

# Australian Art

in the National Gallery of Australia







## Peter Atkins b.1963

*Journal 1999 (Sydney, Auckland, Melbourne, Mexico City) 1999*

found objects; 20 panels 30.0 x 30.0 cm (each)

purchased 2000 2000.134.A-T

Travel – the experience of other cultures and places – has been a rich source of artistic inspiration for Peter Atkins. His most recent works are in the form of a visual diary composed from items collected during his travels, recalling the artist's physical, emotional and intellectual responses to time and place.

These items are of the everyday and commonplace: plastic tags used to tie bread bags and discarded by parents and children feeding ducks in Centennial Park, bottle-tops from Mexico City, and feathers, leaves and moss collected during a weekend in Eden.

*Journal 1999 (Sydney, Auckland, Melbourne, Mexico City)*

comprises 20 collaged panels. In each, Atkins has carefully arranged his materials to create balanced and harmonious compositions made up of repetitive structures. In so doing, Atkins wittily transforms his prosaic raw materials into an elegant poetry of the everyday.

While Atkins's *Journal 1999* is on the one hand an intimate record of the artist's experiences, on the other it has a more universal resonance. By creating structure and pattern, Atkins is able to suggest the habitual and shared elements of human activity. Similarly, the acts of selecting, discarding and arranging elements to form the finished work echo the human compulsion to create order and meaning out of experience.

Elena Taylor