



Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

15th September 2009

“I walk the line”

I walk the line is Maree Azzopardi’s first solo exhibition with Smith & Hall and explores the artist's cathartic journey that began in Europe last year. On returning home in early 2009, Azzopardi began using the Australian landscape as a metaphor for her own interior dialogues and emotional states. Slightly dark, the works include text based on Johnny Cash's album *I walk the line*, symbolic of the artist's past year in the studio.

In her previous work, Azzopardi has explored the universal themes of religion, death and sexuality. The human body is often present, used as a contemporary metaphor for beauty, decay, glory and shame. Her photos are crumpled, lacquered and layered with tarnished gold, as though it is her technique that is damaged, rather than the people and objects she portrays. Her aesthetic is recognisable through its combination of Camp and Neo-Baroque sensibilities which underlies her more recent work, particularly the *Chaos and Revelry* series. Her experience and memories of growing up as a girl in a Catholic Maltese family also inspires her, influencing her identity and therefore her artistic practice.

I walk the line

Featuring a collection of new work by Maree Azzopardi

Smith & Hall Gallery

53-59 Great Buckingham Street, Redfern NSW 2016

12th – 23rd October 2009

Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm

Opening night: 15th October 2009
6pm – 8pm

Maree Azzopardi Biography

Born in Sydney in 1966, Maree Azzopardi’s work has been seen in important solo and group exhibitions in Australia, Italy, Malta and the USA. Shown alongside several prominent photographic artists such as Cindy Sherman, Annie Leibovitz, Vanessa Beecroft and Tracey Moffatt, she has firmly established herself on the international arts scene.

In 1995, Azzopardi was admitted as the artist in residence at St Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney where she produced her award winning *Chrysalis* series. This was followed by her exhibition *Celeste*, which was part of the 2001 Australian Centenary of Federation Celebrations in Malta.

More recently, Azzopardi’s Italian survey exhibition *The Poet Assassinated* was exhibited at Galleria Zerotre, Orvieto, Italy in 2005 and *The All Australian Show* in Naples was exhibited in Galleria Il Ponte Contemporanea in Rome and Lipanjepuntin Arte Contemporanea in Trieste alongside the works of Tracey Moffatt, John McCrea and Paul Ferman, Matthew Griffin and Selina Ou. In 2007, Azzopardi also held a simultaneous exhibition from the Humana series – *Shadow, Relic and Flesh* at Libby Edwards Galleries in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

In 2008 she was invited to create new work for *Chaos and Revelry* at Counihan in Brunswick Gallery in Melbourne, and was included in the Dubai Art Fair with Galleries Direct. Later in the year she also exhibited at Galleria Il Ponte Contemporanea in Rome, at Sentella in The Citadel, Gozo, Malta and Galleri Tapper-Popermajer in Sweden.



Maree Azzopardi, *After the storm – Trinity*, 2009
Inkjet on cotton rag paper, 60 x 90 cm



Maree Azzopardi, *Shoot the Bastards*, 2009
Oil and mixed media on Belgium linen, 200 x 250 cm

About Smith & Hall

Leading art investment gallery Smith & Hall brings the best original artwork to investors and art lovers all around the world. With relationships spanning a broad range of artists and suppliers, they have access to some of the finest Australian art available.

Investment analyst turned art investment guru Cameron Hall, founded the business with his partner Tiffany in 2004. Together they have created a unique perspective which blends financial and technical analysis with their passion for Australian and international art, and allows them to choose the right work for Smith and Hall investors and enhance their own personal collection.

Considering art has traditionally been an expensive commodity limited only to the very wealthy, Smith & Hall's purpose is to educate and help people realise not only the aesthetic, but also the financial rewards of art.

To find out more about Maree Azzopardi and Smith & Hall, go to our website at www.smithandhall.com.au or contact Laura Deane, Head of PR and Events on (02) 8823 4303