



Polixeni Papapetrou

# EDEN





EDEN



Polixeni Papapetrou

**E**DEN



## THE TENDER GAZE: *a detour down the garden path*

Flowers are transient and protean forms. Their life cycle is short lived: the bud blooms and its splendor emerges but then it wilts and dies. The beginning is tethered to the end in a graceful arc. There is sorrow but also beauty in this gesture. A petal falling from its stem retains its elegance. Bruised and faded, it is still beautiful. To photograph a flower as it blossoms is to delay and distill the inevitable. Yet the endpoint—the fade—haunts the image.

Of course—you will no doubt think—we know that death infiltrates all photographs. A photograph prefigures its subject’s passing. This is a pedestrian proposition, but in the image of flower we have a symbolic proxy and the point assumes a different (a piercing) poetic force. For here, death is gracefulness itself.

A flower in full bloom is unfixed. It is a fragmentary and fluid figure on the cusp of change. Overwhelmed by resplendent floral motifs, the photographs in Polixeni Papapetrou’s series *Eden* celebrate this fact. In these photographs the flower is in flux. It speaks to growth and loss; beginnings and endings. Papapetrou’s portraits of young women on the edge of adulthood bear witness to the passing of time and announce the dissolution of childhood and adolescence. Yet her protagonists’ passage is far from passive. These young women simultaneously command and counter our gaze. Their gracefulness is charged with strength.



Each photograph is a controlled study of floral abundance. Papapetrou has turned the generative phenomenon of the bloom (itself a floral gesture) into a compositional strategy. The young women are buried in dense pictorial flowerbeds. Tangled knots of buds and petals consume each scene. Wearing 1950s dresses made from floral fabric, the girls stand in front of a backdrop

of sympathetically patterned bark cloth, a coarse textile widely used for domestic applications from the 1930s onwards. This cacophony of competing floral motifs is punctuated by the arrangements of living flowers that adorn each subject.

These bouquets are not ornamental—they are performative devices. Shaped into headdresses, wreaths, hearts or masks, the arrangements are poetic incursions within the scene. They structure the portrait and gently choreograph each girl’s poise and gesture. Bearing her bouquet, she either hides from view, adopting an oblique and reticent demeanor, or steadfastly faces the camera, her gaze starkly framed by the garland. In this allegorically inflected study of young woman-hood, flowers moderate the oscillation between visibility and invisibility; camouflage and the reveal.

Dramatising the interplay between concealment and revelation, Papapetrou partially unravels the symbolic apparatus that genders the flower and typecasts it as feminine (in spite of the fact that most flowering plants are hermaphrodites and possess both male and female reproductive parts). Each photograph’s transhistorical mise en scène references contexts in which the suppression and servitude of women was socially entrenched. In the bold gaze of Olympia, Papapetrou’s daughter and the figure that appears in both *Amaranthine* and *Heart*, we witness a gentle agitation and a subtle inversion of conventionally codified gender norms. This agitation also manifests through Papapetrou’s eloquent navigation of the metaphoric territory of the garden and its affiliation with a restrictive and reductive conception of the female.

The chaste, pure lily that appears alongside images of the Virgin Mary is bound to the concept of the *bortus conclusus*, or the enclosed garden. Derived from the biblical narrative of the *Song of Solomon*, the term is associated with pious womanhood and the closed womb of the virgin mother. An enclosed garden is a safe haven—paradise with a perimeter. Papapetrou consciously cultivates this theological lineage. Nowhere

is the sanctity of the enclosed garden as emphatically reinforced as it is in the story of the Garden of Eden.

In Papapetrou’s *Eden* the frame of the photograph is the perimeter and the outer limit of a contained yet profuse burst of floral forms. It is the garden fence. Each photograph is a world unto itself—a focused experiment in floriculture as tableaux—but it is marked by the occasional rupture. When we encounter Olympia’s gaze the fence collapses and the enclosed world is transgressed. She looks directly at us across the partition.



The metaphoric designation of the garden as a feminine space is propelled by patriarchal principles. Architectural theorist Sylvia Lavin unpacks the gendered conceptualisation of the garden in relation to the eighteenth century picturesque landscape architecture tradition that originated in England.<sup>1</sup>

Picturesque garden design prioritises visual spectacle in the form of discrete pictorial vignettes that often feature sculptures, fountains and crumbling ruins. The sequential reveal of these small visual scenes is engineered by paths that weave their way through the garden. The picturesque garden is a site of visual display that must be experienced peripatetically. As Lavin affirms, in the eighteenth century this mobile viewer was customarily defined as a man. Lavin bases her argument on the work of Claude-Henri Watelet who built the Moulin Joli near Paris, the first picturesque garden in France from 1754. In his 1774 essay *Essai sur les jardins* Watelet described the garden as if it were a female body. His meandering movement through the space becomes an erotically



charged (and acutely gendered) exercise. For Watelet, the garden is a ‘penetrable space of pleasures’ comprised of ‘tissues of desire.’<sup>2</sup> During one sojourn, he writes:

I notice some exterior footpaths. I see greenery, trees, and flowers. They are feminine charms to entice me toward the different paths... These routes penetrate the fields... [and] they seem, by exciting my curiosity, to be disputing amongst themselves which will have the advantage in determining my choice.<sup>3</sup>

In Lavin’s reading of this passage, the garden is ‘a reclining female body who offers herself to the observer and entices him to enter her.’<sup>4</sup> She is ‘assimilated into the landscape: she accepts the inscription of the plan view of the garden onto her body and so acts out a spectacle of sexual receptivity.’<sup>5</sup>

An undercurrent of violence and violation permeates this metaphoric framework. The male visitor on his promenade possesses agency while the feminised garden is passive and immobile. Here, the allegory is used to subjugate and suppress the feminine. As Lavin asserts, ‘the French picturesque garden, then, is a space that both relies on a notion of the feminine for its definition and uses this definition as a strategy of containment.’<sup>6</sup>

It is fitting, then, that in this context the people responsible for the upkeep of the garden – the people who shaped its paths and manicured its hedges – were primarily identified as male. Until the nineteenth century, gardening manuals were invariably pitched at an exclusively male readership. While women pursued ornamental horticulture from the late sixteenth century, it was not until the 1840s that instruction manuals overtly catered to a female audience. As Robin Veder observes, these instructional texts are imbued with a domestic sentimentality and associate gardening with maternal

care. Many of these texts insinuate that ‘the successful woman gardener sympathised with plants in the same way that mothers should with their children.’<sup>7</sup> While the categorisation of women’s gardening as ‘pure emotional effusion’<sup>8</sup> was often inflected with a patronising tone, this notion of horticultural ‘care’ offers a vital alternative to the sexual power play that unfolded in the picturesque landscape.

The sentimental gardener does not treat her territory as site of seductive potential that must be vanquished and penetrated. She looks upon her plants with a different type of gaze. The garden in her care is not a space to be conquered; it is a space to be nurtured. It is this mode of address that Papapetrou conveys in her work. The gaze her photographs cultivate and command is that of the caregiver, not the voyeuristic Lothario.

The young women in these portraits are blossoming into their own adulthood. We look on as they grow. Those that do return our stare—those who appear ready to leave Eden and forge their own pathways—assert their agency within this space. They become active participants in a loop of tender spectatorship. They receive and sustain the nurturing gaze.



Subverting Watelet’s testosterone fueled topography, art and architectural theorist Giuliana Bruno affirms the presence and vitality of female spectatorship and agency in the picturesque garden. In her analysis, the picturesque garden can be rethought as a site of feminine subjectivity and mobilisation.

By way of garden strolling, the picturesque opened the emotion of traveling cultures to women. As it participated in the formation of a tactile knowledge of space—of haptic epistemologies—the sense and sensibility of the picturesque paved the road to a new

form of spatiality in which the female body was not just a penetrable object but the very subject of an intersubjective spatial mobilisation.<sup>9</sup>

According to Bruno, the garden is both a ‘geopsychic viewing space’<sup>10</sup> and a ‘sensuous space of emotion’<sup>11</sup> that women could traverse freely. Their movement through this space constituted a form of emotional cartography and prefigures the expansion of their mobility in broader socio-political terms.

In *Eden* Papapetrou maps her own sensuous space of emotion. The contours of this cartography delineate the life cycle of the flower but also of the female subjects in the centre of the frame. We look on as these young women bloom but know that change is just around the corner. The path bends and time passes. In the tender gaze that these photographs solicit (in the gaze that extends from Papapetrou to her subjects before it ricochets and ensnares the viewer) we find a tacit acknowledgement of this inevitability. This is a knowing and nurturing gaze, for it is with both courage and care that Papapetrou captures these young women as they leave the shelter of childhood—their Eden.

**Isobel Parker Philip**  
July 2016

[1] Lavin, Sylvia. ‘Sacrifice and the Garden: Watelet’s ‘Essai sur les jardins’ and the Space of the Picturesque’. *Assemblage* no. 28. 1995 pp. 16-33  
[2] *ibid.* p. 22  
[3] Quoted in: *Ibid* p. 23  
[4] *ibid.* p. 23  
[5] *ibid.* p. 23  
[6] *ibid.* p. 25  
[7] Veder, Robin. ‘Mother-Love for Plant-Children: Sentimental Pastoralism and Nineteenth-Century Parlour Gardening’. *Australasian Journal of American Studies* vol. 26 no. 2. 2007 pp. 20-34 p. 27  
[8] *ibid.* p. 30  
[9] Bruno, Giuliana, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film*, Verso, New York p. 200  
[10] *ibid.* p. 199  
[11] *ibid.* p. 203



*The loss of Eden is  
personally experienced by  
every one of us as we leave  
the wonder and magic and  
also the pain and terrors  
of childhood.*

Dennis Potter























*Amaranthine*



*Delphi*



*Heart*



*Blinded*



*Spring*



*Rhodora*



*Flora*



*Psyche*



*Amaryllis*



*Eden*























## RHAPSODIES FROM THE BOWER: Polixeni Papapetrou’s *EDEN*

A beautiful young female figure is immersed in a garden of flowers, a vertical garden that doesn’t recede into deep space but presses itself onto the surface of the photograph. The model has flowers behind her, in front of her, upon her, all around her. Her form is rhapsodized by stitches of blooms and leaves, engulfed by nature but not contained by the three levels of representation that compress figure and ground. Real flowers and leaves are artfully arranged as crown or heart or girdle; then there are painted flowers, leaves, vines and sometimes butterflies, sprinkled in the prints of period dresses; and finally there are further prints in the backdrop made from postwar barkcloth. Because all three have similar colours and mood, they parley in intricate overlap, so that the figure simultaneously comes from behind and stands in front of the garden.

Polixeni Papapetrou’s *Eden* comprises 10 photographs of such girls, dryads, nymphs, whoever they are, children of a tranquil bosk, a flattened grove, a luminous bower. Polixeni stitches space together in the same way that flowers are stitched together in a wreath—the one wand entwined within the space of the other—or vines or branches are woven on a trellis. The very word bower derives from a knot, a bow (as Shakespeare acknowledges with his ‘pleached bower’),<sup>1</sup> a tying together around an armature, where strands are interwoven, locked in, both strengthened and encumbered with their unity. They are ‘Together intertwin’d and trammel’d fresh’,<sup>2</sup> as the romantic poet Keats expressed it in his *Endymion*, a heady poem itself enmeshed with flowers and vine. In Polixeni’s photographs, however, the trammelled armature is the human herself.

It is conventional in photography to talk of a prop, a theatrical thing beside the human that figuratively supports the action or allegorical meaning of the image.

In *Eden*, there are no props. The objects that come into the studio, barkcloth, dress and floral arrangement are all of a piece. They have been conceived with one another in mind, enmeshed in the artist’s imagination not as scenery in the background plus features in the foreground. Rather, a bit like the decorative multiplicity of form in Gustav Klimt or Edouard Vuillard, they defy the expectations of hierarchical space, and implicate one another in their collective presence. At certain times, it is hard to extract the information that you typically want for separating the planes. They are in a sense knitted, commencing with the flowers themselves, which Polixeni conceived in collaboration with a florist. The delicate blooms are connected onto one another’s stalk, threaded so as to form a unity. And so with the consonant properties of the dresses and the backdrops: they form an integrity of space, where the sprays and convolutions and overlap of flowers, leaves, tendrils and pods are stitched—or as the Greeks said, ‘rhapsodized’<sup>3</sup>—into the single plane. But while space is collapsed onto a single plane, it is never claustrophobic, because the gaze of the spectator has plenty of places to go, ranging all over a large field of evenly weighted visual elements, a bit like in a painting where the brushstrokes in the corner are just as present as those in the centre.

This wrapping up of space in Polixeni’s photographs from *Eden* belongs not just in the pictorial tradition of Mantegna or Botticelli but also in poetic literature, where a multiplicity of flowers recurs in a sumptuous poetic tangle. It begins for the mainstream of early modern European literature in the horticultural abundance of a palatial garden evoked by the fourteenth-century Giovanni Boccaccio, where wide areas are embowered with vines (*pergolati di viti*), where a profusion of jasmine and other flowers makes ‘odoriferous and delightful shade’.<sup>4</sup> Such images are picked up in sixteenth-century writers like Pietro Bembo, who evokes a bower with thick jasmine, over-layered with live undergrowth (*di viva selve soprastrata*);<sup>5</sup> and by

the baroque, the image of the bower, as if channelling paintings by Mantegna or Botticelli, reached the heavenly, as in Milton’s ‘thicket overgrown’ all around Eden, where ‘The verdurous wall of Paradise up sprung’;<sup>6</sup> and even the embrace of Eve and Adam is described as a kind of heavenly knot: ‘Imparadis’t in one another’s arms’ as ‘bliss on bliss’.<sup>7</sup> Each wonder is folded onto another.

Eden is also a tangled or layered place because, unlike Arcadia or Paradise or Heaven, it has the encumbrance of an expiry, a use-by date, when God chases Eve and Adam from the gates. And so it has a history, book-ended in our imagination by the creation of Adam (because why would you make Eden if not for our progenitors?) and the tragedy of the fall. It is no use after that time, because there are no longer any innocent humans who would deserve it; they are all fallible and unworthy of the luxury. So as a divine invention, Eden is almost a failed project, a bad investment, squeezed in its use—over the billions of years that the planets have been turning—to the lifetime of two humans. It is chronically crushed, tied up in time, created for a disaster and then laid to waste.

There would be many readings of the biblical place that would match Polixeni’s intuitive walled garden, her enclosed photographs that spread out over the vertical picture plane with minimal depth. One reading would be directly allegorical: that Eden is childhood, a period at the beginning when we are innocent and which we subsequently lose, perchance intermittently regaining it by imaginatively connecting to our childhood. The photographic models, however, vary in age, and the series does not constitute a portrait of childhood. All the images are equally rhapsodic in their own way and the whole does not read as a clinical documentation of different stages of development. Besides, not every youngster has a childhood which is Edenic; many, alas, are denied the utopia that we identify with.



Another allegorical reading would be to match the myth of Eden to life cycles and mortality; but although such content is accommodated by the work, the pictures do not confine themselves to the grim discourse of *vanitas* or *memento mori*.

Yet because humans are as much drawn to optimism as gloom, we think of Eden—this irretrievable place that was condemned and represents our exile, our alienation—as somehow recoverable by artifice, as if we could maybe reinvent it with a satisfactory substitute, ‘my bower in fairy-land’.<sup>8</sup> It can never be regained, we know, and the belief that we have the power to win it back is hubris, a great temerity against the divine decree that punished us as sinners by taking the garden away from us. But that does not mean that Eden has to be deleted from human consciousness. On the contrary, Eden remains in memory, either to heighten our compunction or to encourage our beneficence.

Eden also exists for a provisional moment in everyone’s imagination with the mere mention of the word. Eden can never be rebuilt but it can be proposed. In fact Eden can only ever be commended to the imagination; and rhetorical genius can even invoke Eden for the sake of the homeland, like England, ‘this scepter’d isle... This other Eden, demi-paradise’.<sup>9</sup> It sounds like a metaphor even when one describes the biblical reality, ‘this happy state’, as Milton calls it, with its ‘sacred Light’ and ‘humid Flours, that breath’d / Their morning Incense’:<sup>10</sup> it is a metaphor for imagination, slipping effortlessly between innocence and luxury, artlessness and wantonness. Maybe every gardener unconsciously creates an Eden or some counterpart; and the way that a garden is felt also accommodates both the high-minded and the sensual, the serene and the exciting, the intellectual and the erotic. Throughout the large collection of stories by the sixteenth-century *novelliere* Matteo Bandello, the bower features often and divides between a naughty

place for an amorous assignation by stealth<sup>11</sup> and a kind of philosopher’s cave, where the courtiers and aristocrats of the renaissance gathered to relay and ponder stories, to interpret them in perfect peace, as if transcending into an ideal world of reflexion.<sup>12</sup>

In *Eden*, Polixeni weaves together much more than space but metaphor, metaphors of growth, nature, life-cycles, the sacred, the ideal; and even the all-over aesthetic field constitutes a kind of metaphor, the rhapsodic, the imaginary, the connected. The space that she has created is almost nothing but a metaphor, ‘her close and consecrated bower’;<sup>13</sup> yet all of these metaphors are built upon realities, real people, who are the artist’s daughter and her friends. They all have lives, with diverse and exceptional experiences; and each has a token of difference in their floral adornments. They all share the motif of flowers but the differences between each ornamental arrangement make each distinctive, suggesting intrigue or pathos or love or melancholy. One has the sense that the models are united by a power of fantasy, that they have a presence that might look at you but equally a degree of reserve in which they weave their own thoughts, to which you have no access. They don’t propose fantasies in the sense of a tease but rather imaginative freedom; because each of the floral arrangements had to be conceived upon the conception of the dresses and backdrops. Layer upon layer, including the performance of the models, the pictures are a labour of imagination.

The connexion between the bower and fantasy had already been made by the artistic biographer Giorgio Vasari, when he mentioned ‘bowers and other fantasies’ in the *Life of Andrea del Sarto*.<sup>14</sup> Polixeni’s bower is fantastic in old and new ways: old, because it has forms of painting and sculpture within it where blooms and other plant-matter are brought together; and new because they gesture to a place so far beyond the studio.

Among the many discourses that Polixeni stitches together in this fantastic aesthetic bower is the theme of gender. Her models are all female; their space seems female insofar as flowers may be gendered. One might observe that flowers are not necessarily gendered as female. For example, the word in ancient Greek (*ἄνθος*) is masculine, as it is in Latin (*flos*).<sup>15</sup> Even by cultural convention, there is no absolute alignment between the flower and girls. Endymion in Keats’ poem is, of course, a mythical boy and the nobility who enjoy Bandello’s bowers are mostly men. Yet Polixeni only has young women in her bower and we wouldn’t expect boys in there.

This exclusivity along gender lines, like the image of the unicorn in the garden of a virgin, is also metaphoric: it stands for the preserve of the individual, the quintessentially safe place that is the interior, the inner realm of thought, the preserve of an unaffected psyche, an emotional haven, a bower of immanence. It has love in it, but deferred, otherworldly, imaginary and eternal.

Robert Nelson  
July 2016

[1] William Shakespeare, *Much ado about nothing* 3.1  
[2] John Keats, *Endymion* 1.1389  
[3] *ῥαπτός*, stitched, *Odyssey* 24.228–29, already metaphoric in the classical period, as in strung together, continuous, Pindar, *Nemean odes* 2.2; hence *ῥαψωδός*  
[4] Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron* 3.0 (introduction)  
[5] ‘di spesissimi et verdissimi ginevri’, *Asolani* 1.5  
[6] John Milton, *Paradise lost* 4.131–143  
[7] *ibid.* 4.506–08  
[8] Shakespeare, *A midsummer night’s dream* 4.1  
[9] Shakespeare, *Richard II* 2.1  
[10] *Paradise lost* 8.191–92  
[11] ‘si corcarono su la molle e fresca erbetta che sotto il pergolato era, ed amorosamente si presero piacere...in simili crescamenti’, *Novelle* 1.38; though also with temperance, ‘dando fine ai lor amorosi abbracciamenti, discesero a basso ed entrarono in un giardino e sotto un pergolato si misero a passeggiare’, 3.35  
[12] Letter to Alfonso Vesconte at 2.2, cf. 2.12, to Anna di Polignac, 2.39, cf. 2.50, to Margarita Pia e Sanseverina 2.54, to Giacomo Antiquario 3.18, to Girolamo Archinto 3.49, to Count Bartolomeo Canossa 3.54, to Ridolfo Gonzaga 3.60, to Lodovico Dante Aligieri 4.8  
[13] *A midsummer night’s dream* 3.2  
[14] ‘e pergole et altre fantasie’, Giorgio Vasari, *Vita di Andrea del Sarto*  
[15] Romance languages derived from it vacillate, e.g. masculine in Italian (*il fiore*) though feminine in French, Spanish and Portuguese (*la fleur, la flor, a flor*). In modern Greek (το λουλούδι) it is neuter, though in German the flower is again female (*die Blume*, like flowering, *die Blüte*)



JC: So I get the sense from what you talk about there that childhood to you is a sort of lost land and this comes out in your writing.

DP: I think childhood is to everyone a lost land ...

JC: a lost land which can't be reclaimed in a sense because as you grow up ...

DP: ... as a metaphor ...

JC: ... everything gets smaller, like Alice ...

DP: There's that—but also not only does it get smaller but it's drained of some wonder. The loss of Eden is personally experienced by each and everyone of us as we leave the wonder and magic and also the pains and terrors of childhood... But the knowledge that we have about what it is to be human that we have as a child is something that we necessarily must lose but we don't have to lose it totally if we can remember. But we remember an Eden even though it wasn't perfect ... but it was an Eden in terms of its possibilities and potentialities.

John R. Cook with Dennis Potter (Interview), London, 10 May 1990  
<http://intranet.yorksj.ac.uk/potter/interview2.htm> accessed 10 July 2016

- List of works
- Amaranthbine*
  - Delphi*
  - Heart*
  - Blinded*
  - Spring*
  - Rhodora*
  - Flora*
  - Psyche*
  - Amaryllis*
  - Eden*

All works pigment ink prints  
Edition of 6+2 AP+1 unique  
image size 127.5 x 85 cm  
unique size: 150 x 100 cm

© photograph: Roy Chu



### EDEN and Beyond

The series *Eden* arose out of a project that had been commissioned by the Centre for Contemporary Photography (CCP), Melbourne in 2015. I was asked to create works in response to the Melbourne General Cemetery. I photographed flowers obtained from the cemetery against a black backdrop to invoke ideas about mourning and remembrance. In addition, I made a photograph of my daughter Olympia called *Running under Skies*. Clad in a black dress and bonnet and holding a spray of peppercorn branches, she runs over the unmarked grave section in the cemetery. It was important to me to include this work as I am to be buried in this cemetery and wanted to memorialise my daughter in the space, a site that will become important to her.

While making the work for the CCP, I began investigating the culture and language of flowers. After completing that work, I wanted to create new images that used the metaphor evoked by the flower to talk about the condition of becoming from childhood to adolescence to adulthood. Photographing my

daughter Olympia and her friends through these stages would complete a cycle for me.

The history of photography is replete with glorious images of flowers and I discovered that flowers make challenging subject matter for both technical and philosophical reasons. For this project I decided that I could not photograph the flowers alone and chose instead to create a relationship between the sitters and the flowers. I photographed girls whom I had worked with in the past and in some cases photographing their sister instead. Other sitters I have known for years, but had not had the opportunity to work with them before.

When I was conceiving how to make *Eden* an odd thought kept running through my mind: if these were to be my last photographs what would I have to say about my life and my work? As it turns out, that voice was prescient and I am glad to have followed my instinct to create work about how we are nature. By reflecting on the changing body of young people as they shed one skin for another, we are embedded in the cycles of life. The seasons of growth, blossoming, and wilting are visibly illustrated in the life cycle of the flower which also highlights our mortality.

In *Eden* I used the language of flowers to explore life itself. The girls in the photographs are adorned with floral arrangements to reflect on their metamorphosis and a oneness with the world, fertility and the cycles of life. The girls are enclosed in a floral embrace that symbolize their unity and acceptance of this miraculous thing we call life.

I become almost dizzy with the scent of flowers and this is my metaphor for all the headiness and beauty I have experienced in this lifetime.

**Polixeni Papapetrou**  
July 2016



E D E N

**Polixeni Papapetrou** is an artist who explores the relationship between history, contemporary culture, identity and being. Her work has featured in over 50 solo exhibitions and over 100 group exhibitions in Australia, USA, Asia and Europe. Survey exhibitions were held at the Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne and the Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney. She has exhibited in international photography festivals in Germany, Greece, France, Bratislava, The Netherlands, Colombia, China, Korea and Canada. Papapetrou has received numerous grants from the Australia Council, Arts Victoria and other art awards. Her work is held in Australian and international museum, corporate and private collections.

**Isobel Parker Philip** is a writer and curator based in Sydney. She is the Assistant Curator of Photographs at the Art Gallery of New South Wales and has independently curated exhibitions at UTS Gallery, Firstdraft, MOP Projects, Sydney Guild, Breezeblock and the Villa Alba Museum, Melbourne. Her written work has appeared in *un Magazine*, *Runway*, *Das Superpaper*, *Try Hard Magazine*, *RealTime* among other publications and she has written focus essays and catalogue texts for numerous artists.

**Dr Les Walkling** is an artist, educator and consultant. His works are widely exhibited and in many public collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, and The National Gallery of Victoria. Les is the former Program Director of Media Arts and Senior Research Fellow and Australian Research Council Discovery Project grant recipient at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. He also works as an imaging, printing and colour management consultant, lecturer, and mentor, regularly conducting digital photography courses and workshops, and serves on cultural advisory and management boards including Monash Gallery of Art. Les has also collaborated with Polixeni Papapetrou on ten bodies of work since 2006.

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