

Artist Statement

Earlier this year I resided in the Black Opal mining town of Lightning Ridge, NSW. I couldn't help but notice the variety of cacti in this region. In fact, Lightning Ridge has the largest cactus display in the southern hemisphere and they thrive due to the dry conditions.

Navigation can be tricky when living off the grid. Open mine shafts are abundant and no logical numerical system exists. I found the cactus useful to navigate around the districts and find my way home. Looking for them on dirt tracks could be disorientating at times, especially at night, and my paintings depict this mobile gaze from my car door window.

Artist Biography

Karen Stephens is an emerging Queensland artist who works predominantly in the genre of contemporary landscape painting. Karen has recently completed her Honours degree at Griffith University, Queensland College of Art and her research investigates the disorientated and disembodied gaze in relation to the moving window in order to understand the consequences of an Artificial Horizon.

Cactus through a Car Door Window will be the fifth solo exhibition since graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Art from QCA in 2015. Karen was recently awarded the Flying Arts Alliance *Art for Life Award* for her landscape painting *Noogooraville* (2015) which is currently touring Queensland Regional Galleries as part of the 2016 Queensland Regional Art Awards Exhibition - Colours of Queensland.