

in America it is not considered a prescription drug, more of a food supplement). One local paper assured its readers that this wasn't because they couldn't find a virgin to masticate the wild pepper root, supposedly the traditional method of preparation. Julian Holcroft

### Sue Pedley

GALLERY 4A, SYDNEY  
2-26 August 2000

In her new work, *Quarrying Memory: Drawing to Sound, Sound to Drawing*, Sue Pedley continues her subtle investigation into the process of art-making, playing with its perennial materials, light and space, and exploring the potential overlaps between sound and visual representation.

The installation comprises two elements. Large, sensuous prints of various intensities of blue are aligned on one wall to mimic the row of windows in Pedley's studio, from whose filtered light they took their form. On the facing wall, Pedley has transcribed the soundwaves of a jackhammer by weaving her trademark fine orange wool across a matrix of nails.

The prints are cyanotypes, made by exposing paper treated with light-sensitive emulsion directly to sunlight for different durations and on different occasions throughout the day, throughout the year, in Pedley's studio. The sound map of the jackhammer is made by first digitally recording the ambient sound from Pedley's studio—Pedley lives in inner Sydney and is constantly subject to the eruptions of building developments. The recording is then fed into a software program and transformed into a graph of soundwaves, which is in turn drawn up and woven into jagged lines directly onto the gallery wall.

In much of her work, Pedley attempts to give material presence to duration, either through performance – as in the occasions when she has constructed a work during the time of an exhibition – or through gestures which draw attention to time-dependent processes. In effect, time is the predominant content of both elements of *Quarrying Memory*. The cyanotypes literally record time; the longer the exposure, the deeper the hue. The woven wall-piece transposes sound in a way akin to a musical score: the essence of the music is its performance in time;

See Pedley  
*Quarrying Memory, 2000 (detail)*  
nails, wool

as we read the music off the page we experience it temporally. Similarly, we experience the jackhammer's rumblings and grunts through reading this 'score', moving along its surface, witnessing its trembling responses to our movement.

Pedley's choice of materials; the ambient light and sound in her studio, recalls American conceptualist Bruce Nauman's early existential gestures. Without the money for materials but determined to be an artist, Nauman made work out of his daily life in the studio – drinking coffee, bouncing a ball, killing time – since, as he explained, art is what an artist does, and what an artist does is to sit around in a studio. Pedley's installation necessarily takes us into the realm of the artist's studio, brings us up close to the process of art-making. We come to see the process through her experience, as she tries to make sense of her specific environment – professional, socio-economic, and personal – by carrying out a series of experiments and interventions. The process of art-making is rendered accessible to the viewer as a sensibility, as an interrogative approach to the everyday.

However, Pedley's everyday is also inflected with aesthetic considerations. While her cyanotypes are not unlike mechanical recordings, their rich hue reverberates with the vibrant orange of the handcrafted manifestation of another type of mechanical recording to create both aesthetic tension and delight. The minimalism of the prints, with just a hint of a wire lattice as index of a window, is an apposite counterpoint to the frenetic sound-map which takes the shape of the object which initially produced it (in a gesture reminiscent of Robert Morris' *Box with the Sound of its own Making* (1962)).

In *Quarrying Memory*, Pedley subtly weaves her conceptual and aesthetic concerns, her transpositions and loops, moving from sound to visual representation, from handcrafted to mechanical realisation, from gallery to studio, in oscillations which make us keenly aware of our presence in time.

Jacqueline Millner 

**Octopus No. 1**

200 Gertrude Street

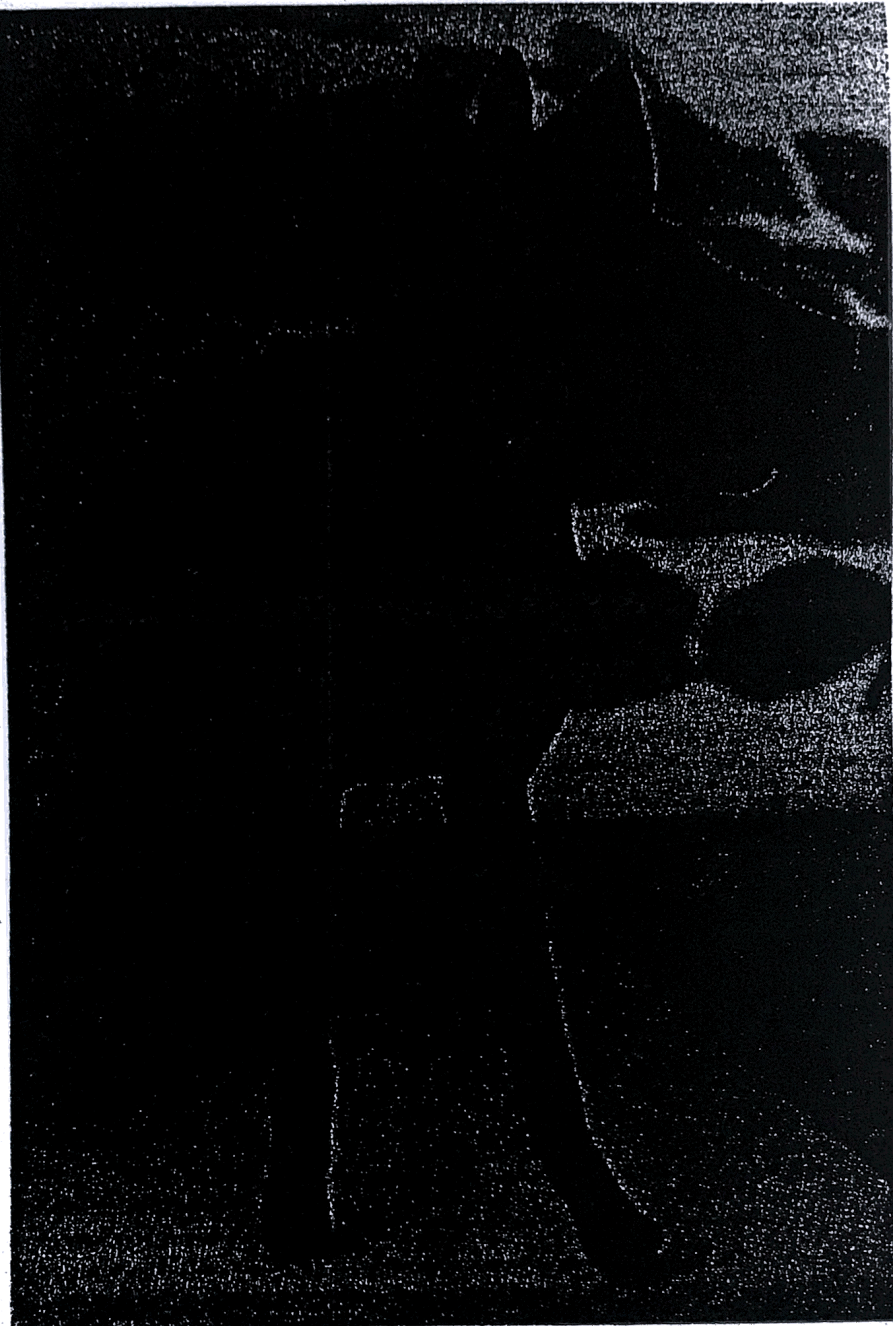
14 July-26 August 2000

**Rent**

ACCA

28 July-3 September 2000

Mid-winter in Melbourne brought two strong statements about the state of contemporary Australian art - one a tightly curated show featuring only four artists, the other a broader sweep including sixteen artists. *Octopus No. 1* at 200 Gertrude Street focused on artists whose works, according to the catalogue, 'advance or engage with contemporary abstract painting and its relationship or stimulus to the perception and proliferation of corollary properties and forms - light, colour, sound and architecture - as experienced in everyday life'. Curator Max Delany described the works by Michael Graeve, Julia Gorman, A.D.S. Donaldson and Sandra Sellg as 'techno-



Louise Weaver  
*Red Fox 2000*, from *Rent*  
 Photo: Kenneth Pleben, Courtesy ACCA

minimalism', connecting these works with new digital technologies and the changing perceptions engendered by them.

In the front room, Michael Graeve created both a sonic and a visual territory - an old amp and speakers in a corner played two tones which gradually swelled into a single wavering tone then flattened into a smooth tone before fading out. A dozen

long, tall paintings, six with solid blocks of colour, six with striped brushstrokes of colour, stood against the wall like a snapshot of the lights on a stereo's equaliser. Upon entering the room, I initially found the noise irritating, but once enclosed in Graeve's environment it became hypnotic as the tones and colours resonated against each other. The sensual confusion continued in the next room with A.D.S.