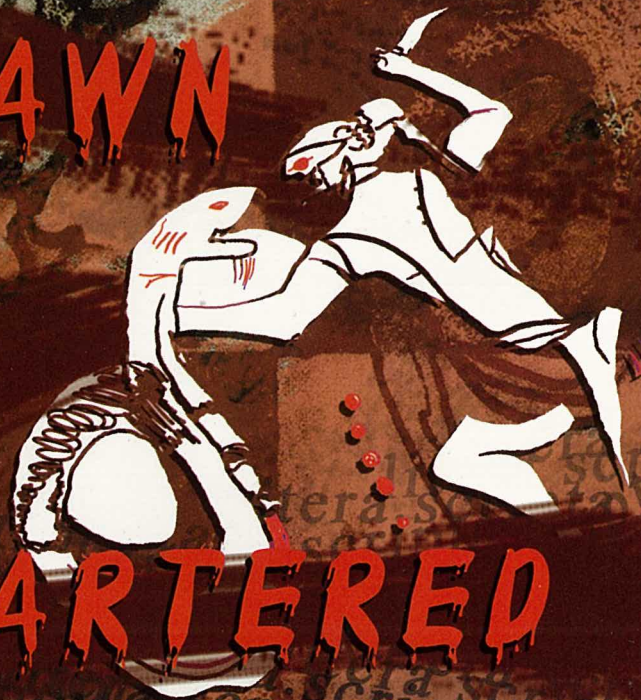


DRAWN

AND

QUARTERED



You are invited to join us for the opening of

Drawn and Quartered

Donna Foley

Exploring the link between literacy and violence

Opening Friday 4 April at 7pm by Dr. Steven Campbell

Free artist talk Sunday 6 April 11am - noon

Exhibition duration: 4 April - 11 May



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THE VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFT STRATEGY



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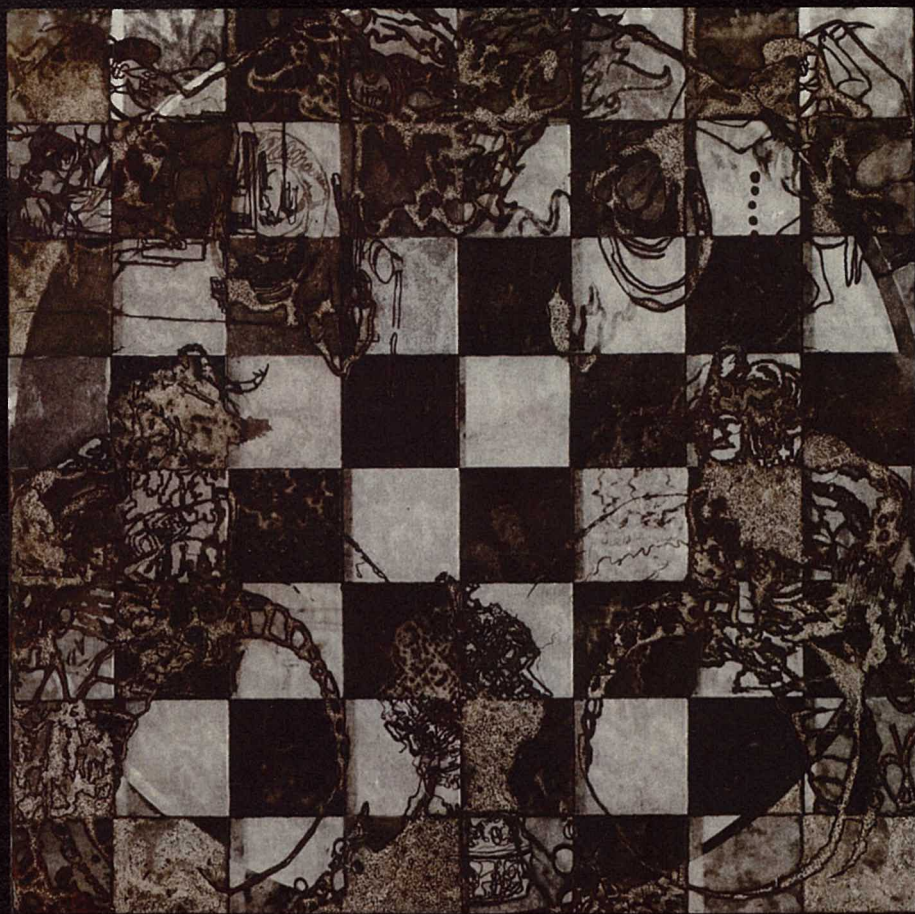
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DRAWN AND QUARTERED



Donna Foley
4 April - 11 May

Time is an elusive system for understanding the past and foretelling the future. However, if perceived as an infinite, mobius-like structure, an eternal braid of spinning threads, such threads contain the thought patterns and actions of man twisting and turning rhythmically in space, perceivable as constantly overlapping or recurring at any given micro-point in time and space.

Concepts of the dragon are pervasive in all cultures. The dragon's longevity is evidenced in the 8000 year old Hongshan jade dragons unearthed in China's Liaohe River Valley Province. It is the basis of mystic symbolism in cultures which hold philosophical notions of existence as infinitely/eternally cyclic. As an oracle, the dragon is invoked in forms as diverse as the ouroboros, the serpent mother, the yin/yang. Conversely in Western literate culture, a culture defined by its linear ideologies and bound finitely by a Day of Judgement or Armageddon, the dragon exemplifies ignorance and evil, a creature to be destroyed by a sword bearing hero.

3000 years earlier than Hitler's Mein Kampf, Egyptian hieroglyphs reveal a remarkable ethos of racism, imperialism and militarism when Pharaoh Usertu III conquered Nubia. The link between violence and the written word is, however, more clearly visible in the mythology and persistent imagery of the Greeks. Emblazoned on their pottery, images of war and violence are often accompanied by text, for example, in the Greek Vase painting of Timiades,



Heracles attacks with his sword the Amazonian Queen Andromache

Particularly significant is the mythology of Cadmus who, upon slaying the dragon, planted its teeth from which sprouted the Greek alphabet. The hero's ability to raise armies is ascribed to his command of written communication using the then twenty-four graphic symbols which ultimately facilitated the transference of power from the temples to the military bureaucracies.

The economical alphabet, the linchpin of imperialism and industrialism in Western culture, subsequently facilitated mass communication technologies with the invention of the Gutenberg Press. The typographic process generated a new form of nationalism and stretched the boundaries and patterns of culture.

¹ Thomson, O. (1993). *A History of Sin*, Great Britain: Cannongate Press.

However, in contemporary times, commonly referred to as the Information Age, digital technologies have impacted the typographic era, giving rise to a host of questions about current communicative strategies and shifting ideologies; questions apropos the written word as an object of typographic culture becoming, in new technologies, a mere trace of electromagnetically stored energy. Just as chirographic culture ceded to a typographic one, the latter is perhaps rapidly losing ground to an electronic culture, and text based technologies to other more graphic/aural forms of on-screen interaction.



Cadmus slaying the dragon.

Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORPGs), notably World of Warcraft (WoW) where participants pay to adopt an online identity to play, were highlighted in the media recently when two addicted players died in separate incidents due to the neglect of routine health care. The online setting is medieval and evolved originally from text-based games online, for example, Zork and Adventure, which in turn evolved from pen and paper role playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons.

Contrary to other systems, for example, the word writing of the Chinese, sequential logic and the linear structuring of the phonetic alphabet demand greater visual sensory perception and diminish the role of other senses of sound, touch and taste.

Drawn and Quartered explores interconnections between visual and verbal forms of expression over time. Communicative action in popular culture, art and the world of enterprise involve interrelated issues and technologies which may have enduring consequences for society. One might consider such consequences to be Karma or even events within a strange loop. Hofstadter described the Strange Loop phenomenon as one which "occurs whenever, by moving upwards, (or downwards) through the levels of some hierarchical system, we unexpectedly find ourselves right back where we started".

² McLuhan, M. (1964) *Understanding media: the extensions of man*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.

³ Dissanayake, E. (1992) *Homo Aestheticus: Where art comes from and why*, Seattle: University of Washington Press.

⁴ Fellow players honoured Snowy in an online funeral after his death following several continuous days gaming without food; an event overshadowed by the death of another addict. Thereafter, which prompted a call to all gamers to take care of their health.

⁵ Hofstadter, D.R. (1979) *Gödel, Escher and Bach: An eternal braid*, London: Basic Books.



BIOGRAPHY

2007 PhD Thesis submitted for examination James Cook University
Thesis title - Ecce Signum: The significance of writing as image
2004 M. ED James Cook University
1997 B.V.A (Hons) - James Cook University
Thesis title - Desire in the Balance

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2008 Drawn and Quartered, Umbrella Studio Townsville
2004 Train of Thought, Pinnacles Gallery Thuringowa
1998 Grammar, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery Townsville
1997 M - Umbrella Studio Townsville

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2008 The inaugural Port Jackson Press Graduate Printmaking Award, PJP, Melbourne
2007 See Hear Now, Multi arts festival, Townsville
2006 Artist Books, Southern Cross University Next Art Gallery, Lismore
Percival's Vestments Perc Tucker Regional Gallery Townsville
2005 Distant Noises, Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Sydney
2004 Temenos, Umbrella Studio Townsville
Walk this Way, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery Townsville
2003 Distant Noises, RMIT Melbourne, curated by Australian Print Council
2002 (W)ink, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery Townsville

COLLECTIONS

Qld. State Library, Mackay Regional Library
Townsville Hospital Douglas
Thuringowa City Council

PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

2005 Art on the Bridge, Jazz Festival, Townsville City Council
2004 Project Services – Floor designs for Cleveland Youth Detention Centre
2003 Concept proposal – Townsville City Council Flinders Street East redevelopment

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