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## Indepth Arts News:

### "Elisabeth Weissensteiner: Intro-Spectatio"

2006-10-25 until 2006-11-22

#### [Uber Gallery](#)

St Kilda, VC, AU Australia

Melbourne-based artist Elisabeth Weissensteiner presents her first solo exhibition at Uber Gallery. INTRO SPECTATIO – a mock Latin title that refers to introspection and the act of looking itself – is an artistic exercise in attempting to understand oneself with an awareness of the impossibility of realising a strictly objective view. It "brings together the detached, outside position of a perceiving investigator with the self awareness of an understanding mind. It therefore describes an investigation performed by the self, of multiple perspectives on the self."



Using symbols from nature such as animals, insects and surreal combinations of both together with figures and photographs works, Weissensteiner creates a unique world that explores the spaces in between interior and exterior, pleasure and pain and comfort and distress. 'Inside' and 'outside' are not the simple concepts we may initially conceive them to be. For Weissensteiner, there is often a "tension between the two... Not always will the outside protect, not always will the inside be vulnerable."

With this in mind, she concentrates her finely detailed crafting technique on bringing out the 'skin' of her objects, using this metaphor to explore the ambiguities between borders and boundaries. Her sculptural and photographic works create a world of feeling that seem to emerge from within objects themselves, exploring eroticism, anguish and tenderness. It is a blend of moods and subtleties that reverberates throughout her intense, complex artwork.

Her practice continues a rich tradition of women artists whose work often explores the complicated middle-ground between emotional pain and sensuality. It is an area of work major artists such as Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse and Rosemarie Trockel have explored with great success; their emotionally-charged work becoming enormously influential on several generations of artists. Weissensteiner's connection to this history is one of a common artistic heritage. She says "I don't see these women as my teachers but rather as confirmation that I am not alone in my endeavours and that there is a tradition of female independent artists."



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Her connection to this tradition also touches on the pragmatic use of various materials and their connection with the textile culture. Weissensteiner's own knowledge of the craft tradition she has gained from her professional life as graphic designer and as a felt-maker adds another level of detail to this highly engaging work.

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