



Firebird Road 2017, Mixed media on canvas, 75 x 75 cm

Ross Booker *Tracing Time*

Woolloongabba Art Gallery

24 Oct — 18 Nov 2017

The artworks in this exhibition are based on many regular excursions into Central Australia, the Kimberley and the Flinders Ranges. Spending long periods of time walking in this country has become a meditation. It's just that vast landscape and me.

It was on my first visit to The Centre in 2002 that I felt a profound connection, it was like coming home. I loved the remoteness and the stillness out there.

Tracing Time refers to the geological deep time I witnessed in these ancient landscapes. Trying to fathom the age of the landforms is like trying to grasp infinity.

The geology of some recently visited cliff faces date back thousands of millions of years, when mountain ranges once formed the ocean floor. My insignificance becomes even more evident when walking in this time rich land. It's easy to become so absorbed and lose all sense of self; becoming part of the landscape.

Returning to the city with many potent memories; the afterimage of the landforms and a strong sense of a primeval land. The towering cliffs, the cradling gorges and the folding ranges stretching to the horizon. Drawing from all this, I depict the country where I've walked. My method is intuitive, interpreting annotated marks made or remembered along the way.

Tracing Time also refers to my working process: building up layers of paint, ink and other media over time. The surface of a work is important; building up a vibrant texture; the interplay that occurs when applying one colour over another.

Working on various pictures, off and on, for many years, with some having several near complete paintings underneath. At times I can lose my way completely and the only way forward is to paint over the whole thing.

Leaving traces of the under paintings becomes evidence of the history embedded within the finished object; the geology of paint.

Approaching each painting with a sense of discovery, I work against my fundamental urge to control, and allow for the accidental. There's a sense of release when looking back to evidence of the abandonment of experimentation; leading to variety in each work and making them appear quite different.

I tend to work flat on a table or the floor as opposed to an easel. This is mainly due to the fluid nature of the media used, with paint or ink drying in pools on the surface of the paper. Sometimes working with the picture upside down helps disassociate with the preconceptions of painting a landscape.

The names I have given my artworks refer directly to the landscapes I am painting or drawing from. Some are real place names; some are invented.

Ross Booker, 2017



Dingo Gap 2017, Mixed media on paper, 75 x 106 cm



Red Hour Range 2017, Mixed media on paper, 37.5 x 110 cm



Above Ross River 2016, Mixed media on drafting film, 87 x 400 cm



Matrimonial Hill 2017, Mixed media on paper, 58 x 77 cm

Woolloongabba Art Gallery

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