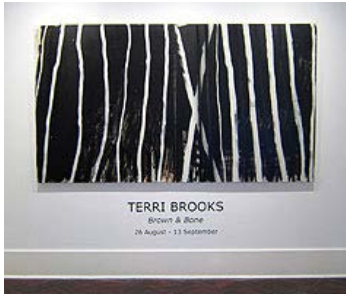


EXHIBITIONS Terri Brooks *Brown and Bone* 26th August 2014 - 13th September 2014

Exploring the physicality of paint and surface textures, Terri Brooks formally investigates natural mark making. With a leanness of technique and an innate feeling for surface textures, Brooks utilises her materials to produce rich and complex works that speak of creating art out of something humble and ordinary, and reflect the truth and beauty of the utilitarian surfaces around her.



'The colours, brown and bone unify this recent body of abstract paintings and paper mache collages by Terri Brooks. Not quite black and white. The familiar stripes, spots and ridges which draw their origin from urban architectural details are somehow made more personal, more inner as Brooks experiments with her painting process, sometimes wet into wet sometimes dry. The borders of the canvas too are no longer confirmed. In some works paper mache spills over the edges while paper attachments frame others.



In Terri Brooks' immaculately clean and fume-free studio is a collection of music to paint by. Glen Campbell sits next to Springsteen, next to Iggy, next to King. She says she likes songs about everyday people, tunes which celebrate nobodies and their dreams, non-über, non-heroic but dignified nonetheless. There is a definite parallel here with her own paintings and drawings which emerge from repetitive, labour-intensive actions, built-up residues and the extremities of her own reach, coupled with sub-radar inspirations she finds within her local environment, a suburb she has known intimately since childhood.



Terri Brooks
Beige Bands 2014
 oil and enamel on canvas
 151cm x 151cm



Terri Brooks
Beige Bands Diptych 2014
 oil and enamel on canvas
 137cm x 244cm



It is also important to note that Terri Brooks has a Doctorate in Philosophy, one of the most harmonious to art practice within the Humanities. For a philosopher, the enquiry is as critical as the answer, if not more so. Little is seen to have concrete substance and all is open to forensic examination. Over the fifteen years that she has been exhibiting with Flinders Lane Gallery, Brooks has applied such challenges to her own art, gradually reducing both her palette and the variety of her technique, pursuing the elemental base of it all. An associated fascination is with the dualism of the world – night/day; life/death; hot/cold – as she searches for her own balance. She eschews narrative and concentrates on the craft, in the sense of 'domestic', even feminine, crafts such as weaving, papier mache and pattern making.



A perfect realisation of all these aims are the suite of Drawings (capital 'D') in the exhibition *Brown and Bone*. In the Drawings, Brooks set herself a series of calculated actions like a production line employee and it is the repetition of these over days and weeks that result in the final pieces. For a piece like *Black Base* she first paints the canvas, then incises horizontal lines with a pencil from top to bottom whilst the paint is still wet. The next day, she returns and again incises from top to bottom, only now the paint has started to dry meaning clumps and clags start to accumulate like furrows at the edge of a recently graded road. The next day she returns, and the next and so on until the paint can be scarred no more. What is left is a geological field of stucco, a condensed mini strata recording every step of the artist's passage in the same manner as a foundry worker or brickie. Honest and with every mark evident. However a transformation also occurs for the viewer as these are now artworks as well, elevated from something that merely is (such as the brickie's wall) to something that is somehow bigger than what it may actually seem. These dynamics of art have been discussed and argued by philosopher-critics over centuries and now Brooks chooses to play her own part as well.



Terri Brooks
Beige Bands Black Stripes 2014
oil and enamel on canvas
106cm x 91cm



Terri Brooks
Black Base 2014
oil, enamel and pencil on canvas
145cm x 107cm



Terri Brooks
Frayed 2013
oil and enamel on paper mache on canvas
91cm x 72cm



The title *Brown and Bone* also refers to the reduced palette of her paintings. A key example is *Beige Bands Diptych* where each vertical brushstroke is executed in one sweep clearly articulating the physical presence of the artist and the length of her arm. Amidst the wavering bands are two diagonals which immediately create a visible tension; and two sprayed black lines create the illusion of foreground. Simple means, simple tactics, dynamic results. This approach carries into the companion piece *Beige Bands* and to the smaller painting *Beige Bands Black Stripes* where sprayed dots contrast with the stripes like the accidental *sgraffito* found on a road after workmen have moved on. In this case, one set of workers have left their mark only to have another come along, recognise their potential and utilise them in the painterly realm to create philosophical meditations on the nature of art/work itself.'

Essay by Andrew Gaynor, 2014.

Brooks and Schawel Collaboration.

'FLG artists Terri Brooks and Melinda Schawel have had a mutual admiration and respect for each other's work for over a decade. At the start of 2014, when the unique opportunity to exhibit simultaneously arose, both artists thought a collaborative project would not only be a tangible expression of this connection, but also an exciting and challenging one. For a collaboration to be truly successful, however, a lot of boxes need ticking. The artists must have time and a genuine interest in stepping into the other's shoes, blind trust, and a willingness to let go. There must be a common thread that underpins the work technically and/or conceptually. It's risky. It doesn't suit those who keep their cards too close to their chest. It therefore does beg the questions - what motivates artists to turn mutual admiration or connection into collaboration, and does it work?

At first glance there really are no obvious similarities in the imagery, palette or media of their current works. In fact, there is a more graphic, hard edged line and brushwork present in Brooks' pieces which one would rarely see in Schawel's more fragile, floating shapes and torn surfaces. Schawel's recurring blue grey tones accented with bold colours and created with water based ink on paper, are also in contrast with Brooks' large 'brown and bone, not quite black and white' oil and enamel works on canvas. Ironically it was exactly these differences that they brought to the table which kept it interesting and visually appealing. The work entitled *Division* is probably the best example of this with Brooks' distinctive stripes used in conjunction with Schawel's perforations. *Bouquet* showcases both artists' use and love of paper but in totally different ways, one employing papier-mâché and the other, collage.

The true motivation behind this project however, is both artists' process driven approach that is at the crux of their practice, where process defines the work. Their curiosity and strong desire to be present in each other's work, i.e. to engage in the other's methodology and the symbolic gestures that go along with it, overrode any potential pitfalls. So, did it work? The artists selected four final pieces out of the original eight which they considered successful and displayed them on the wall



Terri Brooks
Horizontal Lines 2014
oil and enamel on paper mache on canvas
91cm x 63cm



Terri Brooks
Plain Dots 2014
oil and enamel on canvas
43cm x 43cm



Terri Brooks
Brown Black 2014
oil and enamel on canvas
61cm x 61cm

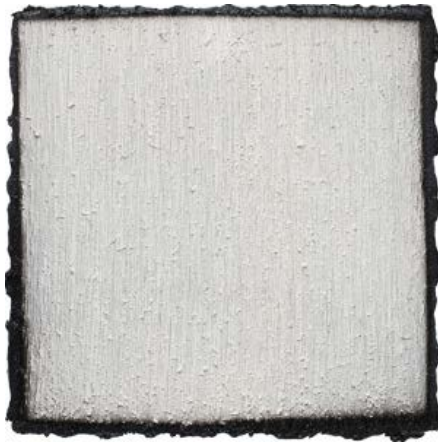
that divides the concurrent exhibitions. The viewer of course will be the ultimate judge but as far as Brooks and Schawel are concerned, the success of any collaborative process ultimately lies in the process itself.'

Written by Melinda Schawel 2014.

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[BROOKS & SCHAWEL PROFILE](#)
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Terri Brooks
Black Border 2014
oil and enamel on canvas
40cm x 40cm



Terri Brooks
Red Edge 2014
oil, enamel, pigment, and PVA on papermache on canvas
42cm x 42cm



Terri Brooks
Three Sides Yellow 2014
oil, enamel, pigment, and PVA on papermache on canvas
45cm x 44cm



Terri Brooks
Folded Edge 2014
oil, enamel and pencil on paper mache on canvas
43cm x 43cm



Terri Brooks
Dotted Wings 2013
oil and enamel on paper mache on canvas
41cm x 53cm



Terri Brooks
Lattice 2014
oil and enamel on paper mache on canvas
52cm x 56cm



Terri Brooks
Horizontal On Brown 2014
oil and enamel on paper mache on canvas
56cm x 37cm



Terri Brooks
Two Black Lines 2014
oil and enamel on paper mache on canvas
41cm x 55cm



Brooks & Schawel
Bands 2014
oil, enamel, pencil & ink on papier mache
58cm x 41cm



Brooks & Schawel
Bouquet 2014
collage on papier mache
64cm x 47cm



Brooks & Schawel
Perforated Dots 2014
oil & enamel on perforated paper
63cm x 39cm



Brooks & Schawel
Division 2014
oil, enamel, ink, papier mache on perforated paper
57cm x 39cm