



ELEGY

Lizzie Hall and Kate Stevens

22 February – 22 March 2025

CIVIC ART BUREAU

Melbourne Building upstairs Smiths Alternative
76 Alinga St / PO Box 2299 Canberra ACT 2601 Australia
info@civicartbureau.com

"To reminisce and gather wool is negative. You have to differentiate between memories. Are you going to them or are they coming to you. If you are going to them, you are wasting time. Nostalgia is not productive. If they come to you, they are the seeds for sculpture."

Louise Bourgeois

Elegy is a response to personal and collective grief, made by two artists whose works are in conversation with each other in a way that reflects the Artists' daily conversations on paint and on life.

Lizzie Hall

So, this photo appears while I'm looking in boxes for other memories of the dead. Instead I found that dead Sea. Soviet mismanagement of the Aral Sea left a vast salinised environment where nothing can regenerate. I took the photo when I had just left art school, my father was working there, as part of a remediation effort to try and save what was left. The image stood in for all the lost faces and lost landscapes and the gulf of Time. An image of absence and inexorability.

Barthes referred to it in Camera Lucida as punctum, that aspect of a photograph that wounds and pierces you. He goes on to say

"I know that there exists another punctum...than the 'detail'. This new punctum, which is no longer of form but of intensity, is Time, the lacerating emphasis of the noeme ('that-has-been')."

I read Camera Lucida at art school, it took 25 years to fully get what he meant.

So, I have been painting the absence, the distance between then and now, in an attempt to retrieve my father and to retrieve a missing sea and in doing so, let the salt pour out.

Kate Stevens

Kate Stevens' paintings are of drone footage (shown on Russian and BBC news stories) of Aleppo, Syria from 2016. Missing from these images of empty ruins is the devastating human toll of bombing civilian populations. Stevens' work looks at how different conflicts elicit different responses from our loungerooms half a world away.

1.



Lizzie Hall

Ship in the Desert (Aral Sea 2001)

113x95cm

oil, oxide on linen

2023

\$2400

2.



Lizzie Hall
Aral Sea, 2001 (diptych 7)
114x182cm
oil, oxide on linen
2024

\$4200

3.



Kate Stevens

Selective Sympathy (East Aleppo)

125x100cm

oil on canvas

2022

\$4200

4.



Kate Stevens
Selective Sympathy (Aleppo) #3
125x100cm
oil on canvas
2022

\$4200

5.



Lizzie Hall
Aral Sea, 2001 (diptych 4)
114x182cm
oil, oxide on linen
2022

\$4200

6.



Kate Stevens
Selective Sympathy (Aleppo) #2
125x200cm (2 panels)
oil on canvas
2024

\$7600

7.



Lizzie Hall
Aral Sea, 2001 (diptych 5)
114x182cm
oil, oxide on linen
2022

\$4200

8.



Kate Stevens
Selective Sympathy (Aleppo)
125x223cm (2 panels)
oil on canvas
2022

\$8200

9.



Kate Stevens

Selective Sympathy (Aleppo) #4

125x123

oil on canvas

2023

\$4400



Lizzie Hall
Aral Sea, 2001 (sketch 2-4)
2022
Oil on oilsketch paper
80x60cm
\$600 each



Lizzie Hall
Aral Sea, 2001 (sketch 1)
2022
Oil on oilsketch paper
80x60cm
\$600

Lizzie Hall is a practicing artist holding an honours degree from the Printmaking Workshop of the Canberra School of Art and is based in Braidwood, NSW. Hall's work has been a finalist in multiple art prizes, including the Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship (2007), the Mosman Art Prize (2013/2024), the Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize (2017), The Alice Prize (2022) and the KAAF Art Prize (2022-Highly commended/2023/2024). Her work has been shown at Monash University, Albury Regional Art Gallery, Tuggeranong Arts Centre, numerous ARIs and was included in the Canberra Biennial in 2020 and 2022.

Kate Stevens is an artist whose work focuses on Australian narratives of distant conflicts, most recently with works addressing the failures of Australia's involvement in the war in Afghanistan. Her work has been shown in numerous group and solo exhibitions including at Sydney Contemporary and the Canberra Contemporary Art Space, and she received the 2021 Evelyn Chapman Art Award. Her paintings are held in the collections of Artbank, ACT Legislative Assembly, ACT Health, CMAG (Canberra Museum and Gallery) and numerous private collections, and she has twice been the recipient of the prestigious Portia Geach Memorial Award for portraiture.

CIVIC ART BUREAU

Upstairs 76 Alinga St Canberra

Director: Adam Bell +61 488 056 988

info@civcartbureau.com

All images photographed by Stephen Best.