

# Organic happenings

Drawing has been a great friend of Rhys Lee's for as long as I've known him. Rhys went through a graphics course in Brisbane with fellow artist Matt Hinkley, but Rhys was always keen to get a little looser and wilder than graphic design would allow. Spending time throwing lines around with spray cans as a youth lead to very exuberant painterly works early in his career as an artist.

On a trip to New York a couple of years ago Rhys expelled about 100 large ink works on paper that he later spread across the walls of Block Projects. I had the opportunity to live with Rhys for a few months down at his abode in Aireys Inlet when we were both between lives in late 2010. We'd come home from the beach nice and salty and Rhys would do a few donuts on the sandy driveway just to liven up an otherwise peaceful day on the coast. We'd then rest on the couch most of the day. Rhys knows how to rest and he knows how to play. He also knows how to keep the house in tip top order while chaos reigns in the studio. When his batteries are fully charged he rises from the couch, walks over to his kitchen table and spills ink or moves it around with old brushes until something appears; maybe a monkey or a hazy memory of an evening in Peru. The cathartic process and drawing and mark making can be fully felt in Rhys's work. The murky organic happenings that lie deep beneath the surface of a person can come forth and be present through this type of art. We watched this documentary on Don Van Vliet (Captain Beefheart); how he said during an interview that he paints just because his arm needs some exercise between concerts. We loved that.

Rhys has recently drawn a bunch of lovely raw patterns that Lisa Gorman has turned into wonderful fashion clothes for her spring/summer collection this year.

Lisa Gorman's collaboration with Rhys Lee can be seen in [Gorman](#) this September.

Rhys Lee is represented in Melbourne by [Utopian Slumps](#).



Lisa Gorman and Rhys  
Lee collaboration



Lisa Gorman and  
Rhys Lee  
collaboration



Rhys Lee, Aireys Inlet



Rhys Lee, preliminary painting



Rhys Lee, designs for the  
Lisa Gorman collaboration,  
ink on paper