

Joy follows like a shadow
Project Space
Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia
8 April – 15 May 2011

Jessie.

Jessie is shy, kind, creative, and very hard-working. She'd rather be making her art than talking about it. She is an observer of the world around her, of the everyday, and sometimes the mundane. Jessie observes the daily routines of people and how they interact with their surroundings. Jessie works to counteract the well-known saying: "humans are creatures of habit". Her simple creative interventions urge passers-by to stop, look, and be changed. In this brief moment of realisation at the slightly altered environment one cannot help but smile. One experiences a sense of surprise, which is closely followed by joy, at this small discovery; that something so minor and mundane like a crack in the concrete or the cast of a shadow can be brought to such sweetness.

Jessie notices things around her that other people don't care for or pay any attention to. One of Jessie's favourite things to do is to discover the ordinary and make it extraordinary. She might be found spending days looking at the walls of a building or crouching on a street closely inspecting cracks in a sidewalk. This exhibition is no exception either, in *Joy follows like a shadow* Jessie has spent weeks hand-cutting each piece of paper and then individually sticking the flower and heart shapes to the gallery walls. Jessie seeks to find the incompleteness's in a space, and by the simple act of *adding* she creates a whole other dimension. She captures your attention. She draws the viewer in. Now you can marvel at a glimpse of the world as she sees it.

Jessie is an extremely committed artist. When she sets her mind to something, there is no stopping her. Her way of working is unusual and completely determined upon the space in which she works. Once she discovers the detail that she wishes to highlight, there's no going back for her. And there's no way for her to take her eyes away from those small incoherencies in the space until

the task is complete with her unique stamp. Often this action of change to a space is minor, involves colour, repetition, endurance, craft, and strives for simple beauty; like that of a blooming flower growing between the cracks in the pavement, surviving the urban sprawl of the city. This beauty is real and tangible, it's precious, and oh so fleeting.

In *Joy follows like a shadow* Jessie brings light and colour (and joy) into the Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia's Project Space. When asked about why she's using all the colours of the rainbow Jessie replied, "I just didn't want to leave any colour out." She values material, form, function, and the site in every aspect of her making process.

When she originally began preparations for her work at the Project Space she felt the overwhelming pressure to make something big that could occupy the entire space. After agonising over this great feat she remembered Aesop's quote "All good things come in small packages". Instead of focusing on having to fill the entire space with some huge sculptural gesture she returned to her usual way of working. Jessie's work originates from a considered preoccupation with the site and follows a process of producing and installing often small, tactile elements by hand over countless hours, days, weeks, and sometimes months.

Like most artists, Jessie makes art that reflects who she is and what she believes in. A huge part of who Jessie is, is what she makes. Jessie's subtle interventions encourage the viewer to look closely and experience the possibility that there is more than meets the eye.

Many people think they know Jessie/their familiar environments pretty well but they probably don't really know her/them. All it takes is a bit more time, care, and observation.

Written by Polly Dance