

# TRUE STORIES

*Australian Crime*  
*Richard Lewer*



**Opposite Page Right:**  
*Brendon Abbott*  
*on the run from Sir David*  
*Longland Prison*  
600mm x 600mm  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008

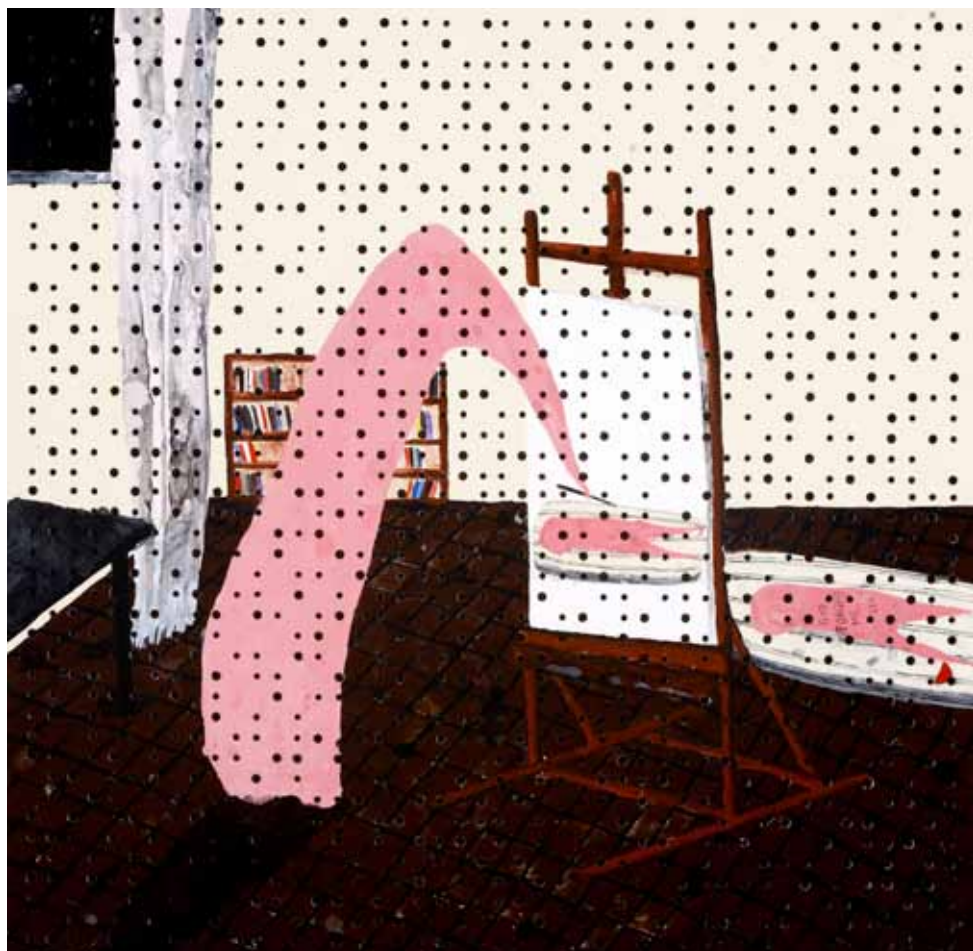
**Design:**  
Famous Visual Services  
[www.famousvs.com](http://www.famousvs.com)

**Photography:**  
Andrew Curtis

# TRUE STORIES

*Australian Crime  
Richard Lewer*





You are a  
Complete  
Disappointment



# ITS STARTING TO GET VERY CREEPY AROUND HERE

– *Richard Lewer and the art of crime*

To walk into the studio of Richard Lewer whilst at work on the series that would become *True Stories* was to walk into something resembling the clichéd version of a murderer's bedroom. The walls were covered in images taken from cheap pulpy murder books, crappy TV crime shows and paintings that transmogrified all this material into succinct images that mystified the subject, and also depicted it as something both malevolent and compelling.

The acoustic wall tiles taken from the ceilings of police stations – embedded with the stories and whispers of countless interrogations – Where were you? What did you do? – provides the palimpsest upon which the action takes place. The enamel sits on this surface glossing in and over the facts or otherwise seeps into the very pores of the boards themselves like blood

Opposite Page Top:  
*Lenny Lawson*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008

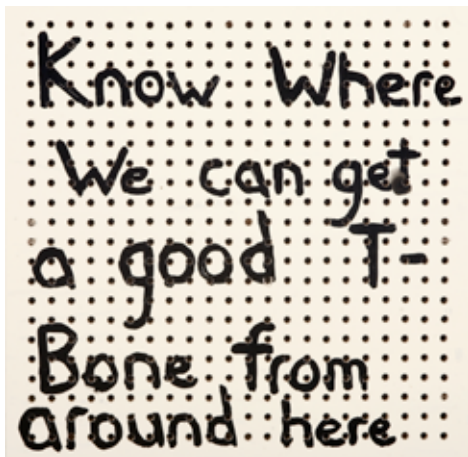
Right: *Peter Norris Dupas*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008

Opposite Page Left:  
*Kathy Pettingill with her son  
Dennis and friends*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008

oozing into a cheap tacky carpet. It's the story seeping away into something else becoming part of a wider culture. Figures become featureless, bodies turn into bloody spirits, everything is summarised with a seeming lack of detail but to those in the know, the 'fans', full of anecdote and clues.

We start to recognise images that despite our best intentions have penetrated into us. Here's Martin – we always thought he was a bit weird... those boys we knew they were strange but who woulda thought...that poor girl...but you know maybe she done it.





Right: *Walsh Street shootings*  
(Constables Damian Eyre  
and Steven Tynan)  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008



### *They told me I would be ok*

What is it about true crime that draws us to it? Why is it that artists in particular see it as such a wellspring of ideas? To my way of thinking it has something to do with the normalcy of the whole thing. It's the collision of the most powerful of human emotions: hate, love, obsession with the banal realities of day to day existence. It's sort of like someone trying to write an opera in your living room.

It's where a photo of you (yes you one never thinks it could happen to them..) at a backyard BBQ starts to revert into something all the more sinister when you go missing or worse are slain, and this becomes the identifying image. Here you are going on a holiday, everything was going

so well, we were having the trip of our lives...or it's a vicious mass murderer caught candidly standing hand in pockets in a carpark, near the sea. It's the heroics of normal people – this lady fought so hard she made the killer leave a footprint. This one didn't give up – here's the clue the killers DNA under her fingernails. These people didn't deserve to die, these things don't happen here – but they do all the time and everyday.



The paintings are like windows into the killer's, the victim's and the artist's world. You look for clues – What's going on here? Who is this person? What does this tell me?

There's nothing to see here folks. Well maybe nothing or maybe everything. It's just the raw material of the art of the everyday - it could be anywhere and it could be anyone – that's the beauty and the terror of it.

– Glenn Barkley

Above: *John Wayne Glover*  
*the grammy killer*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008



Above: *The disappearance  
of Peter Falconio*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008







Right: *Martin Bryant*  
*days before the*  
*Port Arthur massacre*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008





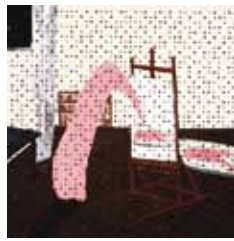
Above: *A message  
from Paul Denyer*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008

Opposite Page Top:  
*Queen Street massacre*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008

Opposite Page Far Right:  
*Mr Baldy*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
600mm x 600mm  
2008

All painting sizes:  
600mm x 600mm

All text work sizes:  
400mm x 400mm



*Lenny Lawson*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008



*Mr Baldy*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008

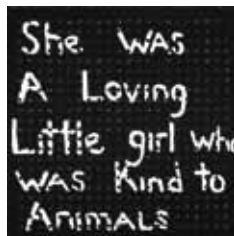


*John Wayne Glover*  
*the granny killer*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008



*Brendon Abbott on the run from Sir David Longland Prison*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008

*A message from Paul Denyer*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008



*Peter Norris Dupas*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008



Fill  
ME With  
ALL your HATE



WHO THE  
FUCK ARE  
YOU WHEN  
YOU ARE AT  
HOME



You  
got No  
Friends

*Russell 'Mad Dog' Cox and his  
escape from Katingal Prison*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008



*Walsh Street shootings  
(Constables Damian Eyre and  
Steven Tynan)*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008



THEY  
Told ME  
I Would BE  
OK

*Martin Bryant days before the  
Port Arthur massacre*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008

MIDGETS

*The disappearance  
of Peter Falconio*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008

FAT  
WHORE



Real Estate  
Agents  
are Maggots

CUNT



*Kathy Pettingill with her son  
Dennis and friends*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008

You never  
Seem To  
Notice Me  
AT ALL

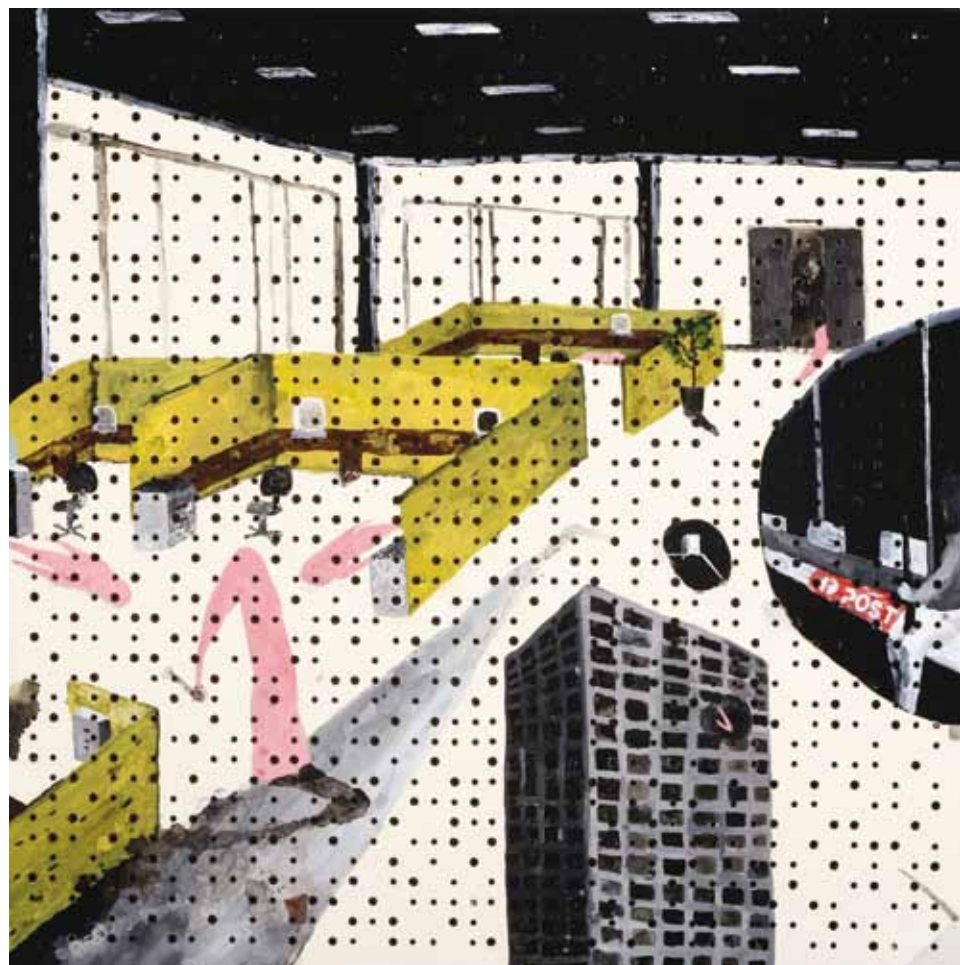
THE  
DIRTIES

*Queen Street massacre*  
Enamel on Acoustic Board  
2008

HE WAS  
A DIFFICULT  
CHILD

ARE  
THE LIGHTS  
OFF





Stranger  
Danger





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**ARTS  
VICTORIA**

