

KYM FRAME

Winner of Contemporary Art Awards 2018

The Resilience of Women

By Dr Julie Rees

Brisbane artist, Kym Frame (b.1961) creates thought-provoking sculptures and installations that centre on the shared experiences of women. Drawing from her own encounters, her latest installation, *In the Hold* (2017), explores the human experience of holding and processing pain. One hundred and fifty women participated in this project and were each asked to write a fear or burden on a hexagonal translucent paper. Interestingly, some of these fears read, 'Not being in control of my life', and 'Failure' while an emphasised burden states 'Being everything to everybody'. These notes are a central feature in the work and represent the strength, vulnerability and resilience of women. Largely, Kym's installation is a representation of her art practice and aims not only to provide a voice for women through the arts but to encourage women to release their held anguishes.

In this piece, an organic life-sized female figure sits on a white coffee table. Her eyes are closed suggesting that she is deep in thought. The figure's right hand is clutching her left shoulder while the other hand seemingly about to hold the table. A slight tear appears above the left hand where multiple notes spill out. Light radiates a soft glow from the left shoulder and feet. Hexagon shaped messages proliferate throughout the work and are carefully placed on the form and table while the remaining notes are scattered on the floor. *In the Hold* (2017) calls for a contemplative look asking the viewer to consider what pain they are holding onto that needs unshackling.

Kym uses multiple visual codes and conventions to convey her message, and her choice of materials is quite deliberate. By using a naked figure —bearing all her physical imperfections— it encourages women to make

peace with their own imperfections. Juxtaposing the figure and table is to question how much of our fears or burdens are the result of societal expectations. Contrasting these two elements is to challenge our perceptions of what we consider perfect and imperfect and aim to reconcile these two opposing forces. The light

located on the shoulder accentuates where we may hold pain while the figures glowing feet signifies the moment of releasing these afflictions. The handwritten notes are not only a visual impact, but it highlights first-hand how different fears and burdens affect women's lives. The use of the hexagon is an interesting inclusion. In nature, hexagons can be perfectly tiled creating symmetry and strength. However, since the hexagons are dispersed, it reinforces Kym's depiction of processing pain. With this installation, the artist fosters our visual curiosity by subtly encouraging us to acknowledge our own fears and burdens through words. This process can liberate us,

breathing new life into our present.

Kym Frame graduated with a Diploma of Visual Arts at the Southbank Institute of Technology, Brisbane in 2010. Kym has exhibited in both solo and group exhibitions and was a finalist in the 2016 Tom Bass Prize for Figurative Sculpture, Sydney, winning the Curators Prize and People's Choice Award.

On this page, *In the Hold* (2017), mixed media, 60 x 130 x 130cm. Image courtesy of the artist

Kym Frame's artwork can be viewed at:

<http://www.contemporaryartawards/finalist-exhibition-2018.com>

