

MELBURNO ŽINIOS

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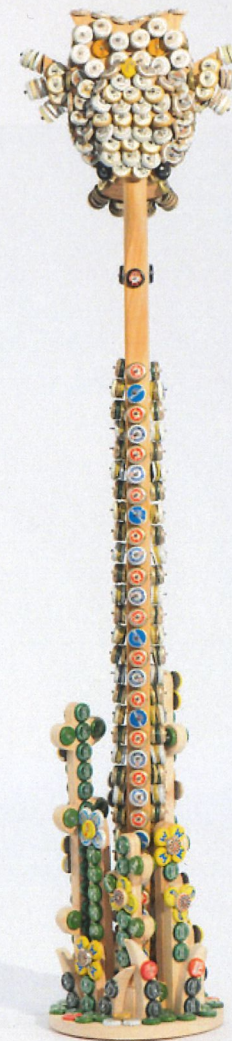
MELBURNO LIETUVIŲ BENDRUOMENĖ

MEET OUR Cover Author - Jazmina Cininas



This month we are thrilled that the multi-talented Dr. Jazmina Cininas has agreed to be our June cover author. She shares her story with us but is very modest about her achievements. It is worth mentioning that Jazmina lectures in printmaking and artist books at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology School of Art. She has exhibited extensively throughout Australia and the world. Enjoy Jazmina's story in her own words.

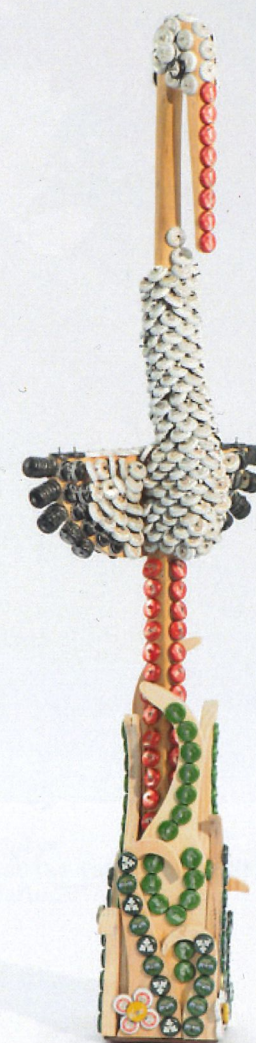
Rima knows the curse of being born on Christmas Eve (2006)
Reduction linocut with wood cut, 70 x 56cm



Pelėda (Owl). Lagerphone (2012) and stand (2021)
Salvaged timber, used bottle caps, nails, rubber stopper. 148 x 32 x 26 cm (approx.).
Private collection

I was born in Melbourne to the daughter and granddaughter of Lithuanian refugees fleeing Soviet occupation in the wake of WWII. Ever since I commenced my BA of Fine Art in 1992, I have been exploring my hybrid Lithuanian-Australian identity as a vehicle for my art practice. An early search for an autobiographical motif that referenced my Lithuanian cultural identity landed upon the Iron Wolf, directly leading to a decades-long fascination with representations of female werewolves throughout the centuries, culminating in my 2014 PhD project, *The Girlie Werewolf Hall of Fame*. While I am probably still best known in art circles for the technically demanding linocut portraits that arose from this research, my more recent artist books and lagerphone projects have returned to a more direct autobiographical exploration of my hybrid Australian-Lithuanian identity through the use of Baltic motifs and narratives of migration and transformation. The use of recycled materials in these projects reflects a conscious decision to engage with more environmentally sustainable art practices, which I attribute to the legacy of resourcefulness that I inherited from my refugee parents and grandparents, along with their strong ethos of 'waste not, want not.'

My complex artist books from discarded print ephemera and my reduction linocuts of female werewolves have been shortlisted for numerous art prizes and exhibited extensively throughout Australia and the world, including the Estonian Printing Museum as part of a three-month residency in Tartu, 2017. It was a dream come true to be invited to present a solo exhibition, *Eglė ir Vilkmerges*, at the Nacionalinis M.K. Čiurlionio dailės muziejus in Kaunas in early 2020 (just before COVID threw the whole world into lockdown). I remain humbled by the honour of exhibiting in such a prestigious venue and the phenomenal media coverage generated by the exhibition. My artwork is represented in over 30 public collections, including the Nacionalinis M.K. Čiurlionio dailės muziejus, Lietuvos nacionalinis dailės muziejus, MARKK Museum



Gandras (Stork). Lagerphone (2014) with stand (2019)
Salvaged timber, used bottle caps, nails, rubber stopper. 139 x 47x 24 cm (approx.)

of Ethnology, Hamburg, National Gallery of Australia and the National Gallery of Victoria. I am fortunate to be represented by the respected Australian Galleries.

I am probably best known amongst the Melbourne-Lithuanian community, however, as a member of the folk ensemble, The Lost Clog (Pamesta Klumpė). I not only sing with the group but also design and generate their promotional material, including their Facebook posts. I also make The Lost Clog's signature lagerphones from recycled bottle caps and timbers. These began as a tongue in cheek nod to our hybrid cultural identity - the quintessentially Australian bush band instrument reimagined as Baltic nature motifs - but have gathered their own momentum

over the years; there are enough now to form a forest, symbolically reinstating the habitat that is being lost to rampant consumerism.

In 2021-2022, I temporarily took the helm of The Lost Clog (now safely back with Stepas Levickis and Gabrielle Staugaitytė) to realise my long-time fantasy of a collaborative lagerphone extravaganza. The result, *The Sparrow Made Some Beer*, showcased my lagerphones in an ambitious melding of immersive solo exhibition, specially devised narrative song cycle performed by The Lost Clog - developed in collaboration with percussion expert, Ben Smart - commissioned video clips by fellow Lithuanian Australian Mark Bakaitis and professional audio CD recording. The project was a celebration of



Trans Baltic-Tasman Crossing (2018)
Artist book from discarded book cover and collage from redundant Estonian, Lithuanian and Australian reference books and used business envelopes. 21 x 14 x 2.3cm (closed)



*Photo by Nadija Brovedani
Lost Clog during film shoot
with Mark Bakaitis*



*Photo by Jonas Lipšys
Jazmina Cininas at the Estonian Printing &
Paper Museum, Tartu 2017*

our hybrid Lithuanian-Australian identity and garnered funding from Creative Victoria, City of Melbourne Arts Grant and the Australian Lithuanian Foundation. We were ecstatic when the CD was announced as a finalist in the Traditional Folk Music Album of the Year at the 2022 Australian Folk Music Awards, with the project going on to win Community/Cultural Project of the Year. This led directly to invitations to perform at 2023 CresFest in Creswick and the National Folk Festival in Canberra.

Like the other members of The Lost Clog, I am proud of my Lithuanian heritage, and actively seek opportunities to share Lithuanian culture with the broader Australian public.

*To find out more about Jazmina Cininas
work check her website:
www.jazminacininas.com*