

# THIS IS CASSOWARY COUNTRY

Margaret Genever, Barbara Dover, Arone Meeks,  
Mollie Bosworth, Terri Eager, Gerhard Hillmann  
& Susan Doherty.

11 April - 24 May 2009



*Casuarius casuarius johnsonii* or Southern Cassowary, is a tall, flightless bird measuring up to the height of a grown human male, with a high helmet on its head, a vivid blue neck and long drooping red wattles. This unique animal, found only in the tropical rainforests of north-east Queensland, Papua New Guinea and some surrounding islands, is the focus of the exhibition ... *This is Cassowary Country*.

At the time of European settlement, the cassowary lived in tropical rainforests of northeast Queensland, from the Paluma Range [north of Townsville] to the tip of Cape York Peninsula. Surviving on a diet of fleshy fruits obtained from a diversity of fruiting trees, these birds are primarily found in rainforest areas, but often frequent woodlands, melaleuca swamps, mangroves and even beaches.

Recently their habitat has been greatly reduced through land clearing, so numbers have decreased quite dramatically. Cassowaries are now found in three broad populations. In the Wet Tropics cassowaries are found from Cooktown to the Paluma Range and on Cape York, they occur in two separate populations: one in the McIlwraith and Iron ranges, the other around Shelburne Bay.

*This is Cassowary Country* has been developed also to compliment the Kuranda Conservation study, which aims to identify [through DNA profiles] and document the remaining cassowaries, their habitat and its condition in the local region. This research makes a significant contribution to CSIRO's Cassowary Recovery Plan for the Wet Tropics as well as highlighting the Kuranda Conservation Volunteer Program [now in it's twelfth year] of growing local native flora for public and private plantings in the lowland rainforests of Cairns and Kuranda.

Through individual perspectives and the employment of personal motifs and other visual language, the combined works of local artists Margaret Genever, Arone Meeks, Barbara Dover, Gerhard Hillmann, Mollie Bosworth, Susan Doherty and Terry Eager will highlight to audiences the plight of the endangered cassowary - nature's own rainforest horticulturalist.

*This is Cassowary Country* is curated by Laurel McKenzie.

Brian Robinson - Exhibitions Manager

## EXHIBITION LAUNCH Friday 17 April - 6.30pm

This is Cassowary Country will be officially launched by Senator Jan McLucas, Labor Senator for Queensland

This is a joint exhibition launch with *Peripheral*: Beth Shorter

## CURATORS TALK Friday 17 April - 6pm

Curator Laurel McKenzie will deliver a short talk explaining the premise of this exhibition and discussing the individual artists and artworks included in

*This is Cassowary Country*.

## CAIRNS REGIONAL GALLERY COMMUNITY EXHIBITIONS PROGRAM

Through the Community Exhibitions Program, Cairns Regional Gallery profiles the work of artists and organisations throughout Tropical North Queensland.

SUPPORTING ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE IN THE HEART OF CAIRNS



Margaret Genever, *The Cap Fits 2008*



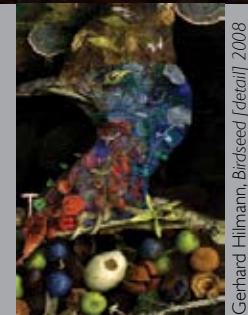
Arone Meeks, *Cassowary Dream 2008* [detail] 2008



Mollie Bosworth, *Untitled 2008*



Susan Doherty, *This was Cassowary Country*  
Barbara Dover, *Looking for Blue Arrow*



Gerhard Hillmann, *Birdseed* [detail] 2008



Terry Eager, *Family*

CONTACT

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