

**ANGELA VALAMANESH:  
ABOUT BEING HERE**

**JAMFACTORY ICON 2019**

JAMFACTORY  
GALLERY ONE

*I believe that art like science can help teach us about who we are, what we are made of and in doing so show us the importance of recognising that we are part of a whole.*

Historically, links have been made between the human form and plant species, not only structurally but also through language: the family tree, our roots, or a severed limb, while early medicine made connections between plants that resembled parts of our bodies and their therapeutic effects on those body parts.

*About being here* is Angela Valamanesh's exploration into the interconnectedness of life on earth - between human, animal and plant beings. This life view, first felt intuitively by the artist, is reinforced through her ongoing research at leading libraries and scientific institutes both here in Australia and abroad.

Valamanesh's long engagement with the drawings of early scientific and botanical illustrators particularly the imagery produced by early microscopists, and more recently her reading in the field of evolutionary biology, enables her to manipulate and integrate seemingly familiar anatomical, botanical and parasitic forms, in unexpected and intriguing ways. Her artworks elicit ambiguity and present a strong sense of personal investigation. In the artist's own words:

*It is important that the work is not prescriptive but offers the viewer the opportunity of personal engagement and time to reflect on their own personal experiences.*

Angela Valamanesh started her career in the late 1970s as a studio based production potter creating beautifully designed and decorated tableware. After running a successful production business for 15 years her practice started to shift. Progressively doing away with glazes and with the introduction of tableau style groupings, Valamanesh started to consider: if the work she was creating was no longer utilitarian in purpose, what then, were the works for or about?

This growing desire and need for the works to have a context provided fertile ground for transformation and discovery for the artist. Instrumental in her burgeoning visual arts practice was her Samstag Scholarship undertaken at the Glasgow School of Art. This residency allowed Valamanesh the time to immerse herself in the vast and broad collection of books housed within the impressive Charles Rennie Macintosh designed library. Of particular interest was an early medical publication full of black and white photographs of a dissected cadaver.

The abstracted biological forms in this publication found their way into the seminal work *For a long while there were only plants*, 1997, and is the point of departure for this exhibition. This artwork - a watercolour, pen and ink work on paper and dipped in wax - is a repository for images and ideas that have fuelled Valamanesh's practice ever since.

## Shades of pollen

In 1952 Dorothy Hodges authored the book *Pollen Loads of the Honey Bees*. Published by the Bee Research Association Limited *Pollen Loads of the Honey Bees* presents the incredible diversity of pollen forms and colours produced by the flowers in Southern England. Presented as painstakingly developed colour charts and microscopic imagery of the pollen forms, apiarists are able to use this book as a reference guide to distinguish which plants the bees within their hives were collecting their pollen from. The works in this series celebrate this pollen variety in high tone colours and rich glaze applications.

1. *Shades of pollen: yellow to red*, 2019  
ceramic, MDF, hessian, grouting compound  
**\$4,400**

2. *Shades of pollen: yellow to green*, no 2, 2018  
ceramic, MDF, hessian, grouting compound  
Private Collection

3. *Various friends and enemies no 6*, 2016  
ceramic  
**\$14,000**

4. *Earthy Garden #15, Lung*, 2012  
ceramic  
**\$2,200**

5. *Animal, vegetable, mineral #D*, 2007  
ceramic  
Private Collection

## Observations

The works in the *Observation* series clearly place the viewer's eye in the eyepiece of a microscope. Valamanesh's Phd studies researched the early scientific illustrations produced at the time of Enlightenment by microscopists such as Nehemiah Grew (1641 -1712) and Robert Hooke (1635- 1703). Through her artworks, Valamanesh wishes to capture that same sense of wonder and intrigue experienced by these visionaries.

*Like today's new technologies the earliest microscopes offered us unimaginable insight into who we are, what we are made of, where we came from; the world around us and inside of us. They offered a parallel and equally significant insight into the expanding universe as seen through the telescopes of today that link us to the field of quantum physics.*

*Using considerable drafting skill and limited technology, a sense of wonder is clearly conveyed to the viewer. These pioneers of microscopy saw creatures or life forms never previously seen and struggled to share the unimaginable with their audiences.*

6. *Untitled observations*, 2011  
watercolour on paper  
**\$9,900**

7. *A little bit of everything*, 2009  
plaster  
**\$12,000**

8. *Shades of pollen: yellow to red*,  
(remembering Dorothy Hodges), 2019  
watercolour on paper  
**\$4,400**

9. *Shades of pollen: yellow to green*,  
(remembering Dorothy Hodges), 2019  
watercolour on paper  
**\$4,400**

## **Insect/Orchid**

*Insect/Orchid* was made in response to a residency funded by the Copyright Agency in the Rare Books and Special Collections of Barr Smith Library at University of Adelaide. During this residency, the librarians presented Valamanesh the wonderful collection of the botanical illustrations produced by Rosa Fiveash for Richard S Rogers' research into South Australian orchids. Fiveash is regarded as one of Australia's foremost botanic illustrators, and contributed illustrations to Rogers' studies for over 30 years.

*At first, I was looking at anatomical and botanical illustration in general but later focused on everything they had relating to orchids. I guess the attraction for me is that orchids look somewhat anatomical and also the illustrations tend to dissect the plant or flower into separate parts with views from different angles and stages of the flower.*

10. *Insect/Orchid 11*, 2017  
ceramic  
**\$2,100**

11. *Insect/Orchid 12*, 2017  
ceramic  
**\$2,100**

12. *Insect/Orchid 5*, 2017  
ceramic  
**\$2,100**

13. *Insect/Orchid 2*, 2017  
ceramic  
**\$2,100**

14. *Insect/Orchid 1*, 2017  
ceramic  
**\$2,100**

## **Natural History Collection**

*A collection of objects with a taxonomy that is ultimately ambiguous - allowing the viewer to experience a more personal reaction to the work; to intuit the underlying connection between living forms.*

The *Natural History Collection* series is informed by Valamanesh interest in the methodical process of collecting, classifying, and naming of scientific specimens.

15. *Natural history collection no. 13*, 2008  
ceramic  
Private Collection

16. *Natural history collection no.14*, 2008  
ceramic  
Private Collection

17. *Earthly Garden #5*, 2011  
ceramic  
Private Collection

18. *Natural Histories #D*, 2008  
Ceramic  
Private Collection

## The Story of the Eye

In this series of artworks, Valamanesh places eye like protuberances on an array of plant and tooth like amalgams to present imagined inventions in the evolutionary development of the eye.

*The eye is one of the most useful organs for survival, and has evolved in dozens of unrelated lineages of animals – for instance, octopuses have famously independently invented complex eyes almost identical to ours. Indeed, the emergence of acute vision is often seen as one of the fundamental breakthroughs in evolution, on a par with flight and consciousness.* (Dr Mike Lee)

19. *The Story of the Eye, part 2, no 2*, 2018  
ceramic  
**\$2,900**

20. *The Story of the Eye, part 2, no 3*, 2018  
ceramic  
**\$2,900**

21. *The Story of the Eye, part 2, no 5*, 2018,  
ceramic  
**\$2,900**

22. *Tell us where we come from*, 2018  
ceramic, auto/marine power cable  
**\$3,300**

23. *Everybody's Everything; Alalcomenaeus*, 2017  
acrylic fabric on linen  
**\$2,400**

24. *Everybody's Everything; Crab*, 2017  
acrylic fabric on linen  
**\$2,400**

25. *Everybody's Everything; Scorpion*, 2017  
acrylic fabric on linen  
**\$2,400**

26. *For a long while there were only plants*, 1997  
glazed ceramic  
**\$14,000**

27. *Been here and gone #5*, 2007  
ceramic  
**\$1,500**

28. *Been here and gone #2*, 2007  
ceramic  
**\$1,500**

29. *Been here and gone 6*, 2006  
ceramic  
**\$1,500**

30. *Been here and gone 7*, 2006  
ceramic  
**\$1,500**

31. *Been here and gone #3*, 2007  
ceramic  
**\$1,500**

32. *Untitled*, 2009  
watercolour on paper  
**\$5,500**

33. *Earthly garden #12*, 2011  
ceramic  
Private Collection

34. *The Anatomy of Plants and Animals no. 1*, 2013  
ceramic  
**\$7,700**

35. *For a long while there were only plants*, 1997  
watercolour, pen and ink on paper dipped in wax  
**\$18,000**

36. *Natural history collection no. 23*, 2010  
ceramic  
**\$2,500**

37. *Untitled A*, 2015  
ceramic  
**\$4,900**

38. *Untitled B*, 2015  
ceramic  
**\$4,900**

39. *Untitled C*, 2015  
ceramic  
Private Collection

40. *Observations no.1*, 2014,  
acrylic and watercolour on paper  
**\$2,200**

41. *Observations no.2*, 2014,  
acrylic and watercolour on paper  
**\$2,200**

42. *Observations no.3*, 2014,  
acrylic and watercolour on paper  
**\$2,200**

43. *Observations no.4*, 2014,  
acrylic and watercolour on paper  
**\$2,200**

44. *Something about a bird brain*, 2016  
ceramic  
**\$12,000**

45. Angela and Hossein Valamanesh  
*What remains A*, 2012  
pearlex powder and gloss medium on stiffened felt  
**\$5,500**

46. Angela and Hossein Valamanesh  
*What remains B*, 2012  
pearlex powder and gloss medium on stiffened felt  
**\$5,500**

47. Angela and Hossein Valamanesh  
*What remains*, 2012  
HD video -videography Nassiem Valamanesh  
duration 10 minutes looped  
**\$3,500**

48. *Dark Life 2*, 2018  
ceramic on plywood backing  
**\$4,400**

49. *Dark Life 4*, 2018  
ceramic on plywood backing  
**\$5,500**

50. *Dark Life 3*, 2018  
ceramic on plywood backing  
**\$4,400**

51. *Black rose 2*, 2015  
Ceramic  
**\$2,750**

52. *Tell us where we come from (yellow)*, 2017  
cerami  
**\$3,300**

53. *Tell us where we come from (black)*, 2016  
ceramic  
**\$3,300**

54. *Collection no. 2*, 2013  
ceramic  
**\$7,700**

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26 JULY - 29 SEPTEMBER 2019  
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