

MEDIA RELEASE

Museum of Brisbane pushes photographic boundaries in new exhibition

One of Australia's most acclaimed photographers has revealed Brisbane's buildings and landmarks from a stunning new perspective with camera obscura – an ancient technique used by the likes of Aristotle, Leonardo da Vinci and even Karl Marx.

The breathtakingly beautiful results, most of which will be shown for the first time, will feature in Museum of Brisbane's specially commissioned exhibition for 2015, *Robyn Stacey: Cloud Land*.

Opening Friday 18 September, the exhibition is a camera obscura spectacle, an historical form of image making, which works by allowing light through a tiny hole, projecting a scene from the outside onto an inside surface.

The process is recreated with ambitious scale in *Cloud Land*, transforming the interiors of high-rise hotels, offices and institutional spaces by wallpapering them with an image of the world outside their windows.

Upside down and back-to-front images of iconic Brisbane landmarks like the Story Bridge and Boggo Road Gaol are wrapped around the photographer's subjects in dreamlike scenarios that provoke the viewer to imagine what might play out within the four walls.

The vivid exhibition marks a new direction for Robyn Stacey, who is known for her striking photographs of historical collections and demonstrates the artist's fascination in exploring the juncture between art and science through photography.

Raised in Brisbane, she has exhibited nationally and internationally since the 1980s, most recently at National Gallery of Australia, Queensland Art Gallery, Monash Gallery of Art, Australian Centre for Photography and Association of International Photography Art Dealers (New York).

Stacey said the transience of camera obscura led her to explore the temporary role of certain rooms and the metamorphosis of cities.

"Images created by the camera obscura only exist for a couple of hours, as it is dependent on the position of the sun in relation to the room and as light travels in a straight line, it creates upside-down, reversed and distorted visual effects, producing surreal and psychological spaces," Ms Stacey said.

"This got me thinking about the ever-changing nature and renewal that is characteristic of the modern metropolis and the rooms and city serve as emblems of transience, with the process of transformation seeping through each image.

"Through the theatrical and distorted view of the camera obscura, a roving, fragmented and fleeting experience of contemporary life is revealed."

Museum of Brisbane Director Peter Denham said the collaboration with Stacey continued the Museum's mission to look at the city through the eyes of artists.

"I saw Robyn's first work with camera obscura and thought it would be a fantastic coup for Brisbane if she would explore different spaces here," Mr Denham said.

"Robyn's photographs show huge imagination – each image is rich and powerful, capturing how the city is forever changing and making you feel like you are being dropped into the room.

"The exhibition will also feature a live camera obscura experience, allowing visitors to interact with the visual effects produced by this technique."

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Robyn Stacey: Cloud Land will run from 18 September 2015 to 3 April 2016. Museum of Brisbane is open daily from 10am to 5pm, on level three of Brisbane City Hall – entry is free.

This project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

Events

A program of events will accompany the exhibition, including artist talks, workshops, and panel discussions. Highlight events include:

In conversation with Robyn Stacey and Shaune Lakin

Sun 20 Sep 2015

Robyn Stacey and Shaune Lakin, Senior Curator of Photography from the National Gallery of Australia, discuss how an artist interprets a city and how Stacey's new work captures a unique perspective of Brisbane's community and history.

Camera obscura experience

Sat 10 & Sun 11 Oct 2015

As part of Brisbane Open House visit Hilton Hotel, designed by renowned Australian Architect Harry Seidler, to experience the magic of the obscura, a live artwork unfolding before your eyes.

Robyn and her subjects tour

Sat 21 Nov 2015

Hear all sides of the story with an intimate tour led by Robyn Stacey and three of her most arresting subjects, Michael Rayner; Yimesret Gebrewold and Maroochy Barambah, Songwoman and Law-woman Turrbal people.

Children's activity: Sunprints

Mon 28 Sep – Fri 2 Oct 2015

Learn about one of the oldest photographic print-making processes that harnesses the power of the sun in our hands-on children's workshop.

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