

# Abuzz

*Johanna Featherstone writes on the drawings of Jacqueline Rose*

Graces of time enclosed in paper. Slowness expresses as pauses, inhalations, invitations to think. How to begin a pilgrimage with so many paths?

In Jacqueline's playfulness of routes and directions, there is no excess even when she offers me so many ways through. Her work is uncluttered and I am grateful for slender strength; it feels as if skin has been lifted from my shoulder blades and I can freely stretch and think into the ink extensions.

I imagine. I see the tracks of a dreamer adventuring through sleep, unencumbered by sentences, looking only for suggestions of gods, in the widths or tips of the lines. The lines keep growing, reassuringly in all pieces.

In one, there is a ritualistic repetition of grey line around a streak of horizon, a golden yellow line within that glows a solution to a puzzle. I gaze longer and the grey lines become strips of memory throbbing on the outskirts of my present as I travel on the gold path of now towards end, my end, the endlessness of every line.



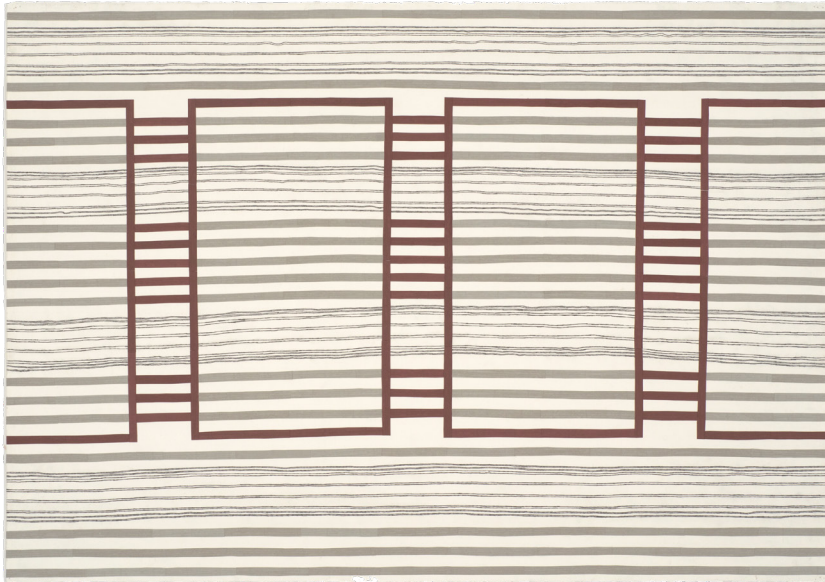
Jacqueline Rose, *Monumental #2*,  
Collage on paper, 65 x 50 cm



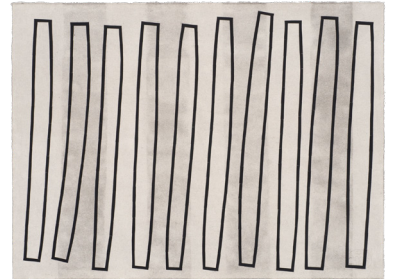
Jacqueline Rose, *Monumental #1*, Ink and collage  
on paper, 56 x 76 cm

Many of Jacqueline's pieces give a voice to the people or things that I can't see, the ghosts, spiritings of the dead, markings that may be small speeches from those no longer here. Sometimes, an entire piece stands like a series of honours. I am offered a multitude of marks, endless footprints but I am never cornered – can always pace forwards and onwards with hope. This acknowledgement of what is no longer here gains momentum with each piece, as lines and dots are held together by spaces and within these spaces, reactions happens. At times, I naturally want to fight the silence or fill the emptiness but the delicacy of each work cautions me, there need be no rush, for soon enough the blanks become their own movement. I need only to wait and watch. Lines fish out my past, my eyes elongate and from the search emerge personal markers of my old time.

Jacqueline's work shows me what *gazing* can do. Her images may seem conceptual and minimalist but the surprise from watching them is that suddenly they are loaded with physical and mental tingles. The line of looking crosses into the line of feeling.

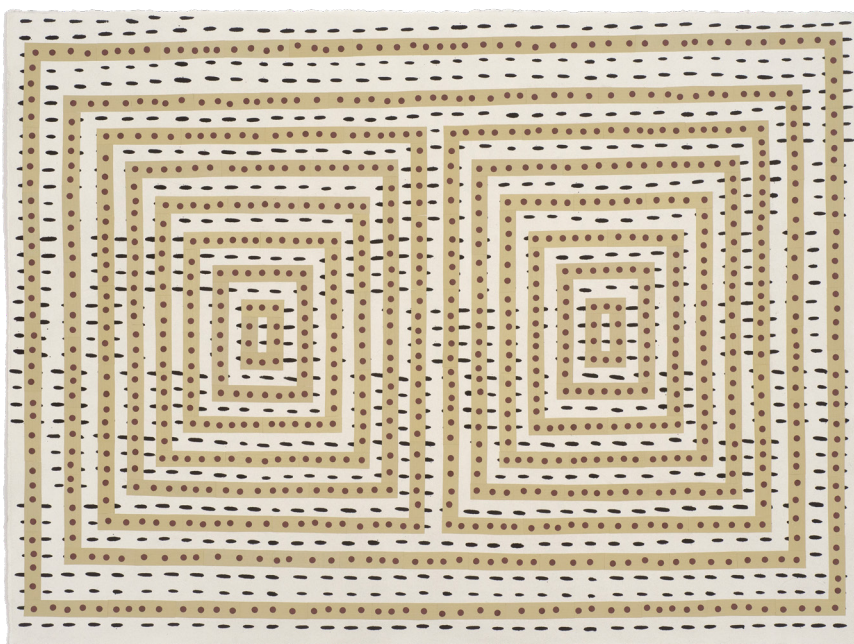


Jacqueline Rose, *Intervals #2*, Pencil and collage on paper, 70 x 100 cm



Jacqueline Rose, *Vertical Thoughts #1 and #2*, Ink and collage on paper, 56 x 76 cm

How those lines throb and expand. As with poetry, there's a magnification of experience as we concentrate on the details of a dot and it swells something of ourselves. Ants scratching the debris for gems. I contemplate the poem more and how Jacqueline's images are drawn and their similarities with how poems come to life.

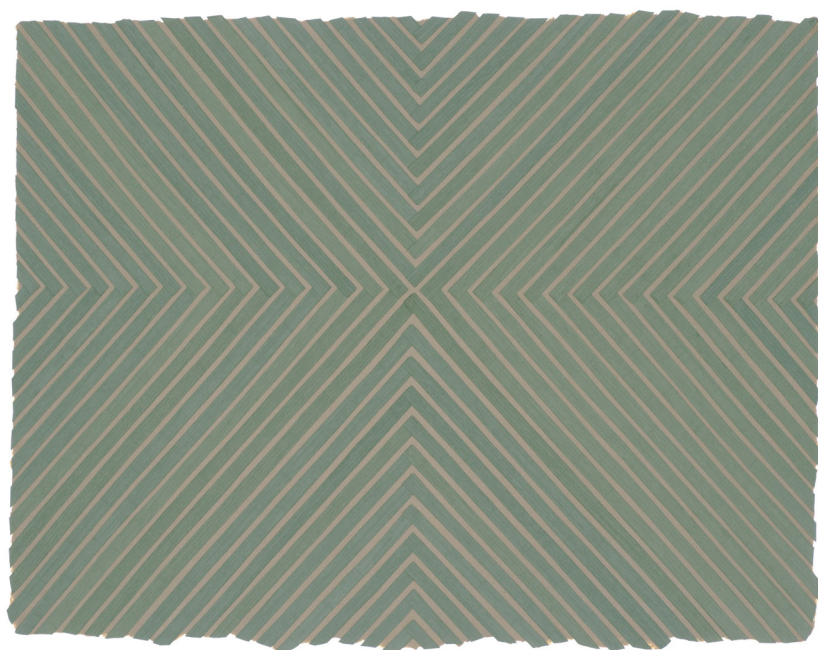


Jacqueline Rose, *Enigmagetic #1*, Ink and collage on paper, 56 x 76 cm



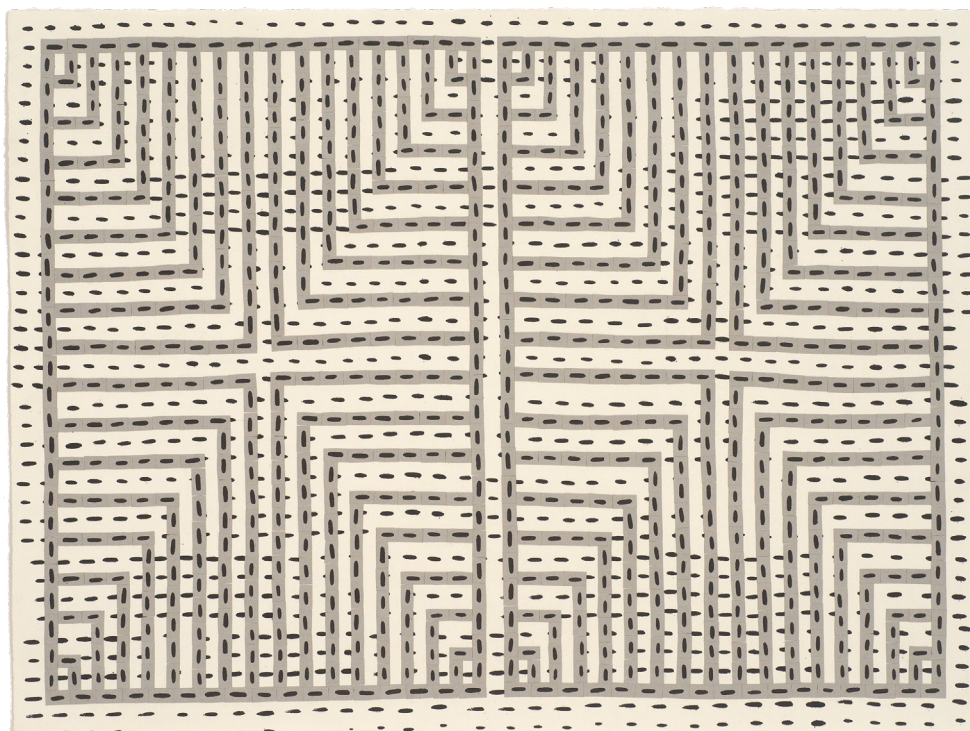
Consideration and care for poet and artist in placing the word here, rather than the alternative there, or nowhere, just as Jacqueline's judicious placement of paper-cut or ink print is made with meaningfulness, in every component of her work. As in the great poem, every exquisite tiny mark must make the whole piece sing. How different would each of Jacqueline's pieces be if lines were shorter or the dots wider. What chaos would occur if the gaps between the lines were thicker or thinner, partially or totally erased? The placement of everything urges us to consider that everything in the pictures has a purpose, including to be enjoyed and reflects our own ethics of making things.

In some works, lines are held together to create boundaries, ensuring the frenzy is out and peace is contained. In these images, lines charge our eyes to focus; an immediate traineeship in looking at the details, of seeing up close. The boundaries enable our thoughts clean opportunity to think anything and be safe in doing so. The lines frame the idea, the geometry is reassuring. The denim greens and earthy beige cool us in our looking, all the while being happily destabilized by the electricity created in the collage's warped architecture. From the inside out or outside in, the line exists in plain view and doesn't stop, as it exists in the minimal and complex. The track is a territory, a conduit and a verge. We may not see the vines, knots or ridges but there is an understanding they are there, the spaces make sure of that. Experience or innocence are the only limits. You may let a line impose a pattern on your life but pattern may be an illusion of structure, a feeder for your own narrative.



*Convergent, Collage on paper, 51 x 65 cm*

The fresh and humble colours provide another surface on which to perambulate. Paths trickle green and circle grey. Pick any place and it is a shifting movement of colour to work towards or away from. It may be white rain patterning the footpath, a muddy green splotch, then a deep blue river, then a black shadow. Ink against khaki, the oxygenated colours feel like we are digging beneath the paper to its roots. Some pieces are like mysterious gardens with complex mazes for our spirits to navigate towards the moon. In the gardens there are prints, perhaps fox steps or maybe an entire system of language, each mark an earthy punctuation, a comma of mulch. These paths are a topography of reliability and punctuality whereby stillness is created through what isn't there and this isn't-ness is where the center sits. We seek our own patch of grass to rest in, to contemplate the beginning and end of a prayer in.



Jacqueline Rose, *Enigmagnetic #2*, Ink and collage on paper, 56 x 76 cm

The ways in which Jacqueline's pieces connect to make paths and tableaux is like watching a dance be choreographed, and accompanying the dance is music; a musical delight in finding the calmness and composure within each piece and then the improvised magic of colour and texture and there's little distraction, no demand to hurry through the sensations. It takes time to find the tempo for each piece and this process of waiting is a chance to compose our own piece onto Jacqueline's piece. The works are unexpectedly collaborative with artist and the viewer being given freedom to play with all the sounds and spaces and to gently expand ourselves in Jacqueline's magical networks of possibility where the personality of paper itself is alive in its fibres.



Jacqueline Rose, *Duet*, Crayon and collage on paper, 24.5 x 31 cm

### *Abuzz: Jacqueline Rose with words by Johanna Featherstone*

For the exhibition: *Abuzz: Jacqueline Rose with words by Johanna Featherstone*  
 The Cross Art Projects, Sydney. 21 September to 27 October 2018  
 Opening talk by Rachel Kent, Chief Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia