

Jodie Wells

Wild Grace

July 26 – August 9 2025

Gold Coast-based, Jodie Wells' 9th solo exhibition with Anthea Polson Art invites the viewer to experience the 'wild grace' offered in the natural world. Expressed through a deep engagement with the plasticity of her oil medium, Jodie's affable subjects are not consciously invested with any narrative or symbolic import. They quite simply represent a quest for joy and freedom away from the constrictions of everyday concerns.

Native Australian birds are once again depicted with gusto. "I find birds are an accessible subject," Jodie relays. "No matter where you live there is most likely to be birds around. Looking out from my home studio window and seeing a bird is often a source of inspiration. However, a lot of my current bird paintings were inspired during a recent trip back to Tasmania and an adventure out to Bruny Island. Fairy wrens, magpies and seagulls were ever present."



Another favourite subject are horses that thunder across the canvas as if they would break free from their pictorial confinement. In commenting on her interest in their portrayal, Jodie says, "Horses have always been around me. My mum living in Tasmania had horses in the back paddock. Grandparents, aunties, cousins, friends and in-laws have all owned horses. Because of their size they can appear somewhat intimidating but their intelligence, power, speed and for the most part gentle temperaments, lead to endless painting possibilities." Jodie divulges that she binge-watched the television series *Yellowstone*. "Packed with striking imagery of horses both wild and domesticated, the show motivated me to revisit the painting of them."

Leaping dogs, paws outstretched are once more depicted in this exhibition. The portrayal of these companionable animals references Jodie's daily walks with her own two and the regular encounters with an assortment of breeds eager to interact. Commenting on the works' titles, she informs that an 'oodle' is a dog crossed with a poodle and both of hers are such.

As with her bird, horse and canine imagery, Jodie's floral renditions are painted with verve. The dynamism of her palette knife markings has accorded the flowers an independent existence. Any semblance of fragility has been subordinated to an almost abstract orchestration of shape, hue and sensuous tactile surface.

An intense involvement with the materiality of her impasto oil medium lifts Jodie's imagery beyond mere representation. We encounter nature in all its textural vividness through the gestural freedom and quality of her palette knife technique. Light bouncing from the troughs and crests creates a palpable presence that bids us entry into her delight of nature's wild grace.

JACQUELINE HOUGHTON

Jodie Wells' work is represented in the Gold Coast City Gallery Collection and she has been a finalist in a great number of Art Prizes: 2019 Winner, People's Choice Award, Artist's Choice Exhibition, Anthea Polson Art, Qld; 2019 Invited Finalist, Tattersall's Club Landscape Prize, Brisbane, Qld; 2015 Finalist, SCAP, Caloundra Regional Gallery Qld; 2015 Finalist, Moreton Bay Art Prize Qld; 2012 Finalist, Clayton Utz Art Award, Brisbane Qld; 2011 Finalist, Stan and Maureen Duke Art Prize, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Qld; 2011 Finalist, Black Swan Portraiture Prize, Perth WA; 2011 Finalist, The Lethbridge 10 000, Lethbridge Gallery, Brisbane Qld; 2010 Finalist, The Glover Art Prize, Evandale Tasmania; 2010 Finalist, Border Art Prize, Tweed River Regional Gallery NSW; 2010 Finalist, Mortimer Art Prize, Travelling Tour, Dubbo, Byron Bay & Canberra; 2010 Finalist, The Waterhouse Prize Works on Paper, South Australian Museum, Adelaide SA; 2010 Finalist, The Lethbridge 10 000, Lethbridge Gallery Paddington Qld; 2009 Finalist, Eutick Memorial Still Life Award (the EMSLA), Coffs Harbour NSW; 2009 Finalist, Black Swan Portraiture Prize, Perth WA; 2008 Finalist, Border Art Prize, Tweed River Regional Gallery NSW; 2008 Finalist, Black Swan Portraiture Prize, Perth WA; 2007 Finalist, Border Art Prize, Tweed River Regional Gallery NSW; 2007

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