



DARREN
KNIGHT
GALLERY



Drags'R'Us

***Drag stars & personalities
of 1990s Melbourne***

**Darren Knight Gallery
4 February - 4 March 2023**

Barbra Quicksand 1995 (detail)
wool sewings on hessian
76 x 93 cm

PAULA HYLAND (& Roger Hyland)

Drags 'R' Us

4 February – 4 March 2023

Opening celebrations Saturday 4 February 3 – 5 pm

In February 2023 the Darren Knight Gallery will present 10 wool sewings by Melbourne artist Paula Hyland from a series made in the early to mid-1990s. These works were originally exhibited at the Darren Knight Gallery in 1995 (Melbourne) and 1997 (Sydney).

Drags 'R' Us features portraits of personalities from the Melbourne drag scene of the early 1990s. At this time, Paula Hyland and her husband Roger became regular attendees at drag shows in Melbourne where they met and befriended many of the stars and characters from this scene.



Paula & Roger Hyland, Dulcie Du Jour and friends at the Darren Knight Gallery, Melbourne 1995.

As Roger remembers....

“Sometime around the end of 1990 we made friends with a young gay man who was always telling us about his nights at gay clubs and bars. Paula was curious and interested in going and one Saturday night, he took us to the Peel (Hotel) on the corner of Peel Street and Wellington Street, Collingwood. At that time, the Peel was open from 9 or 10 at night until 5am or later most days of the week. Typically, it didn’t start to fill up until after 11 or 12.

Around this time Drag Queens would start to arrive after shows at venues like The Exchange Hotel in Commercial Road Prahran. At that time Commercial Road was the heart of Melbourne’s gay entertainment scene. *3 Faces* was the most prestigious venue, massive in size with a huge stage for drag shows and a big dance floor. The Exchange was a local hotel and shows there in the smaller surrounds headlined by Dulcie DuJour (Jeff Dycer) were much more intimate.

On that first night at the Peel, as soon as Paula saw the Drag Queens arrive, she knew what she wanted to do. She approached Dulcie, explained she was a textile artist, and said she’d like to photograph her and make a sewn portrait. At that time Dulcie had no idea who Paula was or what a finished piece would look like. To further complicate things, Paula’s camera was being repaired, so she wasn’t able to start immediately. The repairs took so long, I think Dulcie doubted anything was ever going to happen but finally the camera was working and we went to The Exchange to photograph Dulcie putting on makeup and dressing for the show.

We started going regularly to the Peel and the Exchange, mostly on Friday and Sunday nights, partly because it was fun but also Paula was making herself known to drag queens she wanted to work with. Drag Queens were huge drawcards at all the venues, drinking heavily and mixing with patrons as well as performing. People like Dulcie, Paris, Miss Candee & Barbara Quicksand were hosts and stars of their own shows, which always included performances by an ever-changing cast of regulars like Tara Wells and newcomers like Miss Synthetique. Other popular gay venues at the time included: The Prince of Wales & The Greyhound hotels in St Kilda, the Laird in Abbotsford, DT’s Hotel in Richmond Virgin Mary’s in Commercial Road.”

The Darren Knight Gallery is very pleased to be re-showing the last surviving works from this project alongside two collage pieces made by Roger Hyland at the time. The photographs in Roger’s work collages were taken by Paula and used as references for the earlier sewings and later as the source for the screen prints and collaged elements in the later works.

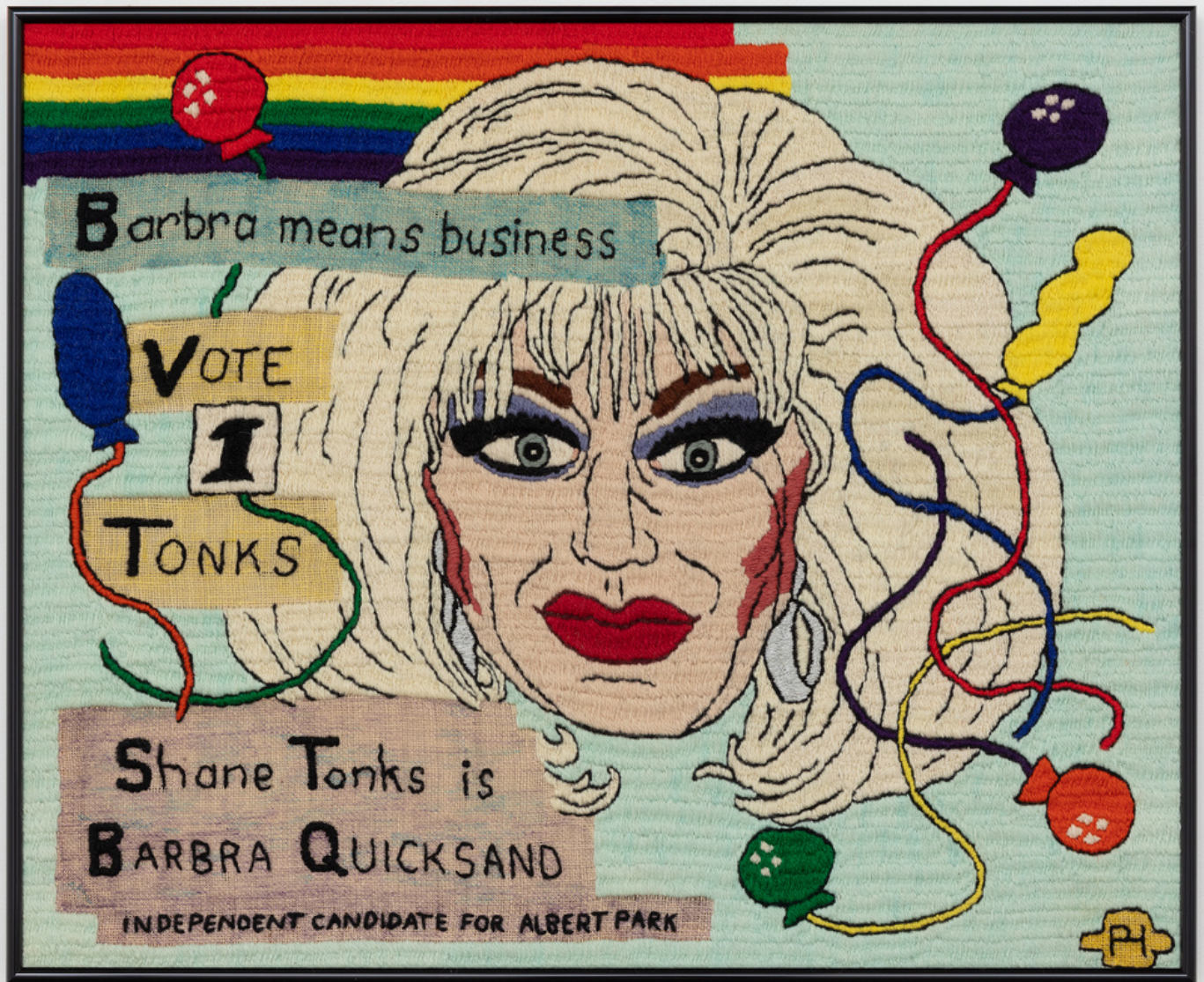
Paula Hyland was born in Melbourne in 1946. She studied creative stitchery with Isobel Foster at the Melbourne College of Advanced Education in 1975 and completed a Graduate Diploma of Embroidery at RMIT in 1981.

Paula has held three solo exhibitions at Darren Knight Gallery - in 1995, 1997 and 2001. The 2023 *Drags 'R' Us* show will be her fourth solo exhibition.

Works from this series are in the collection of the Queensland Art Gallery/GOMA and the Federation University Art Collection, Victoria.



Dulcie and Lucy at Interval 1993
wool sewings on hessian
84 x 71 cm
\$6,500.00



Barbra Quicksand 1995
wool sewings on hessian
76 x 93 cm
\$6,500.00

ESCAPE

Calvin Klein



Ecstatic Rita 1996

wool, liquitex & screen ink on hessian

110 x 124 cm

\$9,500.00



Miss Candee 1995
wool sewings on hessian
82 x 97 cm
\$6,500.00



Dulcie - Our Lady of Flowers 1994

wool sewings on hessian

76 x 74 cm

\$6,500.00



Pink Candee 1996

wool, liquitex & screen ink on hessian

112 x 122 cm

\$9,500.00



Drag Queen 1996
wool sewings on hessian
113 x 112 cm
\$9,500.00



Wendy Frank'n'Burger with Veronika Puddle and Tracey Twat 1994

wool sewings on hessian

62 x 91 cm

\$6,500.00



Dulcie, The Rainbow Award Australian Madonna 1996/7
wool sewings & photocopy collage on hessian
123 x 119 cm
\$9,500.00



ROGER HYLAND

Drag busters 1995

collage on board with artist made frame

88.5 x 79 cm

\$2,500.00



Produce of Australia 1997

103 x 71.5 cm

\$2,500.00



**DARREN
KNIGHT
GALLERY**

840 Elizabeth Street
Waterloo
NSW 2017
Sydney Australia
Tel +61 2 9699 5353
info@darrenknightgallery.com
darrenknightgallery.com