

LIFE WRITING

This special virtual edition of **Life Writing** presents eight articles that have a clear connection with the themes of the upcoming conference of the International Auto/Biography Association, to be held in Canberra, Australia, in July 2012. The conference is called 'Framing Lives', and its title signals an emphasis on the visual aspects of life narrative: 'graphics and animations, photographs and portraits, installations and performances, avatars and characters that come alive on screens, stages, pages, and canvas, through digital and analogue technologies' (www.iaba2012.com).

In the first of the articles chosen to speak to the above theme, Nancy K. Miller ('Out of the Family', 4.1, 2007) explains how the graphic memoir, *Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi, prompts her to reflect on the mother-daughter relationship; and in 'Witnessing the Witness' (3.2, 2006) Susannah Ketchum Glass discusses another graphic memoir, *Maus*, Art Spiegelmann's well-known story of his parents' experiences of Auschwitz. Interestingly, both examinations of graphic memoir refer to inter-generational relationships. Moving on to different media, Judith Woolf (Not the Girl but the Legend, 3.1, 2006) explores the role of the photographic image in the construction of the 'cult' of Diana, Princess of Wales; and in 'Recovering Lives Through Art' (8.1, 2011), Caroline Turner and Glen St John Barclay explore the cultural and political meanings of the work of two artists, the Japanese artist Katsushige Nakahashi and the Indonesian artist Dadang Christanto. Only one of the articles examines what might seem to be the most common and obvious link between visual image and auto/biography, the portrait. In 'Jean-François Rigaud' (8.3, 2011) Arlene Leis fills this gap by exploring a pair of 'companion portraits' showing six of the Founding members of the Royal Academy of the Arts, from 1777 and 1782.

The multi-disciplinary nature of the journal is signalled by the above mix of literary, historical and creative art approaches of the articles.

Click on the article titles to read them online.

Out of the Family: Generations of Women in Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*

Nancy K. Miller

Volume 4, Issue 1, 2007

Witnessing the Witness: Narrative Slippage in Art Spiegelman's *Maus*

Susannah Ketchum Glass

Volume 3, Issue 2, 2006

Not the Girl but the Legend: Mythology, Photography and the Posthumous Cult of Diana

Judith Woolf

Volume 3, Issue 1, 2006

continued ▼



Recovering Lives Through Art: Hidden Histories and Commemoration in the Works of Katsushige Nakahashi and Dadang Christanto

Caroline Turner & Glen St John Barclay

Volume 8, Issue 1, 2011

Jean-François Rigaud: Portraying the Royal Academy of the Arts

Arlene Leis

Volume 8, Issue 3, 2011

As well as the five articles that focus on the visual, this virtual edition carries an article by each of the three conference organisers. In 2009, in a themed co-edited edition of *Life Writing* that was subsequently published as a book (*Trauma Texts*, edited by Gillian Whitlock and Kate Douglas, Routledge, 2009), Gillian Whitlock wrote an article about the Pacific Solution: the attempt to contain and deter the arrivals of 'boat-people' on the shores of Australia ('Letters from Nauru', 5.2, 2008). In the same edition Rosanne Kennedy, also organising the IABA conference, contributed 'Vulnerable Children, Disposable Mothers' (5.2, 2008), a comparative study of Holocaust research and the Stolen Generations in Australia. Finally, in the only example in this virtual special issue of the Reflections section of the journal, Paul Arthur's memoir ('Unearthing the Past', 8.1, 2011) charts the author's attempt to absorb and order the legacy of suffering and displacement that have come down to him from his grandparents' flight from 1943 Ukraine. Coincidentally (or not), photographs and visual images play a central role in all three of these articles, written some time apart and before the conference took shape.

Letters from Nauru

Gillian Whitlock

Volume 5, Issue 2, 2008

Vulnerable Children, Disposable Mothers: Holocaust and Stolen Generations Memoirs of Childhood

Roseanne Kennedy

Volume 5, Issue 2, 2008

Unearthing the Past: Dwikozy Revisited

Paul Longley Arthur

Volume 8, Issue 1, 2011