

## **Malouf and Friends, by David Malouf The Australian, Thursday May 8, p.13**

**What Camille Serisier connects with for this exhibition is an image of transformation that she finds in *Fly Away Peter*.**

Faced with the extraordinary facts of the seasonal migration of birds, "Men", Jim Saddler tells us, "preferred to believe ... that when the season turned, some birds simply changed their form as others changed their plumage — that swallows, for example, became toads ... drew in their wings and heads, splayed their beaks to a toad-mouth, lowered their shrill cries to a throaty creaking, and went under the surface (of a pond) till it was time to be reborn overnight in their old shapes in twittering millions."

Serisier explores this idea first in drawings where she experiments with the moment of transformation; then she extends the idea as performance.

Her own form of transformation as an artist is the crossing of disciplines. In this case to large-scale installation, a stage-set that visitors to this exhibition are invited to enter and become, by a transformative action of their own, performers.

### **Anna Carey**

Anna Carey works with photography. Places once deeply experienced, houses called up out of memory and the holiday times she spent there as a child, are the subject of her art.

The colours in which they appear, the skies that light them, their odd details and haunting isolation, appear to her first as an interior picture, and are then reconstructed as simplified three-dimensional models. She then "fixes" them as two-dimensional photographs: not of what was once there but as a reality remembered, or significantly mis-remembered and remade. This is the artist's way of reproducing the process of memory, in which time, but also feeling, changes, simplifies what was once untidily real and preserves only what is relevant to the emotional charge it carries.

A moment of time lost is recovered, as in Proust, but in a deeper and more enduring form, by allowing it to be flooded with the light not only of time past but of time remembered.

Carey thus lays claim to something of the freedom that language possesses: to work, by exploiting tense, in more than one moment at a time. Not simply, that is, in the immediate present that is the

special realm, but also the limitation usually, of the purely visual arts.

### **Karla Marchesi**

The series of large, very painterly screens that Karla Marchesi calls Thresholds, with their densely re-created subtropical vegetation, play at the crossing point between familiar garden or backyard and untamed, mysterious jungle; they are both sensuously beautiful and disturbing.

A screen is a two-dimensional barrier that closes off and divides or obscures. It is also, in what it evokes in this case, a three-dimensional challenge to us to peer through its interstices and reach for the light beyond, or to break boldly through. Marchesi plays, in the luxuriant texture of her brushstrokes, between surface and depth, an illusion of "reality" that she then breaks by depriving her plant world of its natural green.

These works are as much about how we perceive the world as what the world presents us with, and offer the double pleasure of being both lushly beautiful in their immediacy and deeply perplexing the moment we move, as they tempt us to do, into the teasing suggestion of a space beyond.

### **Bruce Reynolds**

BRUCE Reynolds's response is to the leap from works that are deeply embedded in a subtropical Brisbane — say, 12 Edmondstone St or A First Place — and the Greek or Roman worlds of Ransom and An Imaginary Life. Plaster casts, as they might be, of three pieces of classical armour, are embossed with Queensland flora and fauna; an amphora mounted on a lolly-pink laminex tabletop bears a bas-relief of a flying fox sleeping upside down, perfectly suspended in fossilised time; in two larger works, giant jars, hydria, reconstructed as such large objects often are from fragments, are made up in one case (Bulimba Hydria) from art deco linoleum designs, in the other from what appears to be an aerial view, in red and blue, of a serpentine river that winds across and around it from base to lip.

All this is visually striking, and in its mixing of places, times, cultures, speaks strongly for the mixing and matching of a late or colonial culture that is also very boldly itself. What gives these works their haunting beauty (we might think of Keats) is the sense we get of their having been unearthed and preserved; dug up out of a past that is "just yesterday", and in being frozen or fossilised is

still close to what once was life and for the artist, a living and lyrical relic of his own life.