

Through Her Breath/ Bronwyn Kidd in collaboration with Carol Brown

Through Her Breath celebrates ancestral breath placing women, whose bodies are the source of our first breaths, as the inscriber of embodied legacies of past and present. Inspired by the feminist philosophy of Luce Irigaray the work embraces the idea that intergenerationally a corporeal archive is passed down from our mothers bodies. Women are the thread, custodians and channel for an archive of embodied memories. This comes at a time of loss of my own mother to whom I am eternally grateful to for the air she breathed for me and the archive of memories she and mothers before bequeathed to me, informing and guiding my life and practice.

Embarking on this series it was essential for me to remember my photographic genealogy in order to reimagine it. The sharing of air with choreographer Carol Brown in a deeply layered collaboration reframed a genealogy of Breath-inspired movement transmitted through the teachings of expressionist modern dancer Gertrude Bodenwieser (b. 1890 Vienna d.1959 Sydney) the Bess Mensendieck system, and dance and photographic history with particular reference to Margaret Michalis (b.1902 Dzieditz - d.1985 Melbourne).

Through Her Breath is my own personal awakening to deeper thought and appreciation of woman, memory and community, expressed through the layering of photography, dance and fashion through a feminine lens.

Remembering air involves remembering our debt to the maternal body for it is our mothers' bodies that breathe first for us, creating the ground for autonomy through our first breaths. A culture that remembers air is one in which exchanges between natural and cultural spheres are revealed as interconnected and mutually dependent - *Irigaray (1999)*.

It was during lockdown in early 2021 that I read Carol Brown's article *Breaths and Beats: Vibrating at the Borders of Memory* (Dance Research Aotearoa, 6, 2020). Carol references the threaded genealogy of Breath techniques that come from the Mensendieck-Bodenwieser legacy and are inscribed in her practice. In referencing legacy, Carol writes "*History is undeniably something we carry with us, we wear it, and we habitually reproduce it in our gestures, but it also breathes through us...I dance between remembering and forgetting.*" It is in this remembering of air, exchanges of both natural and cultural spheres that the layers of embodied legacy remain eternal.

Preparing for this body of work for exhibition, breathing through my technical path in photography was important. Having started in photography in 1984 my introduction was in analogue, working with a myriad of primarily post WW2 cameras, film stocks and printing techniques.

In 2004 the commercial market demanded a shift to digital and my film cameras and post production support system became obsolete.

In making this new body of work it was important for me to re visit and merge my photographic ancestry through 'technique'. I resurrected my Rolleiflex 6008 camera that I forged my career in London with from 1992 to 2004. This camera represented my analogue journey.

After resting for 20 years the rebirth of the camera took some time and the rediscovery of available analogue, film, processing and printing was a process of relearning. I experimented with some cameras - a Polaroid a 110A Land Camera converted to take 5 x 4 sheet film, the combination felt right as it was a 1980's camera, of my era. I felt strongly that to revisit in my past in order to create something new was important, I also felt that it was important to embrace what I learnt in the past 20 years in the movement into digital and find a way to merge the two.

In printing my exhibition, *Through Her Breath*, I started the process of scanning negatives, retouching the scans and out putting the digital image back to negative, likewise with the retouched digital image from my Hasselblad, I also made the decision to output to negative. The process reunited me with a cohesive and collaborative body of work that returned to materials, technically circular, layered and evolving collaborations.

The opening performance, *Breath*, underscores a music-dance improvisation performed by Carol Brown, Emma Redding and Monica Lim, with costumes by Susan Dimasi in response to works and the architecture of the gallery, a very special visual reveal of the collaborative exchange of *Breath* connection 'bringing to life' of the performance that is imbedded in my photographic practice. A life-size transparent substrate iteration of *Untitled No.8* eludes immersively to the ephemeral. Utilising film as its base it references my photographic genealogy and the strength and fragility of the connections of *Breath*.

Bronwyn Kidd

2024

Opening performance:

Carol Brown - dance
Emma Redding - dance
Monica Lim - music
Susan Dimasi, MaterialByProduct- costume
Bernadette Fisers - hair & make up

Through Her Breath:

Carol Brown - choreography
Susan Dimasi, MaterialByProduct - costume
Julia Green - make up director
Bernadette Fisers - hair direction & make up
Sun Studios

Dancers:

With gratitude to the VCA and dancers
Julie Anne Minnai
Sami Jane Smith
Liam Berg
Tara Quilligan
Amy Addison
Gabrielle Fallon

Assistants:

Bridget Mac
Dianna Spriggs
Kathleen Fogarty

Post production:

Format Scan
Visual Thing
Bayeux London
Sandra Barnard, Sandy Prints
Brian Gilkes, Pharos Editions
Arten Framing

Breath No1, 2, 3:

With gratitude to the VCA and dancers
Tara Quilligan
Lauren Doyle
Brittany Capill
Sarscha Lewis
Marilyn Lau
Ella Sibel

Assistant:

Dianna Spriggs

Post Production:

Visual Thing
Brian Gilkes, Pharos Editions

Exhibition curation:

Virginia Dowzer

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Through Her Breath_Untitled No.1

2022, printed 2023
Resin coated hand print on Ilford Multigrade Paper,
Selenium toned, framed
122cm x 170cm 72cm x 100cm
edition of 3 + 2 AP edition of 6 + 2 AP
\$8,000 / \$6,000 unframed \$4,000 unframed



Through Her Breath_Untitled No.5

2022, printed 2023
Silver Gelatin print, Ilford Brilliant White gloss Fibre Paper,
Selenium toned, framed
122cm x 170cm 72cm x 74cm
edition of 3 + 2 AP edition of 6 + 2 AP
\$8,000 / \$6,000 unframed \$4,000 unframed



Through Her Breath_Untitled No.2

2022, printed 2023
C-type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper, framed
122cm x 170cm 72cm x 100cm
edition of 3 + 2 AP edition of 6 + 2 AP
\$8,000 / \$6,000 unframed \$4,000 unframed



Through Her Breath_Untitled No.6

2022, printed 2023
C-type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper, framed
122cm x 170cm 72cm x 100cm
edition of 3 + 2 AP edition of 6 + 2 AP
\$8,000 / \$6,000 unframed \$4,000 unframed



Through Her Breath_Untitled No.3

2022, printed 2023
C-type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper, framed
122cm x 170cm 72cm x 100cm
edition of 3 + 2 AP edition of 6 + 2 AP
\$8,000 / \$6,000 unframed \$4,000 unframed



Through Her Breath_Untitled No.7

2022, printed 2023
C- type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper, framed
122cm x 170cm 72cm x 100cm
edition of 3 + 2 AP edition of 6 + 2 AP
\$8,000 / \$6,000 unframed \$4,000 unframed



Through Her Breath_Untitled No.4

2022, printed 2023
C-type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper, framed
122cm x 170cm 72cm x 100cm
edition of 3 + 2 AP edition of 6 + 2 AP
\$8,000 / \$6,000 unframed \$4,000 unframed



Through Her Breath_Untitled No.8

2022, printed 2023
C- type hand print, Kodak Endura Premier matte paper, framed
122cm x 170cm 72cm x 100cm
edition of 3 + 2 AP edition of 6 + 2 AP
\$8,000 / \$6,000 unframed \$4,000 unframed

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Breath No.1

2021, printed 2023
Unique, Digital print,
Awagami Bizan Handmade 300GSM, framed
29.7cm x 42cm
edition of 6 paper stock and size may vary
\$2,700 / \$2,200 unframed



Through Her Breath_CircleB

2022, 2024
Digital Projection



Breath No.2

2021, printed 2023
Unique, Digital print,
Awagami Bizan Handmade 300GSM, framed
29.7cm x 42cm
edition of 6 paper stock and size may vary
\$2,700 / \$2,200 unframed



Through Her Breath_Untitled No.8

2022, printed 2024
Unique
Digital print, Mitsubishi Screenproof film and
Epson Ultrachrome Pro Pigment
274cm x 189cm (In 3 sections)



Breath No.3

2021, printed 2023
Unique, Digital print,
Awagami Bizan Handmade 300GSM, framed
29.7cm x 42cm
edition of 6 paper stock and size may vary
\$2,700 / \$2,200 unframed