

EXHIBITION NEWSLETTER

Wallflower - Mirror, rorriM

Filomena Coppola

Monday 5 September to Friday 23 September 2011



Mildura Palimpsest #8 Collaborators and Saboteurs
Rio Vista House, Mildura Arts Centre, Cureton Avenue, Mildura VIC 3500

c o p p o l a



Wallflower - Mirror, rorriM
Pastel on paper and Mildura dirt
Dimensions Variable

Rio Vista Cellar Basement
Mildura Arts Centre

Artist Statement

Filomena Coppola's work is a response to being born in the regional Victorian town of Mildura to Italian immigrants. Her work explores the complexities of duality and what it is to navigate a journey between two cultures. Her delicate pastels capture these moments of duality – of being a hybrid of Italian/Australian cultures. This is represented in her work through presence/absence, plant/animal, and internal/external.



Her recent work utilizes segments of native Australian orchids; intentionally taken out of context, enlarged and drawn so that the texture of the petals resembles animal fur. They are depicted in the foreground of William Morris wallpaper designs, a reference to the migration of her parents to an English colony. Two unique moments of focus – the Italian Australian girl trying to place herself in Australia through the use of the native orchid and the field of fur, a tactile moment of rapture and of wanting to belong even though the fur is foreign or in some cases extinct. This narrative explores what it is to be caught in between. Together these elements subvert their original forms and create a new context which infers to a possibility of nature morphed, changing and mutating.

The native Australian Orchids and fur are the collaborators in this project. Together they subvert their original forms and create a new context which infers genetically engineered animal plant forms. The viewer is placed in the position of possible saboteur as they have to make the decision of whether to cross the floor to view the drawings. The floor is a carpet of Mildura red dirt and Murray River Sand which repeats the pattern from drawing.

Rio Vista is the ultimate location for this work. Contained within the small cellar basement of the original Chaffey home; the work draws on Mildura's history of colonization, the introduction of irrigation for the planting of vineyards and the migration of Italians to the area.

