

From the Corner of My Eye

4 Sep–9 Oct 2020

Barbara Smith / Tony Nicholls / Sarah Munro / Stephanie Chalmers / Emily Rumney / Gareth Williams
Neill Nutsford / Amanda Watson / Leafa Wilson / Angela Keogh / Eliza Webster / Lauren Mann / Lynda Wilson



From the Corner of My Eye

Lynda Wilson
Curator – Ramp Gallery

A couple of months back, I gave my studio a decent clean out. I will be ruthless I vowed to myself. I will not hold onto scraps of materials, old artworks, potentially useful things, miscellaneous who knows what it is or where it's come from. And I did quite well, kind of. Marie Kondo would be proud, maybe?

It's just that there are certain things that when I look at them, or hold them, feel their texture, enjoy their colour or observe how light plays across their surface, I just can't throw them out. They give me joy. And Marie says if it gives me joy, I can keep it! But does it count for a little piece of blackened copper? Or the vague idea of an artwork in the form of two pieces of balsa glued together? What about a rumpled piece

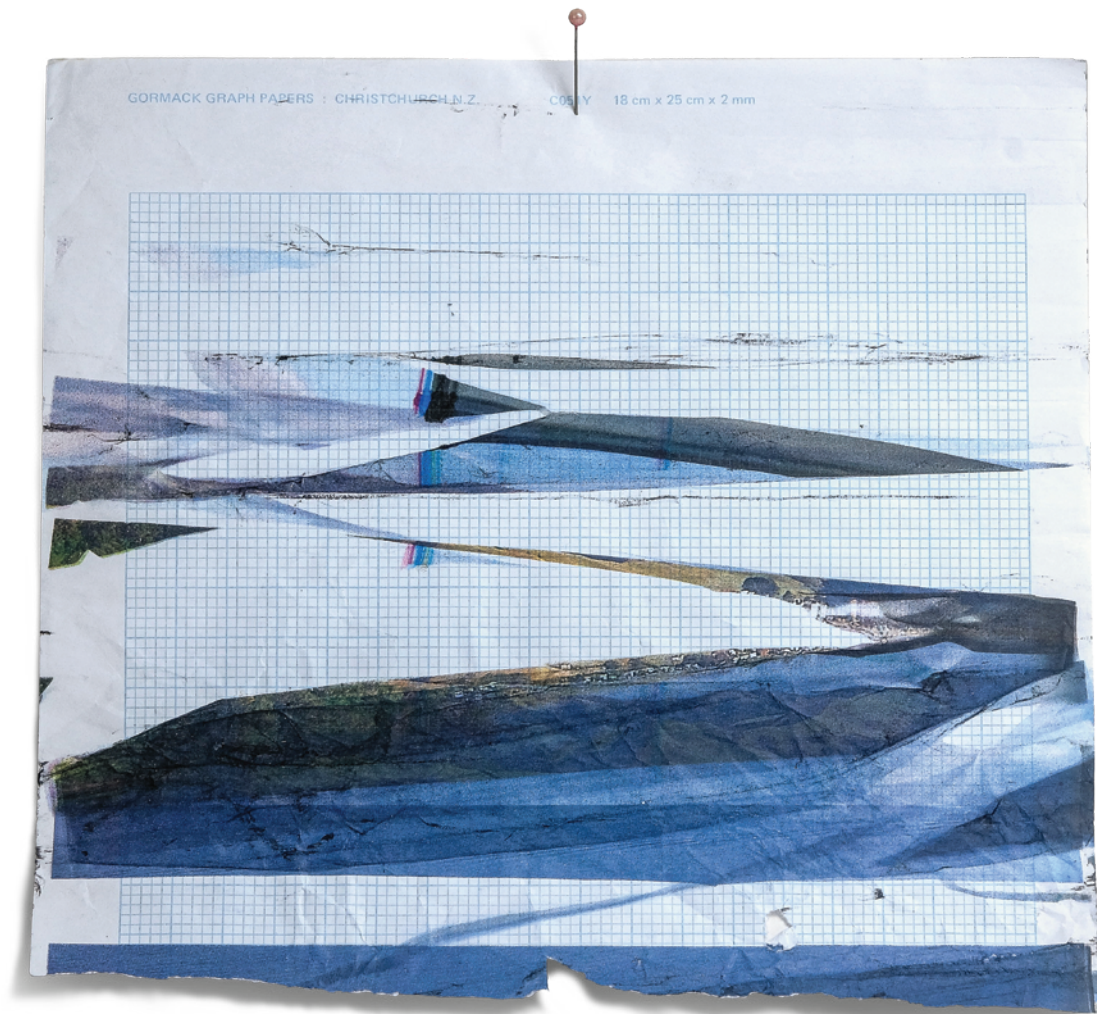
of paper that has been caught in the printer? Surely, these things are worthy of saving?

But what are these objects? Why do I save the strangest of things? Things without any intrinsic value. Yet somehow, they inspire, and inform me. They are suggestions of shape, colour, and materiality. A thought expressed and captured in physical form; a method of making worth remembering; an object that sits in space in a captivating way; a happy and delightful accident.

And I suspect they have a huge impact on my art practice, but in ways subtle and obscure. Sliding in the back door, settling into the deep recesses of my creative mind, weaving their influence, completely undetected. All it takes is a willingness to be subverted by these 'other' things.

Something found,
something made,
something collected,
something saved

Something textured,
something smooth,
something transparent,
something hued



Lynda Wilson
mixed media
date unknown

Sitting on the windowsill, pinned to the wall, rolling around in the bottom of a drawer, tucked behind a jar of brushes all covered in dust, slipped between the pages of a book.

The benefit of tidying up the studio is all these collected objects are rediscovered.

But I found that somethings lost their appeal. They no longer gave me the same joy and I was able to let them go. I wonder if it is because they had worked their way to the surface of my

mind and therefore my practice? They exist in the world in some other more resolved form. They are no longer hidden, and so no longer needed.

This led me to wonder how many other artists and creatives have similar collections of 'things' that they hold onto for vague, unresolved reasons. I suspected that most of them did and that hunch proved correct, when I asked a few artist friends and colleagues if they would be prepared to relinquish said 'things' for this exhibition.

So, as I prepare my collection for the exhibition, I realise I have a range of thoughts going through my mind: Why am I holding onto these? These things are silly, everyone will think I'm out of my mind. But what if I don't get them back? Or they get broken? I'm quite fond of them...



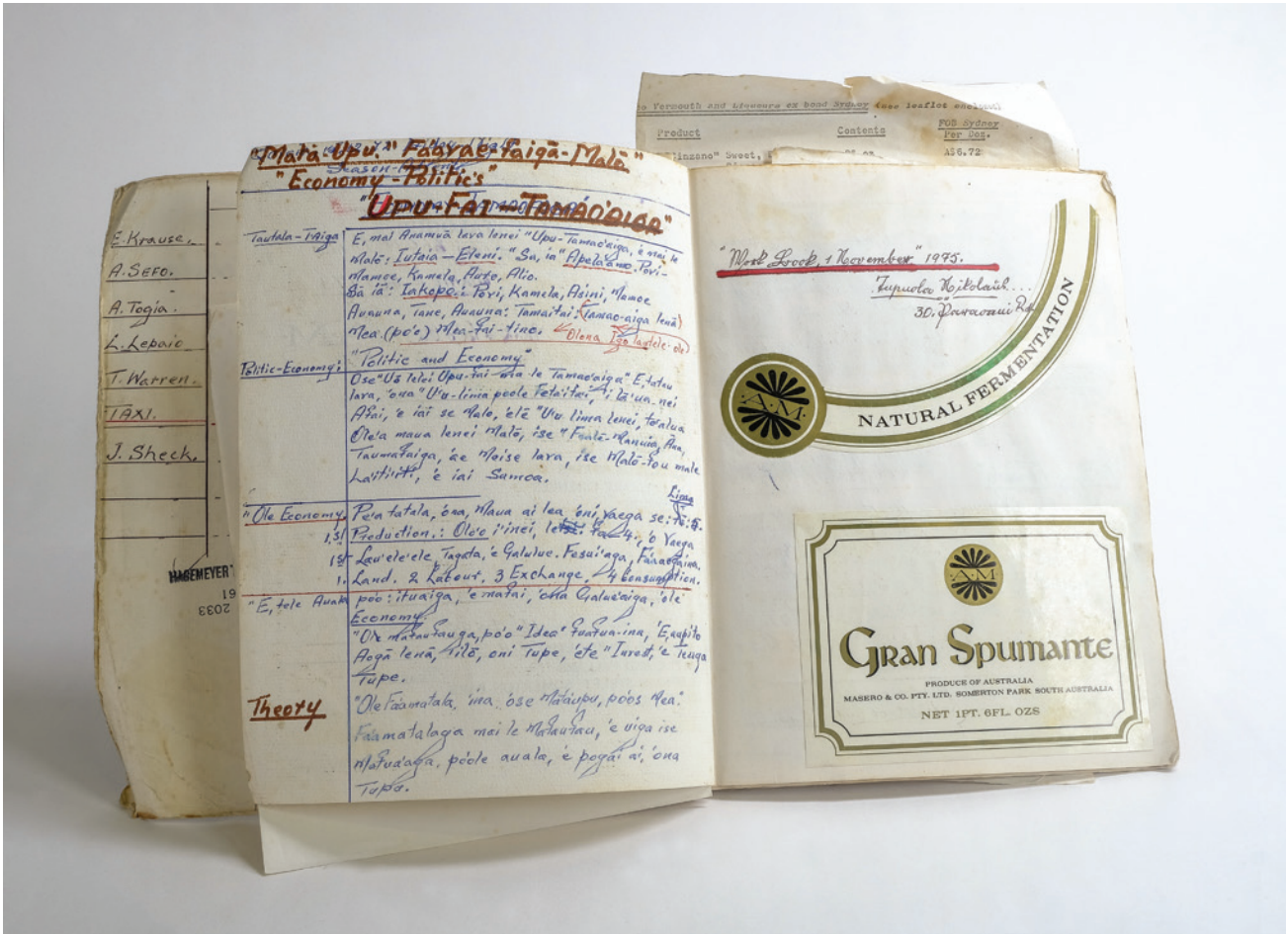
Left:
Lynda Wilson
mixed media
date unknown
Right:
Gareth Williams
found objects
date unknown
Lower left:
Barbara Smith
mixed media
date unknown
Below:
Barbara Smith
mixed media
date unknown
Lower right:
Gareth Williams
found objects
date unknown



They are as good if not better
than many finished works.
— Barbara Smith

From Witnessing to Wit(h)nessing

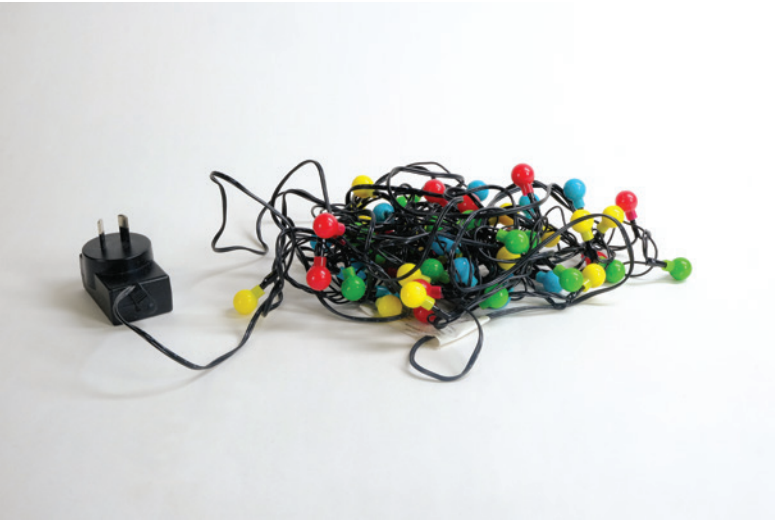
Sarah Munro
2020



There is a tendency within the Western worldview to view objects as something separate from the viewer and composed of matter that is stable, fixed and observable. This assumes that the best way to know a thing is to observe it from a controlled and objective perspective (Boudreau et al., 2001; Dean et al., 1999). This is the basis of the scientific research method which uses tools such as observation, experimentation and verification in its examination of matter. It is largely founded on the ideas of philosophers such as Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) who proposed that humans have the ‘natural’ ability to make rational judgements and therefore

to know things in reality, by examining a substance’s quantity and quality (Kant, 1908). Because this rationalist paradigm privileges objectivity as the means to judge the quantity and quality of a thing, it therefore fails to account for the experience of handling materials. However, there is a worldview often found within indigenous cultures that sees matter in constant flux. Rather than seeing objects as being something separate from the observer, this paradigm assumes that all substance is connected, and that mind and matter are not separated. Radical materialist Gilles Deleuze resides in this philosophical camp. He argues that

immediate experience, subjectivity and intuition are more significant than rationalism and objectivity in understanding reality (Deleuze, 1994). For Deleuze, reality is fluid and changing, and matter is in a constant state of flux, not stable and fixed. He also argues that creativity is not something specific or limited to the human, but is the basic condition of life and the universe. His major concern is that Western thinking and its quantitative and qualitative research methods are hindered by a ‘dogmatic image of thought’ that cannot sufficiently account for creativity.



Left:
Leafa Wilson
found objects
date unknown

Right:
Nell Nutsford
mixed media
date unknown

Below:
Leafa Wilson
found objects
date unknown



I definitely am THAT person... some would even go so far as saying, hoarder. The little things I would miss if they weren’t in the corner of my eye anymore.

– Leafa Wilson

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When I look back
at them, I always get
a profound sense
of wistfulness and
in some instances
harshly berate my
past and present
self for somehow
failing them.

– Nell Nutsford

Above:
Leafa Wilson
found objects
date unknown

Right:
Nell Nutsford
mixed media
date unknown

Cover image:
Gareth Williams
found objects
date unknown

