

A PERFECT DAY
CAMILLE SERISIER



CAMILLE SERISIER was born in Wollongong and grew up in Sydney, though has leaped along the Australian coastline to land presently in Brisbane. While casual travel may seem a usual part for most in this culture, active relocation of this kind has evidently become a formative experience for Serisier's practice as an artist. Of equal importance, though of course occurring later on in her life, is Serisier's multiplicitous training at various art schools, in collaborative curatorial models of practice, and as a theatrical painter for major stage productions. In these settings she deftly commanded fundamental skills in drawing, painting, sculpture, curation, and set design; but too amassed the foundation for the intellectual underpinnings that have carried her practice throughout its development.

Serisier's practice is made up of drawing and watercolour painting, photography, and performance — with these mediums and works often overlapping and intersecting to fold back upon one another. Within her work, an ever expanding and contracting reflexivity is at play, so that Serisier kneads references to the canon of western art history that both surround and underpin the basis of her conceptual progression. Alongside this, Serisier enduringly makes reference to her own previous artworks, recycling and reusing previous props, subjects, and even entire projects. In doing so she questions both her own and her viewer's relation to and understanding of the cultural heritage that at once informs and frames her work.

To be specific, this heritage lies in the purported history of Australian art. It is a history written by, and resultingly dominated by, white men. If we look at it frankly, the 'history' of Australian art is written to begin only about 200 years ago, and largely excludes the work of indigenous artists, queer artists, and women, all of whom have undeniably participated all along but been sidelined or obscured. As a woman, Serisier takes on this history as it is presented, inserting herself into its course to flip it from the inside.

Perhaps this is the grounding for why she is so interested in the landscape, and indeed the Landscape (as a legitimised genre in itself beyond simply a potential subject), as ongoing territory for interrogation.

Bringing the landscape into contemporary focus, Serisier makes reference to digital and online technologies for their impact on our relationship to the physical and natural world. She might begin with a pencil sketch, turning this into a live set built from painted props, performing a scene to be photographed, which may then be turned back into a watercolour. We wonder where the work might begin or end in this ongoing exchange between technologies and their product. If the answer remains unclear, Serisier's works seem nonetheless always to point to the physicality of these interactions, incessantly necessitating very tactile and very human contact. By doing so, she upholds the importance of her personal, physical experience and subjectivity as a woman in the world. And although not the main intent, evident in Serisier's work is her own small appeal to resist against the facelessness of online interaction.

All this is done using the realm of mythology as a means of telling her own version of events. The stories Serisier tells seem to come from far off and long ago and, as do any good stories, step forward as though they have stood in strong stead all this time waiting to reach us. By conceptualising and physically constructing these sets herself, Serisier at once asserts her own agency in telling her story, and exposes the construction of this narrative in order to expose the construction of the entire system within which it must operate. Serisier gives a wink and a nod, doubling as a dead serious stare.

Laura Brown

To watch this DVD online go to
<http://vimeo.com/70819892>



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