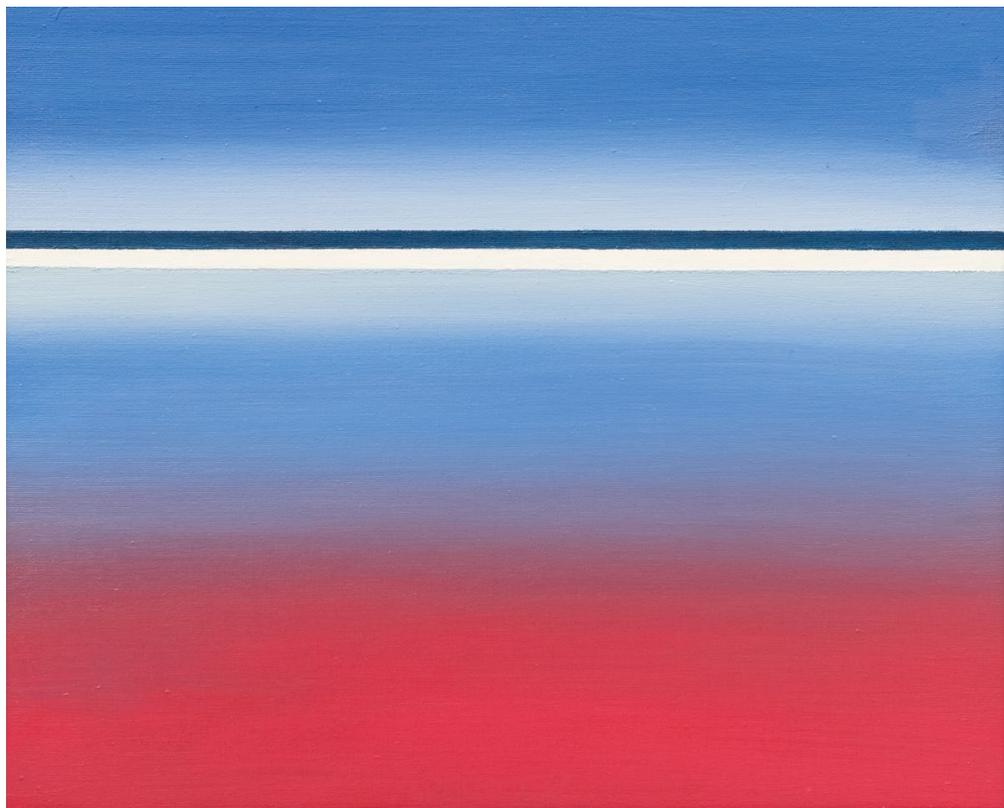


Wim de Vos



E y r e A e r i a l

Exhibition Catalogue 2018

My aim was to create a series of paintings of Lake Eyre and surrounds after flying over and visiting sites there during September 2011. Not long afterwards came the sad news that three dedicated individuals who travelled this vast landscape extensively by helicopter had died due to a helicopter crash, while making another documentary for the ABC. The journalist Paul Lockyer, cameraman John Bean and pilot Gary Ticehurst gave much to the lives of many who live in and love to visit this landscape. I would like you to remember them in the works you see here.

Wim de Vos 2018



Eyre Aerial #27 2018, Oil on canvas, 61 x 120 cm

front image: *Eyre Aerial #22 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 41.5 x 51 cm*

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Images © Wim de Vos

Photography by Tara Divine

www.studiowestend.com

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EYRE AERIAL

The flooding of Lake Eyre would have to be one of Australia's great natural events. Cooper Creek, the Diamantina and Georgina rivers flow with water from rains from over a thousand kilometres away -in Queensland- towards the parched areas around Lake Eyre. Coloured earths gathered on the journey create the most magnificent abstract patterns in slow motion, best observed from the air. It is indeed flights over these vistas that filled Wim de Vos with awe and wonder.

A long artistic journey of exploring identity and belonging precedes these mature and powerful works.

Wim de Vos was born in the Netherlands and came to Brisbane with his parents in 1959 when he was 12 years old. After gaining a Diploma in illustration at Central Tech in Brisbane (1963–67), he trained at the Queensland College of Art (QCA) (1978–80). He became first well known in Brisbane when he showed at Michael Milburn's gallery in 1984–86 (reviewed by Gertrude Langer), soon after two postgraduate years in the Netherlands at the Jan van Eyck Academie in Maastricht. There were prints and drawings on paper, folded to represent bay windows through which the wintery Dutch landscape was observed; views half remembered from his youth rekindled and reconnected with. Though quite young when he left the country of his birth he noted that: "I could totally understand it, everything about it: the smells, the sounds, the looks—those wintery colours". The works at the first show at Milburn might have been less of a celebration and more of a purge, because these recognitions and sensations challenged his sense of belonging: was it here or there? Personal and practical reasons though tied him to Australia, where he also spent his most formative art training. There is a huge difference in focus between those beginnings and the works in the present exhibition, but from his earliest work onwards we see one of the most enduring characteristics of his practice; experimentation and invention.

"Nothing if not experimental" could well be his motto. Graduating at QCA in printmaking, sculpture and painting equipped him well, working with a huge range of media from traditional etching, lithography to experimental perspex, electronics, paper casting. In addition he played guitar in several bands for 12–14 years, and did vocal and instrumental arranging. Indeed we see an artist, who is multi skilled and diverse; who works with traditional and contemporary concepts and media in both 3D and 2D realisations, extending and inventing. His practice articulates the joy of complete freedom to experiment: combining and juxtaposing all that is in his range. Yet within this there is always the challenge to find a balance between freedom and structure.

As his art practice accelerated and widened, many exhibitions followed; *Mark/Remark*, *On Paper with Paper* and *Dusk to Dust* at Michel Sourgnès. Often works were abstractions related to music; titles such as *Sound drawings*, *Tone Poems* give a flavour. Sculptural pieces including lighting *Chord*, *Counterpoint* and *Soundscape* attracted favourable comments from reviewer Phyllis Woolcock. .

When he discovered artists' books with Madonna Staunton in the early 1980s these became an ideal vessel to engage with all elements at once, painting, printmaking, drawing, three

dimensional and temporal elements. Not surprising then that several books relate to music; for instance *Bruckner*, with pages of sombre abstractions progressing through time. His books, drawings and prints were shown in countless exhibitions: the State Library of Qld, Noreen Graham's Gallery, Libris Awards and many regional galleries— as well as overseas. His works are also represented in a wide range of private and public collections.

His involvement with artists' books was further developed with Adele Outteridge –a well known sculptural bookmaker –with whom he opened Studio West End in 1998. It is a veritable 'wunderkammer' of larger and smaller art works, in itself an installation. A haven for art lovers and makers of things, this is where he and Adele generously share their skills and insights with students and visitors. They are much in demand as tutors and give workshops all over Australia.

Over the years we see an increasing connection with the Australian landscape in Wim's work, such as a concertina book of a wide horizon of an outback landscape, and painted studies of landscape colours. He remembers a defining moment during one of his workshops. It was at in the early 1990s at Bundoona Station in far South-Western Queensland: "it happened one afternoon...standing in this open space of endless sky and earth ...it was dead quiet...golden light; tiny sounds of birds, a slight breeze... an understanding just hit me—it was like a vision—my sense of belonging to this landscape was now very clear".

His landscape paintings increased in acuity and narrative connections with the landscape, such as we see in this exhibition which took 5 years to come to fruition. On this journey we see him also finding a resolution between impulse and refinement. Printmaking for him has restraint but painting has the freedom of the brush, a sense of spontaneity much admired by him in the American abstractionists such as De Kooning, Rauschenberg and Motherwell.

The landscapes that we see in this exhibition portray a point in a long journey not only of the flood waters depicted, but of the artist himself. A journey representing a search for identity and finding a balance between structurally refined elements and uninhibited mark making.

These works also epitomise the extreme delight of being in an environment that is entirely shaped by nature with no human interference at all. It is a feeling perhaps unique to those who, like myself, have grown up in the Netherlands where nature is always tailored by humans, confined and infringed on. But these landscapes are of themselves only. As Wim says: "they are tough and harsh and yet have the most delicate colours and textures". A combination which begs to be painted. Looking at these paintings we recognise location, but more than that we see colour and form, spontaneity and structure in balance; and we can also sense sound, encapsulated in the layers of paint!

Dr. Anneke C. Silver

Visual Artist

Associate Professor Visual Arts 1990–2006

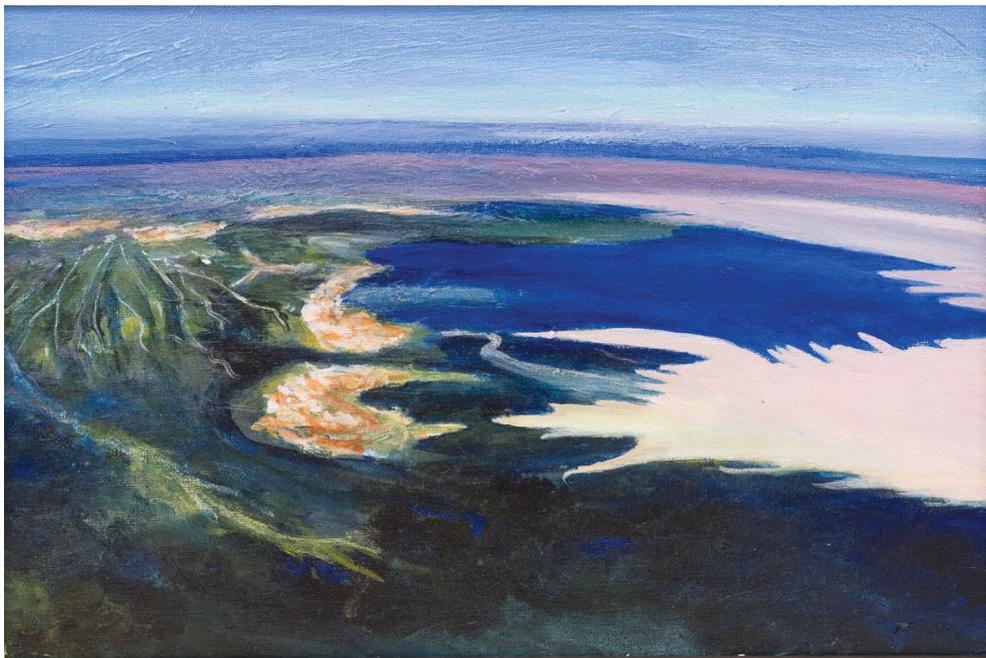
James Cook University, Townsville



Eyre Aerial #7 2018, Oil and acrylic and oil on board, 24.5 x 37 cm



Eyre Aerial #2 2018, Oil and acrylic on board, 24.5 x 37 cm



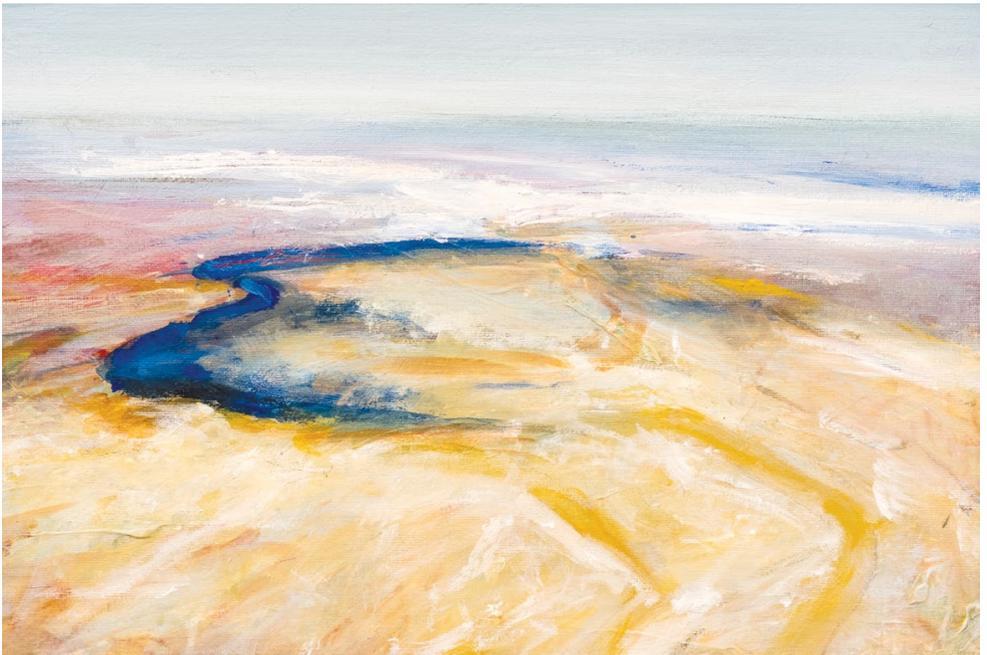
Eyre Aerial #8 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 24.5 x 37 cm



Eyre Aerial #9 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 24.5 x 37 cm



Eyre Aerial #6 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 24.5 x 37 cm



Eyre Aerial #12 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 24.5 x 37 cm



Eyre Aerial #21 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 41.5 x 51 cm



Eyre Aerial #23 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 41.5 x 51 cm



Eyre Aerial #24 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 41.5 x 51 cm



Eyre Aerial #19 2018, Acrylic and oil on board, 41.5 x 51 cm



Eyre Aerial #28 2018, Oil on canvas, 65 x 122 cm



Eyre Aerial #30 2018, Oil on linen, 91.5 x 183 cm

Recent Biography

Born: The Hague, Netherlands, 1947. Migrated to Australia, 1959.
Tertiary: Central Technical College, Brisbane, Qld, Australia: 1963 – '67.
Queensland College of Art, Diploma of Fine Art 1978 – '80.
Post Grad. Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, Netherlands: 1981 – '82.
Teaching Certificate IV, Assessment and Workplace training BS240198, 2001

Teaching Experience

1984–2002 TAFE Qld. Teacher of Art, Drawing, Painting, Printmaking, Design. Brisbane, Toowoomba
1985–2011 Brisbane Institute of Art, Teacher of Printmaking, Painting, Drawing, Design, Paper making.
Currently Freelance Teaching, tutoring workshops and symposia interstate and locally including the McGregor Summer and Winter Schools, Toowoomba.
1997–99 Flying Arts Inc. Teacher of Printmaking, Painting, Drawing.
1988– Judging various exhibitions (Warwick Art Prize, 2001, RNA Exhibition 2012-14, Minister of Arts Award, 2004).

Related Experience

Member, arts organisations incl. Community Arts (Toowoomba), Management Committee (B.I.A.).
Participation/Organisation of Arts events: Artists' Books Exhibition (1995), McGregor Artist in Residence Program, McGregor Schools Exhibition. Coordinator/Writer ATSI Course (Toowoomba)
Shortlisted for major public art projects. Included in State Library of Qld, Artists' Books Online.
2003 External Assessor, Masters of Fine Art, Qld College of Art, Griffith University
2001-04,09 Artist in Residence, Radisson and Peninsula Hotels, Pt. Douglas Gallery of Fine Art, Qld.
1998 Established the Studio West End with Adèle Outeridge – Classes and production of art works.

Recent Exhibitions

2018 Finalist, Libris Awards, Artspace, Mackay, Qld
2016 *'Manifest'* Impress Gallery, Brisbane, Firestation Gallery, Melbourne
2015 *'Stories in Small Spaces'* Impress Gallery, Brisbane, Gympie Regional Gallery.
Finalist, Australian Print Triennial, Mildura, Vic.
2014 *Open Books: Plus* project, Logan Art Gallery (travelling internationally).
2012 *Studio West End*, Perc Tucker Gallery, Townsville
Life's Journey, Redland Gallery
Transparent/Opaque, Abecedarian Gallery, Denver, Colorado, USA
2011 *Mapping the Island*, travelling exhibition.
2010 *Libris Awards*, Artspace Mackay
2009 *Beyond the Monsoon*, Go Troppo Arts Festival, Port Douglas.
My Case, Small works, 12 x 12 cm, Galleries in Hong Kong and Brisbane.
Artists' Book Award Exhibition, Nextart Gallery, Southern Cross University,
Shared Journeys, Papermakers of Victoria, Melbourne
Mapping the Island, (Tas), Ten Days on the Island Festival
Without Boundaries, Artists' Books, Maleny Artworks.

Solo Exhibitions

2014 *Power of Three*, Bligh Voller Nield, Donovan Hill studio.
2010 *Studio West End*, Brisbane City Square Library.
1984-2007 Eleven solo exhibitions of painting, sculpture, printmaking and book arts.

Reference in Art Publications

Open Books: Plus, catalogue, Mary Husted, Sue Hunt and Joe Zhu.
Masters: Book Arts, ed. Eileen Wallace, pp 139, 143, Lark Books,
1000 Artists' Books, pp 263, Quarry
A Perspex Partnership: Plexiglas Downunder, Christine Campbell, Bonefolder e-journal pp. 3-12
Meeting of Creative Minds, Gerry O'Connor, Courier Mail, 29th Dec, 2000, p 36.
Smith's Sewing Single Sheets, Keith A Smith, pp 19, 265, 268-9, 274-5.
Printmaking in the 1990s, Sasha Grishin, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1997.
Bundooona Workshop, Australian Artist Magazine, (February, 1996).
Heaven by a String, Marie Geissler, Craft Arts Magazine 36. (1996).
Paper, Jeff Shaw, Craft Link 9. (1995): Qld Museum.
de Vos, W. (Limited Ed. Books). Maastricht, N.L.: Jan van Eyck Academie Graphic Workshop, 1982.
Artists and Galleries of Australia, ed, Max Germaine, Brisbane: Boolarong Press, 1984, 1990.
Papermaking: From Recycling to Art Jean G Kropper, Lotham Press, Sydney, 1992.
Dictionary of Australian Printmakers, ed, Lillian Wood, Print Council of Aust, Aldine Press, Melbourne, 1982

Representation in Collections

Work represented in public and private collections in Australia



Eyre Aerial #16 2018, Oil and acrylic on paper, 34.5 x 43 cm



Eyre Aerial #15 2018, Oil and acrylic on board, 34.5 x 43 cm