

Stella Downer Fine Art

Dealer Consultant & Valuer

Member of the Australian Commercial Galleries Association
ABN 86 229 108 803

MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Summer 2021

YVONNE BOAG, ANNABEL BUTLER, JANET DAWSON, VIOLA DOMINELLO,
MERRAN ESSON, RACHEL FAIRFAX, ASHLEY FROST & STEVE LOPES

2 February – 27 February 2021

Opening Saturday 6 February, 3 – 5 pm

We are kicking off 2021 with a fresh and summery exhibition with recent works by several of our artists. Each artist has responded to this seasonal theme by evoking a sense of place and time.

YVONNE BOAG's work becomes a response to new surroundings. The results are semi-abstract, strong graphic forms that are simultaneously simple and complex. There is a vivid and immediate quality to her works. Bold gouache is used to capture those visceral encounters with new places and foreign vistas. The result is a patchwork of joyous and vibrant pops of colour in each work; radiating hot with energy and a sense of hyper-stimulation, as if attempting to drink in the sites all at once. ANNABEL BUTLER's painterly landscape vignettes evoke the dry heat and strong light of an Australian summer. Painting *en plein air*, BUTLER has worked on the small 9x5 format in the tradition of the Heidelberg School. She has worked in these smaller formats partly out of necessity. While in between studio spaces and on the road, BUTLER works from a makeshift studio in the back of her car; taking opportunities to paint her surroundings *en plein air* in this small, portable format. This grouping of small works depicts Bondi Beach and Pavilion, showing scenes both before and after the beach was closed during recent Covid restrictions.

JANET DAWSON's ongoing desire to explore and expose the resonance of a place emerges through her pastel drawings and watercolours of, often, rural Australian landscapes and the everyday. This series of time-based drawings of cloud works made at Scribble Rock near Binalong where she used to live. VIOLA DOMINELLO finds inspiration near her home in and around the Hawkesbury and the hinterlands. Working *en plein air* she captures an instant of changing light and tone. Through painterly gestures DOMINELLO's practice is imbued with a sensitivity that reveals moments of intricate and transient beauty of the landscape.

Drawing from her rural upbringing on the land, MERRAN ESSON explores the vessel in relation to man-made catchments such as tanks and dams, as well as naturally occurring catchments such as basin shaped areas and drainage networks in nature. Alongside her works that draw reference to tanks and corrugated iron, ESSON's latest elegant, bulbous forms defy notions of form and weight, and in their perforated organic forms reject the implied function of vessels. Travelling through the Monaro plains of NSW in Autumn, ESSON was inspired by the change of colours in the European trees planted in the plains. The resulting works reflect the orange, green and gold tones of the tree change

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in season. The roundness of ESSON's sculptures is reminiscent of the geometric simplification of landscapes by European Impressionists such as Paul Cézanne.

RACHEL FAIRFAX depicts scenes from the coastline of Coogee that are quintessentially Australian. The soft washes speak of a lightness of hand, evoking a painterly stillness in the works that immerse you in their reflection. Painting at the turning points of the day ASHLEY FROST's works capture the sublime transition of early morning or evening dusk light. Fluid in form and composition, His paintings engage otherworldly evocations of light through a vivid and viscous palette. This mixed media work was made during recent residencies at Fowlers Gap, near Broken Hill. Also painting *en plein air*, STEVE LOPES offers up a brief summer oasis in his latest coastal studies. His energetic paintings of the vast beach at low tide, seaside cliffs and rocky plains, and the native pandanus tree along the coastline radiate with the heat of the day and the promise of cool relief from the sea. These works were painted along the New Zealand coastline during LOPES' travels there in 2018.

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