

KATE BEYNON

The Shapeshifter's Hour



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NEW
ART

IMAGES > [Front cover] Kate Beynon, *The Shapeshifter's Hour* [installation view], 2022, Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.



IMAGES > Kate Beynon, *The Shapeshifter's Cloak*, 2021, acrylic on linen, 90 x 80cm. Image courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery. Private Collection, Melbourne. Photograph: Andrew Curtis

KATE BEYNON

The Shapeshifter's Hour

The Shapeshifter's Hour explores supernatural themes, guardian figures and magical creatures. The imagery and characters in these recent and new works, expand on the artist's interest in cross-cultural stories and mythologies. Featuring a colourful cast of guardian figures developed through recent projects, the exhibition suggests an immersive journey into a world of transformation and mystic ritual.

The figure of the Shapeshifter, who appears in the painting *The Shapeshifter's Cloak* (2022) is adapted from fox spirits and connections across Asian supernatural tales; her distinctive cloak is inspired by a recent collaborative project with Beynon's son Rali. Other characters include the Blue Shaman Guardian, relating to stories of

ancient female shamanic figures; the Gorgon Guardian, a reimagining of a Medusa-like figure as a fierce protector, and the Lotus Goddess Guardian, a contemporary version of Guanyin, also known as the Goddess of Mercy, who looks out to comfort those in need. Self-portraits (sometimes in shapeshifter form) are interspersed amidst a bevy of confidantes and companion creatures.

Kate Beynon's work often blends personal connections and cross-cultural design influences in a semi-autobiographical and collaborative way. Informed by her family's diverse cultural backgrounds including her Cantonese-Malaysian, Celtic/Welsh and Nordic ancestries, blending with Afro-Caribbean and First Nations Pima-Mexican



IMAGE > Kate Beynon, *The Shapeshifter's Hour* [installation view], 2022, Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.



IMAGE > Kate Beynon, *Companion Spirits*, 2018, acrylic on wood, 17 x 23.5cm. Image courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery.

ancestries of her husband and son and her stepson's Māori ancestries, Beynon states: "I am grateful to have all these cultural connections in my life; and as a multi-coloured, multi-migrant and creative family, we are all grateful to live, work and create on unceded Wurundjeri Kulin Country."

Beynon draws from an eclectic range of pictorial traditions including graphic novels, animation, film, textile design and calligraphy. Female Surrealists Remedios Uranga Varo and Leonora Carrington, contemporaries of Frida Kahlo, are all a strong inspiration, as well as the botanical paintings by 17th Century Qing Dynasty artist Yun Bing, who was renowned for her genre 'bird and flower' paintings.

"I've had a long interest in merging art and fashion, shaped by storytelling, adornment and auspicious motifs. Experimenting with textile painting techniques, sewing and repurposed materials, has led to creating amulets and costume artworks. These

feature botanical and talismanic symbols such as eyes, petals, leaves, skull-spirits, serpentine forms and scales. As a kind of festive ceremonial armour, I see them as imbued with healing and protective qualities... The forms of the new costume cape work are based on lotus motifs as a tribute to the Lotus Goddess figure. Lotus imagery in my work signifies cycles of life, renewal and hope, with lotus seeds said to germinate even after hundreds of years. With the addition of eye motifs, owl or bird-like faces emerge, giving the cape its own presence and spirit ... Much of my work features auspicious imagery and guardian figures as a way of dealing with anxieties and counteracting negative energies in precarious times."

The exhibition also features an intergenerational collaboration; a new animated video with sound created with Kate's husband Michael Pablo and their son, emerging artist and animator Rali Beynon. The animation is based on a series

of supernatural mask spirit characters from a recent collaborative project with Rali; *KB X RB – Mask Spirits*, held at Sutton Gallery in May 2022. Through experimental watercolour and digital techniques, *Spirits Summoning* brings these characters to life in a cyclical dream-like space.

The Shapeshifter's Hour continues Beynon's exploration of supernatural tales and characters – reimagining and adapting mythic figures, beings and creatures as a collective of vibrant contemporary guardian figures and companions. Notions of shapeshifting might refer to representing diverse subjectivities—figures who adapt and transform, relating to ideas around fluid cultural identities.

Entering *The Shapeshifter's Hour*, surrounded by suspended charms and talismans, suggests a time and space to consider other worlds; of transformation and the potential for positive social change, and of 'kindred spirits' coming together.

Kate Beynon in conversation with Juliette Hanson, June 2022



IMAGE > Kate Beynon, *The Shapeshifter's Hour* [installation view], 2022, Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.



IMAGE > Kate Beynon, *The Shapeshifter's Hour* [installation view], 2022, Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We, Kate Beynon and family, acknowledge and pay respect to the Woiwurrung Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nations, traditional Owners and Elders, past, present and emerging, on whose Country we live, work and create and to the Bunurong Boon Wurrung People on whose lands this exhibition is held on. We reflect on connections to our multi-coloured family and ancestors, of complex migration and settling, and in hope of kindred spirits and allies coming together. We are grateful to be on Kulin Country where sovereignty has never been ceded, and recognise that this *Always Was and Always Will Be Aboriginal Land*. In solidarity, we acknowledge and pay our respects to all First Nations Peoples worldwide.

SPECIAL THANKS

Linden New Art
Sutton Gallery
Private Lenders
Rali, Hesper & Nyx
Mike Pablo & Barb
Tudo & all the FAM
Soul McKenzie, Isabel Buck & Zu
The Beynons & AlsoCAN
BFFs & Confidantes
Collingwood Yards / CAP team
VCA/University of Melbourne Graphic Design
MADA: Monash Art Design and Architecture
Fine Art

Studio supported by
Collingwood Yards & Bank of Melbourne



IMAGE > Kate Beynon, *The Shapeshifter's Hour* [installation view], 2022, Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.



IMAGE > Kate Beynon, *Studio Self in Blue Shaman Guardian Helmet*, 2022, acrylic on wood 40 x 30 x 3.7 cm. Image courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery.

KATE BEYNON

Kate Beynon is a Hong Kong-born, Naarm/Melbourne-based multidisciplinary artist. Beynon has a Bachelor of Fine Art (Painting), VCA/University of Melbourne and a PhD in Fine Art, MADA: Monash Art, Design & Architecture, Monash University, and is a Teaching Associate at MADA and VCA. As the current Bank of Melbourne Collingwood Yards Resident (2021/22), Beynon is developing a new Art X Fashion project TudoKB, in connection with The Social Studio. Beynon is a 9-time Archibald finalist; her *Collaborative Spirits* self-portrait with son Rali and their dog Tudo, was a finalist in the 2021 Archibald, while her 2010 Highly Commended *Self-portrait with Guardian Spirits* was selected for the *Archie 100: A Century of the Archibald Prize* (touring until 2024). Winner of the 2016 Geelong Contemporary Art Prize, Beynon's work is included in many collections including NGV, NGA, AGNSW, MCA, AGWA, AGSA. Solo highlights include: *Collection Leads: Kate Beynon—Kindred*

Spirits, Geelong Gallery, 2020-21; *Room of Lucky Charms*, Jackson Bella Room Commission, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2017/18; *Kate Beynon: Friendly Beasts*, Children's Art Centre, QAGOMA, 2017 and *An-Li: A Chinese Ghost Tale*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, 2015. Publications include *An-Li: A Chinese Ghost Tale*, with ARTAND Foundation, 2015. Kate Beynon has exhibited across Australia and internationally for more than twenty years and is represented by Sutton Gallery, Naarm/Melbourne.

[Visit Kate Beynon's Instagram @tudokb](#)



IMAGE > Kate Beynon, Rali Beynon & Michael Pablo, *Spirits Summoning* [installation view], 2022, animated video.
Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

COLLABORATIVE ARTIST RALI BEYNON

Rali Beynon is a Naarm/Melbourne born and based emerging artist and animator, and recent Graduate in Bachelor of Design in Animation and Interactive Media, RMIT, 2021. Rali collaborated with parents Kate Beynon and Michael Pablo on the animated screen component *Guardian Creatures Art Boxes*, a major public art project commissioned by Student One for the Elizabeth Arcade, Meanjin/Brisbane, with Arkhefield Architects and Creative Move, 2019/20. He adapted *Guardian Creatures Yards 2022* edit for large scale projection at Collingwood Yards; and *Visions for the Garden State Festival*, curated by the Centre for Projection Art, 2022. Other recent group highlights include: *Creature Feature*, Precinct Night Collingwood Yards 2022 Melbourne Art Fair; *TudoKB*, 2022 Melbourne Fashion Festival; *TudoFAM* at Collingwood Yards; and *Bus Projects Fundraiser*, 2021. Rali's animated film project *Crusher* (2021) was included in *Up in Frames: the RMIT Animation showcase*:

<https://www.rmitanimationshow.com/>

[Visit Rali Beynon's Instagram @rali_beynon](#)

COLLABORATIVE ARTIST MICHAEL PABLO

Michael Pablo McKenzie is a Los-Angeles-born, Naarm-based multi-disciplinary artist, writer and laboratory technician, with a background in music as a MC/lyricist in the mid-late 1990s underground funk and hip hop scene, and Producer of experimental music/culture TV series *Flipside*. Trained in painting at Art Center, Pasadena, and in Graphic Design in Melbourne, he has worked across mixed media, murals, fashion, screen-printing and film, including multicultural community film projects and youth program workshops. Michael has collaborated on animation and studio projects with wife Kate Beynon and their son Rali Beynon, and hosted the artist panel conversation *Spirits of the Mixt* for ARTBAR curated by Kate Beynon at the MCA, Sydney, 2018. Michael is currently working on a creative non-fiction novel of dream stories, and is the resident DJ for Kate Beynon Studio at Collingwood Yards events.



IMAGE > Kate Beynon, *Blue Shaman Guardian Helmet* [Installation view], 2020, acrylic, watercolour, metallic pigment on re- purposed fabrics, cotton calico, velvet, fibre fill, Bitwell motorcycle helmet, 35 x 42 x 35 cm. Photograph: Theresa Harrison Photography.

LIST OF WORKS

<i>The Shapeshifter's Cloak</i> , 2021 acrylic on linen, 91 x 81cm Private Collection NFS	<i>Self-portrait with Anatomical Elements</i> , 2018 acrylic on wood, 30 x 25 cm \$3,800	<i>Companion Spirits</i> , 2018 acrylic on wood, 17cm x 23.5cm \$2,800
<i>Hybrid Self with Kindred Spirits</i> , 2019 acrylic on linen, 55 x 45 cm \$7,000	<i>Breath of the Gorgon Guardian</i> , 2018 acrylic on wood, 30 x 30cm Private Collection NFS	<i>Studio Self in Blue Shaman Guardian Helmet</i> , 2022 acrylic on wood, 40 x 30 x 3.7cm \$4,700
<i>Impulse of the Fox Spirit Shapeshifter</i> , 2018 acrylic on wood, 19.5cm x 19.5cm \$2,800	<i>Heart of the Goddess</i> , 2018 acrylic on wood, 23.5cm x 17cm Private Collection NFS	<i>Robe for the Blue Shaman Guardian</i> , 2020 acrylic, watercolour, metallic pigment on cotton, mixed re-purposed materials, 100 x 80 x 20cm \$12,000

Prices are inclusive of GST

LIST OF WORKS

<i>Blue Shaman Guardian Helmet</i> , 2020 acrylic, watercolour, metallic pigment on re-purposed fabrics, cotton calico, velvet, fibre fill, Bitwell motorcycle helmet, 35cm x 42cm x 35cm \$6,600	<i>Eye Amulet #1 (left/amethyst iris)</i> , 2022 acrylic, watercolour and metallic pigment on repurposed cotton calico, fibre fill, 28cm x 41cm x 4cm \$990	<i>Blue Shaman Companion Third Eye Amulet Collar</i> , 2022 acrylic, watercolour and metallic pigment on repurposed cotton, velvet, fibre fill, 32cm x 30cm x 3.5cm NFS
<i>Cape for the Lotus Goddess Guardian</i> , 2022 acrylic, watercolour, metallic pigment on cotton and mixed re-purposed materials, upholstery fabric, fibre fill, 110 x 83 x 20cm \$13,000	<i>Eye Amulet #2 (right/jade iris)</i> , 2022 acrylic, watercolour and metallic pigment on repurposed cotton calico, fibre fill, 28cm x 41cm x 4cm \$990	Collection of the artist's family & dog Tudo

Prices are inclusive of GST

LIST OF WORKS

Lotus Goddess Third Eye Amulet Headdress, 2022
acrylic, watercolour and metallic pigment on repurposed cotton, velvet, fibre fill,
30cm x 30cm x 3.5cm
\$1,100

Supernatural: Anatomical/Botanical re-mixt 1-9, 2019
watercolour, gouache, acrylic, metallic pigment and pencil on unbleached calico, cotton thread, polyester stuffing, metallised embroidery thread, silk tassels
\$2,200 [each]

Kate Beynon, Rali Beynon & Michael Pablo
Spirits Summoning, 2022
animated video projection, sound approx 14 min loop, dimensions variable
artwork based on Kate Beynon & Rali Beynon *KB X RB –Mask Spirits* series, 2022
NFS

Animation by Rali Beynon
@rali_beynon Editing & Sound by Michael Pablo



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