

/ ARTIST PROFILE /

A PHYSICAL AFFAIR

Jane Giblin's practice is grounded firmly in the physical. From her experiences on the land in Tasmania, to the heavily worked materials she employs, this artist is not afraid to get her hands dirty.

Charlotte Middleton writes.

YOU WOULD BE at pains to find a more highly qualified artist than **Jane Giblin**. At the University of Tasmania in Hobart, she first completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts, followed by a one-year printmaking course, then two separate masters degrees – in painting and lithography. Her training serves her well in a drawing and painting practice that foregrounds the damage that humans inflict on other animals; her work is held in various regional galleries, public and private collections. In her near-sixty years, Jane has observed, and seeks to portray, “the peculiar way we are driven to enlist this world for our purposes... to our demise.”

With a family history of living off the land as muttonbirders stretching back 200 years, the artist feels a special connection to Tasmania and keeps homes in Hobart and Flinders Island. “In five minutes, I can be in the bush, in the rainforest, in the drought-ridden farms, by the sea or in a swamp,” she says. These varied surrounds provide opportunities for field research, translated into medium-to-large works on paper.

At home, the various stages and labour-intensive methods of her artmaking unfold across several rooms. “I have always worked in my home due to raising my kids as a single parent.” Drawing and painting is completed in the would-be living room, where British or Nordic TV crime shows play in the background. The spare room serves as lithography studio, where total focus is required, and music is preferred. Films are processed in the kitchen.

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Jane is represented by Penny Contemporary, Hobart.

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Her multi-step painting process involves studio drawings, worked with thick, natural inks and layers of pigment, which are then washed and scratched with home-grown sharpened bamboo sticks, large ink brushes, and swathes of washed flannelette cotton. Taking anywhere between one day and several months to complete, her complex works depict the land and "all of the human and domestic, feral and native creatures who dwell, work, die and survive in it."

Since retiring a couple of years ago after a teaching career spanning more than 35 years, Jane has been enjoying greater freedom. Her day may start before or after breakfast, and continue until her husband, a studio jeweller, returns in the evening. Other days, she'll work into the night, comfortable in its darkness.

To some, this merging of home and workplace would be taxing. For Jane, it is her work that gives her lifeforce. "I make, therefore I live," she says.



1 / Jane Giblin, *My Mother Judi, by My Self, 3*. Ink, watercolour and pigment on paper, 114 x 114cm.

2 / Jane Giblin, *The Silly Horse*. Ink, pigment and pencil on paper, 86 x 61.5cm.

3 / Jane Giblin, *In Sight, the three foot hang*. Graphite, ink and pigment on paper, 85 x 76.5cm.

4 / Artist Jane Giblin.

5 / Jane Giblin, *One Emita Sports Day Boy*. Graphite, ink and pigment on paper, 85 x 45cm.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST. PHOTOS: OSBORNE IMAGES