

PATRICIA PICCININI: EYE-BLINK SMILE

Following on from her large-scale installation, *A Miracle Constantly Repeated*, staged at Flinders Street Station for Melbourne's 2022 *Rising Festival*, this intriguing exhibition explores the concept of communication between different species.

When Piccinini and her family took in a rescue cat during COVID, she learnt that the cat's slow blink was his way of smiling and signalling trust.

Known for her daring and inventive use of different media – from the hot air balloons of her two *Skywhales* to the high heat of glassblowing – Patricia Piccinini attempts to capture 'the intrinsic optimism' of the idea 'that we don't need to be the same in order to share the world together, we just need a small moment of shared understanding: an eye-blink smile.'

At the heart of *Eye-blink Smile* is a new collection of glass sculptures.

"Hand-blown glass is almost a perfect metaphor for my conceptual interests", says Piccinini.

"These are luminously colourful objects produced by the interplay of terrific heat and human breath, constrained in this case by a constantly changing steel mould. The works capture a moment when these elemental forces are guided by human actions in a way that is more about cooperation than control.

Like most of my work, they try to reconcile and blend oppositions; their visual lightness contrasting with their physical weight, their simple abstract colourfulness contrasting with the extraordinary skill of their creation. They are bubbles made of molten sand."

Having worked with Patricia on the glass sculptures, Aimee Frodsham, Artistic Director of Canberra Glassworks says:

"Patricia brings a new and exciting energy to our studio. She approaches glass making in a way that celebrates traditional techniques with forms and ideas that are truly hers. Over the last few years I have loved the way she has built a collaborative relationship with artist and glass blower Annette Blair. Patricia and Annette have nurtured this creative partnership, resulting in works that reflect their shared care, skill, and passion."

Everything connects in *Eye-blink Smile* — a dazzling exhibition composed of iridescent shapes and colours, reminding us to consider our connection to materials and to remain curious in our experience of the world.