

STEPHEN NOTHLING



Mostly Fine in the South East

About one Painting

The story goes, I was on a bus travelling along Gladstone Road looking out at Brisbane's first modernist high rise 'Torbreck' through the pixelated windows that happen when the outside of the bus is covered with advertising. It got me thinking about what would happen if instead of seeing the sky behind this view there could appear some 'action painting'. Modernism on Modernism.

I've stood before a few Jackson Pollock paintings and find them as timelessly unfathomable as the sky. Recently I'd acquired a ton of mural paint and it felt possible that I could afford the luxury of throwing some paint around aware though that Pollock used enamel, automotive and aluminium paints because they pour well yet I had some lolly-coloured acrylics that aren't as free flowing. Replicating a Pollock was not on the cards although a quick dip into YouTube attests that many have tried. With dubious bravado I talked myself into it.

Simultaneously I was aware that the furthest away from 'action painting' is a flower picture but the gulf between the two appealed.

The furore in the conservative press about the NGA's purchase of 'Blue Poles' in 1973 interests me. I was only eleven at the time so Abstract Expressionism wasn't on my radar. I wondered whether 'Blue Poles' had ever come to Brisbane. After a quick google search, I discovered that the painting toured Australia and was displayed in Brisbane City Hall, 7 June–2 August 1974. Having some of my own work in the same building some fifty years later created a tenuous link.

So I've made a painting that is titled 'Modern Fiction' 2023 that is a time shifting imagining of visiting City Hall clueless in 1974 and returning to Highgate Hill in 2023 with the appreciation I have now. There is a fair bit going on in 'Modern Fiction' that materialises this process.

Stephen Nothing 2023

front image: *Fine in the South East 2023*, Oil on canvas, 50 × 140 cm



Modern Fiction 2023, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 125 × 285 cm



Living Together 2023
Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



Balancing Act 2023
Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



Opposites Attract 2023
Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



Roses this way and that #2 2023
Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



Business at the front, party at the back 2023
Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



Should never be seen 2023
Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



Roses this way and that #1 2023
Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



Like-minded 2023
Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



The Domino Effect, Mollison Street 2023, Oil on canvas, 75 × 250 cm



Prospect Tce Bathed in Gold 2023, Oil on canvas, 90 × 105 cm



Staycation, Brighton Road 2023, Oil on canvas, 75 × 250 cm



Welcome View towards Wahcumba 2023, Oil on canvas, 65 × 135 cm



Blue crane beneath a green tree, before pink sky (Hampstead Rd) 2023, Oil on canvas, 75 × 80 cm



Always is a long time 2023, Oil and acrylic on board, 40 × 80 cm



Tomatoes 3 ways 2023
Oil on board, 32 × 39 cm



Small Potatoes (pink desire) 2023
Oil on board, 32 × 39 cm



Gone bananas and lost marbles 2023
Oil on board, 32 × 39 cm



Two lamingtons are better than
one lamington 2023
Oil on board, 32 × 39 cm



Outta Sight
(4 pairs of broken magnifiers) 2023
Oil on board, 32 × 43 cm



#chicken #cooked #landscape
#sunburntcountry 2023
Oil on board, 32 × 39 cm



1987



1991



1998



2001



2002



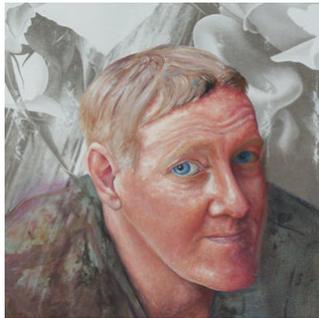
2004



2006



2008



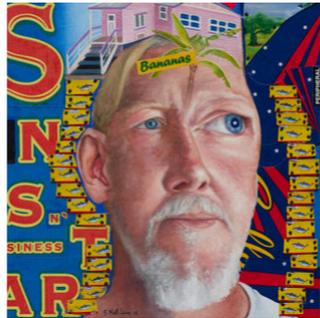
2009



2010



2015



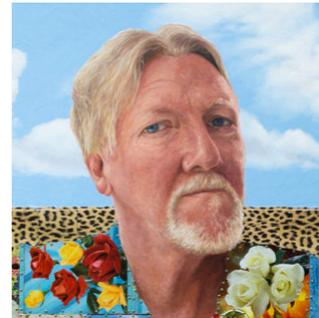
2016



2017



2018



2021



Fool's Gold 2023
Oil on board and
iron pyrite specimen
32 x 28 cm



Quick Sticks 2023, Enamel on printed canvas, 90 x 120 cm

Exhibition Dates

9 November – 2 December 2023



Woollongabba Art Gallery

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