

Landscape and Memory

MICHELLE HISCOCK

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LOVETT BAY (after an historical photograph) watercolour on paper 38 x 28 cm

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In Memory of
Jonathan Nix



Landscape and Memory

Art takes many forms, each with an associated body of knowledge. Historically the most fundamental of all forms of art is drawing, which articulates a direct and immediate aesthetic encounter with the world. And it is from this encounter that art arises: one does not have an idea and then work out how to represent it; art is not the illustration of concepts, it is an embodied form of thinking. It begins with practice, and it is through increasingly fluent practice that we acquire the ability to make our experience of the world concrete.

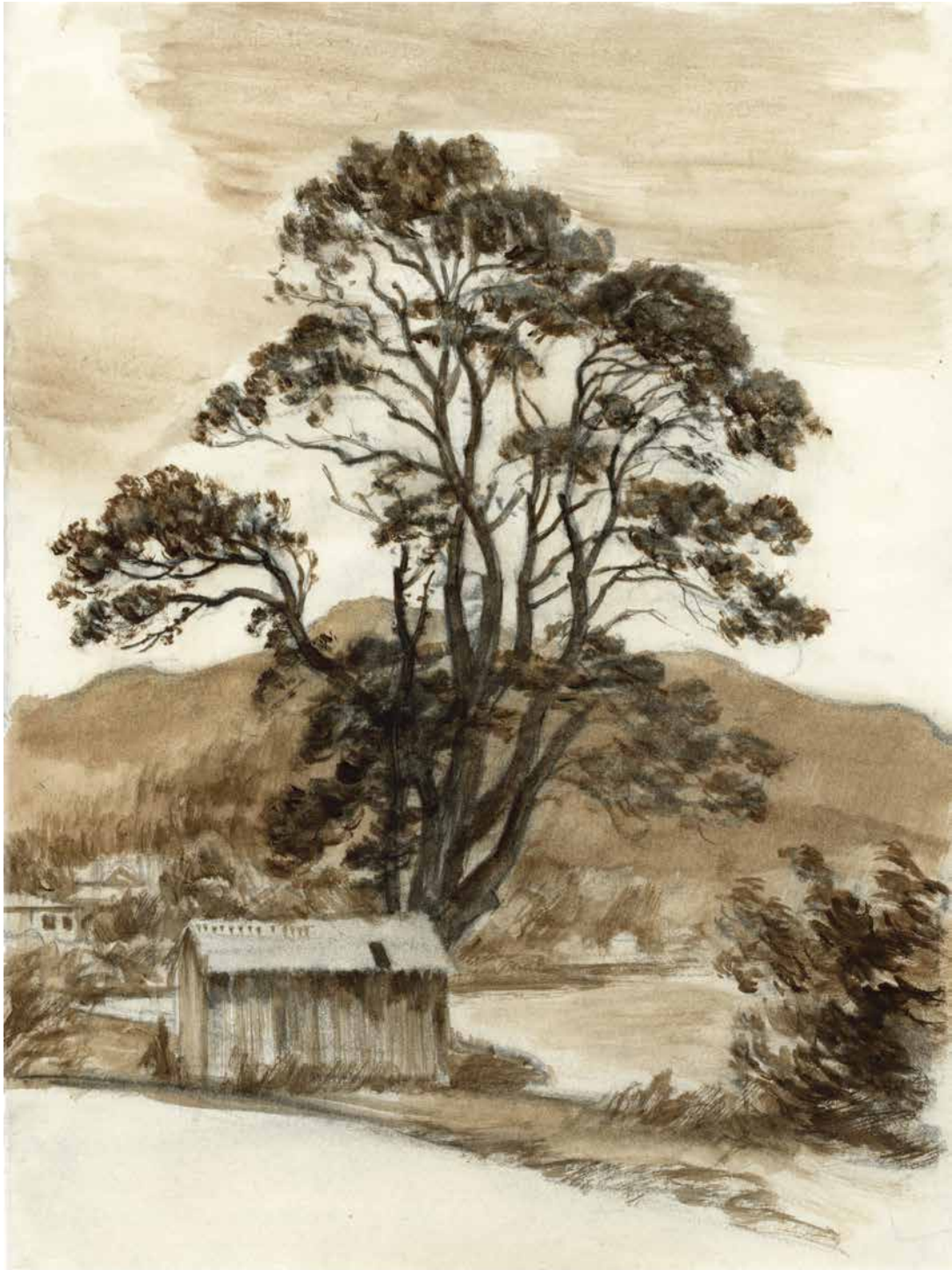
Drawing with the brush is closer to painting because of its predominantly tonal, fluid nature, especially when light is added with body colour which, unlike the other media is opaque. But ordinarily the light parts of the composition are created by leaving the paper ground visible to varying degrees as in printmaking or other dry media. The tonal effect differs from a medium such as pencil which is best suited to the analysis and elucidation of structure and the definition of contours. Tonal drawing with the brush conveys feeling, mood and atmosphere and resists the same degree of control and clarity. Such tonal drawing was the essential organising principle underpinning the development of modern painting from Leonardo's invention of chiaroscuro onwards.

Impressed by the disciplined spontaneity of Japanese calligraphy while an exchange student in Tokyo, I later gravitated to the European tradition of ink drawing from nature – an integral part of the practice of classical landscape – and resolved to master the 17th century version of this technique that is specifically suited to working in the field. Chinese landscape ink drawing differs from the European practice in that it requires a rehearsal of gestures and formulas derived from the close scrutiny of nature, in order to evoke the essence or inner breath of life. The European tradition of wash drawing takes a more empirical approach, conceived as preparation for oil paintings produced in the studio. In a post-photographic world, one might question the necessity of making these preparatory works. But the practice is much more than the mere harvesting of raw material or data.

Sketching from nature requires long periods working in the environment with an unusual level of attentiveness – something increasingly uncommon in a digitally mediated world. We think we have seen something until we begin to draw it and then we come to realise that our perception was perfunctory and superficial. And there is something even more subtle: every place has a particular character due to its geographic position and topographical specificity as well as – significantly for us – the degree to which it is in its pristine natural state or has been encroached upon and shaped by human activity. History unfolds in the landscape too and leaves its traces, giving rise to a palimpsest that can sometimes be felt more than seen by the eye. The slowness of sketching in the landscape has the capacity to reveal some of this character, document unseen aspects of the natural environment, and capture its inherent life.

Where the millions of touristic photographs of famous places seem to take something away from our capacity to experience them and see them afresh, motifs that have become artistic pilgrimage sites like those of the Roman Forum seem to grow in significance as successive artists produce new interpretations embedded in their age. These carefully observed drawings and paintings add layers of meaning rather than taking them away. Our experience of landscape is enriched by memory, and the act of drawing itself seems capable of unveiling layers of meaning. The passage of time, whether on a human or geological scale, is imprinted on the environment and reveals itself to the patient sketcher, even in the pursuit of one particular moment with its slowly moving shadows cast from a particular angle of the sun, determined by the season and tempered by the even more impermanent weather.

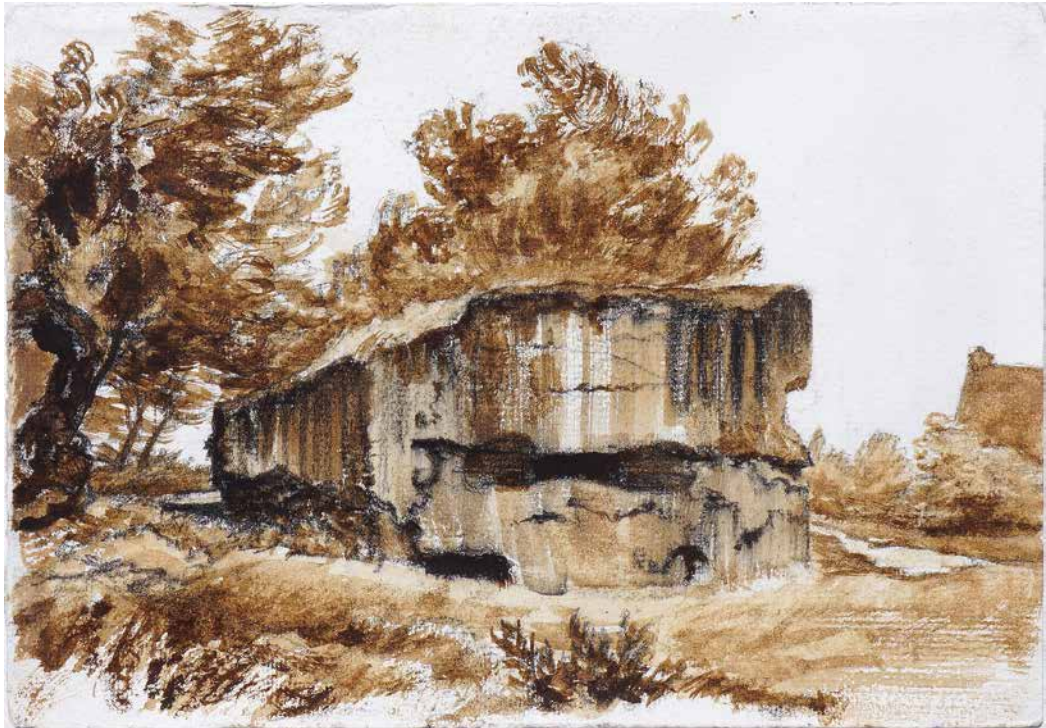
Michelle Hiscock
September 2024



ON THE DERWENT 2018 watercolour on paper 32 x 25 cm

THIEPVAL 2017 watercolour on paper 14.5 x 20.5 cm





BUNKER AT HILL 60 2017 watercolour on paper 14.5 x 20.5 cm



ROCK BUNKER (compositional study) 2018 watercolour on paper 29.5 x 41 cm

RIVER NOCTURNE (compositional study) 2018 oil on prepared paper 40 x 29.5 cm



THE WATERFALL IN HUDSON PARADE, CLAREVILLE 2022 oil on linen 91 x 60.5 cm



UPSTREAM AT DUSK, BELOW THE COURTHOUSE 2018 watercolour on paper 32 x 25 cm



CLAUDIAN RIVER BEND (compositional study) 2018 watercolour on paper 29.5 x 41 cm



THE DARK CORNER (compositional study) 2018 watercolour and gouache on paper 38.5 x 49 cm



THE RIVERBEND AT BURRIER 2015 oil on prepared paper 11 x 21 cm



MEROOGAL 2016 watercolour and gouache on paper 40 x 50 cm (oval)



BATTLE GROUND TO FIELDS 2017 watercolour on paper 20.5 x 25.5 cm



RIVER BEND AT DUSK (large study) 2018
watercolour on paper 38 x 48.5 cm





PORT ARTHUR 2018 watercolour on paper 38 x 28 cm





MICHELLE HISCOCK

Born 1968, Australia

- 2017 Sketching tour of the WWI battlefields of the Western Front: Somme Valley, France and the Ypres Salient, Belgium
 Inaugural St Albans Artist in Residence
- 2013 Leader, sketching tour of Rome and the Campagna *In the Footsteps of the Landscape Masters*
- 1998–present Lecturer in Drawing, Painting and Printmaking, National Art School, Sydney
- 1997 Six months as artist in residence at Ecole Albert Defois, Les Cerqueux sous Passavant, France
- 1994–97 Lecturer in Drawing, Painting and Studio Theory, Adelaide Central School of Art, Adelaide
- 1991 Bachelor of Visual Arts, Canberra School of Art, Australian National University, Canberra
- 1986 Twelve months living and studying in Japan

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Landscape and Memory*, Rusten House, Queanbeyan NSW
- 2021 *Paintings from the Studio and the Field*, Australian Galleries, Royston Street, Sydney
- 2019 *Two Rivers*, Shoalhaven Regional Gallery, Nowra NSW
- 2018 *War and Peace, Paintings and Drawings from St Albans and the Western Front*, Australian Galleries, Royston Street, Sydney
 Paintings and Drawings from St Albans, The Courthouse, St Albans NSW
- 2015 *Paintings and Watercolours* Australian Galleries, Royston Street, Sydney
- 2008 *Paintings*, Australian Galleries, Sydney
- 2007 *New Paintings*, Australian Galleries Painting and Sculpture, Melbourne
- 2006 *Recent Paintings*, Australian Galleries Painting and Sculpture, Sydney
- 2002 *Paintings*, Australian Galleries, Sydney
- 2000 *Landscapes*, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney
- 1998 *Drawings and Paintings*, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney
- 1996 *Drawings*, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney
- 1994 *Paintings*, Australian Galleries, Melbourne
 Paintings, North Adelaide School of Art Gallery, Adelaide
- 1993 *Paintings*, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney
- 1992 *Ash*, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Archibald Salon des Refusés (Finalist)*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
Australian Watercolour Institute 100th Annual Exhibition (Guest),
The Garden Gallery, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney
- 2023 *Archibald Prize (Finalist)*, AGNSW, Sydney
Portia Geach Memorial Award (Finalist), S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
Waverley Woollabra 9 x 5 Landscape Prize (Highly Commended), Sydney
Korea Australia Arts Foundation Art Prize (Finalist), Korean Arts Centre, Sydney
Flow National Contemporary Watercolour Prize (Finalist), Wollongong
- 2022 *Salon des Refusés (Finalist)*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2021 *Portia Geach Memorial Award (Finalist)*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2021 *Hadley's Art Prize (Finalist)*, Hobart
Gallipoli Art Prize (Finalist), Merrylands RSL, Sydney
- 2020 *Portia Geach Memorial Award (Finalist)*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2019 *Gallipoli Art Prize (Finalist)*, 12 Loftus St, Sydney
Salient (Travelling exhibition), Bank Art Museum, Moree; Tweed Regional Gallery, Murwillumbah, NSW
- 2018 *Salient (Travelling exhibition)*, New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale, NSW;
Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, Bathurst, NSW; ANZAC Memorial, Hyde Park Sydney
Portia Geach Memorial Award (Finalist), S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
Mosman Art Prize (Finalist), Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney
NSW Parliament Plein Air Prize (Finalist), NSW Parliament, Sydney
- 2017 *Portia Geach Memorial Award (Finalist)*, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 2016 *The William Fletcher Rome Travelling Fellowship and Bundanon Residency Exhibition*,
Artarmon Galleries, Sydney
Meroogal Women's Art Prize (Finalist), Sydney Living Museums Foundation
- 2015 *An exhibition of paintings, sculpture & works on paper*, Australian Galleries, Royston Street, Sydney
Portia Geach Memorial Award (Finalist), S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
Tattersall's Landscape Art Prize (Finalist), Tattersall's Club, Brisbane
- 2014 *One of Each*, Australian Galleries, Derby Street, Melbourne
- 2008 *Michelle Hiscock and Nerissa Lea*, Adelaide Central Gallery
- 2007 *Small Pleasures*, Australian Galleries Painting & Sculpture, Melbourne
- 2006 *Summery*, Australian Galleries Painting & Sculpture, Sydney
50th Anniversary Exhibition, 5th June, Australian Galleries, Melbourne
- 2005 *Small Important Works*, Australian Galleries, Sydney
Australian Contemporary Art, De Récourt Art in collaboration with Australian Galleries,
The Gallery in Cork Street, London
- 2000 *Women and the Landscape*, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney
- 1999 *Marks and Matter*, Tin Sheds Gallery, Sydney
Sydney Figurative Painters, Hill-Smith Fine Art Gallery, Adelaide
- 1996 *Consider the Mark*, Adelaide Central Gallery, Adelaide
- 1997 *A Fine Line*, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney
- 1998 *Artists Who Teach at the National Art School*, National Art School, Sydney
- 1995 *International Interstate*, King Street Gallery on Burton, Sydney
- 1994 *Fragile Objects*, National Library of Australia, Canberra
and the Musée des Beaux Arts de la Ville du Locle, Switzerland
- 1991 *Microcosms*, Gary Anderson Gallery, Sydney

PUBLIC LECTURES AND DEMONSTRATIONS

Plein-air Painting in Europe 1780 – 1850,
Exhibition Floor Talk, August, 2004,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Boucher, Watteau and the Origin of the Rococo,
Exhibition Floor Talk, 30 March 2005,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Camille Pissarro, the First Impressionist,
Artist's Talk, 12 January 2006,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Richard Glover interviews plein-air artists: Euan MacLeod, Imants Tillers and Michelle Hiscock, Art After Hours celebrity
Talk and video, in association with the exhibition:
Monet and the Impressionists, 5 November, 2008,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Landscape and Memory,
Lecture on my own Plein-air works, along with Imants
Tillers and Paul Connor, to coincide with the exhibition:
Monet and the Impressionists, August 2009,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Printmaking in the Age of Romanticism,
Exhibition Floor Talk, August – October 2009,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

David to Cézanne: master drawings from the Prat Collection, Paris,
Drawing Masterclass 17, 23 and 30 of October, 2010,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

How Paintings are Made Part 1 and 2,
Lectures given for the Art Gallery Society Volunteer
Guides, 2010/2011, Art Gallery of New South Wales

Painting and Drawing in the Renaissance,
Lecture on methods and materials in the Renaissance,
March 2011, Department of Art History,
National Art School

The Poetry of Drawing: Pre-Raphaelite designs, Studies and Watercolours,
Exhibition Floor Talk,
27 July 2011, Art Gallery of New South Wales

In the Footsteps of the Landscape Masters,
Lecture in the Armchair Travel Series, September, 2012,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Corot and Plein-air Painting,
Lecture in the Diploma Series: Revolution to Romanticism:
European Art and Culture 1750 – 1850,
for the Art Gallery Society of NSW, 14/15 August, 2013,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Techniques of Impressionism: Plein-Air Painting 1874 – 1886,
Lecture in the Art Appreciation Series:
Realism to Surrealism: European Art and Culture 1846 –
1936, for the Art Gallery Society of NSW, 09/10 April 2014,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

Anatomy of an Oil Painting,
Artist Demonstration and film to coincide with the
exhibition *The Greats*, 16 – 20 November 2015,
Art Gallery of New South Wales

The Greats,
Exhibition Talk discussing Camille Corot's *Ville d'Avray*,
19 November 2015, Art Gallery of New South Wales

The Critic's Choice Art and Music Cruise: Munich/Main and Rhine/Amsterdam,
Artist Demonstration: copy of Rembrandt's *Self-portrait c.1628*, 19 June – 4 July 2016, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Colour in 18th Century Portrait Painting,
Lecture for the Colour Society of Australia,
24 October 2018, Albion Centre, Sydney

Becoming a Landscape Painter,
Artist's Talk, 14 January 2020, Summer School,
National Art School, Sydney

Michelle Hiscock in Conversation with Dr Christopher Allen,
Artist's Talk 15 May 2021, Australian Galleries, Sydney



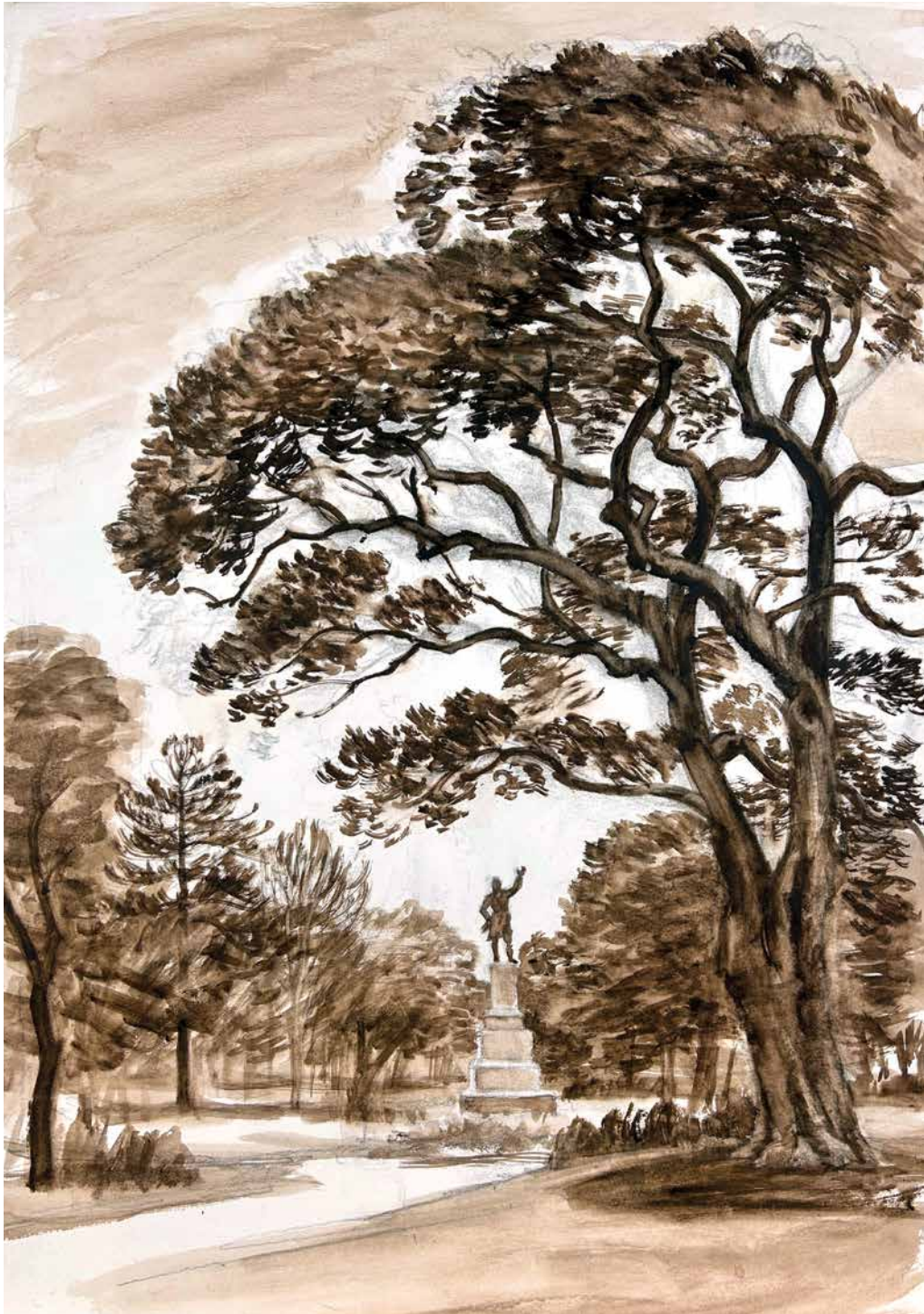
RIVER IN THE MIST (after Corot) 2012 watercolour on paper 12 x 16 cm

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- Salient, Contemporary Artists at the Western Front* catalogue for the travelling exhibition, 2018
- Art Gallery of New South Wales, *Anatomy of an Oil Painting*, Art Gallery of New South Wales video channel, 2015:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3nTVtS5bmc>
- Fox Koob, Simone; *Modern take on landscapes*, The Australian, pp 14, October 2015
- Allen, Richard James; *Fixing the Broken Nightingale*, cover image, Flying Island Books, Macao, China, 2013
- Anderson, Patricia; Luminous Landscapes, Art eGuide book, Apple iBook and Amazon Kindle, 2012
- Beaumont, J., Fenner, F., & McDonald, J.; *The Land and its Psyche: The Macquarie Group collection*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2012
- McDonald, John; *The Past is the Present*, Australian Art Review, pp 30-31, Nov – Jan 2009
- Jones, Jan; review of solo exhibition, Art Monthly Australia, Canberra, Summer 2009
- Allen, Christopher; *Exhibition Folio*, Australian Galleries, May 2002
- Smee, Sebastian; review of solo exhibition, Metro, The Sydney Morning Herald, pp 17, 15 May 1998
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- Radock, Stephanie; review of solo exhibition, The Adelaide Review, No.131, September 1994
- Allen, Christopher; review of solo exhibition, Asian Art News, Vol.2 No.1, pp 36-37, illus., Jan – Feb 1992
- Delaruelle, Jacques; *Small is Beautiful*, The Sydney Review, pp 17, Jan – Feb 1992
- Lynn, Elwyn; review of group exhibition, The Weekend Review, The Australian, pp 13, February 1992

COLLECTIONS

Macquarie Bank
Australian Catholic University
National Art School
National Library of Australia
Australian National University



COOK IN HYDE PARK 2020 watercolour on paper 45 x 34.5 cm



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