

Tender Internal

30 May – 22 June 2024 Opening Celebration, Thursday 30 May, 6 – 8pm

Emma Walker distils beauty from fallibility in her new collection of paintings and sculptures, 'Tender Internal'. Continuing the artist's deepening fascination with the dialectics of outside and inside, the works honour hidden internal spaces and structures of protection and support. The architecture of shells, skeletons, wings and cavities within the body and earth coalesce with freeform mindscapes as Walker empathetically layers the physiological and the psychological.

Defying traditional rectangularity, Walker's organically shaped paintings are like fissures, or portals, into interior spaces. With an approach that is both diagrammatic and symbolic, the artist looks at the vital, visceral parts of our body that are increasingly veiled beneath a glossy veneer. She quarries the tender internal, the truth beneath our skin, actively toppling the common aversions to raw internal spaces endemic to modern western societies. Images evoking vertebrae and veins, muscles and brains are summoned with a soft, somatic palette and the warm tactility of timber. These intimate anatomies are approached cartographically by Walker as vast geographies unfurl across the board. Simultaneously we glimpse details of the natural world – the inside of shells, insect wings, larvae – and through this poetry of plurality Walker shows us, fleetingly, how our innermost selves are interwoven with the eternal universe. The pelvic form in *Protecting the Dreamer* welds skeletal ivories with a convoluted conch, chrysalis, and an abstracted arctic topography, while *Lean In* sees a vertebral structure bridging itself across soft tissues and a network of arteries, or waterways. There is something xylophonic about this pseudo-spine, appealing to our sense of touch, and sound. One gets the feeling that Walker is trying to catch, with her bare hands, some elusive essence – of herself certainly, but also some inexplicable kernel of humanity.

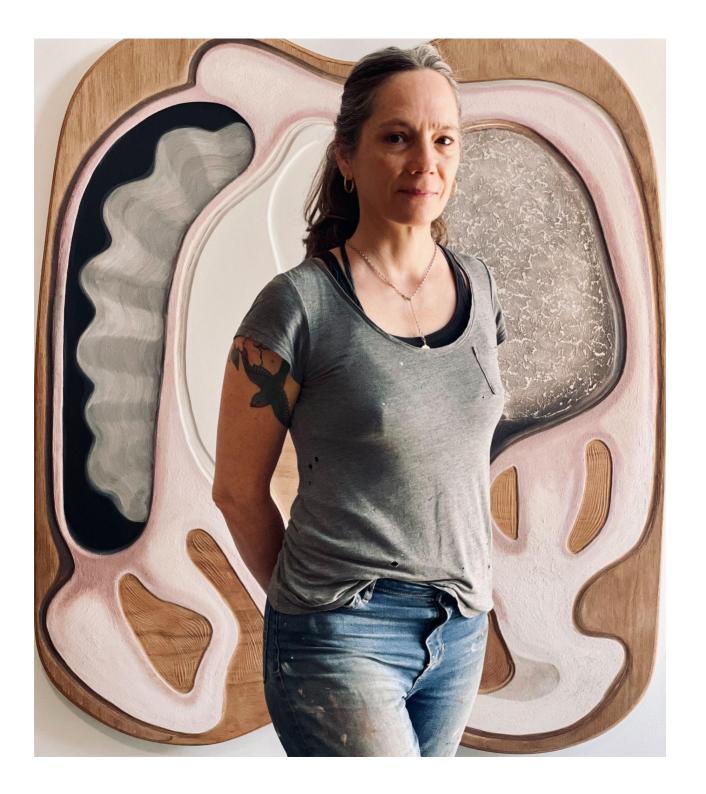
The emphasis on texture and tactility in these works stimulates haptic responses, collapsing the chasm between our bodies and the boards. Spongey cerebral undulations, smooth viscera and dimpled tissue rub up against bones and biological networks — beguiling surfaces that are the result of layer of paint applied on timber, scraped back, sanded, gouged, grinded, scratched, carved and glazed. The physicality of Walker's artmaking process imbues the paintings and sculptures with a sense of struggle and resilience, each piece bearing the memories of Walker's tools like former lives lived. "All of these works have undergone a long-winded metamorphosis over the past year" she reflects, "they have all been worked on together throughout this time, a family of unique individuals. I hand them over to the viewer to make of what they will."

Recently Walker has been experimenting with clay and learning to throw on the wheel. This intuitive process of pulling from both inside and outside, one hand within and one without, has materialised her meditations on the protean nature of previously polar constructs. In many of the works she engages with the fluidity of gender, simultaneously knitting together and pulling apart binary tropes of femininity and masculinity, and the related realms of internal and external. Pink fleshy surfaces, embryonic forms and uterine cavities in paintings such as *Embrace*, *Dreaming*, and *Refuge* see the artist reflecting on her embodied experience of motherhood – in all its multivalence and sublimity. Consciously she hedges these soft internal vistas with hard-edged abstractions and phallic intonations to create subtle pictures of amorphous sexuality.

As Walker gently turns inside out the body, she is also dissolving divisions between materiality and the mind. Shadowy masses akin to radiological imaging reveal, symbolically, the artist burrowing deep into the inky crevices of the human psyche. She's interested in the wilderness of our internal landscape, those hidden parts of ourselves that dwell beyond the cultivated garden of social appearance. The mechanics of Freudian Repression at play, which is, indeed, given great currency in today's world of impeccable façades. "Why is our interior so unacceptable?" questions Walker, "Why must we guard it and not admit to ourselves and others that we ache, that we are vulnerable, that we feel deeply?" These ideas are connected to the artist's ongoing research on Buddhist and Vedic philosophy, identity, gender, perception and being. Yet despite the sincerity of this analysis, there is a timbre of humour in Walker's new series. As the works evolved, the serious nature of her initial intent began to slip as unplanned forms appeared that were unintentionally sexual and comical. The artist concludes, "I have delighted in this process, in allowing for these works to become themselves, without me imposing a version of those very masks that I was initially questioning and peering behind."

Elli Walsh Principle Writer, Artist Profile

Walker has been exhibiting for over thirty years. Her career has enjoyed the strong support of patrons Ann Lewis AO, Nick Waterlow, OAM and Julian Beaumont OAM. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the National Art School, Sydney, and she has also studied in Italy and travelled extensively. She was a finalist in the Paddington Art Prize (2017, 2013, 2010, 2008) and winner of the prestigious Jacaranda Acquisitive Drawing Award (2014). Walker has held numerous exhibitions in both Sydney and Melbourne, and her work features in several major public and corporate collections including Macquarie Bank, Australian Club, Sydney, Lismore Regional Gallery, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre and Bathurst Regional Gallery, in addition to various private collections in Australia, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and the United States.



Lean In acrylic & mixed media on board 64 x 61 cm \$7,200





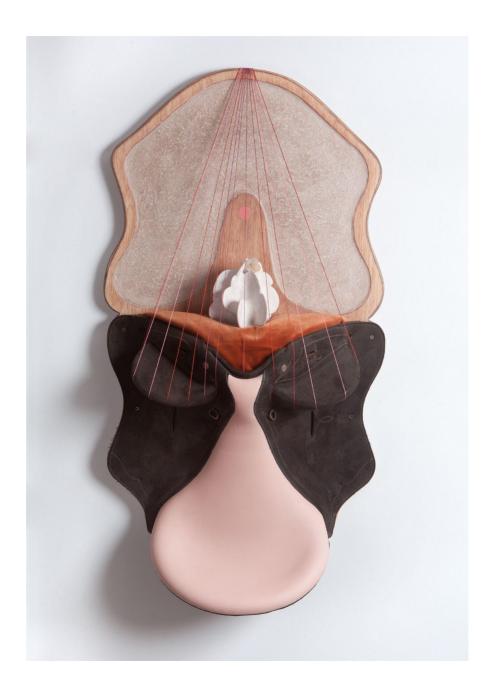




Protecting the Dreamer acrylic & mixed media on board 141 x 122 cm \$16,500



Gentle acrylic on board with saddle, velvet, string, ceramic and crystal $116 \times 56 \text{ cm}$ \$9,500



Butterflies acrylic & mixed media on board 143 x 122 cm \$16,500







Worlds Within acrylic & mixed media on board 122 x 60 cm \$8,000



Closer acrylic & mixed media on board 29.5 x 30 cm \$3,400 Refuge acrylic & mixed media on board 30 x 28.5 cm \$3,400







Whim acrylic & mixed media on board 97.5 x 123 cm \$15,000









Coexistent
ceramic, leather yoke & quartz
42 x 31 x 15 cm
\$3,900





Soft Landing
acrylic & mixed media on board
60.5 x 61 cm
\$6,200



Little Wing (front & side)
acrylic & ceramic on timber
10 x 20 x 13 cm
\$1,500





Betty
acrylic & mixed media on board
80 x 60 cm
\$7,000



Natural Progression ceramic, fabric, paint, branch, dowel 14 x 165 cm, (height variable) \$3,800



Protection ceramic, acrylic & mixed media on board $30 \times 30 \text{ cm}$ \$3,400

 $\begin{tabular}{ll} Embrace \\ acrylic \& mixed media on board \\ 27 \times 28.5 \ cm \\ \$3,400 \end{tabular}$





Balancing Act ceramic, fabric, paint 152 x 76 cm \$3,600

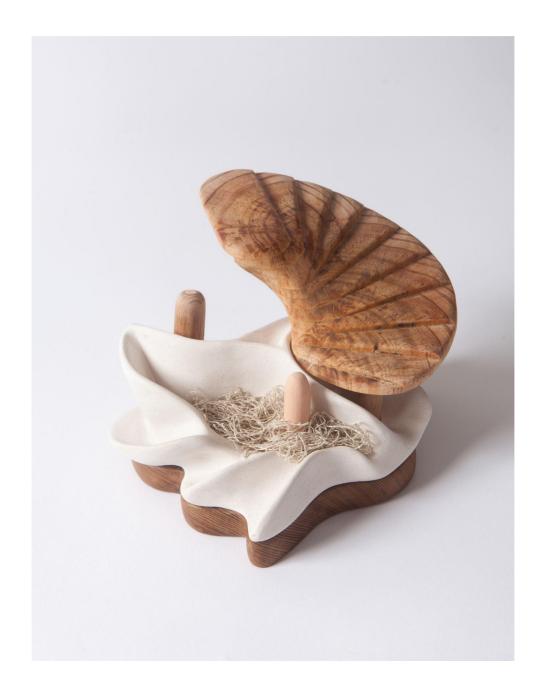


Happy Birthday found object, brass & timber 19 x 17 x 12 cm \$1,500

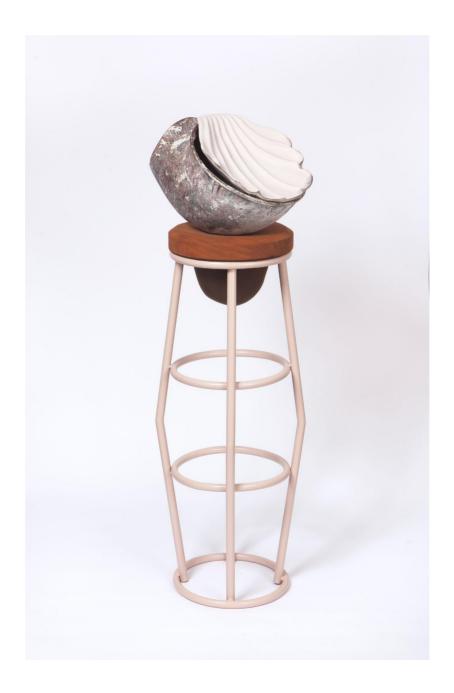




Sexy Beast ceramic, timber & string 13 x 17 x 15 cm \$2,900



Main Stay ceramic, found object, felt and powder coated steel 125.5 \times 41 \times 41 cm \$6,000



Born Sydney, Australia, 1969

2013

EDUCA	TION
2000	Bachelor of Fine Arts, National Art School, Sydney, NSW
1992	Diploma of Fine Arts, National Art School, Sydney, NSW
AWARD	DS, GRANTS & RESIDENCIES
2021	King School Art Prize, Sydney, NSW, Finalist
2020	Artist in Residence, Glasshouse Regional Gallery, Port Macquarie, NSW
	Waterhouse Natural Science Arts Prize, Joint Winner with Grayson Cooke for Open Air
2018	Lumen Prize, UK, Shortlisted
	ATOM Awards, Best Experimental Film, Winner
2017	Paddington Art Prize, Sydney, NSW, Finalist
2014	Jacaranda Acquisitive Drawing Award (JADA), Grafton Regional Gallery NSW, Winner
2013	Paddington Art Prize, Sydney, NSW, Finalist
2010	Paddington Art Prize, Sydney, NSW, Finalist
2008	Paddington Art Prize, Sydney, NSW, Finalist
	Alice Prize, Alice Springs Art Foundation, Alice Springs, NT, Finalist
2006	Norvill Art Prize, Murrurundi, NSW, Finalist
2002	The Border Art Prize, Murwillumbah Regional Art Gallery, NSW, Finalist
2001	National Works on Paper Prize, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney, NSW, Finalist
1996	Fishers Ghost Prize, Campbelltown Regional Gallery, NSW, Finalist
1995	Artist in Residence, Hill End, NSW
SELECT	FED SOLO EXHIBITIONS
2024	'Tender Internal', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2022	'Spring Comes', Gallery Smith, Melbourne, VIC
2021	'Distillations', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Distillations', Port Macquarie Regional Gallery, NSW
2019	'The Dark Sublime', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'The Dark Sublime', Lismore Regional Gallery, Lismore, NSW
2018	'Surface Immersion', Arthouse Gallery at Sydney Contemporary Art Fair
2016	'Sediment Songs', Grafton Regional Gallery, Grafton, NSW
	'Sediment Songs', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2015	'Intimate Immensity', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2014	'Art at the Airport', Ballina/Byron Gateway Airport, Ballina, NSW

'Walk The Line', Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC

2012	'Finding Form', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2010	'The Dawn Language', Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Arts Centre, Murwillumbah, NS
	'Pollination', Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
2009	'Silent Geography', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2008	'Outliving The Night', Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
2007	'New Work', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2006	'New Paintings', King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
2002	'Floating World', King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
2000	'From Little Things', Big Things Grow, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
1999	'Tidal Fragments', Broken Bay, King Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW
1997	'Somewhere To Fly', King Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW
1991	Pod Gallery, Sydney, NSW
SELEC	TED GROUP EXHIBITIONS
2024	'Summer', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2023	'Paper & Clay', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'BSA 10 Years', Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Arts Centre, Murwillumbah, NSW
2021	'Coming Home', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'I Am Here', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Staff Show', BSA Project Space, Mullumbimby, NSW
	'Shared Knowledge', BSA Teachers Exhibition, Tweed Regional Gallery
2020	'Summer Salon', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'You Are Here', Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Arts Centre, Murwillumbah, NSW
2019	'Reflections of a Fading Sky', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	Arthouse Gallery at Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Carriageworks, Sydney
	'The Way We Were', Byron School of Art Project Space, Byron Bay, NSW
2018	'Summer Salon', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'The Way You Came', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'An Invitation Not a Command', Byron School of Art Project Space, Byron Bay, NSW
	'A Series of Parts', M Arts Precinct, Murwillumbah, NSW
2017	Arthouse Gallery at Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Carriageworks, Sydney
	'Works on Paper', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Summer 17', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2016	'Unfolding Splendour,' Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2015	'Under the Sun', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2014	'Unfolding Splendour', Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Celebrating 25 Years', Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC

2013	'Eternity,' Damien Minton Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Five Big Paintings', Damien Minton Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'A Quartet of Artists', Damien Minton Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2012	'From the Studio', Art Piece Gallery, Mullumbimby, NSW
2010	'Gallery Artists', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2009	'Summer Exhibition', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'The View From Here', Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
	'The Australian Landscape', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Australian Contemporary Art', The Rotunda, Hong Kong
2008	'Solstice II', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Singapore Art Fair', Gaffer Studio, Singapore
	'2x2', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Surface Tension', Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
	'Hong Kong Art Walk', Hong Kong
	'Contemporary Australian Art', Gaffer Studio, Hong Kong
	'And the Brightness Begins', Cape Gallery, Byron Bay, NSW
	'Treasures,' Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
	'Paint', John Gordon Gallery, Coffs Harbour, NSW
2007	'Pure', Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
2006	'Summer Show', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Local Art', Lismore Regional Gallery, Byron Bay, NSW
2005	'Oceans 11', Lismore Regional Gallery, Lismore, NSW
	'Group Show', King Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Last Show of the Year', King Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2003	'Country Energy Art Prize', Armidale Regional Gallery, Armidale, NSW
	'330 Show', King Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW
2002	'King Street Gallery at Span Galleries', Melbourne, VIC
2001	'Monochromatic', King Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Bat, Ball and Brush, A Summer of Cricket and Art', SCG, Sydney, NSW
2000	'Redlands', Westpac Exhibition, NSW
	'Women and the Landscape', King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
	'Things of Wood', King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
	'Group show', King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
1999	'New 9', Sir Hermann Black Gallery, Sydney, NSW
	'Last show of the year,' King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
1998	'Our Collection: The Artists of Hill End, 1947 - 1998', Bathurst Regional Gallery, NSW
	'Last show of the year' King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW

1998	'Gallery Artists', King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
1997	'Gallery Artists', King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney, NSW
	'Horizon Line', King Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW
1996	'Guitar Shaped World', Tamworth Regional Gallery, NSW
1995	'The Artists of Hill End', Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, NSW $\&$ Regional Tour
	'Fresh', Gallery on Booth, Sydney, NSW
	'Alumni Exhibition', National Art School, Sydney, NSW
1994	'Dissonance', Wollongong University Art Gallery, NSW
1992	'Drawing Show', Pod Gallery, Sydney, NSW
1988	'Dua Bersama, Mitra Budaya', Jakarta, Indonesia
1986	'Ad in Fine Art Um', Surry Street Gallery, Sydney, NSW

SELECTED COLLABORATIONS

Open Air, 2018. Grayson Cooke film project in collaboration with Emma Walker and The Necks

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Bathurst Regional Gallery, Bond University Collection, Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Lismore Regional Gallery, Macquarie Bank Collection, Gold Coast Regional Gallery, The Australia Club, Jackson Smith Solicitors, Sir Hermann Black Gallery Collection, Sydney University, Ann Lewis AO Collection, Nick Waterlow OAM Collection, Australian Parliament House Art Collection Tamworth Regional Gallery, Grafton Regional Gallery

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Profile in Byron Art Magazine, Issue 11, 2018

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Candida Baker, 'Emma Walker: Artist in Full Flood', Veranda Magazine, 2014

Kate Adams, 'Emma Walker, Field of Dreams', Artist Profile Magazine, p.64-65, Jul 2009

Lois Randal, Weekend Star, 20 Jan 2007

Alex Warren, Starters, Inside Out Magazine, p.150, Apr 2006

Sherine Youssef, 'Sydney Serenity', Maddison Magazine, p.296, Mar 2006

Lenny Ann Low, SMH Metropolitan, p.15, 21-22 Dec 2002

Lisa Pryor, SMH Spotlight, 19 Nov 2002

Sebastian Smee, SMH The Galleries, 20 Apr 1999

Sebastian Smee, '180 Degrees of Separation', SMH Metro, 20 Jun 1997

'Artists of Hill End', In The Picture Exhibition Preview, 1995

