

## Author

**PAT BRASSINGTON**

**Trust: site - specific art**

Title:

*Runnymede* in Trust

Category:

Curated Exhibition

Publication Year:

2009

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Ten Days on the Island, Tasmanian International Arts Festival, University of Tasmania

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Runnymede, New Town, Tasmania

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Australia Council for the Arts

Curator(s)/Artist(s) involved:

Curators: Noel Frankham, Paula Silva, Delia Nicholls  
Artists: Martin Walch, Lucy Bleach, Mary Scott, Ruth Frost, Pat Brassington, Julie Gough, Michael McWilliams, John Vella

Pat Brassington introduces the viewer to her Runnymede exhibition with an eclectic mix of prints, alluding to the idea this project might also be about her, not simply about the home itself.

In *Lure* and *Dear Hearts* images taken from an old family album have been beheaded, focusing us on the body. The dress appears to be the only link between these two images and there is no apparent connection with the other two, apart from the possibility some details are from a personal album as well. *Sweet Sister* and *Don't blame me* portray two young girls and Pat depicts them in black and white, whereas she maintains the colours in the background wallpapers. The girls' positions complement each other. In *Sweet sister* the girl in her makeup is staring directly at us; in *Don't blame me* the girl is facing the wall; with her back to us she observes the ripped wallpaper and what is underneath it.

Cutting off body parts, employing collage techniques and manipulating colours are just some of the means Pat utilizes to create odd scenes intended to stimulate curiosity. These works generate a feeling of uncertainty in the viewers who are left wondering whether to take the images at face value – or engage in a further analysis to discover, for example, the cause of the stern look in *'Sweet Sister'* or the possible identity of the person in *Lure*.

Pat Brassington's *'Be My Guest'* utilises the Runnymede wallpaper pattern motifs and floor board references from images in the Music Room — encouraging us to make links with the subject matter evoked by the mysterious set of four prints.

The obscure and unidentifiable form concealed beneath a cloth is intended to suggest that we all conceal thoughts and events from others, even from those we are closest to.

The work Pat has made for *Trust* reflects on the hidden, concealed and neglected – those things not profiled in the home-as-museum. In taking this approach, Pat asks visitors to reflect on the decisions made by museums and by us as individuals about what we are prepared and able to share with others.

The *Below Stairs* series comprises monochrome prints prompted by Pat Brassington's earliest memories of Runnymede. Remembering the existence of a rubbish dump nearby, Pat was interested to discover that its proximity to the house was of concern for the Bayly sisters.

Is the man pushing the wheelbarrow wearing a mask to protect himself from the potential threats of his load? Why are a child and rat emerging (escaping) from a trap door? Is it the same child as in *Space for Dreams #4* (Music Room)?

Pat has used black and white rather than colour in these images to suggest what takes place here is not directly related to the activities of the house. There is also the issue of the trap door. What can be found beneath the floor? Where does it lead to? Is it only accessible by the children? Pat's imagery suggests questions to which there are few if any obvious answers; she wants us to wonder about the

events and characters depicted — and contribute our own memories and imaginings to complete a possible story or scenario...

Pat Brassington's *Cambridge Road* series has been described as an odd combination of spirit and crime photography.

Moving from New Town to a new home in Cambridge Road during her mid-childhood, Pat maintained a connection with New Town by attending Ogilvie High School and passed Runnymede on her way to and from school. The *Cambridge Road* series was made in 2007 following the death of Pat's mother and subsequently packing up and selling the family home. Pat's daughters assisted her with this sad and memory evoking task; the images that evolved into *Cambridge Road* were photographed during the cleaning and packing process.

In one sense the references to packing up the family home — that is resolving what to do with it, provides a link between Pat and the Bayly sisters who also decided to sell their family home, Runnymede. The sense of loss and disquiet that inevitably accompanies such a process is shared by many of us, however the differences in this case are equally important — Pat's humble family home and the dark and almost menacing images with which she refers to it are a far cry from the affluence and stability of the Runnymede inhabitants, or are they?

Pat Brassington presents us with typical scenes of children's games. In these images the girls are playing dress up and dancing around the room, seemingly unconcerned by the mysterious form or the consequences of their games.

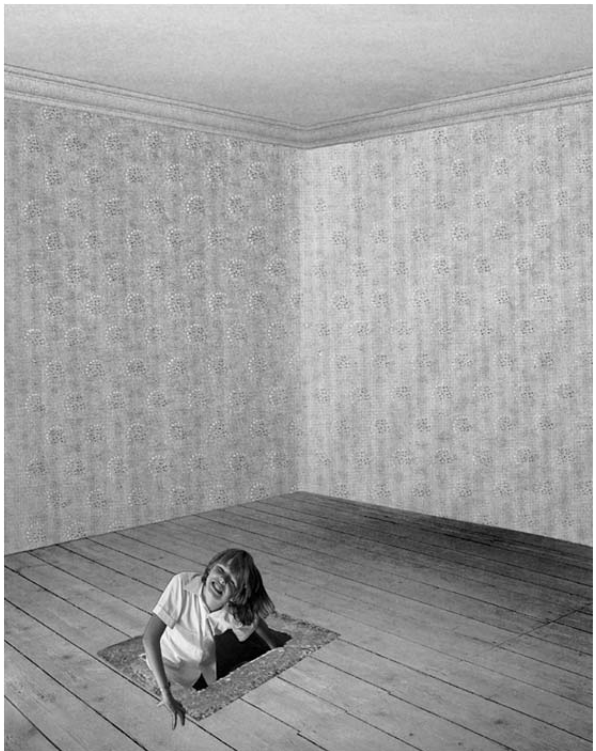
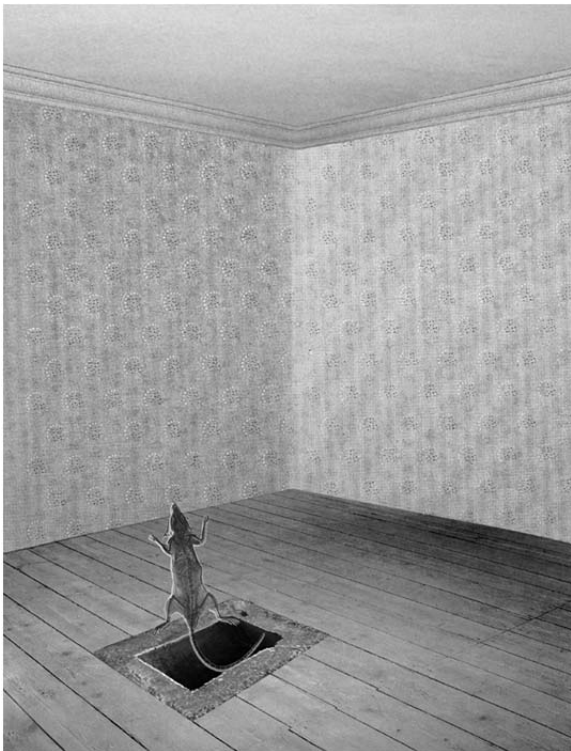
In *Space for Dreams #1* and *Space for Dreams #3* the same girl is portrayed in both images, wearing a white dress; however the girl's identity is unknown as she is headless and we are forced to observe her body. In *Space for Dreams #1* there is a tear in dress, exposing what appears to be a wound, while in the similar image that same area is covered by a strange form clinging to the girl's arms and body. In *Space for Dreams #2* and in *Space for Dreams #4* the games have stopped as one the girls, her expression enigmatic, examines the broken plate at her feet and the other girl appears to be falling, knocked over by an invisible hand.

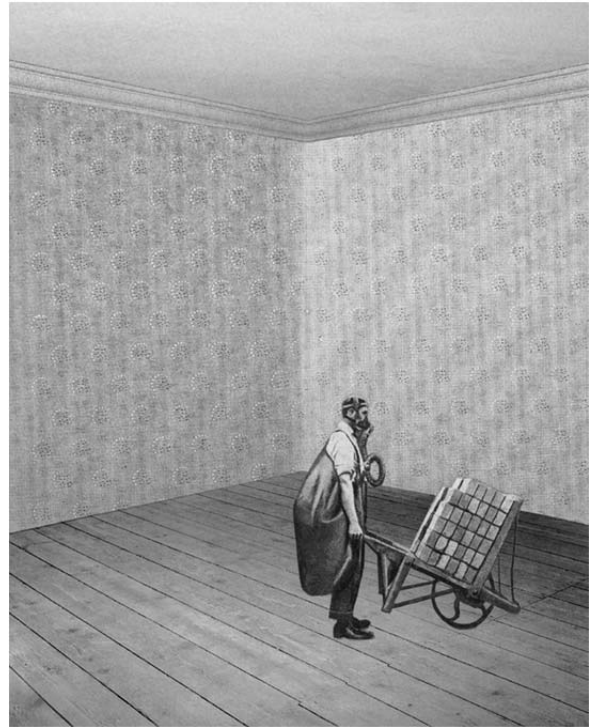
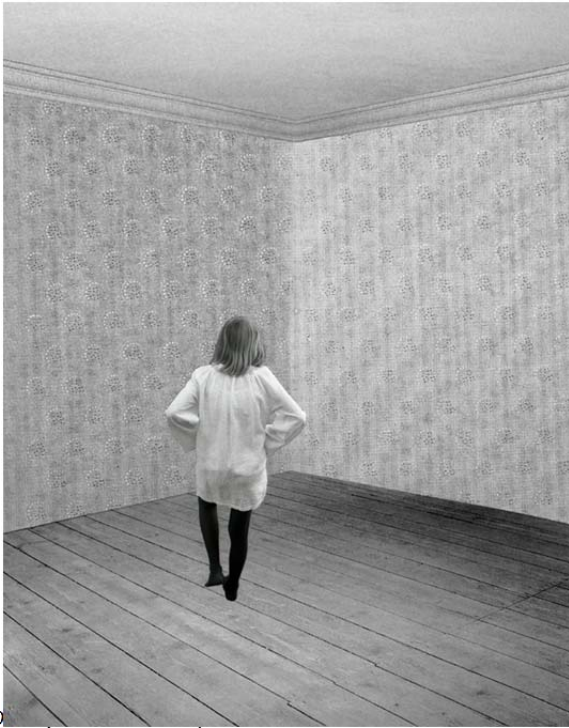
Captured and suspended in time, these four images appear confusing and echo the sense of uncertainty triggered by the images presented in the previous room. The unsettling pink of the wallpaper, a colour Pat does not associate to femininity, connects the four images together, suggesting a possible narrative. Yet the colour makes the figures stand out even more and gives the impression the children and their games are out of place, as if they do not belong there.

## Images

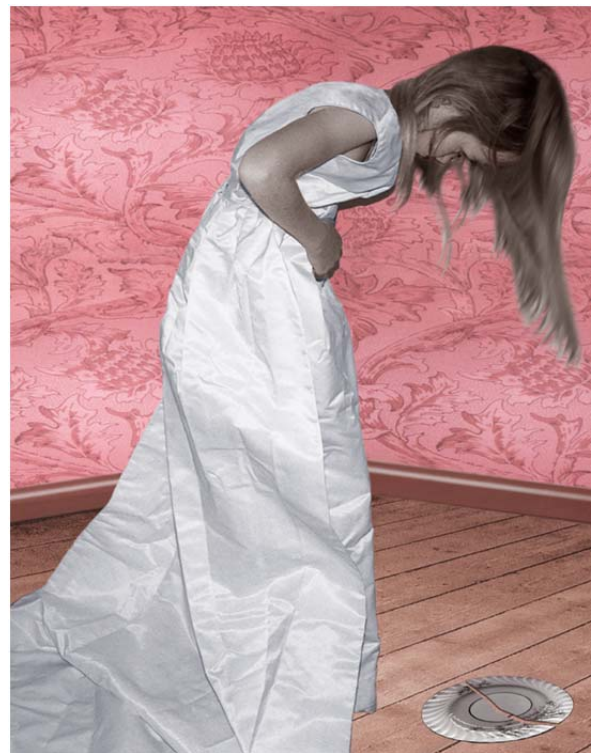


*Be My Guest*  
2009  
Pigment print  
60 x 43 cm





Sp  
2009  
Pigment prints  
74 x 58 cm





*Below Stairs 1-4*  
2009  
Pigment prints  
66 x 52 cm

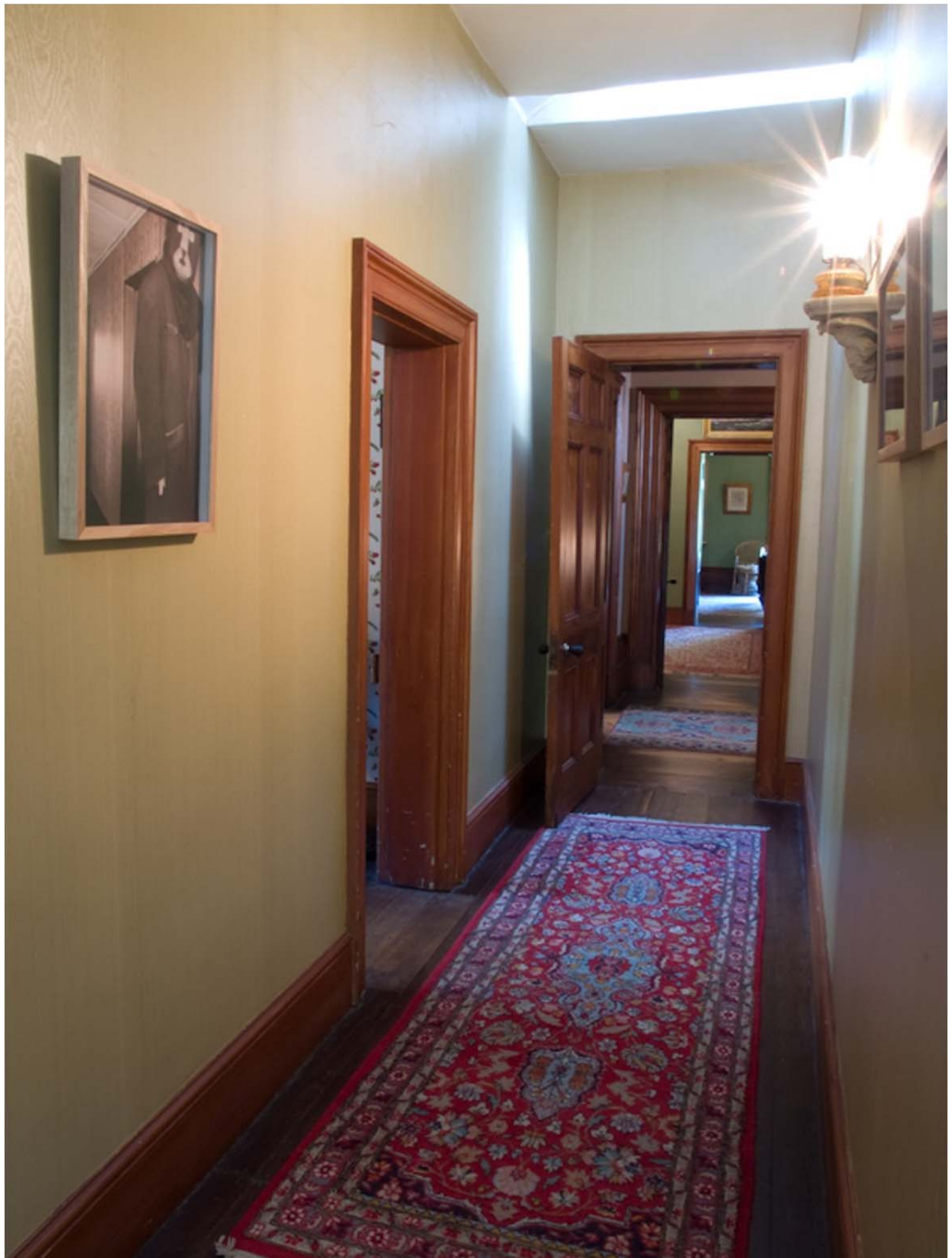
Installation views

















## List of Works

Title:	<i>Be My Guest</i>
Year:	2009
Medium:	Pigment print
Dimensions:	60 x 43 cm
Title:	<i>Space for Dreams 1-4</i>
Year:	2009
Medium:	Pigment prints
Dimensions:	74 x 58 cm
Title:	<i>Below Stairs 1-4</i>
Year:	2009
Medium:	Pigment prints
Dimensions:	66 x 52 cm
Title:	<i>Lure</i>
Year:	2005
Medium:	Pigment print
Dimensions:	62 x 46 cm
Title:	<i>Dear Hearts</i>
Year:	2001
Medium:	Pigment print

Dimensions:

65 x 39 cm

Title:

*Sweet Sister*

Year:

2009

Medium:

Pigment print

Dimensions:

60 x 43 cm

Title:

*Don't Blame Me*

Year:

2009

Medium:

Pigment print

Dimensions:

60 x 43 cm