Research Statement

Luscious [solo exhibition]
Rivergarden Gallery, United States
13 April – 20 May 2008
Brereton, Kurt

Research Background

I live on the littoral edge of the Pacific East Coast of Australia, just south of Sydney. My work is a response to the changing nature of my local rainforest, mangrove and beach environments. The impacts of rapid urban development, global warming and tourism have all been significant players in my work over the years.

I wish to impart the beauty of this land (“singing up the country”) while at the same time address the many disappearances and erasures I witness occurring around me.

Using a combination of media I have aimed to create a tension between representation and abstraction. My paintings tend to grow out of each other in a non-linear rhizomatic fashion, both formally and conceptually.

Layers of information, colours, sensations of space and time are both highlighted and undermined by turn. Nothing is fixed, everything is speculative. Desire for some solid notion of place is raised then dashed with each overlay skin of signs – be they iconic palms, dream homes or idyllic beach views. We find ourselves looking through a series of illusive planes (skeins and glazes) or screens.

While these image-maps deliver an immediate gestalt-like impact, they also operate on our consciousness rather like slow release fertiliser – comforting us with familiar aesthetic art references, historical icons and cosy cultural myths. These images overtly play in a reconstructive sense with concepts of place, territory and landscape (real estate and art lots) that rely on fixed known boundaries.

I have a sympathy with Eugene Delacroix when he said that ”Nothing is so real to me as the illusions I create in my painting”. These images (fictions) that spring from one’s imagination are made in response to experience and offer a way of seeing that is necessarily both a critique and a reflective enquiry.

Research Significance

Brereton’s first solo exhibition was at Bondi Pavilion Gallery Sydney in 1980 and since then he has mounted over 30 solo exhibitions in Australia and overseas (USA, England, Ireland, Taiwan).
Kurt also consults in the web and graphic design fields and is known as educator/trainer across a range of education institutions. Currently, Kurt is teaching art at West Wollongong and St. George TAFE.

In 2005 his book *Hyper-Taiwan: Art, Design, Culture* was published by Art & Collection (Taiwan).

Literature (The Alan Marshall Award) and been short listed for both the Queensland Premier’s Award and the Western Australian Premier’s Awards. Crew has been twice short listed for the Crime Writers of America Edgar Alan Poe Mystery Fiction Award.

In 2008 Luscious, a monograph on Brereton’s recent art career was published by Lakeside Arts (USA) in conjunction with a major solo touring exhibition of his paintings and videos in New York.

In July-August 2009 a major touring survey exhibition of over 70 works spanning the last decade began it’s journey at the Wollongong City Art Gallery. It will travel to the University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery in Sept 2012.

He won the James Kiwi Watercolour Prize in 2010.

Coalcliff Days exhibition (curated with Ken Bolton and Sal Brereton) ran from May 15 -June 12, 2011 at the Wollongong City Gallery.

Kurt was new media artist in residence at Gymea Technology High School, Sydney during 2010.

His book *We Are A Movie* (Collected Artist Books) published by Jellied Tongue Press was published in April 2011. He co-edited the anthology Coalcliff Days with Ken Bolton and Sal Brereton.

A monograph on Kurt Brereton’s art *More Is Plenty* edited by Ken Bolton was published by JTP in November 2011.