



2 MAY - 1 JUNE 2024

# ABOVE THE SURFACE

MICHAEL MUIR

JD MALAT  
GALLERY

# MICHAEL MUIR:

## *ABOVE THE SURFACE*

*"As we bring Michael Muir's paintings to an international audience this May, we're not only showcasing his talent but also strengthening cross-cultural connections. This marks a significant step for the artist, who has previously exhibited exclusively in Australia." - JD Malat*

JD Malat Gallery is proud to present *Above the Surface*, an exhibition by Australia-based painter Michael Muir, marking his debut showcase in London. Presenting five new works, the exhibition from May 2 - 1 June will transform the gallery space into a vivid extension of Muir's paintings complete with white sand and palm trees functioning to reflect the artist's profound connection to the natural world.

Originally from Scotland, Muir's formative years were spent travelling throughout Southeast Asia before eventually settling in Sydney, Australia where the artist is currently based. His peripatetic upbringing deeply informs Muir's artistic practice, manifesting in his adept ability to reconcile the juxtaposition of the familiar with the novelty of new experiences.

Muir's paintings are predominately inspired by his experience of the landscape and awe of both natural and built environments. He states, "Above the surface has different meanings, layers and elements to it. I continue to think about perception and reality in the context of paint. First impressions, hidden textures, and meanings. The ocean has been a constant in my life for the last 20 years and I like the idea that rhythm and lines in the ocean can create a state of flow that works across an artistic medium like painting."

In a minimalist interpretation of our constructed landscapes, Muir's paintings employ a vivid yet refined colour palette. The geometric forms he presents reveal uncertain boundaries, imbuing his canvases with natural rhythm along with an intriguing sense of an alternate dimension. Utilizing loose sketches of his surroundings as a starting point, Muir deftly wields a palette knife to apply oil paint onto his canvases. First creating flattened surfaces, he then reintroduces texture and detailed marks into the areas of colour, using the palette knife much like a pencil to create depth and dimension.

The deliberate use of broad, flat planes of colour reshapes our perceptions of the landscape, offering a unique lens through which reality unfolds. These expanses imbue the scenery with a distinct sense of simplicity, stripping away extraneous details to reveal the raw essence beneath and fostering a connection between the observer and the environment. With a meticulous eye and a profound understanding of how light shapes perception, Muir deftly employs it as a tool to evoke emotions of nostalgia.



*"In essence my work is about finding a connection, feeling welcomed into a space, an environment, a world."*

**- Michael Muir**



**Michael Muir**  
*Oceans away, 2024*  
Oil on linen

78 x 65 3/4 in  
198 x 167 cm



**Michael Muir**  
*the waterline*, 2024  
Oil on linen

54 x 48 in  
137 x 122 cm



**Michael Muir**  
*Glide towards, 2024*  
Oil on linen

54 x 48 in  
137 x 122 cm



**Michael Muir**  
*Ahead is golden, 2024*  
Oil on linen

65 3/4 x 54 in  
167 x 137 cm



**Michael Muir**  
*Holding On, 2024*  
Oil on linen

54 x 48 in  
137 x 122 cm



## **Michael Muir CV**

**b. 1975 - Kilmarnock, Scotland**

**Lives and works in Sydney, Australia.**

### **Education:**

1999-2002 Diploma in Fine Arts, Julian Ashton Art School, Sydney, Australia

1994-1995 Advanced Diploma in Graphic Design and Advertising,

Billy Blue College of Design, Sydney, Australia

### **Solo Exhibitions**

- 2023 *Based on a true story*, Jane Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 2022 *Rising Tide*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, Australia
- 2021 *Rabbit Holes*, Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 2020 *Chasing Rainbows*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, Australia
- 2019 *Proximity*, Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 2018 *Chameleon Effect*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, Australia
- 2017 *Disappearing Act*, Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 2016 *Turning to Water*, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
- 2016 *Home*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, Australia
- 2015 *Slush Fable*, Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 2014 *Under Water*, Offsite Sophie Gannon Gallery, Perth, Australia
- 2014 *Corner Shops*, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
- 2013 *Between the lines*, Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 2012 *Perpetual Motion*, Eva Breuer Art Dealer, Sydney, Australia
- 2012 *Fitting In*, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
- 2012 *Keeping it clean*, Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 2011 *Are we there yet*, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
- 2011 *A magic number*, Eva Breuer Art Dealer, Sydney, Australia
- 2010 *When you were young*, Eva Breuer Art Dealer, Sydney, Australia
- 2010 *Growing Pains*, Libby Edwards Galleries, Melbourne, Australia
- 2008 *One road to freedom*, Libby Edwards Galleries, Brisbane, Australia
- 2008 *Room to move*, Metro 5 Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
- 2004 *Sticky rice*, Global Gallery, Paddington, Sydney, Australia
- 2002 *Waiting for rain*, Alta Gallery, Surry Hills, Sydney, Australia

### **Selected Group Exhibitions**

- 2023 *Winter Group Show*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Paddington, Australia
- 2023 *The Art of Giving*, Macquarie University Art Gallery, New South Wales, Australia
- 2022 *The Art of Giving*, Macquarie University Art Gallery, New South Wales, Australia
- 2021 *Winter Group Show*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Paddington, Australia
- 2021 *Summer Group Show*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Paddington, Australia
- 2020 *Summer Group Show*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Paddington, Australia
- 2019 *Mirror Mirror*, Portraits from the Collection of Macquarie University, New South Wales, Australia

2018 *Fantasy Group Exhibition*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, Australia  
2018 *Muswellbrook Art Prize*, New South Wales, Australia  
2017 *Tattersall Art Prize*, Brisbane, Australia  
2017 *Surface*, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, Australia  
2017 *From Nature*, Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney, Australia  
2016 *Fair Go*, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne, Australia  
2016 *Kilgour Art Prize*, Newcastle Art Gallery, Newcastle, Australia  
2015 *Wynne Prize Art Gallery*, New South Wales, Australia  
2015 *Tattersall Art Prize*, Brisbane, Australia  
2014 *Wynne Prize Art Gallery*, New South Wales, Australia  
2014 *Percival Portrait Award*, Perc Tucker Gallery, Townsville, Australia  
2014 *Albany Art Prize*, Vancouver Arts Centre, Albany, Australia  
2014 *Mosman Art Prize*, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2013 *Gold Coast Art Award*, Gold Coast City Gallery, Queensland, Australia  
2013 *Fishers Ghost Award*, Campbelltown City Gallery, New South Wales, Australia  
2013 *Calleen Art Award*, Cowra Regional Gallery, Cowra, Australia  
2012 *Fishers Ghost Award*, Campbelltown City Gallery, New South Wales, Australia  
2012 *Gold Coast Art Award*, Gold Coast City Gallery, Queensland, Australia  
2012 *Mosman Art Prize*, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2012 *Wilson Art Award*, Lismore, New South Wales, Australia  
2011 *Butterfly Dreaming*, Aptos Cruz Gallery, Adelaide, Australia  
2011 *Together in Harmony*, Noori and Arum Gallery, Korea Foundation Centre, Korea  
2011 *Albany Art Prize*, Western Australia, Australia  
2011 *Rotary Art Prize*, Brisbane, Australia  
2010 *Grounded*, Artpiece Gallery, Mullumbimby, Australia  
2010 *Redland Art Awards*, Queensland, Australia  
2010 *Salisbury Studios Inaugural Exhibition*, Brisbane, Australia  
2010 *Metro Award*, Metro Gallery, Melbourne, Australia  
2010 *Sunshine Coast Art Prize*, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Queensland, Australia  
2010 *Stanthorpe Art Festival*, Queensland, Australia  
2009 *Waiting*, N.G Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2009 *Winter Group Show*, Libby Edwards Galleries, Melbourne, Australia  
2009 *Sunshine Coast Art Prize*, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Queensland, Australia  
2009 *Plein Air Prize*, N.S.W Parliament, New South Wales, Australia  
2009 *All New Stuff*, Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre, New South Wales, Australia  
2009 *Muswellbrook Art Prize*, New South Wales, Australia  
2008 *Paddington Art Prize*, Mary Place Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2008 *Redlands Yurrara Art Prize*, Queensland, Australia  
2008 *Flesh*, Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2008 *Sunshine Coast Art Prize*, Caloundra, Australia  
2008 *Salon*, Arthouse Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2008 *Contempo 5*, Libby Edwards Gallery, Brisbane, Australia  
2008 *Narrative Show*, Brenda May Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2007 *Emerging Artists Maunsell Wickes*, Barry Stern Gallery, New South Wales, Australia  
2007 *Agendo Emerging Art Award*, Melbourne, Australia  
2007 *Metro 5 Award*, Melbourne, Australia  
2007 *Touring*, Benalla Gallery, Victoria, Australia

2006 *Stonevilla Fundraiser Exhibition*, Chrissie Cotter Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2006 *Art on the Rocks*, Sydney, Australia  
2006 *Waverly Art Prize*, Sydney, Australia  
2006 *Mary Place Gallery*, Sydney, Australia  
2006 *Linden Postcard Show*, St Kilda, Australia  
2005 *Small Painting Prize*, Soda Gallery, Sydney, Australia  
2005 *Canberra Art Prize*, Canberra, Australia  
2005 *Sulman Prize*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia  
2005 *P+ art + y*, Ruby Rabbit, Darlinghurst, Australia  
2005 *North Sydney Art Prize*, Sydney, Australia  
2005 *Waverly Art Prize*, Sydney, Australia  
2005 *Art for Asia*, Make Art Supplies, Sydney, Australia  
2004 *Fleurieu Prize*, Adelaide, Australia  
2004 *Waverly Art Prize*, Sydney, Australia  
2003 *Brett Whiteley Scholarship Pre Selection Shortlist*, New South Wales, Australia  
2003 *Waverly Art Prize*, Sydney, Australia  
2002 *Hunters Hill Art Prize*, Sydney, Australia  
1998 - 2004 *Julian Ashton Annual Exhibition*, Sydney, Australia

### **Selected Art Fairs**

2023 Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Australia  
2023 Martin Browne Contemporary, Melbourne Art Fair, Australia  
2022 Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Australia  
2022 Martin Browne Contemporary, Melbourne Art Fair, Australia  
2019 Martin Browne Contemporary, Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Australia  
2019 Martin Browne Contemporary, Auckland Art Fair, New Zealand  
2018 Martin Browne Contemporary, Auckland Art Fair, New Zealand  
2018 Jan Murphy Gallery, Spring 1883 Fair Melbourne, Australia  
2018 Martin Browne Contemporary, Melbourne Art Fair, Australia  
2017 Carriageworks Sydney, Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Australia  
2017 Martin Browne Contemporary, Den Fair Melbourne, Australia  
2016 Martin Browne Contemporary, Auckland Art Fair, New Zealand  
2016 Jan Murphy Gallery. Spring 1883 at The Hotel Windsor, Australia  
2015 Martin Browne Contemporary, Art Central, Hong Kong  
2015 Carriageworks Sydney, Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, Australia  
2014 Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Hall Industries, Australia  
2013 Carriageworks Sydney, Sydney Contemporary Art Fair  
2012 Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Hall Industries, Australia  
2011 London Affordable Art Fair, United Kingdom  
2010 London Affordable Art Fair, United Kingdom

### **Awards**

2018 Muswellbrook Art Prize NSW Finalist  
2017 Tattersall Art Prize NSW Finalist  
2016. Kilgour Art Prize Newcastle Art Gallery NSW Finalist

2015 Wynne Prize Art Gallery New South Wales Finalist  
2014 Mosman Art Prize NSW Winner  
2014 Wynne Prize Art Gallery New South Wales Finalist  
2013 Doug Moran Portrait Prize NSW Semi Finalist  
2013 Moran Portrait Prize Semi Finalist  
2012 Mosman Art Prize NSW Finalist  
2011 Stan and Maureen Duke Gold Coast Art Prize Finalist  
2011 Muswellbrook Art Prize NSW Finalist  
2010 Redland Art Award QLD 2nd Prize Winner  
2010 Metro Award Finalist VIC Finalist  
2010 Sunshine Coast Art Prize Finalist  
2009 Tattersall Landsape Prize Finalist  
2009 Plein Air Prize Finalist  
2009 Sunshine Coast Art Prize Finalist  
2008 Paddington Art Prize Finalist  
2008 Redlands Yurrara Art Prize Finalist  
2008 Sunshine Coast Art Prize Finalist  
2007 Agendo Award Finalist  
2007 Metro 5 Prize Finalist  
2006 Art on the Rocks Finalist  
2005 Sulman Prize Finalist  
2005 Soda Gallery Small Painting Prize Finalist  
2005 Canberra Art Prize Finalist  
2004 Fleurieu Prize Finalist  
2001 John Olsen Scholarship Winner J.A.A.S

## **Collections**

Artbank, New South Wales, Australia  
City of Port Phillip, Victoria, Australia  
Parliament House, Canberra, Australia  
Macquarie Bank, New South Wales, Australia  
Macquarie University, New South Wales, Australia  
Mosman Municipal Council, New South Wales, Australia  
Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre, New South Wales, Australia  
Harbour City Estates, Hong Kong  
Private: U.S.A, U.K, Sth East Asia and Australia



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