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JAMES GLEESON INTERVIEWS: ROSALIE GASCOIGNE

James Gleeson: Rosalie, we are including in this file the survey notes that you made for your show in Melbourne. I suppose no real purpose is served in duplicating a lot of that material.

Rosalie Gascoigne: No; I would think that was fairly definitive.

James Gleeson: Good. Let us start directly with the works of yours that we presently hold in the National Gallery. I have photographs of four works, but I understand that a fifth one has recently come in, which I do not have a photograph of. We could talk about those, with the idea of giving us enough information to make a definitive catalogue entry of them. Of these four, is there any sequence or chronological order in which they were done?

Rosalie Gascoigne: I think they were all done within a fairly short period.

James Gleeson: When you work, do you work on one thing until it is finished, or do you have a lot of things going?

Rosalie Gascoigne: I have a lot of things going.

James Gleeson: It takes a long time often, I imagine, to complete a work.

Rosalie Gascoigne: It depends. Sometimes you're lucky, and sometimes the fascination doesn't hold for you, so you leave them standing around and—as Paul Klee used to say—if they speak to you again, you go on and finish them. Sometimes they don't ever speak to you ever again, and you throw them out.

James Gleeson: I think we had better name these four works. One is a *triptych*, one is called *Black bird box*, another *The colonel's lady* and the fourth one Tiepolo birds—

Rosalie Gascoigne: *Tiepolo parrots*.

James Gleeson: So we have an incorrect title there?

Rosalie Gascoigne: You have, that's right.

James Gleeson: I'll change that to *Tiepolo parrots*. If I remember correctly, these were all acquired from your first exhibition in Sydney?

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right, yes.

James Gleeson: At the *One woman exhibition*, Gallery A, in 1976.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That would be right, yes.

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James Gleeson: I've been thinking a lot about your approach to art, and it seems to me that in some respects the closest artist with comparable approach would be Klippel. You are very different, for instance, to someone like Tinguely. Tinguely uses found objects but he doesn't assemble them with so much as an aesthetic approach—just to emphasise the fact that they are junk, found objects. Your approach is a strongly aesthetic one, isn't it?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, that's true. I'm always trying to make a serious statement of some sort. I only notice when I see my work with other things its sober look. I do not really like the comic element. I don't mind a sort of hidden whimsy—not a word I like—but I want it to look almost like a classical work of art, whatever material I use. If I use an undignified article, I have to get a sort of dignity or beauty out of it. My example of that sort of thing is always the beer can, because a beer can is a laughable object in most people's eyes, and they can't see past it. I feel that I have to be able to get something of dignity or beauty out of whatever I use. Recognition is not the name of the game. A lot of people play recognising specific objects and things.

James Gleeson: You don't, for instance like Schwitters, collect objects because of their emotional or personal souvenir value.

Rosalie Gascoigne: No, I don't. I collect them because I personally like the look of them—they are nice things to me.

James Gleeson: It's an aesthetic.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, it is. It is a very personal choice. Everybody has their tastes. Some people like roses; some people like violets. You cannot expect everybody to think it's a nice object. But for me it is always a nice object or an exciting object on a personal level.

James Gleeson: You would call these works 'assemblages'?

Rosalie Gascoigne: I would call them assemblages, yes.

James Gleeson: And the material that you work with is material that you have searched for and found almost anywhere?

Rosalie Gascoigne: I have not searched for it—I have found it.

James Gleeson: You've found it.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes. I just look at what's about.

James Gleeson: And almost anything can catch your eye as having some intrinsic quality or possible use?

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Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes. I just look at what's available, and I think 'I like that', or 'That does something for me'—and that's what I take.

James Gleeson: When you see something—say seashells or feathers or whatever it is that has attracted your attention—does the possible use you can make of them come to you, or does that develop out of a study of them and thinking about them?

Rosalie Gascoigne: I don't weigh myself down with that. It is joy to me, and I like it. The collecting process is part of the joy of doing it and I never care whether it is going to come good for me. I think 'How nice; I will have that'. Then it follows on quite happily or it doesn't follow on, and it doesn't matter either way.

James Gleeson: But from time to time themes run through your work. Certain kinds of materials or objects seem to concentrate your interest for a period and then you develop what can be developed from them before you move on to something else. Is that so?

Rosalie Gascoigne: It might be that a certain number of things all surfaced as finished works using the same material at the same time. To take a case in point, I find it very difficult to move out of a supermarket when they've been unloading the Arnott's biscuits and all those lovely parrots. You have to stop yourself from taking twenty-four more cardboard boxes and cutting out the parrots—for what end you don't know. If your interest stays in a thing, you soon know when for you it is finished. I have very simple signs. If I still think 'Ah, how marvellous', then that is a sign that my delight has not subsided. If my delight is still there, I can make something else. But if I feel, 'How boring'; I've done that—

James Gleeson: You've come to the end of that cycle.

Rosalie Gascoigne: It's not fresh for me. If it is still fresh for me, I would still use it.

James Gleeson: I am thinking of the parrots, and the Norco cow, shell motifs and things. Feathers were important for a number of your works.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right.

James Gleeson: You found new ways of using them in different ways.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That was because I was loaded with feathers. It does guide you when you find a lot of something. I am very conscious of the fact that when the hot weather comes the Lake George swans are dropping more beautiful feathers. What a waste! It is like when the blackberry season comes around. Sometimes you fear to go into feather country, because they are going to be irresistible.

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James Gleeson: You can put them to a very good use—nature playing right into your hands.

Rosalie Gascoigne: You have to be trusting, especially if you're not going to think it all out. You just take your signs and what drops on the doorstep.

James Gleeson: The form it takes, the work, comes out of the objects themselves. You don't approach it with a preconceived idea?

Rosalie Gascoigne: No, I don't. I think 'I like this material' or 'It excites me'. Then I think, 'I don't want to make it less than it is now, because as it is it is exciting'. Sometimes I find an unlikely juxtaposition—a chance—and I think, 'That works' or 'That's exciting'. You get more knowing as the work goes on and you can emphasise something that is very fleeting to you in your beginning of the work. Suddenly there is an association in your mind, or something you have had an emotion about. It is that Wordsworthian thing about emotion remembered in tranquillity—you have felt it about various things in your life and suddenly you have these inanimate objects and you can plug into those old experiences, those old emotions. But at the beginning you like the material, it works a bit visually for you, and putting it with something else gets a little bit exciting. But that is not enough—you have to work into it something you genuinely felt. It is not a question of just making pictures, as it were. It is expressing something in the end. But at first you are seduced by the visual thing of it.

James Gleeson: So when you are using the objects you do not have in your mind its past.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Oh no—not interested. There it is.

James Gleeson: It is its present appearance, its present quality as an object in itself that you are concerned with.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes. I don't think I'm on about nostalgia. I have had this levelled at me before, this sentimental thing. I just think it's nice; I like it—whether it's because of past associations or whatever.

James Gleeson: A bone does not conjure up the animal that it came from. It's just the beauty of the bone itself.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right. It is a visual pleasure that should not be ignored. That is the way I see it.

James Gleeson: So it is purely aesthetic?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes it is.

James Gleeson: It doesn't have those overloads of sentimentality or nostalgia—

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Rosalie Gascoigne: No.

James Gleeson: Or personal involvement with the past?

Rosalie Gascoigne: No. I would like to think it was a fairly universal statement. I also think that you feed in your past emotions or whatever. Other people who have emotions—as everybody does—can take their journey from the beginning I give them. I put this thing up like a landing platform and they can take their flight off it, as long as it is a good, solid platform. Once it has even a specific meaning for me, I know it has a meaning, unspecific, for somebody else, and they can sort of match their experience.

James Gleeson: I know that ‘recycling’ is a hot word today, but in a way this is what you are doing. You are taking objects that have had a certain role to play in the past. Now that that role is finished, you are giving them a new role to play as an element in a work of art.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, that’s true. Seeing that what I use is the readily available thing; it is only readily available because people have been using it. So there it all is and it’s the stuff of our life.

James Gleeson: Yes.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That’s why I’m not interested in exotics—when people say, ‘This is something terribly clever I bought from Bali for you’.

James Gleeson: It is the world around you, your world, that you are looking at and finding things.

Rosalie Gascoigne: It is from real knowledge. It’s your familiars.

James Gleeson: Yes.

Rosalie Gascoigne: I believe so much in the pleasures of the eye. They are not exercised enough. Even if you do not make things, you can look at things. This is very rewarding. I think a lot of people could do more of it.

James Gleeson: I notice your orientation is towards natural objects.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Outside objects.

James Gleeson: Yes, outside objects, animal objects, bones, feathers—

Rosalie Gascoigne: It is what is there. I find it outside. So it’s all very logical.

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James Gleeson: You also use manmade objects. Almost always they are objects of one's ordinary domestic life—the things around you. You haven't gone in for mechanics a great deal, have you?

Rosalie Gascoigne: No.

James Gleeson: Machinery as a form—like Klippel, for instance.

Rosalie Gascoigne: No, indeed not.

James Gleeson: That does not exercise the same attraction for you?

Rosalie Gascoigne: I might have a slight bias towards ordinariness. Perhaps it's a snobbish thing, but I just like ordinary stuff. People get so exotic about everything, and ordinary stuff is so good.

James Gleeson: The extraordinary thing about your art is that you do find the extraordinary in the ordinary. You are able to transform what most people would dismiss as commonplace, or as having no intrinsic or artistic element in it, into works of art. That is extraordinary.

Rosalie Gascoigne: I see it so clearly. It used to worry me the lengths to which people would go to make an artistic object or sculpture or whatever. They have all the know-how in the world—they can do this and they can do that—and the actual end product is so unexciting, so nothing. I think people have gotten too far away from the source.

James Gleeson: Yes, the dross of real life.

Rosalie Gascoigne: I would like to say, 'Look, this is better, and it didn't cost this or that'. Visually it gives you more feedback.

James Gleeson: It forms a link back to nature.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Well, it's real, and you are not posturing about beauty in a way. A lot of people just discard all the ordinary things. It really does worry me.

James Gleeson: Rosalie, of the five pieces of yours that we now have, do you think we have a fair representation of the areas you have been working in over the past few years? Have we missed out any major aspect? I think we may have. I do not think we have any of your paper works or works with feathers.

Rosalie Gascoigne: No, but I have only done those in large pieces. I think I've made some feathered chairs, and I made a feathered pale landscape.

James Gleeson: And the big one that was in the—

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Rosalie Gascoigne: Oh yes, and a feathered fence—that's right; those three feathers.

James Gleeson: That was in the *Biennale*.

Rosalie Gascoigne: The *Biennale*; that is right. The newspaper one I have just done for Adelaide is in a way a carry-on from the pale landscape. I think that is why I was invited to put one in. That was a paper work; it had a lot of paper besides the feathers. So those are the only paper ones I have done.

James Gleeson: Of the four photographs we have in front of us, the one that seems to me to be perhaps the most classical of your work—and you did mention the word 'classical' before, is the triptych. That seems to me to have that kind of real classicism of spirit which you find in a Chardin still life or a Morandi.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That is a lovely, flattering remark. That is exactly what I was aiming at. I was aiming at dignifying that sort of material so that this air space is read. I had concern about where I divided my boxes off. I was after that elegance of still life you can get, with no sentimental overlays but with shapes and spaces reading in a classical way.

James Gleeson: To my mind it is the most pictorial, or picture-like, of your works in the sense that the surfaces are immensely important. The gleam of the enamel and the metal, the texture and surface of the wooden frames and dividing shelves, have a distinct, almost painterly quality about them. You mentioned that you had had some trouble with the way it had been exhibited in the past, that some of the boxes had been reversed. There is only one right way for them to go isn't there?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes. That is right. The three boxes in the triptych are separate, so you put each one down separately. They have a front and a back. You can get a reading from the back of a box, but that is not the right way. I did at one stage have someone displaying it by hanging it on a wall, which tipped one of the shelves at an angle. It is the sort of piece where you do one thing wrong and the balance is upset. So that is the right way, as photographed here.

James Gleeson: Could we describe it? On the right panel we have a white enamelled coffeepot.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes.

James Gleeson: The spout should be pointing in, towards the centre.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right.

James Gleeson: Leading the eye into the central panel.

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Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right. It is not turning its back on the arrangement.

James Gleeson: No, although I understand it was once exhibited that way.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, that's true.

James Gleeson: The central panel has the bicycle seat and the candlestick.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right.

James Gleeson: The bicycle seat should be facing the front.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That is right.

James Gleeson: The left-hand panel is just the two sheets of corrugated iron, is it?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, that's right. And that is a piece of machinery of some sort.

James Gleeson: And that is less susceptible to changing the composition.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes. When you are using old wood—and those are bee boxes—the weathering is different.

James Gleeson: Bee boxes.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes; these are discarded apiary boxes. They have better sides and worse sides. You do not want to change their weathered appearance. When I am making anything like that and I am using old timber, I put the best side, or the most interesting side, and the more interesting shade of grey to the front. So I pick it up every time if anybody changes it.

James Gleeson: So it is a very closely considered work.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes.

James Gleeson: There is nothing haphazard about it; it is absolutely considered in every element, every proportion and every texture or colour.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, it is exactly as I meant it to be. When making it, you make decisions. I have a red, white and blue colour scheme in it. If you think, 'I will just put something in that coffee pot space and see', everything is wrong if you change one element. Suddenly it sets like concrete and that's it.

James Gleeson: I think it is a good indication of the way you work generally, isn't it?

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Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, I think so.

James Gleeson: It is really considered and then adjusted and readjusted until it comes out.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Inched along. Yes, it is; that's true.

James Gleeson: It is very different in character, for instance to *The colonel's lady*.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes it is. This I did to enjoy myself. I would not have done it if I hadn't happened upon that red first aid box. Red is not a colour that I use a lot, but if you've got a red box, the only thing to do is to go along with it.

James Gleeson: You're determined—

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, that's right. It is the *Coles Funny Picture Book* approach—busy fingers. You load every rift with ore, as they say. I found that I was getting a sort of semi-military overtone to it. That led me along—the rifle shells and even the man boxing—it was fairly belligerent—and the Kiwi boot polish things. It was looking military. And the insignia have that firm pattern.

James Gleeson: So the doll becomes *The colonel's lady*?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes. She's one of those well-groomed army wives. There is his military conformity and she is being a good, unthreatening army wife.

James Gleeson: I notice a little thing saying 'barbed wire'.

Rosalie Gascoigne: You plan some of the things, and some things just look right. You are not really using every print.

James Gleeson: You are not working on a literary concept.

Rosalie Gascoigne: No. If you do that, the whole thing gets very stolid and you push your point home. That's what Bacon says—long diatribes through the brain. I hate them. I like illusion and elusiveness and I like changing ground.

James Gleeson: So I take it that the title came well after.

Rosalie Gascoigne: It was her blue eyes that did it to me. I thought that a title was a good thing, in a way, to have.

James Gleeson: It helps to identify the work. But you didn't start off with the idea of making a box called *The colonel's lady*?

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Rosalie Gascoigne: No, I started off making a box that was crammed tight with pattern. I had these engaging postcards that people had sent me, and I had a lot of the waratah labels.

James Gleeson: So it really sprang first of all from the box itself.

Rosalie Gascoigne: From the box being red.

James Gleeson: The colour of the box.

Rosalie Gascoigne: I might as well enjoy myself. I am not going to be cold or coolly classical—I am going to enjoy myself. That sort of thing is fun to do.

James Gleeson: So what happens depends on the initial spark that comes from an object that excites your interest.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right.

James Gleeson: And everything that follows on comes out of that naturally. It evolves as a process and not as a prepared statement or something preconceived.

Rosalie Gascoigne: No. I have to have the object, in a way. I do not ever think 'Now I will try to make a piece about such and such'—unless I am more interested, as I am now, in air, and things like that. To get something to express the feel you get on very bare, airy days you think, 'What have I got that will make me feel like that when I look at it?' I do work that way sometimes.

James Gleeson: But that is, again, a sort of disembodied thing. It is not a literary thing so much as a sensation or feeling.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, that's right. You want it to transmit your feelings to somebody, or you want to put something, as I have done, into somebody's hands and say, 'Be there', so that they can take that thing and they can feel what it is like to be there. But I don't do that very often.

James Gleeson: We will talk about *Tiepolo parrots* now. Are these the Arnott's biscuits parrots?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes. I had been looking at a lot of books, perhaps about Pompeii, and those walls—

James Gleeson: Frescos?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, the frescos and the wall that has decayed and just these old faded paintings. I had seen the Tiepolo ceiling at the gallery, and I was very much on about fade and those beautiful pink/green/blue Italian colours—

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especially the Italian colours—and that sort of dimly perceived pattern. Most of the parrots had been on boxes that had been out in the weather and they had taken a fade. The ones on the top panel were a line of parrots that Arnott's used to put out that were blue. I do not think they put them out now. I had a lot of those. Then I sort of worked it up. With the top part I was also thinking a bit about those biblical paintings of the loaves and fishes and things all crowding together. What I went for was a feel. I knew when I had a feel that made me feel that way. So that suddenly arrived. It had been whatever it was—and nobody was saying what it was. It was an arrived statement. It was something. I had a lot of trouble with the bottom part because I wanted to keep the flat feel. You did not want something coming out the front. It was about walls and things. But still I had that ledge at the bottom. That had been two boxes, one put on another.

James Gleeson: Are they bolted together or joined—

Rosalie Gascoigne: They are bolted there. This had, I think, come down the river; it had a very good weathering on it. This unlikely piece here is an egg box, but the fading—

James Gleeson: Is it '5,000' or '50,000'?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, but I like to think that you don't have to read that. It just happens to make an artistic statement that is the right weight, the right pattern, the right fade. Eventually it worked.

James Gleeson: When you are working with things like this, and they perhaps do not have quite the right fade that you want, or quite the right colour, do you ever interfere and add colour?

Rosalie Gascoigne: I wouldn't be above anything, as long as it reads right to me. If it reads false and I don't like it, that's it. But I would do anything to gain my ends.

James Gleeson: So you do perhaps touch up things with colour—

Rosalie Gascoigne: I don't because I am not very clever at it; I'm no good with a paintbrush. But I would if I could, and if I needed it. I spend a lot more energy than most people, a lot more illogical time. I search for things. I'm indefatigable. When I know I want an example like that, I will go after it. I will go through a country dump. Eventually you get what you want. Or you get something that works as well.

James Gleeson: But you don't really apply a paintbrush to adjust—

Rosalie Gascoigne: As I say, I would if I could, but to me it probably would look terribly amateurish if I did anything to it. I might perhaps at some time have taken parrots and experimented for no end. When I am making something I think 'That

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one I did'. But I would never work towards manipulating it. It never seems to work for me if I do that.

James Gleeson: Are there many ones that don't work?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Oh, yes—the ones I get very tired of. I have friends who say, 'What did you throw that one out for?' But I have to keep my interest up and, if my interest flags, I don't care how much they like it—I'm not going to have it. Seeing as I have to live with my art around my house all the time, I'm not going to be looking at it all the time if—

James Gleeson: If it doesn't work for you.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Not for me—boring and dangerous. It is terribly dangerous if you allow yourself to be seduced by things like that, which is really vanity. It is not honesty, is it?

James Gleeson: I suppose you learn from your failures, as well?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, you learn all the time. As long as you're moving your hands, you're learning. You have to learn not to think that, because you haven't pulled anything off for two weeks, it was wasted time. Something you have learnt when you are making a positive work, you'll think, 'Ah, I did that and it worked'.

James Gleeson: Rosalie, the *Black bird box* is quite different to the *Tiepolo* in mood and spirit, isn't it?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, it is. It is not romantic. I think the *Tiepolo parrots* is romantic in concept. This I felt was more sternly sculptural.

James Gleeson: Yes, it is. Is there also something slightly sinister about it?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Not to me. I don't find it a bit sinister. I have many visions of hens sitting on fences, things perching on things, and little groups of birds as they sit on wires and that sort of thing. That is all I see. That bird is from a sideshow shooting gallery. He is terribly badly designed.

James Gleeson: Maybe that's where I got the feeling of sinister—they have been shot at and wounded.

Rosalie Gascoigne: They've been shot at. They're all alive, still—made of iron.

James Gleeson: I know, but rather battered.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Enduring. I never thought of them as sinister. They're too chubby.

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James Gleeson: They're too much like living chooks.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, they are—to me. When I was doing that I was rather keen on having a no-colour look. Sometimes you want to swing right into that grey—

James Gleeson: Grey-black—

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, a very tailored feeling.

James Gleeson: An absolute contrast to that.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, it is.

James Gleeson: So we have four contrasting words in mood and character?

Rosalie Gascoigne: It's a good cross-section.

James Gleeson: The big one, what's it called?

Rosalie Gascoigne: *Country air*, I called it.

James Gleeson: We haven't got a photograph of it. But could you describe it?

Rosalie Gascoigne: It's made up of four pieces.

James Gleeson: Four units.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Four units; that's right. I started with sheets of very heavy galvanised iron. They had been weathered and dented.

James Gleeson: Had they been originally painted or just—

Rosalie Gascoigne: I presented them exactly as I found them. They had come off the Canberra Brickworks; they were unpicking all this old tin. I got four panels that were more or less the same size, and they were the same quality of iron. You realise, after you have been collecting galvanised iron for a while, that there are very different qualities. That was very heavy quality and it had a very good sort of greeny painted tinge to it that gave it a sort of elegance and interest which the ordinary run of corrugated iron does not have.

James Gleeson: It was superior quality.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right. I was fascinated with the way the weather had got into it and the treatment it had got, so that it took on the air of something blown in the wind—like curtains, in a way.

James Gleeson: Had it actually been blown about in the wind?

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Rosalie Gascoigne: It was too heavy to blow. I think they had bumped heavy trucks into it and it stove in here and it came out there. Then they had thrown it down onto the clay. That's as it was. All I had to do was scrub it.

James Gleeson: So the wind-blown effect was not produced by wind, but by some accidents during its dismantling or its past life.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, that's right.

James Gleeson: But you recognised this windblown quality.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, I did. It was very interesting looking iron. What I saw in it eventually was a row of curtains, as in a country place, and the wind coming into the building lifting the curtains. In this building you could just see the landscape outside. So under each panel of tin I put another strip of tin in various colours—off-green and pink. So the curtains are lifting and you are looking out through this very humble shed and there is the landscape—the clover field and the green field. I could be standing in one of those calm places and I could smell it coming in the window.

James Gleeson: Is this part of your interest in air that you mentioned earlier?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, it is. Air always does something for me—and country smells, the clean. It's relaxing and gives you a great feeling of freedom. I boxed the tin, in the end, in wood that I weathered. So they are in four shallow trays and the two lots of iron are enclosed in these.

James Gleeson: Is there a proper sequence in which these should be shown?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, there is. You can see the curtain rising. One curtain is sucked by the wind, and it has stove in, in the middle. To me, they read logically in one way.

James Gleeson: I see; so there is just one proper sequence.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes; they're numbered.

James Gleeson: They are numbered?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, they're numbered at the back.

James Gleeson: Oh, good. Is there anything else we should talk about, other ideas? Could you perhaps describe the big paper work that you're going to show in Adelaide?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, I could do that. It's an eight by eight feet wall piece. It's made out of ordinary newspaper, pine board and nails—three things. I have

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newspaper cut into about six-inch squares in thick wads, all aligned. I have nailed these wads of six-inch squares over the whole surface, so you get rows and rows of thick paper squares. Then I've weathered it so that the paper curls with the sun and goes yellow with the sun and the whole thing takes on a sort of organic form. It is what the sun and the wind do to things. You see it happening to trees and to flowers. It takes on a living colour from the air. I like newspaper, I like large plain statements, and I like things that the weather has—

James Gleeson: That the weather has wrought a change in.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes. It has three things that I am always interested in.

James Gleeson: This is something that perhaps we have not mentioned before—the effect that weather has had on the objects you use. It seems to be, now I think of it, a very obvious element in all your work. You don't like raw new wood, for instance, or bright, shiny metal objects straight from the factory but something that has passed through a history of time, weather, use and circumstance to change it.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right. Rauschenberg said, 'It has been somewhere, it has done something and it is something'. It feeds all these things back to you. I find I'm very rarely successful when I buy anything—and I have tried. It has a very slick look to me.

James Gleeson: So there is this implied element of time?

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes.

James Gleeson: Time in the sense of weathering effects and so on—

Rosalie Gascoigne: A bit of living, yes, It is rather like brand new people. They are not quite so interesting—

James Gleeson: Until they have been through a few seasons.

Rosalie Gascoigne: That's right. I think people who are a bit battered are much nicer, or more interesting.

James Gleeson: Yes. The faces read more interesting.

Rosalie Gascoigne: Yes, I like that battered thing.

James Gleeson: Rosalie, thank you very much indeed.