



SAWTOOTH

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...and the sorrow...

Lee Harper (TAS)

@Sawtooth Pop-up #Exhibition 29 November – 21 December 2013



Untitled (2013) Steel cabinet with woollen blankets

On 18th October 2012 the Tasmanian Premier, Lara Giddings, offered an Apology to People Hurt by Past Adoption Practices.

On 28 August 2012, Premier Lara Giddings released a statement in which she said;

This is a symbolic but important step to acknowledge the hurt caused by the past practice of forced adoptions. ... I cannot begin to imagine the trauma and sense of loss those women and their children feel after having the parental bond torn apart.

...While nothing can make up for the pain of a mother losing a child or a child losing their mother...

Forced Adoption Practice is not a 'thing' we discuss openly nor easily. Long thought of as off limits being that personable, touching on the tough, desperate, sensitive and confronting aspects of life, yet there exists facets which speak to joy, happiness and relief.

I can't give you a definitive reason why I made these works, maybe, it is the thought of our housekeeper holding us as children as she prepared for the birth and adoption of her own child; maybe it is witnessing a friends grief - her baby taken from her at age 15, or maybe it is a response to another friends passing, never reconciling with her unknown mother, but dearly loving the mother she knew.

Maybe it doesn't matter why. Sometimes, one just simply makes, driven by a desire to express an emotion.

What could matter is the existence of these objects, but what does matter is the acknowledgement by the Tasmanian Community of our responsibility for the wrong doing and harm caused by the practices of forced removal and adoption of children.

*The narratives of past truths, scribed with deep love & true sorrow, have been etched into our hearts.
Let these women lead us.
Let these children show us*