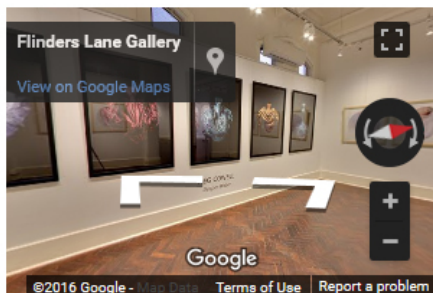


## EXHIBITIONS Meg Cowell *Deeper Water* 20th September 2016 - 8th October 2016

This is Meg's second solo exhibition at FLG. Meg Cowell graduated with Honours in Photography from the University of Tasmania in 2007, and has gone on to exhibit nationally and abroad. In 2013 she was a finalist in the Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Award, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, QLD. She has also been a finalist in the Cliftons Art Prize, SA, the Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Gallery, QLD, and the Prospect Portrait Prize, SA. Meg also completed a mentorship in 2012 with acclaimed artist Deborah Paaue with whom Cowell was paired through the mentorship program during her post-graduate work at the University of South Australia. In 2014 Meg sold out of editions at her fair debut at the 2014 Melbourne Art Fair.



Meg Cowell  
*The Lake House* 2016  
giclee print on paper, 4 of 5 editions available, framed  
80cm x 80cm ,



Meg Cowell  
*Keepsake* 2016  
giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
80cm x 80cm ,

The allure of Meg Cowell's work is just as deep and complex as the garments and swell of water that surrounds them within her photographs. Sumptuous, opulent fabrics appear at once to breathe within their own undulations, the inky blackness that envelops them seemingly endless. Inspired by period costume and the hidden meanings often associated with women, status, life experiences and how they shroud themselves, Cowell entrances us with her interpretations.

The artist has always been fascinated with seducing the viewer, through methods of her own construction yet by also embracing chance. While studying her practice she was fortunate enough to have been inspired by talented artists, one of these being the photographer Anne MacDonald, whom Cowell nods to within this latest exhibition. MacDonald is one of those artists described as part of a sub-category of contemporary Australian art, dubbed Tasmanian Gothic. Artists exploring dark truths and folklore surrounding the island— climate shifts, isolation, indigenous slaughter and convict history – create works that are infused with an inclination for the sinister. MacDonald's work, which looks at showcasing familiar objects lurking in darkness, inspired Cowell. The piece 'Petals,' where a soft, blue tinted rose-like petal folds and disappears almost before the viewers eyes is not too dissimilar in form to Cowell's blue, full dresses. The source of the



Meg Cowell  
*Magic on this Planet* 2016  
giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
80cm x 80cm ,



Meg Cowell  
*Luna* 2016  
giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
80cm x 80cm ,





Meg Cowell  
*River of Dreams* 2016  
 giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
 80cm x 80cm ,

Meg Cowell  
*Promised Land* 2016  
 giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
 80cm x 80cm ,



Meg Cowell  
*The Crystal Palace* 2016  
 giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
 80cm x 80cm ,

works is the same, where MacDonald draws often from nature, so does Cowell. Yet where the first artist depicts those inspirations directly, Cowell fuses her gowns with the essence of these ephemeral muses. The artist says, 'I've been looking at elements common to those things considered beautiful in nature; proportion, symmetry clarity, harmony and colour.' Whilst also looking at Dutch still life painting which captures so brilliantly these exact expressions, Cowell looked to butterflies - their fragility, the aesthetic principals, their deep symbolic resonances - and structured her garments to resemble their forms. The fullness of her dresses appear to take flight, swelling towards the surface and their colours vivid, opalescent, unfading.

This exhibition for Cowell though is not just a continuation of her exploring these visual pursuits. Where her works have often seemed inhabited, it was a natural progression for the artist to try and document human form within her flowing textiles. Imperative was still the desire to have a strong sense of fragility, and so these new photographs tempt our senses with soft pastel pop tints - colours associated with under garments and lace, and the milkshake hues of youth.

Sally Mann and Bill Henson are perhaps the most famous of photographers to explore these themes - Henson sometimes controversially highlighting a haunting uniqueness that he draws out of his young subjects, and Mann capturing so breathtakingly the freckles and wide eyes of her own children at play.

Cowell too handpicked a model that would perfectly match the beauty that she was trying to grasp. As well as highlighting the often-brutal fashion industry that uses young girls and boys to create a world of fantasy and illusion, Cowell photographed a subject who was bordering the precious moment between childhood and young adulthood. Lithe wrists sit across soft silk, and fingers creep up to touch collarbones - these works are beautiful, disarming and arresting.



Meg Cowell  
*The Passage* 2016  
 giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
 80cm x 80cm , \$1500 unframed, edition 1,3,4 & 5 available

There are some photographs where clearly a mature woman is used, and these works too allow for a fascinating reading. Traditional clothing clings across full breasts, partially covered by worked hands and some poses are almost recognisable - the Virgin Mary in her lapis shroud, and Ophelia clutching at flowers at she sinks in to the water beneath her. This move in Cowell's practice has marked an exciting and haunting shift as she delves into deeper water.'

By Melanie Caple, BArts (FA) MArts.

[MEG COWELL PROFILE](#)  
[DOWNLOAD BIO / CV \(PDF\)](#)

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Meg Cowell  
*Undreamed Shores* 2016



Meg Cowell  
*Wonderland* 2016

giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
80cm x 80cm ,



Meg Cowell  
*Moonstone* 2016  
giclee print on paper, edition of 5,  
framed  
133cm x 92cm ,

giclee print on paper, edition of 5, framed  
80cm x 80cm ,



Meg Cowell  
*Cabin in the Sky* 2016  
giclee print on paper, edition of 5,  
framed  
133cm x 92cm ,



Meg Cowell  
*The Bone Church* 2016  
giclee print on paper, edition of 5,  
framed  
133cm x 92cm ,



Meg Cowell  
*The Ring* 2016  
giclee print on paper, edition of 5,  
framed  
133cm x 92cm ,



Meg Cowell  
*The Future* 2016  
giclee print on paper, edition of 5  
133cm x 92cm ,

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