

Jess Taylor Report

I am an early career visual artist based in South Australia named Jess Taylor. In 2018, I was awarded an Independent Arts Foundation Grant to assist with the costs of presenting “Manifesting Monsters”, a solo exhibition at Sawtooth ARI in Launceston, Tasmania.

‘Manifesting Monsters’ is an exhibition of works developed during my masters research exploring the concept of monstrosity, its social function, and the ways in which a female artist might use the language of monstrosity for their own conceptual and affective ends. Spanning across sculptural and two-dimensional media, this work demonstrates how embodying the monster might act as a means to confront personal anxieties and resist gendered societal norms. The IAF Grant allowed me to travel to Tasmania to install my exhibition and attend the opening night, covering the costs of my flight to and from Launceston, and the cost of accommodation and travel during the trip.

As an emerging artist, this exhibition is valuable to my career for many reasons; as my fifth solo exhibition presenting a concentrated body of work, as the first time Tasmanian audiences have been exposed to my work, and as an opportunity to exhibit work developed over two years of concentrated study. Furthermore, showing my work to interstate audiences and building connections to interstate art communities, both through my work and in person, is vital if I am to have a successful, nationally significant career as a practicing artist. Thanks to the IAF grant I was able to personally meet with gallery staff, attend the opening of my exhibition, meeting and engaging verbally with artists, arts professionals and viewers. I was able to make several professional connections and continue these conversations upon return to Adelaide via email.

I have been very pleased with the presentation of my work in Sawtooth ARI and the response thus far. Shortly before my exhibition, the gallery contacted me to inform me that the largest gallery space had become available, and to offer the space to me. The IAF grant, by covering several of my exhibiting costs, freed up my own finances so that I could respond to this last-minute opportunity, allowing me to exhibit works from this body of work that would not have fit within the original space. The result was a much more impressive body of work and exhibition. I am grateful to the Independent Arts Foundation for facilitating this exhibition and investing in my career as a visual artist.

Photographs of the exhibition are on the following pages:





