

THE FEMALE GAZE



LOU STEER

22-02-21 - 14-03-21

intelligent animal and the **Darlington Installation Project (DIP)**
present **The Female Gaze by Lou Steer.**

Sales can be made via email: art@intelligentanimal.com.au
intelligentanimal.com.au

ia acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation on whose traditional lands we live, create, meet and work, and their elders past, present and emerging.

ARTIST STATEMENT

We know the male gaze – the gaze that objectifies women as beautiful images for the pleasure of the male viewer. Under the male gaze, women are seen as seductive, inviting but passive; the woman in the image is waiting to be activated by the man who gazes at her.

The female gaze is less seen in art. In this exhibition, the women gaze fearlessly from the page at the viewer. The observed become the observers. Their expressions are calm and neutral, their eyes bright and inquisitive.

This exhibition will be on display during the Sydney LGBTIQ Mardi Gras (17 February – 7 March) and International Women's Day (8 March). These two events informed the presentation of this exhibition. The paintings form a rainbow spectrum from the backgrounds, painted and overprinted to resemble Victorian wallpaper. The women's faces show diverse women – in age, appearance and ethnicity. They represent the women who live in Australia right now. These are memory portraits – they are not painted from life or from photographs, but from my imagination. They represent diversity in appearance, in age and in ethnicity. All are imperfect, and their flaws are visible.

Women are so pressured to be beautiful and flawless, and to fit very narrow stereotypes, but all women are beautiful and do not need physical perfection to prove it. The women in these portraits are free to be themselves and need no validation from the male gaze.

The first letter of the name of each portrait spells out the message STOP ADANI URGENCY. This is the most pressing environmental issue in Australia today. It's not about tourism on the Great Barrier Reef, it's about protecting our world from destruction. The female gaze in this context challenges the viewer to think what they can do. What are we waiting for?

B I O

Lou Steer is an Inner West multidisciplinary artist working in the art forms of painting, sculpture, performance and digital. She believes there is no such thing as confessional art because art is always at the intersection between the personal and the political. For Lou, this means her artworks express feminist and environmental themes.

Since 2010, Lou has held four solo exhibitions and has exhibited and performed widely in national and local group shows. She was a founding director and curator at ESP Gallery from 2009 – 2015 and was instrumental in creating the EDGE Festival funded by Inner West Council in 2019.

Some highlights include:

Public exhibitions: Bayside Outdoor Art Prize, Sculpture in the Vineyards, Lake Light Jindabyne, ANL National Maritime Art Prize and Marrickville Contemporary Art Prize'

Galleries: Australian Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art, ESP Gallery, The Shop Gallery, Delmar Gallery, At the Vanishing Point Gallery, TAP Gallery

Festivals: Sydney Fringe Festival, Newtown Festival, Winter Magic Festival, Marrickville Festival, Footprints Eco Festival

ART FOR SALE

THE FEMALE GAZE by Lou Steer

All paintings are mixed media (Acrylic, water colour and gouache) on A4 acid free acrylic paper. \$300 unframed.

1. **S**tella Pink
2. **T**opaz Magenta
3. **O**mala Red
4. **P**emba Orange
5. **A**riana Yellow
6. **D**anae Ochre
7. **A**urelia Gold
8. **N**aima Green
9. **I**mogen Emerald
10. **U**rsula Viridian
11. **R**oslyn Cyan
12. **G**race Turquoise
13. **E**lok Cerulean
14. **N**oelani Indigo
15. **C**helsea Lavendar
16. **Y**vonne Violet

Video: The Female Gaze NFS

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Artist declaration in support of the Australian Women & Children's Crisis Service Violence Alliance (20%). www.awccs.com.au

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