *Grass rack* 1977, *Pale landscape* 1977 and *Pink window* 1975
Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



National Gallery of Victoria 1978: (left to right) *Crop [1]* 1976, *Country air* 1977 (2nd state), *Grass rack* 1977 and *Landscape [2]* 1976–77
Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

COMMENT: This was RG's first art-museum exhibition, only four years after her debut. The show was popular, so much so that the gallery ordered a second printing of the catalogue, which had sold out in the first ten days. Regarding the display, RG wrote: 'I am just so glad that the feathers and the windows looked their best that I can forget about the boxes that were ill-placed and the stands that were inappropriate.' RG described reactions to her floor piece of feathers threaded through newspaper (*Pale landscape* 1977): 'I remember putting it down in the gallery in Victoria and three very nervous women came by and said "Oh, what about that?" And I said "Well, look here, if you've been at the North Pole or the South Pole, well look there it is. And if you've seen the winter landscape it's there. And this is the levels of the lake, and if you've been in the aeroplane for a long time and you look out on the clouds, it's all there. It's all your experience come together. You can think what you like, you can move where you like as long as you've had the experience." They got very confident about that. Unlike some other woman who was a historian, who stumped past me to the members' room and said: "Don't you think a lot of art is about occupational therapy these days?" And I was just standing there, so I said "Oh, I believe in this piece. Quite like it." "Who did it, do you know?" Well she asked for it, so I told her. She scuttled way into the members' room with a great scuttle. But you know, she was an example of a person with a tight mind. And she probably hadn't had the experience or couldn't do the shift or something. But to me it had a presence.'³

³ Catalogue sales: 27 May 1978 RG to MG, 13 Jun 1978 BG to TG; 'I am just so glad': 15 May 1978 RG to MG; 'I remember putting it down': 1998 Hughes.

1979

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Ray Hughes Gallery, 11 Enoggera Terrace, Red Hill, Brisbane, 16 June – 5 July 1979.
17 works.

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- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1. The gallery man \$600 | 7. Forty-acre block \$600 | 13. Landscape \$600 [Landscape [2]
1976–77] |
| 2. Husbandry \$600 | 8. The white sun \$600 | 14. Dolly boxes \$750 |
| 3. Footballers \$600 | 9. Waterfront \$600 | 15. Country air [2nd state] \$2000 |
| 4. Dovecot \$600 | 10. Winter order \$600 | 16. March past \$1800 |
| 5. Cloister \$600 | 11. Storage \$600 | 17. Feathered chairs \$1200 |
| 6. Early morning \$600 | 12. Grass rack \$600 | |
-

Exh. cat. with illus. of *Winter order* 1978–79 and artist's statement (from 1979 Biennale of Sydney catalogue);
exh. inv. with same illus.

NOTICES: Dianne Byrne 'Balance and accuracy' *The Australian* 21 Jun 1979; Gertrude Langer 'Rosalie treats us to a feast of images' *Courier Mail* 27 Jun 1979

Dianne Byrne: 'The Ray Hughes Gallery in Brisbane is showing 17 recent works prompted by the people, places and things that occupy this totally talented lady ... Rosalie Gascoigne's art is based on the most ordinary things, but she puts them together with the eye of a connoisseur and the itch of a collector.'

Gertrude Langer: 'A feast of images, each of them assembled from commonplace, humble discards by man or by nature, awaits the visitor ... One does not know what to admire more, Gascoigne's subtle aesthetic sense or her rich imagination.'

COMMENT: RG held a viewing at home of the work she intended to send to Brisbane, a practice she followed for most of her subsequent shows. She had reason to be confident when she went to Brisbane to set up the show, knowing that at least six pieces had already been sold. Before departing she wrote: 'This show in Brisbane is a definitive one. After it's done, I'll have to decide if I want to have a serious crack at Melbourne. But first I want to do something different. Tasmania. Hong Kong. America' (abt 10 Jun 1979 RG to TG). She decided on America and went off to New York in May 1980.



Pinacotheca 1981, installation view: (left to right) *Pond* 1980 and *Reading left to right* 1981 (on back wall), an unidentified work, *Parrot country* 1980 and *Takeover bid* 1981 (on right-hand wall), and *Piece to walk around* 1981 and *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80 (on floor)

Image from author's archive



Pinacotheca 1981, installation view looking towards the entrance: *Piece to walk around* 1981 (on floor in foreground), *Four days by the sea* 1981 (on alcove wall on left), *The fall* 1981 (on alcove wall beyond), and *Step through* 1977/ c. 1979–80 (on floor at rear)

Image from author's archive

1981

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Pinacotheca, 10 Waltham Place, Richmond, Melbourne, 29 April – 16 May 1981. 24 works.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Dove grey \$1500 | 14. Bird house \$800 |
| 2. Reconstruction \$1100 | 15. City birds \$800 |
| 3. Paper square NFS | 16. Side show parrots \$800 |
| 4. The fall \$2000 | 17. Reading left to right \$2500 |
| 5. Rain forest \$2000 | 18. Piece to walk around \$2000 |
| 6. Sharpe Bros horizontal \$1200 | 19. River banks \$1200 |
| 7. Pond \$1200 | 20. Parrot country 1980 \$2500 |
| 8. Four days by the sea \$800 | 21. River crossing (Step through?) [Step through 1977/c. 1979–80] \$2000 |
| 9. Venus \$500 | 22. Takeover bid \$1500 |
| 10. Private beach \$500 | 23. Eightynine parrots [Eighty-nine parrots] \$800 |
| 11. The players \$900 | 24. Ikon \$500 |
| 12. Stonerack \$500 | |
| 13. Parrots \$800 | |

List of works (handwritten Pinacotheca list); also typed (by BG) working list of proposed exhibits with handwritten changes; exh. inv.; Mary Eagle 2000, p. 57 (installation view)

NOTICES: Robert Rooney 'A macho showdown?' *The Age* 6 May 1981; Alan McCulloch *The Herald* [Melbourne] 7 May 1981

Robert Rooney: 'Rosalie Gascoigne's assemblages ... follow the familiar pattern of her past work — boxes filled with nostalgic images and wall structures in which grids are formed by the accumulation of identical units ... The main problem with Gascoigne's works is that the materials she uses are often more interesting than her formal arrangements.'

Alan McCulloch: 'Rosalie Gascoigne's work makes for one of those art forms that seems so strange to a generation sure of its definitions — painting was painting and sculpture was sculpture and so on. Which is not to say that Gascoigne's is not the work of a talented and intelligent artist ... All done with taste, energy, talent for making and design and a sideways look at small, reproduced masterpieces roughly framed in the material of her choice.'

COMMENT: RG first met Bruce Pollard while in Melbourne in May 1978 for her *Survey 2* show at NGV and saw him again in September 1978. In April 1980 (just before she went to New York) he had written to her advising that she would be 'most welcome' to show with him. After the show closed Pollard wrote to R.G.: 'The show was much loved — it drew out of people a type of warmth and appreciation. I can feel this sort of thing at the desk because it is not often that people volunteer

as they leave — one such comment: “Thanks very much. I enjoyed that very much. Best exhibition I’ve seen all year.” I am living with two pieces in the foyer and they wear well. They have a type of skin, a different feel to most work which elicits a type of affection.⁴

1982

AUSTRALIA: VENICE BIENNALE 1982 (with Peter Booth), Venice, Italy, 13 June – September 1982. Curator Nick Waterlow. Commissioner Katrina Rumley, then Carol Henry. 10 works.

Later shown at the National Gallery of Victoria and Art Gallery of New South Wales: **AUSTRALIA AT THE VENICE BIENNALE: WORKS BY PETER BOOTH AND ROSALIE GASCOIGNE**, NGV, Melbourne, 18 November 1982 – 16 January 1983, and **PROJECT 40: AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS AT VENICE AND KASSEL**, AGNSW, Sydney, 5 February – 13 March 1983 (see Appendix 2: Select group exhibitions for details).

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| 1. Country air 1978 [1977] | 5. The bird house 1981 [Bird house 1981] | 8. Crop 2 1978 [1981–82] |
| 2. Feathered fence 1979 [1978–79] | 6. City birds 1981 | 9. Harvest 1982 [1981–82] |
| 3. Parrots 1980 | 7. Scrub country 1981 [1981–82] | 10. Pink window 1975 [illustrated but not catalogued] |
| 4. Side show parrots 1981 | | |

Exh. cat. (*Australia: Venice Biennale 1982* Visual Arts Board, Sydney) (1 photo of R.G., all works illus., essay by Ian North); *La Biennale Visual Arts 82: General catalogue* (3 illus., essay by Nick Waterlow); exh. poster (with *Scrub country* 1981–82); R.G. papers NLA and author’s archive include images of the exhibition installation and pavilion construction, correspondence with the Visual Arts Board, R.G.’s handwritten account and reports to the VAB, and VAB reports

NOTICES: Neville Weston ‘Welcome presence in Venice’ *The Advertiser* 12 Jun 1982, p. 22; John Russell Taylor ‘Fascination and affront in a world apart’ *The Times* 15 Jun 1982; Desmond O’Grady ‘Rough end of the pineapple’ *The Age* 15 Jun 1982, reprinted ‘The game’s tough to play in Venice’ *SMH* 16 Jun 1982; Sandra McGrath ‘Picking up *Chains*’ last links’ *Weekend Australian* 3–4 Jul 1982, p. 14; Lisa Balfour Bowen ‘The 40th Venice Biennale’ *artmagazine* [Canada] Sep/Oct 1982, p. 29; Ronald Millen ‘Requiescat Venice’ *Art and Australia* vol. 20, no. 3, 1983, illus. p. 331, ref. p. 332

John Russell Taylor: ‘The Australian pavilion is not much more advanced, but the Australians are made of sterner stuff, and there, virtually in the open air, the two artists, Rosalie Gascoigne and Peter Booth, are fully displayed. She makes beautiful assemblages out of old painted crates, feathers, newspapers and miscellaneous junk; he paints ...’

Desmond O’Grady: ‘Given the legal battle over the cut-down olives, it [the replacement Australian pavilion] was being constructed around leaning trees which somewhat blunted the effect of Rosemary [sic] Gascoigne’s work, which was meant to evoke tones of the country around Canberra.’

Neville Weston: ‘Her work in Venice includes a window frame curtained by galvanised iron [*Pink window* 1975], a harvest of old nails [probably *Crop 2* 1982], stacks of weathered wood crates and various objects fitted into boxes. She clearly shows her debt to the tradition of [Kurt] Schwitters and Americans Louise Bourgeois and Joseph Cornell, and she lacks none of their sense of poetic purpose.’

⁴ ‘First met Bruce Pollard’: 24 Sep 1978 RG to MG, p. 56; ‘most welcome’: 14 Apr 1980 BP to RG (RG papers NLA); ‘the show was much loved’: 15 Jun 1981 BP to RG (RG papers NLA).

Sandra McGrath: ‘The good sign is that the Australian “pavilion” was well received by the critics. The *Guardian*’s critic, Waldemar Januszczak, in a BBC interview said that he believed that “Europe would be looking towards Australian artists in the next decade because of the vigor and vitality of the work not only at the Venice Biennale but at the Serpentine and ICA shows on view in London”.’

COMMENT: The Australian artists were selected by Nick Waterlow, who was director of the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts, and approved by the Visual Arts Board chaired by Ann Lewis. The works were chosen by Waterlow, Katrina Rumley and Rosalie in Canberra in November 1981 during a visit to discuss Rosalie’s participation. Katrina’s role as commissioner was to manage the exhibition in Venice, and I would like to acknowledge her help with this entry. The promised space for the Australian exhibit did not eventuate and instead the Italian authorities offered an as-yet-unbuilt hut. By the day of the vernissage most of the walls and part of the roof had been erected and so the Australians, many volunteers and an installer whom R.G. brought over from London (Terry Miles, who had worked briefly for the ANG) were able to put the show up, where it was seen by the press and then taken down. The show was not installed until 4 July when the building was finally finished. See also Stephen Naylor 2006 (chapter 5 deals with the 1982 Biennale) and Ronald Millen ‘Requiescat Venice’ *Art and Australia* vol. 20, no. 3, 1983, p. 332.



Venice Biennale: The Australian pavilion under construction shortly before the vernissage. Even though the pavilion was still not weatherproof the show was installed anyway for the duration of the vernissage before being dismantled until the building was completed
Image from author’s archive



Venice Biennale, installation view in the completed building: *Harvest* 1981–82 (on wall), *Feathered fence* 1978–79 (in foreground) and Peter Booth works in the background
Image from author’s archive



Venice Biennale, installation view in the completed building: *Crop 2* 1981–82 (in foreground), *Feathered fence* 1978–79 (on floor) and *Country air* 1977 (on wall)
Image from author’s archive

1983–84

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE: SCULPTURE 1975–1982, National Art Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand, 16 December 1983 – 12 February 1984; Auckland Art Gallery, March – 11 April 1984; Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North, mid-May – 18 June 1984; Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, 5 September – early October 1984. Curator Ian Hunter with Louise Upston. 11 works (not numbered).

- | | |
|---|--|
| [1] Pink window 1975 | [8] Step through 1980 [1977/c. 1979–80] |
| [2] The colonel's lady 1976 | [9] Sharpe Bros horizontal 1981 [1979/1980–81] |
| [3] Tiepolo parrots 1976 | [10] Piece to walk around 1981 |
| [4] Early morning 1977 | [11] Blossom 1982 |
| [5] Grass rack 1977 | |
| [6] Pale landscape 1977 | |
| [7] Parrot country (mark II) 1980 [Parrot country II 1980/83] | |

Exh. cat. and brochure (1 photo of RG, 4 works illus., artist's statement); exh. correspondence in RG papers NLA; six 35 mm slides of installation

NOTICES: 'Sculptor sees beauty in beer cans' *Evening Post* [NZ] 15 Dec 1983 (photo of RG); Elva Bett 'Junk turned into art' *The Dominion* 5 Jan 1984; Ian Wedde 'Gascoigne show a combination of "somethings"' *Evening Post* [NZ] 26 Jan 1984 and edited version 'Where was the best art this summer' *New Zealand Art News* vol. 1, no. 1, Apr 1984; TJ McNamara 'Sunburnt country pervades images' *NZ Herald* 2 Apr 1984; JL Roberts 'Junk for art's sake' *NZ Listener* 7 Apr 1984, pp. 38–39 (1 illus.); Auckland City Art Gallery *Newsletter* no. 13, Apr–Jun 1984 (1 illus.); William Dart 'A "touché" of class' *NZ Listener* 14 Apr 1984 (1 illus.); Manawatu Art Gallery *Quarterly* Apr–Jun 1984 (2 illus.); 'Discovery of an artist' *Manawatu Standard* 18 May 1984 (1 illus.); Ian Wedde 'Duchamp clone wan version of boxed art' *Evening Post* [NZ] ? Jun 1984; Friends of Govett-Brewster Art Gallery *Newsletter* no. 36, Sep–Oct 1984 (2 illus.); 'Sculptor leads imaginations' *Taranaki Herald* 1 Sep 1984 (1 illus.); Warwick Brown 'Art year in retrospect' *NZ Times* 13 Jan 1985

Elva Bett: 'Rosalie Gascoigne [sic] has created works of great beauty ... which are romantic, sophisticated and challenging ... Gascoigne has an ability to generate lyricism and a feeling for lightness and air bringing into the gallery a sense of the great vastness of Australian outdoors.'



National Art Gallery, Wellington, 1983: *Grass rack* 1977 (in foreground), *Step through* 1977/c. 1979–80 (in corner) and *Pink window* 1975 (through door); the work on the right-hand wall is a locally made version of *Paper square* 1979–80
Image from author's archive

Ian Wedde: ‘Rosalie Gascoigne’s marvellous works at the National Art Gallery ... reveal her to be well versed in contemporary art strategies ... The contemplative discipline of ikebana is a lovely complement to her intuitive abilities to “find” materials for art, to achieve magical transformations.’ (*Evening Post* 26 Jan 1984)

TJ McNamara: ‘The pale, weathered look of this landscape [*Pale landscape* 1977] is typical of most of the pieces in the show. They are assembled from discarded material and all show the effects of weather, especially dry wind and dust. This gives the exhibition a particularly Australian flavour.’

JL Roberts: ‘Her arrangement [*Pink window* 1975] ... celebrates the soft warm colours produced only by long weathering, compels our attention to the way time and climate affect objects, and invites us to share her affectionate engagement with a given space and time.’

COMMENT: The exhibition was the third in a series of three by Australian sculptors arranged by the National Art Gallery Wellington for New Zealand, with support from the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts and the Australia New Zealand Foundation. (The other artists were Ken Unsworth and Adrian Hall.) Rosalie initially declined to participate, not wanting the distraction, mindful among other things of her experience in Venice and possibly wary of the reaction her work would provoke, but she agreed to do so after Ian Hunter, the exhibition curator, visited her in April 1983 and reassured her he would minimise the demands on her time. Rosalie also made it clear she did not want to write anything about her work or methods and suggested that Ian North be invited to revamp the catalogue essay he wrote for Venice and that the gallery show the videotape made for the NGV Survey 2 exhibition in 1978. Hunter accepted both ideas.

In Wellington the exhibition included a version of *Paper square* 1979–80 made locally by Chris Cane (a technician at the art gallery) to guidelines provided by R.G. The piece was made of wads of newspaper about 20 cm square and 2 cm thick, stapled to about eight plywood sheets about 1200 × 600 mm hung as a square (i.e. about 240 cm square) after being weathered in the sun. She advised the gallery when the show finished in Wellington that it could be destroyed. ‘It was a piece for the moment. The idea of doing it was sparked off by something Ian Hunter said about making an art work while I was in N.Z. ... I think *N.Z. Paper Square* was valid but something quite different [to the 1990 Adelaide version] and a tribute to Chris’s enterprise and industry.’ While in Wellington Rosalie met gallerist Peter McLeavey and bought Colin McCahon’s painting *Floodgate* 1964–65. Her exhibition coincided with an exhibition of Colin McCahon landscapes at the same venue, *The Mystical Landscape*, including the 1958 *Northland panels*. Rosalie would have been delighted with Ian Wedde’s observation about the two shows: ‘These beautiful works [of hers] using a variety of “found” materials were a good complement to the McCahon landscapes.’ According to Luit Bieringa, director of the National Art Gallery, Rosalie’s exhibition was ‘extremely well received’ and seen by over 50,000 people in Wellington.⁵

⁵ NZ *Paper square*: 20 Feb 1984 RG to Tony Mackie, curator, National Art Gallery, Wellington; ‘these beautiful works’: Ian Wedde ‘Where was the best art this summer’ *New Zealand Art News* vol. 1, no. 1, 1984; ‘extremely well received’: 5 Nov 1984 Luit Bieringa to Bruce Pollard (Pinacotheca archive).

1984

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Pinacotheca, 10 Waltham Place, Richmond, Melbourne, 3–20 October 1984.
31 works.

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- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Municipal gardens 1983 \$1700 | 12. Galahs rising 1984 \$1500 | 23. Travelling circus 1981 \$1000 |
| 2. Checkpoint 1984 \$1800 | 13. Pink on blue 1982–83 \$1600 | 24. Spring 1982 [Spring 1 1981–82] \$2000 |
| 3. Smoko 1984 \$1200 | 14. Graven image 1983 [1982] \$1600 | 25. Swell 1984 \$1600 |
| 4. Industrial area 1982–84 [1984] not priced | 15. Wattle strike 1983 \$1600 | 26. Shell board I 1983 [Shell 1 1981] \$750 |
| 5. Celebration 1983 \$1700 | 16. Balance 1984 \$1500 | 27. Shell board II 1984 [Shell 2 c. 1981–84] \$650 |
| 6. Sparkling fruity flavours 1983 \$750 | 17. String of blue days 1984 \$5000 | 28. Winter paddock 1984 \$1400 |
| 7. Pink kookaburras 1984 \$900 | 18. Habitation 1984 \$2000 | 29. Turn of the tide 1983 \$900 |
| 8. Club colours 1983 \$2200 | 19. Scrub country 1982 [1981–82] \$4000 | 30. Last of the summer wine 1984 \$900 |
| 9. Herb garden 1982 \$1600 | 20. Totemic 1984 \$1600 | 31. Deciduous 1984 \$1500 |
| 10. Grove 1984 \$1600 | 21. Side show 1981 \$1000 | |
| 11. Stained glass 1983 \$1600 | 22. Summerhouse 1984 \$1000 | |
-

Typed exh. list; exh. inv.; 35 mm slides by Adrian Fetherstone (author's archive)

NOTICES: Sue Cramer 'Romantic myth not always quite enough' *The Age* 17 Oct 1984, p. 14; Ronald Millar 'Throwaways, in best of taste' *The Herald* [Melbourne] 18 Oct 1984; Rod Carmichael 'One man's garbage is another man's art' *The Sun* 24 Oct 1984

Sue Cramer: 'In her own idiosyncratic way, Rosalie Gascoigne draws upon stories and memories from within the Australian countryside. Her exhibition at Pinacotheca Gallery of work from the past three years shows little change or development, but a consistent commitment to a body of images which are by now identifiably her own ... Her art ... reflects the renewed emphasis on the "biographical" and the "personal" and on people (particularly women) making art out of the material of their own lives. This characterised the so-called post-modern "pluralism" of the seventies ... the essential appeal of her art ... lies in her ability to "make do", or to improvise with "found objects", weathered wood, broken Laminex, boxes, cups, shells, grasses and newspaper. All are objects stumbled across within a particular radius of her home ... Gascoigne invents her own vocabulary in a gentle, poetic art, with just a touch of humour.'

Rod Carmichael: 'Gascoigne is showing a series of constructions which make no attempt to conceal the humble origins of their constituent materials ... She belongs to what is now a well-established tradition called Actual Art, where "mere" things represent themselves rather than be illustrated ... In the main her wall pieces are tastefully arranged to create pleasant effects, often witty ... Her taste is always impeccable and her transfigurations of the ordinary are remarkably fresh and uncontrived. It would take a degree of perversity to read feminist issues into Gascoigne's work.'

Ronald Millar: 'Rosalie Gascoigne has collected and arranged odd materials for a long time now, to a dutiful chorus of acclaim from the critics. In this show, she gives new life to discarded soft-drink cases, old corrugated iron, dust-pink planks and worn fence-posts. She shuffles these delicately, frames them as wall-sculptures, or exploits their romantically faded colours and crumbling textures to suggest a whiff of nostalgia ... All this is done with balance and taste. Nothing even a bit rough or un-artistic; the good taste never lets up. Do not expect anything like the edgy power of a Rauschenberg or the magic of a Schwitters or the cheek of ... well, anyway, the show is pleasant in Gascoigne's own terms.'

1985

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE: NEW WORK, Fine Arts Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 6–28 September 1985. Curator Mary Eagle. 8 works.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Last stand 1972/1985 [1972] | 6. Piece to walk on 1984 [1983–84] |
| 2. Flight 1985 | 7. Red beach, X'mas 1984 [Red beach 1984] |
| 3. Honey flow 1985 | 8. Pineapple piece 1985 [comprising Pineapple pieces 1–6] |
| 4. Clean country 1985 | |
| 5. Highway code 1985 | |

Exh. cat. (illus., essay); exh. inv.; 35 mm slides with installation views (author's archive)

NOTICES: Rachel Kerr 'Avid collector follows an art of the outdoors' *The Mercury* 10 Sep 1985, p. 12 (photo of RG); Dick Bett 'Gascoigne gives junk the fun treatment' *The Mercury* 14 Sep 1985, p. 18 (1 illus.)

Dick Bett: 'Prepare yourself for a treat ... Her present work ... embraces lyricism without sentiment and dignity without pretence ... Unlike the problem-solving approach taken by many formally trained artists, Gascoigne brings an eye, feeling and time to resolution ... Two new elements have been added to Gascoigne's art vocabulary — the use of sound and reflected light. In *Piece to walk on* 1984 the viewer is invited to walk upon and experience the tactile and auditory response. Various works, especially *Highway code* 1985, use retroreflective paint. Lighting has been arranged to highlight this feature ... There are only eight works in this exhibition but they cry out for space twice the size. This becomes very apparent when contemplating the three floor displayed-works which all suffer badly ...'

COMMENT: Mary Eagle, then on maternity leave from the ANG, helped Rosalie select the works and wrote the catalogue essay. The Hobart exhibition was the first showing of a retroreflective road sign work (*Highway code* 1985). RG visited Hobart for the exhibition and while there gave a talk at the Tasmanian School of Art on 6 September 1985. She also spoke at the Burnie Art Gallery in north-west Tasmania on 9 September. Regarding the Hobart talk: 'I had a piece called *Clean Country* because in Canberra the frosts are so severe that the country goes back to its shape ... it's a very thin time of the year. And it's very beautiful. *Clean Country* was sticks and wire netting and all grey. And the people in Tasmania said, "What does she mean, clean country?" But it was very appropriate for here, but not for there. I realised how regional I was. Because what speaks to you is what gets into your art. And it only speaks to you if you're familiar with it, I think' (1998 Hughes).



Hobart 1985: *Piece to walk on* 1983–84 (in foreground), *Flight* 1985 (on floor behind), *Highway code* 1985 (on left wall), *Honey flow* 1985 (on rear wall) and *Last stand* 1972 (obscured, at rear right)

Image from author's archive



Hobart 1985: *Flight* 1985 (in foreground), *Highway code* 1985 (on left wall), *Honey flow* 1985 (on rear wall) and *Last stand* 1972 (rear right)

Image from author's archive

There was one other outcome. After Hobart RG visited north-west Tasmania to give a talk at the Burnie Art Gallery, which owned *Bird house* 1981. On returning to Canberra she wrote to Toss about the trip, including the following: 'I bought a post card of Glover at ANG and have tastefully framed it in bull's wool (collected off fences) and wire netting — woolly all over — it's those woolly-wooded hills still as in Glover's time that set me off' (c. 20 Sep 1985 RG to TG). The card depicted Glover's *Patterdale landscape and rainbow* c. 1832. A colour slide taken in June 1988 shows the work hanging in her sitting room with a group of other homages. She later dismantled the work (which is not catalogued).

1986

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Pinacotheca, 10 Waltham Place, Richmond, Melbourne, 15 October – 1 November 1986. 13 works.

1. Honey flow 1985 \$2500	6. Orchard 1986 \$3000	11. Swell 1984 \$2500
2. Moonrise 1986 [1985] \$4000	7. Daffodils 1986 \$2700	12. New wave 1986 \$2000
3. Streetwise 1986 \$6000	8. Shoreline 1986 \$1600	13. Inland sea 1986 \$5000
4. Promised land 1986 \$4000	9. Plenty 1986 \$7000	
5. Prescribed text 1986 \$3000	10. Highway code 1986 [1985] NFS	

Typed exh. list; exh. inv.

NOTICES: Ewen McDonald *Art review* ABC Radio National, 20 Oct 1986 (unpublished transcript 20 Nov 1986); Gary Catalano 'A display of perplexity' *The Age* 22 Oct 1986; Ronald Millar 'Call of the outback' *The Herald* [Melbourne] 23 Oct 1986

Ewen McDonald: 'This brings me to talking about Rosalie Gascoigne, who I think is a remarkable woman, and a remarkable show on at the moment at Pinacotheca Gallery in Melbourne ... Gascoigne's work has a monumentality that comes from its sheer simplicity ... It's really quite classical but it also has this undeniable presence because the materials themselves are not sort of adulterated. The work is about respect for material ... They are just very simple and I think quite sheer in their monumentality that makes them most appealing. I think that it's an excellent exhibition.'

Gary Catalano: 'Of Christmann's show at Niagara and Gascoigne's at Pinacotheca I can say nothing kind ... Gascoigne's sculptures are empty and entirely without merit. Make no mistake, in neither of these two exhibitions does one find a single work which has been made in response to a genuine imaginative pressure.'

Ronald Millar: 'Rosalie Gascoigne makes a poetic art from the faded remnants of consumerism: old slats, rusty iron, drink cases ... You might think hundreds of nailed-up, dirty-yellow slats, arranged in rigorous symmetry, would be boring. Not a bit: Gascoigne makes brilliant use of these found objects and arrives at such serenity that you forget that she begins with a load of old rubbish.'

COMMENT: This was the first time RG showed work made from retroreflective road signs in Melbourne. She wrote in September: 'I have been sawing up yellow road signs all day in case I want to show a group in Oct. It is going to be this show or never to use up all that material.' RG later remembered Bruce Pollard being surprised by his first glimpse of a light-struck retroreflective work (it was *Streetwise* 1986): 'Bruce went up the ladder to readjust the lights and said "Ooh, this is the discotheque part of the gallery"'.⁶

Regarding Gary Catalano's remark that 'Gascoigne's sculptures are empty and entirely without merit', she wrote: 'I got a total kill from Gary Catalano in the Age — so bad it's almost a compliment and I show it all round. He has been waiting to do me in ever since I was chosen for Venice. To write like that won't do him any good. It just sounds vindictive. He gives no reasons and is, of course, blind.' Bruce Pollard advised her that 'it had no effect here — in fact, it bounced back on to him as most people were moved enough to say how ridiculous his statements were. Some people used more obscene or violent language. The show had such a strong impact that you do not have to rush shows in Sydney or elsewhere.' Afterwards RG wrote a poem, 'Rosalie to a Melbourne Critic', in which she reflects on the theme of personal experience in shaping one's appreciation of art. It begins:

How can I show you the land I walk?
You, who stand on pavements,
Have never seen the places I know.⁷

1988

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Pinacotheca, 10 Waltham Place, Richmond, Melbourne, 28 September – 15 October 1988. 22 works.

1. Past glories 1988 \$4500	9. Maculosa 1988 \$5000	16. Formal flowers 1988 \$2500
2. Plaza 1988 \$5000	10. Painted word [Painted words] 1988 \$5000	17. Big yellow 1988 \$12,000
3. Chart 1988 \$2000	11. Last leaf 1988 \$5000	18. Press 1987–88 \$4000
4. Court 1988 \$2000	12. Cherry orchard 1987 [1988] \$4000	19. On a clear day 1988 \$5000
5. Legend 1988 \$4000	13. Party piece 1988 \$4000	20. Sun and shadow 1988 \$10,000
6. Plainsong 1988 \$5000	14. Blue bows 1987 [1985–87] \$5500	21. Aerial view 1988 \$4000
7. Wind change 1988 \$4500	15. Persimmon 1987 [1986–87] \$6000	22. Stubble field 1987 [1988] \$4000
8. Twofold Bay 1988 \$5000		

Typed exh. list; *Plantation* 1988 not catalogued or exhibited, but sold⁸

⁶ 'I have been sawing': [Sep] 1986 RG to TG; 'Bruce went up the ladder': Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 39, fn. 31.

⁷ 'I got a total kill': Oct 1986 RG to TG; 'it had no effect': 7 Nov 1986 Bruce Pollard to RG; poem in RG papers NLA.

⁸ *Plantation* 1988: A Pinacotheca Gallery statement is inscribed by BG: 'he [Pollard] didn't want to show it'.

1989

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, 13 Macdonald Street, Paddington, Sydney, 31 October – 18 November 1989. 23 works.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Monaro 1989 [1988–89] \$23,000 | 12. Party piece 1988 \$5500 |
| 2. Wheat belt 1989 \$14,000 | 13. Gaudeamus 1989 \$5500 |
| 3. Market garden 1988 \$8000 | 14. Acacia 1989 \$5500 |
| 4. Outback 1988 \$8000 | 15. Autumn 1989 \$5000 |
| 5. All that glisters 1989 \$8000 | 16. Folded blue 1989 \$4000 |
| 6. All that jazz 1989 \$7500 | 17. Daisy 1989 \$3500 |
| 7. Plaza 1988 \$7000 | 18. Cat tracks 1989 \$3000 |
| 8. Golden mean 1988 \$7000 | 19. City west 1989 \$2500 |
| 9. Plain living 1989 \$6500 | 20. Tesseract 1 1989 \$1800 |
| 10. A rose is a rose 1986–88 [1986/88] \$6000 | 21. Tesseract 2 1989 \$1800 |
| 11. Aerial view 1988 \$5500 | 22. Tesseract 3 1989 \$1800 |
| | 23. Tesseract 4 1989 \$1800 |

Exh. cat.; exh. inv.

NOTICES: John McDonald ‘Touched with that certain grandeur’ *SMH* 11 Nov 1989, p. 88; Elwyn Lynn ‘Mood, mass and melancholy’ *Weekend Australian* 11–12 Nov 1989, p. 10 (1 illus.); Terry Ingram ‘Art galleries adapting to measly returns from “measles” outbreak’ *Australian Financial Review* 30 Nov 1989, p. 54; Jacques Delaruelle ‘Free of gobbledegook’ *Sydney Review* Dec 1989, p. 16; Christopher Allen ‘Bill Robinson: Rosalie Gascoigne’ *Art Monthly Australia* no. 27, Dec 1989, pp. 18–19 (1 illus.); Anna Johnson ‘Rosalie Gascoigne’ *Art & Text* no. 36, 1990, p. 151 (2 illus.)

John McDonald: ‘Her orderly arrangements ... have a serene, unforced beauty. In her hands, these bright yellow or orange signs become ‘reflective’ in a different sense — as objects of contemplation ... Her current exhibition ... doesn’t break any new ground; it is an elegant summation and refinement of themes which have been running through her work for the past decade. If anything, the landscape references are especially vivid, as in the large piece titled *Monaro*, which features four panels covered in thin, closely packed yellow and black slats, creating the sensation of waves, like the wind rippling through a wheat field of a paddock of dry grass ... The titles of the works seem to have been chosen for their poetic associations, underlining the affinities between natural forms and the patterns of ornament common to many cultures. It is this primal, mythical dimension that makes Gascoigne’s simple compositions so absorbing. By using the roadside detritus of our culture, she taps into the residual vitality of these forms. Everything contains traces of past usage, but in these new configurations, the old codes and signals are confused. This is literally the case with her cut-up road signs, which tantalise us with fragments of words; disjointed syllables that hover



Rosalie’s first solo show in Sydney since 1976, and her first at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, included the first works made with battens of soft-drink boxes cut with the tradesman’s bandsaw acquired in November 1988, notably *Monaro* 1988–89 (back wall); *Wheat belt* 1989 is on the left

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney



Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery 1989: (left to right) *All that glisters* 1989, *Acacia* 1989 and *Party piece* 1988; *Folded blue* 1989 (in back room)

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

on verge of a coherent statement. Ultimately, our search for a literal sense is thwarted and we are cast back upon reading these works for their formal and sensuous qualities. Like a disciple of Zen, Gascoigne invites an acceptance of the object rather than an analysis. We withdraw from the expectations of common sense towards a highly personal intuition of each piece — its particular kind of presence and materiality. She is a careful arranger who lets each component retain its integrity, merely putting the pieces into a state where they are more accessible to different imaginative reconstructions. There is nothing theatrical or theoretical about these works; all they ask of us is our attention.’

Elwyn Lynn: ‘I last saw her in strength representing Australia in Venice in 1982 where her works were much like these ... She has remained essentially a Cubist Assemblist of collaged pieces of band-sawn wood from softdrink bottle crates and reflective road signs of black on orange or yellow. As with Braque’s and Picasso’s Cubism between 1907 and 1912, she is concerned with the nature of seeing, by having the eye reassemble essential facets of objects on a flat plane with no elaborate perspectives for elevated subjects. Braque and Picasso reinvented objects from the kitchen, the bar and the studio. Gascoigne takes common, public obsolescent objects like road signs, reusable boxes, worn linoleum and a piece of old corrugated iron tank that she has painted a delicate blue far from [Tim Maguire’s] melancholy. These are, in fact, very cheerful, optimistic works made from an obsolescent world. The sliced boxes, sawn in wobbly thin pieces, and the reassembled roadsigns no longer carry their written messages, which have been sliced and garbled. Perhaps these randomly cut but carefully placed bits of wood and signs are about our inaccurate recollections of how we first saw them. Perhaps, although carefully planned, their occasional wobbliness questions the aesthetic orderliness said to arise from formalism. Again, their weathered nature, lots of sheen and faded hues have part of their origin in Arte Povera.’

Jacques Delaruelle: ‘Each piece is assembled according to a composition process which bears witness to the most sustained poetic inspiration ... Rosalie Gascoigne’s sense of colour is exemplary ... Such a controlled vibrancy is a reminder that art is essentially a condensation of actually lived experience.’

Christopher Allen: ‘The real subject of Gascoigne’s art is not industrial packaging but language. She starts with examples of dead language: words, that is, whose spiritual relation to being has been severed and which have been reduced to the functionalism of commercial or administrative use ... She cuts up the roadsigns into single letters or groups of letters ... and she cuts up the drink crates into horizontal strips through the word “Schweppes” and the other inscriptions. She then proceeds to reassemble these fragments of language and to infuse them with a new and unexpected life.’

Anna Johnson: ‘The most recent work ... goes further than the joyful play of the 1970s, and indulgence in the diversity and sensuality of materials. These works come closer to the formalist agenda of painting. Like the compositions of Agnes Martin, the repetition of geometric patterns in the work approaches a mantra-like state. The eye grows accustomed to a tight set of rules. The high modernist grid ... harnesses the “bent” aspects of bush materials.’

COMMENT: In December 1988 Roslyn Oxley had invited RG to show in Sydney at her gallery and RG accepted in January 1989, with a show ‘maybe towards the end of ’89 ... I have the nucleus of a show already done and expect to gather momentum as the holiday season mercifully phases out.’ RG also wrote to Bruce Pollard in Melbourne explaining her decision: ‘I view this as a slice of life in the fast lane and am not sure if I will really like it. I will need to talk to you. I regard Pinacotheca as my home gallery.’⁹ Elwyn Lynn’s review neatly noted that the ancestry of assemblage art lay in Picasso’s and Braque’s cubist compositions of common objects, which suggests he probably had a copy of William Seitz’s *The art of assemblage* (1961).

⁹ ‘I have the nucleus’ and ‘I view this as a slice’: both dated 11 Jan 1989 (RG papers NLA).

1990

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE AND COLIN McCAHON: SENSE OF PLACE, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 30 June – 28 July 1990 and Ian Potter Gallery, University of Melbourne, 15 August – 8 September 1990. Curator Louise Pether. 8 works (not numbered).

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| [1] Take over bid [Takeover bid] 1981 | [5] Grove 1984 |
| [2] Graven image 1983 [1982] | [6] Legend 1988 |
| [3] Swell 1984 | [7] Wind change 1988 |
| [4] Club colours 1984 [1983] | [8] Monaro 1989 [1988–89] |

Only three of four units of *Takeover bid* 1981 were exhibited.

Exh. cat. (essays, 12 illus.); correspondence with Louise Pether (curator) and related documentation; exh. video (trove.nla.gov.au/work/31658384); installation views in *Eyeline* no. 13, 1990, p. 38; *SMH* 7 Jul 1990 and author's archive; lectures by Anne Kirker (4 Jul), Luit Bieringa (6 Jul) and RG (7 Jul); exh. forum 19 Jul

NOTICES: Christopher Allen 'Against the modern trend' *SMH* 7 Jul 1990 (1 illus.); Elwyn Lynn 'Landscapes of the mind and its signs' *Weekend Australian* 14–15 Jul 1990, p. 8; Paul McGillick 'Model show offers subtle pleasures' *Australian Financial Review* 20 Jul 1990; John Hawke 'Coats; Gascoigne' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 33, Aug 1990, pp. 19–20; Ann Elias 'Rosalie Gascoigne and Colin McCahon: Sense of place' *Eyeline* no. 13 spring/summer 1990, pp. 38–39 (1 illus.); Jenny Zimmer 'A place to call home' *Sunday Herald* [Melbourne] 26 Aug 1990; Gary Catalano 'Fractured view in McCahon's antipodean art' *The Age* 29 Aug 1990, p. 14; Peter James Smith 'The substance of clouds' *Agenda* 13/14 *Contemporary Art Magazine* Oct 1990

Other reports include: 'Artists' works to go to Aust' *The Star* [Christchurch] 24 May 1990; 'NZ-born artist's works on show' *National Business Review* [NZ] 29 May 1990; 'Top artists work together' *Otago Daily Times* 1 Jun 1990; 'NZ PM opens art exhibition' 15 Jun 1990 and 'Major exhibition of Australia/NZ art' 20 Jul 1990, both in UNIKEN (University of NSW); Christopher Allen 'Everything old is new again' *SMH* 11 Jul 1990, p. 16 (photo of RG); 'NZ artist drawing big crowds' *Southland Times* [Invercargill] 26 Jul 1990; 'McCahon a big hit in Oz' *The Press* [Christchurch] 15 Aug 1990; Jeremy Eccles 'Graffiti fit for celestial walls' *The Herald* [Melbourne] 12 Aug 1990; *Australian Art Education* vol. 14, no. 2, Aug 1990 (1 illus.); Virginia Trioli 'Natural beauty inspires Gascoigne' *The Age* 21 Aug 1990; Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 30; 'Exhibition commemorates New Zealand' *University of Melbourne News* Sep 1990 (photo of RG)

Christopher Allen: 'The twentieth century will probably be remembered by future historians as the lowest ebb of European religious consciousness ... Rosalie Gascoigne's work is less obviously concerned with the



The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr Geoffrey Palmer, at the opening of *Sense of Place* in Sydney; Rosalie is in a red coat in the centre of the front row
Image from author's archive



Ivan Dougherty Gallery 1990, installation view: *Monaro* 1988–89 (partial view, in foreground) and part of Colin McCahon's *Landscape theme and variations: Series B* 1963 (in room beyond)
Image from author's archive

religious than McCahon's, and it is foreign to his agnostic and even tragic strain. It is, on the contrary, serene and lyrical; but Gascoigne's lyricism is based on the perception of the immanent presence of a life that permeates the natural world and, through the agency of the artist, can transfigure the human world as well. Her work is almost exclusively made of found materials ... All are discarded products of human industry, worn by use and weathered by exposure to the elements ... Cut up and reassembled, but with minimum interference in other respects, these unlikely materials come to life in the most unexpected ways. In some cases it can be a direct metaphoric or metonymic transformation: two pieces of corrugated iron, for example, evoke the wind; in other cases her real material is found language, the dead words of brand names or road signs. These too are given new life, most splendidly in *Monaro*, where old soft-drink crates with the stencilled word "Schweppes" are cut into strips and reassembled to evoke the undulating light and shade of wheatfields. The words cut into strips and rendered illegible, but not inaudible, form the areas of shade, while the unstamped strips, pure yellow, are at once silence and light, a conjunction familiar to mystical thought. If there is, however, a direct reference to religious feeling in this piece, the most important manifestation of the religious in Rosalie Gascoigne's work remains the redemptive infusion of life and beauty into what had seemed inert and valueless.' (SMH 7 Jul 1990)

Elwyn Lynn: 'It is not all that easy to associate Rosalie Gascoigne's sense of place with a particular place, or with a particular set of mystical or religious beliefs ... Gascoigne and McCahon have many formal resemblances, like those between the stalwart rhythms of McCahon's landscapes on rough hessian and Gascoigne's *Swell*, with two squared pieces of corrugated iron, the impressions on one being horizontal and vertical on the other; or her grove [*Grove* 1984] of three weathered, yellow poles on horizontal rectangles of pink and grey iron. They share tenderness with the single white lines on black in McCahon's *The Kennedy Waterfall* drawings. It would be easy to make comparisons between McCahon's heavily abutted Northland panels and Gascoigne's *Monaro* of four undulating tablelands of plywood, but it's clear that certain recurring attitudes ensnared and captivated McCahon, and certain works — such as the weathered thistle sticks against weathered windows [*Takeover bid* 1981] — free themselves from Gascoigne's habitual work.'

Paul McGillick: 'This tidy exhibition is a real model in a number of ways. [It] is it sensitively curated — just the right quantity and range of work ... Gascoigne's work is always very delicate. But this often belies an underlying toughness. What makes her pieces successful so often is her knack for balancing potentially sentimental and banal statements about the environment with strong and coherent aesthetic products. *Takeover Bid* (1981), for example, is a witty installation piece hinting at the dilemma of what today is referred to as "sustainable development". What price an attractive window frame? Will the trees fight back one day? But if that were all, the work would not be interesting. It is Gascoigne's aesthetic touch which holds our attention. Her sensitivity to colour, to her materials and to the evident rhythmic relationship between shapes is evident in the pieces collected for this show.'

Ann Elias: 'McCahon talked about inventing a way of seeing New Zealand, always offering his work as truths. Gascoigne's assemblages transform materials but they are for contemplation of her immediate landscape. Her work reveals an attraction to the aesthetic of patina on found objects. Her rearrangements are formalist and it is because of a singularity of purpose that her part of the exhibition has greater coherence than McCahon's.'

John Hawke: 'The McCahon paintings are primarily landscapes ... What the exhibition fails to emphasise, in its inclusion of only one of McCahon's major late works, the dominating *Victory over Death* (1970), is one more obvious correlation in the two artists' use of words as signifiers. Rosalie Gascoigne's sculptural assemblages are arranged from the detritus of discarded language — they are, in a fundamental sense, word-constructions ...'

Gary Catalano: 'Rosalie Gascoigne leaves me with a problem I have yet to unravel. She does many things I know I should admire, for she handles her material with real sensitivity and always looks keenly at the commonplace world. But, strangely, I always find that her work leaves me cold. If we put the possibility that

I am being dishonest to one side, I can see just one explanation of this paradox. In Gascoigne, I'd like to suggest, we have an artist whose sensitivity of eye is not matched by any great ability as a maker or, more precisely, as a shaper. Gascoigne is a bit like someone who points to a thing — a piece of tin, say, or a bit of weathered wood — and hopes our enchantment will be such that we will forget our basic artistic expectation. And that, put bluntly, is to see the world imaginatively remade. She relies far too heavily on the grid as an operational device.'

Jenny Zimmer: 'The Gascoigne–McCahon pairing contains an irony: the works are expected to epitomise antipodean experience at a particular point in time. Both artists acknowledge that environmental factors shaped their personal and spiritual identities. Admittedly, McCahon's gloomy *Landscape Theme and Variations* (1963) expresses what he called "the essential monotony" of New Zealand. And Gascoigne's corrugated iron *Swell* (1984) summarizes her present location and interests. Inevitably these raw and elemental works describe a larger place. Their cultural conditioning extends beyond immediate geographic confines. As artists, they connect with others across the globe. Compare Gascoigne with Jasper Johns, or McCahon with Robert Motherwell: a good duo, these two know their *place*, but are not altogether innocent.'

COMMENT: The exhibition marked New Zealand's sesquicentenary: 1000 years of Maori settlement and 150 years of Pakeha (European) settlement. The exhibition was opened in Sydney at The University of New South Wales by Mr Geoffrey Palmer, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

1991

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Pinacotheca, 10 Waltham Place, Richmond, Melbourne, 15 October – 1 November 1991. 24 works.

1. Denim 1990 \$5500	8. Dandelions [Dandelion] 1990 \$5500	17. Apricot letters 1990 \$5500
2. Target 1991 \$4500	9. Beach house 1990 \$5500	18. Letting go 1991 \$45,000
3. Lantern 1990 \$5250	10. Spring tides 1990 \$3750	19. Green piece 1991 [1990–91] \$6000
4. Fragmentation 1991 [Fragmentation [I], later incorporated in Southerly buster 1995] \$5500	11. Leadlight 1991 \$3500	20. Checkerboard 1990 \$7000
5. First fruits 1991 \$3500	12. Vestiges 1990 \$3500	21. Old gold 1990 \$7000
6. Woodland 1990 \$3500	13. Testudo 1991 \$3500	22. Conundrum 1990 [1989–90] \$15,000
7. Summer stack 1990 \$4500	14. Cockatoos 1990 [1991] \$14,000	23. Top brass 1990 \$10,000
	15. Full stretch 1991 \$7000	24. Blue streak 1990 \$18,000
	16. Far view 1990 \$10,000	

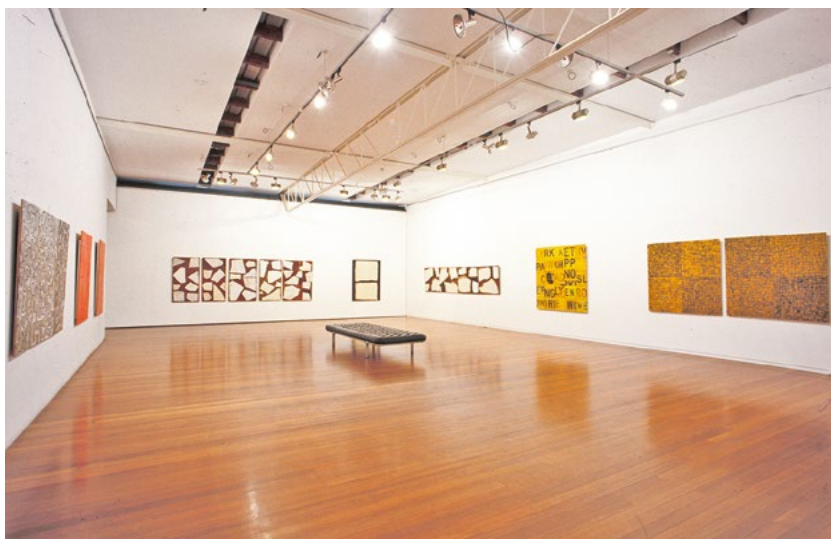
Typed exh. list; exh. inv.; exh. videotape (author's archive)

NOTICES: Tracey Aubin 'Adventures of a cargo carrier: Rosalie Gascoigne's art' *The Bulletin* 30 Apr 1991, pp. 110–111; Christopher Heathcote *The Age* 1 May 1991

Christopher Heathcote: 'For her latest show Gascoigne has fixed more scraps of our culture to nearly 40 weathered plywood panels. Contrary to expectations, the results are anything but chaotic: they have an elegance, a restrained grace. "*Vestiges*", five small squares fashioned from pieces of reflective yellow country road signs, outdistances the most restrained of minimal abstractions. *Far View*, an arrangement of cuisenaire rod sized wooden slats that have been cut from old bottle crates, seems the record of a Pythagorean intellect at work. While *Green Piece*, made of more broken crates overlaid with shards of Frating Green-coloured vinyl floor-coverings, brings to our attention the emotive richness that can suddenly manifest itself when what would otherwise be drab and commonplace suburban debris is touched (and transfigured) by the human imagination.'

1992

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Soudan Lane, Paddington, Sydney, 15 April – 2 May 1992. 41 works.



Installation view of Rosalie's first show in the new Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery at Soudan Lane, Paddington: *Clouds I* 1992 and *Clouds II* 1992 (on back wall); *Clouds III* 1992, *Top brass* 1990 and *Sunflowers* 1991 (on right-hand side); the works on the left are *Lambing* 1991, *Love apples* 1992 and *Firebird* 1991

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Clouds I 1992 \$23,000* | 22. Survey 1991 \$5000 |
| 2. Clouds II 1992 \$9000* | 23. May morning 1992 \$5000 |
| 3. Clouds III 1992 \$16,000* | 24. Bright and beautiful 1990–91 \$5000 |
| 4. Lake 1991 \$20,000 | 25. High density 1992 \$5000 |
| 5. Sunflowers 1991 \$16,000 | 26. Standard 1990–91 \$5000 |
| 6. Lambing 1991 \$12,000 | 27. First fruits 1991 \$4500 |
| 7. Top brass 1990 \$10,000 | 28. Red rag 1992 \$4000 |
| 8. Firebird 1991 \$9000 | 29. Nuggets 1991 \$4000 |
| 9. Love apples 1992 \$9000 | 30. Ledger 1992 \$4000 |
| 10. Beaten track 1992 \$8500 | 31. Port of call 1992 \$4000 |
| 11. Full stretch 1991 \$7500 | 32. Through road 1991 [1990–91] \$3500 |
| 12. Fragmentation [I] 1991 \$7500 | 33. Honey bee 1 1992 \$2000 |
| 13. Sweet sorrow 1990 \$7000 | 34. Honey bee 2 1992 \$2000 |
| 14. Apothecary 1992 \$7000 | 35. Honey bee 3 1992 \$2000 |
| 15. Landfall 1989 \$7000 | 36. Regimental colours A 1990–91 \$2200 |
| 16. Sweet lovers 1990 \$7000 | 37. Regimental colours B 1990–92 \$2000 |
| 17. Meadow-Sweet 1991 \$5500 | 38. Text 1992 \$2000 |
| 18. Sleeper 1992 [1990] \$5000 | 39. Sun silk 1992 \$2000 |
| 19. Wattle and daub 1992 \$5000 | 40. Tesserae W 1991 \$2000 |
| 20. Gaudy night 1992 \$5000 | 41. Tesserae Y 1990 \$2000 |
| 21. High water mark 1992 \$5000 | |

* The three *Cloud* pieces were also offered as an installation at \$40,000 for institutions

Exh. cat.; exh. inv.; installation views (Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery archive and gallery website); exh. videotape by Ross Harley (author's archive)

NOTICES: Lynette Fern 'Possibilities of material are what matter most' *SMH* 20 Apr 1992

Lynette Fern: 'Rosalie Gascoigne continues to explore the metamorphosis of matter ... In images evocative of Lake George, Gascoigne has employed a new technique. She has cut the arcs of circles out of wooden formwork and used the resulting curves over painted wood to suggest clouds, rain and reflections on water ... These works demonstrate new developments in Gascoigne's forms as well as the continuation of her statement of the endless variety to be found in the rhythms of repetition. More than this, they point to the central paradox within her work: as God was able to take clay and turn it into man, so Gascoigne collects the leavings of our civilisation and turns them into art.' (Fern was wrong about RG cutting the arcs — the curves were as she found them.)

CONVERSIONS 4: ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Gorman House, Braddon, Canberra, 19 June – 11 July 1992. Curator Anne Virgo. 7 works.

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- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Feathered fence 1979 [1978–79] | 5. Clouds II 1992 |
| 2. Set up 1984 [1983–84] | 6. Clouds III 1992 |
| 3. Piece to walk on 1984 [1983–84] | 7. Lake 1992 [1991] |
| 4. Clouds I 1992 | |
-

Exh. cat. (with essay by Nick Waterlow and 2 installation views); exh. inv.

NOTICES: Sasha Grishin 'Elegance and lyricism in Gascoigne works' *Canberra Times* 27 Jun 1992 (1 illus.); Robert Macklin *Canberra Times* 4 Jul 1992, p. C7

Sasha Grishin: 'The overwhelming impression is a sense of elegance, lyricism and the ability to metamorphose natural and man-made natural objects into metaphors for landscape. She is an artist who never ceases to amaze the beholder in her ability to re-invent her environment. In a manner akin to Fred Williams, she rearranges the familiar objects to present a poignant new reading of what surrounds us. Feathers, discarded wood panels, abandoned cooking utensils weathered in the bush and random scraps of wood all become Gascoigne raw materials which are then balanced and distilled as a new-installed environment which makes us view all other environments differently ... *Set Up* and *Piece to Walk On* (both 1984) are both floor pieces and use discarded and painted and weathered wood panels. The first piece also employs discarded enamel cooking pots, which litter the bush surrounding Canberra. More than any other piece at the exhibition, for me, they illustrate Rosalie Gascoigne's rare ability through very simple and limited means to evoke a specific landscape charged with a wealth of associations ... Rosalie Gascoigne's exhibition of installations is provocative and challenging in an unusual way. It gives a new reading to our environment, it questions man's impact on the environment, yet it does this with an inspiring ease and a simplicity and freshness which is rare in contemporary art.'

COMMENT: *Conversions: Festival of installation works* was a program of installation art that the Canberra Contemporary Art Space ran from 21 April to 3 October 1992 and was curated by its director, Anne Virgo. It involved eight separate, consecutive exhibitions. RG's was the fourth in the series.

1993

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Pinacotheca, 10 Waltham Place, Richmond, Melbourne, 5–22 May 1993. 35 works.

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|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Skylight 1993 \$6500 | 15. Rose red city 7 1993 \$4800 | 28. Sheep weather alert 1 1992–93 \$5500 |
| 2. Airborne 1 1993 \$4000 | 16. Rose red city 8 1993 \$7500 | 29. Sheep weather alert 2 1992–93 \$10,000 |
| 3. Banner 1 1992 \$3600 | 17. Rose red city 9 1993 \$5500 | 30. Sheep weather alert 3 1992–93 \$5500 |
| 4. Banner 2 1992 \$3600 | 18. Rose red city 10 1993 \$5500 | 31. Sheep weather alert 4 1992–93 \$5500 |
| 5. Archipelago 1993 \$5250 | 19. Rose pink 1992 \$4800 | 32. Sheep weather alert 5 1992–93 \$10,000 |
| 6. September 1992 \$7500 | 20. Midsummer 1992 \$3500 | 33. Sheep weather alert 6 1992–93 \$5500 |
| 7. Red 1992 \$3000 | 21. Maze 1992 \$4500 | 34. Sheep weather alert 7 1992–93 \$4800 |
| 8. Amber 1992 \$3000 | 22. Pursuit 1992 \$4250 | 35. Sheep weather alert 8 1992–93 \$7000 |
| 9. Rose red city 1 1992–93 \$10,000 | 23. Cat's eye 1992–93 \$4750 | |
| 10. Rose red city 2 1993 \$4000 | 24. The place [Age of innocence] 1993 \$4000 | |
| 11. Rose red city 3 1992–93 \$7000 | 25. Stooks 1991–92 \$3000 | |
| 12. Rose red city 4 1991/93 \$12,000 | 26. Airborne 2 1993 \$4000 | |
| 13. Rose red city 5 1992 \$9500 | 27. Port of call 1992 \$3000 | |
| 14. Rose red city 6 1992–93 \$10,000 | | |

The *Rose red city* and *Sheep weather alert* works were displayed as installations.

Typed list of exh. works; exh. inv.

NOTICES: Christopher Heathcote 'A transformation of highway debris' *The Age* 12 May 1993; Robert Rooney 'Diverse objects in art of assemblage' *Weekend Australian* 22–23 May 1993, p. 13

Christopher Heathcote: 'Materials are important, although Gascoigne's art survives mainly on the geometric momentum of the composition. The viewer is invited to see "through" the debris and, in construing it as a chaste composition, retain the sense of junk while savouring the configuration it describes: the commonplace is constantly transfigured. In particular, Gascoigne immerses the vulgar qualities of old lino and chipped signs in the deeper associations of the countryside from which they came, its rhythm and pace, its symbolism and vigor. And in every line and texture one perceives the land undisguised at work, reconstituting the interlocking lumps and chunks of rural rubbish in terms of itself. To order such materials truly, assemblages such as *September* and *Rose Pink* imply, is to represent the ebb and flow of experience.'

Robert Rooney: 'Gascoigne takes what she finds and puts them together with a minimum of intervention. For example, in several works abandoned planks and reflective road signs have been cut up and reassembled in random grids. Sometimes, as in *Banner*, the signs are joined to strips of floral linoleum, a material she seems to have in plentiful supply in a pale geometric design, ripped remnants of which are scattered across the boards of *Sheep Weather Alert*.'

COMMENT: RG: '*Rose Red City* ... was meant to be an installation. The man who sold it unfortunately broke it up' (1998 Hughes).

1994

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Soudan Lane, Paddington, Sydney, 6–30 April 1994.
28 works.

1. Plein air 1994 [installation] \$30,000	10. Plain view 2 1994 \$7000	20. Lily pond 1993 \$10,000
2. Steel magnolias 1994 \$12,000	11. Flute 1993 \$7000	21. Float off 1993 \$8000
3. Regeneration 1994 \$10,000	12. Imperial measure 1993–94 \$7000	22. Billboard 1992–93 \$8000
4. White city 1993–94 NFS	13. White out 1994 \$7000	23. Rose pink 1992 \$8000
5. Tree of life 1994 \$10,000	14. Gazette 1994 \$7000	24. Maze 1992 \$7500
6. Witness 1994 \$10,000	15. Plain view 1 1994 \$5000	25. Age of innocence 1993 \$7500
7. Honeybunch 1993 \$11,000	16. Real estate 1994 \$7000	26. Airborne 2 1993 \$7500
8. Compound 1994 \$8000	17. Bread and butter 1994 \$6000	27. Midsummer 1992 \$7000
9. Top of the morning 1994 [1993–94] \$8000	18. Jotter 1994 \$5000	28. Pursuit 1 and Pursuit 2 [Pursuit] 1992 \$7000 (pair)
	19. Bush yellow 1993 \$11,000	

Exh. list of works; exh. inv.

NOTICES: Anne Loxley ‘The pleasures of the eye’ *SMH* 15 Apr 1994, p. 19; Elwyn Lynn ‘Colour brings life back to the square’ *Weekend Australian* 23–24 Apr 1994, p. 13; Ewen McDonald ‘Rosalie Gascoigne’ *Monument* vol. 1, no. 3, 1994, pp. 66–69 (6 illus.)

Anne Loxley (in a long article): ‘It is her understanding of the act of looking which astounds the viewer of Gascoigne’s work. Her assemblages are like visual Rubik’s cubes — in contemplating the work, one sees the world(s) from which the assembled items have come, gleans something of Gascoigne’s processes of looking at the world, feels and analyses her world and then enjoys her unique reinvention of these familiar objects and their associations. Each piece is a triumphant with an unnerving lyrical beauty; it is no surprise to hear her quote Wordsworth about emotion recollected in tranquillity.’

Elwyn Lynn: ‘Gascoigne seems to have adopted rather grunge, or better, Arte Povera surfaces ... There is no doubt that the cool, still grey works of balanced, simple geometrical areas are astonishingly attractive. Art clings to the old shed door, to the patched-up window, to areas of peaceful contemplation.’

COMMENT: The first gallery was hung primarily with white works (nos. 1–18). ‘I had almost a white show last time at Ros’s [Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery]. I got a lot of this cotton reel stuff — I’ve got one out there in the hall made of the main part of it [*White city* 1993–94] ... I had three I didn’t want to sell, but of course you can’t do that so you say, okay, I’ll keep that one ... And then I made a lot of small whitey ones. I was really turned on by white; white really does turn me on ... As I say, I did a lot of white ... and I did an installation called “Plein air”. You go out in the country and you see this high sky and its marvellous width of the land and fences. It’s beautiful, it was just air — air’s a fairly beautiful thing. I remember trying to get this installation working and I knew that what I needed was just some air on the walls. It’s very hard to paint or manufacture air, I’ll tell you. It’s a very hard thing to do’ (1995 Topliss).

1995

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Soudan Lane, Paddington, Sydney, 27 August – 16 September 1995. 20 works.



Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery 1995: *Suddenly the lake* 1995, *Harlequin* 1994–95 and *Skylark* 1994–95

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Suddenly the lake 1995 \$30,000 | 11. Acanthus 1995 \$7500 |
| 2. Hung fire 1995 \$25,000 | 12. Iron bark 1994–95 \$7500 |
| 3. White garden 1995 \$22,000 | 13. Ensign 1995 \$13,000 |
| 4. Skylark 1994–95 \$12,000 | 14. Southerly buster 1995 \$11,500 |
| 5. Shabby summer 1994–95 \$10,000 | 15. News break 1994 \$11,500 |
| 6. Harlequin 1994–95 \$10,000 | 16. Gentlemen of Japan 1995 \$11,000 |
| 7. The Apple Isle 1994–95 \$8500 | 17. A certain smile 1994–95 \$8500 |
| 8. Top End 1995 [1994–95] \$8000 | 18. Danegeld 1995 \$6500 |
| 9. Wool clip 1995 \$8000 | 19. Wind and weather 1994 \$7000 |
| 10. Wild strawberries 1995 \$8000 | 20. Weighed and divided 1995 \$7000 |

Exh. cat.; exh. inv.; installation views (Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery archive and gallery website)

NOTICES: John McDonald 'Masonite man heads west' *SMH Spectrum* 2 Sep 1995, p. 14A (1 illus.); Joanna Mendelsohn 'Imants Tillers, Rosalie Gascoigne, Colin Lanceley' *The Australian* 8 Sep 1995, p. 14

John McDonald: 'The strength of Gascoigne's work lies not in an endlessly repeated search for novelty, but in the subtle variations she brings to her manipulations of materials. Landscape is the overwhelming reference, but it is a landscape reduced to the bare essentials ... her assemblages have an insistent, meditative dimension that invites prolonged examination. Each work has a distinctive presence and, dare I say it, a sense of the sheer fun in its making that never permits one to remain aloof or indifferent.'

Joanna Mendelsohn: 'In the past two decades Gascoigne has gone on from strength to strength, using her original instincts for acquiring materials, seemingly by accident, and putting them together for great purpose ... In her latest exhibition she continues on one of her explorations of a sense of place, the landscape around Canberra where she has lived for many years.'

AN INSTALLATION BY ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Pinacotheca, 10 Waltham Place, Richmond, Melbourne, 11–28 October 1995. 1 work.

1. But mostly air 1994–95

Exh. inv.; installation photography by Graham Baring (author's archive)

1996

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Greenaway Art Gallery, 39 Rundle Street, Kent Town, Adelaide, 6–31 March 1996. 13 works.

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- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Summer fat \$14,000 | 8. Milky Way \$12,000 |
| 2. Summer sprawl \$14,000 | 9. Star chart \$10,000 |
| 3. Summer swarm \$12,000 | 10. Downtown [Down town] \$10,000 |
| 4. Tally \$4000 | 11. Tidy summer \$20,000 |
| 5. All summer long \$40,000 | 12. Summer divided \$12,000 |
| 6. High summer \$10,000 | [unnumbered] But mostly air \$45,000 |
| 7. Mud brick \$6000 | |
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Typed exh. list; exh. inv.; videotape of opening (author's archive)

NOTICES: SR [Stephanie Radock] 'Golden summers' *Adelaide Review* c. Mar 1996

SR [Stephanie Radock]: 'Rosalie Gascoigne's work took over Greenaway Gallery with a limited colour range, mostly gold and yellow but also included bleached wood, weathered blue, lots of shades of white, cream, a little brown and red and black in a spare exhibition of works that was assured in its sense of maturity and quality. The work glows, is considered and restrained.'

COMMENT: The exhibition was part of the 1996 Adelaide Festival program. 'The last [soft-drink crates at the Schweppes depot] they had were yellow Schweppes boxes, which I used in an exhibition in Adelaide. I purposely made all my works in that gold for the Adelaide show, because of the summer heat there' (1996 Davidson). RG later found more of the yellow boxes and made more works from them.

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE at ACAF 5: FIFTH AUSTRALIAN CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne, 2–6 October 1996. 2 works.

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1. Piece to walk around 1981
 2. Letting go 1991
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NOTICES: John McDonald 'Art supermarket' *SMH* 12 Oct 1996, p. 145

COMMENT: One of several solo exhibitions incorporated into ACAF 5. John McDonald wrote: 'The awkward sprinkling of sculptures in the main hall of ACAF 94 was replaced by a series of solo exhibitions by Robert Klippel, Rosalie Gascoigne, Neil Taylor, Akio Makigawa, Bronwyn Oliver and Aboriginal tribal artists. Each body of work was allotted generous space and the display was impressive.'

1997–98

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE: MATERIAL AS LANDSCAPE, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 14 November 1997 – 11 January 1998 and National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 4 July – 27 September 1998. Curator Deborah Edwards. 30 works (not numbered).

[1] The crop 1 [Crop [1]] 1976	[11] Inland sea 1986	[21] Fool's gold 1992
[2] Pale landscape 1977	[12] Shoreline 1986	[22] Age of innocence 1993
[3] Feathered fence 1978–79	[13] Roadside 1987–88 [1987]	[23] Skylight 1993
[4] Piece to walk around 1981	[14] Maculosa 1988	[24] White city 1993–94
[5] Scrub country 1982 [1981–82]	[15] Monaro 1989 [1988–89]	[25] Eden 1994 [1995]
[6] Graven image 1983 [1982]	[16] Far view 1990	[26] But mostly air 1994–95
[7] Wattle strike 1983	[17] Lake 1991	[27] Shabby summer 1994–95
[8] Grove 1984	[18] Sunflowers 1991	[28] Southerly buster 1995
[9] Set up 1984 [1983–84]	[19] Clouds I 1992	[29] Suddenly the lake 1995
[10] Swell 1984	[20] Cow pasture 1992	[30] White garden 1995

Exh. cat. (essay, interview, 31 illus.); installation view at AGNSW in Fenner 1999, pp. 88–89; twenty 35 mm slides of installation by Christopher Snee (AGNSW)

NOTICES: Sebastian Smee 'Be here now' *SMH Metro* 14–20 Nov 1997, p. 6 (1 illus.); Joanna Mendelssohn 'Avant-garde magic out of the chrysalis' *The Australian* 21 Nov 1997 (1 illus.); John McDonald 'Charms to soothe a savage critic' *SMH Spectrum Arts* 29 Nov 1997, p. 16 (1 illus.); Sasha Grishin 'Looking at the edges of our society' *Canberra Times Panorama* 6 Dec 1997, p. 16 (1 illus.); Ken Scarlett 'Rosalie Gascoigne' *Sculpture* vol. 17, no. 5, 1998, pp. 86–87 (1 illus.); Stephen Banham 'Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as landscape' *Monument* no. 23, 1998, p. 97; Brigid Shadbolt 'Rosalie Gascoigne's contested terrain' *Broadsheet* magazine [NZ] vol. 27, no. 1, 1998, pp. 14–15 (3 illus.); Sasha Grishin 'Recognition for Rosalie' *Canberra Times Panorama* 11 Jul 1998, p. 15 (1 illus.); ; Adriana Alvarez 'Landscapes for your mind' *Revolver* [Antwerp, Belgium] 7 Sep 1998; Felicity Fenner 'Landscape of shards' *Art in America* Feb 1999, pp. 88–91 (4 illus.)

Also: Janet Hawley 'A late developer' *SMH Good Weekend* 15 Nov 1997, pp. 40–44 (7 illus.) and republished 2012; 'Hear it, do it!' *Herald Sun* 9 Nov 1997 (1 illus.); Deborah Edwards 'Material as landscape' *Look* magazine [Art Gallery Society of NSW], Nov 1997, pp. 12–13 (4 illus.); Vivienne Webb 'Rosalie Gascoigne' *State of the Arts* (no. 3) 1997, pp. 6–7 (4 illus.) and also *State of the Arts New Zealand* Dec 1997 – Mar 1998

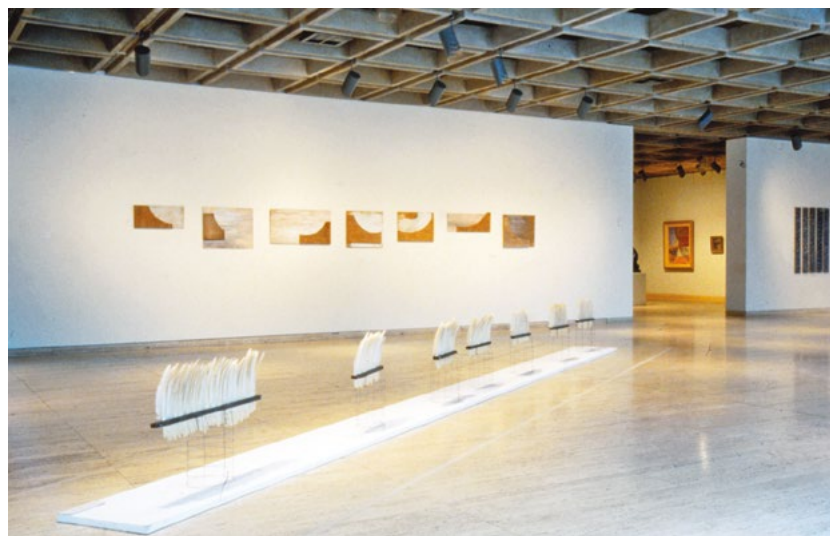
Sebastian Smee: 'Rosalie Gascoigne — surely one of the best Australian artists of the last 20 years — makes art you want to be with, not just blink at. The Art Gallery of NSW is currently hosting ... a "mid-career survey" of Gascoigne's work, and you're your own worst enemy if you miss it ... Gascoigne shows why fine art remains the unembarrassed queen of visual culture. It's about filtering out the guff, the noise, the blather. It's about wanting to pay attention.'

Joanna Mendelssohn: 'There is nothing accidental about Gascoigne's use of materials. With an unerring eye she selects and manipulates other people's rejects until she has created her own purpose ... Hers is an eye that sees everything as being of value and then places it in an orderly universe, a language defined by object rather than by brushstroke.'

John McDonald: 'She is one of a rare breed: a leading contemporary artist who consistently pursues a form of lyrical beauty. Her works are seductive rather than confrontational — they almost dare us to dislike them ... No matter how she cuts and rearranges softdrink crates, reflective signs or sheets of corrugated iron, they



Art Gallery of New South Wales 1997: *Piece to walk around* 1981 (in foreground), *Shoreline* 1986 (on wall at right), *Inland sea* 1986, *Clouds I* 1992 and *Swell* 1984 (in room beyond)
Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



Art Gallery of New South Wales 1997: *Feathered fence* 1978–79 (on floor), *Lake* 1991 (on wall) and *Maculosa* 1988 (far right)
Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



Art Gallery of New South Wales 1997: *Lake* 1991 (on left), *Feathered fence* 1978–79 (in foreground), *Scrub country* 1981–82 (on rear wall) and *Set up* 1984 (by window on right)
Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney



Art Gallery of New South Wales 1997: *Pale landscape* 1977 (in foreground), *Sunflowers* 1991 and *Far view* 1990 (beyond)
Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

retain much of their original identity. They make us think of landscape not as a window onto the world, but as a momentary perception of physical sensation ... Her art has an air of lucid intelligence. She knows one need not force the issue: a work of art will generate its own chain of recognition, regardless of the artist's intentions.'

Ken Scarlett: 'In some ways she continues in the tradition of Australian landscape painting, but she is unmistakably a Modernist, one strongly attracted to Minimalist aesthetic and the use of the grid. Yet she would never be thought of as a Minimalist, for she is fundamentally a poet with strong links to the land. Gascoigne has been able to combine acute yet poetic observation of her country with a practical no-nonsense attitude towards materials and methods of working ... Over the years the origins of her objects and materials have become less recognisable and significant, yet the sense of place is still very strong — but more intangible. It is as though the brilliant Australian light is flooding her work, destroying shadows, and flattening out and dissolving forms ... Her journey of discovery may have started late but is far from over.'

Sasha Grishin (11 Jul 1998): 'As with [Tom] Roberts and [Fred] Williams, before her, Gascoigne has given a new reading to the Australian landscape, and it is now possible to view our landscape through her eyes ... As in Zen Buddhism, she seems to instinctively know that if you approach a question from an open position, rather than with a preconceived answer, the way will be revealed to you.'

Adriana Alvarez: 'Her works say more about nature than any painting can. Her ordering of found objects from the land reflect our interaction with nature, the imprint we have left on it. By creating landscapes out of old, discarded or lost bits and pieces her work represents the human desire to control nature. To bend it to our will, straightening crooked rows, flattening hills, creating order out of chaos. She shows a picture of nature that is so true it has to be made out of unnatural objects to capture it.'

Felicity Fenner: 'While her connection to the land is often articulated in terms which echo those used by indigenous artists, her rapport with the landscape is meditative and emotional rather than cultural or historical ... Gascoigne's works alert her viewers to the infinite potential of the landscape as a source of spiritual inspiration ... More directly suggestive of landscape are Gascoigne's many floor pieces, simple grid systems that seem to offer the possibility of infinite space ... A visual sensation of movement and space permeates Gascoigne's oeuvre ... Much of Gascoigne's work ... embodies a feeling of edgelessness which again finds an analogy in the vastness of the Australian topography ... Gascoigne's practice celebrates with casual reverence the infinite metaphorical capacity of everyday material and local subject matter to embody a worldview which ranges beyond the specifics of time and place.'

COMMENT: The exhibition was planned and presented as a 'mid-career survey' rather than a full-scale retrospective, which RG did not want. When Stephen Feneley asked her whether it worried her as an artist that big exhibitions such as this were 'putting a full stop', she replied: 'Oh very definitely. Well that's her lot, she's done it. I always think you have for yourself if you're an artist, my sort of artist, that you have an expanding universe and as long as you've got the heart and strength to your elbow you can discover something else.' RG gave talks to the Art Gallery Society at the AGNSW on 13 November 1997 and the NGA on 15 July 1998 and a public interview with Michael Desmond at the NGA on 23 July 1998. She was also interviewed by Stephen Feneley for the ABC TV Arts program on 4 December 1997. During the exhibition somebody painted a large inscription on the plywood hoarding along College Street, Sydney, that was screening development near St Mary's Cathedral. The inscription read 'Installation by Rosalie Gascoigne'. The exhibition also inspired Geoff Page's poem 'Monaro, for Rosalie Gascoigne' September 1998.¹⁰

¹⁰ 'Putting a full stop': 1997 Feneley; 'inscription on the plywood hoarding': Leo Schofield *SMH* 10 Jan 1998, p. 26; 'Monaro, for Rosalie Gascoigne' 1998, in Geoff Page *Darker and lighter* Five Islands Press, Wollongong University, NSW, 2001.

1998

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Roslyn Oxley⁹ Gallery, Soudan Lane, Paddington, Sydney, 1 April – 2 May 1998.
23 works.

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- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Never never [Grasslands II] 1998
\$25,000 | 8. Please drive slowly 1996 \$14,000 | 16. Morning glory 1996 \$10,000 |
| 2. Easy street 1997 [1996–97] \$18,000 | 9. Pentimento 1997 \$13,000 | 17. Canary bird 1996 \$10,000 |
| 3. Loopholes 1997 [1995] NFS | 10. Full fathom five 1998 [1997] \$11,500 | 18. Trumpet voluntary 1997 \$8000 |
| 4. Cloud cuckoo land 1998 \$18,000 | 11. Thermals 1998 \$10,500 | 19. Pavement [Pavement [III]] 1998
\$7500 |
| 5. Downbeat 1998 [1997] \$17,000 | 12. Indian summer 1996 \$10,500 | 20. Golden bamboo 1997 \$7500 |
| 6. Lasseter's reef 1996/97 [1993/1996–
97] \$16,000 | 13. Ship's log 1997/98 [1996/98]
\$10,500 | 21. Reserve 1997 \$7000 |
| 7. Solitude 1997 NFS | 14. Medusa 1998 \$10,000 | 22. Siesta 1997 \$5000 |
| | 15. Regatta 1996 \$10,000 | 23. Shark 1998 \$5000 |
-

Exh. cat.; exh. inv.; installation views (Roslyn Oxley⁹ Gallery archive and gallery website)

NOTICES: Sebastian Smee 'The prime of Rosalie Gascoigne' *SMH Metro* 2 Apr 1998, p. 11 (3 illus.)

Sebastian Smee: 'The new show is made up almost entirely of "retro-reflectives" ... To see the new show is to see how inventive Gascoigne is, even with the most predictable ingredients ... These works are about the solidly real and the transitory all at once. The bold letters are arranged on the grid so as to hint at meaning, or else simply to scramble it. Spliced into still smaller pieces, they blur the line between pattern and notation. The titles are as crucial and as pitch-perfect as ever: playful, allusive, poetic.'

COMMENT: The exhibition opening was also the occasion for the launch of Vici MacDonald's book *Rosalie Gascoigne*, Regaro Press, Sydney, 1998.

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Greenaway Art Gallery, 39 Rundle Street, Kent Town, Adelaide, 19 August – 13 September 1998. 19 works.

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- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Embers I and II [Embers I & II] 1998
\$11,000 (pair) | 7. Pavement I 1997 \$8000 | 14. Drawing board 1996 \$8500 |
| 2. Origami 1998 \$11,000 | 8. Palings 1998 [1994/98] \$12,500 | 15. Effervescence 1998 \$4500 |
| 3. Black tulip 1996 \$15,000 | 9. Swarm I 1998 \$4500 | 16. Rocky road I 1996 [1993/96] \$7000 |
| 4. Sleep 1996 \$15,000 | 10. Swarm II 1998 \$4500 | 17. Rocky road II 1996 \$7000 |
| 5. Out of Africa 1994 \$12,500 | 11. March 1998 \$6500 | 18. Slow burn 1998 \$6500 |
| 6. Tidy summer 1996 \$30,000 | 12. City blocks [City block] 1996 \$11,500 | 19. Torch 1998 \$6500 |
| | 13. Pavement II 1997 \$8000 | |
-

Typed exh. list of works (works not dated); exh. inv.

NOTICES: Louise Nunn 'True-grit talent' *The Advertiser* 26 Aug 1998, p. 102 (1 illus.); John Neylon 'Familiar chords' *Adelaide Review* Sep 1998

John Neylon: 'Here we have an artist who has kept the faith in terms of an austere and disciplined aesthetic ... the systems of fragmentation and reassembly, repetition, tessellation and compression ... speak in the final product more of control of, rather than collaboration with, nature ... Yet paradoxically, [in some works] elements of sensuality and organic rhythms dominate over structure ... A refreshing exhibition.'

1999

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Soudan Lane, Paddington, Sydney, 1–25 September 1999. 22 works.



Last works at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery in 1999, a show Rosalie never got to see because by then she was in hospital: (left to right) *Metropolis* 1999, *Great blond paddocks* 1998–99 and *Parasol* 1999

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Metropolis 1999 NFS | 13. Tartan 1998 \$35,000 |
| 2. Great blond paddocks 1998–99 \$60,000 | 14. NYT (SRTO) [[Untitled (SRTO)]] 1999 \$35,000 |
| 3. Orangery 1998 \$60,000 | 15. Cumquats 1999 \$30,000 |
| 4. Traffic snarl 1998 \$30,000 | 16. Rose red city 7 1993 \$30,000 |
| 5. Rain and shine 1998 \$30,000 | 17. Carnival 1998 [Carnival [2] 1998/99] \$30,000 |
| 6. Parasol 1999 \$50,000 | 18. NYT (Red squares) 1999 [[Red squares] 1998] \$30,000 |
| 7. Birdsong 1999 \$45,000 | 19. Magpie 1998 \$18,000 |
| 8. Windows 1999 \$45,000 | 20. Fiesta 1999 \$18,000 |
| 9. Valentine 1999 \$45,000 | 21. Fishbowl 1999 \$10,000 |
| 10. Flagged down 1998 \$40,000 | 22. NYT (Little one) [[Untitled (Little one)]] 1999 \$10,000 |
| 11. Printed circuit 1999 \$40,000 | |
| 12. Directives 1999 \$38,000 | |

Exh. list; exh. inv.; installation views (Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery archive and gallery website, and author's archive)

NOTICES: Sebastian Smee 'The Herald recommends' *SMH* 1 Sep 1999, p. 28; Catherine Taylor 'Show and tell: Going underground' *The Australian* 6 Sep 1999; Terry Ingram 'Art oldies but goodies "hot"' *Australian Financial Review* 7 Sep 1999, p. 5 (1 illus.); 'The perfect week' *The Bulletin* 7 Sep 1999, p. 111 (1 illus.)

COMMENT: Three works in the exhibition were untitled: numbers 14, 18 and 22, although the gallery added words or letters to help identify them. RG's health deteriorated in August 1999 and she did not have the time or energy to name all the works before she sent them to Sydney, and by the time the exhibition opened she was in hospital (although she did not know she was dying). She never saw the show.

2000

FROM THE STUDIO OF ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Kingsley Street, Acton, Canberra, 5 September – 12 November 2000. Curator Mary Eagle. 39 works (37 by R.G.) (not numbered).

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| [1] Untitled c. 1975 [Homage to Ken Whisson's <i>And what should I do in Illyria?</i> 1977] | [14] Untitled c. 1984 [Homage with Ingres's <i>Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière</i>] c. 1984–92] | [28] Untitled c. 1995 [Study with formboard shape] c. 1988–95] |
| [2] Lilee c. 1975 [Lilee and daffodils] c. 1977–78] | [15] Untitled [Moth] c. 1984 [Moth] c. 1984] | [29] Parterre 1996 [Parterre c. 1994/97] |
| [3] Pink window 1975 | [16] Red beach Christmas [Red beach] 1984 | [30] Untitled [Roses] 1996 [Parterre c. 1994/97] |
| [4] The tea party c. 1980 [The teaparty 1980] | [17] Honey flow 1985 | [31] Tribal 1996 [1996/1997–98] |
| [5] Rain forest 1980 | [18] Highway code 1985 | [32] Loopholes 1996 [1995] |
| [6] Takeover bid 1981 | [19] Plainsong 1988 | [33] Solitude 1997 |
| [7] Untitled c. 1981 [White and grey A] 1980] | [20] Close owly 1988 | [34] Untitled c. 1998 [Study with FSC-coated wood] 1998] |
| [8] Side show 1981 | [21] The marriage feast 1988–89 | [35] Untitled 1999 [The still of the night] c. 1998–99] |
| [9] [Beach] c. 1981 [1983] | [22] Hill station 1989 | [36] Earth 1–10 [Earth] 1999 |
| [10] Paper square [2] 1982 [Harvest 1981–82] | [23] Loose leaf 1991 [1990] | [37] Untitled n.d. [Pink offcuts] c. 1986–87, 1994] |
| [11] Spring [1] c. 1982 [Spring 2 1981–82] | [24] September 1992 | [38] Ken Whisson, <i>And what should I do in Illyria?</i> 1974 |
| [12] Graven image 1982 | [25] Untitled c. 1992 [Linoleum study (chart)] c. 1992] | [39] Colin McCahon, <i>Floodgate</i> 1 1964–65 |
| [13] Habitation 1984 | [26] Honeybunch 1993 | |
| | [27] White city 1993–94 | |



ANU Drill Hall Gallery 2000: *Harvest* 1981–82 (exhibited as *Paper Square [2]*) and *Habitation* 1984
Image by Matt Kelso from author's archive

Exh. cat. (59 illus.); exh. inv.; ANU media release; installation views (Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery and author's archive)

NOTICES: Sasha Grishin 'An artist's revelation' *Canberra Times Panorama* 16 Sep 2000 (1 illus.); Merryn Gates 'Reflections on Rosalie' *Muse* [Canberra] Oct 2000 (1 illus.); Kate Sands 'Gascoigne's collected works' *Arena* magazine no. 52, Apr–May 2001, pp. 42–44 (1 illus.)

Sasha Grishin: 'Even for those who know Rosalie Gascoigne's work well, this exhibition will come as a revelation. The 10 *Earth* panels of 1999 have not been shown publicly before and yet are, undoubtedly, a major work. They are dark, sombre, moody and melancholy ... [This] is neither a retrospective exhibition nor a survey show, but a very intimate look at the workings of the artist's studio. It is a big exhibition and a fascinating journey through a very complicated process of looking at and rearranging external and internal topographies. In this process Rosalie Gascoigne recreates environments and in the process changes the manner in which we view the world and our place in it.'

Merryn Gates: 'The current exhibition ... offers a unique insight into Gascoigne's studio process, and the close circle of family and colleagues who supported her intellectually and professionally.'

Kate Sands: 'Whilst her art is reliant on materials derived from the countryside, weathered and dilapidated, her work characteristically invokes not so much an image of human habitation as of the landscape itself. Hers is not an art of representation; it is one of signification, not unlike the work of Colin McCahon ... or Imants Tillers ... Her work is curiously unsentimental, avoiding easy correlations with the quality and experience of rural life. It possesses the power to co-opt the presence of the land ... Much of her later work possesses an airy largesse,



ANU Drill Hall Gallery 2000: *Earth* 1999 (five of the ten panels), the first time the work was exhibited

Image by Matt Kelso from author's archive



ANU Drill Hall Gallery 2000: *[The still of the night]* c. 1998–99 (exhibited as *Untitled* 1999), *Graven image* 1982, Colin McCahon's *Floodgate 1* 1964–65, *Pink window* 1975 and *Hill station* 1989

Image by Matt Kelso from author's archive

an elemental quality, one of space expanding beyond the confine of the frame ... One fascinating aspect of the art of Rosalie Gascoigne is the way in which she plays off various dimensions ... drawing on geometric shapes and the grid formation, and yet making them gently askew. Her grids are never exactly geometrical, her jigsaw arrangements don't strive for perfection, her arrangements bear the evidence of hand tooling ...'

2003

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE: PLEIN AIR, Gow Langsford Gallery, 2 Danks Street, Waterloo, Sydney, 15 January – 11 February 2003. 1 work.

-
1. Plein air 1994 (installation)
-

Typed exh. list; exh. inv.; installation views (on inv., in *SMH* 25–26 Jan 2003, p. 13 and author's archive)

NOTICES: 'In the frame' *Herald Sun* 19 Jan 2002, p. 2 (1 illus.); Anne Loxley 'Classic Gascoigne work is head and shoulders above rest of field' *SMH* 22 Jan 2002, p. 15; Lenny Ann Low 'Watch this space' *SMH Metropolitan* 25–26 Jan 2002, p. 13 (1 illus.); Terry Ingram 'Sharp rise for Gascoigne' *Australian Financial Review* 13 Mar 2002, p. 65

Anne Loxley: 'Of the shows I've seen in Sculpture 2003 ... nothing comes close to Rosalie Gascoigne's *Plein Air* at Gow Langsford Gallery. This work from 1994, like all vintage Gascoigne, exemplifies the saying about the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. The rigorous, sparse installation of everyday materials amounts to a distillation of essences. An assembly of spindly yellow timber, mostly white-painted masonite and wire pieces, magically conjures a glittering sun, silvery clouds, golden birds, glistening yellow grasses, paddocks and acres of air ...'

Lenny Ann Low: 'Gascoigne's battered panels seem to form bleached landscapes below dormant skies or distant clouds hovering above ginger-coloured dirt. Pale chipboard fitted beside creamy wooden panels suggests zinc cream on skin, while each wood particle resembles a hair. Elsewhere, leaning against the gallery walls and resting on the ground, are 26 wooden panels fixed with multiple strips of yellow wood. Each strip lies like a buckled ribbon, a grass frond or parts of a battered cattle grid while, in the centre of the room, wire lengths imitate stiffened fabric or the curve of a body.'

2004

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE: PLAIN AIR, City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand, 22 February – 16 May 2004. Curator Gregory O'Brien with Paula Savage. 34 works (not numbered).

[1] Pink window 1976 [1975]	[12] Set up 1984 [1983–84]	[24] Foreign affairs 1994
[2] The colonel's lady 1976	[13] Big yellow 1988	[25] Plein air 1994
[3] Early morning 1977	[14] All that jazz 1989	[26] Steel magnolias 1994
[4] Feathered chairs 1978	[15] Hill station 1989	[27] Skylark 1994 [1994–95]
[5] The teaparty 1980	[16] Monaro 1989 [1988–89]	[28] Suddenly the lake 1995
[6] Piece to walk around 1981	[17] Apricot letters 1990	[29] White garden 1995
[7] Graven image 1982	[18] Checkerboard 1996 [1990]	[30] Checkers 1996
[8] Scrub country 1982 [1981–82]	[19] Cockatoos 1990 [1991]	[31] Flagged down 1998
[9] Parrot country 1983 [Parrot country II 1980/83]	[20] Apothecary 1992	[32] Orangery 1998
[10] Turn of the tide 1983	[21] Clouds I 1992	[33] Birdsong 1999
[11] Habitation 1984	[22] Honeybunch 1993	[34] Metropolis 1999
	[23] Skewbald 1993	

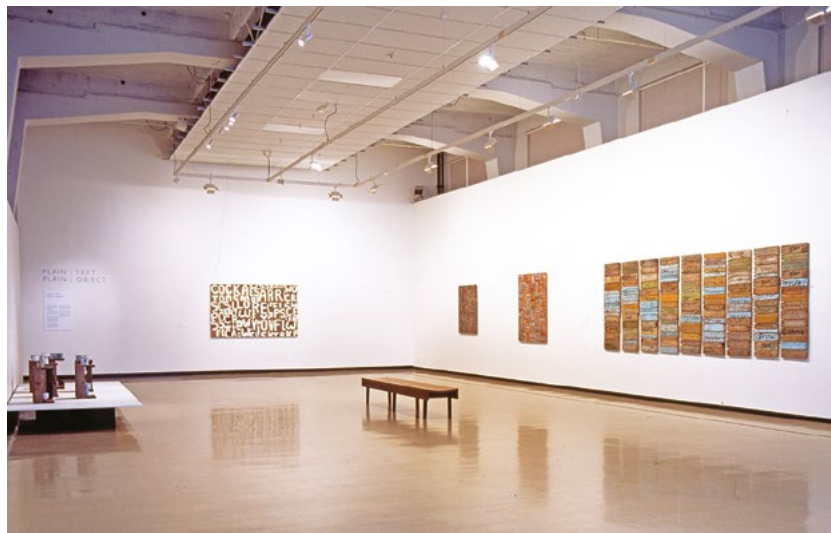
Exh. notes (with list of works); exh. cat.; exh. inv.; exh. plan; exh. report; installation views (City Gallery Wellington and author's archive)

NOTICES: Mark Amery 'What might have been' *Dominion Post* [Wellington NZ] 27 Feb 2004 (1 illus.); Fran Dibble 'Scavenging for her art' *Manawatu Evening Standard* 5 Mar 2004, p. 10 (2 illus.); Galvan Macnamara 'Rosalie Gascoigne' *Sunday Star Times* [Wellington NZ] 21 Mar 2004 (1 illus.); Warren Feeney 'Disarming charm' *The Press* [Christchurch NZ] 24 Mar 2004 (1 illus.); John Daly-Peoples 'Making great art from bits and pieces' *National Business Review* [NZ] 8 Apr 2004 (1 illus.); William McAloon 'Roadrunner' *New Zealand Listener* vol. 193, no. 3336, 17–23 Apr 2004 (2 illus.); *Air New Zealand Magazine* April 2004 (1 illus.); Christopher Harrod 'Rosalie Gascoigne: Kinetics, air and physical montage' *NZ Art Monthly* May 2004 (3 illus.); Janet Hughes 'Taking to the air' *New Zealand Books* vol. 14, no. 3, Aug 2004 (photo of RG); Richard Kalina 'A change of empires' *Art in America* Oct 2005, pp. 84–85 (2 illus.)

OTHER NOTICES: *Art News New Zealand* vol. 24, no. 1, 2004, p. 37; Robyn McLean *Dominion Post* [Wellington NZ] 20 Feb 2004, p. B9 (6 illus.); Shyambara Ni Fohoghlu 'Art was Gascoigne's purpose in life' *Wellington Contact* 4 Mar 2004, p. 15 (1 illus.), and also in *Hutt News* 2 Mar, *Kapi-Mana News* 2 Mar, *Wairarapa News* 3 Mar and *Upper Hutt Leader* 3 Mar; 'Big yellow hits windy city' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 167, Mar 2004, pp. 36–37 (1 illus.); Georgina Safe 'Kiwis taking flight' *The Australian* 13 Apr 2004, p. 12 (1 illus.). The City Gallery Wellington exhibition report notes additional media coverage.

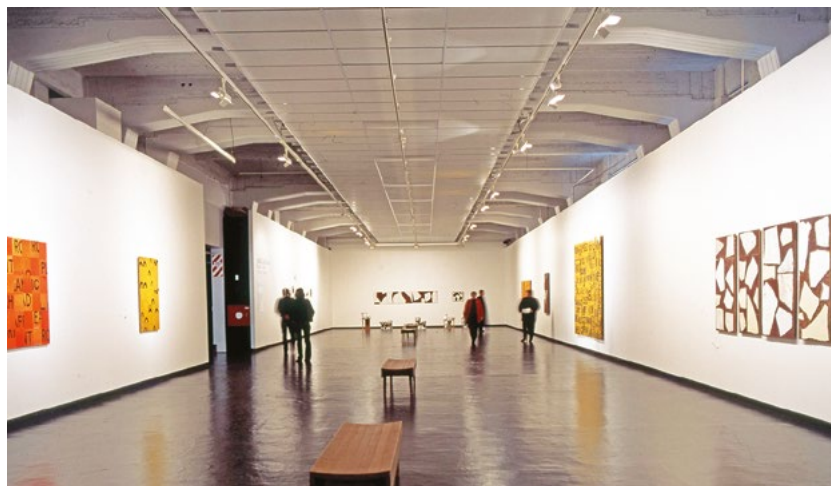
Mark Amery: 'To my eyes, New Zealand appears in her work only as a distant echo, with the additional reflection of her admiration for the work of Colin McCahon. It is hard to imagine a more Australian artist ... Gascoigne's work has something of the contemporary Australian about it. Influenced by the rhythms of country and city, on the one hand, it provides plain-shooting, rough as guts, big epic gestures, on the other, it is urbanely aware of the subtleties to be found when ordered with sharp clarity.'

Warren Feeney: 'Arguably it is the increasing fascination with those artists who have sought a profile beyond New Zealand (for example, Len Lye and Boyd Webb) that has contributed to the interest in Gascoigne's art ... While questions about Gascoigne's relevance to New Zealand's art history may be too close for comfort to make valid judgements upon, the physicality and ethereal ambience of her work disarm the urge even to try.'



City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand, 2004: (left to right) *Habitation* 1984, *Cockatoos* 1991, *Apothecary* 1992, *All that jazz* 1989 and *Scrub country* 1981–82

Image courtesy of City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand



City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand, 2004: *Checkerboard* 1990 and *Birdsong* 1999 (on near left), *Skewbald* 1993 (at far end), and *Clouds I* 1992 and *Big yellow* 1988 (on near right)

Image courtesy of City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand

William McAloon: ‘The best works in the exhibition are from the 1980s, where Gascoigne’s material sense and metaphoric sensibility are beautifully aligned. The show includes some absolute crackers, works that are rightly icons of Australian art ... a fine testament to a remarkable career.’

Christopher Harrod: ‘Gascoigne never loses sight of the natural world, as she fashions images from man made objects: “Nature selects, makes, abandons, is big.” And so are Gascoigne’s ideas.’

John Daly-Peoples: ‘Much of her art explores the nature of art and art processes, with the idea of transformation central to her work. Rather than invent new visual elements, she takes existing elements to reassemble and reinvigorate.’

Janet Hughes: ‘Generosity seems to have been a ruling principle of the exhibition, which used all the galleries in the building to display a representative selection of Gascoigne’s work. The spacious treatment gave both installations and large wall-hung pieces the ample room they needed to resonate. It also underpinned the exhibition’s emphatic referencing of Rosalie Gascoigne’s avowed ambition to render the very “air” of the landscape she abstracts ... The grid is the organising principle of many of the works, and especially all tessellated assemblages of board and sheet metal. They speak of the air by exhibiting its weathering influence, and also by implying extension beyond their boundaries, as if they have been sawn or tin-sniped out of an infinity.’

Richard Kalina: ‘... her most powerful efforts are flat wall pieces ... Her grasp of tone, contrast, placement and color was uncanny, and words and letters, when she used them, make for a low-key concrete poetry. Gascoigne’s work in this vein combines directness and strength with subtlety, and never falls into self-consciousness or artiness.’

COMMENT: City Gallery Wellington’s tagline for the exhibition was ‘Rosalie Gascoigne: Australia’s most famous New Zealand artist’. The exhibition included a poetry event at the gallery for which Rosemary Dobson wrote a memoir of Rosalie read by her son Ian. Curiously, Richard Kalina’s remarks about RG’s grasp of ‘tone, contrast, placement and color’ almost repeat what Daniel Thomas said thirty years before in his 1975 review of *The Artists’ Choice* exhibition at Gallery A, Sydney, in 1975, in which he noted her ‘marvellously sure and fully sculptural taste in setting up contrasts of texture, colour, direction and weight’ (*SMH* 8 May 1975) (see Appendix 2: Selected group exhibitions).

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Soudan Lane, Paddington, Sydney, 22 April – 22 May 2004. 25 works.

Title as exhibited	Revised title
1–10. Earth 1–10 1999 NFS	
11. Untitled (12 squares of 6) 1980–81 \$130,000	[Twelve squares of six] c. 1980
12. Archipelago 1993 \$130,000	
13. Untitled (25 scallop shells) c. 1984–1985 \$85,000	[Twenty-five scallop shells] c. 1984–86
14. Hollyhocks 1997 \$80,000	
15. Poplars 1996–97 \$80,000	Poplars 1996/97
16. Untitled (three landscapes) c. 1993–95 \$80,000	[Three landscape studies] c. 1993–96
17. Tribal 1996 \$75,000	Tribal 1996/1997–98
18. Pink kookaburras 1984 \$70,000	
19. Tidal 1997 \$70,000	
20. Untitled (pink offcuts) 1994 \$70,000	[Pink offcuts] c. 1986–87, 1994
21. Untitled (white cloud) 1993–95 \$65,000	[White cloud] c. 1993–96
22. Untitled (chart) 1992–93 \$55,000	[Linoleum study (chart)] c. 1992
23. Untitled (four linoleum tesserae) 1994–95 \$55,000	[Four linoleum tesserae] c. 1990–91
24. Untitled (two linoleum tesserae) 1994–95 \$30,000	[Two linoleum tesserae] c. 1990–91
25. Untitled (12 bunches of grapes) c. early 1980s \$20,000	[Twelve bunches of grapes] c. 1979–82

Regarding revised titles and dates see comments.

Exh. cat.; exh. notes by MG on *Earth* 1999; installation view (Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery archive and gallery website)

NOTICES: Peter Hill 'Exceptions to a rule' *SMH Spectrum* 24–25 Apr 2004, p. 9 (1 illus.); Victoria Hynes *the (sydney) magazine* Apr? 2004, p. 101 (1 illus.); 'Love that Rosalie' *SMH* 24 April 2004, p. 22 (social notes); Patricia Anderson 'An eye for poetry in the ordinary' *The Australian* 11 May 2004, p. 14 (2 illus.)

Patricia Anderson: 'The centrepiece of this exhibition is a series of 10 works completed just before Gascoigne died. Grids of wooden panels, each entitled Earth, in rust and dried-blood red tones, are so self-effacing and so similar to each other that one longs for some of her more assertive efforts. And there they are, nudging each other in the small room annexed to the main theatre. There we see Gascoigne's unmistakable hand using the saw, the metal cutters and the drill to give us the poetry of the ordinary and conjure the whimsical from the prosaic.'

COMMENT: This show was to introduce *Earth* 1999 to a Sydney audience, the works having been exhibited only once, in Canberra in 2000. Titles and dates of some works were subsequently changed in the preparation of this catalogue raisonné.

2008

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, National Gallery of Victoria, Federation Square, Melbourne, 19 December 2008 – 15 March 2009. Curator Kelly Gellatly. 80 works (not numbered).

[1] Pub 1974	[28] Piece to walk around 1981	[55] Green piece 1991 [1990–91]
[2] Two lovely blue eyes 1974	[29] Crop 2 1982 [1981–82]	[56] Clouds I 1992
[3] Enamel ware 1974	[30] Scrub country 1982 [1981–82]	[57] Clouds II 1992
[4] Flora Galop 1975 [1976]	[31] Graven image 1982–83 [1982]	[58] Clouds III 1992
[5] Pink window 1975	[32] Stained glass 1983	[59] Fool's gold 1992
[6] Specimen box 1975	[33] Turn of the tide 1983	[60] Love apples 1992
[7] Italian birds 1976 [1975]	[34] Balance 1984	[61] Age of innocence 1993
[8] Triptych 1975	[35] Grove 1984	[62] Skylight 1993
[9] The Pepper Pot 1975	[36] Red beach 1984	[63] Regeneration 1994
[10] Black bird box 1976	[37] Set up 1984 [1983–84]	[64] Steel magnolias 1994
[11] The colonel's lady 1976	[38] Smoko 1984	[65] But mostly air 1994–95
[12] Dolly boxes 1976	[39] Summer house [Summerhouse] 1984	[66] Acanthus 1995
[13] Games table 1976 [1975–76]	[40] Swell 1984	[67] Hung fire 1995
[14] Parrot morning 1976	[41] Plenty 1986	[68] Milky Way 1995
[15] Dovecot 1977	[42] Inland sea 1986	[69] Mud brick 1995
[16] Forty acre block 1977 [1977/79]	[43] Promised land 1986	[70] Star chart 1995
[17] Room with a view 1977 [1976–77]	[44] A rose is a rose 1986–88 [1986/88]	[71] Suddenly the lake 1995
[18] Feathered chairs 1978	[45] Flash art 1987	[72] Summer swarm 1995
[19] Waterfront 1978	[46] Maculosa 1988	[73] White garden 1995
[20] Cloister 1978	[47] All that jazz 1989	[74] Golden bamboo 1997
[21] Feathered fence 1979 [1978–79]	[48] Monaro 1989 [1988–89]	[75] Down beat 1998 [Downbeat 1997]
[22] The white sun 1979	[49] Beach house 1990	[76] Medusa 1998
[23] Step through 1980 [1977/c. 1979–80]	[50] Checkerboard 1990	[77] Tartan 1998
[24] The tea party [The teaparty] 1980	[51] Far view 1990	[78] Earth 1999
[25] The fall 1981	[52] Night watch 1990	[79] Grassfest 1999
[26] The players 1981	[53] Sweet lovers 1990	[80] Metropolis 1999
[27] Sideshow [Side show] 1981	[54] Sweet sorrow 1990	

Exh. cat.; exh. inv.; exh. report; installation views (NGV, author's archive and *Art Monthly Australia* no. 220, Jun 2009)

NOTICES: Michael Ruffles 'Collected inspiration' *Canberra Times Panorama* 13 Dec 2008, p. 8 (1 illus.); Robert Nelson 'Private goes public' *The Age* 16 Dec 2008, p. 20; Robin Usher 'Bowerbird lifts beauty from banal' *The Age* 17 Dec 2008, p. 16 (2 illus.); Harbant Gill 'It's coming up Rosalie' *Herald Sun* 19 Dec 2008, p. 75 (5 illus.); Sasha Grishin 'Still baffling in bold majesty' *Canberra Times* 27 Dec 2008, p. 17 (2 illus.); Laura Murray Cree 'Rosalie Gascoigne eternal verities' *Art World* Dec 2008 – Jan 2009, pp. 77–81 (9 illus.); Christopher Allen 'One of a kind' *Weekend Australian Review* 24–25 Jan 2009, pp. 18–19 (2 illus.); Jeff Makin 'Hunter gatherer' *Herald Sun* 2 Feb 2009, p. 45 (1 illus.); Robert Nelson 'Assembling cast-offs into a fresh take on western art' *The Age* 25 Feb 2009, p. 18 (1 illus.); John McDonald 'Journeys through dimensions' *SMH Arts and Entertainment* 28 Feb 2009, pp. 18–19 (2 illus.); Juliet Peers 'Rosalie Gascoigne' *Artlink* 2009, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 83–84 (illus. p. 83); 'Rosalie Gascoigne: A retrospective' *Museums Australia Magazine* Feb 2009, pp. 12–13 (3 illus.); Ray Edgar 'Rosalie Gascoigne' *Landscape Architecture Australia* no. 122, May 2009, pp. 39–40 (5 illus.); David

Hansen 'Prescribed text: Rosalie Gascoigne in Melbourne' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 220, Jun 2009, pp. 30–34 (5 illus. incl. 1 installation view); Eleanor Heartney 'Report from Australia' *Art in America* no. 5, May 2009, pp. 66–68 (2 illus.)

Robert Nelson: 'The work of Rosalie Gascoigne is a kind of humorous sculpture that is all about painting ... It uses non-art objects as art materials and then reconstitutes them ... With lots of room for paradoxes, the materials run a parallel critique of the subject matter ... Gascoigne's aesthetic of fragments can be seen in large and impressive retrospective at NGV Australia ... We witness Gascoigne gently and methodically probing the tradition of Western painting, tackling the great questions of European art with home-made construction in industrial cast-offs. Gascoigne's first major pieces already reveal an interest in the history of painting. *Set up* from 1984 uses bits of old wood and enamel jugs ... recalling Dutch painting from the 17th century ... The references to painting become more intense when Gascoigne conceives the assemblage to hang flat on the wall in vertical habit ... In all her work Gascoigne tickles the Western tradition with jokes about its tricks and preoccupations, using her makeshift archive of institutional junk ... But Gascoigne is not a satirist. In other works, she uses her techniques to reflect on landscape as something purely sublime ...'

John McDonald: 'What Gascoigne reveals is the poetry and pathos that lies dormant in even the humblest objects, scarred and molded by years of rough handling. At her best she creates a vivid impression of an environment where nature is inextricably entwined with human labours and aspirations.'

Christopher Allen: 'Gascoigne really finds the heart of her inspiration when she learns to make poetic effects from the materials that are banal yet free of specific and trivial associations. Beautiful and moving as Gascoigne's work can be, it is also inimitable: not just exceptional, but literally incapable of repetition or even variation. Softdrink crates and road signs can never be used again without falling into pastiche ...'

Sasha Grishin: 'There is nothing repetitive in the show and it manages to convey the bold majesty of her vision and appears convincing even within the awkward spaces of the Federation Square building.'

David Hansen (an extended article): 'Throughout her career, Gascoigne continued to deliver such frissons of familiarity, reflecting and refracting a great deal of the art she saw and read about and admired, and thereby ensuring subliminal enhancement of her credibility within art circles. Walking around the NGV exhibition, I was struck, for example, by the numerous echoes of Jasper Johns ... The torn masonite of *Clouds II* (1992) conjured up the fuzzy rectangles of Mark Rothko, while many works brought to mind the accumulations of Arman and the French *Nouveaux Réaliste*. And as Vici MacDonald has previously noted, the



National Gallery of Victoria 2008: this retrospective exhibition featured a comprehensive display of 'boxed' works, including (left to right) *Pub* 1974, *Summerhouse* 1984, *Room with a view* 1976–77, *Specimen box* 1975, *Black bird box* 1976, *The white sun* 1979, *The players* 1981, *Cloister* 1978, *Italian birds* 1975 and *The Pepper Pot* 1975

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



Part of the advertising display outside the National Gallery of Victoria 2008

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

rectilinear structure most commonly employed by the artist necessarily evoked (amongst others) “Agnes Martin’s wavering crosshatched grids, Sean Scully’s thick barn-door stripes, and the gleaming metallic checkerboards of Carl Andre” ... There does seem to be a curious resistance ... to actually embracing the idea of influence ... I think there are probably more to be uncovered ... She has a unique, clearly identifiable and richly resonant voice, yes, but she says the same thing over and over again. Her vocabulary is regularly expanded, certainly — from cardboard parrots to plastic dolls, linoleum to masonite, softdrink boxes to road signs — but her syntax — of gridding, boxing, flooring and fencing — is distinctly repetitive ... Edgar Degas once said ... that art is not what you see, but what you make others see. The interest in Gascoigne’s art lies not so much in what it is or represents, but in what it indicates, what it shows us, what it reminds us of. Sometimes, of course, it is largely about the subtle beauties of Australian land and light, and of the artist’s Canberra/Monaro/Southern Tablelands home-scape in particular. But it is equally about the Rauschenbergian “vernacular glance”, celebrating the materials and shapes of human construction and habitation ... Gascoigne’s constructions present the patterns of country Australia within the frame of world art. Through them, she challenges us to identify the fundamental sources of our aesthetic pleasure, and shows us that such delights can be found almost anywhere.’

Juliet Peers: ‘The retrospective provided both intellectual and sensual delight ... Many [of her works] have become iconic in any overview of the last three decades of Australian art, and yet when seen again their strength invites us to find something new, valid and unexpected in both the formalist rigour of their assemblage and in the poetic suggestiveness and mobility of surface, recalling the transcendental nuance of Rothko’s work ... The catalogue ... seeks to distance her from the feminist movement, but it cannot be denied that she opened up a different placement of women artists. For three decades in Australian art, women artists in particular have found Gascoigne’s authority and calmness, but concurrent romantic delight in rethinking basic materials, inspirational.’

Eleanor Heartney: ‘Gascoigne’s idiosyncratic work amounts to a compendium of Western art as seen from a distance and recreated with the humble materials at hand. For her, and for the other artists in my admittedly arbitrary roundup, Australia’s isolation can be more a goad and a virtue than an affliction.’

2009

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE: PLEIN AIR, Charles Nodrum Gallery, 267 Church Street, Richmond, Melbourne, 3–21 March 2009. 1 work.

1. Plein air 1994

Exh. cat.; exh. inv.; 2 installation views in *Art Monthly Australia* no. 220, Jun 2009; installation views also in Charles Nodrum Gallery, RG papers NLA and author’s archive

NOTICES: David Hansen ‘Prescribed text: Rosalie Gascoigne in Melbourne’ *Art Monthly Australia* no. 220, Jun 2009, pp. 30–34 (2 installation views)

David Hansen: ‘*Plein Air* looked terrific. It settled down on the worn polish of the gallery floorboards, it harmonised with the heating duct grilles, it quietly commanded attention to the fading, tragic, poetic texts on one panel’s found timbers (plant nursery stakes): “Weeping cherry \$30.50”; “Please do not remove trees from the ground.” *Plein Air* spoke both of and to the wall, the screen, the fence, the gate ... There was no such seduction in the installation at the NGV.’

COMMENT: The gallery had the work remeasured for the exhibition.

2013

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW, 18 May – 9 June 2013. Curator Sarah Johnson. 6 works (not numbered).

[1] Steam c. 1971–73	[3] Italian birds 1975	[5] Fragmentation 1991 [Fragmentation II]
[2] Standing piece 1973/74	[4] Flora Galop 1976	[6] Wild strawberries 1995

NAG Exhibitions and Events June–August 2013; installation views (Newcastle Art Gallery and author's archive)

COMMENT: 'A focus on the expanding collection of works by the celebrated Australian artist Rosalie Gascoigne.'

2015

THE DAYLIGHT MOON: ROSALIE GASCOIGNE AND LAKE GEORGE, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW, 26 June – 22 August 2015. Curator Glenn Barkley. 10 works (not numbered).

[1] Piece to walk around 1981	[5] Plain view 2 1994	[9] Poplars 19 1996–97 [Poplars 1996/97]
[2] Lambing 1991	[6] Top of the morning 1993–94	[10] High country [2] 1999
[3] Rose red city 5 1992	[7] White garden 1995	
[4] Sheep weather alert 5 1992–93	[8] Wool clip 1995	

Exh. cat. (illus., essay by Glenn Barkley); exh. inv. (illus.)

NOTICES: Peter Haynes 'Artist Rosalie Gascoigne is articulate and subtle in Goulburn exhibition' *Canberra Times* 13 Jul 2015 (1 illus.)



Newcastle Art Gallery 2013: (left to right) John Armstrong's *Tag rack* 1973 (which Rosalie had admired and helped shape her thinking for *Grass rack* 1977), *Italian birds* 1975 (back wall), *Steam* c. 1971–73 (on plinth), *Fragmentation [I]* 1991 and *Wild strawberries* 1995
Image courtesy of Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW

APPENDIX 2: SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Where the names or dates of works listed in an exhibition vary from those used in this catalogue raisonné, a cross-reference is included, either in the list or in the exhibition comments. Exhibition documentation listings do not include correspondence with the gallery involved, mostly regarding exhibition arrangements; such correspondence is accessible in the RG papers, National Library of Australia, Canberra. Documentation includes references to images of the exhibition displays. Extracts from notices are quoted, sufficient to indicate the flavour of the reviewer's response, but not always the full review. Notices cited do not always include a reference to R.G. Exhibition comments also include comments by R.G. in correspondence with family members and in her talks and interviews.

1975

PHILIP MORRIS ARTS GRANT SECOND ANNUAL EXHIBITION, City Square, Melbourne, 28 February – 10 March 1975 and Hyde Park, Sydney, 27 March – 6 April 1975. 4 works.¹

Untitled No 25 [The dredge] 1974

Untitled No 7 [Back verandah] 1974

Woolshed 1974

Untitled 1975 [[Bowls of balls] 1974–75]

Exh. broadsheet with artist notes (Sydney)

NOTICES: Maureen Gilchrist 'Good men who come to the aid of the arty' *The Age* 5 Mar 1975, p. 2; Nancy Borlase 'Taking high culture to the people' *The Bulletin* 15 Mar 1975, pp. 51–52; Daniel Thomas 'Refreshing friend' *SMH* 27 Mar 1975; 'Art on show in City Square' *The Age* 28 Feb 1975, p. 26. An unidentified review possibly in a West Australian journal included a large illustration of *[Bowls of balls]* 1974–75 labelled 'Assemblage' by Rosalie Gascoigne

¹ List of works from Ken Scarlett *Australian sculptors 1830–1977* Thomas Nelson, Melbourne, 1980, pp. 77–78.

Maureen Gilchrist: 'It is a lively and diverse selection. There is the odd lulu but generally the standard is high and there are a number of major statements.'

Nancy Borlase: 'A widening of this lively spectrum of art is seen this year ... and in interesting new additions, such as Rosalie Gascoigne's combines using down-on-the-farm discards — old wood, tin cans and tennis balls — they are surprisingly tasteful.'

COMMENT: 'The exhibition has been to Melbourne and Sydney, where it is showing in Hyde Park. Next stop is one of the major provincial cities, probably in NSW, then Adelaide and Perth ... The visible, travelling show is housed in a special portable pavilion, designed by Danish-born Ole Olsen to provide maximum protection in the outdoors for the collection. The paintings are under pitched roofs in the central aisle, and prints, photographs, and graphics along the sides with clear plastic blinds rolled up above, ready to be let down with the first drops of rain ...' ('Travelling art show' *Australian Women's Weekly* 30 Apr 1975, p. 43).

THE ARTISTS' CHOICE, Gallery A, 21 Gipps Street, Paddington, Sydney, 3 May – late May 1975. 4 works.

-
27. Standing piece 1974 [1973/74] \$250 30. Collection 1974 [Collection [1] 1974] \$120
 28. Leaning piece 1974 \$150
 29. Lying piece 1974 [c. 1975] \$150
-

Exh. cat. (list of works); Hannah Fink 2009, pp. 150–155, installation view p. 151

NOTICES: Daniel Thomas 'Interesting artists' choice' *SMH* 8 May 1975; Ruth Faerber 'Sculpture solo in two parts' *Australian Jewish Times* 15 May 1975, p. 16; Nancy Borlase 'Giving artists a choice' *The Bulletin* 17 May 1975, p. 55; Sandra McGrath 'Things found' *The Australian* 24 May 1975

Daniel Thomas: 'And the most interesting choice is the only fully cross-cultural one: the painter Michael Taylor chooses sculptures by Rosalie Gascoigne, quite unlike his own work, and quite unlike anybody else's in Australia. She turns out to be not a young post-graduate student but a mother of grown-up children, recently self-taught. She assembles disparate objects, like neat horizontal stalks in a piece of convex metal, with a marvellously sure and fully sculptural taste in setting up contrasts of texture, colour, direction and weight. In addition, there is a poetic trace of domestic imagery, a hint of the satisfaction found in tidiness and housekeeping, a suggestion that a fireplace is a kind of shrine. Thanks, Michael, for telling us about Rosalie.'

Ruth Faerber: 'Amongst the more individual work is Rosalie Gascoigne's small intimate and poetic assemblages.'

Nancy Borlase: '... Rosalie Gascoigne's fragile, non-academic assemblages. In her instinctive feeling for the texture and colour of weather-worn discards, she evokes an image of the rural environment as valid, in its way, as the fresh-as-air paintings of Michael Taylor who nominated her. Paradoxically, these are the most satisfying but least ambitious works here.'

Sandra McGrath: 'To the extent that an artist working in this field can change one thing into another, by putting it in another context and making the viewer see it as something else, is a major factor in its success as an object. Ms Gascoigne does this with amazing finesse and sensitivity.'

COMMENT: Gallery A asked a number of artists each to nominate another artist for the exhibition. On 24 February 1975 Michael Taylor told RG that he wanted to nominate her (24 Feb 1975 RG to TG) and he selected the four works. RG spoke about the exhibition several times (see 1982 North; 1995 Topliss; 1998 Hughes; Vici MacDonald 1998). 'I looked different because I was different. You could see the heavy hand of their teachers on all of them except me. I didn't know the rules' (Vici MacDonald 1998, p. 27). Three of RG's

four works sold and Gallery A immediately offered RG a solo exhibition (*Rosalie Gascoigne Assemblage* Gallery A, 1976). On Taylor's choices see also the Biographical Note in this catalogue and Martin Gascoigne 'Rosalie's artists' 2008, p. 41.

1976

PHILIP MORRIS ARTS GRANT THIRD ANNUAL EXHIBITION, Adelaide Festival Plaza, Adelaide, March 1976. 4 works.

No. 7 1974 [Back verandah 1974]	Woolshed 1975 [1974]
No. 25 1974 [The dredge 1974]	Untitled 1975 [[Bowls of balls] 1974–75]

All works were withdrawn from exhibition.

Exh. cat. (list of works, artist notes)

NOTICES: Noel Sheridan 'Rare opportunity in exhibition of art' *The Advertiser* 10 Mar 1976, p. 8

COMMENT: The exhibition was part of the Adelaide Festival and the works were shown in a marquee (as they had been in Melbourne and Sydney in 1975). RG visited Adelaide for the festival and wrote afterwards: 'I flew to Adelaide on Monday and ... started the drive home on Wed. I didn't see much of the Festival except the Gallery show "Genesis", the Thai sculpture and the Leger ... and finally, screwing up my insensibilities, the Philip Morris. Mine have been fairly well shattered and I am having them withdrawn and mended. P. Morris doesn't pack its stuff or look after it. John Armstrong's was in like condition I was consoled to see' (8 Apr 1976 RG to TG). She never forgot and in March 1980 declined to appear in 'a road-show to travel in South Australia and Tasmania', explaining: 'Since my experience with Philip Morris and the state my pieces were exhibited in I have fought shy of travelling exhibitions. Indeed I refused Ron Radford on those grounds' (5 Mar 1980 Ray Hughes to RG and c. March 1980 RG to Ray Hughes, Hughes Gallery archive).

1977

OBJECTS, Ray Hughes Gallery, 11 Enoggera Terrace, Red Hill, Brisbane, 5–24 March 1977. 6 works.

Friends [c. 1974–76] \$100	Hand and flowers [Yellow hand 1976]
Blue water(s) [Blue water 1977] \$250	Flora [Flora Galop 1976] \$300
A room with a view [Room with a view 1976–77] \$450	Collection [Collection [2] 1977] \$100

Exh. poster (illus. of *Yellow hand* 1976)

NOTICES: Gertrude Langer '“Visual poetry” creations from collector of refuse' *Courier Mail* 12 Mar 1977; Pamela Bell 'A fresh view of life' *The Australian* 15 Mar 1977

Gertrude Langer: 'Outstanding are the assemblages by Rosalie Gascoigne. Her imagination and sensitivity to beauty metamorphose humble, discarded things into marvellous, new creations. It has to be seen to be believed that she can create a thing of visual poetry with a weathered wooden box (she may have found it in a farm yard), containing an arrangement of Tooheys Bitter Ale tins.'

Pamela Bell: 'It includes several works by Rosalie Gascoigne ... This artist handles every object and material with respect, both for the original honesty of its purpose, and for its unique quality. It is by surprise and freshness of association that Rosalie Gascoigne illuminates and reveals the presence of the surreal in the everyday world.' (See catalogue entries for what Bell says about *Friends* and *Yellow hand*.)

COMMENT: Four of the six works sold. R.G reported on the exhibition on 7 March 1977: 'Here is the local trivia, in case you have time to read a letter. "Genesis" on Wednesday, packed to the doors ... Had long talk with Pam Bell ... Said she was so glad my show was her first assignment [as Brisbane art critic for the *Australian*]. I said I'd felt the odd man out. "You were the heavyweight", she said. She likes Ray Hughes and says it's a very good gallery ... I had a letter from Jill Hughes last week saying that Dr. Gertrude Langer, the Art Critic, liked my stuff best in show, and thought that "Room with a View" was an important piece and was going to try to get the newspaper to print a picture of it (they hardly ever will give the space for such). I feel vindicated — espec. as Ray had \$300 on it (I insisted on \$400). Apparently the interview I did came over well — the mother-in-law of one of the other exhibitors heard it and came to see show on strength of it. Which pleased Jill and Ray. "Blue Water" was bought before the show opened, by Ian Still who is on the University Gallery Council' (7 Mar 1977 R.G to M.G). Ray Hughes bought *Room with a view* (which he gave to the QAG in 2016). There are also references to the show in 1982 North.

1978

SOME RECENT ACQUISITIONS OF AUSTRALIAN ART, Australian National Gallery at Canberra Theatre Centre Gallery, 3–30 January 1978. Curator James Gleeson. 3 works.

The colonel's lady 1976

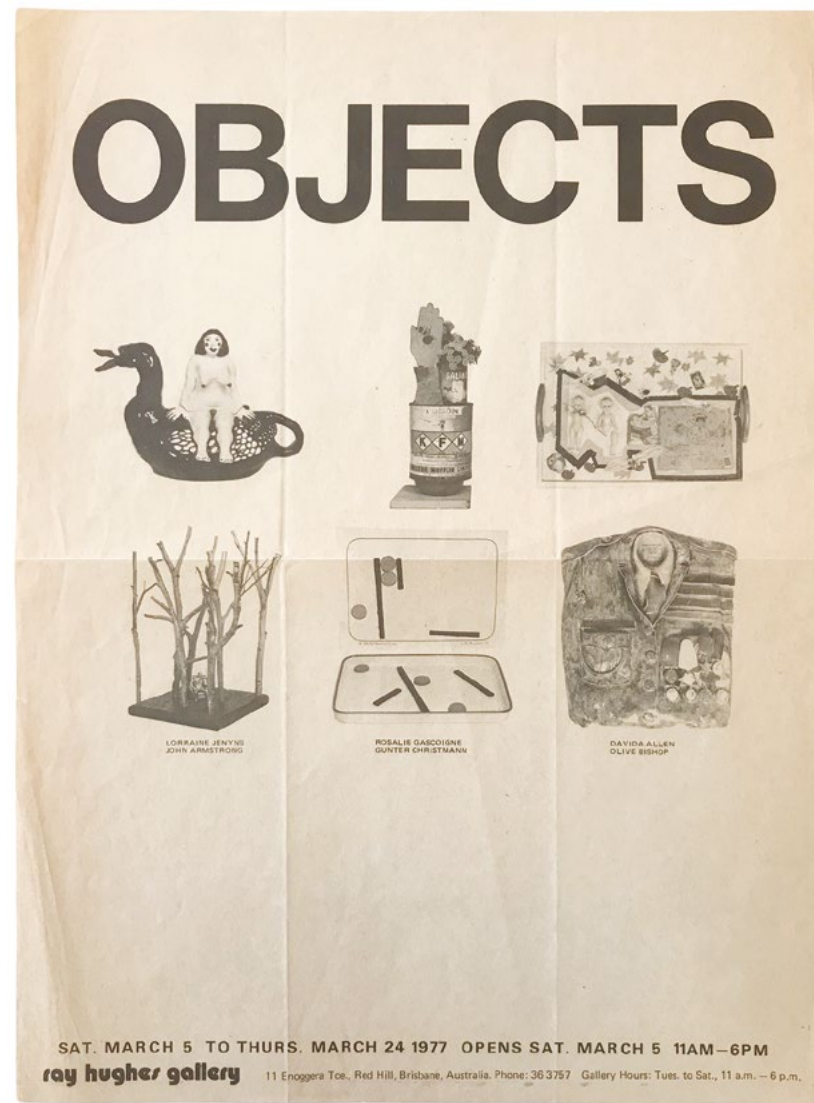
Tiepolo birds [Tiepolo parrots] 1976

Black bird box 1976

Exh. cat. (list of works with curatorial notes)

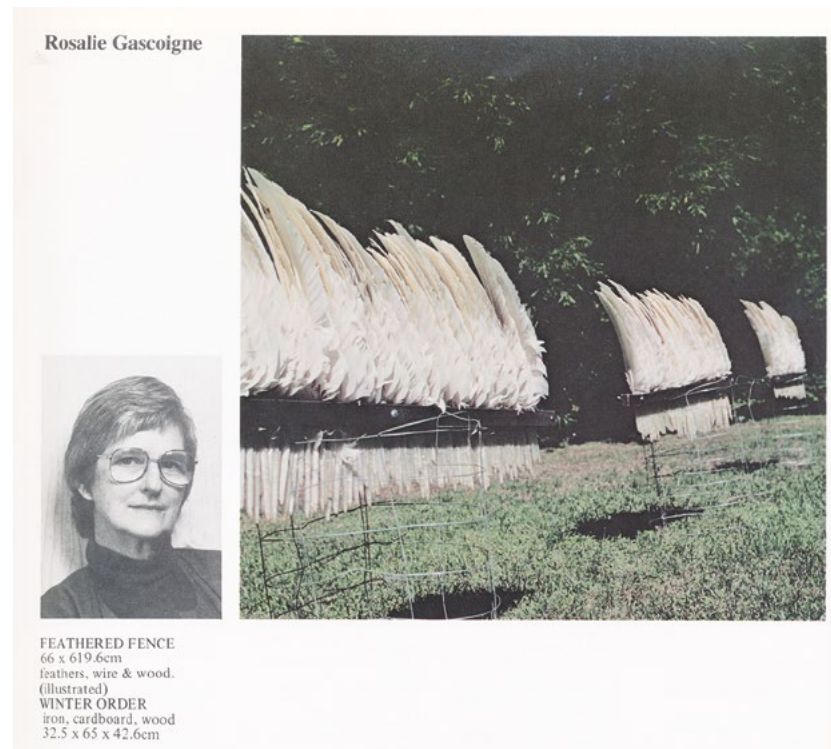
NOTICES: 'Recent acquisitions on show' *Canberra Times* 4 Jan 1978, p. 17

'Twelve artists are represented by paintings and sculptures ... Among the older artists who are still producing new work are Rosalie Gascoigne, born in 1917, who has three mixed-media assemblages made in 1976, and Robert Klippel, born in 1920, who has six drawings and a metal sculpture on show' (author unidentified).



Ray Hughes Gallery 1977: *Yellow hand* 1976 (centre, top row)

Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of Evan Hughes



3rd Biennale of Sydney 1979 catalogue entry (detail)

Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of the Biennale of Sydney

1979

3RD BIENNALE OF SYDNEY — EUROPEAN DIALOGUE,
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 12 April – 27 May 1979.
Curator Nick Waterlow. 2 works.

Feathered fence [1978–79] (illus.)

Winter order [1978–79]

Exh. cat. (illus., artist notes, artist statements, RG portrait); see also *European dialogue: A commentary* (essentially an exhibition report including illus., reviews, list of works) (illus. p. 26 of *Feathered fence* 1978–79) and letters dated 12 Oct 1978 RG to MG (p. 56) and 7 Dec and Thursday 21 [Dec 1978] RG to Nick Waterlow (Biennale of Sydney archive, AGNSW Research Library)

NOTICES: Extensive reporting including Nancy Borlase 'One great scoop' *SMH* 14 Apr 1979 (ref. to RG); Elwyn Lynn 'The Sydney Biennale' *Art International* summer 1979 (ref. to RG); Sandra McGrath 'A rather by-the-way biennale' *Weekend Australian Magazine* 14–15 Apr 1979, p. 8 (ref. to RG); Graeme Sturgeon 'In pursuit of the idea: Recent Australian sculpture' *Meanjin* vol. 39, no. 2, 1980, pp. 212–221 (ref. to RG); Nick Waterlow 'Biennale of Sydney' *Flash Art* [Italy] no. 90–91, 1979 (with illus. *Feathered fence* 1978–79, p. 16)

COMMENT: The exhibition subtitle was 'Origins of recent European & aspects of recent Australian art'. Nick Waterlow's catalogue explanation reads (in part): 'There is without doubt an imbalance that needs redressing concerning American and European exposition in Australia, and, for a continent contributing increasingly to the pioneering of visual expression in the world, Europe has been somewhat neglected, and in a community of which a large proportion is of European origin.'

Nick Waterlow visited RG in early October 1978 to discuss possible works for inclusion in the biennale and he chose three pieces still under construction: *Feathered fence* 1978–79, *Winter order* 1978–79 and a construction later titled *Going sideways* involving metal cages through which horizontal grey sticks were threaded (12 Oct 1978 RG to MG, p. 56; 21 Dec 1978 RG to NW). In two letters to Waterlow in December she reported progress on their construction and advised that 'in the main, my pieces look best in an area with natural light. The one with the horizontal sticks in cages looks best against the light' (7 Dec 1978 RG to NW). She continued working on the pieces (21 Dec RG to NW) and into 1979. Ultimately only two works were exhibited and the third, *Going sideways*, with the sticks in cages, was dismantled, although RG returned to the idea in 1985 (*Clean country* 1985) and again in *Plein air* 1994.

In April 1979 RG reported that she was in Sydney ‘to set up [*Feathered fence* and *Winter order*] for Biennale ... My things are saying what I meant them to — all pale country air ...’ (11 Apr 1979 RG to MG, p. 58). Nick Waterlow (1992) later recalled: ‘*Feathered Fence* ... became for the visiting artists a poetic metaphor for this place that none had previously visited’. And in 2000 he wrote: ‘*Feathered Fence* by Rosalie Gascoigne epitomised for the visiting Europeans the psyche of the Australian landscape and it helped them understand it more effectively’ (Nick Waterlow in Ewen McDonald 2000, p. 168).

1980

DRAWN AND QUARTERED: AUSTRALIAN CONTEMPORARY PAPERWORKS, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 1–30 March 1980. Curator Alison Carroll. 1 work.

9. Paper square 1980 [1979–80]

Exh. cat. (artist notes, artist statements, list of works); installation view in *Annual report of the Art Gallery Board 1979–1980* AGSA, Adelaide, 1980, p. 37

NOTICES: David Dolan ‘Good — and great’ *The Advertiser* 4 Mar 1980, p. 10; Nancy Borlase ‘The week in art’ *The Australian* 8 Mar 1980; Jeffrey Makin ‘Arts festival’s a show in three’ *Sun News Pictorial* 22 Mar 1980

Nancy Borlase: ‘... in Rosalie Gascoigne’s wall of paper grids, constructed with plentiful bunched squares of newspaper, dried and yellowed in the sun. Only under strong artificial light does this strikingly decorative, perishable work come to life, curling and rippling like a wheatfield ready for harvesting.’

Jeffrey Makin: ‘this show is completely dominated by two works — Rosalie Gascoigne’s “Paper Square” and Helen Geier’s “Madonna Blind”. The Gascoigne is a packed paper assemblage over a grid ...’

COMMENT: See catalogue entry on *Paper square* 1979–80 for history of RG’s involvement.



Art Gallery of South Australia 1980, installation view with *Paper square* 1979–80
Image courtesy of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

1981

FIRST AUSTRALIAN SCULPTURE TRIENNIAL, Preston Institute of Technology and La Trobe University, Melbourne, 28 February – 12 April 1981. Director Tom McCullough. 1 work.

26. Piece to walk around 1981 (illus. p. 38, bio. p. 249)

Exh. cat. (artist notes, artist statements, illus.)

NOTICES: Jeffrey Makin ‘Sculpture lacks challenge’ *Sun News Pictorial* 4 Mar 1981; Robert Rooney ‘Painted trees down memory lane’ *The Age* 4 Mar 1981; Alan McCulloch *The Herald* 10 Mar 1981; Janine Burke ‘Did you see the koala-bears with machine guns?’ *Art Network* no. 3 & 4, 1981, pp. 26–28 (illus. p. 26 *Piece to walk around* detail); *La Trobe University Record* vol. 15, no. 1, 1981, p. 12 (illus. *Piece to walk around* detail); *Art Network* no. 3 & 4, 1981 also included articles by Anne Marsh (pp. 24–25, on women artists, but no ref. to RG) and Paul Taylor (pp. 30–31, no ref.)

Jeffrey Makin: ‘Gascoigne’s *Piece to Walk Around* is the most stylish of the pieces in the La Trobe University Union Hall. It’s a giant chessboard of dried twigs, sensitively arranged in heaps, and has an interesting play-off between organic materials and a geometric grid.’

Janine Burke: ‘... *Piece to Walk Around* ... its fine textures and colours, its clear and simple arrangement brought the landscape and its endlessness indoors. Gascoigne’s feeling for the Canberra bush near her home is so precisely evoked, she knows it so well, that her sculpture does not need the added props of a landscape setting ... More than any other Australian sculptor, Rosalie Gascoigne can derive [from] her experience of a specific, known and loved landscape an abstract sense of it that is neither too broad (and therefore indistinct and unplaceable) nor too descriptive: she helps me to see the landscape again, in its particular beauty and general topography.’

COMMENT: The exhibition catalogue was divided in five sections. *Piece to walk around* 1981 was included in the section ‘Processes/Installations/Environments’. The other sections were Objects Sculptures, Performances, Documents/Media/Technology and Non-categorised.

AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTA, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 29 May – 21 June 1981. Curator Bernice Murphy. 1 work.

51. March past 1978–79 (illus. p.79)

Exh. cat. (essay, artist photos and notes, illus.)

NOTICES: Janine Burke ‘Art for the end of the world’ *Meanjin* vol. 40, no. 3, 1981, pp. 375–382; Nancy Borlase ‘The answer to the biennale is good’ *SMH* 30 May 1981, p. 8; Sandra McGrath ‘Perspecta ’81’ *Weekend Australian Magazine* 30–31 May 1981, p. 15 (ref.)

Sandra McGrath: ‘While there is still only space to describe a few pieces of interest it is worth noting that the flower of Australian contemporary art is on view. These include such artists as Robert Owen, Ken Unsworth, Ken Whisson, David Aspden, Mike Brown, Marr Grounds, Rosalie Gascoigne and Kerrie Lester as well as three very fine Aboriginal painters.’

1982

AUSTRALIA: VENICE BIENNALE 1982, Venice, Italy; AUSTRALIA AT THE VENICE BIENNALE: WORKS BY PETER BOOTH AND ROSALIE GASCOIGNE (see entry in Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions)

THE PHILIP MORRIS ARTS GRANT: AUSTRALIAN ART OF THE PAST TEN YEARS, Melville Hall, Australian National University, Canberra, c. 12–28 October 1982 and 15 December 1982 – 20 March 1983.

Possibly exhibited:

River crossing (Step through) 1980 [Step through 1977/c. 1979–80]

March past 1978–79 (illus. p. 25)

Exh. cat. (list in works acquired, with some illus.)

NOTICES: *Canberra Times* 12 Oct 1982, p. 27

COMMENT: The exhibition comprised works of art acquired through the Philip Morris Arts Grant and gifted to the Australian National Gallery in 1982. Not all works in the gift were exhibited.

AUSTRALIA AT THE VENICE BIENNALE: WORKS BY PETER BOOTH AND ROSALIE GASCOIGNE, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 18 November 1982 – 16 January 1983. 10 works (RG).

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Pink window 1975 | 5. Side show parrots 1981 | 9. Crop 2 1978 [1981–82] |
| 2. Country air 1978 [1977] | 6. The bird house [Bird house] 1981 | 10. Harvest 1982 [1981–82] |
| 3. Feathered fence 1979 [1978–79] | 7. City birds 1981 | |
| 4. Parrots 1980 | 8. Scrub country 1981 [1981–82] | |
-

Exh. inv.

NOTICES: Ronald Millar 'Sam Atyeo's return' *The Herald* 25 Nov 1982

Ronald Millar: 'Booth's harrowing and turbid imagery makes the work of Gascoigne look precious. Her gentle nostalgia is based on carefully arranging the stencilled panels of weathered old soft-drink boxes in serried ranks; on cut-out wooden parrots in thick cages; of a fence made of clumps of swans' feathers; and on regularly spaced thickets of yellowing newspaper squares with the edges curled up. This is all done with some sensitivity, but somehow (right next to Booth's apparitions) looks about as comfy as Christopher Robin might be at a wife-swapping.'

1983

PROJECT 40: AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS AT VENICE AND KASSEL, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 5 February – 13 March 1983. Curator Bernice Murphy. 10 works.



Art Gallery of New South Wales 1983, installation view: *Feathered fence* 1978–79 (in foreground), *Harvest* 1981–82 (on wall) and Peter Booth's *Painting* 1979 (at rear)
Image from author's archive

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Pink window 1975 | 5. Side show parrots 1981 | 9. Crop 2 1978 [1981–82] |
| 2. Country air 1978 [1977] | 6. The bird house [Bird house] 1981 | 10. Harvest 1982 [1981–82] |
| 3. Feathered fence 1979 [1978–79] | 7. City birds 1981 | |
| 4. Parrots 1980 | 8. Scrub country 1981 [1981–82] | |

Exh. cat. (2 illus.); installation views (author's archive); the exhibition showed the works at the Venice Biennale (RG and Peter Booth) and at Documenta 7, Kassel, Germany (John Nixon and Imants Tillers)

NOTICES: *SMH* 12 Feb 1973; Andrew Saw 'Fashion's bright young things follow the rule' *The Australian* 18 Feb 1983, p. 14; Billboard *National Times* 20 Feb 1983

Andrew Saw wrote of the show as a whole: 'There's nothing wrong with the work, it's all terribly professional. But it's also extremely predictable. It looks like modern art ought to look, and that's all.' Of RG he wrote: 'Rosalie Gascoigne is fairly well steeped in the Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns Pop stuff from the 60s, only it's in Australian outback colours. Antipodean rural Pop is how it may be summed up.'

The *National Times* took a different view: 'Booth's apocalyptic visions ... are worlds away from Gascoigne's lyrical abstract work with its joyous wonder at the sense of sight and touch. An important exhibition.'

The *SMH* summarised the show thus: 'On this showing, it is Gascoigne who emerges as the poet, in her use of materials, and Tillers who stands out for his work's sheer conceptual rigour.'

CONTINUUM '83: THE FIRST EXHIBITION OF AUSTRALIAN CONTEMPORARY ART IN JAPAN, fifteen venues in Tokyo, 22 August – 3 September 1983. Artists chosen by Emiko Namikawa (see Comments). 5 works.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Spring 1982 [Spring 1 1981–82] | 4. Blue bands [Reading left to right] 1981 |
| 2. Wattle strike 1983 | 5. Scrub country 1982 [1981–82] |
| 3. Herb garden 1982 (illus.) | |

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works, artist statements) (incl. RG image); exh. report

NOTICES: Memory Holloway 'A clash of culture' *The Age* 25 Aug 1983, p. 14; Rod O'Brien 'A whiff of eucalyptus along the Ginza' *SMH* 6 Sep 1983; Ken Scarlett 'Continuum '83' *Art and Australia* vol. 2, no. 2, 1983, pp. 178–179; Toshio Matsuura 'Notes of a traveller: CONTINUUM '83' *Bijutsu techo* vol. 35, no. 517, 1983, pp. 174–179 (illus. *Scrub country* 1982); Tadashi Akatsu 'CONTINUUM '83 review' *Art Network* no. 13, 1984, pp. 43–45 (illus. *Herb garden* 1982, p. 44); Peter Callas 'CONTINUUM midstream' *Art Network* no. 13, 1984, pp. 46–48

COMMENT: RG's works were shown at Gallery Yamaguchi Yamato Bld 3F, 3–8–12 Ginza Chuo-ku, Tokyo. Continuum '83 was organised by the Japan–Australia Cultural & Art Exchange Committee, a loose grouping of artists and gallerists, with Akio Makigawa as chairperson and Ken Scarlett as executive officer in Australia. The artists were selected by Emiko Namikawa, director of Lunami Gallery Tokyo, one of the principal initiators of the exhibition, and coordinator in Tokyo (assisted by fifteen gallery directors/owners there). The broad theme was 'Earth, environment and the multicultural society'. CONTINUUM '83 was funded by the Visual

Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts, the Japan Foundation and the Australia Japan Foundation in Japan. Publications reporting the exhibition included *Ikebana Ohara*, *Ikebana Ruyusei*, *The Japan Times*, *The Asahi Evening News* and *Elle Japan*.

CONTINUUM '83 in fact was not the first exhibition of Australian contemporary art in Japan; the first was an exhibition titled 'Young Australian Painters', curated by Hal Missingham in 1965 (my thanks to Daniel Thomas for this).

1984

AUSTRALIAN SCULPTURE NOW: SECOND AUSTRALIAN SCULPTURE TRIENNIAL, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2 November 1984 – 28 January 1985. Curator Graeme Sturgeon. 5 works catalogued (possibly not all exhibited — and NGV exhibition check list only lists *Set up* 1983–84).

Set up 1983–84 (illus. p. 95)	Graven image 1982
The colonel's lady 1976 (illus. p. 94)	Step through 1977/c. 1979–80 (illus. p. 94)
Piece to walk around 1981 (illus. p. 94)	

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., artist notes, list of works)

NOTICES: Maudie Palmer 'Australian sculpture now: The second Australian sculpture triennial' *Art and Australia* vol. 23, no. 1, 1985, pp. 78–83; Harriet Edquist 'Material matters: The landscapes of Rosalie Gascoigne' *Binocular* 1993, pp. 18, 22

Maudie Palmer: 'While Sturgeon sought and, in instances like those just cited, discovered innovations which reflect the interests of this decade, some of the strengths — the clichés of the 1970s — still prevailed ... Rosalie Gascoigne sets up peaceful patterns seeking to find beauty through repetition of humble found objects, from a time already past. Gascoigne's unpretentious sensibility was akin to that of John Davis in the 1970s' (p. 83).

Harriet Edquist: 'Since she began exhibiting in 1974 Gascoigne has enjoyed an undimmed critical success yet no-one has thought to throw into contention the whole basis of landscape on which her sculpture is said to be constructed. Paradoxically, while I find many of the utterances about the work to be problematic, the work itself offers up a different view. This became particularly evident in the context of the 1984 Sculpture Triennial where a large number of the exhibits, constructed from natural materials, displayed a nostalgic pseudo-ritualistic atavism I found deeply troubling. Gascoigne's work stood out clearly in contrast. It is not nostalgic. In fact what it shows is not an untroubled relation to the "spirit" of the landscape but a highly mediated one that to an extent subverts the Kraussian strictures of the grid by, among other things, its insistent materiality which cuts across the aesthetic uniformity of the plane.'



Australian Sculpture Now 1984 exhibition catalogue

Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of the National Gallery of Victoria

1986

FOUR SCULPTORS, Wollongong City Gallery, New South Wales, 2 May – 1 June 1986. Curator Graeme Sturgeon. 1 work.

String of blue days 1985 [1984]

Exh. cat. (with essay by Graeme Sturgeon)

The other artists were Hossein Valamanesh, Peter D Cole and Augustine Dall'ava.

1987

CONTEMPORARY ART IN AUSTRALIA: A REVIEW, Museum of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, opened 18 July 1987. Curator James Baker. 1 work.

Streetwise 1986 (illus. pp. 28–29 incorrectly as a single panel instead of four separate panels)

Exh. cat. (illus.)

NOTICES: Terry Smith 'MOCA: An oasis among the eucalypts' *Times on Sunday* 19 Jul 1987; George Petelin 'Public gains from private patronage' *The Australian* 29 Jul 1987, p. 9

COMMENT: Terry Smith: '“Opportunistic art” hits the visitor straight away: sound-object assemblages range from Colin Lanceley's junkscape *Ethol* (1963) to Rosalie Gascoigne's subtly effective collation of sign sections *Streetwise* (1986).'

A NEW ROMANCE, Australian National Gallery at The Australian National University Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 12 September – 15 November 1987. Curator John McPhee. 1 work.

Plenty 1986

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., list of works)

NOTICES: Sasha Grishin 'A provocative selection' *Canberra Times* 15 Sep 1987, p. 16

Sasha Grishin: 'The exhibition also features a major piece by Rosalie Gascoigne — *Plenty* (1986). While in some ways it is one of her most minimal pieces, with just an assembled facade of weathered painted boards, it is also one of her most lyrical. As is so frequently the case with her work, prolonged contemplation of installed environments is a rewarding experience.'

THIRD AUSTRALIAN SCULPTURE TRIENNIAL, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 16 September – 22 October 1987. Coordinator Geoffrey Edwards. 3 works.

Flash art 1987 (illus. p. 83)

Grasslands [Grasslands [I]] 1987

Thirty two 1987

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works); exhibition proposal (letter G Edwards to RG 6 Mar 1987)

COMMENT: The triennial was held in conjunction with the 1987 Melbourne Spoleto Festival. The venues were the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, 200 Gertrude Street and the National Gallery of Victoria. The exhibition at the NGV (where RG's works were exhibited) focused on 'the resurgence of interest in working directly with wood as a sculptural medium' (GE to RG 6 Mar 1987).

TEN BY TEN 1975–1985, 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne, 20 November – 12 December 1987. Curator Lesley Dumbrell. 4 works.

Cloisters 1976 [Cloister 1978]

White sun 1976 [The white sun 1979]

Gallery man 1976 [The gallery man 1978] (illus. p. 12)

Promised land 1985 [1986] (illus. p. 13)

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., list of works); exhibition proposal (letter Lesley Dumbrell to RG 11 Mar 1987)

NOTICES: Robert Rooney 'Cursory curating is such a doddle' *The Australian* 13 Dec 1987; Bronwyn Watson 'Storerooms become show rooms' *SMH* 15 Jan 1988

COMMENT: (On the exhibition rationale) 'The later works in the exhibition provide a means of exploring the journey that each artist has taken in developing his or her particular path, and the impact of time, and the shifts in place and style that have resulted' (Lesley Dumbrell in exh. cat.).

1988

THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN ART EXHIBITION: 200 Years of Australian Art 1788–1988, an Australian Bicentennial Authority touring exhibition opening at the Queensland Art Gallery 17 May – 17 July 1988 and touring Australian capital cities until 1989. Curators Ron Radford and Daniel Thomas. 1 work.

Swell 1984 (illus. p. 162)

Exh. cat. (Daniel Thomas (ed.) *Creating Australia: 200 years of art 1788–1988* International Cultural Corporation of Australia and Art Gallery Board of South Australia, Sydney, 1988) (essays, illus., list of works)

NOTICES: see 'REVIEWS: Australian Bicentennial Art Program 1988', Australian Bicentennial Authority, Sydney, 1989, pp. 487–500

COMMENT: The exhibition was part of the Australian Bicentennial celebrations and was organised by AGSA and the International Cultural Corporation of Australia for the Australian Bicentennial Authority. The other venues were: 12 Aug – 25 Sep 1988, AGWA Perth; 21 Oct – 27 Nov 1988, AGNSW Sydney; 21 Dec 1988 – 5 Feb 1989, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery Hobart; 1 Mar – 30 Apr 1989, NGV Melbourne; 23 May – 16 Jul 1989, AGSA Adelaide.

7TH BIENNALE OF SYDNEY — FROM THE SOUTHERN CROSS: A VIEW OF WORLD ART c. 1940–1988, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 18 May – 3 July 1988, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 4 August – 18 September 1988. Director Nick Waterlow. 3 works.



7th Biennale of Sydney 1988 exhibition catalogue

Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of the Biennale of Sydney

Golden wedge 1987
Tiger tiger 1987
Roadside 1988 [1987] (illus. p. 133)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus. p. 133, list of works) (incl. essay by Mary Eagle, p. 132)

NOTICES: John McDonald 'A patchwork triumph' *SMH* 21 May 1988, p. 77; Jo Saurin 'Connecting with the '88 Biennale' *Sun Herald* 22 May 1988, p. 97; Elwyn Lynn 'Farewell to all that jolly fun' *Weekend Australian Magazine* 28–29 May 1988, p. 13; Marie Geissler 'Weekend Art' *Australian Financial Review* 10 Jun 1988, pp. 11–12; Nicholas Baume 'Australian Biennale 1988: Not just cricket!' *Art & Text* no. 29, 1988, pp. 98–100; Dan Cameron 'Showdown at the Southern Cross: Notes on the 1988 Australian Biennial' *Artlink* vol. 8, no. 3, 1988, p. 12

John McDonald: 'Rosalie Gascoigne and Colin McCahon make a wonderful pairing, as does Klippel with David Smith.'

Jo Saurin: 'Rosalie Gascoigne's landscape constructions look good near a suite of Fred Williams' work.'

Marie Geissler: '[Rosalie Gascoigne's] carefully made wooden assemblages such as *Roadside* of 1988 offer in very reassuring and human terms a sense of order and beauty for the most ordinary of objects.'

Dan Cameron: 'For the most part, the exhibition at the AGNSW ambles along at this uneven keel. Certain moments are quite compelling, as for example a pair of walls on which the late Colin McCahon's intensely quiet paintings face a group of three wood reliefs by Rosalie Gascoigne, one of the Biennale's true discoveries. Because of his mystic but wry vision, McCahon is considered by many to be the finest artist New Zealand ever produced, and his death a year ago has magnified his importance. Gascoigne is in many ways the obverse: her panel-reliefs are lovingly built from found packing crate materials gathered during exploratory voyages from her Canberra homestead/studio. The resulting surfaces and textural patterns resemble the process-scarred abstractions of post-minimalism, but projecting humour, pathos and poetry.'

COMMENT: The three artists hung near RG's works were Willem de Kooning, Georges Braque and Fred Williams.

1989

WHAT IS CONTEMPORARY ART?, Rooseum, Malmö, Sweden, 3 June – 30 July 1989. Curators Dan Cameron and Anna Palmqvist. 8 works.

-
- | | |
|---|--|
| 11. Stubble field 1988 (dated 1987)
(illus. p. 44) | 16. Cherry orchard 1988 (illus. p. 43
upside down) |
| 12. Maculosa 1988 (illus. p. 36) | * Sharpe Bros horizontal 1981
[1979/1980–81] (illus. p. 42) |
| 13. Sun and shadow 1988 (illus. p. 47) | * All that jazz 1989 (illus. p. 48) |
| 14. Plainsong 1988 (illus. p. 45) | |
| 15. Roadside 1987 (illus. p. 49) | |

*not numbered

Exh. cat. (essay, illus.)

COMMENT: The exhibition brought together nineteen artists from around the world, including Jeff Koons, Katharina Fritsch, Rebecca Horn, Mike Kelley and Sherrie Levine. Cameron's catalogue essay includes the following comment about RG: 'What is unique about her practice, however, is neither its labor-intensiveness nor its inherently handmade qualities, but rather Gascoigne's evocation of a sense of place that is both nowhere and everywhere at once. This is the famous edgelessness which appears repeatedly as a motif in Australian art, even when, as in Gascoigne's work, the intimate presence of the land itself is part of the texture of the work.'

1990

STRANGE HARMONY OF CONTRASTS, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, 13 Macdonald Street, Paddington, Sydney, 24 January – 10 February 1990 then touring New South Wales and Queensland. Curator Nicholas Baume. 2 works.

Inland sea 1986
Lampit 1989 (illus.)

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., list of works); exh. inv.; installation view in *Tension* no. 20, 1990, p. 60

NOTICES: Christopher Allen 'Unlikely material for a cooling plunge' *SMH* 2 Feb 1990; Elwyn Lynn 'Harmonies of minimalism' *Weekend Australian* 3–4 Feb 1990, p. 11; Jacques Delaruelle 'Strange harmony and magic paintings' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 28, Mar 1990, pp. 14–15; Sasha Grishin 'Few strange harmonies, even fewer contrasts' *Canberra Times* 2 Apr 1990, p. 19; Alan R. Dodge 'Strange harmony of contrasts: recycling modernism' *Eyeline* no. 12, 1990, pp. 38–39

Jacques Delaruelle: (on *Inland sea*) 'In this metaphor of a marine sight, the artist materialised a poetic contemplation of a remembered ocean. With found material, she conjured up the sea in its absence, the sea as it can be dreamt of in the heat of the inland, the waves on an *Inland Sea*. In both works, light was conceived as the emanation of a reality which needs the observer's desire to come into being. The participation of the viewer was not an ad hoc gesture, but the crucial theme of a work which stands as an invitation to recognize beauty in the least expected place, and whose prosaic material was transfigured by the artist's imagination.'

Christopher Allen: 'The transmutation of corrugated iron scrap into water speaks immediately of an Australian experience of nature; of the waterless desert, and of the miraculous transformation by which desert lakes fill with water every few decades. But it also speaks of the transforming power of the imagination, common both to aesthetic and to religious experience. And it reminds us that art and rational thought are governed by different logics ... Both the poetic identification of metaphor and the religious mystery are relevant to Rosalie Gascoigne's work: her sheets of corrugated iron become water in the same way that Proust's steeples on the horizon become three young women ... Gascoigne's beautiful work is the outstanding piece in Strange Harmony of Contrasts.'

COMMENT: The exhibition was the last show at Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery's Macdonald Street location. It then toured Canberra School of Art Gallery, 21 Mar – 3 Apr 1990; Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 10 May – 9 Jun 1990; Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW, 22 Jun – 14 Jul 1990 and Campbelltown City Art Gallery, NSW, 10 Aug – 16 Sep 1990.

ADELAIDE BIENNIAL OF AUSTRALIAN ART, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2 March – 22 April 1990. Curator Mary Eagle. 2 works.

Hill station 1989 (illus. p. 97)

Monaro 1989 [1988–89] (illus. pp. 42–43)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works) (incl. essay by Michael Desmond, pp. 42–43)

NOTICES: Peter Ward 'Smart art from the heart and beyond' *Weekend Australian Magazine* 10–11 Mar 1990, p. 9; Ian North 'A critical evaluation of the First Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art' *Artlink* vol. 10, no. 4, 1990, pp. 24–26; Elizabeth Cross 'Adelaide art show fails to satisfy' *The Age* 3 Apr 1990

Peter Ward: '... unmistakably splintery off-cuts with clearly stencilled but fragmented, incomprehensible lettering [*Monaro* 1988–89], the "intellectual/emotional content" springs from the rigour of her method and the alchemy of her transformations.'

Ian North: 'As it happened, some of the most resonant art in the exhibition was [also] by Anglo-Celtic Australian artists, including Bea Maddock and Rosalie Gascoigne ... Gascoigne's eye for the open, pale ochre landscapes of the New South Wales tablelands, celebrated with an assemblage of weathered soft-drink crates [*Monaro* 1988–89], was undoubtedly sharpened by contrast with the dark, enclosed landscapes of her native country [*Hill Station* 1989].'

8TH BIENNALE OF SYDNEY — THE READYMADE BOOMERANG: CERTAIN RELATIONS IN 20TH CENTURY ART, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 11 April – 3 June 1990. Curator René Block. 4 works (see Comment).

168. Highway code 1985

170. Blue streak 1990

169. Marmalade 1990

171. Plainsong 1988

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works); see also *The readymade boomerang: Print portfolio and documentation* Daadgalerie, Berlin, Germany and Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 1992, with installation view of four RG works, p. 18 (incorrectly captioned 'All that glisters')

NOTICES: John McDonald 'It's the biennale, but is it art?' *SMH* 11 Apr 1990, p. 5 and 'Fun parlour of gags and gimmicks' 14 Apr 1990, p. 42; Elwyn Lynn 'Biennale is a readymade conundrum' *Weekend Australian Magazine* 21–22 Apr 1990, p. 12; Ian Burn 'The world is round so thought can change direction' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 31, Jun 1990, pp. 9–12; Mary Eagle 'Freud says "A change of mood is a most precious thing ..."' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 31, Jun 1990, pp. 13–15; *Artlink* vol. 10, no. 4, 1990, p. 17 (illus. of *Highway code* 1985); Sue Cramer 'The readymade boomerang' *Art & Text* no. 37, 1990, pp. 150–151

COMMENT: The exhibition catalogue lists six works by RG, including *Monaro* 1988–89 (illus. p. 192) and *All that glisters* 1989, neither of which were exhibited (*Monaro* was at the Adelaide Biennial). It also has an illustration incorrectly titled *All that glisters* 1989 (p. 193) which is actually *Golden mean* 1988 (which was not exhibited). Her works were specially lit, which she later regretted. 'I am now not happy with what we did in the Sydney Biennale. We had a lot of trouble then, and it was not what I really wanted — it was too dramatised' (RG to Chris Saines at QAG in March 1990, QAG records). RG spoke about the special lighting in 1997. 'You've got to have the light directly behind you, like a car light, because after all we know what it is, the material. And so most galleries are lit from the ceiling so they don't light up. I remember once in the New South Wales Gallery having something upon the wall and I said to the very exhausted electrician, "oh, look, can't you get a light right behind me?" And he said no, and went up the ladder and nearly fell off. WOW, he said, because he had the light right behind him, and made his exhausted assistant go up the ladder. She was a girl and she did not want to go up that ladder but when she got there, WOW she said, and I thought, if we leave the ladder there and we charge people to go up we should be all right' (1997 Ross).

THE READYMADE BOOMERANG PRINT PORTFOLIO, Cell Block Theatre, East Sydney Technical College, May 1990; Daadgalerie, Kurfurstenstrasse 58, Berlin, Germany, 17–27 January 1991 and Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 12 November 1990 – 3 February 1991. Curator René Block. 1 work.

Close owly 1990 (screenprint) (illus. p. 73)

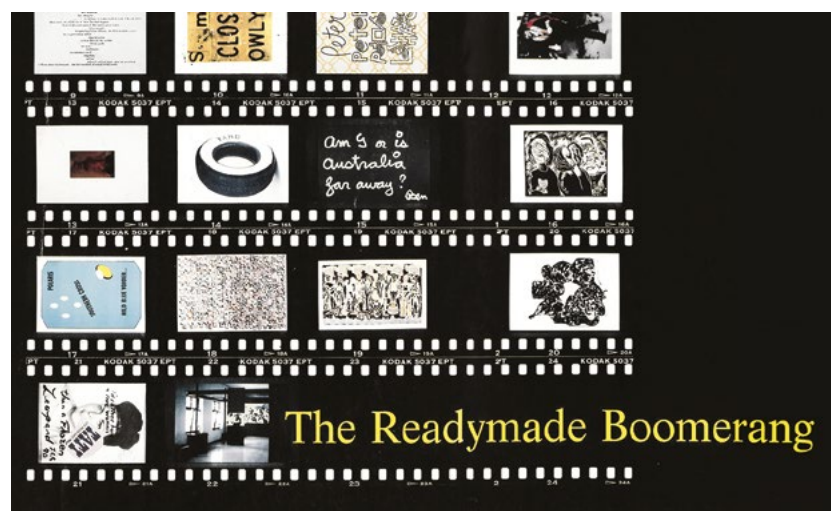
Exh. cat. (print portfolio and documentation, essays, illus.)

COMMENT: The Readymade Boomerang Print Portfolio was a satellite event for the 8th Biennale of Sydney in 1990. It contained work of twenty-one artists from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia and elsewhere (all listed in the catalogue entry on *Close owly* 1990). After the biennale, René Block wrote to RG 'I like your print very much and I am very happy that I did invite you to participate' (undated note from RB to RG).



8th Biennale of Sydney 1990, installation view

Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of René Block and the Biennale of Sydney



The Readymade Boomerang Print Portfolio 1990

Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of René Block and the Biennale of Sydney

L'ÉTÉ AUSTRALIEN À MONTPELIER, Muse Fabre Gallery Saint Ravy, Montpellier, France, 10 June – 13 September 1990. Curator John McPhee. 2 works.

Step through 1980 [1977/c. 1979–80]
Plenty 1986 (as *Abondance*) (illus. p. 87)

Exh. cat. (essay, illus.)

COMMENT: The exhibition, 'The Australian Summer', was organised by the ANG. There were one hundred works by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal artists.

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE AND COLIN McCAHON: SENSE OF PLACE, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 30 June – 28 July 1990 and Ian Potter Gallery, University of Melbourne, 15 August – 8 September 1990

See Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions.

1991

DIVERSE VISIONS: TWELVE AUSTRALIAN MID TO LATE CAREER ARTISTS, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 18 March – 19 May 1991. 5 works.

Hill station 1989
Lamplit 1989 (illus. p. 15)
Landfall 1989
Loose leaf 1990
Vintage 1990

Exh. cat. (essay by John Massey, p. 14, illus. incl. RG image p. 4)

COMMENT: RG gave a floor talk on 20 March 1991.

1993

CLEMENGER TRIENNIAL EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY ART, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 23 February – 16 May 1993. Curator John McPhee. 4 works.

Fool's gold 1992
Clouds 111 [Clouds III] 1992
Lake 1992 [1991]
Cow pasture 1992

Exh. cat. (notes on artists, artists' statements, illus., list of works)

NOTICES: Sasha Grishin 'Fairly lame triennial exercise' *Canberra Times* 20 Mar 1993; Diana Bagnall 'Truth in advertising' *The Bulletin* 30 Mar 1993, pp. 94–95; Christopher Heathcote 'New museum of art may stray from the ideals of the Reeds' *The Age* 31 Mar 1993, p. 14; Robert Rooney 'Contemporaneity just isn't what it used to be' *Weekend Australian* 10 Apr 1993, p. 13

Sasha Grishin: 'A good solid selection of work by Rosalie Gascoigne. If judged by what was exhibited they [the works by Gascoigne and Emily Kame Kngwarreye] are the only other two contenders to Bea Maddock.'

Christopher Heathcote: 'The [Heide] MOMA and NGV shows do include some worthy recent work ... Gascoigne, Gleeson, and Parr at NGV. But overall their displays strike me as excruciatingly boring.'

Robert Rooney: 'If pressed to choose a winner, I would unhesitatingly go for Rosalie Gascoigne, whose sequences of painted and weathered wooden reliefs are abstract yet suggestive of clouds and the contours of lakes. Gascoigne's use of linoleum and rusty corrugated iron may seem comfortably familiar, but in *Cow Pasture* the patterns and textures are richer by far than any I remember.'

COMMENT: Bea Maddock was selected as the winner of the Clemenger Contemporary Art Award for 1993.

CONFRONTATIONS, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW Sydney, 2–25 September 1993. Curator Nick Waterlow. 1 work.

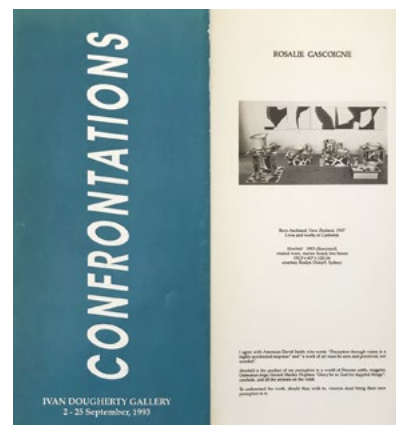
Skewbald 1993 (illus.)

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., list of works)

NOTICES: Elwyn Lynn 'Objects of artful desire' *Weekend Australian* 11–12 Sep 1993, p. 13 (ref.)

Elwyn Lynn: 'Of late, Rosalie Gascoigne's imposition of order on feathers, branches and sliced up wooden crates has led to the neat presentation of mainly rural objects on white stands; white enamel bowls, jugs and dishes with patches of rust are assembled without irony or nostalgia, while a row of paintings has the piebald white and tawny hues of Friesian cattle.'

COMMENT: The curator, Nick Waterlow, wrote: 'There are, I believe, many good reasons for presenting at this time a modest exhibition of sculpture as there exists a need, when installation is so dominant, to reassess if not restate the particular characteristics of this medium'. The exhibition comprised seven sculptures by seven artists who were invited to include 'a short piece on your work and its particular presence'.



Confrontations 1993 exhibition catalogue
Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy
of UNSW Galleries

RG wrote (in part): 'I agree with American David Smith, who wrote "Perception through vision is a highly accelerated response", and "a work of art must be seen and perceived, not worded" ... To understand the work, should they wish to, viewers must bring their own perception to it.'

IDENTITIES: ART FROM AUSTRALIA, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan, 11 December 1993 – 29 February 1994, then Wollongong Art Gallery, New South Wales, 29 April – 5 June 1994. Curator Deborah Hart. 3 works.

Set-up [Set up] 1984 (illus. p. 75)

Highway code 1985 (illus. p. 74)

Lambing 1991

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., list of works)

NOTICES: Nancy T. Lu 'Art from Australia focuses on land, people, culture' *China Post* 11 Dec 1993, p. 93; Maggie Pai 'Exhibit aims to redefine the concept of Australia' *China News* 12 Dec 1993; Ian Findlay 'Journeys through minds' *Asian Art News* Jan/Feb 1994, p. 38 ff. (also Chinese language press items)

1994

AUSSEMBLAGE!: EVERYDAY OBJECTS TRANSFORMED, Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand, 26 May – 24 July 1994. Curator Andrew Bogle. 2 works.

Big yellow 1988

Skewbald 1994 [1993]

Exh. cat. (curator's note, list of works)

NOTICES: Nick Smith 'Art just made to be tasted' *New Zealand Herald* 9 May 1994, p. 19; Pat Baskett 'Ugly ducklings' *New Zealand Herald* 26 May 1994; TJ McNamara 'The Aussemblage answer' *New Zealand Herald* Jun 1994; Justin Paton 'Critics choice' *The Listener* Jun? 1994; Mark Amery 'Titillation for a time' *The Listener* 23 Jul 1994, p. 44

COMMENT: This was an exhibition of Australian sculpture from the previous five years.

CIRCLE, LINE, SQUARE: ASPECTS OF GEOMETRY, Campbelltown City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 16 September – 21 October 1994 then touring NSW. Curatorial consultant Jenny Zimmer. 7 works.

Tesserae 4 1989 (illus. p. 30)

Summer stack 1990

Tesserae B 1990

Maze 1992

Billboard 1992–93

Lily pond 1993

Witness (illus. p. 31)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works)

COMMENT: The exhibition was also shown in New South Wales at the Newcastle Art Gallery, 16 December 1994 – 29 January 1995; Albury Regional Art Gallery, 28 April – 28 May 1995; and the New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale, 4–27 August 1995.

1995

IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN: 100 YEARS OF WOMEN'S ART FROM THE CRUTHERS COLLECTION, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Western Australia, 16 February – 13 March 1995. Curator John Cruthers. 4 works.

52. Parrot lady c. 1974 [1973] (illus. p. 46, image before work was repaired)
 53. High country [High country [1]] 1986
 54. Past glories 1988 (illus. p. 46)
 55. A rose is a rose 1986/88

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works)

COMMENT: This was a Perth Festival exhibition.

PERCEIVED DIFFERENTLY, ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 2–30 April 1995. Curator Michael Desmond. 2 works.

But mostly air 1994–95
 Hung fire 1995 (illus. detail p. 4)

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., list of works); exh. inv.

NOTICES: Sasha Grishin 'Elegant objects are neither parochial nor provincial' *Canberra Times* 8 Apr 1995, p. 56

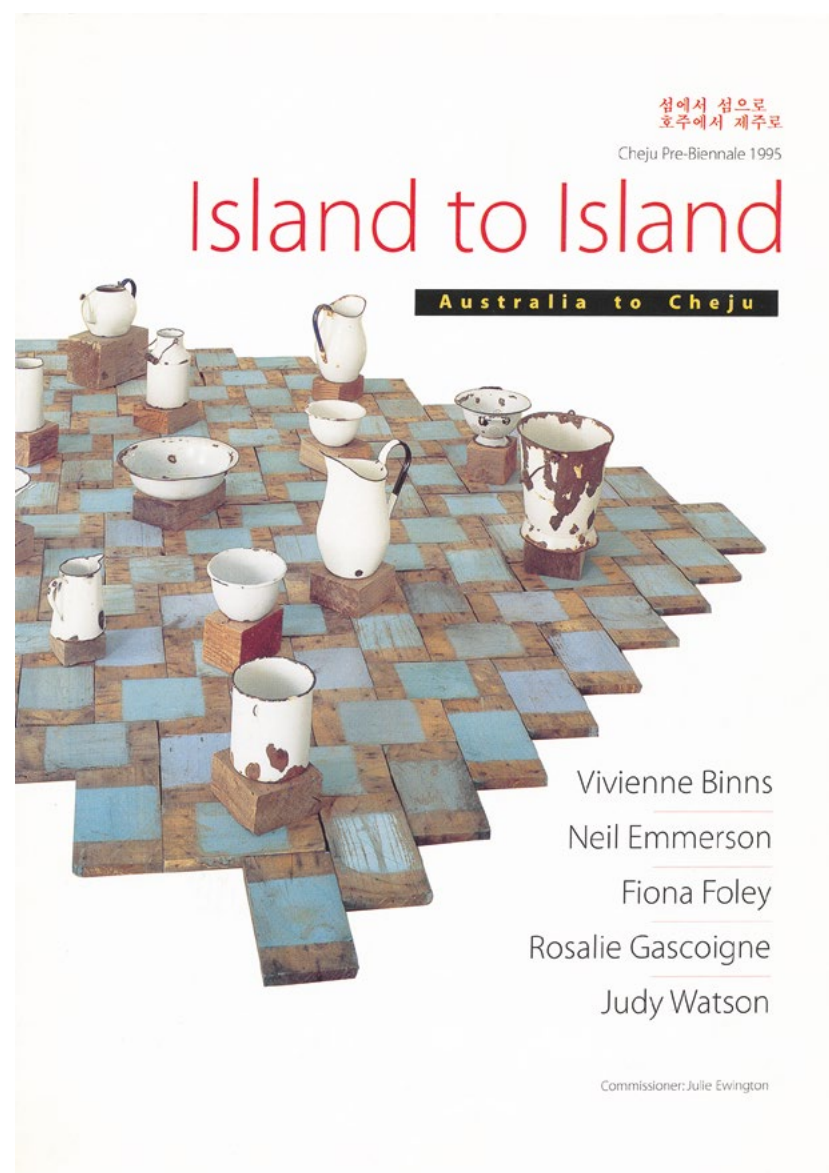
Sasha Grishin: 'Rosalie Gascoigne's assemblage piece *Hung Fire*, 1995, and installation *But Mostly Air*, 1994–95, comment on her favourite preoccupations with space and time. Her sculptures have the quality of happening rather than being made or forced. The weathered road signs stripped of their former significance and context gain a new iconic order and natural structure. The painted panels go beyond capturing an image, but define the space between images. They record a passage of time which appears strangely tangible, yet timeless.'

COMMENT: The exhibition was part of the Canberra National Sculpture Forum and involved four Canberra artists. The others were Mark Grey-Smith, David Jenzs and Wendy Teakel. Regarding RG's involvement, see the catalogue entry on *But mostly air* 1994–95.

ISLAND TO ISLAND: AUSTRALIA TO CHEJU, Cheju Pre-biennale, South Korea, July 1995. Commissioner Julie Ewington. 1 work.

Set up 1983–84 (illus.)

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., list of works)



Island to Island 1995 exhibition catalogue

Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

COMMENT: The project was undertaken by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney. *Set up* 1983–84 was awarded the Grand Prize of US\$2000 and a trophy. The other Australian artists were Vivienne Binns, Neil Emmerson, Fiona Foley and Judy Watson.

AUSTRALIAN ART 1940–1990 FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA, Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu, Japan, 28 July – 3 September 1995. Curator Tim Fisher. 1 work.

March past 1979 [1978–79] (illus. pp. 104, 177; refs. pp. 113–114)

Exh. cat. (essay, illus., list of works)

COMMENT: The exhibition subtitle was ‘In search of an inner landscape’.

1996

ISLANDS: CONTEMPORARY INSTALLATIONS FROM AUSTRALIA, ASIA, EUROPE AND AMERICA, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 31 August – 27 October 1996. Curators Kate Davidson and Michael Desmond. 1 work.

String of blue days 1984 (illus. p. 13 (detail), p. 15)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works) (incl. interview with RG, pp. 13–18)

NOTICES: Sasha Grishin ‘Modern works of an old art form’ *Canberra Times* 21 Sep 1996, p. C6; John McDonald ‘Islands of lost souls’ *SMH* 28 Sep 1996

John McDonald: ‘... the major loan is Richard Wilson’s 20–50 from the Saatchi Collection in Britain ... There is a distant relationship between Wilson’s work and that of Rosalie Gascoigne, who uses old soft-drink crates to make minimal sculptural works with echoes of landscape ... Both Gascoigne and Wilson are poetic in their ambitions, with the scale of their respective works playing a vital part in the way we experience each piece.’

COMMENT: During the exhibition RG gave a talk about *String of blue days* at the NGA on 11 September 1996.

SPIRIT + PLACE: ART IN AUSTRALIA 1861–1996, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 22 November 1996 – 31 March 1997. Curators Nick Waterlow and Ross Mellick. 1 work.

Feathered fence 1979 [1978–79] (illus. p. 29, refs. pp. 29, 41)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works)

COMMENT: The exhibition theme: ‘In the closing years of this century of modernity, there is a growing recognition of the significance in Australian life of pressing spiritual needs, and the opportunities offered by a plethora of beliefs are becoming more evident ... *Spirit and Place* seeks to contribute to the present process of convergence and partnership between the cultures of indigenous and non-indigenous Australians by considering a broad range of works from the last hundred years through a fresh perspective’ (MCA News). RG spoke at an exhibition seminar.

1997

IN PLACE (OUT OF TIME): CONTEMPORARY ART IN AUSTRALIA, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, United Kingdom, 20 July – 2 November 1997. Curators David Elliott and Howard Morphy. 4 works.

Highway code 1985 (illus. (detail) p. 32)

Afternoon 1996

All summer long 1996 (illus. p. 42)

Overland 1996 (illus. p. 43)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works) (incl. essay by Deborah Edwards, pp. 39–44); exh. brochure (with illus. *Afternoon* 1996, *Highway code* 1985); exh. inv. (illus. *Afternoon* 1996)

NOTICES: William Feaver *The Observer* 13 Jul 1997, p. 55; Susan McCulloch 'No boundaries in our sense of place' *Weekend Australian* 2–3 Aug 1997, p. 12; Laura Cumming 'The week in reviews: Art' *The Observer* 3 Aug 1997, p. 13; Paul Levy 'The gallery: Mondrian and his heir' *Wall Street Journal Europe* 15 Aug 1997, p. 11, also the *Wall Street Journal* 10 Sep 1997, p. A20; Adrian Searle *The Guardian* 2 Sep 1997, p. 12; Greg Hilty *Art Monthly UK* Sep 1997, pp. 44–46; Richard Noyce *Contemporary Visual Arts* no. 16, 1997, p. 79; Antonia Carver 'In place (out of time): Contemporary art in Australia' *Flash Art* [Italy] Nov–Dec 1997, p. 74 (with illus. of *Afternoon* 1996); Stephanie Radok 'The figure/ground relationship' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 115, Nov 1998, pp. 25–26

Laura Cumming: 'Rosalie Gascoigne, now in her eighties, gives you Australia as she finds it. Twenty squares of wood, salvaged from the tablelands around Canberra, float together on the high gallery wall. Across these panels, bleached by years of sun, drift patches of white distemper, hazy clouds in a huge afternoon. This is thin air, shifting, sultry, off-peak, embodied in warped board. In *All Summer Long*, Gascoigne gets a whole calendar of such afternoons from a few battered bottle crates. In this abstract composition, dense areas of black print (Schweppes screwtop 32 fl. oz.) undulate against plain ochre plywood, sometimes below it, sometimes above. It's a thirst-quenching season of suns-up and suns-down. It is said that Gascoigne deconstructs language, willing you not to read. Don't believe it: print usually speaks louder than paint. Visitors busily decipher the scrabble of letters in her roadsign-yellow *Highway Code*.'

Paul Levy: 'The whole of the Oxford museum is given over to this show, which has been sparsely hung — with stunning results in the large central gallery, where Ms Gascoigne's art-from-debris pictures and floor installations are absolutely "beaut".'

Greg Hilty: 'Finally, there is a series of works by white New Zealander Rosalie Gascoigne, who lives near Canberra in the South. Gascoigne's bent plywood floor work clearly evokes the form of the bark paintings of Arnhem Land, but its surfaces are blank, distressed, washed out and yet still powerfully evocative of place. Her wallworks are assembled from scavenged roadsigns or crates, knocked into stammering concrete poems. Her message is that of other artists in the show that the land they inhabit is neither empty nor innocent: culture and history course through its veins and re-emerge in their work.'

Adrian Searle: 'Rosalie Gascoigne ... makes rather beautiful, sun-bleached assemblages out of discarded signboards, warped sheets of plywood and demolished packing crates. It is minor-key, yet sensitive, poetic work, evoking heat and dust, tan skies, rubbish-strewn hinterlands between the city and the outback ...'

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Museum of Modern Art Oxford

In Place (Out of Time)
Contemporary Art in Australia

July 20 - November 2 1997



In Place (Out of Time) 1997 exhibition catalogue cover and invitation showing *Afternoon* 1996

Image from author's archive

COMMENT: RG wrote to MOMA Oxford about her contribution: 'I want to know if I can have a room where I can display very little. I want to create a feeling of infinite space and air, and I would also like some natural light' (RG fax to Rob Bowman 16 Dec 1996). The other artists exhibited were Gordon Bennett, Tom Djumburrpurr, Fiona Foley, Philip Gudthaykudthay, John Mawurndjul, George Milpurrurru, Eubena Nampitjin, Mike Parr, Judy Watson and Clara Wubugwubug.

OTHER STORIES: FIVE AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS, ASIAlink travelling exhibition at 8th Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1997 and four other countries. Curator Alison Carroll. 1 work.

Skylark 1994–95 (illus. p. 2, detail p. 9)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works)

COMMENT: After Bangladesh the exhibition went to Kathmandu, Nepal; Hanoi, Vietnam; Colombo, Sri Lanka and Lahore, Pakistan. It was the first exhibition of three-dimensional works from Australia to tour the smaller countries of South Asia. The other artists included were Fiona Hall, Mike Parr, Rosslynd Piggott and Hossein Valamanesh.

1998

EXPANSE: ABORIGINALITIES, SPACIALITIES AND THE POLITICS OF ECSTASY, University of South Australia Art Museum, Adelaide, 4 September – 3 October 1998. Curator Ian North. 3 works.

Frontiers I–IV 1998

Frontier V [1993/98] (illus. p. 5)

Outback II 1996 [Overland 1996]

The three were exhibited as an installation (illus. p. 19)

Exh. cat. (essay by Ian North, illus., list of works and note on RG, p. 18)

NOTICES: Joanne Harris 'Merging pragmatism and spirituality' *The Advertiser* 12 Sep 1998, p. 61; Peter Ward 'Homing in on explorations of identity and landscape' *The Australian* 2 Oct 1998, p. 19; John Neylon 'Discourse-specific practices etc.' *Adelaide Review* Jan 1999; Sarah Thomas 'Expanse: Different ways of seeing landscape' *Art and Australia* vol. 36, no. 4, 1999, pp. 484–485 (*Frontier V*, illus. p. 485)

COMMENT: This was the inaugural exhibition at the university gallery.



University of South Australia Art Museum 1997, installation view: *Overland* 1996 (on floor), *Frontiers I–IV* 1998 (on wall at left), *Frontier V* 1993/98 (on wall at right)

Image from author's archive

1999

TOI TOI TOI: THREE GENERATIONS OF ARTISTS FROM NEW ZEALAND, Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany, 23 January – 5 April 1999 and Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand, 22 May – 4 July 1999. Curator René Block. 11 works.

63. Scrub country 1982 [1981–82]
64. Highway code 1985 (illus. p. 80)
65. Party piece 1988 (illus. p. 77)
66. Cockatoos 1991 (illus. p. 85)
67. Beaten track 1992 (illus. p. 84)
68. Love apples 1992 (illus. p. 76)
69. White garden 1995 (illus. p. 85)
70. Please drive slowly 1996 (illus. p. 79)
71. Loopholes 1996 [1995] (illus. p. 81)
72. Solitude 1997 (illus. p. 78)
73. Lasseter's reef 1997 [1993/1996–97] (illus. p. 83)

Note: *Grasslands III* 1998 illus. but not exhibited. *Through road* 1990–91 was added to the exhibition at Auckland Art Gallery, but about half the other works were not exhibited there because of lack of space (see notices by Pat Baskett and John Daly-Peoples).

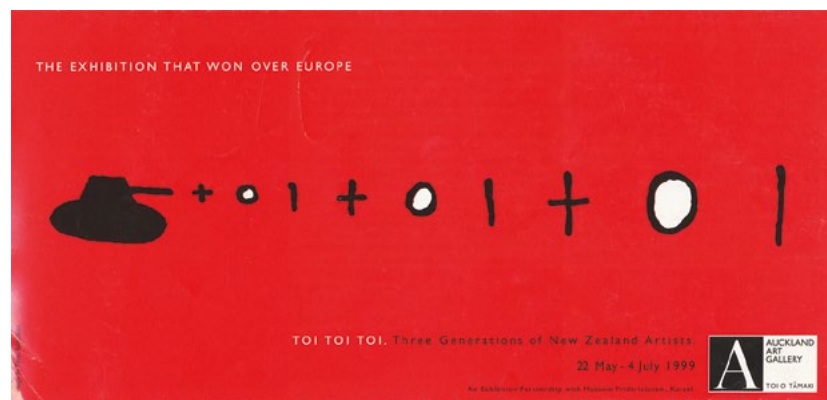
Exh. cat. (essays, illus.) (incl. essay by Anne Kirker, pp. 74–75); Auckland Art Gallery exh. guide (illus. *Through road* 1990–91); installation views at Kassel (author's archive)

NOTICES: Pat Baskett 'Cultural conquerors' *NZ Herald Weekend* 22–23 May 1999; TJ McNamara 'No slaves to tradition' *NZ Herald Weekend* 29–30 May 1999; Peter Simpson 'A German view of Kiwi art' *Sunday Star Times* 30 May 1999; Louise Garrett 'Toi Toi Toi New Zealand art in Kassel' *ArtAsiaPacific* no. 23, 1999, p. 24 (*Solitude* 1997 illus. p. 24); John Daly-Peoples 'Getting good exercise in Auckland's mind gym' *National Business Review* [NZ] 11 Jun 1999, p. 38; Justin Paton 'Frequent flyers Toi Toi Toi in Auckland' *Art New Zealand* no. 92, spring 1999 (*Cockatoos* 1991 illus. p. 48)

COMMENT: Regarding the title of the exhibition: 'toi' in Maori means 'art'; 'toi toi' in German means 'good luck'. Fourteen artists were represented. RG was pleased to be included though she had doubts about being treated as a New Zealand artist. 'I've got a show going on in Kassel ... [René Block] ... is trying to introduce the antipodean art to Europe. As soon as they mentioned Colin McCahon, well I would cross the seas to go anywhere with Colin McCahon. I really think he's the greatest antipodean — he gives you the country they would never know in the northern hemisphere ... I said to Roslyn Oxley, where I show, "I'd rather be an Australian really, because I was never an artist in New Zealand". Couldn't have been and I didn't hit the scene here 'til I was in my fifties



Toi Toi Toi's red banner at the Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany, 1999
Image from author's archive



Toi Toi Toi in Auckland, New Zealand, 1999
Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

anyway ... I am claimed by New Zealanders as a New Zealand artist ... Place of birth, place of birth. But it doesn't deal with the places that formed you. And it was certainly circumstances in Australia that formed me, and taking on another country' (1998 Hughes).

There was some debate in the New Zealand notices regarding Rosalie's inclusion in the exhibition. TJ McNamara: '... and Rosalie Gascoigne, who is really part of Australian art'; Peter Simpson: '... from McCahon's generation come the expatriate artists Rosalie Gascoigne, whose career is wholly Australian, and Len Lye ...'; and Justin Paton: 'The wildcards in Block's curatorial pack are Webb, Culbert, and above all Rosalie Gascoigne — expatriates all ... Not only did Gascoigne leave here in 1943; she didn't make art until the 1970s, and thus ought to qualify — if at all — for the "middle" generation. She's a wonderful artist, sure, but I'm enough of a believer in local quotas to wish that an under known artist such as Geoffrey Thornley had secured air-time. At the very least, her inclusion reveals exactly how far Block's Young, Middle, and Older categories can be stretched before collapsing into nonsense (I mean, why not Affordable, Pricey, and Mortgage the House).'

CLEMENGER CONTEMPORARY ART AWARD, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, with the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 3 April – 9 May 1999. Curators Max Delany and Jason Smith. 1 work.

Orangery 1998 (illus. p. 17)

Note: Inland sea 1986 illus. p. 8 but not exhibited

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., additional refs p. 8) (incl. essay by Ian North, pp. 16–17); exh. inv.

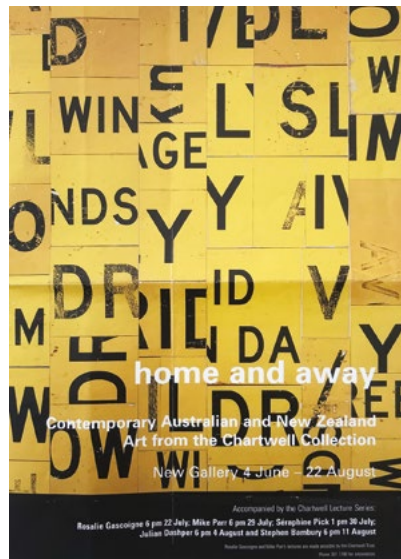
COMMENT: John Nixon was selected as the winner of the Clemenger Contemporary Art Award for 1999.

HOME AND AWAY: CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ART FROM THE CHARTWELL COLLECTION, Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand, 4 June – 22 August 1999 and touring New Zealand. Curator William McAloon. 1 work.

Big yellow 1988 (illus. p. 39)

Exh. cat. (illus., essay by Ewen McDonald, p. 38); exh. guide

COMMENT: RG visited Auckland to lecture for the Chartwell Foundation at the Auckland Art Gallery on 22 July. She also gave a floor talk in front of *Big yellow* 1988 on 24 July and several media interviews. These were her last public appearances. The exhibition was also shown at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, 6 May – 25 June 2001; City Gallery Wellington, 3 February – 31 March 2000 and also Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton; Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North, 18 November 2000 – 21 January 2001 and Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, 14 April – 17 June 2001.



Poster advertising artist talks for *Home and Away* at Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand, 1999. This was Rosalie's last public appearance

Image from author's archive, reproduced courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

2000

DRIVE: POWER – PROGRESS – DESIRE, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand, 12 February – 30 April 2000. Curators Gregory Burke and Hanna Scott. 1 work.

Party piece 1988

Exh. cat. (essays, illus., list of works)

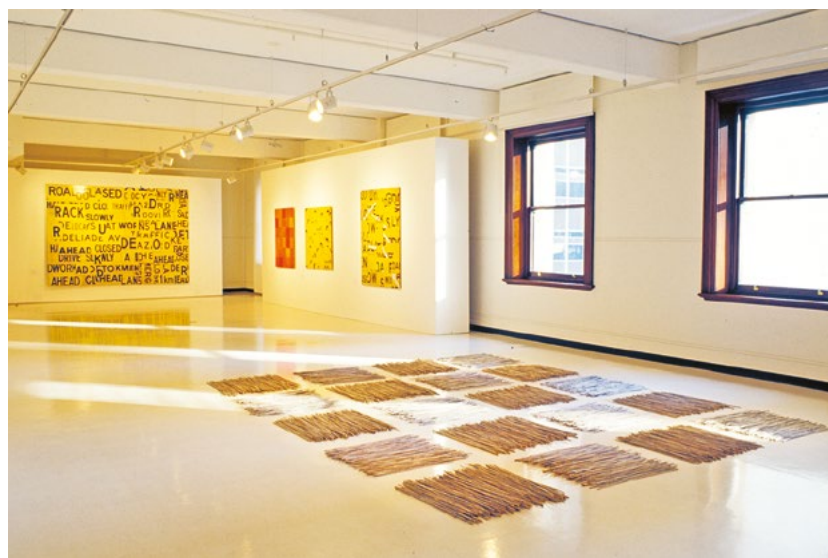
COMMENT: The exhibition focused on the car and highway in relation to expressions of power, progress and desire. It included over sixty artists from Australia, Canada, Ireland, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States, including Chris Burden, Andy Warhol, Richard Prince, Tracey Moffat, Willie Doherty, Ed Ruscha, Len Lye, Richard Hamilton, John Baldessari and Julian Opie.

12TH BIENNALE OF SYDNEY — BIENNALE OF SYDNEY 2000, Objects Gallery, Australian Centre for Craft and Design, Customs House, Circular Quay, Sydney, 26 May – 30 July 2000. Curator (for R.G. component) Hetti Perkins. 14 works.

Metropolis 1999	Steel magnolias 1994
Construction 1999 [The still of the night] c. 1998–99]	White city 1993–94
Overland 1996	Love apples 1992
Afternoon 1996	Far view 1990
Loopholes 1996 [1995]	Monaro 1989 [1988–89]
White garden 1995	Piece to walk around 1981
Compound 1994	Highway code 1985 (not listed)
	Note: Fool's gold 1992 listed but not exhibited.

Exh. cat. (2 illus.); exh. inv.; Objects Gallery media release; fourteen 35 mm slides of the installation from the biennale organisation, and six installation images on the Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery website

NOTICES: Benjamin Genocchio 'Idiosyncratic hits — and misses' *Weekend Australian* 8–9 Jul 2000, p. 23 (1 illus.); Joanna Mendelssohn 'The 12th Sydney Biennale' *Artlink* vol. 20, no. 3, 2000, pp. 82–83; Brett Levine 'Variety is the spice of life: The Biennale of Sydney 2000' *Art New Zealand* no. 96, spring 2000, pp. 68–70; '12 Biennale of Sydney' *Object* no. 1, 2000, p. 10 (1 illus.)



12th Biennale of Sydney 2000, installation at Customs House: *Piece to walk around* 1981 (in foreground), *Metropolis* 1999 (on rear wall), *Love apples* 1992, *Loopholes* 1995 and *Highway code* 1985

Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery

Benjamin Genocchio: 'Rosalie Gascoigne is the Australian art world's sacred cow ... What is missing from the pages of superlative ecstasy eulogising the life of Saint Rosalie ... is a willingness to sort myths from facts, good works from bad. A willingness, in short, to make honest critical judgments ... The more I look at her works, in fact, the more I realise they are very hit or miss ... As formal compositions they are vaguely pleasing to the eye but they lack the magic of art — that sense of an alchemic process transforming banal materials into gold ... Fortunately, the failure of some of the works here is overshadowed by the success of others.'

Joanna Mendelssohn: 'There is a recognition of spiritual and contemplative qualities — in works by John Mawurndjul, Rosalie Gascoigne and Yoko Ono.'

2000–2002

FEDERATION: AUSTRALIAN ART AND SOCIETY 1901–2001, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 8 December 2000 – 11 February 2001 and touring nationally. Curator John McDonald. 1 work.

Cow pasture 1992 (ref. p. 254, illus. p. 66)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus.)

COMMENT: The exhibition toured Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 17 March – 13 May 2001; Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville, Queensland, 15 June – 5 August 2001; Newcastle Art Gallery, New South Wales, 18 August – 14 October 2001; Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, The University of Western Australia, Perth, 2 November 2001 – 27 January 2002; Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 22 February – 21 April 2002 and Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, Tasmania, 10 May – 7 July 2002.

COLIN McCAGHON: A TIME FOR MESSAGES, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2 February – 13 May 2001. Curator Jason Smith. 2 works.

Clouds III 1992

Close owly 1990 19/60 (serigraph) (both illus.)

Exh. cat. (essay, illus.)

NOTICES: Damian Skinner 'Colin McCahon at the NGV' *Art and Australia* vol. 39, no. 2, 2001, pp. 232–233

COMMENT: 'The display [of six late works by Colin McCahon] integrates the works of several artists for whom McCahon's art can be seen to have been influential or with which it resonates' (Jason Smith catalogue essay). The exhibition was held at NGV on Russell, a temporary location at Russell Street during building alterations at NGV St Kilda Road.

2002

SUBLIME: 25 YEARS OF THE WESFARMERS COLLECTION OF AUSTRALIAN ART, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 2 October – 24 November 2002 and touring. 1 work.

Hung fire 1995 (illus. p. 68 and detail at preface)

Exh. cat. (essays, illus.)

NOTICES: Mary Eagle 'Sublime cocktail' *Australian Book Review* May 2004, p. 36

COMMENT: Other venues included Geraldton Regional Art Gallery, Western Australia, January 2003; Cairns Art Gallery, Queensland; Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne (ending 28 September 2003); Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Victoria; and the National Library of Australia, Canberra, 12 February – 26 April 2004. *Hung fire* 1995 was used in exhibition publicity materials. A similar exhibition based on the Wesfarmers collection, 'Luminous world', also again with *Hung fire*, toured Australia in 2013–15.

2003

HOME SWEET HOME: WORKS FROM THE PETER FAY COLLECTION, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 11 October 2003 – 8 January 2004 and touring in Australasia. Curators Deborah Hart and Glenn Barkley. 4 works.

The white sun 1979 (illus. p. 42)

Down to the silver sea 1981–82 [1977/81] (illus. p. 15)

Chatting up 1994 (illus. p. 6)

The fourth work was a joint piece with Narelle Jubelin comprising Rosalie Gascoigne, Not titled 1980s (see [*Homage with Lysaght lady*] c. 1990) and Narelle Jubelin, Jubilee Fountain (after Eric Ridler) 1992

Exh. cat. (essay, refs. pp. 10, 13–14, 41–42, 50, illus. pp. 6, 15, 42)

NOTICES: Lenny Ann Low 'Houseful of works speak to their owner' *SMH* 9 Oct 2003; Philippa Kelly 'Artnotes: Home Sweet Home' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 164, Oct 2003; Sonia Barron 'An exhibition that is daunting in its scale' *Canberra Times* 8 Nov 2003

COMMENT: 'This exhibition of works from the Peter Fay collection reveals the passions of a collector who, since the 1980s, has supported emerging artists from Australia and New Zealand and has watched their careers develop. It shows how the Peter Fay collection has broadened from paintings to include diverse media such as object-based works, as well as "insider" and "outsider" art, illustrating the dialogues between the two' (NGA media release). The exhibition later toured extensively in Australia and New Zealand as part of the NGA's Travelling Exhibitions program for 2004–05.

2009

GALLERY A SYDNEY 1964–1983, Campbelltown Arts Centre, 21 March – 3 May 2009 and Newcastle Art Gallery, New South Wales, 9 May – 19 July 2009. Curator John Murphy. 6 works.

Leaning piece 1974	Italian birds 1976 [1975]
Standing piece 1974 [1973/74]	Tiepolo's parrots [Tiepolo parrots] 1976
Cricketers (find the ball) [Cricketers [1]] 1976	Winter morning 1976

Exh. cat. (essays, list of works, illus.) (incl. essay by Hannah Fink, pp. 150–155); exh. inv.

NOTICES: John McDonald ‘“A” stands for attitude, too’ *SMH* 10–12 Apr 2009, pp. 16–17

John McDonald: ‘Twenty five years after the gallery closed its doors, the art looks as fresh as if it had been made last week ... As [Max] Hutchinson opted out and [Ann] Lewis took on responsibility for the Sydney gallery, there was no let-up in the adventurous, experimental nature of the exhibitions ... Rosalie Gascoigne was “discovered” by Gallery A in a group exhibition of 1975 and given a solo show the next year.’

CUBISM AND AUSTRALIAN ART, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 24 November 2009 – 8 April 2010. Curators Sue Cramer and Lesley Harding. 3 works.

Banner 1 1992
Gazette 1994
Milky Way 1995

Exh. cat. (refs and illus. pp. 232–233, 255); exh. inv.

COMMENT: ‘This exhibition explores the influence of Cubism on Australian art and its ongoing relevance to artists today’ (Curatorial statement).

ALMANAC: THE GIFT OF ANN LEWIS AO, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 8 December 2009 – 18 April 2010 and touring. Curator Glenn Barkley. 2 works.

Leaning piece 1974
Winter morning 1976

Exh. cat. (illus. pp. 18–19, 56); exh. inv.

NOTICES: Sasha Grishin ‘Collection tells engaging story’ *Canberra Times* 12 Mar 2011, p. 28

Sasha Grishin: ‘The Ann Lewis collection highlights a development in Australian art where abstraction and strong formal properties of art making have been given primacy. It is a selection made by a passionate collector with a discerning and well-informed eye.’

COMMENT: The exhibition consisted of a selection of works donated by Ann Lewis to the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Newcastle Art Gallery and the Moree Plains Gallery. A (lightly abridged) version also travelled to the ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 18 February – 3 April 2011; Wollongong City Art Gallery, NSW, 15 April – 5 June 2011 and New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale, NSW, 18 November 2011 – 5 February 2012.

2010

SOMETHING IN THE AIR: COLLAGE AND ASSEMBLAGE IN CANBERRA REGION ART, Canberra Museum and Art Gallery, 19 June – 10 October 2010. Curators Deborah Clark and Mark Van Veen. 4 works.

Pink window 1975 (illus.)

Parrot morning 1976

Triptych 1975 (illus.)

The white sun 1979 (illus. p. 15)

Exh. cat. (refs pp. 4, 8, 15, 18, 43; illus. pp. 2, 9, 15); exh. inv.

NOTICES: Diana Streak 'Art of recycling' *Canberra Times* Panorama 26 Jun 2010, pp. 15–16 (refs); Helen Maxwell 'Air-borne wonders at CMAG' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 232, Aug 2010, p. 88 (illus.); Anni Doyle Wawrzynczak 'The ghost of Gascoigne, and other apparitions' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 246, Dec 2011, pp. 35–37

Diana Streak: 'Central to the exhibition is Canberra artist Rosalie Gascoigne, whose assemblage was profoundly influenced by the local environment.'

Anni Doyle Wawrzynczak: 'Clark's initial point, that Gascoigne's internationally acclaimed works have had a lasting impact on Canberra region artists, was clearly demonstrated, but no less remarkable was the exhibition's extreme evocation of place.'

COMMENT: The exhibition looked at the influence on Canberra's contemporary art scene of the collage and assemblage works of RG and other artists in the NGA collection such as Robert Rauschenberg, Sidney Nolan and Robert Klippel.

SPIRIT IN THE LAND, McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery, Langwarrin, Victoria, 12 December 2010 – 20 February 2011 and touring. Curator Robert Lindsay. 3 works.

Inland sea 1986

Vintage 1990

Monaro 1989 [1988–89] (not all venues)

Exh. cat. (refs, illus. pp. 34–37); exh. inv.

COMMENT: The exhibition's aim was to 'survey the work of important Australian artists and focus on their metaphysical relationship to the land'.

After closing at the McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery on 20 February 2011 the exhibition toured Hamilton Art Gallery, VIC, 20 May – 10 July 2011; Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs, NT, 17 November 2011 – 4 February 2012; ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 23 February – 1 April 2012; Flinders University Art Museum, Adelaide, 13 April – 27 May 2012; Benalla Art Gallery, VIC, 15 June – 29 July 2012; Penrith Regional Art Gallery, NSW, 10 August – 16 September 2012 and Tweed River Art Gallery, Murwillumbah, NSW, 26 September – 25 November 2012.

2011

LAVERTY 2: SELECTIONS FROM THE COLIN AND ELIZABETH LAVERTY COLLECTION, Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW, 14 May – 14 August 2011 and Geelong Gallery, Victoria, 18 February – 15 April 2011. 3 works.

Flora Gallop 1976

Legend 1988

Rose pink 1992

Exh. inv.; installation view with three RG works in 'The Laverty Sale' Bonhams, Sydney, 24 May 2013, pp. 86–87

NOTICES: John McDonald 'An eye for talent' *SMH Spectrum* 28 May 2011, p. 10; Jeremy Eccles 'Laverty 2: A brave new aesthetic world' *Art Monthly Australia* Sep 2011, pp. 41–42; Ron Ramsey 'Laverty 2' *Artemis* vol. 42, no. 1, 2011, pp. 10–11 (with illus.)

TELL ME, TELL ME: AUSTRALIAN AND KOREAN ART 1976–2011, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, at National Art School Gallery, Sydney, 17 June – 25 August 2011 then National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea, 8 November 2011 – 19 February 2012. Curators Glenn Barkley and Inhye Kim. 1 work.

Set up 1983–84

Exh. cat. (ref., illus.); exh. brochure and plan

NOTICES: John McDonald 'That '70s show' *SMH Spectrum* 16–17 Jul 2011, pp. 14–15; Adam Geczy 'Cultural juxtaposition: Tell me tell me: Australian and Korean art 1976–2011' *Art Monthly Australia* no. 24, Sep 2011, pp. 11–13

2013

AUSTRALIA, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 21 September – 8 December 2013. Principal curator Kathleen Soriano (with Ron Radford and Anna Gray and others). 1 work.

178. Monaro 1988–89

Exh. cat.; exh. brochure (ref., illus. pp. 260–261)

NOTICES: Alastair Sooke 'Australia at the Royal Academy' *The Telegraph* [London] 16 Sep 2013; Adrian Searle 'Australia at the Royal Academy: Ned Kelly to the rescue' *The Guardian* 17 Sep 2013; John McDonald 'Australian arts showcase is a missed chance' *SMH* 19 Sep 2013 and 'Australia at the Royal Academy' 28 Sep 2013; Brian Sewell 'Australia, Royal Academy' *London Evening Standard* 19 Sep 2013; Waldemar Januszczak 'A desert of new ideas' *Sunday Times* [London] 22 Sep 2013; Prospero 'New frontier' *The Economist* 23 Sep 2013; Jill, Duchess of Hamilton 'Art review: Australia, Royal Academy' *Catholic Herald* [UK] 5 Nov 2013; Peter Conrad *The Monthly* Dec 2013. Media reports include Michael Fitzgerald 'Made in Australia' *SMH Spectrum* 14–15 Sep 2013, p. 10

COMMENT: The exhibition drew very mixed reviews in the British press.



APPENDIX 3: WORKS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Australian collections

Artbank, Sydney

Eighty-nine parrots 1981

Survey 1991

Art Gallery of Ballarat, Victoria

Blossom 1982

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Sir Bagby c. 1970–72

Bottled glass 1974

Enamel ware 1974

Crop [1] 1976

Mosaic 1976

Clouds I 1992

Gazette 1994

Great blond paddocks 1998–99

Metropolis 1999

Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

Swell 1984

But mostly air 1994–95

Palings 1994/98

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

String of blue days 1984

Twofold bay 1988

Monaro 1988–89

Close owly 1990 (screenprint 39/60)

Sweet sorrow 1990

Plein air 1994

Benalla Art Gallery, Victoria

Husbandry 1977

Banner 1 1992

Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria

All summer long 1996

Burnie Regional Art Gallery, Tasmania

Bird house 1981

Campbelltown City Art Gallery,
New South Wales

Witness 1994

Fool's gold 1992

Image courtesy of the National Gallery of Australia,
Canberra

Canberra Museum and Art Gallery

Close owly 1990 (screenprint)
Across town 1991 (screenprint)

Charles Sturt University Art Collection,
Wagga Wagga, New South Wales

Tesserae 1 1989

Geelong Gallery, Victoria

Sharpe Bros horizontal 1979/1980–81

Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Queensland

Last leaf 1988

Griffith University Art Collection, Brisbane

Close owly 1990 (screenprint)
Across town 1991 (screenprint)

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Takeover bid 1981
Aerial view 1988

Latrobe Regional Gallery, Morwell, Victoria

Firebird 1991

Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, The University
of Western Australia, Perth

Parrot lady 1973
A rose is a rose 1986/88
Past glories 1988

Macquarie University Art Collection, Sydney

Landfall 1989

Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

Leaning piece 1974
Winter morning 1976
Piece to walk around 1981
Habitation 1984 (jointly with Tate, United Kingdom)
Set up 1983–84
Tiger tiger 1987
Close owly 1990 (screenprint 20/60)
[Homage with Lysaght lady] c. 1990 (collaboration
with Narelle Jubelin)

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Back verandah 1974
The dredge 1974
Woolshed 1974
[Bowls of balls] 1974–75
Triptych 1975
Black bird box 1976
The colonel's lady 1976
Tiepolo parrots 1976
Country air 1977
Feathered fence 1978–79
March past 1978–79
The white sun 1979
Step through 1977/c. 1979–80
Down to the silver sea 1977/81
Plenty 1986
The marriage feast 1988–89
Wheat belt 1989
Letting go 1991
Cow pasture 1992
Fool's gold 1992
Chatting up 1994
Suddenly the lake 1995
Earth 1999

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra,
study collection

Norco (after Gruner) 1974
Norco cows c. 1974–75
[Dolly boxes study B] 1976
[Two children] c. 1976
[Feather study 2] 1978
[Feather study 3] 1978
[Homage with a cricket team] c. 1976–78
[Homage with Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*] c. 1980
[Homage with Arnott's parrot] c. 1980–82
[Homage with five cricket cards] c. 1982
[Study: horse races] 1983
[Moth study] c. 1984
[Study: stencilled boards] c. 1981–84
Pineapple pieces 5 1985
Pineapple pieces 6 1985
[Homage with Matisse's *Le Luxe II*] c. 1982–86
[Linoleum study (Tasmania)] c. 1986–87
[Studies of 'cloud' shapes] 1987
['Bird' studies] c. 1991

- [Three studies: linoleum on red] c. 1992
 [Archipelago studies A & B] 1993
 [Masonite studies] c. 1993
 Sheep weather alert 2 1992–93 (right-hand panel only)
 [Study: four blue items] c. 1993–94
 [White wood study: cockatoos] c. 1994–95
 [Yellow wood study #4] c. 1995
 [Yellow wood study #5] c. 1995
 [Yellow wood study #6] c. 1995
 [Study: four pink rectangles] c. 1993–96
 [Study: six yellow strips] c. 1995–96
 [Study: two pink squares] c. 1993–96
 [White wood study #1] c. 1995–97
 [White wood study #2] c. 1995–97
 [White wood study #3] c. 1995–97
 [White wood study #4] c. 1995–97
 [White wood study #7] c. 1995–97
 [Study: seven coloured boards B] c. 1990–98
 [Study with painted road signs A & B] c. 1990–98
 [Study with retroreflective letter R.] c. 1998
- National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Parrot morning 1976
 Cloister 1978
 Crop 2 1981–82
 Inland sea 1986
 Flash art 1987
 Close owly 1990 (screenprint 19/60)
 Clouds III 1992
- Newcastle Art Gallery, New South Wales
 Steam c. 1971–73
 Standing piece 1973/74
 Italian birds 1975
 Flora Galop 1976
 Wild strawberries 1995
- New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale,
 New South Wales
 Regimental colours A 1990–91
- Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
 The Pepper Pot 1975
 Stained glass 1983
 Winter paddock 1984
 New wave 1986
- Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art,
 Brisbane
 Room with a view 1976–77
 Storage 1977
 Lamplit 1989
 Close owly 1990 (screenprint 15/60)
 Overland 1996
- Queensland University of Technology Art
 Collection, Brisbane
 Winter order 1978–79
 Close owly 1990 (screenprint XXXI/XLV)
 Grassfest 1999
- Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery,
 Launceston, Tasmania
 Pub 1974
- RMIT University Art Collection, Melbourne
 Galahs rising 1984
- TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, Victoria
 Club colours 1983
 Municipal gardens 1983
 Promised land 1986
 Lantern 1990
 Milky Way 1995
 Afternoon 1996
 Poplars 1996/97
 Cloud cuckoo land 1998
- Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
 Spring 2 1981–82

The University of Melbourne Art Collection
The players 1981
Piece to walk on 1983–84
Conundrum 1989–90

The University of New South Wales Art
Collection, Sydney
Across town 1991 (screenprint 16/99)

The University of Queensland Art Museum,
Brisbane
Dolly boxes 1976
Daffodils 1986

Wollongong Art Gallery, New South Wales
Footballers 1978–79
Lambing 1991

Overseas collections

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, New Zealand
Big yellow 1988
Cockatoos 1991
Through road 1990–91
Skewbald 1993
Foreign affairs 1994
Piece work 1994
Web 1994

Gus Fisher Gallery, The University of Auckland,
New Zealand
Wattle and daub 1992

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa,
Wellington
Early morning 1977
Pale landscape 1977
Parrot country II 1980/83

Tate, United Kingdom
Habitation 1984 (jointly with Museum
of Contemporary Art, Sydney)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
First fruits 1991

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Archives

Papers of Rosalie Gascoigne (manuscript), National Library of Australia, Canberra, Bib ID 4836962, 28 boxes, 1 roll, 1 map folder, MS Acc09.203, MS Acc10.045, MS Acc10.126. (Cited as RG papers NLA.)

RoslynOxley9 Gallery, Paddington, Sydney, has images of all works exhibited there, including installation views of RG's exhibitions. They are accessible on the gallery's website: www.roslynoxley9.com.au/artists/15/Rosalie_Gascoigne/

The archives of Gallery A Sydney, Watters Gallery and the Biennale of Sydney are all at the National Art Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales. There is also some material in the Ray Hughes Gallery and the Pinacotheca Gallery archives.

Major public collections hold artist files on Rosalie Gascoigne relating to their collections and contact with the artist. (For listings of RG's works in public collections, see Appendix 3 in this catalogue raisonné.) The National Art Archive at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, and research library at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, also have collections of materials on the artist.

Papers of Ben (SCB) Gascoigne (manuscript), National Library of Australia, Canberra, Bib ID 4330474, 24 boxes, 1 folio item, MS Acc08.033. (Cited as BG papers NLA.) Additional material on Ben is held in The Australian National University archives (staff records for SCB Gascoigne reference UA2005/25 Box70 file 8.2.2.69 (3 parts); also ANU Oral History Project file UA2001/20 Box 2) and by the Australian Academy of Science.

CW Allen papers, National Library of Australia, Canberra, Bib ID 2602199, 2 boxes, MS 7360 (for his diaries on life on Mount Stromlo in the 1940s). (Cited as CW Allen papers NLA.)

Horticultural Society of Canberra Incorporated records, ACT Heritage Library, Phillip, Canberra, HMSS 0220.

Theo Bischoff papers, ACT Heritage Library, Phillip, Canberra, HMSS 0159.

Metcalfé family: material is held in the privately owned Hamilton Metcalfé collection in New Zealand. (Cited as HJHM archive.)

Martin Gascoigne has a private archive which includes additional documents, transcripts, images and personal correspondence. (Cited as author's archive.)

Family letters

One set consists of letters from Rosalie to Ben in the late 1930s (now held in the papers of Ben Gascoigne, National Library of Australia, Canberra, MS Acc08.033). There are two, much more extensive, collections of letters to sons Martin (while living in the Philippines and Hong Kong in the 1970s) and Toss (while living in Hobart and Britain from the late 1960s until the early 1990s). The originals are held by the recipients. Edited extracts of the letters to Martin were published in Mary Eagle (ed.), *From the studio of Rosalie Gascoigne*, 2000 (exh. cat.). This catalogue raisonné draws on both the published and unpublished letters. The unpublished letters are referenced by date and initials of sender and recipient, as in c. Jan 1974 RG to TG; where the extract was published in *From the studio of Rosalie Gascoigne* the reference is accompanied by a page number (as in 25 Jan 1974 RG to MG, p. 43).

Photography

The photographic record comprises family photographs held by family members and Ben's photographic archive of Rosalie's works. Ben's archive comprises prints and negatives taken from the early 1970s to 1999 and his photography logbook from the 1990s, all used for dating works. It also includes numerous 35 mm slides and transparencies commissioned from various, mostly unrecorded, photographers. In due course Ben's records will be deposited in the Art Gallery of New South Wales Research Library.

Interviews, talks and film (chronological)

Note: Unless otherwise noted, short titles used in citations are in the form of the date and either name of interviewer or location of the talk (as in 1982 North and 1985 School of Art).

- c. 1960 Gascoigne, Rosalie, 'Too many pine trees', ABC Radio. Manuscript in RG papers NLA box 27; slightly edited version in Vici MacDonald 1998, pp. 14–15. (Cited as c. 1960 RG 'Too many pine trees'.)
- c. 1960 Gascoigne, Rosalie, 'Dried arrangements', talk for unspecified audience. Manuscript in RG papers NLA box 27. (Cited as c. 1960 RG 'Dried arrangements'.)
- 1978 Lindsay, Robert, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne in Bob Weis, Judi Stack and Robert Lindsay (production/direction), *Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne*, produced by the Media Resource Centre for the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (filmed in Melbourne). Transcript in author's archive.
- 1979 Gascoigne, Rosalie, 'The eye as an instrument of pleasure', *The craftsman in society: Present and future*, Crafts Council of Victoria, 6–7 October (summary of talk and discussion). RG papers NLA box 21.
- 1980 Gleeson, James, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, Canberra, 8 February. Transcript in National Gallery of Australia Research Library, Canberra.
- 1982 North, Ian, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, Canberra, 9 February. Transcript in National Gallery of Australia Research Library, Canberra, and RG papers NLA box 21.
- 1984 Wood Conroy, Diana, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, University of Southern Queensland. Reference USQ 1984, video B90-084. Unedited transcript in RG papers NLA box 21.

- 1985 Gascoigne, Rosalie, 'Illustrated lecture to students at Canberra Art School' [now School of Art & Design, The Australian National University], 21 August. Transcript in RG papers NLA box 21. (Cited as 1985 School of Art.) Edited version published in *Unreal City*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1986, Bitumen River Gallery, Canberra, pp. 15–18.
- 1987 Havyatt, Saskia, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, 24 April, in Saskia Havyatt, *The Art of assemblage*, October 1987. RG papers NLA.
- 1988 McDonald, Ewen, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne. Transcript in RG papers NLA box 22. (Cited as 1988 Ewen McDonald.) Edited version published in Ewen McDonald, 'There are only lovers and others ...', 1990, pp. 10–13.
- 1990 Ross, Peter, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, *Review*, ABC TV, broadcast 12 August (filmed at Pearce, Canberra). Transcript in author's archive.
- 1993 Gascoigne, Rosalie, 'Opening address, Australian Perspecta 1993', Art Gallery of New South Wales, 5 October. Manuscript in RG papers NLA box 22.
- 1995 Topliss, Helen, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 26 February. NLA Oral History and Folklore Collection (ORAL TRC 3198).
- 1996 Davidson, Kate, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne ('Rosalie Gascoigne: String of blue days', conducted at Pearce, Canberra), 15 May. Published in Kate Davidson and Michael Desmond 1996, pp. 14–18.
- 1996 Taylor, Louise, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne (on early life on Mount Stromlo), 2 July. Unpublished transcript in author's archive.
- c. 1996–97 MacDonald, Vici, interviews with Rosalie Gascoigne. Quoted extensively in Vici MacDonald 1998.
- 1997 Mollison, James and Steven Heath, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne ('Rosalie Gascoigne in her own words'). Published in Deborah Edwards (ed.), *Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as landscape*, 1997, pp. 7–8. (exh. cat.)
- 1997 Ross, Peter, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney [November]. Videotape and transcript in Art Gallery of New South Wales Research Library.
- 1997 Frost, Annabel, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne. Published as 'My country childhood', *Country Style*, December, 1997, pp. 19–21.
- 1997 Feneley, Stephen, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, *Arts express*, ABC TV, 4 December. Transcript in RG papers NLA.
- 1998 Gascoigne, Rosalie, talk at National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 15 July. Transcript (incomplete recording) in National Gallery of Australia Research Library, tape 976. (Cited as 1998 NGA.)
- 1998 Desmond, Michael, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 23 July. Transcript in National Gallery of Australia Research Library, tape 532.
- 1998 Hughes, Robin, interviews with Rosalie Gascoigne, Canberra, 11–13 November (filmed at Pearce). Full interview transcript at Australian Biography website: www.australianbiography.gov.au/subjects/gascoigne. Also Rosalie Gascoigne, *Australian biography*, Film Australia in association with SBS TV (based on the interviews with Robin Hughes), broadcast 1 August 1999.

- 1999 Lindsay, Shonagh, interview with Rosalie Gascoigne, Auckland, New Zealand, July. Published as 'Rosalie Gascoigne: On being driven', *Art News* (New Zealand), spring 1999, p. 33.
- 1999 Gascoigne, Rosalie, videotaped artist's talk, Auckland Art Gallery, July. Transcript in Auckland Art Gallery Library and author's archive. (Cited as 1999 Auckland AG.)
- 2001 Balendra, Jaya (director/producer), 'Gascoigne country', *The arts show*, ABC TV. Broadcast 25 January.

Rosalie's writings (chronological)

- 'Letters to Martin 1971–1980', in Mary Eagle, 2000, pp. 29–61. (exh. cat.)
- Rosalie Gascoigne, Artist's statement, in Fay Bottrell, 1972, p. 39.
- Rosalie Gascoigne, Artist's statement, in Robert Lindsay, 1978 (exh. cat.); reprinted in *European dialogue: The third Biennale of Sydney*, Biennale of Sydney, 1979 (exh. cat.) and *Continuum '83: The first exhibition of Australian contemporary art in Japan*, August 1983. (exh. cat.)
- Rosalie Gascoigne, 'Ken Whisson', *Ken Whisson: Selected paintings*, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne, 1978.
- Rosalie Gascoigne, Artist's statement, in Janine Burke, 1979, pp. 314–315.
- Rosalie Gascoigne, Artist's statement, in *Drawn and quartered: Australian contemporary paperworks*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 1980. (exh. cat.)
- Rosalie Gascoigne, Artist's statement, in *The first Australian sculpture triennial*, First Australian Sculpture Triennial Committee, Melbourne, 1981, p. 38. (exh. cat.)
- Rosalie Gascoigne, Artist's statement [on ikebana] for unknown Japanese publication (with annotated title 'Letter to the Japanese', dated 13 March 1983). Manuscript in RG papers NLA box 27.
- Rosalie Gascoigne, 'Colin McCahon: "Victory over death 2"', *Art and Australia*, vol. 21, no. 4, 1984, pp. 490–491.
- Rosalie Gascoigne, 'Step through', 24 February 1987. RG papers NLA box 21 and National Gallery of Australia artist's file (NGA 75/1869–01 Rosalie Gascoigne f.181).
- Rosalie Gascoigne, 'Diary', *Australian and International Art Monthly* [later *Art Monthly Australia*], September 1987. Reprinted in Vici MacDonald, 1998, pp. 28–29.
- Rosalie Gascoigne, 'Peter Booth', *Peter Booth: Drawings 1977–1987*, Deutscher Gertrude Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne, 1989. (exh. cat.)
- Rosalie Gascoigne, 'Assembled art', *Gold Coast City Conrad Jupiters Art Prize*, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, 1992. (exh. cat.)
- Rosalie Gascoigne, Artist's statement (1 July 1993), *Confrontations*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney, 1993. (exh. cat.) Manuscript in RG papers NLA box 22.
- Rosalie Gascoigne, Artist's statement, in John McPhee, *Joan and Peter Clemenger triennial exhibition of contemporary Australian art*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1993. (exh. cat.)
- Rosalie Gascoigne, in *A return to poetry 1999*, Duffy and Snellgrove, Sydney, 1999.

Solo exhibition catalogues (chronological)

Note: Details of group exhibition catalogues are given in Appendix 2: Selected group exhibitions, although significant essays on RG are listed by author in this bibliography and the reference annotated to indicate it is an exhibition catalogue.

Lindsay, Robert, *Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1978 (with artist's statement).

Australia: Venice Biennale 1982. Works by Peter Booth & Rosalie Gascoigne, Visual Arts Board, Australia Council for the Arts, North Sydney, 1982 (with essay by Ian North).

Eagle, Mary, *Rosalie Gascoigne: New work*, Fine Arts Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 1985 (with essay by Mary Eagle).

Pether, Louise (ed.), *Rosalie Gascoigne – Colin McCahon: Sense of place*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, UNSW Sydney, 1990 (with essays by Anne Kirker, Ian Wedde and Ewen McDonald).

Edwards, Deborah (ed.), *Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as landscape*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1997 (with essay by Deborah Edwards and interview with RG by James Mollison and Steven Heath).

Eagle, Mary (ed.), *From the studio of Rosalie Gascoigne*, ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 2000 (with essay by Ben Gascoigne, interview with Marie Hagerty and Peter Vandermark, and extracts from RG's letters).

O'Brien, Gregory (ed.), *Rosalie Gascoigne: Plain air*, City Gallery Wellington and Victoria University Press, Wellington, New Zealand, 2004 (with essays by Paula Savage, Daniel Thomas, Gregory O'Brien and Barbara Anderson).

Gellatly, Kelly, *Rosalie Gascoigne*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2008 (with essays by Kelly Gellatly, Deborah Clark and Martin Gascoigne).

Barkley, Glenn, *The daylight moon: Rosalie Gascoigne and Lake George*, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, Goulburn, NSW, 2015.

Articles and books

Appendix 1: Solo exhibitions and Appendix 2: Selected group exhibitions include details of exhibition reviews and notices with references to RG. Other than for major review articles, those references are not repeated here. Literature referred to only once or twice is presented fully in the catalogue and not repeated here.

Allen, Christopher, 'Bill Robinson: Rosalie Gascoigne', *Art Monthly Australia*, no. 27, Dec 1989, pp. 18–19.

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Bottrell, Fay, *The artist craftsman in Australia*, Jack Pollard, Crows Nest, NSW, 1972.

Burke, Janine (ed.), 'Six women artists', *Meanjin*, vol. 38, no. 3, 1979, pp. 305–320. Reprinted in Janine Burke, 1990.

Burke, Janine, *Field of vision. A decade of change: Women's art in the seventies*, Viking, Ringwood, Victoria, 1990.

- Cameron, Dan, 'Showdown at the Southern Cross: Notes on the 1988 Australian Biennale', *Artlink*, vol. 8, no. 3, 1988, pp. 10–14.
- Cameron, Milton, 'Where science meets art: Bischoff and the Gascoigne house', *Experiments in modern living: Scientists' houses in Canberra 1950–1970*, ANU E Press, Canberra, 2012, pp. 131–159.
- Clark, Deborah, 'Standing on the mountain: The landscape impulse in Rosalie Gascoigne's art', in Kelly Gellatly, *Rosalie Gascoigne*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2008, pp. 29–33. (exh. cat.)
- Davidson, Kate and Michael Desmond, *Islands: Contemporary installations from Australia, Asia, Europe and America*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1996. (exh. cat.)
- Dedman, Roger, 'Rosalie Gascoigne', *Australian Art Market Report*, issue 24, winter 2007, pp. 24–25.
- Desmond, Michael, 'Rosalie Gascoigne', *Adelaide biennial of Australian art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 1990, pp. 42–43. (exh. cat.)
- Dobson, Rosemary, 'Rosalie Gascoigne 1917–1999: A memoir'. Unpublished memoir read at City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand, 18 April 2004, in conjunction with the exhibition Rosalie Gascoigne: Plain Air. RG papers NLA box 26.
- Eagle, Mary, 'Rosalie Gascoigne', *1988 Australian Biennale. From the Southern Cross: A view of world art c. 1940–88*, Sydney, 1988, p. 132. (exh. cat.) Reprinted in Ewen McDonald, 2000.
- Eagle, Mary, 'Rosalie Gascoigne's lyrical derailments', in Lynne Seear and Julie Ewington (eds), *Brought to light II: Contemporary Australian art 1966–2006 from the Queensland Art Gallery Collection*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 2007, pp. 198–205, 475.
- Edgar, Ray, 'Rosalie Gascoigne', *Landscape Architecture Australia*, no. 122, May 2009, pp. 39–40.
- Edquist, Harriet, 'Material matters: The landscapes of Rosalie Gascoigne', *Binocular*, Moët and Chandon, Sydney, 1993, pp. 10–25.
- Edquist, Harriet and Elizabeth Grierson, *A skilled hand and cultivated mind: A guide to the architecture and art of RMIT University*, RMIT University Press, Melbourne, 2008 (and 2nd edition, RMIT University Press, Melbourne, 2012).
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- Edwards, Deborah, 'Rosalie Gascoigne', in Natasha Bullock (ed.), *MCA collection handbook*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2016.
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- Fern, Lynette, 'Rosalie Gascoigne', *Interior Architecture and Design*, no. 23, 1989, pp. 180–185.
- Fink, Hannah, 'That sidling sight: Wondering about the art of Rosalie Gascoigne', *Art and Australia*, vol. 35, no. 2, 1997, pp. 200–208.
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This catalogue and the essays that accompany it are the product of almost twenty years' work and involved contributions from a great many people and institutions. I could not have produced this catalogue without their support, so the end result should truly be regarded as a collaborative effort by all those involved. The judgements about what to include and exclude, and how to date works, however, are mine alone.

In the Introduction to this catalogue raisonné I gave a brief account of its origins in the work that Rosalie's husband and my father, Ben Gascoigne, undertook to record Rosalie's output, first by starting a photographic record in the mid-1970s and then, from the mid-1980s, by maintaining a database with the titles, materials, dimensions and first exhibition of each work. In the 1990s he used this information to build a computerised database, with his grandson Charles helping with the imagery. This painstaking work provided a solid foundation when, at Ben's request, I took over the database in 2001 with the idea of eventually producing a catalogue raisonné of Rosalie's work. The catalogue that I have produced owes a great deal to Ben's methodical work. If only all artists had a partner or assistant who kept records as good as his.

There would of course be no catalogue without Rosalie's art. But she also contributed in another way: through the letters to me and my brother in which she described in detail her engagement with the art world, and her effort to find a place for herself and the art she was making. Later, her talks and interviews were an important source for information about her early years, evolution as an artist, views on the life of an artist and the work she was doing. Ben's letters and memoirs helped fill out the picture, from his perspective. The extensive use I have made of their writings and talks in the catalogue and essays shows just how important their contributions have been.

In addition to Mary Eagle's contribution referred to in the Introduction to this catalogue, I would also like to acknowledge her work in sorting Rosalie's papers and her foresight while editing *From the studio of Rosalie Gascoigne* (2000) in commissioning the invaluable accounts by Ben of his role in Rosalie's work and by Marie Hagerty and Peter Vandermark of their memories of Rosalie in and around the studio and out in the country.

Family and friends of Rosalie and Ben have contributed generously. My brother, Toss Gascoigne, gave me access to his letters from Rosalie and Ben, copies of family photographs and shared his memories of our parents. His wife, Lyn Gascoigne, likewise shared her memories and provided helpful advice with photography, and their son Charles dealt calmly and effectively with computer issues that threatened my databases. My sister, Hester L Gascoigne, provided the image of Rosalie's patchwork quilt. Marie Hagerty and Peter Vandermark were reassuring sounding boards on Rosalie's studio practice and art world interests, drawn from their relationship

with Rosalie over the last ten years of her life. Likewise, I am grateful to Rosemary Dobson for recording her memories of Rosalie, and to her son Robert Bolton for permission to quote from Rosemary Dobson's letter of 10 July 1985 and her poem 'The almond-tree in the King James version'.

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In this day and age the internet is a wonderful research tool, but it wasn't always the case when I started on this project. One of the pleasures in researching this catalogue has come from working in good libraries. I particularly want to acknowledge the help I received at the Research Library of the National Gallery of Australia, especially from Joy Volker and Kathleen Collins, and from the wonderful team at the National Archive at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, especially Steven Miller and Eric Riddler, and also Claire Eggleston for her help with the Biennale of Sydney archive. The National Library of Australia is another great resource, and over the years I made extensive use of its Reading Room, newspaper, manuscripts (particularly for the CW Allen papers) and photographic collections (for the opening of the library building in 1968) and the Special Collections room. The resources include a well-trained staff of patient, courteous and very helpful librarians.

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Over the years many people have shared their memories of Rosalie with me and spoken about their love for her art. My hope is that this publication will nourish their interest and bring new admirers to the fold.

Martin Gascoigne



INDEX

Overleaf: *Acanthus* 1995 (detail)
Image courtesy of Sotheby's Australia

LIST OF WORKS

This list shows all titles used in exhibitions and correspondence, cross-referenced where appropriate to the title used in this catalogue raisonné. Alternative titles and titles of uncatalogued works are shown in plain type, not bold. Dates are the dates given in the catalogue, and might differ from the inscription on the work.

Page references in *italic* refer to images and photographs.

- Abundance, *see* **Plenty** (1986)
Acacia (1989), 235
Acanthus (1995), 125, 275, 411
A certain smile (1994–95), 275
Across town (1990), 97, 240
Across town (1991) (screenprint), 246
Adam and Eve (c. 1966–68), 147
Aerial view (1988), 115, 229
Africa (1995), 97, 275
Afternoon (1996), 77, 117, 287
Age of innocence (1993), 17, 75, 96, 260
Airborne 1 (1993), 260
Airborne 2 (1993), 260
[Allowrie cows] (c. 1977), 176
All summer long (1996), 77, 287
All that glisters (1989), 235–236
All that jazz (1989), 236
Amber (1992), 67n162, 253
Anemone box (c. 1971–73), 152
Angels (1976), 106, 167–168
Apothecary (1992), 253
Apricot letters (1990), 124, 240
Archipelago (1993), 70, 115, 261
[Archipelago studies A & B] (1993), 71, 261
A rose is a rose (1986/88), 115, 229
Autumn (1989), 236
Back verandah (1974), 57, 156
Bailed up (1978), 182
Balance (1984), 212
Balls (c. 1973–74), 156
Banana yellow (1998), 299
Banner (1985–86), 222
Banner 1 (1992), 253
Banner 2 (1992), 253
Bath of balls (c. 1973–74), 156
[Beach] (c. 1983), 208
Beach house (1990), 75, 85, 96, 240, 420
Beaten track (1992), 84, 253
Bee (1972), 148
Big yellow (1988), 229–230
Billboard (1992–93), 261
Bird house (1981), 196
Bird sanctuary (1975), 161–162
Birdsong (1999), 124, 307
['Bird' studies] (c. 1991), 124, 247
Black bird box (1976), 60, 168
Black birds (1976), 168
Black tulip (1996), 288
Blocks (1975), 162
Blossom (1982), 115, 203
Blue bands, *see* **Reading left to right** (1981)
Blue bows (1985–87), 226
Blue flower tower (c. 1975), 162
Blue Madonna (c. 1982–83), 208
Blue streak (1990), 240
Blue water (1977), 176, 360
Bone board, *see* **Interior decoration** (1975)
[Bone sculpture] (1973), 152–153
[Bones under glass] (c. 1984–88), 230
[Bottle and fish] (c. 1974–77), 176
Bottled glass (1974), 57, 62, 106, 114, 140, 156
[Bowls of balls] (1974–75), 162
[Bow ties] (c. 1978–80), 190
Boxer (1976), 168
Bread and butter (1994), 267
Bright and beautiful (1990–91), 247
Bucket of flowers (c. 1976), 109, 168
Bush yellow (1993), 261
But mostly air (1994–95), 75, 76, 96, 117, 125, 276–277
Buttercups (1976), 168
Byzantium (1997), 71, 295

- [Caged bird]** (c. 1973–74), 157
Canary bird (1996), 123, 124, 141, 288
Carnival [1] (1976), 169, 318
Carnival [2] (1998/99), 307
Cat's eye (1992–93), 141, 261
[Cat study 1] (c. 1981), 196
[Cat study 2] (c. 1981), 197
[Cat study 3] (c. 1985–87), 226
Cat tracks (1989), 236
[Cat with glass eye] (c. 1986–88), 230
Celebration (1983), 121, 208
Chart (1988), 230
Chatting up (1994), 267
Checkerboard (1990), 241
Checkers (1996), 288
Checkpoint (1984), 212
Cherry orchard (1988), 115, 230
Citrus (1998), 299
City birds (1981), 97, 118, 121, 197
City block (1996), 97, 98, 288
Cityscape (1972), 87, 97, 116, 148
City west (1989), 236
Clean country (1985), 94, 100, 106, 107, 219–220, 329
Cloister (1978), 63, 182–183
Close owly (1988), 60, 230
Close owly (1990) (screenprint), 73, 241–242
Cloud cuckoo land (1998), 123, 124, 141, 299–300
Clouds I (1992), 61, 115, 254
Clouds II (1992), 61, 115, 254
Clouds III (1992), 61, 115, 254
Club colours (1983), 69, 208, 404
Cockatoos (1991), 95, 124, 247
Collection [1] (1974), 57, 58, 157
Collection [2] (1977), 177
Compound (1994), 267
Conscription (c. 1966–68), 147
 Construction, *see* **[The still of the night]** (c. 1998–99)
Continuing fine (1996), 288
Conundrum (1989–90), 124, 242
Country air (1977), 62, 64, 91, 94, 119, 177
Court (1988), 231
Cow (1976), 169
Cow antics (1976), 169
Cow pasture (1992), 95, 101, 115, 255
Cows 4 ways (1976), 169
Cricketers [1] (1976), 169
Cricketers [2] (1976), 169
Crop [1] (1976), 59, 68, 101, 106, 170
Crop 2 (1981–82), 68, 100, 106, 203
Cumquats (1999), 307
Daffodil box (1977), 63, 178
Daffodils (1986), 121, 223
Daisy (1989), 236
Dance of the sunflower (c. 1971–72), 148
Dandelion (1990), 124, 242
Danegeld (1995), 124, 277
Deciduous (1984), 115, 212
Deep shade (1988), 231
Denim (1990), 67n162, 242
Deserted house (1974), 157
Directives (1999), 124, 307
Doll's house (1975), 108, 162
Dolly boxes (1976), 88, 108, 170, 318
[Dolly boxes study A] (1976), 171
[Dolly boxes study B] (1976), 171
Dovecot (1977), 178
Dove grey (1980), 190
Downbeat (1997), 124, 295
Down to the silver sea (1977/81), 85, 113, 197
Down town (1994), 97, 267
Drawing board (1996), 288
Dunny door (1974), 157
Eagle (1972), 149
Early morning (1977), 75, 94, 106, 178
Earth (1999), 76, 78, 105, 118, 125, 308, 352
Easy street (1996–97), 295
Eden (1995), 277
Effervescence (1998), 300
Eighty-nine parrots (1981), 121, 198
Elephant (c. 1970–72), 149
Elephant pot (1972), 45, 149
Embers I & II (1998), 300
Enamel ware (1974), 59, 60, 61, 109, 157–158
Ensign (1995), 124, 278
[Envelope studies] (1977), 178
[Family group] (c. 1968–72), 149
Farmer's daughter (1971–72), 149
Far view (1990), 242
Feathered chairs (1978), 62, 63, 64, 65, 103, 183
Feathered fence (1978–79), 62, 63, 65, 88, 92, 103, 106, 185–186, 344, 361–362
[Feather study 1] (1978), 103, 183
[Feather study 2] (1978), 103, 183
[Feather study 3] (1978), 103, 183
Fiesta (1999), 309
 Find the ball, *see* **Cricketers [1]** (1976)
Firebird (1991), 247
First fruits (1991), 115, 247
Fishbowl (1999), 309
Flagged down (1998), 300
Flamingo (1998), 300
Flash art (1987), 226
Flight (1985), 71, 100, 220, 329
Flight of parrots (c. 1975), 162
Float off (1993), 124, 262
Flock (1996), 288
 Flora, *see* **Flora Galop** (1976)
Flora Galop (1976), 171
Flower tower 1 (1975), 110, 163, 318
Flower tower 2 (1975), 110, 163, 318
Flute (1993), 262
Folded blue (1989), 236
Fool's gold (1992), 124, 255, 388
Footballers (1978–79), 186
Foreign affairs (1994), 267
Formal flowers (1988), 67n162, 115, 231
[For Ray] (1979), 187
Forty-acre block (1977/79), 187
Fountain (c. 1966–68), 147
Four days by the sea (1981), 198
[Four linoleum tesserae] (c. 1990–91), 248
Fragmentation [I] (1991), 121, 248
Fragmentation [II] (1991), 248
Friends (c. 1974–76), 171
Friends and relatives (1974), 158
Frontier V (1993/98), 301, 379
Frontiers I, II, III, IV (1998), 301, 379
Full fathom five (1997), 295
Full flower (1995), 278
Full stretch (1991), 248

- Galahs rising** (1984), 117, 212
Games table (1975–76), 17, 50, 171
Garlands (1994), 267
Gaudeamus (1989), 237
Gaudy night (1992), 255
Gay Gordons (1996), 125, 289
Gay lady (c. 1973), 153
Gazette (1994), 268
Gentlemen of Japan (1995), 278
Germaine Greer (1972), 46, 150
[Glass insulators] (c. 1971), 44, 114, 150
[Glass insulators in box] (1974), 57, 62, 114, 158
Golden bamboo (1997), 123, 295
Golden mean (1988), 231
Golden wedge (1987), 227
Goldfield (1996), 289
Gold rush (1996), 289
Good news (1997), 296
Grassfest (1999), 101, 309
Grasslands [I] (1987), 67n162, 227
Grasslands II (1998), 124, 301
Grass rack (1977), 52, 101, 179, *see also* **Storage** (1977)
Graven image (1982), 116, 117, 203–204
Great blond paddocks (1998–99), 78, 122, 125, 310
Green piece (1990–91), 115, 248
Grey choices (c. 1976), 172
Grove (1984), 116, 213

Habitation (1984), 71, 79, 86, 109, 116, 213, 348
 Hand and flowers, *see* **Yellow hand** (1976)
Hanging yellow bird (c. 1973), 153
 Hard water, *see* **Tap** (1974)
Harlequin (1994–95), 278
 Harvest (1974), *see* **Standing piece** (1973/74)
Harvest (1981–82), 68, 113, 204, 348
Hat rack (c. 1971–72), 150
Heraldic beasts (1975), 163
Herb garden (1982), 75, 97, 115, 204
High country [1] (1986), 118, 223
High country [2] (1999), 310
[High country cows] (c. 1976), 95, 172
High density (1992), 255

High summer (1996), 289
High water mark (1992), 96, 255–256
Highway code (1985), 77, 84, 88, 95, 123, 124, 220–221
Highway to heaven (1994), 268
Hill station (1989), 75, 94, 96, 237
Hollyhocks (1997), 296
[Homage: the cup] (c. 1993–95), 113, 278
[Homage to Ken Whisson's *And what should I do in Illyria?*] (1977), 179
[Homage with a cricket team] (c. 1976–78), 184
[Homage with Arnott's parrot] (c. 1980–82), 204
[Homage with Ashile Gorky's *The artist and his mother*] (c. 1984), 213
[Homage with a Virgin and Child] (c. 1985–88), 231
[Homage with *Body of a woman, probably Nefertiti*] (c. 1980–84), 213
[Homage with Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*] (c. 1980), 190
[Homage with Botticelli's *Birth of Venus and shells*] (c. 1980), 190
[Homage with Colin McCahon's *Angel of the Annunciation*] (1984), 214
[Homage with Dennis Lillee] (c. 1977–78), 184
[Homage with Eadweard Muybridge's *Ox trotting (1887)*] (c. 1976–77), 112, 179
[Homage with figure from Titian's *Sacred and profane love*] (c. 1980–84), 214
[Homage with five cricket cards] (c. 1982), 111, 205
[Homage with footballer 2] (c. 1984–88/1998), 301
[Homage with footballers 1] (c. 1984–88/c. 1997), 296
[Homage with granddaughter] (1984), 214
[Homage with Ingres's *Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière*] (c. 1984–92), 256

[Homage with Lady Arabella Stuart, aged 23 months] (c. 1982–84), 214
[Homage with Lysaght lady] (c. 1990), 110, 243
[Homage with Matisse's *Le luxe II*] (c. 1982–86), 223
[Homage with Matisse's *Nono Lebasque 1908*] (c. 1986), 223
[Homage with Renoir's *La loge*] (c. 1984–86), 113, 223
Honey bee 1 (1992), 256
Honey bee 2 (1992), 256
Honey bee 3 (1992), 256
Honeybunch (1993), 124, 262
Honey flow (1985), 121, 221
Hung fire (1995), 88, 279
Husbandry (1977), 179–180
Hydrant (c. 1971–73), 153

Ikon (1980), 190
Imperial measure (1993–94), 268
Indian summer (1996), 289
Industrial area (1982–84), 66, 69, 71, 105, 214
Inland sea (1986), 71, 224, 370
Interior (1989), 113, 115, 237
Interior decoration (1975), 50, 163
Iron bark (1994–95), 279
Italian birds (1975), 106, 163
[It's time] (c. 1975), 164

Japanese bathing (c. 1972–73), 108, 153
Jim's picnic (1975), 54, 91, 95, 133, 164
Joie de mourir (1973), 41, 50, 102, 106, 153–154
Jotter (1994), 268
Joyful and triumphant (c. 1976), 172

 Kakadu (1994–95), 96
Kaleidoscope (1994), 125, 268
 King of Id, *see* **The king** (1972)

Lake (1991), 63, 92, 249
Lambing (1991), 115, 249
Lamplit (1989), 237–238
Landfall (1989), 75, 96, 238
Landscape [1] (1975), 164

- Landscape [2]** (1976–77), 135, 180
Landscape [3] (c. 1987–96), 289
Lantern (1990), 67n162, 243
Lasseter's reef (1993/1996–97), 124, 296
Last leaf (1988), 231
Last of the summer wine (1984), 215
Last stand (1972), 50, 54, 90, 100, 131, 150–151
Leadlight (1991), 115, 249
Leaning piece (1974), 57–58, 62, 63, 158
 Lecherous O'Leary, *see* **Pub** (1974)
Ledger (1992), 121, 137, 256
Legend (1988), 124, 232
 Leg room, *see* **Monument** (1974)
[Letter to a grandson] (c. 1986), 224
Letting go (1991), 25, 70, 91, 115, 250–251
[Lilisee and daffodils] (c. 1977–78), 112, 184
Lily pond (1993), 115, 262
[Linoleum study (chart)] (c. 1992), 256
[Linoleum study (Tasmania)] (c. 1986–87), 227
Loopholes (1995), 124, 279
Loose leaf (1990), 71, 243
Love apples (1992), 257
 Love in a cottage, *see* **The cottage** (1974)
Lying piece (c. 1975), 57, 58, 62, 63, 113, 164

Maculosa (1988), 115, 233
Madonna and child (c. 1970–72), 97, 151
Magpie (1998), 302
March (1998), 302
March past (1978–79), 65, 120, 121, 187–188
Market garden (1988), 233
Marmalade (1989–90), 243
[Masonite studies] (c. 1993), 262
Matriarch (1983), 113, 209
May morning (1992), 94, 257
Maze (1992), 115, 257
Meadow-sweet (1991), 115, 251
Medusa (1998), 123, 124, 302

Memorial (1998), 302
Metropolis (1999), 78, 97, 123, 125, 311
Midsummer (1992), 115, 257
Milky Way (1995), 280
Miss Neujean (c. 1973), 154
Monaro (1988–89), 70, 92, 121, 238
Monument (1974), 108, 158
Moonrise (1985), 221
Morning glory (1996), 94, 290
Mosaic (1976), 62, 110, 114, 172
[Moth] (c. 1984), 215
 Moth box, *see* **Specimen box** (1975)
 Mother and child, *see* **Madonna and child** (c. 1970–72)
[Moth study] (c. 1984), 215
Mud brick (1995), 280
Municipal gardens (1983), 97, 115, 209
Murrumbidgee Venus (c. 1973–74), 159

 Nail stack, *see* **Collection [1]** (1974)
[Nail study A] (c. 1979–80), 121, 191
[Nail study B] (c. 1979–80), 121, 191
Needle case (c. 1972–73), 154
 Never never, *see* **Grasslands II** (1998)
News break (1994), 124, 269
New wave (1986), 119, 224
Night and day (1996), 70, 290
Night watch (1990), 244
Norco (after Gruner) (1974), 106, 159
Norco cows (c. 1974–75), 50, 165
Nuggets (1991), 251
[Numbers for Patrick] (c. 1982), 206
 NYT little one, *see* **[Untitled (Little one)]** (1999)
 NYT red squares, *see* **[Red squares]** (1998)
 NYT SRTO, *see* **[Untitled (SRTO)]** (1999)

Old gold (1990), 244
On a clear day (1988), 233
Orangery (1998), 19n20, 70, 125, 302
Orchard (1986), 95, 121, 224
Origami (1998), 302

Outback (1988), 71, 233
 Outback II, *see* **Overland** (1996)
Out of Africa (1994), 97, 269
Overland (1996), 75, 77, 290, 379

Painted words (1988), 233
Pale landscape (1977), 62, 63, 64, 75, 88, 92, 94, 103, 113, 180, 319, 321, 344
Palings (1994/98), 140, 303
Paper square (1979–80), 62, 63, 65, 68, 113, 191–192, 327, 362
 Paper square [2], *see* **Harvest** (1981–82)
Parasol (1999), 312
[Parrot and ball] (c. 1980–82), 205
Parrot country (1980), 60, 62, 64, 67, 90, 96, 121, 192
Parrot country II (1980/83), 62, 69, 96, 209–210
 Parrot country (mark II) (1980), *see* **Parrot country II** (1980/83)
 Parrot house, *see* **Parrot lady** (1973)
Parrot lady (1973), 55, 87, 108, 111, 154
Parrot morning (1976), 172–173
Parrots (1980), 121, 193
[Parrots for Ian North] (1982), 205
[Parrots on fencepost] (1979), 188
Parterre (c. 1994/97), 115, 296
Party piece (1988), 233–234
Past glories (1988), 234
 Pavement, *see* **Pavement [III]** (1998)
Pavement I (1997), 97, 297
Pavement II (1997), 97, 297
Pavement [III] (1998), 97, 304
Peg rack (1975), 165
Pentimento (1997), 123, 124, 297
Persimmon (1986–87), 123, 227
Pet sheep (1976), 173
 Pickled glass, *see* **Bottled glass** (1974)
Piece to walk around (1981), 63, 65, 67, 75, 92, 100, 198–199, 323, 344, 363, 382
Piece to walk on (1983–84), 69, 71, 215, 329, 338
Piece work (1994), 269
Pineapple pieces 1 (1985), 221
Pineapple pieces 2 (1985), 221
Pineapple pieces 3 (1985), 222
Pineapple pieces 4 (1985), 222

- Pineapple pieces 5** (1985), 222
Pineapple pieces 6 (1985), 222
Pineapple pieces 7 (1985), 222
Pink kookaburras (1984), 113, 216
[Pink offcuts] (c. 1986–87, 1994), 269
Pink on blue (1982–83), 94, 117, 210
Pink parrots (c. 1974–75), 50, 165
Pink perpendicular (1996), 117, 291
Pink window (1975), 75, 94, 119, 165–166
Plain living (1989), 239
Plainsong (1988), 124, 141, 234
Plain view 1 (1994), 270
Plain view 2 (1994), 270
Plantation (1988), 67n162, 234
Plaza (1988), 234
Please drive slowly (1996), 123, 124, 291
Plein air (1994), 70, 75, 76, 88, 91, 106, 107, 271, 340, 349, 355
Plenty (1986), 70, 92, 121, 225, 367
Polka (1996), 291
Pond (1980), 193
Poor man's orange (1987), 227
Poplars (1996/97), 115, 297
Port of call (1992), 257
Prescribed text (1986), 121, 225
Press (1987–88), 234
Printed circuit (1999), 312
Private beach (1979), 85, 188
Promised land (1986), 225
Pub (1974), 50, 95, 159
Pursuit (1992), 257

Rain and shine (1998), 304
Rain forest (1980), 193
Reading left to right (1981), 67, 199
Real estate (1994), 272
Reconstruction (1980–81), 97, 121, 199
[Reconstruction 2] (1980–81), 199
Red (1992), 88, 258
Red beach (1984), 216
Red rag (1992), 258
[Red squares] (1998), 304
Regatta (1996), 291
Regeneration (1994), 93, 115, 272
Regimental colours A (1990–91), 251

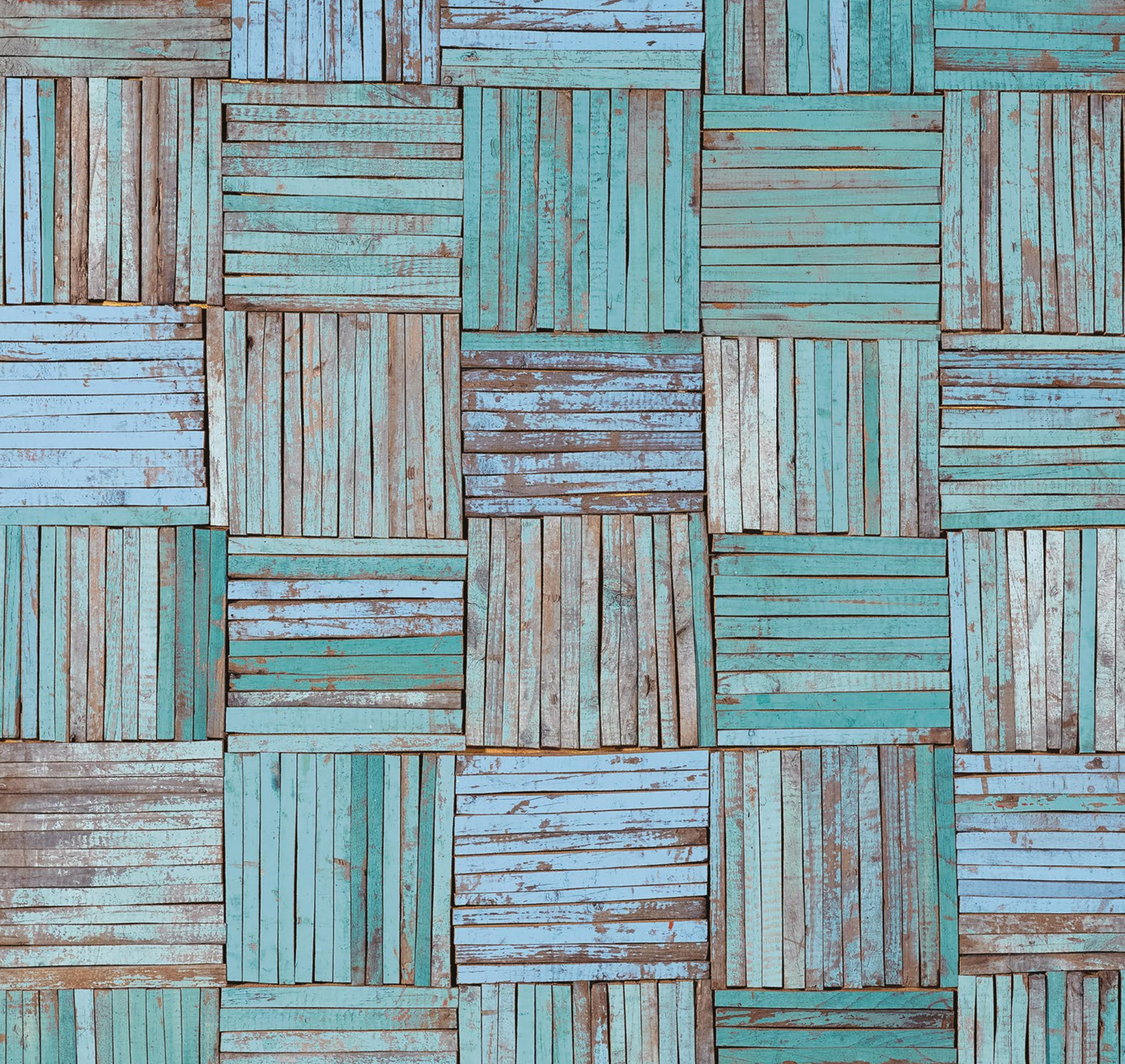
Regimental colours B (1990–92), 258
Reserve (1997), 123, 297
River banks (1977), 63, 114, 115, 181
 River crossing, *see* **Step through** (1977/c. 1979–80)
[River stone] (c. 1966–68), 52, 105, 147
Roadside (1987), 84, 228
Rocky road I (1993/96), 84, 117, 291
Rocky road II (1996), 84, 117, 291
Room with a view (1976–77), 60, 63, 75, 181–182, 360
Rose hips (1998), 125, 304
Rose pink (1992), 70, 115, 258
Rose red city 1 (1992–93), 119, 263
Rose red city 2 (1993), 119, 263
Rose red city 3 (1992–93), 119, 263
Rose red city 4 (1991/93), 119, 263
Rose red city 5 (1992), 119, 258
Rose red city 6 (1992–93), 119, 263
Rose red city 7 (1993), 119, 264
Rose red city 8 (1993), 119, 264
Rose red city 9 (1993), 119, 264
Rose red city 10 (1993), 119, 264
Roundelay (1996), 292
Ruby rose (1998), 304

 S.A. hat rack, *see* **Hat rack** (c. 1971–72)
Scrub country (1981–82), 68, 89, 91, 93, 206
[Seaside] (1976), 173
Semaphore (1998), 304
September (1992), 61, 258
 Set table, *see* **Games table** (1975–76)
Set up (1983–84), 52, 69, 77, 86, 109, 216–217
Shabby summer (1994–95), 280
Shark (1998), 85, 123, 124, 304
Sharpe Bros horizontal (1979/1980–81), 199
Sheep weather alert 1 (1992–93), 115, 264
Sheep weather alert 2 (1992–93), 115, 265
Sheep weather alert 3 (1992–93), 115, 265
Sheep weather alert 4 (1992–93), 115, 265

Sheep weather alert 5 (1992–93), 95, 115, 265
Sheep weather alert 6 (1992–93), 115, 265
Sheep weather alert 7 (1992–93), 115, 265
Sheep weather alert 8 (1992–93), 115, 266
[Sheep yard] (c. 1982–83), 95, 210
Shell 1 (1981), 113, 200
 Shell 1 (1983), *see* **Shell 1** (1981)
Shell 2 (c. 1981–84), 113, 217
 Shell board 1, *see* **Shell 1** (1981)
 Shell board 2, *see* **Shell 2** (c. 1981–84)
Ship's log (1996/98), 123, 304
Shoreline (1986), 67n162, 115, 118, 225
[Shrine] (c. 1972–73), 154
Sideboard piece (1976), 109, 173
Side show (1981), 200
Side show parrots (1981), 40, 62, 121, 200–201
Siesta (1997), 123, 124, 141, 297
[Single linoleum tesserae] (c. 1990–91), 251
Sir Bagby (c. 1970–72), 151
Skewbald (1993), 109, 116, 266
Skylark (1994–95), 70, 84, 118, 281
Skylight (1993), 266
Sleep (1996), 292
Sleeper (1990), 244
Slow burn (1998), 305
Small parrot (1976), 173
Smoko (1984), 63, 94, 217
Snowdrop (1996), 292
Solitude (1997), 298
Southerly buster (1995), 282
Sparkling fruity flavours (1983), 210
Specimen box (1975), 166
Spine (1972), 47, 49–50, 63, 102, 151
 Spring, *see* **Spring 1** (1981–82) and **Spring 2** (1981–82)
Spring 1 (1981–82), 207
Spring 2 (1981–82), 207
 Spring: the daffodil (1974–77), *see* **Daffodil box** (1977)
Spring tides (1990), 244
Stained glass (1983), 211
Standard (1990–91), 70, 251

- Standing piece** (1973/74), 45, 57, 135, 159
- Star chart** (1995), 282
- Steam** (c. 1971–73), 154–155
- Steel magnolias** (1994), 272
- Step through** (1977/c. 1979–80), 52, 62, 63, 67, 115, 194–195
- [Still life]** (1983), 41, 104, 211
- Stonerack** (1980), 105, 195
- Stooks** (1991–92), 259
- Storage** (1977), 182, *see also* **Grass rack** (1977)
- Straws** (1975), 166
- Streetwise** (1986), 123, 124, 226, 331
- Strictly ballroom** (1996), 292
- String of blue days** (1984), 69, 71, 75, 95, 117, 217–218
- Strung up** (1976), 173
- Stubble field** (1988), 95, 235
- [Studies of ‘cloud’ shapes]** (1987), 228
- [Studies with linoleum and retroreflective board A & B]** (c. 1993–96), 293
- [Study: four blue items]** (c. 1993–94), 272
- [Study: four pink rectangles]** (c. 1993–96), 292
- [Study: horse races]** (1983), 112, 211
- [Study: horses]** (1976), 112, 174
- [Study: limpet shells]** (c. 1983–84), 218
- [Study: seven coloured boards A]** (c. 1990–98), 305
- [Study: seven coloured boards B]** (c. 1990–98), 305
- [Study: six yellow strips]** (c. 1995–96), 292
- [Study: stencilled boards]** (c. 1981–84), 218
- [Study: Tarax logos]** (c. 1978–82), 207
- [Study: thistle stalks]** (c. 1974–75), 166
- [Study: two pink squares]** (c. 1993–96), 292
- [Study: white wood boards]** (c. 1995), 282
- [Study with formboard shape]** (c. 1988–95), 282
- [Study with FSC-coated wood]** (1998), 305
- [Study with linoleum on reflective board]** (1992–93), 266
- [Study with painted road signs A & B]** (c. 1990–98), 124, 305
- [Study with retroreflective letter R]** (c. 1998), 305
- Suddenly the lake** (1995), 60, 84, 88, 92, 118, 282–283
- Summer divided** (1995), 283
- Summer fat** (1995), 283
- Summerhouse** (1984), 218
- Summer sprawl** (1995), 283
- Summer stack** (1990), 95, 244
- Summer swarm** (1995), 283–284
- Sun and shadow** (1988), 235
- Sunflowers** (1991), 95, 252
- [Sunflowers and radiator]** (c. 1970–71), 46, 152
- Sun silk** (1992), 259
- Survey** (1991), 252
- Surveyor’s pegs** (1973), 47, 118, 155
- Swarm I** (1998), 305
- Swarm II** (1998), 305
- Sweater girl, *see* **Murrumbidgee Venus** (c. 1973–74)
- Sweet lovers** (1990), 124, 245
- Sweet sorrow** (1990), 124, 245
- Swell** (1984), 88, 218–219
- TAB** (1994), 272
- Table of found objects, *see* **Games table** (1975–76)
- Takeover bid** (1981), 63, 67, 100, 201, 323
- Tally** (1996), 293
- Tap** (1974), 50, 160
- Target** (1991), 71, 252
- Tartan** (1998), 305
- Tesserae 1** (1989), 70, 239
- Tesserae 2** (1989), 70, 239
- Tesserae 3** (1989), 70, 239
- Tesserae 4** (1989), 70, 239
- Tesserae 5** (1989), 70, 239
- Tesserae 6** (1989), 70, 239
- Tesserae A** (1990), 70, 245
- Tesserae B** (1990), 70, 245
- Tesserae C** (1990), 70, 245
- Tesserae D** (1990), 70, 245
- Tesserae W** (1991), 70, 252
- Tesserae Y** (1990), 70, 245
- Tesserae Z** (1990), 70, 245
- Testudo** (1991), 252
- Text** (1992), 259
- The Apple Isle** (1994–95), 284
- The ballerina** (c. 1971–73), 155
- The colonel’s lady** (1976), 109, 110, 174
- The cottage** (1974), 50, 108, 160
- The cow** (c. 1973–74), 160
- The crop, *see* **Crop [1]** (1976)
- The dredge** (1974), 57, 60, 160
- The fall** (1981), 201
- The gallery man** (1978), 113, 184
- The king** (1972), 152
- The marriage feast** (1988–89), 121, 239
- The miners** (c. 1970–72), 152
- The Pepper Pot** (1975), 60, 166
- The phone call** (1976), 174
- The place, *see* **Age of innocence** (1993)
- The players** (1981), 61, 202
- The politician** (c. 1973–74), 160
- The pram** (c. 1970–72), 152
- Thermals** (1998), 125, 306
- [The still of the night]** (c. 1998–99), 312
- The teaparty** (1980), 109, 195
- The white sun** (1979), 188
- Thirty two** (1987), 228
- [Three figures]** (c. 1966–68), 147
- [Three landscape studies]** (c. 1993–96), 293
- [Three metal cups]** (c. 1972), 152
- [Three studies: linoleum on red]** (c. 1992), 259
- [Three studies with red road sign boards]** (c. 1991–95), 284
- Through road** (1990–91), 84, 124, 252
- Tidal** (1997), 85, 298
- Tidy summer** (1996), 294
- Tiepolo parrots** (1976), 175
- Tiger tiger** (1987), 124, 228
- [Title unknown inscribed Studio #14], *see* **[Yellow wood cubes]** (1998)
- Top brass** (1990), 246
- Top End** (1994–95), 96, 284

- Top of the morning** (1993–94), 94, 124, 273
- Torch** (1998), 306
- Totemic** (1984), 117, 219
- Traffic snarl** (1998), 124, 306
- Travelling circus** (1981), 202–203
- Travelling hopefully** (1976), 175
- Tree of life** (1994), 273
- Tree tops, *see* **Parrot morning** (1976)
- Tribal** (1996/1997–98), 306
- Triptych** (1975), 109, 167
- Trumpet voluntary** (1997), 298
- Turn of the tide** (1983), 85, 104, 116, 211
- [Twelve bunches of grapes]** (c. 1979–82), 207
- [Twelve squares of six]** (c. 1980), 195
- [Twenty-five scallop shells]** (c. 1984–86), 226
- [TWG]** (c. 1988), 235
- Twig tidy** (c. 1972–73), 45, 100, 135, 155
- [Two blue cows]** (c. 1976), 175
- [Two children]** (c. 1976), 175
- Twofold Bay** (1988), 85, 235
- [Two linoleum tesserae]** (c. 1990–91), 253
- Two lovely blue eyes** (1974), 161
- Two owls** (c. 1971–73), 155
- Untitled (1975), *see* **[Bowls of balls]** (1974–75)
- Untitled (c. 1981), *see* **[White and grey A]** (1980)
- Untitled ? (1997), *see* **[White wood study #8]** (c. 1997)
- Untitled (c. 1998), *see* **[Study with FSC-coated wood]** (1998)
- Untitled (1999), *see* **[The still of the night]** (c. 1998–99)
- Untitled No 7, *see* **Back verandah** (1974)
- Untitled No 25, *see* **The dredge** (1974)
- Untitled #31** (c. 1972–74), 161
- Untitled #48** (c. 1972–74), 161
- Untitled #49** (c. 1972–74), 161
- Untitled (Chart), *see* **[Linoleum study (chart)]** (c. 1992)
- [Untitled (Little one)]** (1999), 312
- Untitled [Roses] (1996), *see* **Parterre** (c. 1994/97)
- [Untitled (SRTO)]** (1999), 312
- Valentine** (1999), 312
- [Vase of flowers]** (1992), 113, 259
- Venus** (1980), 67n162, 196
- Vertical hold** (1975), 167
- Vestiges** (1990), 246
- Victoriana** (1976), 175
- View of the garden** (c. 1991/95), 115, 284
- Vine** (1996), 95, 115, 294
- Vintage** (1990), 124, 141, 246
- Waterfront** (1978), 185
- Wattle and daub** (1992), 259
- Wattle strike** (1983), 93, 211–212
- Web** (1994), 273
- Weighed and divided** (1995), 284
- Western plains** (1998), 306
- Wheat belt** (1989), 95, 240
- [White and grey A]** (1980), 196
- [White and grey B]** (1980), 196
- White city** (1993–94), 71, 88, 97, 125, 273, 340
- [White cloud]** (c. 1993–96), 294
- White garden** (1995), 82, 285
- White out** (1994), 274
- [White wood study #1]** (c. 1995–97), 298
- [White wood study #2]** (c. 1995–97), 298
- [White wood study #3]** (c. 1995–97), 298
- [White wood study #4]** (c. 1995–97), 298
- [White wood study #5]** (c. 1995/98), 140, 307
- [White wood study #6 (with Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière)]** (c. 1995–97), 298
- [White wood study #7]** (c. 1995–97), 299
- [White wood study #8]** (c. 1997), 299
- [White wood study: cockatoos]** (c. 1994–95), 285
- Wild strawberries** (1995), 285
- William Tell** (1970), 148
- Wind and weather** (1994), 274
- Wind change** (1988), 235
- Window (1976), *see* **Pink window** (1975)
- Windows** (1999), 312
- Winter morning** (1976), 94, 176
- Winter order** (1978–79), 65, 106, 107, 189
- Winter paddock** (1984), 94, 103, 104, 219
- Wired wool** (c. 1973), 155
- Witness** (1994), 274
- Woodland** (1990), 115, 246
- [Wood study with orange and black markings]** (1994), 275
- [Wood study with orange markings]** (1994), 275
- Wool clip** (1995), 95, 286
- Woolly wood** (c. 1973), 113, 155
- Woolshed** (1974), 161
- [Yellow beach]** (1984), 219
- Yellow hand** (1976), 176
- [Yellow wood cubes]** (1998), 307
- [Yellow wood study #1]** (c. 1991–92), 259
- [Yellow wood study #2]** (1994), 275
- [Yellow wood study #3]** (c. 1995), 286
- [Yellow wood study #4]** (c. 1995), 286
- [Yellow wood study #5]** (c. 1995), 286
- [Yellow wood study #6]** (c. 1995), 286
- [Yellow wood study #7]** (c. 1996), 294
- [Ziggurat]** (c. 1996–97), 299



INDEX

The subject of this index is Rosalie Gascoigne and her art. Taken together, the many entries provide a picture of her life and times, her aesthetic and sensibility, including her artworks and how they were created, titled and exhibited, the art world's reaction to them, her materials and their sources, including the places she scavenged, her work practices, the artists she admired, the curators and critics who admired her, the country that inspired her, and the themes reflected in her art. The indexing is comprehensive for the first part of the book ('The Artist', excluding the chronology), and selective for the Catalogue proper (e.g. practice regarding titles, Ben Gascoigne's involvement, work practices). In the case of entries from the Catalogue, the reference gives the page number followed by the title of the relevant work to help locate the reference. The two appendices on exhibitions have been indexed for exhibition titles, galleries, names of curators, critics and writers quoted, and some points from the notes.

Page references in *italic* refer to images and photographs. A separate index to all 692 artworks can be found at the List of Works.

A

- Academy of Science, 36–37, 38, *41*,
54, 131, 150 (*Last stand*)
- Adelaide Festival, 63, 65, 77, 287
(*All summer long*), 342, 359
see also Art Gallery of South
Australia; Greenaway Art
Gallery
- Adelaide, Myer store exhibit, 47
- air, 43, 48, 76, 91
as a theme in artworks, 76, 77, 82,
164 (*Jim's picnic*), 170 (*Crop*
[1]), 177 (*Country air*), 186
(*Feathered fence*), 189 (*Winter*
order), 216 (*Set up*), 270 (*Plain*
view 1), 271 (*Plein air*), 276–277
(*But mostly air*), 290 (*Overland*)
see also sky and clouds
- Allen, Christopher, 333, 334–335,
354, 371
- Allen, CW (Clay), 26n41, 28, 30n52
- Alvarez, Adriana, 345
- Amery, Mark, 350
- Anderson, Patricia, 352
- Andre, Carl, 51, 60, 355
- Angelico, Fra, 113, 172 (*Mosaic*)
- ANU Drill Hall Gallery exhibitions
A New Romance (1987), 367
From the Studio of Rosalie
Gascoigne (2000), 348–349
Perceived Differently (1995), 276,
376
Recent Australian Sculpture (1965),
42n92
- Arman, 56, 354
- Armstrong, John, 50, 51, 52, 83, 179
(*Grass rack*), 356 (*Tag rack*), 359
- Arp, Hans, 311
- Artbank, 389
- Art Gallery of Ballarat, 389
- Art Gallery of New South Wales
buys R.G. works, 59, 318
exhibitions
3rd Biennale of Sydney —
European Dialogue (1979),
65, 361–362
7th Biennale of Sydney —
From the Southern Cross
(1988), 73, 369
8th Biennale of Sydney —
The Readymade Boomerang
(1990), 73, 371–372
12th Biennale of Sydney —
Biennale of Sydney 2000
(2000), 382–383

Art Gallery of New South Wales
(cont.)
Australian Perspecta (1981), 65, 363
Australian Perspecta (1993), 2, 78
Found Objects (1962), 37
Material as Landscape (1997), 77–78, 343–345
Project 40: Australian Artists at Venice and Kassel (1983), 69, 365
Recent Australian Art (1973), 51–52
Some Recent American Art (1974), 51
Two Decades of American Painting (1967), 51
 family visits to, 34
 John McCaughey Prize (*Clouds I*), 254
 RG works in collection, 389
see also Thomas, Daniel

Art Gallery of South Australia
 exhibitions
Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art (1990), 237 (*Hill station*), 371
Drawn and Quartered (1980), 65, 191 (*Paper square*), 362
 RG works in collection, 389
see also Radford, Ron

Art Gallery of Western Australia, 384, 389

art history context and RG
 assemblage art, 51, 56, 70
 contemporary look, art of her times, 50, 59, 60, 63, *see also* exhibitions, group (selected)
 minimalism, 50–51, 59, 345, 369
 ‘outsider’ art, 45, 50
 pop art 55
see also Gascoigne, Rosalie: art, RG on looking at other; installations; sculpture

Arthur, Tom, 52n121, 65

art literature, 35, 41, 51, 56, 113
Art and Australia, 41, 51, 74, 176 (*Yellow hand*)
Artforum, 51
Art in America, 51
Art Monthly Australia, 90, 246 (*Across town*)

art literature (cont.)
Australian painting (Bernard Smith), 41
Flash Art, 226 (*Flash art*)
Japanese flower arrangement (Norman Sparnon), 37
 Penguin *Modern painters* series, 35
Picasso's Picassos (David Douglas Duncan), 41, 61
Rosalie Gascoigne (Vici MacDonald), 78, 346
The artist craftsman in Australia (Fay Bottrell), 46–47, 135, 152 (*[Sunflowers and radiator]*)
The art of assemblage (William Seitz), 56, 60
The arts in Australia: Sculpture (Lenton Parr), 41
The Faber Gallery: Matisse (Jean Cassou), 35n67
The meaning of art (Herbert Read), 35, 41
The Moderns and their world (John Rothenstein), 35
see also literary references in RG works; poetry references in RG works

assemblage art, 51, 56, 70, *see also* sculpture

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 exhibitions
Aussemblage! (1994), 375
 Colin McCahon retrospective (1988), 75
Home and Away (1999), 75, 381
Rosalie Gascoigne: Sculpture (1983), 326–327
Toi Toi Toi (1999), 73, 75, 380–381
 RG talk (1999), 75, 125
 RG works in collection, 75, 392

Auckland University College, 20–21

Australia Council for the Arts, *see* Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council

Australian Biography: Rosalie Gascoigne (TV interview), 78

Australian National Gallery, *see* National Gallery of Australia

Australian Sculpture Gallery/Centre, 42

B

Bacon, Francis, 41, 42, 174 (*The colonel's lady*)

Baker, James, 367

Baldessin, George, 52

Ball, Sydney, 52

Ballarat, 97, 209 (*Municipal gardens*)

Barkley, Glenn, 356, 384, 385, 387

Batemans Bay, *see* south coast, NSW

Battersea Park, London, 41, 42n90

Baume, Nicholas, 370

Beechworth, 167–168 (*Angels*), 173 (*Pet sheep*)

Bell, Pamela, 53, 59, 171 (*Friends*), 176 (*Yellow hand*), 181 (*Room with a view*), 319, 360

Benalla Art Gallery, 389

Bendigo, 97, 173 (*Pet sheep*), 209 (*Municipal gardens*)

Bendigo Art Gallery, 389

Best, Marie, 19, 21, 23

Bett, Dick, 215 (*Piece to walk on*), 329

Bett, Elva, 326

biblical and religious references in RG works, 151 (*Madonna and child*), 175 (*Tiepolo parrots*), 187 (*[For Ray]*), 225 (*Promised land*), 247 (*Bright and beautiful*), 284 (*Weighed and divided*)

Bieringa, Luit, 327

birds
 cockatoos, 95–96, 97, 221 (*Highway code*), 247 (*Cockatoos*), 276 (*But mostly air*)
 parrots, 30, 95, 96, 164 (*Jim's picnic*), 192 (*Parrot country*), 193 (*Parrots*), 209 (*Parrot country II*)
 in RG's art, 95–96, 102–104, 118, 168 (*Black bird box, Black birds*), 196 (*Bird house*), 212 (*Galahs rising*), 216 (*Pink kookaburras*), 307 (*Birdsong*)
see also materials: feathers, package branding

Bischoff, Theo, 43

Blackman, Charles, 46

Block, René, 73, 241–242 (*Close owly*), 371, 372, 380

- Bogle, Andrew, 375
 Bonython Gallery, Sydney, 46, 47, 51, 52
 Bonython, Kym, 59
 Booth, Peter, 65, 68, 69, 202–203 (*Travelling circus*), 324, 364, 365
 Borlase, Nancy, 56n133, 58, 318, 358, 362
 Botticelli, Sandro, 190 (*[Homage ... Birth of Venus]*)
 Bottrell, Fay, 46–47, 152 (*[Sunflowers and radiator]*)
 Boyd, Arthur, 52
 Braque, Georges, 34, 56, 112, 113, 197 (*Down to the silver sea*)
 brickworks, Canberra, 62, 83, 100, 177 (*Country air*)
 Brindabella mountains, 30, 78, 83
 Brook, Donald, 39, 42
 Brooke, Rupert, 42n90
 Brown, Mike, 56
 Bungendore, 80, 83, 87–88, 238 (*Lamplit*)
 dump as source of materials
 dolls, 108, 168 (*Angels*), 170 (*Dolly boxes*), 195 (*The teaparty*)
 enamelware, 109, 157 (*Enamel ware*)
 metal and iron, 152 (*[Sunflowers and radiator]*), 168 (*Black bird box*)
 photographs, 175 (*[Tivo children]*)
 wood, 286 (*Wool clip*)
 Burke, Gregory, 382
 Burke, Janine, 66, 320, 363
 Burnie Regional Art Gallery, 329, 330, 389
 Byrne, Dianne, 322
- C**
- Calder, Alexander, 50, 66, 202 (*Travelling circus*)
 Cameron, Dan, 73, 369, 370
 Campbelltown Arts Centre, 385
 Campbelltown City Art Gallery, 375, 389
 Canberra, 26
 art scene, 35, 42, 51
 Canberra (cont.)
 new suburbs, 83, 155 (*Surveyor's pegs*), 195 (*[Twelve squares of six]*), 198 (*Piece to walk around*)
 Scrivener Dam, 83, 107, 156 (*Bath of balls*)
 see also brickworks, Canberra; Brindabella mountains; Canberra district, reflections in RG's art; country; Mount Stromlo
 Canberra Contemporary Art Space, 338
 Canberra district, reflections in RG's art, 161 (*Woolshed*), 211–212 (*Wattle strike*), 215 (*Piece to walk on*), 225 (*Plenty*), 249 (*Lambing*), 264 (*Sheep weather alert*), 287 (*Afternoon*), *see also* country
 Canberra Museum and Art Gallery, 386, 390
 Canberra Technical College, 35, 45, 54
 Capon, Edmund, 78
 Captains Flat, 80, 83, 87, 88, 105
 as source of materials
 dolls, 108, 154 (*Parrot lady*)
 linoleum, 114, 181 (*River banks*), 195 (*Step through*)
 metal, 147 (*Conscription*)
 wood, 116, 148 (*Cityscape*)
 Carmichael, Rod, 72, 328
 Carnegie, Margaret, 46, 152 (*[Sunflowers and radiator]*)
 carnivals, *see* circus and carnival themes
 Carroll, Alison, 191 (*Paper square*), 362, 379
 Catalano, Gary, 72, 73, 330, 331, 335–336
 catalogue terminology, 139–144
 Chardin, Jean-Baptiste-Siméon, 64, 109, 167 (*Triptych*)
 Charles Nodrum Gallery, 355
 Charles Sturt University Art Collection, 390
 Christo, 186 (*Feathered fence*)
 circus and carnival themes, 168 (*Black bird box*, *Black birds*, *Boxer*), 169 (*Carnival [1]*), 200 (*Side show*), 200–201 (*Side show parrots*), 202 (*The players*), 202–203 (*Travelling circus*), 278 (*Harlequin*), 307 (*Carnival [2]*)
 City Gallery Wellington, 350–351
 Clark, Deborah, 386
 Clements, Bill, 52
 clouds, *see* sky and clouds
 Coburn, John, 42, 46
 Coleing, Tony, 50
 Collector, 80, 83, 87, 88, 91, 276 (*But mostly air*)
 dump as source of materials
 corrugated iron, 219 (*Swell*)
 road signs, 122, 221 (*Highway code*), 258 (*Red*)
 reflections in RG's art, 276 (*But mostly air*), 297 (*Poplars*)
 colours
 Australian countryside, 30, 93, 190 (*Ikona*), 201 (*Takeover bid*), 203 (*Crop 2*), 217–218 (*String of blue days*)
 grey, 116–117, 148 (*Cityscape*), 179 (*Grass rack*), 188 (*Private beach*), 204 (*Graven image*), 218 (*String of blue days*)
 pinks and pastels, faded, 49, 62, 110, 116, 117, 163 (*Italian birds*), 165 (*Pink window*), 210 (*Pink on blue*)
 sky, 30, 61, 91, 93, 95, 97, 217–218 (*String of blue days*)
 surveyors' pegs, 118
 white, 49, 118, 125, 262 (*Honeybunch*), 271 (*Plein air*), 340
 yellow, 16, 17, 23n33, 252 (*Sunflowers*), 255 (*Fool's gold*), 287 (*All summer long*), 342
 Conron, Jean, 42n93, 102
 Contemporary Art Society, Sydney, 34, 37
 Cooma, 80, 83, 85, 89, 90, 93, 122, *see also* Monaro district
 copyright, 140
 Cornell, Joseph, 49, 56, 59–60, 66, 156 (*Bottled glass*), 160 (*The dredge*)
 country, 81–97
 beauty, 78, 94, 97
 emptiness, 165 (*Pink window*)
 evocation of, 170 (*Crop[1]*), 198–199 (*Piece to walk around*), 203 (*Crop 2*), 206 (*Scrub country*), 213 (*Grove*), 219 (*Winter paddock*), 271 (*Plein air*)

country (cont.)

- first encounters, 30–31
- importance in RG's art, 81–82, 88, 90–95
- materials as part of, 81, 101, 110, 124, 153 (*Joie de mourir*), 285 (*White garden*)
- regional geography, 80, 83–84, *see also individual placenames*
- seasons, 93–94, 97, 180 (*Pale landscape*), 219 (*Winter paddock*)
- sense of place, 31, 96, 97, 284 (*Top End*)
- see also* air; Gascoigne, Rosalie:
 - aesthetics and sensibility, cars and driving, freedom, 'nature'; sky and clouds
- Coventry Gallery, 51
- Cramer, Sue, 72, 328, 385
- Crooke, Ray, 42, 50
- Crothall, Ross, 56
- Cruthers, John, 376
- Cumming, Laura, 77, 378

D

- Dali, Salvador, 56
- Daly-Peoples, John, 351
- Daniel, Marjorie, 23, 24, 25, 86
- Danko, Aleksander, 52
- dating and signing, 141, 143, 318
- David, Gerard, 113, 208 (*Blue Madonna*)
- Davidson, Kate, 217–218 (*String of blue days*), 377
- da Vinci, Leonardo, 113
- Davis, John, 50, 52, 170 (*Joyful and triumphant*)
- de Groen, Geoffrey, 57, 155 (*Twig tidy*), 316
- Delany, Max, 381
- Delaruelle, Jacques, 333, 370
- De Maria, Walter, 66
- Desmond, Michael, 376, 377
- Dickerson, Robert, 52
- display of RG works
 - context, 99, 119–120, 187 (*[For Ray]*), 193 (*Pond*), 196 (*[White and grey A]*), 208 (*Celebration*), 270 (*Plain view 1*), 272 (*Steel magnolias*), 285 (*White garden*), 290 (*Overland*)

display of RG works (cont.)

- lighting, 106–107, 114, 156
 - (*Bottled glass*), 180 (*Pale landscape*), 186 (*Feathered fence*), 290 (*Overland*), 361, 379
- in mixed and travelling shows, 191–192 (*Paper square*), 308 (*Earth*), 359
- retroreflective works, 72, 123, 220–221 (*Highway code*), 226 (*Flash art*), 228 (*Tiger tiger*), 238 (*Lamplit*), 277 (*Danegeld*), 331, 372
- specific works, 167 (*Triptych*), 169 (*Cows 4 ways*), 180 (*Pale landscape*), 186 (*Feathered fence*), 194 (*Step through*), 215 (*Piece to walk on*), 226 (*Streetwise*), 294 (*Tidy summer*)
- Dobson, Rosemary, 48, 86, 94, 120n53, 152 (*The king*), 220 (*Flight*), 257 (*May morning*), 351
- Drysdale, Russell, 149 (*Farmer's daughter*), 152 (*The king*), 276 (*But mostly air*)
- Duchamp, Marcel, 56, 60, 166 (*The Pepper Pot*)
- Dumbrell, Lesley, 368
- dumps, 39, 81, 82, 86, 87–88, 90
 - mentioned by RG in specific works, 159 (*Pub*), 167 (*Triptych*), 170 (*Dolly boxes*), 173 (*Pet sheep*), 179 (*Grass rack*), 183 (*Feathered chairs*), 195 (*The teaparty*), 219 (*Swell*), 220–221 (*Highway code*), 232 (*Legend*), 258 (*Red*)
- as source of materials
 - dolls, 108
 - enamel ware, 109
 - linoleum, 63, 114–115
 - road signs, 122
 - see also* Beechworth; Bungendore; Captains Flat; Collector; foraging; Gundaroo; Queanbeyan; Revolve recycling depot
- Dunn, Richard, 65

E

- Eagle, Mary, 320, 329, 348, 371
- Edwards, Deborah, 77–78, 81, 343
- Edwards, Geoffrey, 368
- Egyptian sculpture, 113, 196 (*Venus*), 213 (*[Homage ... Nefertiti]*)
- Elias, Ann, 335
- Elliott, David, 77, 378
- emotions, *see* Gascoigne, Rosalie:
 - aesthetics and sensibility, feelings; poetry
- Englund, Ivan, 42
- Evans, Ruth, 19, 30
- Ewington, Julie, 376
- exhibitions, group (selected), 73
 - 3rd Biennale of Sydney —
 - European Dialogue* AGNSW (1979), 65–66, 106–107, 185–186 (*Feathered fence*), 189 (*Winter order*), 361–362
 - 7th Biennale of Sydney — *From the Southern Cross* AGNSW & NGV (1988), 73, 369
 - 8th Biennale of Sydney —
 - The Readymade Boomerang* AGNSW (1990), 73, 371–372
 - 12th Biennale of Sydney —
 - Biennale of Sydney 2000* (2000), 382–383
 - Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art* AGSA (1990), 371
 - Almanac: The Gift of Ann Lewis* MCA & touring (2009), 385
 - A New Romance* ANG (1987), 367
 - Aussemblage!: Everyday Objects Transformed* Auckland AG (1994), 375
 - Australia Royal Academy*, London (2013), 387
 - Australia at the Venice Biennale* NGV (1982), 69, 364
 - Australian Art 1940–1990 from the Collection of the National Gallery of Australia* Gifu, Japan (1995), 377
 - Australian Perspectives* AGNSW (1981), 65, 363
 - Australian Sculpture Now: Second Australian Sculpture Triennial* NGV (1984), 73, 366

- exhibitions, group (selected) (cont.)
- Circle, Line, Square: Aspects of Geometry* Campbelltown & touring (1994), 375
 - Clemenger Contemporary Art Award* Heide MOMA & NGV (1999), 381
 - Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Art* NGV (1993), 73, 373–374
 - Colin McCahon: A Time for Messages* NGV (2001), 383
 - Confrontations* Ivan Dougherty Gallery (1993), 374–375
 - Contemporary Art in Australia: A Review* MOCA Brisbane (1987), 367
 - Continuum '83: The First Exhibition of Australian Contemporary Art in Japan* Tokyo (1983), 365–366
 - Cubism and Australian Art* Heide MOMA (2009), 385
 - Diverse Visions: Twelve Australian Mid to Late Career Artists* QAG (1991), 373
 - Drawn and Quartered: Australian Contemporary Paperworks* AGSA (1980), 65, 191 (*Paper square*), 362
 - Drive: Power – Progress – Desire* New Plymouth, NZ (2000), 382
 - Expanse: Aboriginalities, Specialities and the Politics of Ecstasy* Adelaide (1998), 379
 - Federation: Australian Art and Society 1901–2001* NGA & touring (2000), 383
 - First Australian Sculpture Triennial* Melbourne (1981), 65, 198 (*Piece to walk around*), 363
 - Four Sculptors* Wollongong City Gallery (1986), 367
 - Gallery A Sydney 1964–1983* Campbelltown & Newcastle (2009), 385
 - Home and Away: Contemporary Australian and New Zealand Art from the Chartwell Collection* Auckland AG (1999), 75, 381
- exhibitions, group (selected) (cont.)
- Home Sweet Home: Works from the Peter Fay Collection* NGA & touring (2003), 384
 - Identities: Art from Australia* Taipei & Wollongong (1993), 375
 - In Place (Out of Time)* MOMA Oxford (1997), 77, 287 (*Afternoon*), 290 (*Overland*), 378–379
 - In the Company of Women* Perth Institute of Contemporary Art (1995), 376
 - Islands: Contemporary Installations from Australia, Asia, Europe and America* NGA (1996), 377
 - Island to Island: Australia to Cheju* South Korea (1995), 77, 376–377
 - Laverty 2: Selections from the Colin and Elizabeth Laverty Collection* Newcastle (2011), 387
 - L'été Australien à Montpellier* France (1990), 373
 - Objects* Ray Hughes Gallery (1977), 359–360
 - Other Stories: Five Australian Artists* Asian tour (1997), 379
 - Perceived Differently* ANU Drill Hall Gallery (1995), 276, 376
 - Philip Morris Arts Grant Second Annual Exhibition* Melbourne & Sydney (1975), 357–358
 - Philip Morris Arts Grant Third Annual Exhibition* Adelaide (1976), 359
 - Project 40: Australian Artists at Venice and Kassel* AGNSW (1983), 69, 365
 - Some Recent Acquisitions of Australian Art* ANG (1978), 360
 - Something in the Air* CMAG (2010), 386
 - Spirit + Place: Art in Australia 1861–1996* MCA (1996), 377
 - Spirit in the Land* McClelland Gallery & touring (2010), 386
 - Strange Harmony of Contrasts* Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery (1990), 370–371
- exhibitions, group (selected) (cont.)
- Sublime: 25 Years of the Wesfarmers Collection of Australian Art* AGWA & touring (2002), 384
 - Tell Me, Tell Me: Australian and Korean Art 1976–2011* MCA & Korea (2011), 387
 - Ten by Ten: 1975–1985* Gertrude Street, Melbourne (1987), 368
 - The Artists' Choice Gallery A* Sydney (1975), 57–58, 358–359
 - The Great Australian Art Exhibition* QAG & touring (1988), 368–369
 - The Philip Morris Arts Grant: Australian Art of the Past Ten Years* ANG (1982), 364
 - The Readymade Boomerang Print Portfolio* Sydney, Berlin & Brisbane (1990), 241–242, 372
 - Third Australian Sculpture Triennial* NGV (1987), 368
 - Toi Toi Toi* Germany & New Zealand (1999), 73, 75, 380–381
 - What Is Contemporary Art?* Malmö, Sweden (1989), 73, 370
- exhibitions, solo, 46, 47, 74–75
- An Installation by Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca (1995), 341
 - Australia: Venice Biennale (1982), 65, 67–69, 95, 97, 114, 324–325
 - Conversions 4: Rosalie Gascoigne* Canberra Contemporary Art Space (1992), 338
 - From the Studio of Rosalie Gascoigne* ANU Drill Hall Gallery (2000), 348–349
 - Myer store, Adelaide, 47
 - Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway Art Gallery (1996), 342
 - Rosalie Gascoigne* Greenaway Art Gallery (1998), 346
 - Rosalie Gascoigne* Newcastle Art Gallery (2013), 356
 - Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV (2008), 79, 353–355
 - Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca (1981), 67, 323–324

exhibitions, solo (cont.)

- Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca (1984), 72, 328
- Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca (1986), 72, 123, 330–331
- Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca (1988), 73, 331
- Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca (1991), 336
- Rosalie Gascoigne* Pinacotheca (1993), 339
- Rosalie Gascoigne* Ray Hughes Gallery (1979), 65, 322
- Rosalie Gascoigne* RoslynOxley9 Gallery (1989), 332–333
- Rosalie Gascoigne* RoslynOxley9 Gallery (1992), 337
- Rosalie Gascoigne* RoslynOxley9 Gallery (1994), 340
- Rosalie Gascoigne* RoslynOxley9 Gallery (1995), 341
- Rosalie Gascoigne* RoslynOxley9 Gallery (1998), 346
- Rosalie Gascoigne* RoslynOxley9 Gallery (1999), 347
- Rosalie Gascoigne* RoslynOxley9 Gallery (2004), 352
- Rosalie Gascoigne: A New Work* IMA Brisbane (1977), 319
- Rosalie Gascoigne Assemblage* Gallery A Sydney (1976), 58–59, 317–318
- Rosalie Gascoigne Assemblages* Macquarie Galleries (1974), 57, 107, 315–316
- Rosalie Gascoigne at ACAF* 5, Melbourne (1996), 342
- Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as Landscape* AGNSW (1997), 77–78, 81, 343–345
- Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as Landscape* NGA (1998), 77–78, 81, 343–345
- Rosalie Gascoigne: New Work* UTas (1985), 329
- Rosalie Gascoigne: Plain Air* City Gallery Wellington, NZ (2004), 79, 350–351
- Rosalie Gascoigne: Plein Air* Charles Nodrum Gallery (2009), 355

exhibitions, solo (cont.)

- Rosalie Gascoigne: Plein Air* Gow Langsford Gallery, Sydney (2003), 349
- Rosalie Gascoigne: Sculpture* New Zealand (1983), 326–327
- Sense of Place* (with Colin McCahon) Sydney & Melbourne (1990), 73, 334–336
- Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne* NGV (1978), 64, 65, 320–321
- The Daylight Moon: Rosalie Gascoigne and Lake George* Goulburn Regional Art Gallery (2015), 356

F

- Faerber, Ruth, 58, 358
- Feeney, Warren, 350
- Fenner, Felicity, 345
- Fern, Lynette, 337
- film and television references in RG works, 182 (*Room with a view*), 215 (*Last of the summer wine*), 224 (*New wave*), 269 (*Out of Africa*), 272 (*Steel magnolias*), 275 (*A certain smile*), 285 (*Wild strawberries*), 290 (*Night and day*), 292 (*Strictly ballroom*), 295 (*Easy street*), see also literary references in RG works
- Fink, Hannah, 59, 82
- Fisher, Tim, 377
- Fleming, Charles, 21
- flower arranging, see Gascoigne, Rosalie: flower arranging
- foraging, 31, 36, 83–90, 91, 119, see also dumps
- Foster, Bob, 22, 23
- framing, 113, 143, 177 (*Country air*)
- Francesca, Piero della, 99, 110, 113, 182 (*Cloister*), 190 (*Ikon*)
- freedom, see Gascoigne, Rosalie: freedom
- Freeman, Monica, 103

G

- Gallery A, Canberra, 42
- Gallery A, Sydney, 51, 55, 57–59, 65, 317–318, 358–359
- Gascoigne, Charles (grandson), 1, 224 (*[Letter to a grandson]*)
- Gascoigne, Hester L (daughter), 27, 28
- Gascoigne, Hester MB (granddaughter), 23n32, 214 (*[Homage with granddaughter]*)
- Gascoigne, Martin (son), 5, 25, 27, 34 art collection, 42, 50, 51, 179 (*Grass rack*)
- correspondence with RG, 2, 160 (*The dredge*), 151 (*Spine*), 177 (*Country air*)
- relationship with RG, 39n81, 41, 42, 56, 86, 188 (*March past*), 193 (*Pond*), 196 (*[White and grey A]*), 210 (*Pink on blue*), 277 (*Eden*)
- Gascoigne, Rosalie
- aesthetics and sensibility, 1, 17, 29, 31, 36, 38, 39, 70
- nostalgia, sentiment, 99, 167 (*Triptych*), 170 (*Dolly boxes*), 187 (*[For Ray]*)
- see also Gascoigne, Rosalie: feelings, qualities admired in art; poetry: RG's poetic imagination
- art, RG objectives, 20, 44–45, 47, 67, 76, 81, 110, 141, 167 (*Triptych*), 260 (*Airborne 1*)
- viewer readings, 75, 181 (*Pale landscape*), 182 (*Cloister*), 194 (*Step through*), 198–199 (*Piece to walk around*), 202 (*The players*), 217 (*String of blue days*), 266 (*Skewbald*), 321 (*Pale landscape*)
- see also Gascoigne, Rosalie: aesthetics and sensibility, creative process, feelings
- art, RG on looking at other, 50–52, 56, 60, 61–62, 65–67
- artist, RG thoughts on being an, 2, 25, 39, 70, 79, 82, 250–251 (*Letting go*)

- Gascoigne, Rosalie (cont.)
 not an NZ artist 25, 75, 380–381
 ‘regional’ artist, 81, 82, 184
 (*[Lillem and daffodils]*), 186
 (*Footballers*), 219–220
 (*Clean country*), 329
 on women’s art, 66, 78, 194
 (*Step through*), 216 (*Set up*)
 biographical outline
 childhood, 16–18
 schoolgirl, 19–20
 university years, 20–21
 teacher, 22
 courtship and marriage, 23–24
 children, 27, 31
 early years Mount Stromlo,
 26–32, 94
 1950s, 33–35
 1960s, 35–37, 41–42
 1970s, 44–66
 1980s, 66–75
 1990s, 76–79
 cars and driving, 32, 48, 84–87,
 90–91, 95, 247 (*Cockatoos*),
 276 (*But mostly air*), *see also*
 Gascoigne, Rosalie: freedom
 ‘chance’ in R.G.’s art
 in her creative process, 48, 75,
 180–181 (*Pale landscape*),
 225 (*Shoreline*), 255 (*Fool’s*
gold), 276 (*But mostly air*),
 311 (*Metropolis*)
 in her materials, 62, 63, 88,
 89, 108, 123, 217 (*String of*
blue days)
 creative process, 17, 29, 31, 50, 56,
 70, 75, 191–192 (*Paper square*),
see also Gascoigne, Rosalie:
 ‘chance’ in R.G.’s art, feelings;
 poetry
 family (New Zealand), 13–18,
 20, 23, *see also under* Metcalfe;
 Walker
 feelings, 67, 70, 75, 159 (*Pub*), 217
 (*String of blue days*)
 feelings as noted by reviewers, 326
 (Elva Bett), 329 (Dick Bett),
 335 (Christopher Allen), 345
 (Felicity Fenner), 358 (Nancy
 Borlase), 363 (Janine Burke)
- Gascoigne, Rosalie (cont.)
 feelings and other artists, 37, 52,
 283
 feelings, specific
 ‘above Lake George’, 76, 276
 (*But mostly air*)
 of being in the country, 48,
 93, 198 (*Piece to walk*
around), 206 (*Scrub country*)
 of Biblical paintings, 175
 (*Tiepolo parrots*)
 ‘the colour’, 215 (*Piece to*
walk on)
 of early morning, 178
 (*Early morning*)
 of freedom, liberation, 92, 177
 (*Country air*), 198 (*Piece to*
walk around)
 of infinite, open space, air,
 77, 92, 271 (*Plein air*), 290
 (*Overland*), 379
 of the lake, 185–186 (*Feathered*
fence), 249 (*Lake*)
 for parrot tails, 193 (*Parrots*),
 200 (*Side show parrots*)
 ‘the rose feeling’, 110, 170
 (*Dolly boxes*), 229 (*A rose*
is a rose)
 of shearing time, 264–265
 (*Sheep weather alert*)
 of stepping, 194 (*Step through*)
 of the summer sky, 254
 (*Clouds I*)
 of the view from AGNSW,
 181 (*Room with a view*)
 flower arranging, 16, 32–33,
 36–37, 49, 100, 127–130, *see*
also ikebana
 freedom, 13, 17, 18, 30, 48, 76–77,
 79
 as a theme in artworks,
 250–251 (*Letting go*), 260
 (*Age of innocence*), 276 (*But*
mostly air), 290 (*Overland*)
 houses
 Deakin (Dugan Street), 35, 39,
 40, 247 (*First fruits*)
 Mount Stromlo, 26–28
 Pearce (Anstey Street), 43–44,
 47–48, 295 (*Golden*
bamboo), 307 (*Cumquats*)
- Gascoigne, Rosalie (cont.)
see also Gascoigne, Rosalie:
 studio and workspaces
 judges art prizes, 56, 78
 language and word skills, 2, 20, 30
 descriptions of landscapes,
 91–94
 poetry by R.G., 73n178, 86,
 331
see also poetry; titles
 ‘nature’, 13, 18, 31, 81, 92, 102,
 151 (*Last stand*), 217 (*String of*
blue days), 249 (*Lake*), *see also*
 country
 opens art exhibitions, 2, 78
 ‘place’, sensitivity to, 17, 31, 75,
 96, *see also* country; Gascoigne,
 Rosalie: travel
 qualities admired in art
 clarity of image, 48
 ‘classical’, 52, 99, 109, 167
 (*Triptych*), 252 (*Sunflowers*)
 elegance, 99, 167 (*Triptych*)
 ‘presence’, 46, 208
 (*Celebration*), 285 (*White*
garden)
 ‘rigour’, 240 (*Wheat belt*)
 ‘tight’, 108, 170 (*Dolly boxes*),
 174 (*The colonel’s lady*),
 235 (*Stubble field*), 252
 (*Sunflowers*)
 self-portrait, materials as, 82
 studio and workspaces
 Deakin, 39, 40
 Pearce, back lawn, 49, 102,
 153 (*Joie de mourir*), 189
 (*Winter order*)
 Pearce, courtyard, 90, 105,
 107, 118, 119, 121
 Pearce, living rooms, 17, 43–
 44, 47–48, 50, 63–64, 103,
 118, 125, 213 (*Crop 2*)
 Pearce, other spaces, 103,
 120, 188 (*March past*), 311
 (*Metropolis*)
 studio, 69–71, 98, 106, 123,
 208 (*Club colours*), 209
 (*Parrot country II*)
see also Gascoigne, Rosalie:
 houses; work practices

Gascoigne, Rosalie (cont.)
 studio assistants, 70, 186 (*Feathered fence*), see also Gascoigne, SCB (Ben); Hagerty, Marie; Vandermark, Peter
 talks and interviews by R.G., 22, 35–36, 38n78, 68, 75, 78, 100, 394–396, see also Gascoigne, Rosalie: language and word skills
 travel
 Africa, 97, 269 (*Out of Africa*), 275 (*Africa*)
 Australia, 24, 27, 34, 51–52, 96, 97, see also south coast, NSW
 Europe, 41, 44, 46, 97, 151 (*Madonna and child*), 285 (*White garden*)
 New York, 66–67, 96–97, 199 (*Reconstruction*), 213 (*[Homage with Arshile Gorky's ...]*), 273 (*Tree of life*)
 New Zealand, 24, 27, 32, 74, 75, 125, 326–327
 Tokyo, 44
 see also Venice Biennale

Gascoigne, SCB (Ben) (husband)
 and art, 18, 27n43, 33–35, 40, 42, 43, 46
 Auckland years, 18, 22–23
 engagement and marriage, 23, 24
 financial support to R.G., 44n97, 48, 69
 foraging with R.G., 83, 119, 155 (*Surveyor's pegs*)
 Pearce house, 43–44
 photographs of, 22, 23, 27, 71, 79
 professional life, 23, 27, 37n73, 58
 record keeping, 1, 70
 as studio assistant, 69–70, 72, 148 (*Cityscape*), 158 (*Enamelware*), 166 (*The Pepper Pot*), 173 (*Pet sheep*), 177 (*Country air*), 178 (*Early morning*), 183 (*Feathered chairs*), 185, 186 (*Feathered fence*), 188 (*March past*), 190 (*Dove grey*), 199 (*Sharpe Bros horizontal*), 200 (*Side show*), 202 (*Travelling circus*), 206 (*Scrub country*), 212 (*Balance*), 219 (*Swell, Totemic*), 308 (*Earth*)

Gascoigne, SCB (Ben) (husband) (cont.)
 travel, professional, 23, 35, 40, 41, 44, 46, 97, 151
 welding, 48, 105, 147 (*Fountain*), 148 (*Bee*), 149 (*Eagle*), 151 (*Spine*)
 Gascoigne, Thomas (Toss) (son), 5, 27, 28, 46n103, 284 (*The Apple Isle*)
 helps source materials, 104–105, 109, 123, 182 (*Room with a view*), 216 (*Red beach*), 226 (*[Twenty-five scallop shells]*), 311 (*Metropolis*)
 Gascoigne, Thom (grandson), 235 (*[TWG]*)
 Gates, Merryn, 348
 Gearys Gap, 84, 92, 283 (*Suddenly the lake*), see also Lake George
 Geelong Gallery, 387, 390
 Geissler, Marie, 369
 Gellatly, Kelly, 353
 Genocchio, Benjamin, 383
 Giacometti, Alberto, 87, 102, 105
 Gilchrist, Maureen, 358
 Gleeson, James, 37, 59, 64, 171 (*Flora Galop*), 360, 394
 responds to R.G. works, 103, 109, 167 (*Triptych*), 174 (*The colonel's lady*), 183 (*[Feather study 1]*), 192 (*Parrot country*)
 Gleghorn, Tom, 42
 Glover, John, 330
 Gold Coast City Art Gallery, 390
 Gorky, Arshile, 66, 213 (*[Homage with ... his mother]*)
 Goulburn, 80, 88, 89, 122
 Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, 356
 Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, NZ, 382
 Gow Langsford Gallery, Sydney, 349
 Greece and Greek culture, 20, 97
 reflections in R.G.'s art, 99, 119, 231 (*Golden mean*), 258 (*Rose red city 5*), 275 (*Acanthus*), 285 (*White garden*), 299–300 (*Cloud cuckoo land*), 302 (*Medusa*)
 Greenaway Art Gallery, 283 (*Summer sprawl*), 287 (*All summer long*), 342, 346
 Greenaway, Paul, 77, 308 (*Earth*)

Greer, Germaine, 46, 150 (*Germaine Greer*)
 Griffith University Art Collection, 390
 Gris, Juan, 56
 Grishin, Sasha, 338, 345, 348, 354, 367, 374, 376, 385
 Grounds, Ross, 52
 Grounds, Roy, 36, 43
 Gruner, Elioth, 159 (*Norco (after Gruner)*)
 Gundaroo, 80, 83, 87, 88, 90–91, 116, 119, 159 (*Pub*), 285 (*White garden*)
 Guy Fisher Gallery, 392

H

Hagerty, Marie, 48, 70, 260 (*Airborne 1*), 277 (*But mostly air*)
 Hall, Basil, 241 (*Close owly*), 246 (*Across town*), 268 (*Highway to heaven*)
 Hansen, David, 354–355
 Harding, Lesley, 385
 Harrod, Christopher, 351
 Hart, Deborah, 375, 384
 Hawke, John, 335
 Heartney, Eleanor, 355
 Heathcote, Christopher, 336, 339, 374
 Heide Museum of Modern Art, 204, 381, 385, 390
 Henry, Carol, 324
 Hesse, Eva, 51, 60
 Hickey, Dale, 52
 Hilty, Greg, 378
 Hinder, Margel, 41, 131
 Holloway, Memory, 320
 homages, artworks used in, 113
 Angelico, Fra, 113, 172 (*Mosaic*)
 Botticelli, Sandro, 190 (*[Homage ... Birth of Venus]*)
 Braque, Georges, 112, 113, 197 (*Down to the silver sea*)
 David, Gerard, 113, 208 (*Blue Madonna*)
 Egyptian sculpture, 113, 196 (*Venus*), 213 (*[Homage ... Nefertiti]*)
 English portrait, 214 (*[Homage with Lady Arabella ...]*)

- homages, artworks used in (cont.)
 Francesca, Piero della, 113, 182
 (*Cloister*), 190 (*Ikon*)
 Glover, John, 330
 Gorky, Arshile, 213 (*[Homage with ... his mother]*)
 Gruner, Elioth, 159 (*Norco (after Gruner)*)
 Ingres, Jean-August-Dominique, 113, 218 (*Summerhouse*), 256 (*[Homage with Ingres's ...]*), 298 (*[White wood study #6 ...]*)
 Matisse, Henri, 223 (*[Homage ... Le luxe II]*), *[Homage ... Nono Lebasque]*, 273 (*Tree of life*)
 McCahon, Colin, 214 (*[Homage ... Angel of the Annunciation]*)
 Muybridge, Eadweard, 112, 179 (*[Homage ... Ox trotting]*)
 Picasso, Pablo, 113, 202 (*Travelling circus*)
 Raphael, Sanzio da Urbino, 113, 184 (*The gallery man*)
 Renaissance painting, 231 (*[Homage with a Virgin and Child]*)
 Renoir, Pierre-Auguste, 113, 223 (*[Homage ... La loge]*)
 Titian, 214 (*[Homage ... Sacred and profane love]*)
 Whisson, Ken, 179 (*[Homage ... Illyria?]*)
 Horticultural Society of Canberra, *see* Gascoigne, Rosalie: flower arranging
 Hughes, Janet, 351
 Hughes, Ray, 112n32, 153 (*Japanese bathing*), 162 (*Bird sanctuary, Doll's house*), 176 (*Yellow hand*), 181 (*Room with a view*), 187 (*[For Ray]*), *see also* Ray Hughes Gallery
 Hughes, Robin, 78
 Hunter, Ian, 326, 327
 Hunter, Robert, 42, 51, 52
- I**
 Ian Potter Gallery, 73, 334–336
 ikebana, 37–40, 41, 44–45, 49, 60, 126, 132–135, *see also* Sparnon, Norman; Teshigahara, Sofu
 Industrial Design Council of Australia, 44, 132, 134
 Ingres, Jean-August-Dominique, 113, 218 (*Summerhouse*), 256 (*[Homage with Ingres's ...]*), 298 (*[White wood study #6 ...]*)
 installations, 63, 71, 76, 78, 345, 363
 RG works, 151 (*Last stand, Spine*), 180–181 (*Pale landscape*), 194–195 (*Step through*), 198–199 (*Piece to walk around*), 215 (*Piece to walk on*), 216 (*Set up*), 254 (*Clouds I*), 262–264 (*Rose red city*), 276–277 (*But mostly air*)
 Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 64, 319
 Ivan Dougherty Gallery, 334–336, 374–375
- J**
 Japanese Embassy, 44, 132, 134
 Johns, Jasper, 39, 60, 70
 Johnson, Anna, 333
 Joyce, Guy, 186 (*Feathered fence*)
 Jubelin, Narelle, 243 (*[Homage with Lysaght lady]*)
 Judd, Donald, 51, 56, 59
- K**
 Kalina, Richard, 351
 Kelly, Ellsworth, 60, 283 (*Suddenly the lake*)
 Kelly, Ned, 95, 164 (*Jim's picnic*), 192 (*Parrot country*), 209 (*Parrot country II*), *see also* Nolan, Sidney
 Kelso, Matt, 162 (*Flight of parrots*), 163 (*Flower tower I*), 164 (*Jim's picnic*), 166 (*Pink window*), 168 (*Black bird box*), 170 (*Dolly boxes*), 173 (*Pet sheep*)
- Kirk, Mildred, 88, 183 (*Feathered chairs*)
 Klippel, Robert, 40, 64, 103, 183 (*[Feather study 1]*), 211 (*[Still life]*)
- L**
 Lake George, 30, 63, 76, 80, 84, 91, 92, 185
 bird sanctuary, 62, 88–89, 95, 103–104
 reflections in RG's art, 180–181 (*Pale landscape*), 183 (*[Feather study 1]*), 185–186 (*Feathered fence*), 249 (*Lake*), 276 (*But mostly air*), 282–283 (*Suddenly the lake*), 356
 as source of materials, 63n150, 103, 105, 117n45, 120, 132, 180, 183
 Lanceley, Colin, 56
 landscape, *see* country
 Lang, Nikolaus, 66, 214 (*Industrial area*)
 Langer, Gertrude, 181 (*Room with a view*), 319, 322, 359, 360
 Larter, Richard, 198 (*Eighty-nine parrots*)
 Latrobe Regional Gallery, 390
 Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, 390
 Laycock, Donald, 52
 Leach-Jones, Alun, 52
 Lendon, Nigel, 52
 Levertov, Denise, 212 (*Balance*), 257 (*May morning*)
 Levy, Paul, 378
 Lewers, Gerald, 34, 41
 Lewers, Margo, 34
 Lewis, Ann, 59, 68, 158 (*Leaning piece*), 176 (*Winter morning*), 284 (*Summer swarm*), 385
 LeWitt, Sol, 51
 Lichtenstein, Roy, 42, 51, 111
 light
 in nature, outdoors, 81, 86, 91, 92, 93, 94, 100, 118, 206 (*Scrub country*), 308 (*Earth*)
 reviewer comments, 319 (Bell), 329 (Bett), 335 (Allen), 345 (Scarlett), 370 (Delaruelle)

light (cont.)

- as subject, 63, 173 (*Parrot morning*), 178 (*Early morning*), 191–192 (*Paper square*), 198 (*Piece to walk around*), 225 (*Shoreline*), 271 (*Plein air*), 290 (*Morning glory*)
- Lindsay, Frances (nee McCarthy), 52n119
- Lindsay, Robert, 64, 65, 67, 320–321, 386
- literary references in RG works
 - Aristophanes, 299–300 (*Cloud cuckoo land*)
 - Deeping, Warwick, 280 (*Shabby summer*)
 - Fielding, Henry, 161 (*Two lovely blue eyes*)
 - Forster, EM, 181 (*Room with a view*)
 - Langley, Eve, 30, 276 (*But mostly air*), 287 (*Afternoon*)
 - Sagan, Françoise, 275 (*A certain smile*)
 - The wizard of Id* (cartoon), 151 (*Sir Bagby*), 152 (*The king*)
 - von Blixen-Finecke, Karen, 269 (*Out of Africa*)
 - see also biblical and religious references in RG works; film and television references in RG works; poetry references in RG works; Shakespeare, William
- Lloyd, Michael, 64, 283 (*Suddenly the lake*)
- Looby, Keith, 153 (*Japanese bathing*)
- Louis, Morris, 60, 192 (*Parrot country*)
- Low, Lenny Ann, 349
- Loxley, Anne, 340, 349
- Lynn, Elwyn, 333, 335, 340, 374
- Lynn, Victoria, 78

M

- MacDonald, Vici, 78, 346
- Macfarlane, Pamela, 42
- Macquarie Galleries, Canberra, 42, 55, 57, 105, 107, 315–316
- Macquarie University Art Collection, 390

- Makin, Jeffrey, 362, 363
- Marden, Brice, 51
- Martin, Agnes, 51, 60
- Mary Martin Bookshop, 113
- Matégot, Mathieu, 43, 44n96
- materials, 99–125
 - aesthetic qualities, 44–45, 81, 107, 173 (*Parrot morning*), see also Gascoigne, Rosalie: aesthetics and sensibility
 - aluminium, dislike of, 116, 123, 142
 - apiary boxes, 49, 89, 116, 211 (*Turn of the tide*), 213 (*Grove*), 266 (*Skewbald*)
 - Arnott's parrots, see materials: package branding
 - art images, 113, see also homages, artworks used in; materials: printed images
 - balls, 83, 107, 156 (*Bath of balls*), 160 (*The dredge*), 162 (*[Bowls of balls]*), 182 (*Cloister*)
 - beer cans, 62, 109–110, 181–182 (*Room with a view*), 185 (*Waterfront*)
 - blue devil, 36, 41, 100, 130, 133
 - bones, 33, 49–50, 102, 129, 150–151 (*Last stand*), 151 (*Spine*), 153–154 (*Joie de mourir*)
 - boxes, 48–49, 116, see also materials: apiary boxes, soft-drink boxes
 - cable reels, 76, 90, 125, 264 (*Rose red city 7*), 273 (*White city*), 285 (*Wild strawberries*)
 - china shards, 114
 - collecting tactics, 87, 89–90, 118, 120, 240 (*Apricot letters*), see also materials: purchases
 - composition board, 142
 - copper floats, 107, 109
 - corrugated iron, see materials: iron, corrugated, galvanised
 - cow parsley, 101, 106
 - defined, 142–143
 - dolls, 88, 108, 154 (*Parrot lady*), 170 (*Dolly boxes*)
 - driftwood, 31, 33, 85
 - electrical insulators, 114, 143

materials (cont.)

- 'elegance' of, 63, 97, 99, 109, 113, 119, 124, 157–158 (*Enamel ware*), 177 (*Country air*), 180 (*Pale landscape*), 191 (*Paper square*), 216 (*Set up*), 232 (*Legend*), 258 (*Rose red city 5*), 262 (*Rose red city*), 285 (*White garden*)
- enamelware, 107, 109, 157–158 (*Enamel ware*), 195 (*The teaparty*), 216–217 (*Set up*)
- feathers, 62, 102–104, 157 (*[Caged bird]*), 180 (*Pale landscape*), 183 (*Feathered chairs*, [*Feather studies 1, 2 and 3*]), 185–186 (*Feathered fence*), 219 (*Winter paddock*), see also birds; Lake George
- fence posts, 117, 132, 218 (*String of blue days*)
- formboard and builders' plywood, 83, 118, 142, 223 (*High country [1]*), 225 (*Shoreline*), 244 (*Spring tides*)
- found objects, 107, see also dumps; foraging
- galvanised iron, see materials: iron, corrugated, galvanised
- glass, 114, 156 (*Bottled glass*)
- grasses, 33, 36, 62, 83, 100–101, 179 (*Grass rack*), 182 (*Storage*), 309 (*Grassfest*)
- iron, corrugated, galvanised, 39, 40, 48, 62, 83, 86, 119–120, 177 (*Country air*), 218–219 (*Swell*), 262–264 (*Rose red city series*), 272 (*Steel magnolias*), 285 (*White garden*)
- linoleum, 63, 76, 114–115, 181 (*River banks*), 194–195 (*Step through*), 264–266 (*Sheep weather alert*)
- Lysaght lady, 110, 179–180 (*Husbandry*), 209 (*Matriarch*), 237 (*Hill station*), 243 (*[Homage with Lysaght lady]*)
- Masonite board, 76, 117, 142
- metal labels, 107, 110, 125

- materials (cont.)
- newspaper, 55, 62–63, 112, 113–114, 174 (*[Study: horses]*), 180–181 (*Pale landscape*), 184 (*[Lillie and daffodils]*), 191–192 (*Paper square*), 204 (*Harvest*), 211 (*[Study: horse races]*)
 - Norco cows, *see* materials: package branding
 - package branding, 55, 111–112, 159 (*Norco (after Gruner)*), 164 (*Jim's picnic*), 175 (*Tiepolo parrots*), 221 (*Pineapple pieces*)
 - paint, *see* work practices: paint, use of
 - plywood, 117, 142
 - printed images, 111–114, *see also* homages, artworks used in; materials: newspaper, package branding
 - printed metal, 107, 110, 125
 - purchases, 113, 116n41, 125, 153 (*Joie de mourir*), 173 (*Pet sheep*), 266 (*Skewbald*), 277 (*But mostly air*)
 - road signs, handpainted, 124, 142, 232 (*Legend*), 240 (*Apricot letters*)
 - road signs, (retro)reflective, 71–72, 89–90, 122–124, 142, 248 (*Full stretch*), 255 (*Fool's gold*), 278 (*Gentlemen of Japan*), 279 (*Hung fire*), *see also* display of R.G. works
 - salsify, 57, 83, 90, 100, 101, 135, 170 (*Crop [1]*), 203 (*Crop 2*)
 - as self-portrait, 82
 - sheep droppings, 95, 210 (*[Sheep yard]*)
 - shells, 17, 104–105, 211 (*Turn of the tide*), 216 (*Red beach*)
 - soft-drink boxes, 63, 71, 72, 89, 90, 120–122, 167 (*Vertical hold*), 187–188 (*March past*), 192 (*Parrot country*), 199 (*Sharpe Bros horizontal*), 217–218 (*String of blue days*)
 - sources of, *see* dumps; foraging
 - sporting images, 112, *see also* materials: newspaper
- materials (cont.)
- stone and gravel, 31, 33, 36, 105, 214 (*Industrial area*)
 - surveyors' pegs, 83, 118, 155 (*Surveyor's pegs*)
 - thistles, 36, 44, 45, 47, 83, 90, 100, 106–107, 135, 198 (*Piece to walk around*), 201 (*Takeover bid*)
 - used 'as found', 163 (*Italian birds*), 165 (*Pink window*), 173 (*Parrot morning*), 190 (*Ikona*), 258 (*Rose red city 5*)
 - weathered, 81, 110, 113–114, 191–192 (*Paper square*), 204 (*Harvest*), 213 (*Grove*)
 - window frames, 116, 117, 165, 201 (*Takeover bid*)
 - wire, wire mesh, cages, 36, 39, 40, 106–107, 133, 167–168 (*Angels*), 271 (*Plein air*)
 - wood, pink-painted, 117, 210 (*Pink on blue*)
 - wood, weathered, 116–118, 143, 167 (*Triptych*), 188 (*Private beach*), *see also* colours
 - wool, 95, 330
 - see also* Gascoigne, Rosalie: aesthetics and sensibility, 'chance' in R.G.'s art; work practices: preparation of materials
 - Matisse, Henri, 35, 223 (*[Homage ... Le luxe II]*), *[Homage ... Nono Lebasque]*, 273 (*Tree of life*)
 - McAloon, William, 351, 381
 - McCahon, Colin, 61, 73, 74–75, 327 in R.G.'s art, 75, 214 (*[Homage ... Angel of the Annunciation]*), 223 (*High country [1]*), 225 (*Shoreline*), 237 (*Hill station*), 254 (*Clouds I*), 281 (*Skylark*)
 - McCarthy, Frances (Lindsay), 52n119
 - McCaughy, Patrick, 53, 66
 - McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery, 386
 - McCulloch, Alan, 72, 323
 - McCullough, Tom, 363
 - McDonald, Ewen, 72–73, 330
 - McDonald, John, 332–333, 341, 342, 343, 345, 354, 369, 377, 383, 385
 - McGillick, Paul, 335
 - McGrath, Sandra, 58, 317, 325, 358, 363
 - McLeavey, Peter, 74, 214 (*[Homage ... Angel of the Annunciation]*), 327
 - McMeekan, Daintry (sister), *see* Walker, Daintry
 - McMeekin, Ivan, 42
 - McNamara, TJ, 327, 381
 - McPhee, John, 173 (*Parrot morning*), 201 (*The fall*), 367, 373
 - Meadmore, Clement, 42
 - Mellick, Ross, 377
 - Mendelssohn, Joanna, 341, 343, 383
 - Metcalfe, Ellen (Nellie) (aunt), 16, 17
 - Metcalfe, Jessie (grandmother), 15, 16, 17
 - Mignacca, Eneide, 318
 - Millar, Ronald, 72, 328, 330, 364
 - Mimms, Vicki, 106
 - minimalism and R.G., *see* art history context and R.G.: minimalism
 - Missingham, Hal, 37
 - Modigliani, Amedeo, 38, 42n90
 - Mollison, James, 42, 53–54, 66, 78, 164 (*Jim's picnic*), 260 (*Airborne 1*)
 - advice on exhibiting, 57, 58, 64, 65, 68, 169 (*Carnival*), 316 and *Nu debout*, 113, 197 (*Down to the silver sea*)
 - offers help, 63, 186 (*Feathered fence*)
 - purchases R.G. works, 57, 59, 162 (*[Bowls of balls]*), 188 (*March past*), 316
 - reactions to R.G.'s art, 54n125, 63, 149 (*Elephant pot*), 150 (*Last stand*), 155 (*Wired wool*), 182 (*Cloister*), 191 (*Paper square*), 194 (*Step through*)
 - reflections in R.G.'s art, 164 (*Jim's picnic*), 184 (*The gallery man*), 188 (*Private beach*)
 - on R.G.'s titles 106, 149 (*Elephant pot*), 156 (*Back verandah*), 160 (*The dredge*)
 - seeks R.G.'s views, 53, 64, 78, 283 (*Suddenly the lake*)
 - wanting his reaction to new works, 50, 63, 148 (*Cityscape*), 153 (*Joie de mourir*), 158 (*Enamelware*), 260 (*Airborne 1*)

- Mollison, James (cont.)
works owned by, 164 (*Jim's picnic*), 168 (*Bucket of flowers*), 178 (*Daffodil box*), 181 (*River banks*), 182 (*Cloister*)
see also National Gallery of Australia
- Monaro district, 55, 80, 83, 84, 85, 90, 93, 101, 345
reflections in R.G.'s art, 92, 179 (*Grass rack*), 238 (*Monaro*), 297 (*Poplars*)
see also Cooma; country
- Monet, Claude, 76
- Moore, Henry, 41, 42
- Morandi, Giorgio, 109, 167 (*Triptych*)
- Morphy, Howard, 378
- Morris, Robert, 51
- Mount Stromlo, 23, 26–32, 80
reflections in R.G.'s art, 94, 96, 165–166 (*Pink window*), 242 (*Far view*), 250–251 (*Letting go*), 280 (*Milky Way*), 282 (*Star chart*), 287 (*Afternoon*), 304 (*Rose hips*)
see also Brindabella mountains; Gascoigne, Rosalie: houses
- Murphy, Bernice, 363
- Murphy, John, 385
- Murrumbidgee River, 30, 31, 33, 83
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, 367
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
exhibitions
Almanac: The Gift of Ann Lewis (2009), 385
Island to Island: Australia to Cheju (1995), 376–377
Spirit + Place: Art in Australia 1861–1996 (1996), 377
Tell Me, Tell Me: Australian and Korean Art 1976–2011 (2011), 387
R.G. works in collection, 390
- Museum of Modern Art, New York, 51n116, 54, 164 (*Jim's picnic*)
- Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, 77, 287 (*Afternoon*), 290 (*Overland*), 378–379
- Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 74, 326–327, 392
- music references in R.G. works, 171 (*Flora Galop*), 172 (*Joyful and triumphant*), 234 (*Plainsong*), 236 (*All that jazz*), 237 (*Gaudeamus*), 278 (*Gentlemen of Japan*), 289 (*Gay Gordons*), 290 (*Night and day*), 291 (*Polka*), 292 (*Roundelay*), 295 (*Downbeat*), 298 (*Trumpet voluntary*)
- Muybridge, Eadweard, 112, 179 (*[Homage ... Ox trotting]*)
- Myer store exhibit, Adelaide, 47
- ## N
- National Art Gallery, Wellington, see Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
- National Gallery of Australia
acquisitions
other artists, 60, 66, 74, see also Braque, Georges
R.G. works, 54, 57n136, 59, 174 (*The colonel's lady*), 318, 360
exhibitions
20th Century Masters ... (1986), 223 (*[Homage ... Lebasque]*)
A New Romance (1987), 367
Australian Art 1940–1990 from the Collection of the National Gallery of Australia (Japan 1995), 377
Federation: Australian Art and Society 1901–2001 (2000), 383
Home Sweet Home: Works from the Peter Fay Collection (2003), 384
Islands: Contemporary Installations from Australia, Asia, Europe and America (1996), 377
Landscape — Art: Two Way Reaction (1980–81), 66, 214 (*Industrial area*)
Material as Landscape (1998), 77–78, 343–345
- National Gallery of Australia (cont.)
Some Recent Acquisitions of Australian Art (1978), 360
The Great Impressionists, 113, 223 (*[Homage ... La loge]*)
The Philip Morris Arts Grant ... (1982), 364
gifts by R.G., 42n93, 185 (*Feathered fence*), 283 (*Suddenly the lake*)
reflections in R.G.'s art, 60, 113, 164 (*Jim's picnic*), 175 (*Tiepolo parrots*), 184 (*The gallery man*), 192 (*Parrot country*), 197 (*Down to the silver sea*), 223 (*[Homage ... Lebasque]*), *[Homage ... La loge]*, 283 (*Suddenly the lake*)
R.G. tries out works at, 186 (*Feathered fence*), 281 (*Skylark*), 290 (*Overland*)
R.G. works in collection, 122, 390–391
see also Mollison, James
- National Gallery of Victoria
exhibitions
7th Biennale of Sydney — From the Southern Cross (1988), 73, 369
Australia at the Venice Biennale (1982), 69, 364
Australian Sculpture Now: Second Australian Sculpture Triennial (1984), 73, 366
Clemenger Contemporary Art Award (1999), 381
Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Art (1993), 73, 373–374
Colin McCahon: A Time for Messages (2001), 383
Rosalie Gascoigne (2008), 79, 353–355
Survey 2: Rosalie Gascoigne (1978), 64–65, 320–321
Third Australian Sculpture Triennial (1987), 368
R.G. works in collection, 59, 67, 391
- National Library of Australia, 38, 78, 132
- National Times*, 365

- Nefertiti, 113, 196 (*Venus*), 213
 ([*Homage ... Nefertiti*])
- Nelson, Robert, 354
- Nevelson, Louise, 56, 60n143
- Newcastle Art Gallery
 exhibitions
 Gallery A Sydney 1964–1983
 (2009), 385
 *Laverty 2: Selections from the
 Colin and Elizabeth Laverty
 Collection* (2011), 387
 Rosalie Gascoigne (2013), 356
 RG works in collection, 59, 391
- New England Regional Art Museum,
 391
- New York, *see* Gascoigne, Rosalie:
 travel
- New Zealand
 childhood and family, 13–18
 education, 19–23
 memories of, 24–25, 75
 not an NZ artist 25, 75, 380–381
 re-engagement with, 74–75
 reflections in RG's art, 75, 96,
 227 (*Poor man's orange*), 235
 (*Tivofold Bay*), 237 (*Hill
 station*), 238 (*Landfall*), 240
 (*Beach house*), 250–251 (*Letting
 go*), 255–256 (*High water mark*),
 260 (*Age of innocence*), 263
 (*Rose red city series*)
 travel to, 24, 27, 32, 74, 75, 125,
 326–327
see also Auckland Art Gallery
 Toi o Tāmaki; City Gallery
 Wellington; Daniel, Marjorie;
 McCahon, Colin; Museum
 of New Zealand Te Papa
 Tongarewa
- Neylon, John, 346
- Nixon, John, 69
- Nolan, Sidney, 42, 95, 164 (*Jim's
 picnic*), 192 (*Parrot country*), 209
 (*Parrot country II*)
- North, Ian, 68, 205 ([*Numbers for
 Patrick*], [*Parrots for Ian North*]),
 371, 379
- O
- O'Brien, Gregory, 96n39, 124n65,
 350
- O'Brien, Lesta, 42
- O'Grady, Desmond, 324
- Oxley, Roslyn, 73, 77, 123, 125, 333,
see also RoslynOxley9 Gallery
- P
- Page, Geoff, 48n109, 345
- Palmqvist, Anna, 370
- Pardoe, Anthony, 46, 152 ([*Sunflowers
 and radiator*])
- Parliament House Art Collection, 391
- Parr, Lenton, 41
- patchwork quilt, 29
- Paton, Justin, 381
- Pearce house (Anstey Street), *see under*
 Gascoigne, Rosalie: houses
- Peers, Juliet, 355
- Perkins, Hetti, 382
- Perth Institute of Contemporary Art,
 376
- Pether, Louise, 74, 334
- Philip Morris art collection, 53, 54,
 57, 187 (*March past*), 194 (*Step
 through*), 316
 exhibitions
 *Philip Morris Arts Grant Second
 Annual Exhibition* (1975),
 357–358
 *Philip Morris Arts Grant Third
 Annual Exhibition* (1976),
 359
 *The Philip Morris Arts Grant:
 Australian Art of the Past Ten
 Years* (1982), 364
 works damaged, 156 (*Back
 verandah*), 160 (*The dredge*),
 161 (*Woolshed*), 162
 ([*Bowls of balls*])
- Phipps, Jennifer, 172 (*Parrot morning*)
- Picasso, Pablo, 25, 35, 40, 41, 56,
 61–62, 78, 113
 reflections in RG's art, 167
 (*Triptych*), 200 (*Side show
 parrots*), 202 (*The players*),
 202–203 (*Travelling circus*), 278
 (*Harlequin*)
- Pinacotheca Gallery, 67, 72–73, 123,
 194 (*Step through*), 333, *see also*
 Pollard, Bruce
 exhibitions by RG, *see under*
 exhibitions, solo
- Plate, Carl, 33–34, 46, 51, 52, 64, 130,
 150 (*Germaine Greer*)
- poetry
 poet friends, *see* Bell, Pamela;
 Dobson, Rosemary; Levertov,
 Denise; Page, Geoff; Rowland,
 John; Wright, Judith
 in RG's art, as seen by critics, 58,
 124, 181 (*Room with a view*),
 320, 324, 330, 351, 352, 354,
 359, 365
 RG's art as subject for other
 poets, 48n109, 158 (*Enamel
 ware*), 220 (*Flight*), 257 (*May
 morning*), 345, 401–402
 RG's poetic imagination, 20, 50,
 58, 75, 76, 95, 141
see also Gascoigne, Rosalie:
 aesthetics and sensibility,
 language and word skills
 poetry references in RG works
 Alexander, Cecil Francis, 247
 (*Bright and beautiful*)
 Blake, William, 124, 228 (*Tiger
 tiger*)
 Burgon, John William, 262–264
 (*Rose red city series*)
 Campbell, David, 310 (*Great blond
 paddocks*)
 Homer, 178 (*Early morning*)
 Hopkins, Gerard Manley, 109,
 266 (*Skewbald*)
 Kipling, Rudyard, 174 (*The
 colonel's lady*)
 skylarks, 281 (*Skylark*)
 Stein, Gertrude, 229 (*A rose is a
 rose*)
see also biblical and religious
 references in RG works;
 literary references in RG
 works; Shakespeare, William
- Pollard, Bruce, 67, 73, 210 (*Pink on
 blue*), 247 (*Cockatoos*), 262–263
 (*Rose red city series*), 323–324,
 331, 333, *see also* Pinacotheca
 Gallery

Pollock, Jackson, 51n116, 53
printmaking, 241–242 (*Close owly*),
246 (*Across town*)

Q

Queanbeyan, 80, 117, 169 (*Carnival [1]*), 201 (*Side show parrots*),
218 (*String of blue days*), *see also*
Schweppes depot, Queanbeyan
Queensland Art Gallery
exhibitions
*Diverse Visions: Twelve Australian
Mid to Late Career Artists*
(1991), 373
*The Great Australian Art
Exhibition* (1988), 368–369
*The Readymade Boomerang
Print Portfolio* (1990), 372
R.G. works in collection, 391
Queensland University of
Technology Art Collection, 391
Queen Victoria Museum and Art
Gallery, 59, 391

R

Radford, Ron, 75n184, 237 (*Hill
station*), 359, 368, 387
[Radock, Stephanie] SR, 342
Raphael, Sanzio da Urbino, 113, 184
(*The gallery man*)
Rauschenberg, Robert, 51, 59, 79, 81
Ray Hughes Gallery, 64, 65, 153
(*Japanese bathing*), 187 (*[For Ray]*),
195 (*Step through*), 322, 359–360,
see also Hughes, Ray
Ray, Man, 53
'regional' artist, *see under* Gascoigne,
Rosalie: artist, R.G. thoughts on
being an
Rembrandt, 244 (*Night watch*)
Renoir, Pierre-Auguste, 113, 223
(*[Homage ... La loge]*)
Revolve recycling depot, 88, 122,
277 (*But mostly air*), 279 (*Hung
fire*), 283 (*Suddenly the lake*)
Richmond, Oliffé, 42
RMIT University Art Collection, 391
Roberts, JL, 327

Roberts, Tom, 182 (*Bailed up*)
Rooney, Robert, 72, 73, 323, 339,
374
RoslynOxley9 Gallery, 77, 370–371,
see also Oxley, Roslyn
exhibitions by R.G., *see under*
exhibitions, solo
Rothko, Mark, 254 (*Clouds I, Clouds II*)
Rousseau, Henri, 186 (*Footballers*)
Rowland, John, 48n109
Royal Academy of Arts, London, 387
Rudy Komon Gallery, 51, 52
Rumley, Katrina, 68, 324, 325

S

Sacks, Oliver, 79n193
Sands, Kate, 348–349
Saurin, Jo, 369
Savage, Paula, 350
Saw, Andrew, 365
Sayers, Andrew, 82
Scarlett, Ken, 345
Schweppes depot, Queanbeyan, 63,
88, 89, 120–121, 187–188 (*March
past*), 190 (*Dove grey*), 192 (*Parrot
country*), 193 (*Rain forest*), 196
(*[White and grey A, B]*), 199 (*Sharpe
Bros horizontal*), 217 (*String of blue
days*), 283 (*Summer sprawl*)
Schwitters, Kurt, 56, 99
Scott, Hanna, 382
sculpture
early exposure, 34, 41–42, 50,
51–52
first efforts, 40, 44–48, 152
(*The miners*)
learning from ikebana, 37–38,
39, 41
see also assemblage art
Searle, Adrian, 378
seasons, 93–94, 97, 180 (*Pale
landscape*), 219 (*Winter paddock*)
Serra, Richard, 51
Shakespeare, William, 19, 91, 235
(*All that glisters*), 245 (*Sweet lovers,
Sweet sorrow*), 276 (*But mostly air*),
295 (*Full fathom five*)
Shinfield, Gary, 241 (*Close owly*)
Simons, Anna, 55, 316, *see also*
Macquarie Galleries, Canberra

Skipper, Matcham, 46
sky and clouds, 30, 61, 76, 217–218
(*String of blue days*), 228 (*[Studies
of 'cloud' shapes]*), 254 (*Clouds I, II,
III*), 271 (*Plein air*), 274 (*Wind and
weather*), 276 (*But mostly air*), 287
(*Afternoon*), 294 (*[White cloud]*),
see also air; country
Smee, Sebastian, 343, 346
Smith, David, 266 (*Skewbald*), 375
Smith, Gray, 42
Smith, Jason, 381, 383
Smith, Terry, 367
Smiths Gap, 282, 283 (*Suddenly the
lake*), *see also* Lake George
Soriano, Kathleen, 387
south coast, NSW, 85, 104, 188 (*Private
beach*), 211 (*Turn of the tide*), 225
(*Shoreline*), 235 (*Tivofold Bay*)
Sparnon, Norman, 37–38, 40, 45,
132, 133, 134, 135, *see also* ikebana
Stacey, Wesley, 45n100, 46
Streak, Diana, 386
Stuart, Guy, 42, 51
Studio One Printmaking Workshop,
241–242 (*Close owly*), 246 (*Across
town*)
Sturgeon, Graeme, 366, 367
supermarkets, *see* materials: package
branding

T

TarraWarra Museum of Art, 391
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery,
391
Tate Gallery, 40, 79, 392
Taylor, John Russell, 324
Taylor, Michael, 51, 52, 54–55,
57–58, 102, 153 (*Joie de mourir*),
154 (*Needle case, Parrot lady*), 155
(*Wired wool, Woolly wood*), 160
(*The cottage*), 162 (*Blue flower
tower*), 358
Taylor, Rominie, 54–55, 154 (*Parrot
lady*), 160 (*The cottage*)
Te Kuiti, New Zealand, 17
Teshigahara, Sofu, 37, 38–39, 45n99,
103, 104n12, 131, *see also* ikebana
Tharwa, 80, 85

- The Australian National University, 35, 42, 364, *see also* ANU Drill Hall Gallery exhibitions
- The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 35, 392
- The University of Melbourne Art Collection, 392
- The University of New South Wales Art Collection, 392
- The University of Queensland Art Museum, 392
- Thomas, Daniel, 58, 59, 153 (*Joie de mourir*), 201 (*The fall*), 351, 358, 368
- Tiepolo, Giambattista, 175 (*Tiepolo parrots*)
- Tillers, Imants, 69, 78
- tips, *see* dumps
- Titian, 214 (*Homage ... Sacred and profane love*)
- titles, 57, 115, 124, 140–141, 210 (*Pink on blue*), 230 (*Cherry orchard*), 258 (*Red*), 316
- admired by critics, 332, 346
- use of non-prescriptive titles, 141, 202 (*The players*), 218 (*Swell*), 279 (*Loopholes*), *see also* Gascoigne, Rosalie: art, RG objectives
- see also* biblical and religious references in RG works; film and television references in RG works; literary references in RG works; music references in RG works; poetry references in RG works
- tools
- bandsaws, 69, 72, 121, 123, 201 (*Side show parrots*), 227 (*Grasslands [I]*), 233 (*Outback*), 238 (*Monaro*), 239 (*The marriage feast*), 332
 - becoming skilled with, 69–70
 - Bedacryl (rust stabiliser), 90
 - blowlamps, 39
 - circular saws, 69
 - crowbars, 90
 - drills, 69, 72
 - tools (cont.)
 - hacksaws, 90, 120, 121, 188
 - (*March past*), 190 (*Dove grey*), 196 (*[White and grey A]*), 199 (*Sharpe Bros horizontal*)
 - jigsaws, 65, 111, 115, 184
 - (*[Homage with Dennis Lillee]*, *[Lillee and daffodils]*), 195 (*Step through*), 196 (*[Cat study 1]*), 197 (*Down to the silver sea*)
 - nibblers, 69
 - pinch-bars, 125
 - sanders, 69, 90
 - screwdrivers, electric, 69
 - sledgehammers, 125
 - tinsnips, 84
 - tomahawks, 90, 121
 - see also* Gascoigne, Rosalie: studio assistants; Gascoigne, SCB (Ben): welding
- Tucker, Albert, 64, 149 (*Eagle*), 192 (*Parrot country*)
- Tuckson, Tony, 290 (*Overland*)
- Twombly, Cy, 60, 230 (*Close owly*)
- U**
- University of South Australia Art Museum, 379
- University of Tasmania Fine Arts Gallery, 329
- Upston, Louise, 326
- V**
- Vandermark, Peter, 43n95, 70, 87, 88, 295 (*Byzantium, Easy street*), 306 (*Tribal*), 308 (*Earth*), 311 (*Metropolis*)
- Van Gogh, Vincent, 18, 252 (*Sunflowers*)
- Van Veen, Mark, 386
- Venice Biennale, 65, 67–69, 95, 97, 114, 324–325
- viewing, reading RG works, *see* under Gascoigne, Rosalie: art, RG objectives
- Virgo, Anne, 338
- Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council
- exhibitions supported, 67–68, 324–325, 327, 365–366
 - purchase grants, 163 (*Italian birds*), 170 (*Dolly boxes*), 179 (*Husbandry*), 199 (*Sharpe Bros horizontal*), 203 (*Blossom*)
- Vogue Living*, 43–44, 148 (*William Tell*), 150 (*[Glass insulators]*), 226 (*Blue bows*)
- W**
- Waiheke Island, New Zealand, 17, 31, 77, 105, 260 (*Age of innocence*)
- Walker, Daintry (McMeekan) (sister), 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20n23, 23, 75, 237 (*Hill station*)
- Walker, David, 148 (*William Tell*)
- Walker, Douglas (brother), 13, 16, 17, 20n23, 23
- Walker, Marion (née Metcalfe) (mother), 13–14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29
- Walker, Stanley (father), 13, 14–15, 16, 20, 24
- Ward, Elinor, 28
- Ward, Frederick, 28n45, 42
- Ward, Peter, 371
- Warhol, Andy, 56, 111
- Waterlow, Nick
- exhibition curator/director, 65–66, 106, 185–186 (*Feathered fence*), 189 (*Winter order*), 361–362, 369, 374, 377
 - and Venice Biennale (1982), 67, 68, 324–325
- Watkins, Richard (Dick), 42, 50, 51, 52
- Watters, Frank, 47, 51
- Watters Gallery, 47, 51, 52, 179 (*Grass rack*)
- Wawrzynczak, Anni Doyle, 386
- Wedde, Ian, 74, 327
- Wee Jasper, 80, 83, 90, 100
- Weight, Greg, 166 (*Pink window*)
- Weston, Neville, 324
- Whangarei, New Zealand, 21, 23

Whisson, Ken, 50, 61, 157–158
 (*Enamel ware*), 179 (*[Homage ... Illyria?]*), 258 (*September*), 274 (*Wind and weather*)

Williams, Fred, 81, 202 (*Travelling circus*)

Wollongong Art Gallery, 367, 375, 392

Woollard, Diana, 85n13, 104, 187
 (*Forty-acre block*), 188 (*[Parrots on fencepost]*, *Private beach*), 190 (*[Homage ... and shells]*)

Woolley, Richard, 26

work practices, 36, 51, 70–71, 72, 90
 aluminium strip, use of, 70, 72, 143, 199 (*Sharpe Bros horizontal*)
 assessment of works, 43, 70, 193 (*Pond*), 196 (*[White and grey A]*), 210 (*Pink on blue*), 281 (*Skylark*), 290 (*Overland*)
 backing boards, 231 (*Formal flowers*), 247 (*First fruits*), 291 (*Rocky road I*), 296 (*Parterre*)
 fine-tuning, 206 (*Scrub country*), 244 (*Old gold*), 250 (*Letting go*), 269 (*News break*, *[Pink offcuts]*), 310 (*Great blond paddocks*)
 framing, 113, 143, 177 (*Country air*)
 glueing, 72, 111, 112, 114, 115, 190 (*Dove grey*), 198 (*Eighty-nine parrots*), 199 (*Reconstruction*), 206 (*Scrub country*), 227 (*Grasslands [I]*), 238 (*Monaro*), 297 (*Poplars*), 308 (*Earth*)
 grids, *see* work practices: units and grids
 maquettes, 185 (*Waterfront*), 191–192 (*Paper square*), 192 (*Parrot country*), 199 (*Sharpe Bros horizontal*), *see also* work practices: studies
 multiples, use of, 108, 110, 153 (*Joie de mourir*), 170 (*Dolly boxes*)
 naming works, *see* titles
 offcuts and leftovers, 71, 121, 238 (*Monaro*), 246 (*Vestiges*)

work practices (cont.)
 paint, use of, 117, 163 (*Italian birds*), 247 (*[‘Bird’ studies]*, *Cockatoos*), 262 (*Honeybunch*), 265 (*Sheep weather alert 5*), 270 (*Plain view 1*, *Plain view 2*), 271 (*Plein air*), 276–277 (*But mostly air*), 287 (*Afternoon*), 290 (*Overland*)
 plinths, use of, 60, 147 (*[River stone]*), 157–158 (*Enamel ware*), 160 (*The dredge*), 162 (*Blocks*), 166 (*The Pepper Pot*), 168 (*Black bird box*), 181 (*Room with a view*), 184 (*The gallery man*), 185–186 (*Feathered fence*), 186 (*Footballers*), 200–201 (*Side show parrots*), 216–217 (*Set up*)
 preparation of materials, 90
 boxes, 116, 120, 121, 238 (*Monaro*)
 cable reels, 125, 273 (*White city*)
 formboard, 223 (*High country [1]*)
 galvanised iron, 119
 grasses, thistles, 100, 203 (*Crop 2*)
 linoleum, 115
 newspaper, 113
 package branding, 111, 112
 road signs, 123, 124
see also materials: used ‘as found’
 recreated or reconstructed works, 170 (*Crop [1]*), 180 (*Landscape [2]*, *Pale landscape*), 191–192 (*Paper square*), 192 (*Parrot country*), 203 (*Crop 2*), 204 (*Harvest*), 209–210 (*Parrot country II*), 248 (*Fragmentation [II]*), 252 (*Target*), 262–264 (*Rose red city 8, 9, 10*), 264–266 (*Sheep weather alert series*), 282 (*Southerly buster*), 284 (*Top End*), 289 (*Landscape [3]*), 295 (*Byzantium*), 297 (*Poplars*), 299 (*[Ziggurat]*), 301 (*Frontiers I–IV*, *Frontier V*)

work practices (cont.)
 resized works, 189 (*Winter order*), 193 (*Rain forest*), 194 (*Step through*), 207 (*Spring 1*, *Spring 2*), 252 (*Through road*), 296 (*Lasseter’s reef*), 306 (*Tribal*), *see also* work practices: units and grids
 signing and dating, 141, 143, 318
 studies, 70–71, 140, 174 (*The colonel’s lady*), *see also* work practices: maquettes
 units and grids, 62, 70–71, 72, 140, 170 (*Dolly boxes*), 187–188 (*March past*), 191–192 (*Paper square*), 192 (*Parrot country*), 194 (*Step through*), 206 (*Scrub country*), 295 (*Easy street*), 303 (*Palings*)
 welding, *see* Gascoigne, SCB (Ben): welding
see also Gascoigne, Rosalie: aesthetics and sensibility, ‘chance’ in RG’s art, creative process, feelings, studio and workspaces; titles; tools

Wright, Judith, 48, 317

Wrigley, Hilary, 47, 52, 150 (*[Glass insulators]*)

Y

Yass, 80, 83, 89, 122

Z

Zimmer, Jenny, 336, 375