

Jessica B Watson



Education

2000 Master of Fine Arts and Applied Crafts, Högskolan för Design och Konsthantverk (HDK), Gothenburg University, Sweden

Exhibitions – Solo

2009 *Sketches from Rio*, Art in Motion, Preera, Frank and Ernest, Gothenburg, Sweden
 2008 *Sketches from Rio*, Galleri mitt i centrum, Gothenburg
 2008 *Sketches from Rio*, Galleri Mosebacke, Stockholm, Sweden

Exhibitions – Group

2011 *Gecko on my shoulder*, Rimbun Dahan, Malaysia
 2010 *2010 Miniartextil Como*, Como, Italy
 2010 *Art for Nature*, WWF Malaysia, Rimbun Dahan, Malaysia
 2006 *Broderia Fantasia*, Floras Rike Gallery, Botanical Gardens, Gothenburg
 2004 *Butterfly Stomach & Hunter*, Gothenburg City Library
 2004 *Hunter*, Galleri D Lyx, Malmö, Sweden
 2003 *wouldwork*, Knot Gallery, Sydney, Australia
 2001 *Watt Space*, Newcastle, Australia
 2001 *Omång*, 25m2 Stockholm, Formargruppen Malmö, Galleri 5 Visby
 2000 *flickers*, Gothenburg, Sweden
 2000 *Talente*, Munich, Germany
 2000 *Omång*, Galleri Koch, Stenungsund, Sweden
 2000 *Masters Exhibition*, Rohsska Museét, Gothenburg, Sweden

Employment/ Productions

2006-10 Teaching, Fashion drawing, Art & Design, Tillskärarakademin i Göteborg, School of Tailoring in Gothenburg
 2004-10 Teaching, Fashion drawing, screenprinting, Folkuniversitetet, Art Collage, Gothenburg
 2009 Majornas Playgrounds, Screenprinted illustrations
 2009 Downup & updownN, Costume Design
 2005 'Objector', Bachelor Examination, Borås school of Textiles, Sweden
 2004 Screenprinting workshop, Stenebyskolan, Sweden
 2004 Costume for the stage, Assistent, Linköpings University & Vadstena Akademin
 2003 Drömmar (Dreams), GöteborgsOperan, Costume Design, Costumer & Makeup
 2003 The Lion King, Beading, Anthony Philips Costumes, Sydney, Australia

2002 Howard Katz & Holy Day, Breaking Down, Sydney Theatre Company
 2002 Downup & updownN, Dance production, Costume Design
 2001 Infra Exhibition, Installation, The Gothenburg Museum, Sweden
 2001 pillow room, 'Noll Vision', Trollhättan, Roads and Traffic Authority, Sweden
 2000 The Merry Widow, Costume Design & Millinery, Arbisteatern, Norrköping
 2000 Gående bord (Walking Table), Dance production, Costume Design, Gothenburg
 2000 Lethe-The Urban Mytoplay, Costume Design, Gothenburg Culture night
 2000 flickers, Costume Design & Production Management
 2000 Gothenburg Dance and Theatre Festival & Hedens Lustgård Opening Ceremony

Grants

2010-11 Rimbun Dahan, One year Artists Residency
 2010 Konstnärnsämnden (Swedish Arts Committee)
 2009 Konstnärnsämnden (Swedish Arts Committee)
 2008 Företagarna (Association for small businesses in Sweden)
 2005 Konstnärnsämnden (Swedish Arts Committee)
 2002 Gothenburg City Culture Grant
 2000 Markarna Lindeqvists Scholarship
 2000 Estrid Ericsons Scholarship – group
 2000 Slöjdskolans Scholarship
 2000 Anna Ahrenbergs Scholarship
 2000 Goteborg&Co sponsorship
 1999 Stiftelsen Erik och Lily Philipsons Minnesfonds' Scholarship
 1999 Theodor och Hanne Mannheimers fund
 1999 Slöjdskolans Scholarship
 1996 University of Newcastle Student Exchange Scholarship

Collections

Gothenburg City Arts Council
 Private collections, Australia, Sweden and Malaysia

Prizes

Golden needle, Täcklebo Embroidery Academy, Sweden, silver needle prize
World Wide Wool, Australia
Near Distance, Lochem, The Netherlands, 2nd prize
Fashion Design Competition, Barcelona, Spain, 1st prize
Hunter Institute of Technology, Mardi Gras Costume Design, 3rd prize

The Rimbun Dahan Malaysia-Australia Visual Arts Residency programme is funded by the architectural firm Hijjas Kasturi Associates in appreciation for the opportunities that the Hijjas family has enjoyed in Malaysia and Australia.

Rimbun Dahan

www.rimbundahan.org

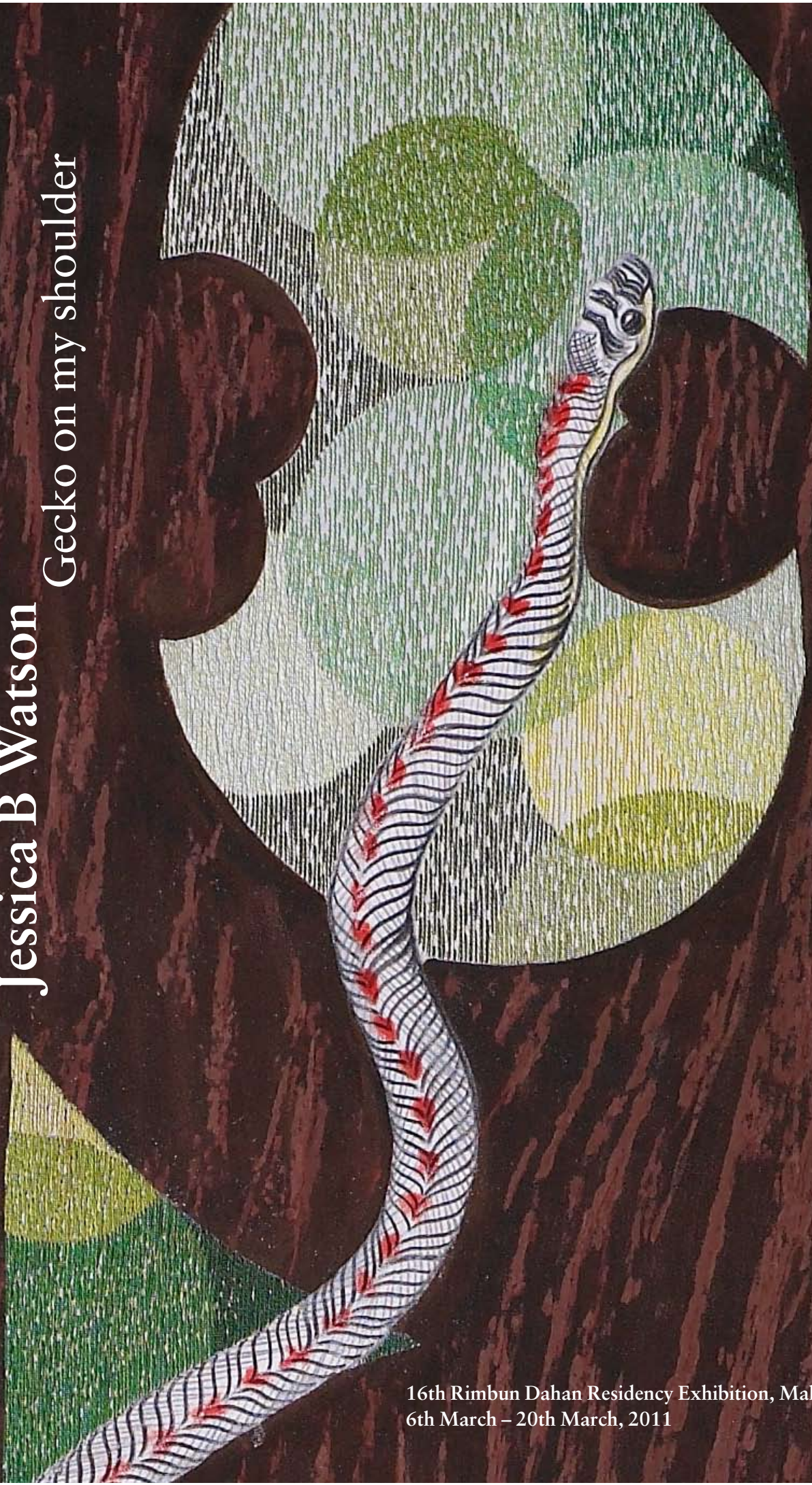
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Gecko on my shoulder



16th Rimbum Dahan Residency Exhibition, Malaysia
6th March – 20th March, 2011



*Textile Art with glowing colours,
growing in Jessica B Watson's concepts*



“...Into the future I like to continue working with costume, sculptural textiles and art as a profession. I'd like to continue developing and exploring – methods and paths may change along the way but I'm sure that something shall glow and grow...”

These were the words Jessica wrote ten years ago, concluding the report of her Masters' Degree in 2000. Her project then was called “*Flickers*” — a colourful swarm of mushroom-like figures, entering trams and spreading out in Gothenburg City, Sweden, as homage to spring, blowing into the gloomy infrastructure after a long winter. — What is this? Confused people asked. This playful group in Jessica's designed outfits also took part in the Gothenburg Dance and Theatre Festival, which led to further engagements in the international field.

Nature seems to influence Jessica, wherever she goes in this world: The structure of the squiggly bark of the eucalyptus trees in her native Australia, the bright red mushrooms with white dots in Swedish forests, the vivid yellow lichens of the grey rocks at the Scandinavian coast and here the tropic vegetation of Malaysia. What inspiration do they bring out in an artists' mind?

Her motifs are, however, not only aesthetic or decorative, they also reveal a concept. That is what makes them so



Cover:
Surviving Paradise (detail), 2010, fabric ink, oil pastel, pencil & cotton embroidery thread on cotton, 60 x 140 cm

Inside: (clockwise from top left)
Penang Cloud, 2010, fabric ink & silk embroidery thread on cotton, 56 x 142 cm

Listen, 2010, fabric ink, water soluble pastel & cotton embroidery thread on cotton, 70 x 100 cm

Good things happen in threes, 2010, watercolour & gouache on paper, 21 x 15 cm



imaginative. They deal with different phases of human relationships. Some phenomena in nature take a long time to grow; sensitive textile art is indeed time-consuming and sincere relationships between people need time to build up. All to be handled with care!

Characteristic for Jessica are bright colours which vibrate through layers of different materials and are accentuated through light and a number of techniques. Embroidered simple lines or sketchy, but dramatic stitches show an expressive movement in her pictures such as the ambulating salesmen with their dangling goods on the beaches of Rio or heavily falling rain where she is now. Motifs are emphasized, being worked in series and different scales. Her three-dimensional forms show connection to wearable art and costume design.

For an observant and aware artist like Jessica the environment of Rimbun Dahan ought to be stimulating. Her residence is in an old traditional Malay house, surrounded by a large garden. The multicultural society, where Muslim arabesques and lattice screens meet ancient Chinese symbols and Indian *kolam* applications are incorporated in Malaysian daily life. Here the skilled handicraft is the base of a fascinating blend. The blue sky holds changing dragon-clouds, bringing cosmic energy to people on the earth. Look up and you will see!

Jessica's titles are often subtexts. "*Good things happen in threes*" is among her recent works. The three fertile

fig trees, supported by the screen, are individuals, each carrying an ethnic issue. Delicate embroidered lines, like nerves in a leaf, shape *shou* — the sign of long life, still beloved by the Chinese. The polychrome segmented leaves are influenced by the colourful Indian *kolam* floor decorations. The third plant with translucent, fluorescent flowers is like an attractive part of Malaysian *songket* (weaving with gold or silver thread). It is a piece of beauty, but it also points at some global complications. People from different regions and religions live together and have to face the problems of coping with each other. Hopefully they will grow together, glow side by side, like the art of Jessica. Intentionally she uses a combination of frottage, *songket*, screen-printing, hand painting and embroidery to achieve a richness more expressive than in a painting. Being open-minded the spiritual fire will be maintained, developed by concentrated work to multifarious flowering.

Marianne Erikson

Textile historian, Head of the Textile collections at the Röhsska Museum of Arts & Crafts and Design, Gothenburg Sweden between 1974-1999.

Acknowledgements

Hijjas Kasturi and Angela Hijjas, my partner Alex, my daughter Jacqui, my parents Sue and Geoff, Marianne Erikson.