

# Kerryl Shirley

## Constructions

23 June – 27 July 2016

Kerryl Shirley has been a quiet force on the Australian art scene since her time as Resident Artist of Adelaide's first Fringe Festival in 1986.

Shirley studied art at the University of South Australia's Underdale Campus where she majored in painting, and she has exhibited regularly for forty years in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney.

In 'Constructions' Shirley has created what she refers to as drawings in space, within which layers are built up from found materials and objects. A bulky tangibility is achieved, and the disparate media are unified through skilful juxtaposition and through the artist's uncanny

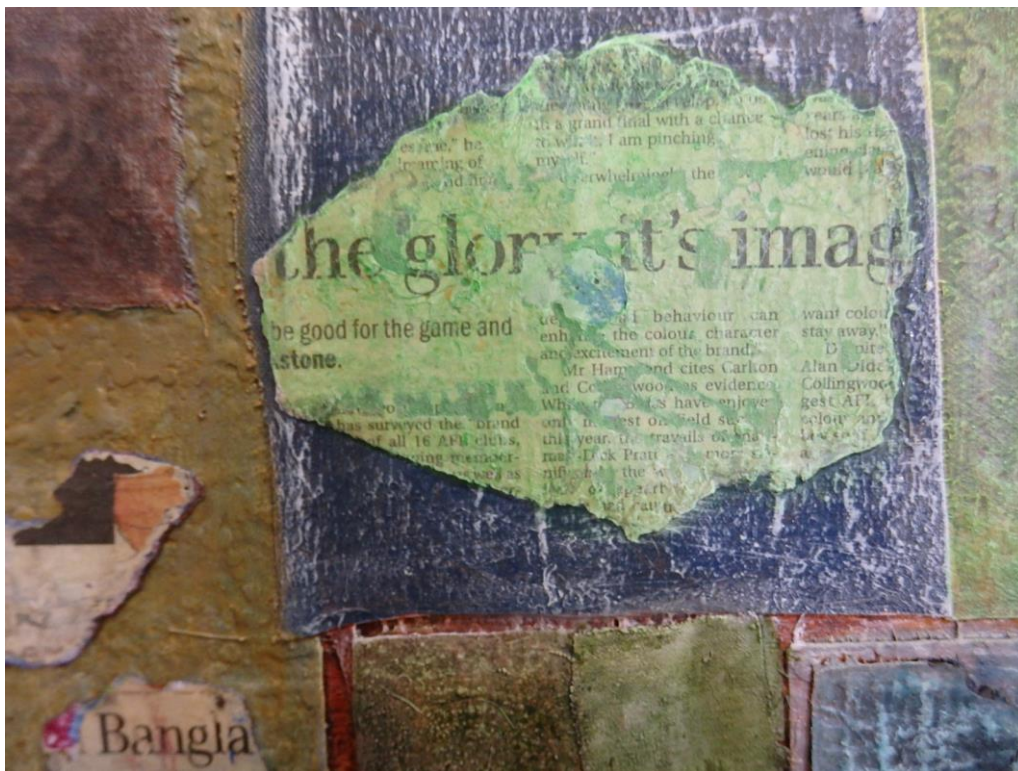


Detail from *Text*, paper, canvas, tin, found objects, acrylic paint on board, 155 x 157cm, \$3,600

manipulation of a colour palate that is markedly antique in appearance. Both harmonious and discordant tensions result, while a reading of symbolic elements presents viewers with relationships to be understood, riddles to be solved and complex identities to be mapped out.

These works, while referencing the Matter Painting of Spanish artist and art theorist Antoni Tàpies, the wooden Earthly Forms reliefs of Dadaist Hans Arp, and the 'shadow box' constructions of American surrealist Joseph Cornell, bring a new range of materials, a new sense of colour and a new sensibility to the form.

A bewildering array of objects make their way into Shirley's work: a one hundred year old bench from the now newly renovated Healesville Station, sheets of decorative pressed metal from an antique store in Yarra Glen, a kitsch ornamental rose bought for one dollar at a bric-a-brac shop, and much else besides. Once collected these objects undergo a time consuming transformation involving a process of sanding, dry brushing and glazing, which is repeated, sometimes for years, until the desired colour vibration and textural depth is achieved. The overall effect is warm, rich, musty and sensual.



Detail from *The Square*, canvas, paper, rag, lace, handmade paper, acrylic paint on board, 175 x 175cm, \$3,200