

PAUL RYAN

THE COLONIES, SOUTH BY SOUTHEAST

22 February - 16 March 2018

Catalogue of Works

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GALLERY

When Paul Ryan paints the landscape, it's not the scenery so much as the forgotten histories of his local area that he seeks to explore. Never straying far from his home base in Thirroul, a suburb of Wollongong noted for post-colonial industries including whaling, logging, and mining, Ryan repeatedly finds himself searching for the footprints of the people who came before him. Multi-layered contemplations on the impact of invasion and colonisation, his work examines the damage to natural and social worlds that once existed in the dark, hilly bushland of the NSW South Coast, and the alternative realities that might otherwise have been.

A keen surfer, Ryan is afforded a dramatic panoramic view of the Illawarra Escarpment and its coastal plain from the ocean that ignites imagination and provokes reflection on the absurdity of colonialism – the clash of cultures that occurred, the pompous naivety of Europeans entering the landscape in long woolen coats and oversized hats, and the bewilderment traditional land owners must have felt when they first encountered such a sight. Manifesting the ghosts of the past, Ryan brings them to life with strong visuals and a wry sense of humour, much like a novelist might construct a work of creative non-fiction. Though very little of the region's beginnings are on public record, Ryan possesses a compulsive fascination with colonisation and the ongoing ramifications of white settlement, and uses this knowledge to recreate lost history. Adopted in New Zealand at birth and brought to Australia as a young child, Ryan can empathise with what it means to be both powerless to involuntary displacement, and an outsider in a new land.

This search for hidden memories within the northern Illawarra's bush might also provide the perfect analogy for how Ryan tackles the other aspect of his practice, that of portraiture. Though his landscapes have been acclaimed within the Australian art scene for almost three decades, it is his singular way of depicting the human face that has most recently garnered attention. A continuation of his Australian historical theme, Ryan's approach to portraiture is much the same as that of his landscapes – that the overall view is a blank canvas upon which he can envisage endless alternatives. In the same way he fixates on one particular environment, so too does he limit his range of sitters to paint only those with whom he is personally familiar and whose features are so well known to him as to no longer be a distraction. Pushing beyond external appearances, he eschews painting an obvious likeness in order to discover underlying characters and personality traits; a process that turns his small band of recognisable friends into almost unidentifiable grotesques of themselves, their features manipulated to suit new roles in his grand narrative.

Born in New Zealand in 1964, Paul Ryan moved to Australia with his adoptive parents in 1973. Exhibiting his work since 1988, he won the 2015 Hurford Hardwood Portrait Prize at Lismore Regional Gallery for his portrait of Noah Taylor, and is a previous winner of multiple national painting prizes. A thirteen-time finalist in the Archibald Prize, he has received manifold highly respected award nominations throughout his career including the Fleurieu Landscape Prize, the Mosman Art Prize, the Doug Moran National Portraiture Prize, the Blake Prize, and the Wynne and Sulman Prizes. His work is held in both public and private collection throughout Australia and internationally.

South by Southeast 2018
oil on linen
122 x 122 cm
\$12,000

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North Coast Colonial Girl 2018
oil on linen
122 x 138 cm
\$15,000

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Cook and Hounds II 2017
oil on linen
153 x 138 cm
\$15,500



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The Colonial, Blue Boy 2018
oil on linen
153 x 153 cm
\$17,000

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North by Northwest 2017
oil on linen
112 x 122 cm
\$12,000

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Coledale Cook and Hound 2017
oil on linen
153 x 138 cm
\$15,500

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January, Coal Coast 2018
oil on linen
122 x 138 cm
\$15,000

EDWINA
CORLETTE
GALLERY





Cook and Hounds I 2017
oil on linen
153 x 138 cm
\$15,500

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Is This What It Means To Be Free 2018
oil on linen
72 x 82 cm
\$5,500



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The Hunt Clifton 2017
oil on found object
47 x 79 cm
\$4,000

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GALLERY

The Hunt, Chimney 2017
oil on found object
49 x 79 cm
\$4,000

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Blue Boy Bali 2017
oil on found object
59 x 69 cm
\$4,000

EDWINA
CORLETTE
GALLERY

Blue Mountains Hunter 2017
oil on found object
29 x 75 cm
\$2,900



EDWINA
CORLETTE
GALLERY



The Hunt. Green Jacket 2017
oil on found object
46 x 60 cm
\$4,000

EDWINA
CORLETTE
GALLERY

This is what it means to be free 2018
oil on linen
72 x 82 cm
\$5,500

EDWINA
CORLETTE
GALLERY



Born 1964, Auckland, New Zealand

Lives and works in Australia

EDUCATION

1990 Bachelor of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, New South Wales

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2018 'The Colonies, South by Southeast', Edwina Corlette Gallery, Brisbane

2017 'Happy Days in the Colony', Edwina Corlette Gallery, Brisbane

'The Colonies', nanda/hobbs, Sydney

2016 'Queen and Country', Olsen Irwin, Sydney

'Frank and Paul', Egg and Dart Gallery, Thirroul, New South Wales

2015 'Birds of Wollongong', Olsen Irwin, Sydney

'Stalking Noah', Gallery Ecosse, Exeter

2014 'Happy Days on the Leisure Coast', Olsen Irwin, Sydney

2013 'Wild Colonial Boys', Olsen Irwin, Sydney

2012 'Wild Colonial Boys', Egg and Dart, Rex Irwin Art Dealer, Sydney

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2017 'Coast', Edwina Corlette Gallery, Brisbane

Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Edwina Corlette Gallery, Brisbane

Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, nanda/hobbs, Sydney

Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, James Maikin Gallery, Victoria

2015 Group Show, This is No Fantasy, Melbourne

2014 Group Show, Station, Melbourne

2013 'Green Cathedral', Wollongong City Gallery

AWARDS

2017 Finalist, Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra

2016 Finalist, Kilgour Prize, Newcastle Art Gallery

Honourable mention, Paddington Art Prize, Sydney

Finalist, Plein Air Prize, New South Wales Parliament House

2015 Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales

Winner, Hurford Hardwood Portrait Prize, Lismore Regional Gallery

Finalist, Mosman Prize, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney

2014 Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales

Runner up, Mosman Prize, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney

Finalist, Doug Moran Prize, Paddington, Sydney

2013 Winner, The Bay of Fires Art Prize, Bay of Fires, Tasmania

Finalist, Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales

Finalist, Fleurieu Landscape Prize, McLaren Vale, South Australia

Finalist, Mosman Prize, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney

Finalist, Tattersalls Art Prize, Brisbane

Finalist, Blake Prize, Sydney

Finalist, Fishers Ghost Art Prize, Campbelltown

Semi-finalist, Doug Moran Portrait Prize

2012 Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales

Finalist, Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales

Winner, Geelong Contemporary Art Prize, Geelong Regional Gallery

Finalist, Fishers Ghost Prize, Campbelltown Gallery

Finalist, Tattersalls Prize, Brisbane

Semi-finalist, Doug Moran Prize, Paddington, Sydney

COLLECTIONS

Artbank

Geelong Regional Gallery

Lismore Regional Gallery

Mosman Art Gallery

Manly Art Gallery

Wollongong Regional Art Gallery

Wollongong University Collection

Private collections in Australia and Internationally

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