



DOMESTICATED

contemporary feminist art and craft

9th - 18th March 2022 • George Paton Gallery



GEORGE
PATON
GALLERY

We acknowledge that this exhibition
takes place on Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung
Country. This was and always
will be Aboriginal land.



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PATON
GALLERY**

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Domesticated is a multi-disciplinary group exhibition that playfully explores intersections of domesticity and feminism. The gallery space is taken over by a kind of surreal playground, bursting with lurid colour and nostalgia. But underneath deeper politics are at play.

Domesticated examines the politics and emotion of domestic spaces, represents contemporary uses of traditional 'feminine' crafts, and celebrates on the history of the George Paton Gallery as a hub for feminist artists in the 1970's and 1980's.

Curated by Steph Markerink

Featuring Ebony Hoiberg, Bella Froebel, Maddie Mo,
Caitlin Aloisio Shearer and Emily King



Looking back to go forward: Feminist art at the George Paton Gallery

Written by Steph Markerink

It's funny to think that a quirky little gallery tucked away on level 2 of the University of Melbourne's Student Union House was the birthplace of feminist art in Melbourne. The walls of the George Paton Gallery [GPG] have seen the pioneering of the first Women's Art Register, Melbourne's first feminist art exhibition, and the first and perhaps only festival of women's performance art in Melbourne. Kiffy Rubbo, Janine Burke, Erica McGilchrist, Micky Allen, Elizabeth Gower, Vivienne Binns, and Laura Mulvey are just some of the incredible creative women who have made these walls their own and contributed something new to the experimental art scene of the 1970's and 1980's.

With the original gallery closing and imminently moving to the University of Melbourne's New Student Precinct, it is poignant to reflect on the significant role the GPG played in the progression of Australian feminist art.

Domesticated celebrates the future of contemporary feminist art by looking back at its history.

Domesticated interrogates the complexity of domestic spaces and their connection to a woman's identity. The home can be both a haven and a prison, offering comfort but also restriction. There is no doubt that the treatment, representation, and acknowledgement of women has improved in recent times, but there remains an inextricable and restraining link between a domestic setting and the woman occupying it.

To marry, to have children, to be satisfied with your career by 30, and to abandon the idea of having yourself as the priority in your life is something that most (if not all) women are not asked of, but are expected of. Since childhood we are fed a narrative so strongly ingrained in society that we pretend it is of our own choosing. A life

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confined to the domestic realm. There is joy in it, but there is sacrifice.

Domesticated deconstructs these narratives. Using colour, play, interactivity, and humour to examine a twisted, darker reality underneath. As you enter the exhibition you will find home-like fragments around you: a bed, a kitchen table, an armchair, and a chandelier of sorts. Just like any real home, these objects are performative. Their outward presentation is contradictory to the truths they hold. When you explore this exhibition, you're invited to not just view but to truly live in the space; to sit at the kitchen table, to smell the scents of home, and even to watch tv. You are asked to look beyond the surface and consider what each object is really saying about domesticity, femininity, and identity.

Domesticated also relates to the idea of a gallery as a home, a hub, and a haven for women artists. For decades women have been yearning for a space that offers creative autonomy, yearning for 'a room of one's own'. With the birth of the Women's Art Movement, many creative women

found their home within the walls of the GPG. This exhibition joins the feminist art history discourse. Offering our voices, perspectives, and stories through various artistic disciplines allows for multiple discussions on feminism and feminisms to take place simultaneously. Each artist uses different materials, techniques, and tools to examine their own understanding of gender and identity. Bringing these different perspectives together in the same space creates a conversation between each work rather than the delivery of a single argument.

With a few cheeky odes to some of the great feminist powerhouses that have exhibited before us, *Domesticated* farewell's the GPG and acknowledges its significant contribution to Australian feminist history. You are invited to become a part of that history. Enjoy the space, sit with the artworks, learn about the brave women before you, and consider how your relationship to your home has informed who you are.

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the curator



Steph Markerink is an emerging curator and creative producer with experience in visual arts programming in university festivals, private galleries, virtual, and not-for-profit contexts. At the core of her work is passion for inclusive, consumer-directed creative experiences that advance vibrant community life.

the artists



Ebony Hoiberg is a Melbourne-based sculpture and installation artist. With a background in Sociology and Community Development Ebony's work focuses on storytelling and considers what makes us the same and how we experience the world around us differently. Ebony works with a range of materials to create immersive experiences, presented with high aesthetic value.



Bella Froebel is a Sydney based artist with a focus on ceramics and textiles. Recently her practice has expanded into product design with an emphasis on recycled materials and sustainability during her studies at UNSW doing a Masters of Design. Her artworks share a sense of inclusivity, playfulness, and vibrance, but can also touch quite poignantly on deeper and darker themes.

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Maddie Mo is an artist based in Melbourne and Perth. Her work ranges from oil painting, to murals, watercolours, tattoos, and embroidery. Across all mediums Maddie's work is delicate, intricate, and unique. Her practice brings a refreshing edge to embroidery, marrying the traditional with the contemporary.



Emily King is a Melbourne-based multidisciplinary artist with a focus on creating sculptural fibre art pieces. Her work explores the boundaries of aesthetics by simultaneously representing desire and disgust, the attractive and the repulsive. She offers a bold and powerful exploration of feminism, consent, body image, and queerness.



Caitlin Aloisio Shearer is a fine arts graduate from the VCA where she studied painting. Bringing a unique quality to the traditional medium, Caitlin combines oil paint with wax and chalk pastel giving her paintings a warmth, richness, and enchanting haze. Caitlin imagines generous, soft, and playful worlds that combine a child-like sense of imagination with technical sophistication.

the artworks

Maddie | Embroidery

Maddie's most recent embroidery collection shown at the Domesticated Exhibition explores themes of the body and nature. The delicate and intricate works feature silent figures sewn carefully into fabric, lounging, and reflecting in a minimal palette. The pieces marry the traditional practice of needlework to the contemporary context of fine art in a unique way.

Emily | Crochet & Ceramics

This collection of work explores the perception of the feminine body and duality of desire and disgust. By presenting of the feminine body through an abstract organic lens, the viewer is drawn in but also intrigued by the unattractive notion of these forms reminiscent of bulbous organisms. Creating art through traditionally feminine mediums, ceramic and fibre; I hope to subvert the delicate and 'pretty' essence of those materials to produce work that challenges these notions. The concept of the installation is to take something that you would normally find comfort in and make it peculiar and unwelcoming, however remain tactile and inviting at the same time. My work encourages the audience to immersing themselves in my work and react to the feelings and emotions it rouses.

Ebony | Scent

What does home smell like? It's hard to pinpoint or explain. That smell of dust settled on bricks. Being wrapped up in my mum's dressing gown and channel number 5 on a special occasion. Spag bol on the stovetop. Windex to clean the bathroom mirrors every Sunday. The smell is a distinct sense because it is connected to our olfactory cortex, the part of the brain responsible for emotions and memory. In an instant, it hits you, as you try to grasp what the smell is or what its connected to in the deeps of your memory. These are segments and slices of my memories of the smell of my home, different to yours. So, what does home smell

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Caitlin | Painting

This collection of paintings revolves around a sincere attempt to grapple with the word Domesticated and its connotations. Defined by a preoccupation with the household, with adaptation and dependence, the word Domesticated carries a particular weight. At the moment the word speaks to me of an ultimate kind of interiority. Homeward bound. Very much Inside.

I have situated these paintings within four walls at all times to capture a feeling of being hemmed in. I looked back to the many housebound months of lockdown and hoped to translate the immense melancholy of that period. A semblance of resilience and a benign sort of palatable sweetness are squashed in there too. Made in my lounge room during a period without a studio, between bookshelves and an 80's rose print Laura Ashley fold out couch bed, these paintings came to light.

Bella | Fabric Installation & Video

My underwear was taken off me - for years I wondered if I could have done anything to prevent what happened that night and this led me to create Underneath and Crotch Pocket. The pieces are thematically linked by the idea of fabric as protection, prevention, armour - despite its flimsy, soft and colourful qualities.

Underneath is a hung canopy of underwear featuring many colours, patterns and textures. The waistbands of the underwear are sewn together to create a kaleidoscopic effect. The many pairs symbolise a few different ideas: firstly that the event has played so many times in my mind, uncontrollably and intrusively repeating. Secondly, these types of events happen so often - more than you think and to every type of person, which I like to think is reflected in the many styles and sizes of underwear in the work.

Crotch Pocket is a video work in which I am wearing a pale pink pair of hi-briefs (otherwise known as granny undies) which have a lace pocket sewn in the front. The video consists of a series of short clips in which different items are shoved in the pocket. I consider this work an absurdist comedy video as, although the themes are dark, I've always used humour to deal with trauma. Yes; the work is about things being shoved where they're not meant to go, but at the same time the colour palette, items used and pacing of the video create an amusing tone. One which I hope people can enjoy despite the subject matter.

the catalogue

Ebony Hoiberg

H-1) *What does home smell like?*, 2021, installation, scent vials | not for sale

A black stand holds nine glass scent vials. Each vial contains different smells evocative of home, smells include brick dust, perfume, and cleaning products.

Emily King

K-1) *Bound I*, 2022, earthenware clay, glaze, embroidery floss, felt | \$50

Large organic and bumpy shaped ceramics breast with dark dusty pink glazed nipple on top. The form is glazed white and stands upright and has fine candy pink thread tied tight around the form.

K-2) *Bound II*, 2022, earthenware clay, glaze, embroidery floss, felt | \$50

Medium sized organic and bumpy shaped ceramics breast. It has three oval forms connected from largest to smallest orientated from bottom to top. Two thirds of the form have a pale pink glaze and the atop the sculpture is a dark dusty pink glazed nipple on top. The form stands upright and has fine candy pink thread tied tight around the form.

K-3) *Bound III*, 2022, earthenware clay, glaze, embroidery floss, felt | \$50

Small organic ceramic form made up of two circular shapes. The bottom half is white and the top half is light pink with a dusty pink nipple on top. The form stands upright and has fine candy pink thread tied tight around the form.

K-4) *(un)Comfortable*, 2022, mattress, pillow, sheet set, acrylic paint, hand painted sheet and pillowcase | \$150

A single mattress lies on the floor with a beige cotton sheet haphazardly covering it. It had a beige covered pillow at the head of the mattress. The sheet and pillow case have white, brown and various shades of pink painted semi abstract fat female torsos. The torsos have a combination of solid colour and outlines to make the forms. They appear to have fat rolls, breasts and nipples and are akin to a microorganism.

K-5) *(dis)Comfort*, 2022, cotton crochet thread, acrylic wool, cotton twine | \$300

A crochet throw blanket lying across the (un)comfortable work. It is made of wool and cotton thread. The work has over 80 nipples crocheted together varying in colours and combinations from hot pink to pale pink, beiges, browns and corals and creams. The blanket is organic in form and doesn't have straight edges. The work has a chocolate brown border crocheted.

K-6) *Tea(t) Time*, 2022, cotton crochet thread, acrylic wool, cotton twine, stainless steel piercings | \$150

3D crocheted breasts joined together varying in colours and combinations from hot pink to pale pink, beiges, browns and corals and creams. Some nipples are pierced with stainless steel bars and hoops. The wall piece is organic in form. The work has a raspberry pink border crocheted.

Maddie Mo

M-1) *Leopard Danio*, 2020, Embroidery on linen, framed in Tasmanian Oak | \$200

Simple image of a fish sewn into white linen using mustard coloured pearlescent thread. Stretched tight and framed with oiled Tasmanian oak.

M-2) *Weeping Boy*, 2020, Embroidery and keshi pearls on Linen | \$150

Renaissance style image of a weeping boy's head sewn in to pale pink linen with blue pearlescent thread. He has a halo of small pearls sewn around his curly hair. Stretched tight over stretcher bars.

M-3) *Beaded Bust*, 2019, Embroidery and glass beads on linen, framed in Tasmanian Oak | \$100

Small image of a stone bust sewn on to natural linen using blue pearlescent thread. A grid of small white beads are sewn on top of the image. Stretched and framed in Tasmanian oak.

M-4) *Droop*, 2020, Embroidery on Linen | \$90

Small abstract face sewn on to pale green linen using pink thread. A green starburst adorns it's right cheek. Stretched over pine, unframed.

M-5) *Halo*, 2020, Embroidery on Linen, framed in Tasmanian Oak | \$250

Squiggly line drawing of a woman's face sewn in to natural linen, using khaki green pearlescent thread. A halo of cream coloured thread is sewn radiating away from her head. Stretched and framed in Tasmanian Oak.

M-6) *Squiggly Boys*, 2020, Embroidery on Linen, framed in Tasmanian Oak | \$600

Squiggly line drawing of two headless male presenting bodies (one facing towards the viewer, one facing away) on natural linen, using crimson thread. Stretched and framed with Tasmanian oak.

M-7) *Mellow*, 2020, Embroidery on linen, framed in Tasmanian Oak | \$370

A simple image of a daisy and leaves in a vase, next to a small reclining woman sewn in to white linen using pink, green, white, yellow and grey thread. Stretched and framed over Tasmanian oak.

M-8) *Triple Venus*, 2020, Embroidery on linen, framed in Tasmanian Oak | not for sale

Line drawing of three nude female presenting bodies overlapping each other. Sewn in navy blue on a cream linen. Stretched and framed over Tasmanian oak.

Bella Froebel

F-1) Underneath, 2018, textile | not for sale

Dozens of colourful womens underwear sewn together to create a canopy that is hung from the ceiling.

F-2) Crotch Pocket, 2018, video | not for sale

An 18-minute video of a woman with white skin wearing high waisted undies that have a 'crotch pocket'. Throughout the video the woman puts a random series of household objects into the pocket, items include a drill, and a bouquet of flowers.

Caitlin Aloisio Shearer

AS-1) Chair, 2022, oil paint, wax, and chalk pastel on canvas | \$250

Mauve background with blurry brown lines, partially resembling a wooden chair.

AS-2) Imposter Syndrome, 2022, oil paint, wax, and chalk pastel on canvas | \$250

Pale pink and pastel coloured painting in blurry lines vaguely resembling a female character squashed into a box.

AS-3) Dandelion and keyhole, 2022, oil paint, and chalk pastel on canvas | \$500

Lilac painting with brown textures resembling a keyhole and a dandelion, a trompe l'oeil of a woman's torso.

AS-4) I.U.D, 2022, oil paint, wax, and chalk pastel on canvas | \$250

A blurry female figure in very big boots holding onto a pink string, on a pale pink background.

AS-5) Table, 2022, oil paint and chalk pastel on canvas | \$350

A mauve background and blurry faint brown linework resembling a nude woman in the yoga position 'tabletop/wheel'.

AS-6) Hairdo, 2022, oil paint, wax and chalk pastel on canvas | \$250

A painting of a scene through a window with blue curtains and brown eyes superimposed on top.

AS-7) Chair Shoes, 2022, oil paint and chalk pastel on canvas | \$500

A painting of an amorphous fleshy chair with bright pink high heels on its feet.

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To purchase an artwork please contact the artist directly

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