

NICOLA DICKSON

Nicola Dickson is a Canberra-based artist whose practice explores the natural world and perceptions of identity with particular reference to Australia's colonial history. Although primarily a painter, Nicola works with a range of media including drawing, installation, printmaking and ceramics. She says "my practice focuses on communicating the sense of wonder I feel when I encounter strange or novel things in the natural world. Small treasures, large landscapes, living creatures and remnants of past lives and stories folded into locations inspire my practice. My art works aim to convey the fascination that all these things hold for me." Retracing the footsteps of the 18th/19th century European explorers, naturalists and expedition artists to Australia, Nicola uses archival material from their voyages as a starting point. She re-presents these historical images of people, plants and animals, incorporating imaginary idealised landscapes and decorative forms to enhance the feeling of "other worldliness" that stemmed from these encounters. Her intricate paintings and drawings evoke not only a sense of beauty but also offer an opportunity to find historical resonances in the present.

Nicola Dickson graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the School of Art at the Australian National University in 2003 before undertaking a PhD which she completed in 2010. She has exhibited widely since graduating and has held over twenty solo exhibitions nationally including a regional show at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery in 2023. Nicola was a finalist in the 2013 Sulman Prize and, in 2024, was a finalist in the Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize. Nicola's work was included in the National Portrait Gallery exhibition 'So Fine: Contemporary women artists make Australian history' in 2018 and is represented in the collections of the Canberra Museum & Gallery, Parliament House and the ACT Legislative Assembly. Nicola Dickson has undertaken several residencies including an artist residency in Mildura in 2021 and Rhode Island in 2019.

BIOGRAPHY

1959	Born, Southport, Qld
2000-03	Bachelor of Visual Art, Honours, School of Art, Australian National University
2004-5	Alumni in Residence, Edition and Arts Book Studio, Australian National University
2006-10	Doctor of Philosophy, School of Art, Australian National University
2014	Vice-Chancellor's College Visiting Artist Fellowship, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific
2017	Residency, Institut français résidence cité internationale des arts, Paris
2019	Mabel Residency, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Rhode Island, USA
2021	Artist in residence, The Art Vault, Mildura

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2024	"Voyagers' Tales - Louis de Freycinet", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
2023	"Only a remnant", Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, NSW
2022	"Walking the Murray - in the steps of Blandowski", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
2021	"Space for Hope and Wonder", The Art Vault, Mildura
2020	"Voyagers' Tales – Baudin", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
2019	"French Collection", Canberra Museum and Gallery
2018	"The Naturalist's Footsteps", Allport Museum and Gallery, Hobart
2017	"Voyagers' Tales: Labillardière", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
2016	"Close Encounters", Alliance Française, Melbourne
2015	"Close Encounters", Canberra Museum and Gallery
	"Voyager's tales: Ferdinand Bauer", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
2014	"Embodied encounters", Australian National University, Canberra
2013	"Frames of reference", M16 Artspace, Canberra
	"Birds from a New World, Bega Regional Gallery, Western Plains Cultural Centre, NSW
2011	"Indigene Imagining", Beatty Gallery, Paddington, NSW
2010	"Empire eyes", Beatty Gallery, Paddington, NSW
	"Wonderlust", School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
2009	"An 'other' visions", Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Canberra
2008	"Other visions", foyer gallery, School of Art, Australian National University
2006	"Exotica", Beatty Gallery, Sydney
2005	"Mementos", Impressions on Paper Gallery, Canberra
	"Garden games", Canberra Grammar School
2004	"By any other Name", Canberra Contemporary Art Space

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024	Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, finalist, South Australian Museum
2023	"Small works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra

- 2022 Fisher's Ghost Art Award, Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW
Canberra Art Biennial (installation at Beaver Galleries)
- 2021-22 "Harbinger", Mildura Arts Centre, Vic, Gippsland Art Gallery, Vic
- 2021 "Small works", Beaver Galleries
- 2019 Bayside Acquisitive Art Prize, Bayside, Melbourne
"Small works", Beaver Galleries
The R&M McGivern Prize, Melbourne
The Hadley's Art Prize, Hobart
- 2018 "Small works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
"So Fine", National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
"The Fellows", ANU School of Art and Design Gallery, Canberra
- 2017 "Avian", Canberra Museum and Gallery
"Naturally yours", ANU School of Art and Design Gallery, Canberra
"How does your garden grow?", Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW
- 2016 "Small works 2016", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
Stanthorpe Art Festival, Stanthorpe, QLD
"Bush Capital", Canberra Museum and Gallery
"Art not Apart, New Acton, Canberra
- 2015 "Art and Environment Exhibition in a Suitcase", ANU Regional Partnership Program
"VCCAFS 2014", School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
- 2014 "Art in Embassies Exhibition", US Embassy, Canberra
M16 artists' exhibition, M16 Gallery, Canberra
Waterhouse Natural Science Prize, South Australian Museum
- 2013 "Small Works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
Waterhouse Natural Science Prize, South Australian Museum
Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales
- 2012 "Groundworks", Form Gallery, Queanbeyan, NSW
"Climarte", Form Gallery, Queanbeyan, NSW
- 2011 "Natural Instincts", M16 Artspace, Canberra
"Blending Boundaries", Goulburn Regional Gallery, NSW
"A Gleam of Light", Helen Maxwell Gallery, Canberra
"Atonement", Bega Regional Gallery
"Imitation of Life", Canberra Museum and Gallery
- 2010 "The St George Art Award", Hurtsville City Museum and Gallery
"The Kilgour Prize", Newcastle Regional Gallery, NSW
The Paper Show", Brenda May Gallery, Sydney
- 2009 "The Flower Show", Brenda May Gallery, Sydney
"M16 Drawing Prize", M16 Gallery, Canberra
"Prometheus Visual Art Award", Merrimac, Qld
- 2008 "The Gathering", M16 Gallery, Canberra
- 2007 "Great Southern Land", Beatty Gallery, Sydney
"Hazlehurst Art Award", Hazlehurst Regional Gallery, NSW
"Waterhouse Natural History Prize", South Australian Museum
"Caring for Land", Australian Botanical Gardens, Canberra
"Prometheus Visual Arts Award", Merrimac, Qld
- 2006 "Picture this: painting alumni 2000-6", School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
- 2005 "Canberra Contemporary Art Space Award", Canberra Contemporary Art Space
"Flock, group show about birds", Helen Maxwell Gallery, Canberra
"Willoughby Art Prize", Chatswood, NSW
"Artists Book Exhibition", Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby, NSW
"Vision Exchange", Ewha Woman's University, Seoul, Korea
"Prometheus Visual Arts Award", Merrimac, Qld
- 2005 "How I entered there I cannot truly say", touring exhibition, Artspace, McKay, Bathurst Regional Gallery, NSW, State Library of Victoria
"Cowra Festival Art Award", Cowra, NSW
- 2004 "Cowra Festival Art Award", Cowra, NSW
- 2003 "130 Degrees", School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
"The Lachlan: Blue-Gold", Grenfell, NSW

AWARDS / COMMISSIONS

- 2024 Finalist, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
2023 Finalist, Fisher's Ghost Art Award, Campbelltown Arts Centre
2022 Grant recipient: CAPO Rosalie Gascoigne Memorial Award
2021 Grant recipient: ArtsACT Project funding
2020 Grant recipient: ArtsACT Arts Activity funding
2019 Mabel Residency, Norman bird Sanctuary, Rhode Island, USA
Grant recipient: ArtsACT Arts Activity funding
Finalist, The R&M McGivern Prize, Melbourne
Finalist, The Hadley's Art Prize, Hobart
Finalist, Bayside Acquisitive Art Prize, Melbourne
2017 Laureate Institut Française, residency program, France
2014 Vice-Chancellor's College Visiting Artist Fellowship, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific
Highly Commended, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
Finalist, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
2013 Highly Commended, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
Finalist, Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize, South Australian Museum
Finalist, Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales
2012 "Enlighten Canberra 2012", design of architectural projections
Highly Commended, Goulburn Art Award, NSW
CAPO Singapore Airlines Travel Grant
2010 Highly Commended, St George Art Award
2009 Graduate materials award, School of Art, Australian National University
2008 Istituto Italiano di Cultura Premio Italia Award
Cliftons Art Prize
2006 Australian Post-Graduate Award
2003 EASS Australian National University Art Collection Acquisitive Award
Australian National University HC Coombs Scholarship

PUBLICATIONS

- 2022 "Natural fascination with the world", Sasha Grishin, *Canberra Times*, 4 June
2020 "Imagining Malmaison: artist Nicola Dickson's wonderful journey", Genevieve Jacobs, *the-riotact.com*, 27 July
"Wistful works of detailed delicacy", Sasha Grishin, *Canberra Times*, 1 August
"Witnessing wonder at its most intense", Sally Pryor, *Canberra Times*, 3 August
2019 "Representing Encounters- The drawings of Jean Piron", *History and Anthropology*, Volume 33(1)
2018 "Translation and Transformation-Piron's Drawings' in Collecting in the South Sea: The voyage of Bruni d'Entrecasteaux 1791-1794", editors Bronwen Douglas, Fanny Wonu Veys and Billie Lythberg, *Sidestone Press, Leiden*
2017 "Nicola Dickson's Voyagers Tales at Beaver Galleries", Sasha Grishin, *The Canberra Times*, 13 August
2015 "Close Encounters at Canberra Museum and Gallery", Kerry-Anne Cousins, *The Canberra Times*, 18 November
2011 "Natural Instincts", Chloe Mandryk, *BMA Magazine*, Issue 383, 7 November
"Natural talent laid bare", Jacqui Cheney, *The Canberra Times*, 5 November, p. 24
"Flattery of imitation pervades exhibition", Jacqui Cheney, *The Canberra Times*, 3 September, p. 28
2007 "Rewriting the Exotic: in discussion with Nicola Dickson", J. Trevethick & N. Dickson, *Graduate Journal of Asian and Pacific Studies* 5(1)
2004 "Exhibition shows the beast behind the Beauty", Ian Warden, *The Canberra Times*, 23 November, p. 7

COLLECTIONS

ACT Legislative Assembly, Canberra; Canberra Museum and Gallery, Canberra; Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra; Australian National University, Canberra; Canberra Hospital, Embassy of the USA 'Art in Embassies' Collection, Network Economics Consulting Group, Sydney