



EMMA WALKER

ARTIST STATEMENT

My Extended Family

These paintings are part of a body of work that has been produced in the past year. But in reality they are the result of all the years that I have been painting. Each work that I do, somehow informs the next and so all the paintings that I have ever produced, form a kind of family with an ever growing ancestry. With these new works, I feel that I have pushed through into a new territory that I have been trying to reach for a long time. The subject matter is not new. Landscape and the natural world seem to be recurring themes that I never tire of. But the manner in which these works have been painted has become much looser. Painting fearlessly, without thought is not as easy as some might think as they stand before a Jackson Pollack, declaring that their 3 year old could do better. The fact is that a 3 year old would do it better. It seems that as we age we gradually build up layers of conditioning and fear, ending up terribly weighed down by baggage laded with expectations and conventions that can make our every move self conscious and laborious. The primary aim in my practice is to try and work without these limitations. I am finally starting to feel that I am getting closer to this objective.

To write about a specific work is slightly strange for me, as painting is so much about the process and not so much about the end result. Once a painting is finished it seems to have a life of it's own and hopefully speaks for itself. The end result is of course always fascinating for me to behold. That instant when my mind, hand and heart all seem to know at the same time that the moment of completion has finally arrived. When I am really happy with the outcome, there is often an extraordinary sense of surprise and wonder. "Where did this come from?" "is it really me that made this painting or were there other forces at work?". I have come to the conclusion that there are certainly other forces involved. Love, confusion, the muse, poetry, fatigue, joy, longing, music, grief, passion, literature, annoyance, dreams. The list could be endless. Everything that informs my Self is drawn into the process. This all has something to do with the Divine of course...

The way I paint is a very intuitive process. Decisions about where to go next in terms of composition, palette, textures and subject, get made on the hop. I never start a painting with much of an idea of what the outcome will be. I always work using many layers of paint and I enjoy manipulating paint in a variety of different ways to build up rich and varied surfaces. In this way the painting can reveal itself gradually and be visually interesting in many different ways.

I seldom paint from "life". The landscapes that emerge on my canvasses are all and none of the numerous landscapes that I have walked through and have drunk with my eyes and other senses. I guess they are more about the essence of landscape than an actual depiction. For me this is much more rewarding than trying to represent something literally. To capture the atmosphere and the feeling of a place is more my aim. In doing this, I hope that the people that look at my work will have some kind of an emotional response and that these invocations of landscape will some how resonate with others.

The technique of painting in many layers is also symbolically important somehow. It is as if each layer somehow contributes in giving the painting a sense of history and a real physical presence. Like organs, bones, muscles, arteries, veins and skin all being essential and intrinsic parts of the human body. So too does each layer of paint need to be applied (even if some of them end up completely obscured by the next) to make up the finished piece. Sometimes I will photograph a work in its various stages and it is fascinating to see how many paintings there were beneath that final layer. Perhaps this is analogous to a life lived. All of those countless moments that contribute to the experience of being alive and of the person that we become through all of these experiences. Painting is my way of making some sense of the world and my particular incarnation in it.

Gurukula Magazine USA, Spring 2006

CV

born 1969 Sydney, Australia

studies, work & travel

2004-05 UK, Austria, Netherlands
2003 Indonesia
2000 B.A. (Visual Art), National Art School, Sydney
1999 France, Italy, Holland, England, Honduras, India
1998 India
1995-96 USA, Cuba, Honduras, Belize
1995 Residency, Hill End, NSW
1994 Printers assistant, Whaling Road Studios, Sydney
Worked on series of etchings with Arthur Boyd
1993 India and Arnhem Land
1992-94 Diploma Fine Arts, National Art School, Sydney
New Zealand
1990-91 Studied life drawing, Acadamia di Belle Arte
1987-89 Lived in Jakarta and Bali
1986-87 USA, Austria, Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, France
Lived In Rome

solo exhibitions

2007 new work, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney
2006 new paintings, king street gallery on burton sydney
2002 floating world, king street gallery on burton
2000 from little things, big things grow, king street gallery on burton
1999 tidal fragments, broken bay, king street gallery, Sydney
1997 somewhere to fly, king street gallery
1991 Pod Gallery, Sydney

selected group exhibitions

2008 Surface Tension, Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne
2x2, Tim Olsen Gallery Annex, Sydney
Treasures, Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne
Paint, John Gordon Gallery, Coffs Harbour
Hong Kong Art Walk, Hong Kong
Contemporary Australian Art, Gaffer Studio, Hong Kong
Alice Prize, Alice Springs Art Foundation, Alice Springs
2007 Pure, Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne
Gallery Artists, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney
2006/7 Summer Show, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney
2006 Local Art, Lismore Regional Gallery at the Byron Bay Writers Festival
2006 Norville Art Prize, Murrurundi
2005 Oceans 11, Lismore Regional Gallery, Lismore, NSW
Group Show, King Street Gallery, Sydney
Last show of the year, King Street Gallery, Sydney
2003 Country energy art prize, Armidale Regional gallery, NSW
330 show, king street gallery on burton
2002 king street gallery at Span Galleries, Melbourne
The Border Art Prize, Murwillumbah Regional Art Gallery, NSW
2001 monochromatic, king street gallery
Bat, Ball and Brush, A Summer of Cricket and Art at the S.C.G, Sydney
2000 Redlands Westpac Exhibition
women and the landscape, king street gallery on burton
things of wood, king street gallery
group show, king street gallery on burton
1999 New 9, Sir Herman Black Gallery, Sydney University, Sydney
last show of the year, king street gallery on burton
1998 Our Collection-The Artists of Hill End, 1947 - 1998, Bathurst Regional Gallery, NSW
last show of the year, king street gallery on burton
gallery artists, king street gallery on burton

- 1997 gallery artists, king street gallery on burton
horizon line, (curated by robert hirschmann), king street gallery, newtown, Sydney
- 1996 Guitar Shaped World, Tamworth Regional Gallery, NSW
Fishers Ghost Prize , Campbelltown Regional Gallery, NSW
- 1995-96 The Artists of Hill End,
Art Gallery of NSW, touring Bathurst; Armidale; Broken Hill; Ballarat Regional Galleries
- 1995 Fresh, (with Pamela Cowper), Gallery on Booth, Sydney
Alumni Exhibition, National Art School, Sydney
- 1994 Dissonance, Wollongong University Art Gallery, NSW
- 1992 Drawing Show, Pod Gallery
- 1988 Dua Bersama, Mitra Budaya, Jakarta, Indonesia
- 1986 Ad in Fine Art Um, Surry Street Gallery, Sydney

Collections

Bathurst Regional Gallery
Macquarie Bank
Jackson Smith Solicitors
UTS Gallery Collection
Private Collections

selected bibliography

- 2006 Alex Warren: Starters, Insideout Magazine April pg.150
Youssef, Sherine: Sydney Serenity, Maddison Magazine, March pg.296
- 2002 Lenny Ann Low: Metropolitan, The Sydney Morning Herald, 21-22 December pg.15
Pryor, Lisa: Spotlight, The Sydney Morning Herald, 19 November 1999
Smee, Sebastian: Review, The Galleries, The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 April 1997
Smee, Sebastian: 180 Degrees of Separation, The Sydney Morning Herald, Metro, 20 June