

LAY THE MYSTIC

Old wind

MIRROR: New views on photography is an exhibition of words and pictures at State Library Victoria. Storytellers from Victoria responded to 141 photographs from the State Collection through new works.

Dating from 1950 to today, the photographs were taken by artists, documentarians and photojournalists. Some are born-digital, while others were made for record keeping or for books, gallery walls or newspapers.

The photographs are interpreted through the theme of ‘mirror’ by novelists, essayists, spoken word artists, non-fiction writers, activists, songwriters and poets. Mirrors can be objects on bathroom walls, a screen in a photo booth, the reflection of the sky on a body of water, two identical children, an imitation or a copy. Mirrors are also referenced through their symbolism: they reveal other ways of seeing, and even the idea of photography itself.

Pasifika Storytellers Collective is a group of diverse creative persons of Pasifika background who have come together to nurture and develop their craft as storytellers, reconnecting back to the oral traditions of the past but adapting to contemporary experiences and environments.

Lay the Mystic, a member of Pasifika Storytellers Collective, is a lyrical poet, musician and performance installation artist. In his work *Old wind*, Lay speaks of *matangi* | wind carrying wishes over generations. The work speaks to the reflection on the world and ancestral whispers across time.



I don't know a lot of Tongan words



but matangi,
wind, is one of them.



The rising and descending winds never stop
spinning, rolling, wild,



falling,

free.



And lapping planets up
in the same kind of



here and now,



kind of like there and a long time ago.



Those winds are where all my shyest grandmas
put their secrets.



And I hear the wind
moving heavy with her wishes
when I'm quiet,

and still,

and here.



Soft wind holds me suspended and wishing
'cause someone too long ago to know me
put a wish on the wind
for all of her kids' kids.



And the wind's just been waiting
for one of us to live it.



Matangi rises with wishes older than me
then sinks under the sunset with all of mine.
And we work our wishes
into life across time,



here,



and here,



and here.

Loving all across the wind.

Photographs

Wolfgang Sievers

Shell Refinery, Geelong, Vic., at night
Photographic print (gelatin silver) 1957
20 × 25 cm
H2003.100/117

Mathias Heng

The Gill Memorial Home, 217 A'Beckett Street, Melbourne
Photographic print (gelatin silver) 1995
30.3 × 40.6 cm
H95.190/17

Ian Harrison Hill

Segment loader & gantry crane on elevated roadway between Arden St. & Macauley Rd., Kensington, 21/1/98
Photographic print (gelatin silver) 1998
31 × 41 cm
H99.20/49

Reimund Zunde

Train travel, Melbourne, Vic.
Photographic print (gelatin silver, selenium toned) 2004–06
41 × 31 cm
H2007.32/27

Wolfgang Sievers

'Spirit of Progress' and the 'Daylight Express', Spencer Street Station
Photographic print (gelatin silver) c. 1963
19.9 × 24.6 cm
H2000.195/100

Wolfgang Sievers

Rolls of sheet aluminium at the Alcoa aluminium fabrication plant, Point Henry, Victoria
Photographic print (gelatin silver) 1971
24.1 × 19.4 cm
H2002.99/313

Alan K Jordan

Hostel beds, location unknown
Black and white negative c. 1968
35 mm
H2010.105/64d

Lyle Fowler

Display of Vacola brand foodstuffs
Black and white negative 1950
20.3 × 25.4 cm
H92.20/4543

Rennie Ellis

Children viewed through Water window, National Gallery of Victoria
Digitised colour slide (35 mm transparency) c. 1980–89
35 mm
H2011.150/1226
Courtesy of the Rennie Ellis Photographic Archive

Dyranda Prevost

Flat Fleet De-enactment, Fitzroy Swimming Pool, 22 January 1988
Photographic print (gelatin silver, selenium toned) 1988
20.3 × 25.2 cm
H88.43/2
Courtesy of the Dyranda Prevost Archive

Julie Millowick

Victorian Arts Centre – Concert hall acoustic discs
Colour negative 1983
35mm
H2022.76/1224

Destiny Deacon

Whitey's watchin'
Colour photographic print 1994
26 × 21 cm
H99.222
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley Gallery, Sydney

Matthew Sleeth

Untitled #46 from the series Rosebud, 2004–6
Photographic print (Type C) 2004
51 × 61 cm
H2008.133/17

Georgia Metaxas

Hellenic Dancefest series, Crown Casino, 19th September 1999
Photographic print (gelatin silver, selenium toned) 1999
17 × 24 cm
H2000.142/4

Reimund Zunde

Ramp leading up to multistorey carpark
Photographic print (gelatin silver) 2004–6
31 × 41 cm
H2007.32