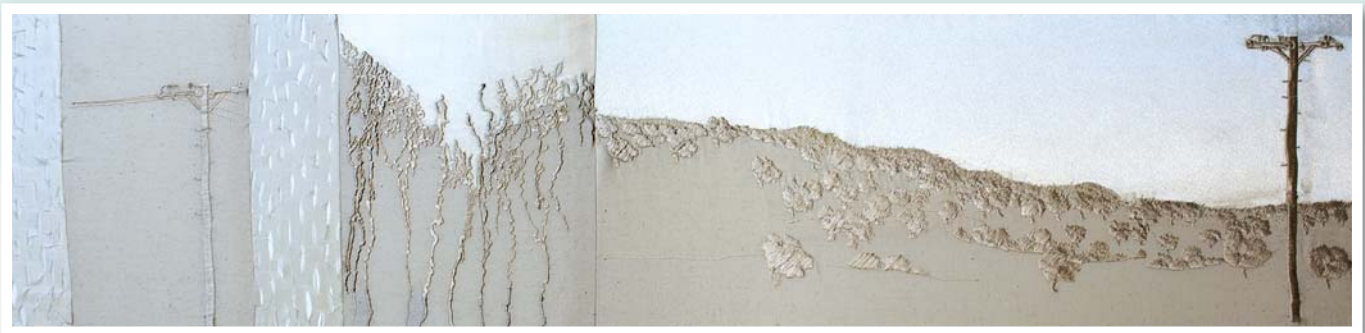


A CONVERSATION WITH RAIN

An exhibition of Contemporary Textile Art curated by Helen Lancaster

Fairfield City Museum and Gallery, Smithfield Sydney 23 May 2009 - 5 July 2009



Story by Irene Manion

By providing another challenging theme, Helen Lancaster, who has curated a number of themed exhibitions for the Fairfield City Museum and Gallery over the years, ensured that her selected artists would push boundaries. As a result, *A Conversation with Rain* showcased the variety, complexity and overall strength of the contemporary textile art movement in Australia.

Interpretations of the theme varied widely in both concept and textile media used. How might something as mercurial, formless and transparent as raindrops be captured through a medium that is as solid, tactile and stable as fibre?

A number of artists chose to make strong political statements. This is not surprising in the context of global warming. In Karen Macpherson's futuristic installation 'Efflorescence after the Rain', techno-trees have replaced real trees and plants. Her forged black steel stems and branches and

recycled white plastic leaves eerily cast beautiful shadows on the wall of the gallery. This was a sober, direct statement in a sculptural form that registered as 'industrial' and cold, whilst her 'bleached' leaf clusters conjured memories of beautiful rows of silver trees and rustling autumn canopies.

