



## Jacqui Stockdale

Jacqui Stockdale is a highly acclaimed Australian artist known for her theatrical portrait photography, figurative paintings, drawings and collages. Her practice explores identity, folklore, masquerade and metamorphosis.

Stockdale has, in the past, been a wandering soul. Widely travelled, her artworks traverse a personal cartography of associations that weave irreverently between history, folklore, indigenous cultures and the carnivalesque. Religious deities, exotic postcards and masks act as windows of discovery into ethnography, as well as referencing moments from the everyday in various cultures. Stockdale deconstructs many of her drawings and paintings from the past two decades and uses elements of these combined with found decorative papers to arrange a series of bold, figurative portraits featuring a vivid palette. Each of these portraits present the human form in a myriad of different guises and explore the complexities of the human mind and spirit.

stockdale creates a wonderful *mélange* of archetypal characters that subvert traditional identities and narratives. Her creations “shape-shift” and frustrate attempts at categorization and assimilation. *Crudelia de Mon Della Botanica*, featured here in WONDERWORKS is an Australian colonial take on Cruella de Vil, the fictional character and the antagonist of the novel, *The Hundred and One Dalmatians*. *Botanica* references the hand painted backdrop that depicts the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, Victoria, Australia. Fluffy dog headdress, courtesy of Melbourne sculptor, Kate Rohde.

Stockdale has assembled objects from her travels into a vast collection exploring the idea of the ‘soul’ of non-human and inanimate entities. In her work, she plays with this potential of meaning to linger in objects like masks that have been created with ritual or shamanistic intent. It’s hard not to think that Stockdale has created a unique realm of magical thinking. Hers is a place of collapse and possibility, of worlds outside our own, of worlds without end.

Stockdale is a recipient of the Australia Council, Barcelona Studio Residency 2013 and joint winner of the Doug Moran Contemporary Photography Prize, 2012 with her portrait, *Rama Jaara-The Royal Shepherdess*. She is also a recent finalist in the Geelong Art Prize and the Josephine Ulrick and Win Schuman Award, 2012. Selected for the Dobell Drawing Prize, 2010, Art Gallery of NSW. In 2009 she won the inaugural Belle Arti –Chapman and Bailey Award, judged by Alexie Glass-Kantor and Jason Smith and her work was included in ‘Charles Darwin in Australia; Art & Evolution’ at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne. A documentary about her practice, “Heart”, won “Best Documentary’ at the 2008 Melbourne International Film Festival and screened on the ABC, Artscape in 2009.