

# [Go-Go]

## SELF AND THE CITY

Paintings, Prints and Incidentals

Bill O'Donovan

Cities are a constant theme in Bill O'Donovan's art. Whether as the backdrop for Johnny Ice PI's hardboiled adventures, or more directly as delicately rendered gouache and ink paintings, the city is alive and an ever tangible presence in the artist's work.

The city as motif is a gestalt, a complex beast at once alluring and foreboding, full of promise yet harsh and merciless, alive with people yet a distant, aloof and sometimes lonely place. It is perhaps a city's very contradictory and often surprising nature that gives it its irresistible buzz and is such an attraction for the artist.

For Bill a life of bucolic quiet was never to be. Even as a young man in the first cohort of students at the UOW Creative Arts School, his creative and restless mind was searching for new experiences. After a stint as a founding member of SWAMP ART, a contemporary performance group, he left Australia

to become an economic refugee in Tokyo, a gaijin in Japan. It was a mind expanding experience that continues to resonate in his work today.

Bill is most at home among the urban sprawl and often conflicting energetic vibe of the city. Whether in Sydney, Tokyo or now once again Wollongong Bill delves into the creative undercurrents that give a city its personality and taps that energy to spark his own innovative thinking and ways of seeing the world.

*Go Go: Self and the City* Bill O'Donovan's exhibition currently on show at Wollongong Art Gallery is as much accidental autobiography as art exhibition and gives us an insight into the quirky, original, humorous and playful character of the artist.

We would like to thank Bill for sharing aspects of his life and passions with us. We hope you enjoy the exhibition.

John Monteleone, Program Director

Wollongong Art Gallery

May 13 - July 23, 2017

Digital catalogue available at  
[www.thesometimespress.com](http://www.thesometimespress.com)

Images

Front: *Silver City* (detail), 2017, ink  
Back: *City Element*, 2017, ink and gouache  
Inside: *What have they done?*, 2017,  
ink and gouache, digital composite



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ART GALLERY



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open Tues-Fri 10am-5pm  
weekends 12-4pm

Wollongong Art Gallery is a service of Wollongong City Council and receives assistance from the NSW Government through Arts NSW. Wollongong Art Gallery is a member of Regional and Public Galleries of NSW. WCC@1442878.MDP



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