STEPHEN NOTHLING



HOLIDAY IN SUBURBIA

Among the thousands of vehicles that line the streets I occasionally see something that triggers my curiosity. The enigma of the covered vehicle suggests a whole lot of questions and inferences that are impossible to know. Initially I think of Christo and Jean Claude but a boat, ute, caravan or scooter is hardly the Reichstag or Little Bay so I know this is a stretch but it is amusing.

Personally I have a love, hate relationship with caravans, spending many long, cramped and tense holidays in them during my childhood. Out of context, unfit for purpose on the street and devoid of nostalgia they interest me more. The glider parked on a road bridge over a railway line and the various campers were just too tempting to avoid once I got started on this series.

Isolating them as the central subject matter, I felt a certain kinship as an artist working away alone in the studio not going anywhere. The paintings became my holidays. By including the backgrounds and surrounding imagery, to my surprise I have inadvertently painted a collection of quiet suburban landscapes.

To take a break from the streets, one morning a heap of my socks fell out of the cupboard in front of me and in a flash I thought these would be good to paint. My family have taken to giving me novelty socks for birthdays, Christmas etc so I had no shortage of material. I just wanted to create images that could be painted in one go in a day. Thirty five years ago I won the Churchie Emerging Artist prize with a series of nine paintings of my shoes so in 2026 the socks seemed like a step in the right direction.

Then there are always the flowers, this time with a few hearts thrown in. The roses are gratifying because it is like solving a puzzle, they evoke emotion and mean many, many things.

Stephen Nothling 2026



Critical Infrastructure 2026, Oil on canvas, 91 x 210 cm



Groovy Socks 2026
Oil on board, 20 x 25 cm



Mondrian Socks 2026
Oil on board, 20 x 20 cm



Deep Sea Fish Socks 2026
Oil on board, 20 x 25 cm



Botticelli Socks 2026
Oil on board, 25 x 20 cm



Local Colour 2026, Oil on canvas, 91 x 91 cm

front image: *The Adventure of a Lifetime* 2026, Oil on canvas, 60.5 x 60.5 cm

Selected artworks from ‘Holiday In Suburbia’.

Exhibition dates
11 November – 28 November 2026

WOOLLOONGABBA ART GALLERY

613 Stanley Street Woolloongabba Qld 4102 Australia +61 7 3891 5551 ~ email@wag.com.au