

onespace

Marian Drew  
Wild Tender Close  
17 April – 23 May 2026



# Wild Tender Close

17 April – 23 May 2026



Marian Drew, *Bandicoot and Quince*, 2005. Archival pigment print on cotton paper.  
Image: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

**Exhibition Dates:** 17 April – 23 May 2026  
**Opening Event:** Saturday 18 April, 5 – 7pm | Artist Talk, 4 – 5pm  
**Gallery Hours:** Tuesday to Friday, 10am – 5pm, Saturday 12pm – 5pm

**Gallery Walk Through:**

Saturday 2 May 2026, 2 – 4pm | Ticketed event via Humanitix | \$15.00/ticket

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Marking more than two decades since the inception of Marian Drew's *Australiana Still Life* series, *Wild Tender Close* assembles 46 significant works from the collection, curated by the artist herself.

Nationally and internationally acclaimed, the series recontextualises the still life genre through ornate, yet haunting, images of deceased fauna found in Australia by a community of contributors. Through intimate portraits and carefully composed arrangements, Drew conveys a deep care and reverence for these creatures—lives often dismissed as mere 'roadkill.' Essay writer Pippa Milne eloquently states, "Drew's images, in their stillness, offer a provocation: to consider animals not as peripheral to human life, but as central to it—as participants, as knowledge holders, as beings whose lives intersect with us but need not serve us." The exhibition is further anchored by *Twelve Wishes*, a major work spanning 7.5 metres, making its Brisbane debut.

Although realised over a period of two decades, these works feel newly urgent amid escalating existential threats such as climate change and habitat loss. In bringing together these 46 photographs, *Wild Tender Close* invites audiences to reconsider *Australiana Still Life*, uncovering renewed meaning and moments of quiet solace.



Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

Marian Drew is one of Australia's most significant photomedia artists, with a practice spanning more than 30 years. She is known for her evocative photographic works that blend still life, landscape, and portraiture with historical and cultural references, and is particularly recognised for her carefully staged tableaux. Her work sits at the intersection of fine art photography and conceptual practice, often drawing on traditions of European painting. Her practice is also closely associated with vanitas imagery, exploring themes of mortality, abundance, and decay—most notably in her *Australiana Still Life series* (2003–2011).

Based in Brisbane, Drew has been closely connected to the academic and artistic community at the Queensland College of Art and Design, where she has taught photography (1986-2016). She was also founding member of the Queensland Centre for Photography and active during its operations from 2004 until 2014, with her work showcasing in international art fairs such as photoLA and the London Art Fair. Drew has held more than 35 solo exhibitions across Australia, the United States, France, Hong Kong, and Germany, and has been included in over 100 group exhibitions internationally, including in New Zealand, the United Kingdom, China, Singapore, Poland, Taiwan, Peru, and the United States.

Recent exhibitions include *What Lasts Doesn't Always Hold Shape* at James Stirling's No.1 Poultry, London, 2026, *Cloudy with a Chance of Art* at HOTA, Home of the Arts (2026); *Volatile Terrain* at The Condensery (2025); *Horizons* at Goulburn Regional Art Gallery (2025); *Shifter* at Lake Macquarie Museum of Art and Culture, NSW, *Food in Art* at MOCAK Museum of Contemporary Art in Kraków (2024); *New Light: Photography Now + Then* at Museum of Brisbane (2024); and *Materiality But Not As We Know It* at the Canberra Museum and Gallery (2024).

She represented Australia in the First Asia Pacific Triennial in 1993, Dubai Photo, 2016, Musée du Quai Branly, PhotoQuai, Paris 2011, and the Pingyao International Photography Festival, China 2010. She was awarded her Doctor of Philosophy, School of Art and Design, ANU, College of Arts and Social Sciences in 2023, completed a Bachelor of Visual Art in 1984 at the Canberra School of Art, Australian National University, and was awarded a German Government Scholarship from the German government DAAD to study Experimental Photography, at Kassel University, Germany. The Dyason Bequest administered by the NSW Art Gallery assisted her studies in the major art collections of Europe.

She has received several commissions that include the National Portrait Gallery of Australia, Brisbane Magistrates Court, Brisbane Festival, Museum of Brisbane, and Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Great Walks, and completed Creative Australia (formerly Australia Council for the Arts) international residencies in Los Angeles (1994) and New York (1989 and 2011).

Her artwork is held in major collections that include the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Museum of Photographic Art, San Diego, Fonds National D'Art Contemporain (FNAC), Paris, France, Artbank, National Gallery of Australia, Victorian National Gallery, Art Gallery of South Australia, the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Monash Gallery of Art, University of Queensland Art Museum, Griffith, Murdoch and Curtin Universities.

## *Marian Drew - Wild, Tender, Close*

For centuries, still life painting has functioned as a display of wealth and consumption. Often placed in ornate frames, they depict arrangements of fruit, flowers, books, or hunted game that signify abundance, ownership, and cultural refinement; in many ways, they have acted as portraits of individuals through their possessions.

Marian Drew reworks this tradition by replacing such symbols of prosperity with the remains of wild animals—creatures killed through human carelessness. Placing these bodies into the visual language of still life raises difficult and unsettling questions. What does it mean to elevate these remains into aesthetic objects? Who is being represented, and who benefits from their display? While these works still speak to consumption, they are no longer celebratory or refined, but instead tender, even violent. As the Jains say in their philosophy: consumption (and, in fact, living) always carries a ‘shadow viciousness’ (i.e., a form of violence), whether or not we choose to acknowledge it.

Amid the animals Drew has so tenderly arranged, I can’t go past my favourite bird. A kingfisher always swooped onto the tree in front of our bach in New Zealand, catching the antipodean light on its breast. It is hard not to be drawn to such a bird—small, vivid, almost impossibly bright, with its feathers shifting between tones of blue and green, depending on the light. There is something self-contained about it with a sense of precision and independence.

Kingfishers are seen by many as a lucky charm, augers of calm weather, with their feathers kept for warding off thunder. For those who have watched a kingfisher in motion—the sudden dive, the swift return to a branch, the efficient gulp of its catch—they

embody both grace and ferocity in miniature form. When I saw Drew’s photograph, the kingfisher was stilled. Laid carefully upon what feels like a kitchen table, its delicate body flanked by curling pagodas within the Chinese textile of the cloth and accompanied by two ripe strawberries. Its luminous colour remains and its small scale is still surprising—barely larger than the fruit beside it—but its cheeky vitality is gone. The juxtaposition is jarring in its quietness.

Still life has historically belonged to painting, where compositions were entirely constructed and unverifiable. Photography, by contrast, is often understood as a truthful medium. Drew complicates this assumption. Shot on medium-format film, these works frame constructed scenes, with landscape photographs (also made by the artist and therefore truthful but dislocated) printed and pinned behind the tables or windowsills that hold the animals and their attendant objects.

Multiple arrangements, compositions and photographs were made and tested by Drew in order to find the right setting for each animal. The artist describes the process as seeking to make death a little beautiful, so that people might look a little longer because they are questioning what they were seeing. The animals, who once moved through real environments, are repositioned into ambiguous sets. Tablecloths, backdrops, and objects are combined to suggest multiple places at once without resolving into any single, identifiable location.

This dislocation gives the work an almost metaphysical quality. The animals seem suspended between worlds—no longer part of their original habitats but not completely belonging to these constructed

## ***Wild Tender Close***

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interiors either. They might be read as inhabiting an imagined afterlife, or perhaps as specimens relocated into a kind of museological diorama. Alternatively, they exist in the liminal space of the digital image itself. In all cases, the photographs become sites of uncertainty, where reality and fiction blur and where we have to navigate the tension between what is seen and what is known.

Film lends Drew's work a photographic grain, giving the print a character that digital capture cannot replicate. The medium-format film was scanned for printing on cotton paper, which is less reflective and glossy than photographic papers and reads as less commercial in presentation. Simultaneously, the dead animal actually existed in front of the camera, with its film. This sounds obvious but writing it reminds me that these bodies have not been digitally conjured: they were laid out and considered—cared for—as the work was crafted.

Encountering the series as a whole opens up a broader reflection on time and artistic practice. Bringing together works made across several decades allows for connections and continuities to emerge—threads that may not have been visible as the artist was making it. Seeing it as a body of work encourages slower, more deliberate looking... a mode that resists the speed of contemporary image culture. Revisiting earlier works in a changing photographic landscape also raises the question of whether an artwork is ever truly finished, or whether it continues to shift in meaning as contexts evolve.

There is a quiet irony in the titles as they relate to the subjects. Birds known for their sound fall silent; creatures associated with action or agency appear inert. This tension underscores the bittersweet quality of the work—its ability to hold beauty and discomfort in the same

frame. If these works ask anything of us, it is a shift in perspective. To understand the world and our place within it requires moving beyond a purely human-centered view. The scale of environmental damage inflicted over the past century alone makes this impossible to ignore. Drew's images, in their stillness, offer a provocation: to consider animals not as peripheral to human life, but as central to it—as participants, as knowledge holders, as beings whose lives intersect with us but need not serve us.

- Pippa Milne

Marian Drew

*Wild Tender Close*

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Marian Drew

*Twelve Wishes*, 2006

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, 765 cm x 110 cm

2AP + Edition of 3

\$25,000

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

Marian Drew

*Wild Tender Close*

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Marian Drew

*Flourish, 2026*

Archival pigment print on cotton paper,

Image: 70 x 54cm, paper: 91 x 64cm

2AP + Edition of 10

\$5,500 (unframed) | \$6,500 (framed)

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

# Marian Drew

# Wild Tender Close

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Marian Drew

*Bandicoot and Quince, 2005*

Archival pigment print on cotton paper  
Image: 140 x 180 | Paper: 185 x 220  
(unframed), 2AP + Edition of 3

\$10,000

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Marian Drew

*Wombat with Watermelon, 2005*

Archival pigment print on cotton paper  
Image: 140 x 180 | Paper: 185 x 220  
(unframed), 2AP + Edition of 3

\$10,000

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Marian Drew

*Tasmanian Rosella with Apple, 2005*

Archival pigment print on cotton paper  
Image: 140 x 180 | Paper: 185 x 220  
(unframed), 2AP + Edition of 3

\$10,000

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Marian Drew

*Possum with Five Birds, 2003*

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, (small)

Image: 70 x 78, paper: 91 x 107cm, frame: 104 x 120 x 5cm,

Edition 5/10

\$5,500 (unframed) | \$6,500 (framed)

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Marian Drew

*Crow with Salt, 2003*

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, (small)

Image: 70 x 78, paper: 91 x 107cm, frame: 104 x 120 x 5cm,

Edition 5/10

\$5,500 (unframed) | \$6,500 (framed)

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Marian Drew

*Rosella in Alabaster Bowl, 2005*

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, (small)

Image: 69 x 85cm, paper: 78 x 95cm, frame: 99 x 116 x 4cm,  
Edition 8/10

\$5,500 (unframed) | \$6,500 (framed)

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.



Marian Drew

*Potoroo with Protea, 2004*

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, (small)

Image: 70 x 89cm, paper: 83 x 11cm, frame: 104 x 120 x 5cm,  
Edition 5/10

\$5,500 (unframed) | \$6,500 (framed)

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Onespace.

## **Box Set 1**

*Wild*, 2026

Solander Box Set of 7 prints

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, 38 x 45cm

Edition of 3

\$5,000

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## Wild, 2026

Solander Box Set of 7 prints



*Wallaby with Tarp, 2006*



*Kookaburra with Small Jug, 2006*



*Pelican with Turnips, 2005*



*Magpie with Limes, 2006*



*Crow with Salt, 2003*



*Rose Crowned Fruit Dove on Embroidered Cloth, 2009*



*Rosella in Alabaster Bowl, 2005*

## **Box Set 2**

*Tender, 2026*

Solander Box Set of 7 prints

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, 38 x 45cm

Edition of 3

**\$5,000**

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## Tender, 2026

Solander Box Set of 7 prints



*Possum with Five Birds, 2003*



*Tasmanian Swamp Hen with Candle, 2005*



*Gallah in Landscape, 2003*



*Rainbow Lorikeet on Queensland Needlepoint, 2009*



*Kingfisher with Two Strawberries on Chinese Cloth, 2009*



*Tasmanian Rosella with Apple, 2005*



*Penguin with Enamel Jug, 2009*

## **Box Set 3**

*Close, 2026*

Solander Box Set of 7 prints

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, 38 x 45cm

Edition of 3

\$5,000

# Marian Drew

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## Close, 2026

Solander Box Set of 7 prints



*Bower Bird, Swamp Hen, Duck, 2003*



*Wombat with Watermelon, 2005*



*Potoroo with Protea, 2004*



*Tasmanian Swamp Hen with Apple, 2005*



*Bandicoot and Quince, 2005*



*Pelican on paper and Linen, 2003*



*Lorikeet with Green Cloth, 2006*

## **Box Set 4**

*Wild Tender Close, 2026*

Solander Box Set of 45 prints

Archival pigment print on cotton paper, 38 x 45cm

Edition of 3

**\$18,000**

### **Individual Prints Available\*:**

38 x 45cm | 2AP + Edition of 10 | \$800 (unframed) \$1,100 (framed)

75 x 92cm | 2AP + Edition of 10 | \$5,500 (unframed) \$6,500 (framed)

85 x 110cm | 2AP + Edition of 5 | \$6,500 (unframed) \$8,000 (framed)

110 x 133 | 2AP + Edition of 5 | \$7,000 (unframed) \$8,500 (framed)

\*Please enquire with gallery about available edition for each size.

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# Wild Tender Close, 2026

Solander Box Set of 45 Prints



*Possum with Five Birds, 2003*



*Galah in Landscape, 2003*



*Kitchen View with Mask, 2003*



*Bower Bird, Swamp Hen, Duck, 2003*



*Butcher with Knife, 2003*



*Magpie with Butcher and Bowl, 2003*



*Fruit Bat with Plate, 2003*



*Noisy Minor in Banana Flower, 2003*



*Raven, Rock and Rockmelon, 2003*

# Marian Drew

# Wild Tender Close, 2026

Solander Box Set of 45 Prints



*Crow with Salt, 2003*



*Potoroo with Protea, 2004*



*Bandicoot on Plate, 2005*



*Pelican with 2 Fish, 2003*



*Table Laid Kangaroo, 2004*



*Pelican with Turnips, 2005*



*Pelican on Paper and Linen, 2003*



*Bandicoot and Quince, 2005*



*Tasmanian Swamp Hen with Candle, 2005*

# Marian Drew

# Wild Tender Close, 2026

Solander Box Set of 45 Prints



*Rosella in Alabaster Bowl, 2005*



*Wombat with Watermelon and Plate, 2005*



*Tasmanian Rosella with Merino Sheep Painting, 2005*



*Tasmanian Rosella with Apple, 2005*



*Quoll with Bowl and Flowers, 2005*



*Bird with Trunk and Paw Paw 2005*



*Wombat with Watermelon, 2005*



*Quoll with Apple and Flowers, 2005*



*Tasmanian Swamp Hen with Apples, 2005*

# Marian Drew

# Wild Tender Close, 2026

Solander Box Set of 45 Prints



*Wallaby with Tarp, 2006*



*Lorikeet with Green Cloth, 2006*



*Magpie with Limes, 2006*



*Kookaburra with Small Jug, 2006*



*Dusky Moorhen with Enamel Teapot, 2006*



*Magpie with Pawpaw, 2006*



*Lorikeet with Jug and 3 Birds, 2006*



*Boobook Owl with Limes, 2006*



*Brush-tail Possum and Echidna with Burning Log, 2006*

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*Echidna with Bowl, 2008*



*Penguin with Enamel Jug, 2009*



*Kingfisher with Two Strawberries on Chinese Cloth, 2009*



*Crested Wood Pigeon with Mother of Pearl Plate, 2010*



*Rainbow Lorikeet on Queensland Needlepoint, 2009*



*Rose Crowned Fruit Dove on Embroidered Cloth, 2009*

# Wild Tender Close, 2026

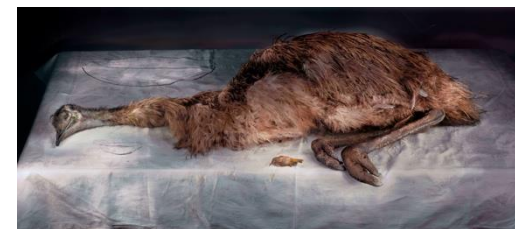
Solander Box Set of 45 Prints



*Sacred Kingfisher with Sewn Cloth, 2010*



*Emu with Yellow Canary, 2009*



*Emu with Two Drawn Bowls, 2009*

Onespace is a Brisbane-based gallery that presents and sells contemporary art, including work by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

We curate an exhibition program exploring diverse themes and media, showcasing emerging, mid-career and established artists whose works inform, stimulate and challenge. Onespace welcomes you to engage with the artists and artworks we exhibit.

Onespace is uniquely located adjacent to Maiwar (Brisbane river) beneath the Spice Apartments near the Go Between Bridge in South Brisbane. We are proudly surrounded by the dynamic buzz of the Queensland cultural precinct that is significant to this area of Brisbane.

Onespace acknowledges the traditional custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

**Director, John Stafford:** [john@onespace.com.au](mailto:john@onespace.com.au)

**Director, Jodie Cox:** [jodie@onespace.com.au](mailto:jodie@onespace.com.au)

**Gallery Manager, Demi Conrad:** [demi@onespace.com.au](mailto:demi@onespace.com.au)

**Gallery Assistant, Poppy Saines:** [poppy@onespace.com.au](mailto:poppy@onespace.com.au)

**Gallery Assistant, Mae Stanton:** [mae@onespace.com.au](mailto:mae@onespace.com.au)

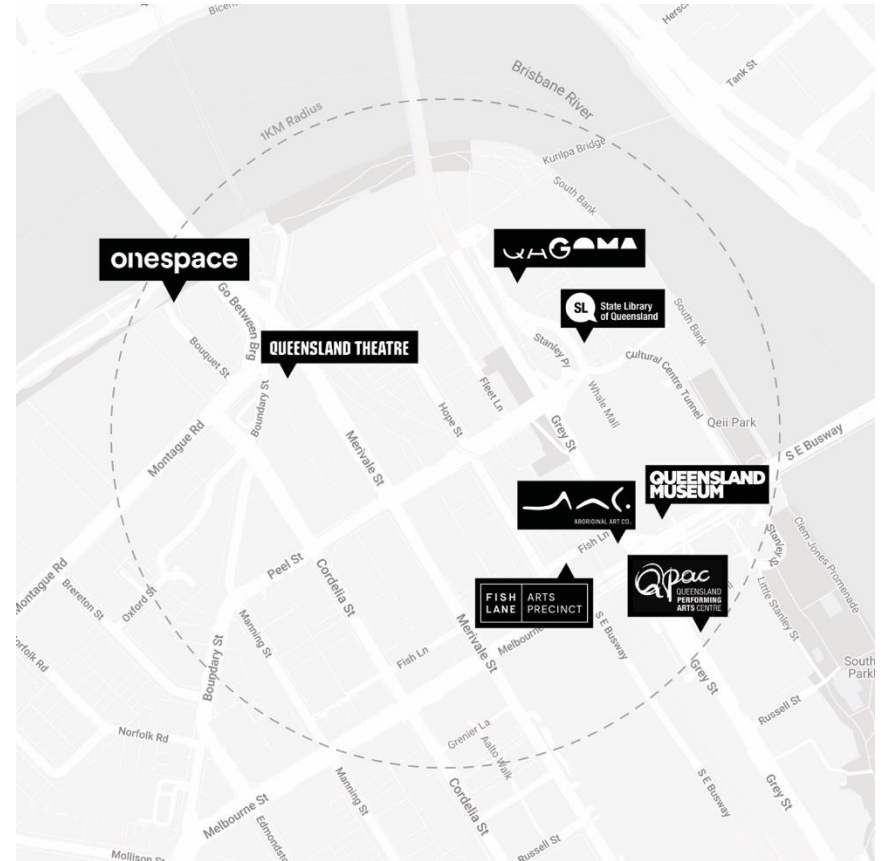
[onespace.com.au](http://onespace.com.au)

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Onespace Gallery Hours:

Tuesday to Friday 10am – 5pm, Saturday 12pm – 5pm

25A Bouquet Street, South Brisbane Q 4101 Australia



The artist expresses deep gratitude to the many participants of this project. Family who suffered and supported its production, Bruce, Genevieve and Isabella Reynolds, Martin Barry of Brisbane Digital Images who scanned and printed the work, Maurice Ortega and Camilla Birkland of the Queensland Centre for Photography who initially promoted the work internationally, members of the community that brought animals, and the many valued exhibition partners. Thanks to John Stafford and curator Demi Conrad of Onespace carefully and patiently helped put this show together.

Special thanks to video producer Alex Chomicz who directed, shot and edited the insightful *Australiana Still Life* documentary.