

Exploring the psychology of the found object



Eye-catching: Philip Ward-Dickson's banksia solandri acrylic.



Bold: Louise Paramor's Square is an interesting change of direction.

Motif and structural design also come together in Philip Ward-Dickson's Banksia on display at Turner Galleries. These articulations of banksia leaves remind me of museum displays or diagrams in a biology book.

This probably is because of their singularity and centrality in the frame which, combined with the two-colour scheme, makes them uncomplicated, but equally seductive.

Titled after their genus and the colours they are painted in, Ward-Dickson's simplified motifs catch the eye. The method of building the paint through translucent layers adds depth around the image while also alluding to the passage of time.

More than this, Banksia explores the psychology of the found object. In stopping and picking up something to study we are more often than not grasping at the need to commit a moment to memory.

This may be about loss of environment or species but in the repetition of the motif in Banksia, Ward-Dickson builds well the visualisation of memory and its surrounding emotions.

If his work seems a little different from previous efforts, then the other display at Turner Galleries shows an artist willing to take completely

different avenues. Louise Paramor is perhaps better known for her big rugs illustrating Mills and Boon book covers.

Since then she has moved on to sculptures made with everyday objects and now to Square, a series of poured paintings. Interestingly, the pop-influenced colour scheme of her works has remained consistent, but this shift into painting certainly took me by surprise.

Perhaps this is about neo-ornamentation or even a return to abstraction. Whatever the reason, the underlying emotive response to these works for me was a sense of enjoyment and that's got to be a good thing.

The pop-culture reference is still there in their nod to 1960s abstraction and in their tactility they don't seem too far from Paramor's earlier rugs or plastic sculptures.

As is the case with most pourings, the bigger works are more successful and allow a greater sense of freedom.

In the end, Square seems a conflict of restriction and new-found energy.

Philip Ward-Dickson's Banksia and Louise Paramor's Square are at Turner Galleries, Northbridge, until September 7.
