

## Olga Cironis's CV

### EDUCATION

1996 Masters Visual Arts University of Sydney (SCA) NSW

### SOLO SHOWS

2012 Fajr, Bunbury Regional Art Gallery, Bunbury, WA  
2011 Fajr, Fremantle Art Centre, Fremantle, WA  
Transart, Help me be like you, City of Perth Public Art Project, Perth, WA  
2010 Today I am what you want me to be, Turner Galleries, Perth, WA  
Blue Sky, Installation Commission for Bunbury City Council and BRAG, WA  
2008 Handle Me Gently, Turner Galleries, Perth, WA  
Tilt, Cover Up, Heathcote Museum and Art Gallery, Applecross, WA  
2007 Behind Each Look, Fremantle Arts Centre, Fremantle, WA  
The Horizon of Your Eyes, Brigitte Braun Art Dealer, @45 downstairs, Melbourne  
2006 Under Cover 2, Moores Building Contemporary Art Gallery, Fremantle, WA  
2003 Under Cover, Artplace Gallery, Claremont, WA  
2000 Lovers Pillows, Artplace with Millionchino, WA  
1999 Aherns Installation Art Exhibition, Perth, WA  
Human, Soapbox Gallery, Brisbane, QLD  
1998 Tertium Non Data, Artplace Gallery, Claremont, WA  
1997 Intercido, Artplace Gallery Claremont, WA  
1996 Touch of Fluff First Draft Gallery, Sydney, NSW  
Intercido, Bunbury Regional Art Galleries, Bunbury, WA  
1996 Biennale of Sydney System Error, First Draft Gallery, NSW  
1995 Lick, Zitlip Gallery, Sydney, NSW  
Wedding Tomb, Selenium Gallery, Sydney, NSW  
1993 Sorry Salt Bed, First Draft West Gallery Leichardt NSW

### COLLECTION DETAILS

Art Gallery of Western Australia, WA  
King Edward Memorial Hospital Art Collection, WA  
BankWest Art Collection, WA  
Fremantle Art Collection, WA  
City of Melville Art Collection, WA  
Bunbury Regional Art Gallery, WA  
Bunbury Art Collection, WA  
Geraldton Art Gallery Collection, WA  
Turner Gallery Art Angels Acquisition, WA  
John Stringer Art Collection, WA  
Brigitte Braun Artplace Art Collection, Victoria  
Central Institute of Technology, Northbridge, WA  
Liz and Lloyd Horn Art Collection, WA  
Royal Perth Hospital Art Collection, WA  
Fremantle Hospital Art Collection, WA  
Princess Margaret Hospital Art Collection, WA  
Lyn Hughes Art Collection, WA  
Housing Foundation Percent for Art, Public Art, Northbridge, WA  
Fiona Stanley Hospital, Public Art, WA  
Numerous private collections national and international

## Into the woods alone



Olga Cironis

Turner Galleries 2 - 31 August 2013

## Into the Woods Alone - Olga Cironis

Turner Galleries 2-31 August 2013

**Into the Woods Alone** is a milestone exhibition for Olga Cironis. In 2012 she travelled back to Greece and the Czech Republic to document contemporary truths and her own family's evolution since the post WWII Greek Civil war. Through memories, stories, photographs and objects the resulting body of work reassesses both personal and universal truths about how we perceive reality in the face of social dissonance and misunderstood certainties.

We know that history is narrated by the victors, a textbook history, existing on the backbone of smaller ones. We see what we are shown and often what we want to see. It is often a story about post war mutism; people forced into silence in an attempt to move on from the past. Even after decades, those who lived the war remember it in its infinitesimal detail; it shaped them, their lives and their children's. Others choose to forget and never speak of it again. Civil war is different to foreign invasion; the enemy is next door, someone who's lived alongside you for generations.

Cironis' stitched lips speak volumes about the inability to express yourself and your past when no-one else understands the conditions that shaped you. This is the first time Cironis has used her face, her identity. Until now, words have been her disguise. Through the words spoken by others, and objects disguised through covering, Cironis has identified with her history at a distance, as a character in her own life theatre within a universal script.

While earlier in her career, Cironis focused strongly on performance, she admits to having stopped because it was too exposing and she felt too close to the naked flame. In *Alexandra* she is looking at the camera, at us, personalising and owning the foundations of her own ethnic, social, political and personal history. By removing the safety net of anonymity she questions whether a dominant political, social or ethnic structure must repress others to maintain its authority and established social order.

Through her encounters in Europe and the collection of quotes and conversations from the Civil War in Greece, to the exodus to the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Albania, to the unification of Europe and the subsequent political and financial collapses, it seems that the world overall remains focused on diluting and whitewashing cultural differences to create a manageable uniformity.

*Bound by fate* speaks of memory, identity, individuality and collectivity. Hair is commonly charged with historical and cultural meaning, used to indicate a person's personal beliefs, social position, their age, gender, or religion. Hair from family and friends is trussed and sewn together by chance, the contents of each frame show some distinctions in form and colour but ultimately it's all one thing, fundamentally the same, organically similar material.

Unlike Cironis' early hair pieces dating from 1996 where over 80 people donated their hair to be woven together into a single work, *Bound by fate* documents a

sense of separation and confinement. Clustered into frames, separated from each-other, the objects become souvenirs, records, memorabilia with a common bond traceable to one single point, the artist.

In *What's mine is yours*, feathers secured together in a tufted bundle are mirrored by a simple black acrylic oval; one confused and lacking order, the other pristine and polished. The work explores ideas about the transience of memory, culture and identity. *What's mine is yours* questions perceptions of stability and chaos, harmony and upheaval and how these can be two sides of the same coin. The reflection in the highly polished Perspex is fleeting, one blink and it deviates, it changes; it is possibly never exactly the same again while the feathers are equally light, movable and temporary. History; coloured by a subtly shifting point of view and personal position.

Every object Cironis uses has its own history. Nothing is new but reconstructed and reassembled to create a new perspective that carries with it the object's original idiosyncrasies. Its past does not get whitewashed. Cironis brings value back to it, regenerates it, so the discarded becomes wanted, precious, desired and totemic.

*Whitewash* is simply an old hand-woven blanket. It dates from the time of the Greek Civil war (1945-1949) and has never been unbound. It was found in the stables of a cabin in the Gramos Mountains in Northern Greece, on the Albanian border, the last stand of the partisans. A gift from an old man who indicated to Olga that she may want to open it. She chose not to. It might have belonged to a shepherd or to a partisan, both used to carry humble but precious possessions and personal belongings inside such blankets, so maybe someone's history is concealed within it. Objects like this blanket are cultural DNA and a link in a shared collective consciousness, which remains unbroken through time and distance.

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