

Independent Arts Foundation Small Grants for Young or Emerging Artists Report

Ellen Schlobohm

I write to thank the Independent Arts Foundation for their support of my recent residency undertaken at Nexus Arts which culminated in an exhibition titled 's.il.hou.ette~' during the Adelaide Fringe Festival.

In December 2018 I began a residency at Nexus Arts alongside fellow paper artist Janaki Lele. During the course of this residency we each explored our cultural heritage through the form of paper art. For myself, I sought to reconnect with my German heritage through exploring the link between Scherenschnitte, traditional German papercutting, and contemporary papercutting. I reflected on childhood memories, explored traditions and examined the loss of my cultural connections over time.

The merging together of contemporary papercutting and Scherenschnitte was particularly prevalent in my work '*Silhouette*'. The white and black papers of this piece contrast one another, emulating a person and their shadow. Intimately bound yet somewhat separate, the silhouettes express my feelings of disconnect to my German heritage.



Silhouette, 2019, hand cut Fabriano Accademia paper, hand cut black paper, photo by Morgan Sette

Our exhibition 's.il.hou.ette~' was well received by the public and won the Adelaide Fringe Weekly Award for Best Visual Art and Design for Week 3. Along with an opening night we also hosted a closing event in which musician Zhao Liang responded to our works, creating unique compositions which she then played on the guzheng (Chinese harp).

The residency at Nexus Arts was an important aspect of creating this body of work. It was the first residency I had undertaken and it was a great experience. Having dedicated time and space to really explore my ideas meant I was able to push my works in new directions and to their fullest potential. Working alongside Janaki Lele was another really beneficial experience. As Janaki also works in paper and employs papercutting techniques we were able to discuss both the conceptual and the technical aspects of the art works we created. This allowed each us to have that little extra bit of support and I feel our work was stronger for it.

I put my IAF grant towards covering the cost of materials and time as well as getting my work professionally documented by photographer Morgan Sette. This was the first time I had my work professionally photographed, something I would not have been able to do without the support from the Independent Arts Foundation. The photos have added tremendous value to my portfolio and will be a great asset when applying for future artistic projects and opportunities.

My sincere thanks to the Independent Arts Foundation for their support of both myself and this project. Through the process of undertaking the residency at Nexus Arts and creating the exhibited works, I have reconnected with my German heritage. Now, with each cut of the paper I feel I am contributing to this traditional art form of my father's homeland and this experience will certainly shape my arts practice going forward.

Warmest regards,



Ellen Schlobohm

www.ellenmarieartistry.com

@ellenmarieartistry



Hearth Blessing, 2019, handcut newspaper, shelves and objects, photos by Morgan Sette



Gummibärchen, 2019, hand cut Fabriano Accademia paper, spray paint, photos by Morgan Sette