

'One among many': Contemporary photography (1970s–present)

By the mid 1970s, photography was established as a recognised medium within the Australian art world, and a new generation of art school-trained photographers began to emerge. Emphasising 'personal expression', art photography in the 1970s was a means of recording one's subjective experience of the world. This was not the social truth of the earlier generation of documentary photographers, but was more concerned with the private interior world of the photographer–artist.

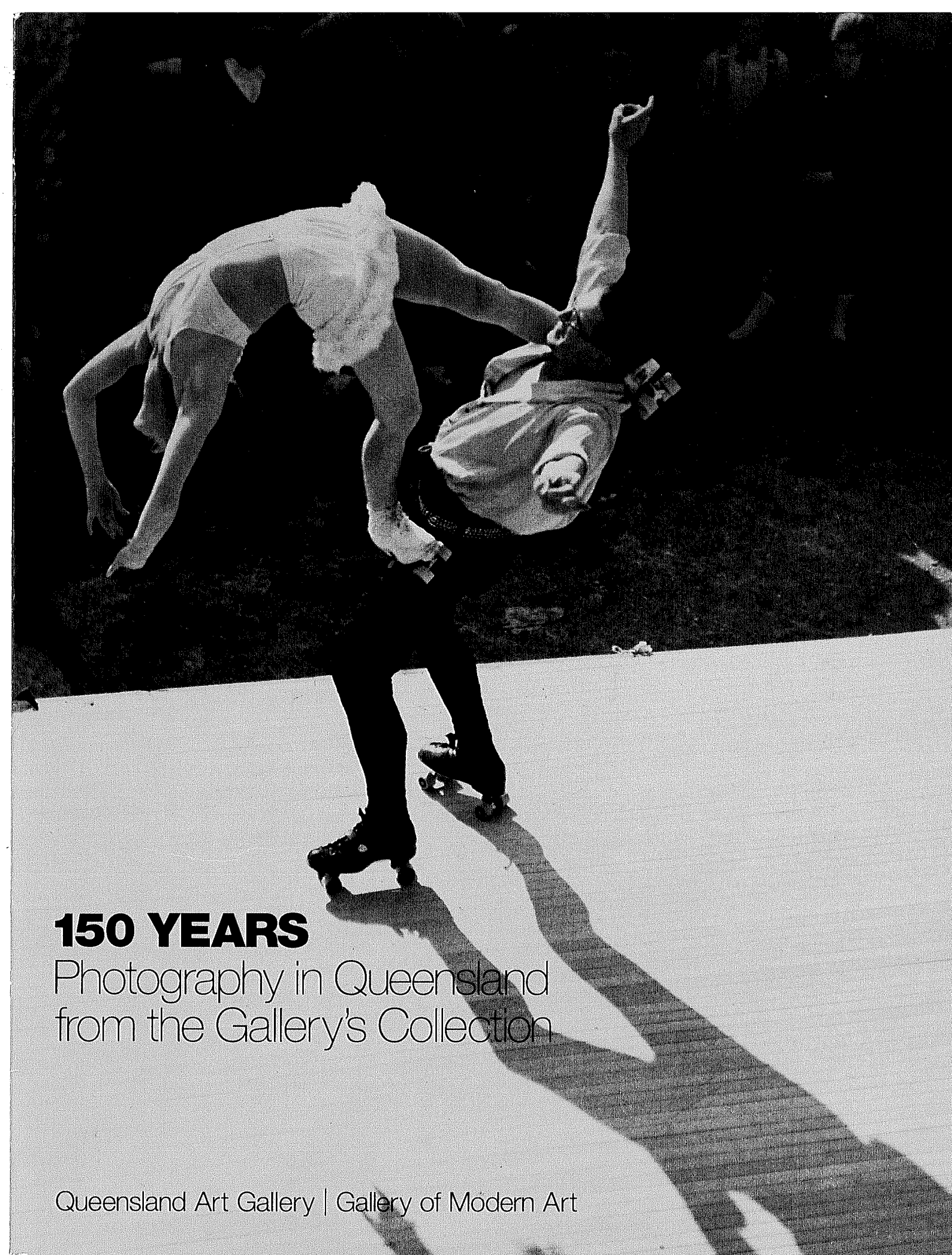
The 'Journeys north' portfolio is indicative of this individualistic exploration of the medium. Here, Lin Martin concentrated on creating portraits in which the personality of the subject emerges from the rapport developed between photographer and sitter. Similarly, the element of personal narrative appears in Max Pam's images of the Queensland landscape, as expressed through the eyes of a holidaying family, while Glen O'Malley's images of everyday situations imply a diaristic approach, with work titles including dates or places.

Contemporary photography is diverse and varied, with many artists using it as one medium among many. For example, Martin Smith carves text from his photographs, and these texts are as important as his images in the final work, while other young Queensland artists, such as Francesca Rosa, are more purist in intent. In Rosa's photographs of a decomposing house, taken some months after its destruction by Cyclone Larry, the medium acts as a means for classifying and categorising, a modern forensic tool of investigation.



Selected from the Queensland Art Gallery's Collection, the works on display demonstrate the proliferation of uses and approaches to photography that have emerged over the last 150 years. A source of continuing fascination, the photographic image has the emotional and conceptual power to involve the viewer in the worlds it creates, and to reflect and explore the culture of the times.

Francesca Rosa / Australia b.1971
Interior disaster 4 (from 'interior disaster' series) 2007
Lambda print, ed.2/7 / Purchased 2008. The Queensland Government's Gallery of Modern Art Acquisitions Fund



150 YEARS
Photography in Queensland
from the Gallery's Collection

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