



ART

THE ICONIC AND VINTAGE INFORMATION PAGE.

Colour Bombs. Artist

Lara Merrett

September 8, 2014



'brown diamonds' Latest work by Lara Merrett 2014

Artist Lara Merrett has a new body of work and it won't disappoint. Her signature is consistently bold of form, explosive of colour and undeniably romantic. Her palettes of choice sway dramatically from buttercup to storm cloud and I am determined that one day I will own one and it will be displayed gloriously above my bed.

This softly spoken Sydney based artist is Melbourne bound this week for the opening of her latest exhibition *Doublethink* which is launching at the Karen Woodbury Gallery in Flinders Lane this Wednesday 10th September at 6pm.



How would you describe your style?

Intuitive, ever changing, immersive, full of paradoxes and contradictions.

What is your heritage?

My mother is Anglo Australian claiming a little Portuguese(not sure how that fits) and my father came to Australia as a ten pound pom with Polish Russian Jewish heritage.

What jobs did your parents do?

My mother and I went through College of Fine Arts in Sydney together and before that my mother was a high school art teacher. My father was in advertising and market research..so he always had the stats to win every argument!

How old were you when you first discovered creativity?

I can't remember as I've always been surrounded by art since I was born. All the women on my mother's side are artists so it was kind of expected and that's why I tried for so long to resist this urge. I swore I'd never be an artist!

What and who were your influences in the early years?

As kids we travelled a lot and lived in Asia (Malaysia and Singapore) until I was 7 or 8 years old. I was dragged to every Museum and Temple when we travelled through India and south east Asia. I'm convinced the street life and colour in these places had a huge influence on my art practise and I know it has given me life long yearning of going to far away places. I also spent 3 years in Spain when I left school and this separation from everything I knew had a huge impact on me. The art collections at The Prado and Reina Sofia were my regular haunts and taught me a lot about art making.

Do you paint in any frame of mind?

I turn up to the studio 5 days a week no matter how I feel. When I get there I decide what way I want to work depending on my mood. If I'm feeling good and full of energy I'll make use of this by trying out new ideas and working quickly. If my mood is quieter or low energy I like to find a corner and work on repetitive pattern making elements of the work ..It can feel like meditating.

The first piece of art that you bought?

Good question...artists are always swapping so it's hard to remember first time I paid cash for art. I bought a small sculpture by Melbourne artist Peter Graham quite a few years back. It's a small head with hands coming out of the eye sockets..I think it's so magical though most people I know can't hack it!

Do you paint to music?

I paint to words a lot. First thing when I get to my studio is to turn on the radio and hear voices it makes the studio not feel so empty. The music comes latersome of the most incredible music to work to has been Phillip Glass. Not what I'd listen to at home though in the studio the long simple repetitive tracks are mesmerising.

If you weren't an artist you would be....

Every one jokes that my real estate talents have gone to waste ...but really it's so hard to answer as I've never given anything else a real go.

I think I've always wanted to be more political with social agendas and still hope I can fit that in sometime soon and be more involved in some way. I always want to improve things and give back to the community.

Your favourite artist is...

There are so many so I'll list a few recent Agnes Martin, Mama Anderson, Ruldoph Stingel. I also just returned form Barcelona and have a new love for Gaudi. So perhaps Gaudi is my number one at the moment.

Your proudest artistic moment?

Every show I manage to finish with a young family. It's amazing what you can do if you let go of stuff and let it all be a bit crazy.

Has anyone famous bought a painting from you?

My friend sold a painting to Sting ..that always impressed me so nothing on that level though I sold my first paint to Jenny Kee years ago and my best mate Claudia Karvan has built up a collection of my works.

Where in the world would you like to paint for a week?

I'd love to go to Iceland and paint for a week. A friend just did a residency there and the photos blew me away.

Your gaols for 2015?

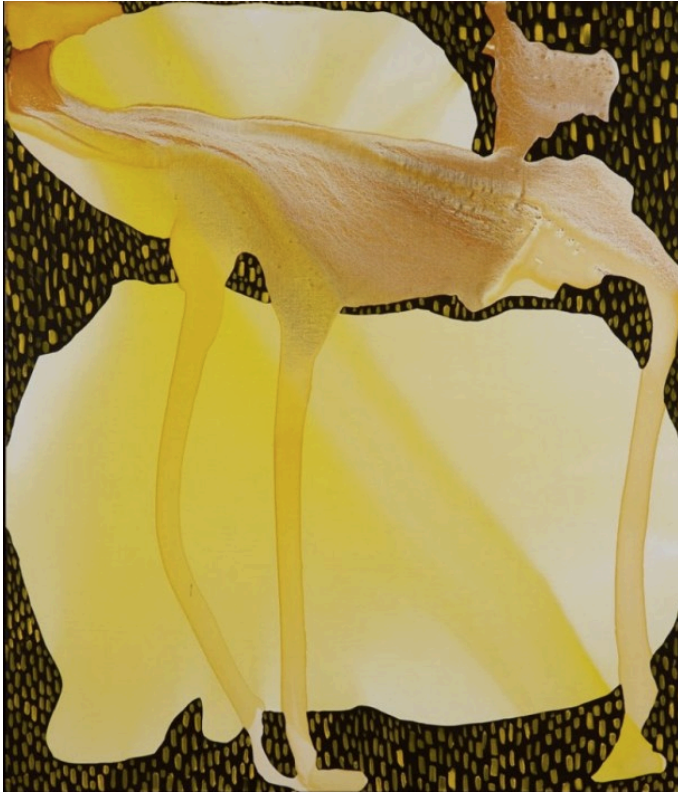
2015 I'll be busy putting some work into the next Sydney Contemporary Art Fair and a solo show in Hong Kong. I figure that's enough for the year!



Photos of Lara Merrett by Carine Thevenau

Lara's Work

Lara Merrett's colour-rich paintings have been compared to the romantic painters of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries: both 'imagine geographies of space, atmosphere and physicality. For Merrett, it's the inquiry into the picture plane and surface, balance of ink and acrylic, of depth and opacity, chaos with order and the reference to otherness' that inspire her works.



Travels through India and Spain as a young artist have also informed Merrett's amorphous and organic arrangements, which are realized through the layering and pouring of water-based materials directly onto the canvas. No work is ever pre-planned; 'It's like magic when the unexpected starts to happen. I love it - it's completely intoxicating. From start to completion, a work can take anywhere from three days to six months. Each work has its own personality and therefore takes its own time.' Merrett studied painting abroad at the Circulo de Bellas Artes in Madrid, Spain, before completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Arts at the College of Fine Arts, Sydney. She has recently been commissioned for various projects at the Victorian Tapestry Workshop for St Michaels Church, Melbourne, the Sofitel Hotel, Melbourne, and is represented in numerous private and public collections including the University of New South Wales, Sydney, the Bundanon Estate, Artbank, Melbourne, and the Macquarie Bank and the UBS collections.

Lara's Website

<http://laramerrett.publishpath.com/>

Previous works.





'the ever changing nature of things' 2013



Photos of Lara by Carine Thevenau 2014





'upside down you turn me' 2004

Doublethink Exhibition runs from September 10th – October 10th
2014 at The Karen Woodbury Gallery in Flinders Lane, Melbourne.
Opening night is Wednesday 10th September 6–8pm.