

**LIGHTBORNE**  
Vicki Katthagen



## FOREWORD

Throughout 2024, I had the pleasure of being Vicki Katthagen's mentor in the *Transitions* program, a partnership run by Umbrella Studio Contemporary Arts and Townsville City Galleries. Vicki's work in this exhibition is a continuation of her *Transitions* project and her Master of Photography, which she undertook simultaneously. The result is two very different styles of work, both of which are resolved beautifully.

When Vicki decided to work with botanicals for her *Transitions* project, it appeared too simple. The challenge then posed to her was always how to elevate that botanical form to fine art. It had to be more than a photograph of a flower. I must applaud her hard work and dedication to this exploration. Given that Vicki learnt her photography skills through a Bachelor of Photography at James Cook University, before the digital era, and only learned analogue techniques, she was always eager to learn more about the digital process. This knowledge was crucial for the successful outcome of her *Transitions* project and this exhibition.

The second half of this body of work, the colour fields, is the outcome of Vicki's Master of Photography studies. This work relies on the viewer's engagement with colour and the relationship between colour and their emotions. The de-focused, abstracted botanical studies complement the more structured and textural work.

Visitors to the exhibition will recognise the talent and deeply internalised, reflexive engagement with nature, particularly in her botanical forms and the use of colour in an abstract, non-objective manner.

Both series demonstrate a unique vision and one to be applauded. Both are poetic and insightful. As Vicki is an emerging artist, this is just the beginning for her and I already look forward to her next project.

I congratulate Vicki on her efforts and Umbrella on their dedication to the *Transitions* program for emerging artists, which supports the creative arts and artists in Townsville. It was a privilege to mentor and guide Vicki through her journey.

~ **Dr Ann Vardanega**  
PhD Creative Arts



## LIGHTBORNE

Flowers inhabit our memories, our rituals, and our language. We describe them as we do ourselves, with words that speak of life and emotion. Through this act of personification, the boundaries between human and botanical perception dissolve, revealing their shared emotional and structural vocabularies.

In *Lightborne*, the flower is abstracted to become a vessel for reflection. Macro photography expands what is minuscule, allowing the viewer to see what usually remains unseen. Two visual languages have emerged – one which has colour removed to reveal the intricacy of forms, while the other releases structure to highlight colour and the emotions that this can evoke. Though their methods diverge, both series speak to each other and reach toward the same truth: that strength and fragility coexist, and that emotion can be felt as vividly through absence as through abundance.

Within these oppositions – of detail and diffusion, structure and sensation – each botanical can become a mirror for the viewer's own states of being. Each work invites pause, a moment to stand before it and appreciate the provocations that the work poses. What memories or moods stir?

Through these encounters, colour, light, and natural form are revealed as being heavily intertwined. This quiet, revelatory space enables perception to become feeling.

~ Vicki Katthagen

## IMAGE LIST

**Front cover:** Vicki Katthagen, *Aubis* (detail), 2025, Digital photograph on cotton rag paper, 84.1 x 66.11cm. | **P.1:** Vicki Katthagen, *Lucidia* (detail), 2025, Digital photograph on cotton rag paper, 118.9 x 92.84cm. | **P.3-4:** Vicki Katthagen, *Vitalis* (detail), 2025, Digital photograph on cotton rag paper, 84.1 x 70.72cm. | **P.6:** Vicki Katthagen, *Etherea* (detail), 2025, Digital photograph on cotton rag paper, 778.9 x 112.75cm. | **Back cover:** Vicki Katthagen, *Dilucens* (detail), 2025, Digital photograph on cotton rag paper, 84.1 x 72.35cm.



# VICKI KATTHAGEN - LIGHTBORNE

7 November - 21 December 2025  
[www.umbrella.org.au/lightborne](http://www.umbrella.org.au/lightborne)

## UMBRELLA STUDIO CONTEMPORARY ARTS

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Umbrella is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, part of the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy, and by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, state and territory governments. Umbrella is supported by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation and receives funding from Creative Australia through the Australian Cultural Fund. Townsville City Council is a funding partner of Umbrella's program.

This project was made possible by the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund, provided through Regional Arts Australia, administered in Queensland by Flying Arts Alliance.



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