

PATRICIA PICCININI

The Struggle and the Dawn



30 AUGUST - 30 SEPTEMBER 2017

roslyn oxley9 gallery

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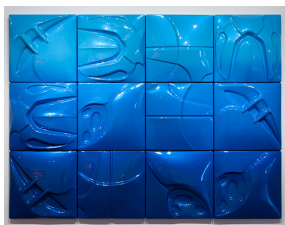
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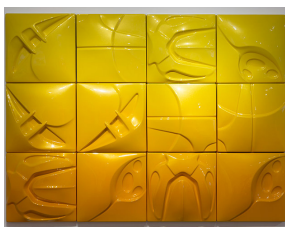
The Struggle, 2017
fibreglass, automotive paint, leather,
steel, cycle parts
201 × 252 × 160cm
Edition of 3 + AP 1

2.



The Smell of Rain, 2017
ABS plastic and automotive paint
150 × 200cm

3.



Cloudless Field, 2017
ABS plastic and automotive paint
150 × 200cm

4.



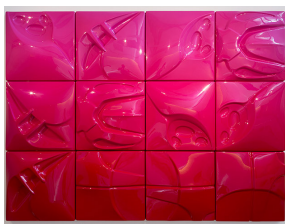
Jupiter, 2017
ABS plastic and automotive paint
150 × 200cm

5.



Rising to the Surface, 2017
ABS plastic and automotive paint
150 × 200cm

6.



Dawn, 2017
ABS plastic and automotive paint
150 × 200cm

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The Struggle and the Dawn, 2017

Patricia Piccinini

For more than 10 years I have been going out into the technological wilderness and documenting the lives of the beasts that I imagine might live there. In a world where the cultural and the natural - the technological and organic - are ever more intermingled, this wilderness is my symbolic representation of a space where technology has become so natural that it takes on a life of its own.

Over the years I have captured moments from the lifecycle of the inhabitants of this place; birth, mating, rivalry have all been depicted through scenes drawn as if from some alternative nature documentary. *The Struggle* presents possibly the completion of the lifecycle of these creatures, a moment where predator and prey are locked in a grave struggle for survival. "Nature, red in tooth and claw."

The Struggle, and the works that precede it, are also references to the representation of nature and its beasts in Art History. *The Struggle* draws from the millennia-old trope of the predator and prey - from the lion and ox of Persian bas-relief to the lion and horse of Greek sculpture and its reinterpretation in the C19th paintings of George Stubbs for example. In all these cases, these portrayals are more than just likenesses of things that do exist in the world. They are symbolic images that refer to the hard (and soft) truths of human life.



Lion fighting a bull, relief on the east staircase of the Apadana, Achaemenian Period, c.515 (stone), Achaemenid, (550-330 BC) / Persepolis, Iran / Giraudon



Lion Attacking a Horse, Greek, 325-300 B.C.; restored in Rome in 1594, marble, 150 x 250 cm

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The Struggle catches these creatures at a point where the outcome is unclear. Eventually there will be a winner and a loser, but at this moment it is impossible to tell which one it will be. We must pick a side, and then decide if we want to imagine a 'good' or a 'bad' end. Which one we choose says more about us than about the world around us.

Surrounding *The Struggle* are a new series of Panelworks, which are the landscape painting of this inorganic wilderness. They are works spun directly from the 'stuff' of this world, synthesised from its shiny surfaces and angular, automotive forms.

In many ways these are works that focus unashamedly on formal properties. These Panelworks have evolved alongside my practice. Their forms are more complex and sophisticated, sharper and more defined. The colours also come from a new place, suggesting a spectrum rather than discrete individuals. They are about colour and lustre and the (guilty?) pleasure of beauty that is "skin deep". On one level, Panelworks are an acknowledgement that we might need to see the beauty in a world of plastic and paint so that we can move past an idea of this world as somehow separate from the rest of nature. Or maybe I'm overthinking it? To be honest I'm happy for them to just be what they are.



George Stubbs, *Lion attacking horse*, c.1765, oil on canvas, 69.0 x 100.1 cm

Patricia Piccinini is one of Australia's most acclaimed contemporary artists. She has exhibited extensively in Australia and overseas for over two decades, and her work is held in all Australian state galleries as well as important private collections nationally and internationally. In 2003, Piccinini represented Australia at the 50th Venice Biennale, her exhibition *We are Family* later toured to Hara Museum, Tokyo and Bendigo Art Gallery, Australia. Her significant solo and group exhibitions include: *The Universe and Art*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan and ArtScience Museum, Singapore (2016); *New Romance: art and the posthuman*, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney (2016); *ComCiência*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brasilia (2016); *Bodyscape*, Yu-Hsiu Museum of Art, Taiwan (2016); *On The Origins of Art*, Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart (2016); *Beautiful Beast*, New York Academy of Art, New York (2015); *Like Us: Patricia Piccinini*, Newcastle Art Gallery, Australia (2014-15); *Menagerie*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne (2014); *Post- Humanist Desire: Sexuality and Digitality in Contemporary Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (2013); dOCUMENTA 13, *The Fredericianum*, Kassel (2012); *Once Upon a Time*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (2011); *Hold Me Close To Your Heart*, Arter Space For Art, Istanbul (2011); *Power of Making*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London (2011); *RELATIVITY*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth (2010); *Evolution*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart (2009); *Global Feminisms*, Brooklyn Museum, New York (2008); *Hug: Recent Works by Patricia Piccinini*, Des Moines Art Centre, Des Moines and Frye Museum, Seattle (2007); (*tiernas Criaturas/ (tender) Creatures*, Artium, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain (2007).