

Jesse Odgers

Contemporary visual arts practitioner & fine art painter

Pictured with - Pathways for recovery - Homage.
Tryptich panel each: 35 x 85 cm
Acrylic on canvas, 2011



As a Contemporary Visual Artist of 20 years professional arts practice, my first major exhibition was a group show at A.C.C.A. My paintings have previously explored definitions and preconceptions of cultural and social dictums. Following the loss of my home, community and way of life in the bushfires, I am currently painting to visually challenge and extend some commonly held social, environmental and historical dictums, applied in a personal context to matters of 'placement and displacement' in the journey through bushfire and trauma recovery.

In artistic response to the bushfires, I have embarked to creatively explore the philosophical framework of the 'Still Life' to hallmark the metamorphic changes in flux beholding our forests and community, and in so doing, exhibited paintings in two of the Bushfire Royal Commissions exhibitions and in privately commissioned paintings.

My artworks juxtapose an interpretation of 'Life', that is in constant metamorphic flux, responsive, fluid and transitional, that instead of a static 'Still'-ness, embodies atmospheric 'edges' of both our landscape and community, where stillness embodies resonances of the pre, present, and post-fire experiences.

In this way, my artistic intentions are to respectfully broaden the greater public's awareness and understanding beyond the confines of demise, regeneration, and recovery, to instead pictorially represent a complexity of details in those stories and in so doing, my paintings aim to deepen connectivity of people and place with these spaces of recovery and journey to new normal.

Tryptich

Immediately identifiable, the charcoal band unifies an extensive landscape of the 2009 Black Saturday Victorian bushfires, where harmful definitions of loss divided families, friendships and communities (as represented by the spaces dividing the panels). The charcoal band instead unifies the diversity and collective experiences of the fire-affected. As a physical link to the fires, I've used charcoal sourced from burnt trees on my fire affected property.

The banded lines linking each panel acknowledge the ongoing indigenous cultural heritage of the fire affected regions, where once caring for country created safe and sustainable living environments. The lines also represent unification of fire affected regions and communities after the fracturing from the fire event.

Underlying each panel is painted an aspect of our landscape in re-vegetation, regrowth or renewal. While a metaphor for our personal ongoing recovery, these plant images are further pictorially placed as deeper metaphor for the underlying mental and emotional experiences of trauma.

Underlying the first panel is a young plant flowering to seed for the first time - metaphor for all the 'first' post fire or trauma event experiences and their psychological effects. These first experiences, be they first shower, first meal, first change of season, first rain, first birthday, are mentally and emotionally challenging.

The middle panel features an old growth tree, whose dense trunk metaphorically contains our collective body of memory, a witness to our lives pre-trauma. Radiating out are the younger branches having new form, new shape, as metaphor for our new psychological and emotional pathways, as we challenge ourselves to accept grief and joy as part of our journey to create a 'new normal'.

The final panel depicts a vigorous young sapling that bends and waivers in acceptance of psychological, emotional and environmental challenges and grows strong roots to further withstand future challenges. Purple is featured to reference women specifically, and our abilities to create pathways to recovery for recovery through self healing, contributing to healthier families, friendships and communities.

Contact Firefoxes for sales or commission enquiries with Jesse Odgers - Artist.