

ABOUT IMAGERY GALLERY: A SNAPSHOT

Imagery Gallery was founded in 1980 by Ruby Spowart and son Doug Spowart.



The gallery operated out of three addresses in South Brisbane:

1980-1983 1st Floor, Cnr of Grey and Melbourne Streets

1984-1985 Knowles Bristow Building Melbourne Street

1985-1995 1st Floor, 89 Grey Street.

The Imagery Gallery Concept and Objectives:

- To provide an exhibition venue for photographers
- To assist those wishing to share their imagery with others
- To provide a meeting place for those interested in photography
- To provide a centre of photographic learning
- To provide a resource centre on photography and photographers.

IMAGERY GALLERY GREW INTO A MULTI-FACETED ORGANISATION WITH FOUR MAIN ACTIVITY AREAS

(1) Exhibition Gallery for photography.

The first exhibition being opened on March 28th, 1980 and closed in June 1995. During that time 205 exhibitions were shown featuring images made by international, Australian and Queensland photographers.

The Content of Exhibitions

Social documentary, pictorial, photo essay, personal imagery, promotional exhibitions, competitions and awards.

Funding

From 1980 to 1984 exhibitors were charged commission on sales, however, as many exhibitions have been of a non-commercial or personal content. From 1985-1995 the gallery functioned on a hire of facility basis. This enabled works which would not be considered viable by commercial galleries to be shown.

The Gallery Exhibition Record

205 Exhibitions from 1135 Exhibitors. Approximately 75,500 people visited Imagery Gallery in the fifteen years of operation.

(2) Workshops and Seminars in photography

Imagery Gallery has operated photographic workshops since 1980 which were attended by approximately 4,950 students. Nearly all of the classes were conducted by Doug Spowart using curriculum developed by him.

Specific workshop packages have been designed around specialist client needs. Clients have included; the Queensland Art Gallery, Tarong Coal, the Department of Primary Industries, Sommerville House Girls School, Brisbane Grammar School, the Queensland Potters Association, the Queensland Arts Council and the University of Southern Queensland.



(3) Agents for specialised photographic products and services.

Imagery Gallery was an agent and second-hand dealer in LEICA cameras from 1982 til the gallery's closure. Other agencies included; Kodak products, Sinar cameras, Balcar flash, Contax cameras and many photographic books and journals.

From 1980-1995 Imagery Gallery was an agent for NECO Superscan murals. This process enabled large scale murals to be produced from laser scanned artwork or photographs and 'printed' using micro-air brush pigment application systems. The method by which this technology opeated is similar to the wide-format inkjet printers of today. This mural work was usually completed under the business name PHOTO-DECOR (a partnership with Don Kahl).

Major projects undertaken using NECO Superscan murals and other photo based technologies include the fitting out of the National Parliament Building in New Guinea requiring some 200 square metres of murals. World EXPO 88 saw involvement in the visual fit-out of 14 different pavilions. Major clients included the United Kingdom, Queensland Pavilion, Queensland Newspapers, The Australian Capital Territory, Germany, the European Community.



(4) Organisation of tours for photographers.

From 1982~1998 Imagery Gallery was involved in the planning, co-ordination and the leading of tours for photographers to locations Australia-wide and overseas. In seventeen years there have been 34 tours; 12 to the Northern Territory, 8 to North West Australia, 1 to the South West of Australia, 2 to North Queensland, 6 to New Zealand, 1 to Africa and 2 each to China and the South-West of the USA.

Usually these tours had 25 participants and were usually safari style, camping out in the bush, close to the areas of photographic interest. En-route lectures, discussions and advice were given to participants to enable them to make the most of their photo opportunities.

On Imagery Gallery's closure its archive, around 2 cubic metres in volume, was donated to the State Library of Queensland to contribute to a permanent record of the history of photographic practice undertaken in Queensland during this period.