



Caroline Gasteen

Caroline Gasteen is a Meanjin/Brisbane based artist whose practice is process-led. She uses collage, photography and paint to generate work. She is particularly interested in colour relationships and dimensionality. Her recent works particularly focus on the concept of three-dimensional space that permits both illusion and depth as well as light and shadow. Since graduating from RMIT's art school in 2014, Gasteen has participated in groupsshowes across Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. She had her first solo show at QCA's Grey St Gallery in 2019. Gasteen has been a finalist in the Port Lincoln Art Prize and The Ravenswood Women's Art Prize, for which her 2022 entry won a highly commended. In 2018, she was the overall winner of the Churchie National Emerging Art Prize.



Arabella Walker

Arabella Walker is from a maternal line of Wulli Wulli, Auburn Hawkwood people. She is an emerging female contemporary Aboriginal artist. Walker's practice conveys significant topics of First Nations histories with a focus on the challenge of being an Aboriginal woman living in the Colony. Walker deals with this challenge by weaving Indigenous ways of knowing and being into knowledges of culture and protocols, connections, and traditions, through a variety of media. The body is activated to express ideas, cultural knowledge, histories, stories and cultural connections. Media, such as acrylic paints, videoprojections, and installations form an interdisciplinary dialogue. Walkers creative process communicates a cultural intent in ways that words can't.



Clare Jaque Vasquez

Clare Jaque Vasquez is an emerging Indigenous artist from Gomeroi/Kamilaroi Nation. Growing up in Sydney, she then moved back on Country to a community in a small town near Tamworth. Clare now has a studio based on Bindal Country and transverses across Gurambilbarra (Wulgurukaba Country) in North Queensland. Clare's methodology can take up to 12 weeks to complete. This slow process of layering showcases her gentle, resilient nature, carefully turning a two-dimensional canvas into a sculptural painting. Her approach to creating art also protects and embeds her Cultural stories into the works. Clare gently encourages the viewer to think about the shifting roles between contemporary society and First Nations practices and how traditional practices have evolved to occur in the modern world.



Alisha Kitto

Alisha Kitto is an emerging abstract artist living in Brisbane, Australia. Her practice includes painting and printmaking. She creates sensitive and emotionally charged monochromatic paintings on canvas by layering repetitive mark making on top of dense fields of color, and large prints on paper using a blind embossing technique. The marks are subtle from a distance but once close their effect is profound. Her work serves as a record of her internal state of being and speaks to the lasting imprint of trauma. Kitto was also awarded a three-month residency and dual exhibition by Impress Printmakers Gallery, "For artworks realized through outstanding an adventurous printmaking practice."

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We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Brisbane region, the Turrbal and Jagera peoples.

We acknowledge their continuing connection to the lands, waters, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

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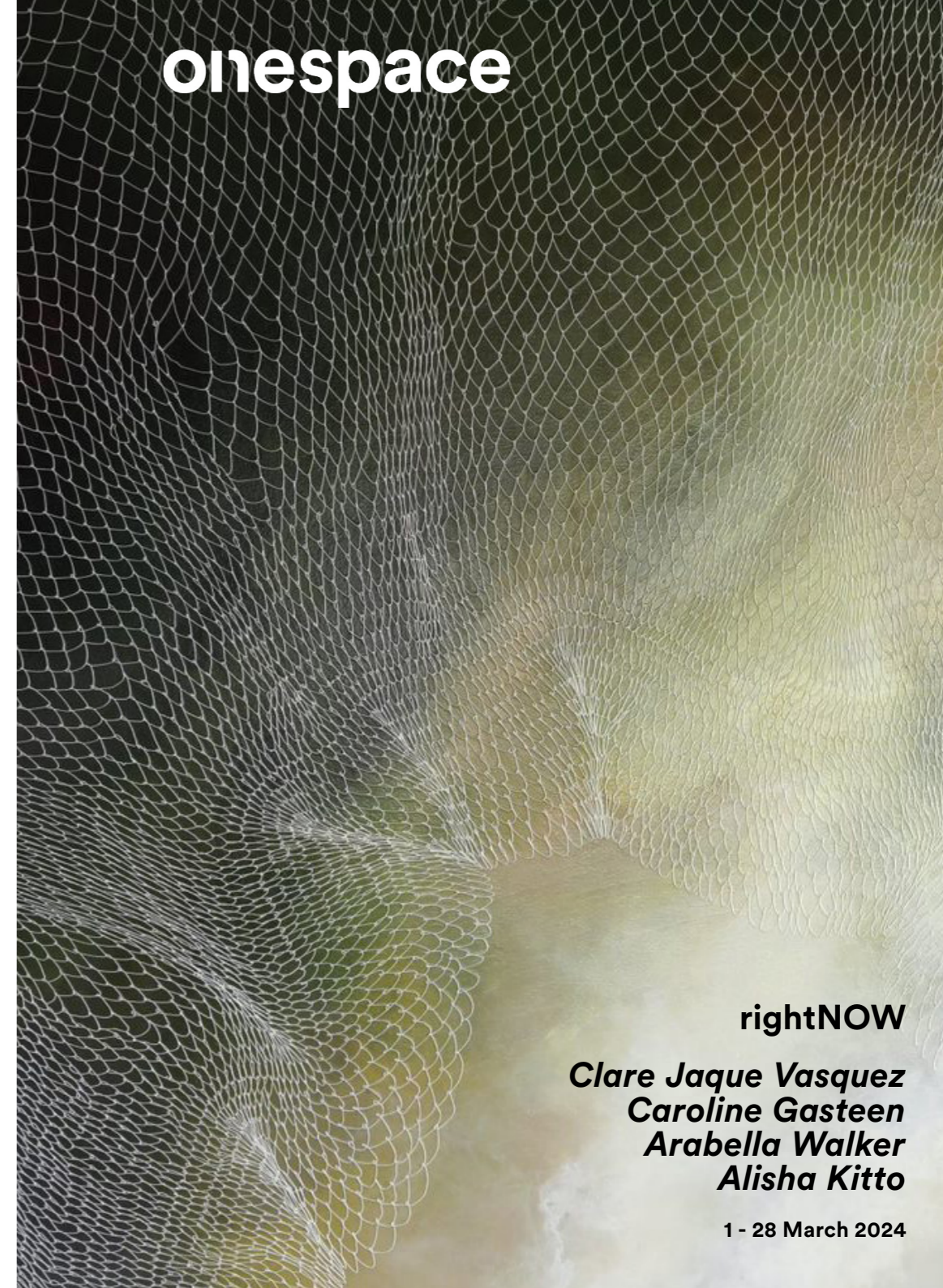
Cover Image: Clare Jaque Vasquez, *Bag of tricks* (detail), 2024, Acrylic and impasto on canvas, 200 x 200cm

Above: Arabella Walker, *Flourishing*, 2024, Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 180cm

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rightNOW

**Clare Jaque Vasquez
Caroline Gasteen
Arabella Walker
Alisha Kitto**

1 - 28 March 2024

rightNOW

Clare Jaque Vasquez, Caroline Gasteen, Arabella Walker and Alisha Kitto

This is the fourth iteration of rightNOW, an exhibition format that expedites freshly conceived ideas and experiments straight from artists’ studios to eager new audiences at Onespace gallery. An immediate sense of contemporaneity is established by the premise that the featured works have been produced ‘right now’, and indeed, these paintings by Caroline Gasteen, Alisha Kitto, Clare Jaque Vasquez, and Arabella Walker are ‘hot off the press’. But this is only one part of their appeal. Between and among them, these paintings toy with tensions between the surface and the illusion of space and depth; innovate against traditional methods of paint application; and level a collective challenge at Isabelle Graw’s assertion that “painting has long since departed from its ancestral home—that is, the picture on canvas”.¹ Moreover, the works speak subtly to discourse around contemporary painting via their sensitive, almost inward-facing orientation to the world.

For Caroline Gasteen, the process of producing small-scale models from paper scraps and other mundane items has offered the artist a way back to painting following the birth of her first child. These humble sculptural origins can be seen echoing throughout the paintings in repeated references to edges, shadows, peaks, folds, and planes. While associations with abstracted landscapes or modernist interiors might seem logical, these connotations are deftly circumvented by Gasteen’s playful and off-beat placement of elements (e.g., the staircase is horizontal and the mountain is upside down). On the one hand, these paintings could be seen to exploit the formal elements of painting (and sculpture) in order to antagonise the distinctions between abstraction and illusion, between picture and object; on the other, they point to something far more experiential, private. Through the perpetual shuffling of tiny moving pieces—much more than a mere practical tool for constructing a painting—Gasteen captures a sense of the overwhelm, the repetition, and the simplicity (or banality) that can characterise experiences of new parenthood.

Arabella Walker produces paintings that convey her living embodiment of Wulli Wulli and Auburn Hawkwood culture and identity. In the studio, the artist employs her extensive dance background to utilise her body in the service of expressing cultural knowledge and practices. *The Before* (2024) is alive with rhythm, movement, repetition, and dynamics; here, Walker’s mark making could almost be read like choreographic notation of a dance sequence viewed from the clouds. In *Flourishing* (2024), dotted lines, tracks, and passageways across the



canvas echo songlines running through country or chart a metaphysical journey through non-linear time. Walker suggests that her practice broadly focuses on the challenges associated with being an Aboriginal woman living in the Colony and yet these current paintings seem charged with such joy and resilience. They show how, as Aileen Moreton-Robinson states, Indigenous sovereignty “is carried by the body ... grounded within complex relations derived from the intersubstantiation of ancestral beings, humans and land”.²

Alisha Kitto’s paintings invite the viewer to contemplate the experiences of time and endurance. *In the Darkness There Is Life* (2024) features rows upon rows of tiny tally-like marks on a dark background, the effect of which seems to both hide and reveal the surface through a veil of stitches, notches, or cuts. From a distance, these paintings almost take on the effect of shimmering minimalist monochrome paintings, until closer inspection reveals their almost dizzying abundance of visual information. For Kitto, these are the products of a painstaking and time-consuming process during which she covers the surface of the canvas with lines of repeated marks. Painting in such a way could be understood in David Joselit’s terms as “marking time and storing affect, [which] leads to scoring experience”.³ This seems an appropriate way to think about Kitto’s paintings which, according to the artist, function something like a visual meditation on the endurance and persistence of trauma.

Memories and experiences of home on her Gomerioi/Kamilaroi Country inform the work of Clare Jaque Vasquez. In these paintings, figments of black soil, thunderstorms, green flats, and hills are overlaid with passages of meticulously sculpted fibres and strings of paint which take the appearance of woven nets or as swathes of loosely knotted fabric. Having honed this method over some time, the artist now utilises unconventional and natural painting tools together with a secret mixture of acrylic paints and mediums, to weave with paint. This ability to innovate and adapt traditional cultural practices reflects what Ian McLean refers to as the “endless cycle of performative Indigeneity—that is, tangible reconfigurations of ancestral knowledge and cultural practices for the altered context of modern Australia”.⁴

rightNOW brings together new works by four artists, each creating at a pivotal moment in their respective careers whether recently graduated, in the midst of moving to a new community, or navigating the demands of emergent matrescence. Through various means and modes, the artists demonstrate both a commitment to painting and a critique of its conventions. They reflect recent categorisations of painting as “a form of production of signs that is experienced as highly personalised”.⁵ In this, more than their recent production, the paintings in this exhibition reveal their true contemporaneity.

Sally Molloy

Left: Caroline Gasteen, *The More Things Come Together, the More They Fall Apart*, 2023, Oil on canvas, 61 x 61cm

Right: Alisha Kitto, *The Ghost of Me Remembers*, 2024, Acrylic and graphite on canvas, 101 x 76cm

1. Isabelle Graw, “The Value of Painting: Notes on Unspecificity, Indexicality, and Highly Valuable Quasi-Persons,” in *Reflexivity and Agency Beyond the Canvas*, ed. Isabelle Graw, Daniel Birnbaum, and Nikolaus Hirsch (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012), 45.

2. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, “Introduction,” in *Sovereign Subjects: Indigenous Sovereignty Matters*, ed. Aileen Moreton-Robinson (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2007), 142.

3. David Joselit, “Marking, Scoring, Storing, and Speculating (on Time),” in *Painting Beyond Itself: The Medium in the Post-Medium Condition*, ed. Isabelle Graw and Ewa Lajer-Burcharth (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016), 15.

4. Ian McLean, *Rattling Spears: A History of Indigenous Australian Art* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2016), 22.

5. Graw, “The Value of Painting,” 45.