

# NOT TO BE MISSED

The must-see exhibitions happening in Australia and New Zealand this quarter.

## JANET LAURENCE: *After Nature*

Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney  
Until 10 June 2019

JANET LAURENCE calls her work “an ecological quest”. For more than 30 years she has explored natural processes across a variety of media: sculpture, installation, photography and video. She’s used trees to remediate water quality in Sydney and offered plant-based elixirs to audiences in Japan and South America. Increasingly “politicised” (in her words) by global environmental degradation, her work reflects on the perishability, resilience and fascination of the natural world.

*Janet Laurence: After Nature* at Sydney’s Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) is the first major survey of the artist’s work, tracing her preoccupations from alchemy and Land Art to botanical science and environmentalism, along with formal transformations from stand-alone sculptures to vitrine displays and elaborate installations incorporating sound and moving images. A key component of the exhibition is *Theatre of Trees*, an immersive installation commissioned by the institution.

Laurence recently acknowledged that

## *Finissage*

Dominik Mersch Gallery Sydney  
12-16 June 2019

because her way of working has evolved to include more public commissions and participatory projects, hers is not “a madly commercial practice”. This hasn’t deterred what Sydney gallerist **Dominik Mersch** calls her “big following” among collectors. To coincide with the closing of the MCA exhibition, Dominik Mersch Gallery will host a *Finissage* from June 12 to 16, featuring works related to *Theatre of Trees*. These comprise small printed editions using the same images as the commissioned work, drawn from Laurence’s extensive photography of trees from around the world.

Collectors wanting to understand Laurence’s practice need to see the MCA survey; anyone wanting more – and Laurence’s work doesn’t often appear on the secondary market according to Mersch – needs to attend the *Finissage*. Come September, Laurence will be showing with her Melbourne gallery ARC ONE at this year’s Sydney Contemporary.

*Ingrid Periz*



Janet Laurence, *Theatre of Trees*, 2018–19. Installation view, *Janet Laurence: After Nature*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2019. COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND MCA, SYDNEY. PHOTO: JACQUIE MANNING.



Izabela Pluta, *Abstruse terms and general uncertainties (mirage)*, from the *Abstruse terms and general uncertainties* series, 2018. Chromogenic print on metallic paper. COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND THIS IS NO FANTASY, MELBOURNE.



Sally Gabori, *Dibiribi Country*, 2011. Synthetic polymer paint on linen, 151 x 196cm. COURTESY: THE ARTIST'S ESTATE, ALCASTON GALLERY, MELBOURNE AND THE VIVIAN, NEW ZEALAND.

## IZABELA PLUTA

### THIS IS NO FANTASY, Melbourne

9–27 April 2019

Izabela Pluta's latest solo at Melbourne's This Is No Fantasy comprises the most recent scenes of a longer conversation. It began with a deepwater dive in Japan, where the Pacific meets the East China Sea, in early 2018. Through the journey, Pluta sought to personally explore and document an archaeologically disputed underwater rock formation that lies at this oceanic intersection. The proving (or disproving) of the formation's historic legitimacy, fact or fiction, holds the potential to fundamentally change people's relationship and understanding of place: it could shape-shift memory retrospectively. Such inquiry and its concern with the construction of reality lies at the core of Pluta's practice.

This Is No Fantasy presents Pluta's photographs from Japan; of liminal objects like

navigational buoys, photocopied cinefoil, two-way mirrors and artifacts found in situ. These images are framed further by a multi-channel looped video circumnavigating the edge of a vertical rock face, tracing fallen limestone formations into the sea.

Initially shown in the exhibition *Geography of Space, Archaeology of Time* – a project developed in dialogue with Japanese artist **Utako Shindo** at Sydney's Australian Centre for Photography – Pluta uses the disputed Japanese site as a broader metaphor for uncertainty and displacement.

The dialogue initiated in Japan will further continue in Pluta's major new commission for *The National: New Australian Art* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales until 21 July 2019. It further coincides with Pluta's forthcoming solo at Port Macquarie's Glasshouse, running from 18 May to 12 July 2019.

Ineke Dane

## SALLY GABORI: Memories of Place – The Art of Sally Gabori

### The Vivian, Matakana

23 March – 12 May 2019

### Auckland Art Fair

1 – 5 May 2019

The late great **Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori** continues to attract attention in Australia and overseas, driven by the compelling colour, expression and sense of place for which her paintings have become known. While her painting practice spanned only 10 years at the end of her life, a significant estate remains, with funds from sales building a foundation to assist the education of her family's future generations.

Never-seen-before paintings have been released by Gabori's estate for an exhibition in New Zealand to be held at The Vivian, a contemporary gallery in Matakana, about an hour's drive north of Auckland. The Vivian will also show work by Gabori and **Patricia Piccinini** at the Auckland Art Fair. "The selection of paintings demonstrates both the boldness, and the delicate subtlety, of her work," says director **Scott Lawrie**. "There's a wonderful honesty in all of Mrs Gabori's paintings. We're excited to share her passion for colour, form, and storytelling with collectors on this side of the Tasman."

The exhibition is a collaboration with agent for the Gabori estate, **Beverly Knight** (also director of Alcaston Gallery). Alcaston represented Gabori at the gallery for nine of the 10 years of her painting practice and Knight believes that Gabori's paintings have a strong resonance for New Zealand audiences: "The paintings look abstracted at first, but when you delve a little bit you realise, they are about Country, land and sea."

Gabori's painterly expressions of place on Bentinck Island in Queensland's north were the subject of a major retrospective at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art and the National Gallery of Victoria in 2016 and 2017.

Louise Martin-Chew