

# RAINBOWS ON TOAST WITH JAM

11 - 27 MAY 2023

*Bonnie Hislop*



Side Gallery





SPITTING SMOKING STRICTLY PROHIBITED SHALLOW END

NO DIVING  
NO RUNNING

25

26

27

28

29

DANGER  
KEEP OUT

30

31

KEEP WATCH ATTENTION!  
CHILDREN & COACHES  
THE BEST SUPERVISION IS YOUR SUPERVISION



Words by Jess McNicol

## Rainbows on Toast with Jam was almost a very different collection

Artist Bonnie Hislop explains her concept evolution for this collection — which will be part of the Brisbane Art and Design Festival — from her workspace, which is a wonderland full of ceramics in varying states of the drying and firing process. *Rainbows* was nearly a vibrant manifesto of feminist vinegar in the form of polished quips and saccharine imagery.

Hislop's practice is rich in recurring motifs and accentuated in gold lustre, and there is no escaping the sugary visuals. There is a universal collective recognition of this kind of imagery which we, viewers, have been conditioned to dismiss as cheap naivety. This presents an interesting mediation on the culture of aesthetics and media that should not be separated from the consideration of this work. The natural and honest value here is evident in her celebration of the girlish

hyper-feminine. There are not the same hierarchical assumptions when we consider the often violent and boyish aesthetic of the many men held in high esteem for championing their media in similar ways. Bonnie's original concept started as a method of exploring this anger at the marginalisation of female representation in serious ceramic practice, especially given the sometimes dismissive classification of the media as craft or women's work. The show that *Rainbows* almost became, Hislop describes as spicy, a middle finger to the double standards of her field (and many others) — fired, glazed, and gilded. However, it wasn't. She recounts a moment that made her pause — in the art world, hidden behind every man, there is an angry woman, a sassy woman, an anarchistic woman, but what about a woman who creates idols of our fragility, joy, or the beauty of the frivolous instead?

Side Gallery





This idea instead sits at the heart of *Rainbows on Toast with Jam*, which became a love letter to anyone, right now, as unapologetically sincere as it is sweet. In this version, the exploration of femininity aims to reclaim the innocent nostalgia of doodles in notebook margins, stickers on your diary, and handmade beaded bracelets — here Hislop earnestly reclaims this aesthetic — “It’s ok,” she says, “Lean into it”. This approach is intentionally a direct contrast to previous work where pickup lines, forced small talk, and escapist yearning inspired a more cynical approach to her trademark use of text. This text, an instantly recognisable element of her practice, has been refined and redirected for *Rainbows*, and each passage reads as a mantra for empowerment from your innermost hype girl.

Another interesting dimension of this collection that represents a step away from Hislop’s usual approach to wielding cake and polka dots as modes of weaponised sarcasm is the accompanying photographic works. For the artist, there has always been an element of performance in the documentation of her work, using her own image to reinforce the message by posing alongside her ceramic

confections, looking fiercely down the lens in a fantastic array of unapologetically feminine costumes. For *Rainbows*, work from photographer and collaborator Melanie Hinds hangs alongside Hislop’s ceramics in the sunlit space at Side Gallery. These images instead invite a dreamy anonymity that allows the viewer to fantasise or reminisce about their own lived experience. These sugary, suburban vignettes weave aspects of a vague and stylised visual narrative around the central pieces in the collection, deepening the pastel projection of a feminine utopia. *Rainbows on Toast with Jam*, in its depictions of fairy bread, love hearts, dolphins and cupids, connect intimately with our desire to enjoy indulgence openly. Hislop’s “cute, fun feminism” beams out from elaborately glazed surfaces, inscribed on a trophy, a monumental ice-cream cake, or a vase telling you, poetically, to “never let poets lie to you” — Björk. This collection ultimately represents a little slice of joy, to be enjoyed for joy’s sake.

JESS MCNICOL







"For *Rainbows*, work from photographer and collaborator Melanie Hinds hangs alongside Hislop's ceramics in the sunlit space at Side Gallery. These images instead invite a dreamy anonymity that allows the viewer to fantasise or reminisce about their own lived experience."



## Bonnie Hislop

Bonnie Hislop is a ceramicist specialising in hand building and ceramic illustration. Grounded in technical skill, her practice has evolved from creating illustrative ceramic cats to large-scale sculptural work. Bonnie uses her forms to critically engage with the world around her and document the human experience. Working from her Meanjin home studio, Bonnie meticulously handcrafts her forms through an involved and often uncertain process inherent in working with clay. She unites bright colours and satirical shapes to engage her audience in a dialogue with the physical world around them. Her work intersects traditional representations of ceramics with a craft aesthetic to create a contemporary interpretation of the ceramic medium. The artwork doesn't take itself too seriously yet can capture personal experiences universal to the human condition. Her practice aims to encapsulate universal experiences of frustration, angst, grief, and emotional fatigue, as well as tenderness, intimacy and desire. The performative, brightly coloured ceramics forge an existence through joy and curiosity.







TODAY  
IS  
THE  
DAY

DOUBLE  
10 kg 2 baskets  
Double & Single Drums, General Use





Today is the Day

2023

Fired & glazed ceramic

32 x 30 cm

**\$2800**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$280 with Art Money)







**Fun and Games 2020**

Fired & glazed ceramic

39.5 x 42 cm

**\$1750**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$175 with Art Money)











**Simply the Best 2023**

Fired & glazed ceramic

30 x 20 cm

**\$1750**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$175 with Art Money)







“Bonnie’s signature text, an instantly recognisable element of her practice, has been refined and redirected for Rainbows, and each passage reads as a mantra for empowerment from your innermost hype girl.”



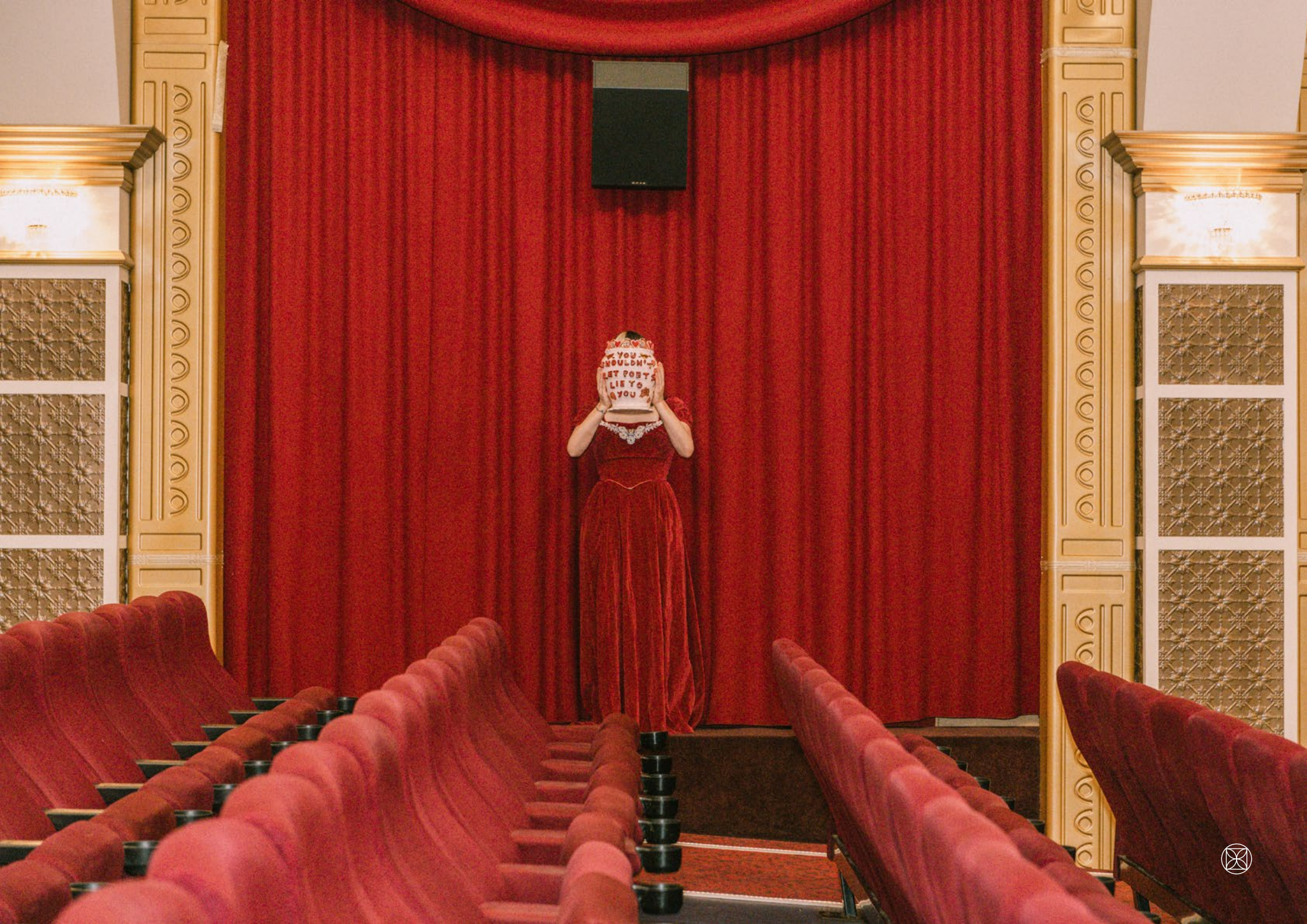




Someone Somewhere may be having Fun  
2023  
Fired & glazed ceramic  
39 x 37 cm  
**\$3000**  
(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$300 with Art Money)







YOU SHOULDN'T  
LET POST  
LIE TO  
YOU







You Shouldn't let Poets Lie to You

2023

Fired & glazed ceramic

30 x 25 cm

**\$2300**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$230 with Art Money)







**Intrepid Traveller 2023**

Fired & glazed ceramic

30 x 20 cm

**\$2000**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$200 with Art Money)







**Making a Splash 2023**

Fired & glazed ceramic

30 x 20 cm

**\$2000**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$200 with Art Money)







**Polka Dot Enthusiast 2023**

Fired & glazed ceramic

20 x 15 cm

**\$550**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$55 with Art Money)







**Rainbow Chaser 2023**

Fired & glazed ceramic

20 x 20 cm

**\$550**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$55 with Art Money)







Sundae Best

2023

Fired & glazed ceramic

20 x 15 cm

\$550

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$55 with Art Money)







Toast  
2023  
Edition of 5  
Fired & glazed ceramic  
11 x 11 cm  
\$130 patterned  
\$110 plain





Rainbow 2023  
Fired & glazed ceramic  
14 x 15 cm  
\$140



Cloud 2023  
Fired & glazed ceramic  
3 x 10 cm  
\$50



Rainbow Clouds 2023  
Fired & glazed ceramic  
19.5 x 21 cm  
\$220



Rainbow Cloud 2023  
Fired & glazed ceramic  
19.5 x 21 cm  
\$190







Feelings Crush Hope 2022

Fired & glazed ceramic

Feelings: 30 x 20 cm, Crush: 35 x 18 cm, Hopes: 33 x 17 cm

**\$4000**

(or 10 interest free monthly payments  
of \$400 with Art Money)





Melanie Hinds





## Melanie Hinds

Melanie Hinds is a Meanjin-based photographer whose work investigates and highlights the aspects that make an individual unique.

Her main focus is exploring humans in society as she uses her photography to seek out creative, standout characters within the community.

She utilises an editorial aesthetic in delivering a documentary style to create a unique interpretation. The resulting imagery is bold curated images that act to deliver a deeper message.

Melanie has work published in the Guardian, Local Wolves and is currently a finalist in the Frankie 'Good Stuff' awards. Melanie applies her stylistic and documentary photography on photoshoots for artists and creatives as well as wedding couples who seek her out for her "dirtbag chic" wedding photography.

Melanie was Born in Mt Isa, Queensland and spent many of her childhood and teen years travelling Australia with her mother. Living in the country, city and beach led to a varied lifestyle and allowed her to develop exceptional people skills. In her adult life she joined the Air Force and served as a military working dog handler. Life however led her to a camera and she has been exploring her own challenges and the human experience through her lens. She believes her lack of formal training has allowed her a dynamic ability to develop and be truly present in her photoshoots.





You Shouldn't Let Poets Lie To You

2023

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper

Hahnemule natural agave paper. Repurposed frame

21 x 29.7 cm

\$110 Framed

Side Gallery



You Shouldn't Let Poets Lie to You (Center Stage) 2023

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper

Hahnemule natural agave paper. Repurposed frame

21 x 29.7 cm

\$120 Framed







**Intrepid Traveller (Blue) 2023**

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper  
Hahnemule natural agave paper. Repurposed frame  
15 x 20 cm  
**\$55 Framed**

Side Gallery



**Someone Somewhere May Be Having Fun (Diner) 2023**

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper  
Hahnemule natural agave paper. Repurposed frame  
21 x 29.7 cm  
**\$110 Framed**





Someone Somewhere May Be Having Fun (Door Frames) 2023  
120 mm film Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.  
Repurposed frame  
21 x 29.7 cm  
\$110 Framed



Simply The Best (Diner) 2023  
Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper  
Hahnemule natural agave paper. Repurposed frame  
28 x 35 cm  
\$110 Framed





"For *Rainbows*, work from photographer and collaborator Melanie Hinds hangs alongside Hislop's ceramics in the sunlit space at Side Gallery. These images instead invite a dreamy anonymity that allows the viewer to fantasise or reminisce about their own lived experience."







**Lifeguard 2023**

120 mm film Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.

Repurposed frame

21 x 29.7 cm

**\$110 Framed**







**Making a splash (pool) 2023**

120 mm film Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.

Repurposed frame

29.7 x 42 cm

\$150 Framed





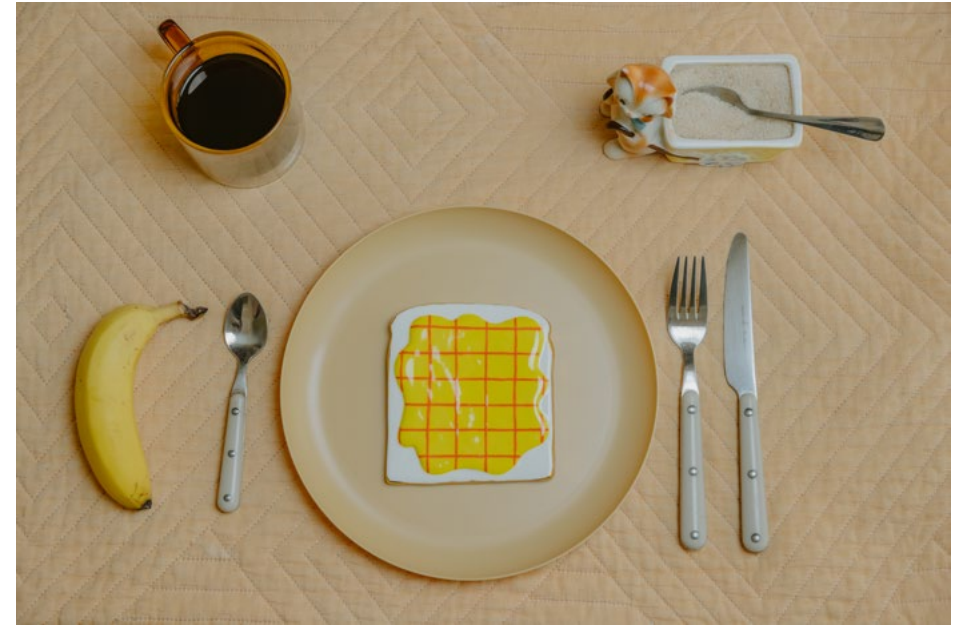
**Red Toast 2023**

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.

Repurposed frame

20 x 25 cm

**\$75 Framed**



**Yellow Toast 2023**

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.

Repurposed frame

20 x 25 cm

**\$75 Framed**







**Cloud Toast 2023**

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.

Repurposed frame

20 x 25 cm

**\$75 Framed**



**Blue Toast 2023**

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.

Repurposed frame

20 x 25 cm

**\$75 Framed**





**Pink Toast 2023**

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.

Repurposed frame

20 x 25 cm

**\$75 Framed**



**Green Toast 2023**

Print on 290 gsm Hahnemule natural agave paper.

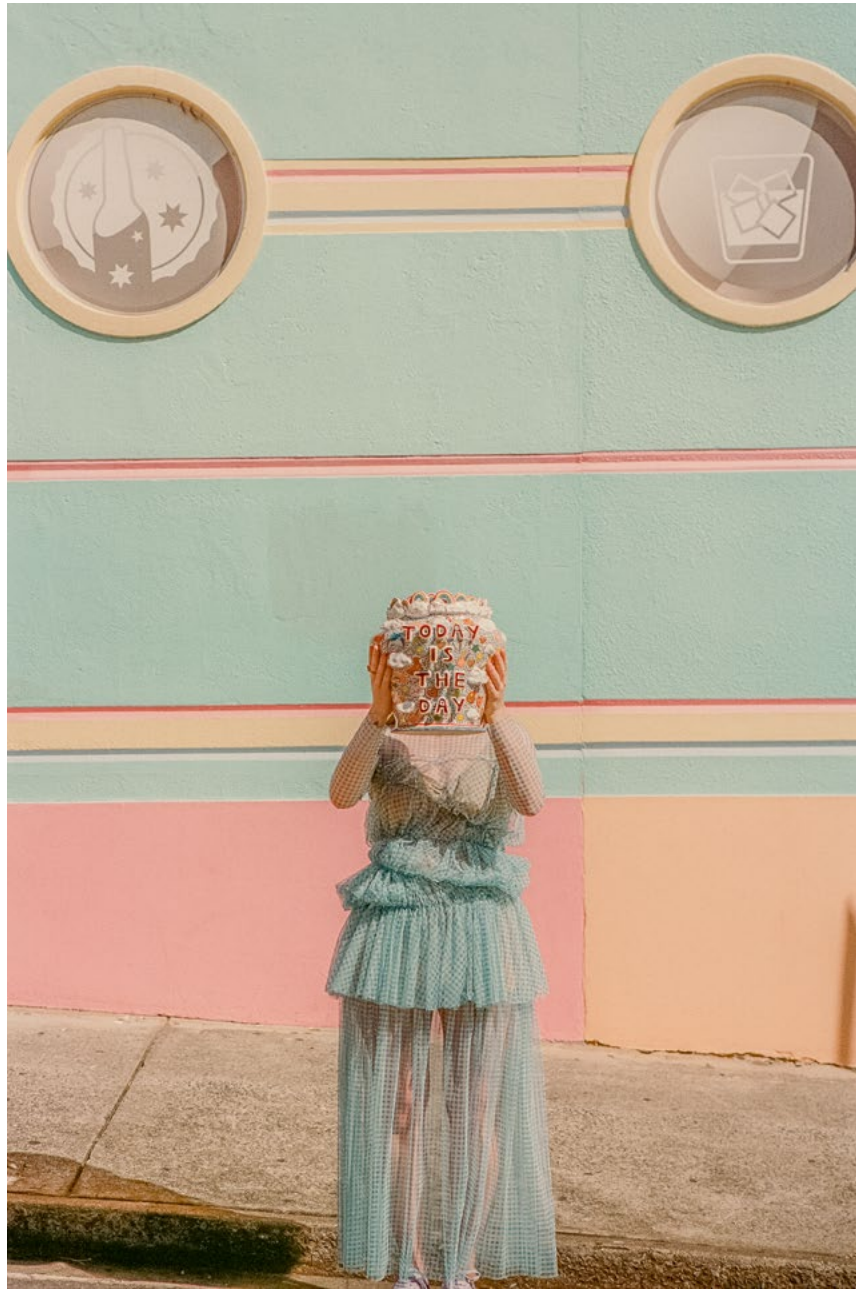
Repurposed frame

20 x 25 cm

**\$75 Framed**







Today is the day (hold) 2023  
35 mm film print on 290 gsm Hahnemule  
natural agave paper. Repurposed frame  
20 x 30 cm  
\$95 Framed



Photography Melanie Hinds  
Cover, P 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06,  
07, 10, 14, 17, 24, 25, 29, 36

Side Gallery



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Rainbows on toast with jam — Bonnie Hislop







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#### **Side Gallery**

The Garden Studio  
7 Emma Street  
Red Hill  
PO Box 515 Red Hill  
Queensland 4059

[info@sidegallery.com.au](mailto:info@sidegallery.com.au)

0409 549 447

#### **Gallery Hours**

During exhibition periods, we are open at the following times:

Monday, Tuesday open by appointment.

Wednesday – Friday 10am – 5pm

Saturday 10am – 1pm

Stay updated by checking our website and social media for exhibition opening dates and times.

Instagram: [thesidegallery](#)

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

Yuggera [yug-a-rah]

Turrubul [tor-oo-bull]

We acknowledge the Yuggera and Turrubul people as the Traditional Custodians of the Country we live and work on at Side Gallery. We recognise their continuing connection to the land, waterways and skies, and thank them for protecting this region and its ecosystems since time immemorial. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all First Nations people, acknowledging too that they never ceded sovereignty of the land, skies and waterways.



Thank you

