

JENNIFER FRENCH

b. 1961, New Zealand

Lives and works in Auckland

TRISH
CLARK
GALLERY

New Zealand photographer Jennifer French has succeeded, perhaps unusually, in practising her medium on both sides of the art and commercial divide. Graduating with a BFA from the University of Auckland's Elam School of Fine Arts in 1987, French has carved a niche for herself as New Zealand's leading specialist photographer of art, undertaken alongside her art practice of sporadic production of discrete bodies of work. For the past decade French has worked closely with Creative New Zealand in photographically documenting New Zealand's projects at the Venice Biennale, and she remains Gallery Photographer at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, a position she has held both part- and full-time since 1987, with occasional sabbaticals to accommodate undistracted art practice.

French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859 – 1941) has informed her approach to image-making: fluid ideas of time, duration, intuition, and the nature of perception informed by such thinking. So not so much Cartier-Bresson's 'decisive moment' – a crisp excerpt from time's flow, but more the circularity of time, the emotional resonances that can be intuited from a location or situation. French states 'Photography, in the creation of the image, is an effect performed upon the object, by a photographer. It is a caress. It is a personal testament, a set of subjective mysteries. A use of image as metaphor for the act of looking.'

At the same time, French considers the photographic image as technologically arbitrary – a framing, a set of tonalities and colour, created by an optical system. In seeking to escape the frame, or utilise its fiction, French's quiet meditations catch 'things that could escape back into the ether with no one the wiser, if someone wasn't there to arrest them.'

French has exhibited widely throughout New Zealand, including 'Darkness & Light: Looking at the Landscape' at Auckland Art Gallery (2000), and 'A walk in the black forest' at SHOW in Wellington in 2005. She was awarded the Moët & Chandon Fellowship and Residency in France in 1995, and graduated with an MFA in 2000 from RMIT, Melbourne, Australia. French lives and works in Auckland, New Zealand.

AWARDS

Moët & Chandon New Zealand Art Foundation Fellowship
Residency, Avize, France

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SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2014 Duplex, Trish Clark Gallery, Auckland
- 2006 V1 [100H x 80.41W] 1955/2005, dep_art_ment @ Miss Crabb, Ponsonby, Auckland (curator: Richard Orgias)
- 2005 a walk in the black forest, SHOW Gallery, Wellington [peer-reviewed exhibition programme by Massey University School of Visual Arts]
- 2004 dream city, Vavasour Godkin Gallery, Auckland
- 2002 forty bastards, Vavasour Godkin Gallery, Auckland
- 1999 ein klein wenig blau, Compact [artist run space] @ Kate Sylvester, Auckland
- 1998 Illumination - Soliloquy, Auckland
- 1994 6 Hokianga Panoramas - [in conjunction with touring exhibition, Opo: The Hokianga Dolphin by Eric Lee Johnson], Auckland Art Gallery, Waikato Museum of Art & History
- 1988 Still Life, Still Looking – Southern Cross Gallery, Wellington
- 1987 Home thoughts – Southern Cross Gallery, Wellington

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 From Kauri to Canopy, selected works from 'Decommission: the demolition of the Edmiston Wing 2008', a commissioned photographic essay, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki.
- 2010 Dismantling Boundries, Antoinette Godkin Gallery, Auckland

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- 2009 Mesh, Antoinette Godkin Gallery, Auckland
- 2009 Photography Sell-Out, Selected photographers, Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland
- 2007 Moving Still, selected photographers, Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland/MacNamara Gallery Wanganui
- 2006 Achernar, Matakana Pictures, Matakana NZ
- 2004 Political Landscapes, Blue Oyster Gallery, Dunedin
- 2003 Lush, Platform, Melbourne, Australia
- 2000 - 2001 Darkness and Light: Looking at the Landscape, [touring]- McClelland Gallery, Victoria, Australia; New Gallery, Auckland Art Gallery, NZ
- 1999 747X10, [touring] New Work Studio, Wellington; Arch Hill Gallery, Auckland
- 1999 RMIT Graduating Students - 200 Gertrude Street, Melbourne
- 1998 Interface -online exhibition as part of the Fotofest Fringe Festival, Wellington, NZ
Apparatus - Soliloquy Gallery, Auckland
Sense and Sensibility - Art Station, Auckland
- 1997 One Night Stand - Minnie St Studio, Auckland
- 1996 Pinhole Photography - Rotorua Museum and Art Gallery
- 1995 Symbolist Photography - Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga
- 1994 Open the Shutter: Auckland Photographers Now, Auckland Museum.
- 1993 Combing - photography by invited artists - Lopdell House Gallery, Titirangi
- 1992 Panoramas of Auckland 1841 to 1991- Auckland City Art Gallery

- 1991 6 Photographers - Gregory Flint Gallery, Auckland
- 1990 Sarjeant/United Photographic Award - Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
- 1989 Fact and Desire - Real Pictures Gallery, Auckland

PUBLICATIONS

- 2013 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki - A Place for Art; 'Decommission' from a commissioned series, published by Auckland Art Gallery.
- 2012 978-0-9864650-5-5; commissioned page work [pg 18 -20] St Paul St Gallery, AUT, Auckland NZ (ed. Melissa Laing)
- 2007 Reading Room: Issue/01 Autobiography in the Wake of Conceptualism - commissioned page work: 'The Artists' Files' by Jennifer French pg 161 - 168, published by Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki (ed. Christina Barton, Wystan Curnow & Robert Leonard)
- 2005 Natural Selection Magazine # 4 [A kind of sleep: Ann Shelton – review by Jennifer French] (ed. Gwynneth Porter & Dan Arps)
- 2004 Foxymoron # 5 pageworks {pg 4,5}, Auckland NZ (ed. Georgie Hill)
- 2000 Landfall – New Zealand Journal of Arts and Letters, issue 200, 2000 [Approach – selected images 1989 -1999 by Jennifer French] (ed. Justin Paton)
- 2000 Darkness and Light: looking at the landscape, catalogue, McClelland Gallery
- 1997 Monica, summer [Invisible: Michael Harrison - review by Jennifer French, pg 54] (ed. Tessa Laird et al)
- 1996 Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art catalogue
A Pacific Story - Screw the Rim: We Live in the Basin by Margo Neale, [illustrations pg 56] - Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia

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- 1996 Monica, Aug/Sept [Identi-kit - review by Jennifer French & Stuart Sontier, pg 8-9] (ed. Tessa Laird)
- 1994 Open the Shutter: Auckland Photographers Now – Catalogue, PhotoForum New Zealand.
- 1992 Art New Zealand issue # 64, [Symbolist tendencies in recent New Zealand Photography by Allan Smith]
- 1990 Sarjeant/United Photographic Award; Catalogue - Sarjeant Gallery/United Banking Group.

EDUCATION

- 2000 Master of Fine Arts, RMIT University, Australia