SEBASTIAN DI MAURO

GREENBACK

7 NOVEMBER – 7 DECEMBER 2019

My maternal grandparents immigrated to Australia at the turn of the 20th century. Whilst my paternal grandparents and father arrived in Australia in the 1920s. I grew up on a continent far from where they had immigrated–Sicily. My upbringing was a rich experience living between two very different cultures. At four I was bilingual speaking Italian and English. It must have been difficult for my grandparents to comprehend the political incarnations of their new land. Much of their understanding would have come from their children. We lived in tropical far north Queensland until I was 13 when my family moved to Brisbane which is ironically in the same location as Delaware is on the Eastern Seaboard of the United States.

I have recently immigrated to the USA and am reflecting on my experience of being an immigrant from a country thousands of miles away. I am married to a US citizen who was born and raised in Wilmington Delaware and so I have some understanding of the country I am now living in. During my childhood I watched copious television series from America and these created an image of a country similar to Australia. But the reality is very different. Nothing really prepares you for a new life in a completely different land. Subtleties become exaggerated, loss of self becomes exacerbated with no immediate family or lifelong friends to support and nurture you.

Blankets have been part of my artistic lexicon since 1996 where I used electric blankets splayed on the wall of the gallery. In 2002 I wove blankets from Mountain Ash bark in Victoria whilst on a residency in Warrandyte with Parks Victoria. Metaphorically blankets reference nurturing, protection, comfort and security. I have used US Government military blankets as the ground for quilts I am creating.

Quilt making's origins lie in Europe but the English and Dutch settlers who migrated to North America brought the tradition with them and quilting took on a new life here in all stratum of society and flourished.

The quilt, as we know it in America, was originally a strictly utilitarian article, born of the necessity of providing warm covers for beds. The earliest American quilts, were intimately connected to everyday life of the early colonists. Those early settlers could not afford to simply discard things when they wore out; necessity required they carefully use their resources.

[MARS]

Therefore, when blankets became worn, they were patched, combined with other fabrics, or used as filler between other blankets. These were not carefully constructed heirlooms, rather they were functional items for the sole purpose of keeping people warm. Now, in another century, quilt making in the early 2000s is still practiced as it always was, though now more for relaxation and artistic merit than out of necessity. 'Quilts represent American possibilities and opportunities of freedom, democracy, equality, home, community, and individual expression.' [1]

Money is the binding agent that enables me to survive in the US and appears to be revered differently here than in Australia. Greenbacks can buy almost anything. They illustrate historical elements that have helped solidify this globally influential nation. These notes are the most used in international transactions and is the world's primary reserve currency. I have stitched these meticulously engraved images found on the reverse side of US dollar bills onto US military blankets of various ranks and climates.

The images on the reverse side of many of the US notes feature significant American buildings. On the $5 note is the Lincoln Memorial. Abraham Lincoln was renowned for saving the nation and the emancipation of slavery in the USA. The White House (the peoples house) is the official residence and workplace of the President of the United States and appears on the $20 note.

The United States Capitol, often called The Capitol, is the home of the United States Congress, and the seat of the legislative branch of the U.S. federal government. The Capitol appears on the $50 bill. The US Treasury, established by an Act of Congress in 1789 is featured on the $10 note. The $100 bill highlights Independence Hall where both the United States Declaration of independence and the United States Constitution were created, debated and adopted. On the $1 note the Great Seal of the United States is highlighted and the reverse of the seal on the left includes a barren landscape dominated by an unfinished pyramid of 13 steps, topped by the Eye of Providence within a triangle. All bills contain the statement 'In God We Trust'.

There are 6 different quilts in the series each representing the current notes in circulation.

Reference

[1] Shaw, Robert. 1995 Quilts: A Living Tradition. Beaux Arts Editions. Hugh Lauter Levin Associates Inc. p7

[MARS]

$1
(from GREENBACK series)
2018-19
US military blankets, cotton thread
204 x 158 cm
$17,500

[MARS]

$5
(from GREENBACK series)
2018-19
US military blankets, cotton thread
197 x 160 cm
$17,500

[MARS]

$10
(from GREENBACK series)
2018-19
US military blankets, cotton thread
215 x 153 cm
$17,500

[MARS]

$20
(from GREENBACK series)
2018-19
US military blankets, cotton thread
208 x 153 cm
$17,500

[MARS]

$50
(from GREENBACK series)
2018-19
US military blankets, cotton thread
163 x 210 cm
$17,500

[MARS]

$100
(from GREENBACK series)
2018-19
US military blankets, cotton thread
204 x 158 cm
$17,500

[MARS]

CV

PLACE OF BIRTH
Innisfail, Queensland, AUSTRALIA

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS
2014-2015 Doctor of Philosophy, Griffith University
1993-1996 Master of Arts (Visual Arts), Monash University
1987 Bachelor of Arts, Queensland College of Art, Brisbane

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS
2019 Greenback, Onespace Gallery, Brisbane
2014 Surf 'n' Turf, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Gold Coast
2010 Scuta, Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne
2009 Footnotes of a verdurous tale, Sebastian Di Mauro 1987-2009, QUT Art Museum, Brisbane
Scuta, Sullivan+Strumpf Fine Art, Sydney
2008 Evergreen, Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne
2007 Lasciare, Victorian Tapestry Workshop Gallery, Melbourne
Archimedes' Bath, Sullivan + Strumpf Fine Art, Sydney
Suburban Abstractions 4, Mackay Artspace, Mackay,
Suburban Abstractions 3, Gladstone Regional Art Gallery, Gladstone
2006 Float, Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne
2005 Suburban Abstractions 2, Bundaberg Arts Centre, Bundaberg
2004 Suburban Abstractions: Lifts Project, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Suburban Abstractions: Roots, Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne
Pivot, Umbrella Studios, Townsville, Queensland
2003 Turf Sweet, Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne
Pivot, Herring Island Gallery, Melbourne
2002 over and over, gallery 482, Brisbane
2000 floccus, Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane
1999 Respirare, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane
1998 Pane e Zucchero, Cairns Regional Gallery, Cairns
Manifestations, Beatty Gallery, Sydney
SKiN, Ipswich Regional Art Gallery, Ipswich
1995 Pagine dal Libro Muto, Beatty Gallery, Sydney
1994 Underlay, Beatty Gallery, Sydney
1993 Praeparatio Physica, Omniscient Gallery, Brisbane
evanescence, Space Plentitude, Brisbane
1990 being-BECOMING, Roz MacAllan Gallery, Brisbane
1989 Passage, Roz MacAllan Gallery, Brisbane Gallery, Brisbane

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS
2015 Garden, QUT Art Museum, Brisbane
Y Fibre, Ewart Gallery, Willoughby, New South Wales
2014 Deakin University Contemporary Small Sculpture Award, Deakin University Art Gallery, Melbourne
2014 The Gathering: A survey of Australian Sculpture, Wangaratta Art Gallery, Wangaratta, Victoria
2012 A Verdant Heart, King Street Gallery, Sydney
2011, 12 Wspolna Wizja: Shared Vision, Touring Poland
A Verdant Heart, Hawkesbury Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales
2011 Australia Felix, Crane Arts, Philadelphia, USA
2010 Your Move: Australian Artists Play Chess, Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria, 2011 UQ Art Museum, Queensland University, St Lucia, Queensland, 2011, McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park, Vic; and
2011 Samstag Museum, SA.
2008 Bias Bound 3 venues: Victorian Tapestry Workshop Gallery
The Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award 08, Werribee Park, Victoria
2007 Woollahra Sculpture Prize and Exhibition, Woollahra Municipal Council
15 years of Urban Art Projects, QUT Art Museum, Brisbane
Group Show 07, Sullivan + Strumpf Fine Art, Paddington, Sydney
2006 If you were to collect… Elements of abstraction, Deloitte Office, Melbourne
Unbound: artists' books from the collection, State Library of Queensland, Brisbane
2005 Enigmatic, Shandong Arts College, Shandong, China
The Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award, Werribee Park, Victoria
2004 Matter of Time, Tamworth Fibre Textile Biennial, Tamworth
Melt, British School at Rome Gallery, Italy
Temperature: Contemporary Queensland Sculpture, Museum of Brisbane.
2003 The McClelland Survey and Award 2003, McClelland Gallery, Langwarrin, Victoria
The Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award, Werribee Park, Victoria
Montalto Sculpture Prize, Montalto Vineyard and Olive Grove, Red Hill South, Victoria
2002 Sculpture by the Sea, Mark's Park Bondi, Sydney
Robert Jacks Drawing Prize, Bendigo Art Galllery, Bendigo
The Shape of Air, Plimsoll Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart
Transit/Narratives, Centro per la Cultura e le Arti Visive, Villa Letizia, Treviso, Italy
2001 National Sculpture Prize & Exhibition 2001, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Woollahra Sculpture Prize and Exhibition, Woollahra Municipal Council, Sydney
2000 Against the Grain, Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane
Enjoin, Cairns Regional Gallery, Cairns
1998 Enjoin, GSIS Museum, Manila, Philippines
1996 Diverse Alliances, Ecole D'Art, Noumea
The Toowomba Biennial Acquisitive Fine Art Award and Exhibition,
Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery
Queensland Artists Books, Brisbane City Gallery, Brisbane
1994 Brisbane/Hanoi Exchange Project, Queensland College of Art, Brisbane & Hanoi University, Hanoi, Vietnam
FOI - Festival of Installation, Noosa Regional Gallery, Tewantin
Reference Points, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
The River Styx (Sticks), An Australian-New Zealand Artist's Book Project.,
National Library of Australia, Canberra
1990 Melbourne Contemporary Art Fair, Roz MacAllan Gallery Melbourne

COLLECTIONS

Queensland Art Gallery; James Hardy Collection, State Library of Queensland; Bendigo Art Gallery; Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery; Woollahra Municipal Council, Sydney; Prostitution Licensing Authority,QLD; Art Space Mackay; Artbank; Museum of Brisbane; Attorney General's Department, Queensland; Downlands College, Toowoomba; Australian Construction Services; Gippsland Art Gallery; Ipswich Art Gallery; Griffith Art Works, Queensland; Corrigan Collection; Woollahra Municipal Council; Montalto Winery; University Art Museum, UQ; Besen Collection, Tarrawarra; Deakin University, Melbourne; Cairns City Council; Tamworth Regional Gallery; QUT Art Collection, Brisbane; Swire Properties, Hong Kong; Ningbo City East New Town Development and Investment Company Limited, China; Private and Corporate collections in Australia and overseas.

AWARDS

2013 Winner, Clayton Utz Art Award, Clayton Utz Riparian Plaza, Brisbane
2009 Recipient – Australia Council Residency Barcelona Studio, Spain
Development and Presentation Grant Arts Queensland, Queensland Government
2005 Finalist, The Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award, Werribee Park, Victoria
2004 Recipient – Australia Council Residency British School at Rome, Italy
2003 Finalist, The McClelland Survey and Award 2003, McClelland Gallery, Langwarrin, Victoria
Finalist, The Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award 03, Werribee Park, Victoria
Winner, Montalto Sculpture Prize, Montalto Vineyard and Olive Grove, Red Hill, South, Victoria
Finalist, Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award 2003, Werribee Park, Victoria
Awarded Australia Council Residency, British School at Rome, Italy
2001 Winner, Woollahra Sculpture Prize, Sydney
Finalist, National Sculpture Prize and Exhibition, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
2000 Recipient – Parks Victoria Residency (awarded through the Gold Coast Art Prize)
1999 New Work, project grant, Australia Council
1997 Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery Acquisitive Award
1996 Project Grant, Arts Office, Queensland
1991 Selected, Aberdere Art Prize, Ipswich Regional Gallery, Ipswich

SELECTED COMMISSIONS

2016 Seeding, Redbank Plains Shopping Centre, Ipswich, Queensland
2014 Rise, Lake Street, Cairns, Queensland
Rapture, JinHe Plaza, Suzhou, China
2013 Confluenza, Italian Memorial, Roma Street Parkland, Brisbane
2012 Bloom and Scatter, Swire Properties, 28 Hennessey Road, Hong Kong
Suite, Browning Street, West End, Brisbane
2011 Drifter, Ningbo City East New Town Development and Investment Company Limited, Ningbo China
The REEL Project, Adelaide City Council, Vardon Avenue, Adelaide
2008 Blind spot, Crime and Misconduct Commission, Brisbane, Queensland
2007 Huddle series, Orion Springfield, public artwork, Mirvac, Queensland
2006 Decoy, private commission, Taylor, Cullity, Lethlean Landscape Architects, Adelaide
Greener fields, Gabba Members Area, Project Services, Queensland Government,
Public Artwork –collaboration with Alice Hampson
2004,05 Undulant, Logan Community Health Centre, Queensland
Government, Public Artwork-collaboration with Alice Hampson
2004 Blur Between, Brisbane Magistrates Court, Public Artwork
2002-04 Drift, 33 Charlotte Street, Brisbane, Major Public Artwork, Queensland Government
2001 Chat, 175 Eagle Street, Brisbane, Major Public Artwork for entrance