

EXHIBITION NEWSLETTER

Heart Song

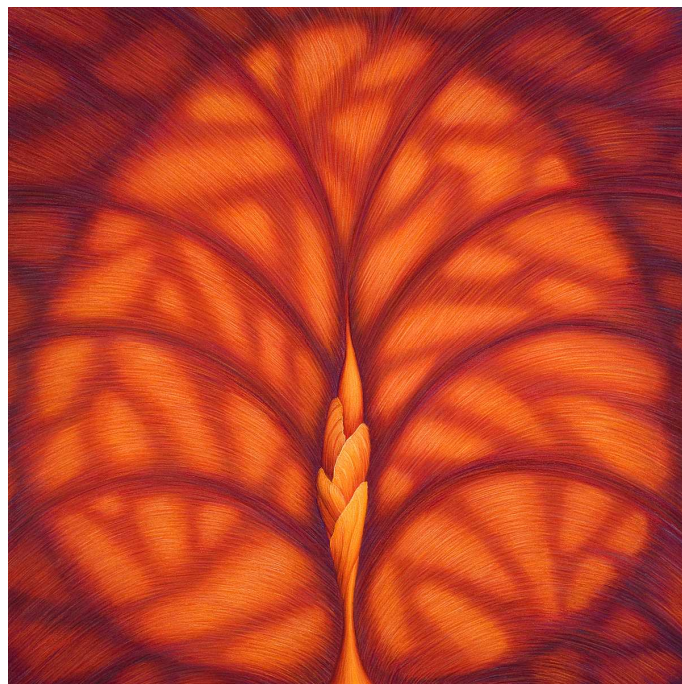
Recent drawings by Filomena Coppola

Tuesday 15 April to Saturday 17 May 2008

Stella Downer Fine Art

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c o p p o l a



Beautiful Dreamer
Pastel on paper
80h x 80w cm
2007

In Filomena Coppola's work the interpretation of light and shadow represents a physical mapping of migratory movement across the globe. She has been photographically documenting shadows to record her own experiences as well as images which represent her parents' migration from Italy to Australia. In the drawings these photographs are reinterpreted and layered so that through the artwork several different experiences and locations can coexist in the same moment.

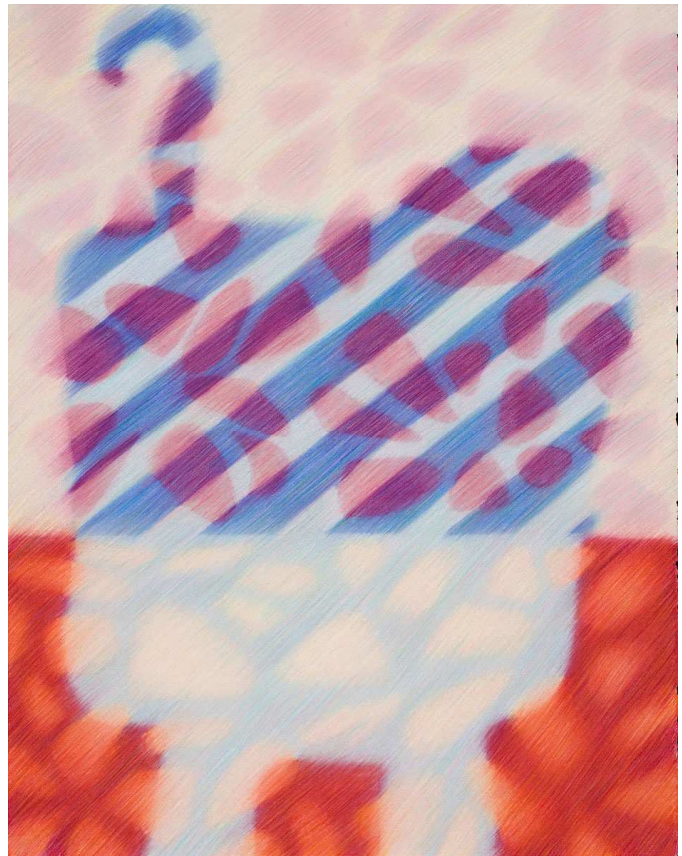
Heart Song represents the individual stories of 10 women expressed visually through this same process. Each woman was asked to take photographs of shadows she responded to or felt a sense of affinity to. These images were then collated and reinterpreted by Coppola into an image which she feels evokes the spirit of each woman.

There is a wonderful sense of collaboration in this work as each woman generously volunteered to participate in the photographic component and then share these images and their stories with Coppola. She feels an incredible sense of humility in trying to bring out the uniqueness of each woman through their shadow images and in spending so much time thinking about each woman and their individual journey.

The woman behind **Inside Out** was the inspiration for this exhibition. In hearing her story and how apologetic she was for the challenges that life presented her with, Coppola decided to ask her to photograph shadows for her so that she could make an image which celebrated her life. She photographed images of the MCG – a structure that she has held a strong affinity with since she was first taken there as a child by her aunt. These images were overlayed with a soft image of a lampshade shadow taken in her lounge room. **Beautiful Dreamer** portrays the heart

and energy of an American woman who is making Australia her home. **Walk With Me** shows the strength of a woman moving forward after caring for her sister before her death. She commented on having cut her hair because her own shadow looked so much like that of her sister's. **Between the Light** expresses an intellectual woman's search for balance and the integration of the mind, religion and emotion. **Playful Spirit** represents this woman's extraordinary ability to look at the smaller details, and to search for and experience joy. **Family Heirloom** portrays a woman whose family, friends and home life are her priorities. Coppola wanted the drawing to look like a jewel that would be handed down through generations. This drawing came together the day that she told the artist that she was pregnant. **The Tangled Web** displays a woman's struggle with her own identity and her freedom from being boxed in. **Deciphering Language** represents a woman who travels extensively and uses the written word as an art form. **Codes of Light** portrays a retired grandmother who takes pride in her home, her journey of migration and the fulfilment of her life. Light shifts over the surface as time has moved and changed her life. And **Reflecting on North and South** expresses Coppola's cultural richness of being born in Australia to Italian parents.

Heart Song has been an incredible, challenging and rewarding experience for Coppola as an artist and she thanks all the women who participated.



Playful Spirit
Pastel on paper
72h x 56w cm
2008

Below from left to Right

Deciphering Language
Pastel on paper
70h x 80w cm
2008

Codes of Light
Pastel on paper
40h x 80w cm
2008

Walk With Me
Pastel on paper
70h x 90w cm
2007

Between the Light
Pastel on paper
70h x 55w cm
2008

Heart Song is **Filomena Coppola's** first exhibition with Stella Downer Fine Art. She has been shortlisted for The Robert Jacks Drawing Award, the City of Banyule Drawing Award and The Hutchins Drawing Prize. She has been the recipient of several awards and residencies including the Vermont Studio Centre Residency and Part Fellowship, Vermont, USA in 2004, Ian Potter Foundation Individual Grant in 2001, Arts Tasmania Development Grant in 1999 and the Rosamond McCulloch Scholarship to the Cite Internationale des Arts, Paris in 1997. Her work is represented in many public collections including Artbank, Print Council of Australia, University of Tasmania, Launceston and Hobart, Mornington Peninsula Gallery, The Hutchins School, Hobart and the Devonport Art Gallery.

