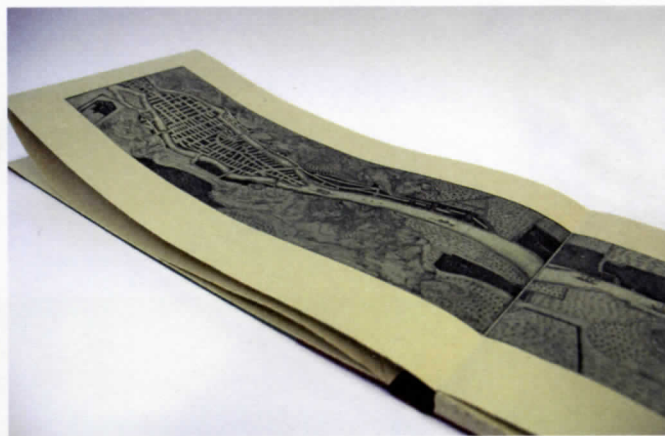


Red Rag Press



Red Rag Press, owned and operated by artist Sheree Kinlyside, is a book arts studio situated in a relaxed tropical setting beside the Ross River, which flows casually through the North Queensland city of Townsville. After graduating in 2000 with a BA in Fine Arts at James Cook University (JCU), Kinlyside set up a home printmaking studio. As if an etching press and associated equipment were not enough, she then began collecting and restoring antique letterpress machines, type and other bookbinding equipment, some of which dates back to the mid-19th century.



Equipment was also acquired through the closure of JCU's arts campus, printery and bookbinding works, but much more was donated by North Queensland's museums. Townsville Historical Society Museum and Cairns Historical Society Museum in particular requested that Kinlyside assist in the cataloguing, assessment and consequent distribution of their vast print-related collections. Limited space for museum storage meant that type and other trappings were apportioned to various institutions around Australia.

Red Rag Press now has two studios, five presses of varying size, age and function and more than 200 full type cases. Kinlyside states she is merely the current guardian of these historical machines and predicts that their life will extend far beyond her own.

Red Rag Press's printing strengths lie in 'artist book text and imagery' with the publication of eight editioned artist books since 2006 and several others now in various stages of development. Hands-on letterpress techniques and modern digital methods are sometimes combined in the making of artist books to portray quirky, humorously subversive, as well as personal works such as *Knitted Planet*, which takes its direction from the artist's mother. It depicts a knitted landscape, which was imagined, in the young artist's mind, as a refuge from difficult times.

Kinlyside's interest in social justice has led to a different direction in her most recent publication. Printed and published in Ireland during an Arts Queensland funded residency with Cork Printmakers in 2015, the book titled *What Falls Away* retraces the artist's Irish convict great-great-grandmother's journey to Australia. The etched imagery connects the river shapes in both countries in the form of map-like illustrations. In the text, Kinlyside also reflects on the devastating displacement of the Wiradjuri people of NSW by her own grazier ancestors and questions the hidden history of Australia and our failure as human beings to come to terms with our unbearable truth.

Kinlyside's passion for artist books began in the late 1990s when she was permitted to assist in the production of books through Lyre Bird Press and Monsoon Publishing in Townsville. At this time

printmaking and book arts subjects were taught in the printmaking departments at JCU by master printmakers Ron McBurnie and Anne Lord, with visiting master printmakers including Fred Genis, Danny Moynihan, Julie Hass, Peter Lancaster and master bookbinder Fred Pohlmann.

Now, the pool of tertiary-trained printmakers left behind after the closure of JCU Arts is thriving in the North Queensland region. Contemporary art spaces such as Umbrella Studio, as well as TAFE and print groups such as Inkmasters (Cairns) and PressNorth (Townsville) continue to foster skills and enable teaching printmakers to visit the North.

Part of Kinlyside's enthusiasm for printmaking and book arts is prompted by an eagerness to collaborate with others. 'There is something very rare and extraordinary about working with other like-minded people,' she says. 'The production of *What Falls Away* gave me the opportunity to work with excellent Brisbane typographer Nicole Phillips.'

The Red Rag Poster project is set to begin in 2017, which will bring together 15 North Queensland printmakers to individually work under Kinlyside's guidance and each produce a letterpress poster using the type and equipment at Red Rag Press.

Through Kinlyside's dedication and contagious enthusiasm for printmaking, artist books, letterpress and collaboration, she has established and honed a very well-equipped and exceptional atelier quite unique to North Queensland's arts community. Red Rag Press is a valuable asset to the larger arts and letterpress communities both locally, interstate and internationally.

A.

Sheree Kinlyside at Red Rag Press, 2016. Photo: Alan Carpenter.

B.

The lithographic imagery for Sheree Kinlyside's *Knitted Planet*, 2013, was printed from one stone at Umbrella Studio in Townsville by Jill O'Sullivan and Maxine Smith. Photo courtesy of Red Rag Press archive.

C.

Sheree Kinlyside, with typography by Nicole Phillips, *What Falls Away*, 2015, hard bound flutter book, etchings, text printed using photopolymer plates, 23 x 48 x 2 cm [closed], edition of 20, Red Rag Press. Photo: Johnny Bugler, Cork Printmakers, Ireland.