



This catalogue has been produced as part of the inaugural
**Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces and
 Art & Australia Emerging Writers Program**

The Emerging Writers Program pairs four young writers with an experienced mentor each, culminating in the production of a catalogue essay for GCAS's Studio 12 exhibition program and a review to be published in *Art & Australia* magazine.

Love and Babies or Landscape of the Planet Tralfamadore
 Noël Skrzypczak
 4 July – 2 August 2008

Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces
 200 Gertrude Street Fitzroy VIC 3065
 T +61 3 9419 3406 F +61 3 9419 2519
 E info@gertrude.org.au www.gertrude.org.au

This catalogue has been produced as a part of Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces' and Express Media's Emerging Writers Program, and is the twelfth in the series. The Emerging Writers Program pairs four young writers each with an experienced mentor, and culminates in the production of a catalogue essay for Gertrude's Studio 12 exhibition program, and an independent exhibition review for *Artlink* magazine.

Text: Clarissa Chikiamco
 Mentor: Lisa Byrne
 Catalogue Design: Danny Lacy
 Print Production: Econoprint

© artists, author and Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces.

The artist would like to thank: Neon Parc Gallery and Andrew "Moose" Newton for his invaluable technical assistance.

Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments, and is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

Noël Skrzypczak
 Love and babies OR Landscape of
 the Planet Tralfamadore

Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces and
 Art & Australia Emerging Writers Program

13

GERTRUDE
 contemporary art spaces

e(x)_m

art
 & Australia



Into the Fourth Dimension

By Clarissa Chikiamco

For her GCAS Studio 12 project, Noël Skrzypczak adds a new dimension in her visual art practice. Extending her painting prose into the sculptural, Skrzypczak's latest work continues her recent explorations into the multidimensional.

Skrzypczak's paintings have always been, in a sense, sculptural. In an attempt to break the illusion of paintings being like windows into another world, Skrzypczak's work continually attempts to free itself from the uniformly rectangular canvas. Using abstraction, either alone, or combined with the recognisable; odd-shaped canvases or no canvases at all, she paints with a constellation of different colours that simultaneously combine, meld, gravitate and levitate, so that her paintings act like the visible residues of an otherworldly realm existing beyond the human level of perception.

Like traces of auric bodies, Skrzypczak's work seems to tune into other frequencies, picking up radiations of the emotive, the relative and the surreal. Her paintings are inducements to the experiential—inviting contact with palpable drops of the metaphysical. Perhaps the paintings could appropriately be called 'space invaders' for their shambolic and unreserved occupations of space, their ostensibly extraterrestrial presence. Yet, despite these benign confrontations with the foreign and the mystical, the works remain essentially human, having a persuasive ability to stimulate contemplation into the very real world of the intangible.



Love and Babies or Landscape of the Planet Tralfamadore runs in the same vein. Oscillating between the corporeal and the ethereal, Skrzypczak's sculptural installation is another experimental foray into rendering the multiplicities of the invisible into the physical.

Love and Babies or Landscape of the Planet Tralfamadore is inspired by the book *Slaughterhouse 5* by Kurt Vonnegut. A tale of the bombing of Dresden, the book contains a subplot in which protagonist Billy Pilgrim is abducted by aliens from the planet Tralfamadore. He is exhibited naked in a Tralfamadorian zoo and is later joined by kidnapped porn star Montana Wildhack, who is equally naked, save for a locket containing a picture of her mother around her neck. He later mates with her and impregnates her and, several years later back on earth, remembers her on the planet Tralfamadore, taking care of their baby.

Skrzypczak's work, originally envisaged as a temporary installation in a strip club, was meant to echo the book's observation that the sex industry is really all about love and babies. Through capturing this desire for intimacy and the innocent yearning for tenderness through procreation, the piece moves beyond its initial beginnings in the realm of the erotic, to a very basic and universal longing for an other.

Skrzypczak intuitively sculpts a partial landscape of Tralfamadore in which this mating took place, using various gradients of magenta that sensuously unfold and

mushroom on Studio 12's floor. Through installing a light within the landscape's voluptuous swells and contusions in the darkened room, *Love and Babies or Landscape of the Planet Tralfamadore* can be seen to evoke a sense that life forms are incubating within its interior, transforming the sculpture into a protoplasmic sheath protecting its simmering progenies. In this way the delicate biomorphic quality resonates with the very organic and enigmatic processes in which babies are created, while its lush colouring and wide span seem to embody a mother's, or a lover's, embrace. *Love and Babies or Landscape of Tralfamadore* does not simply suggest an alien terrain, but describes the very mystifying and phenomenal astral ambit of love and babies.

Slaughterhouse 5 describes the Tralfamadorians as being able to see in the fourth dimension, and find humans' limited 3D vision limiting in the extreme. It is precisely a fourth dimension that Skrzypczak essentially brings to her works. Through employing materials that appear to escape from their confines Skrzypczak incites the viewer to realise the presence of the extrasensory spectrum in which experience and emotions lie, and ultimately inviting the viewer to see into another dimension and beyond the 3D.

IMAGE CAPTIONS: Front Cover: Noël Skrzypczak, *Untitled (Drawing for Twelve Disasters)*, sumi ink on paper, 2008 Above: Noël Skrzypczak, *Cave Painting II*, 2006, acrylic paint, An installation at Grant Pirrie Gallery Sydney Photo credit: Jenni Carter