

Michael Muir

Born in Scotland and having spent his childhood in Southeast Asia, Michael Muir (b.1975) is a contemporary artist based in Sydney, Australia. Honing his studio skills through formal studies in painting and design, Muir has departed from traditional en plein-air painting to describe more ambiguous visual puzzles derived from the urban landscape.



Muir's paintings portray picturesque scenes using solid colour blocks and a consistently muted colour palette. His background in graphic art and design equips him with a distinctive perspective on geometry, landscape, and architecture, profoundly shaping his overall artistic practice. Empirically influenced by his surroundings, Muir depicts simplistic contemporary Australian landscapes, coalescing urban constructions with natural formations. His convivial solidity and dream-like compositions are achieved by the application of paint through a palette knife, employing a textural vibrancy that oscillates between memory and reality.

Muir's work employs autobiographical referencing, regarding his childhood, children, multicultural background and travels. Enacting a generational connectivity while incorporating personal resonance, Muir's compositions embody a sentimentality that operates on a universal and individual scale, leaving the viewer with visual documentation of his artificially constructed memories. Verging the borders of figuration and abstraction, Muir playfully harnesses mundane scenes and imbues them with an atmospheric warmth, leaving his audience in a state of comfort and familiarity in scenes that are virtually unknown to them.

"I realised over time, that my approach to finding subject matter relates to my personal experience of shifting homes and countries at a young age. There is a mix of excitement and trepidation when you arrive at a new place, and a natural instinct to seek out what is familiar and inviting within a new environment. When I travel now, I often make quick sketches, and gouache paintings utilising a camera and write ideas about feelings and spontaneous thoughts. Looking for a sense of vibrancy and belonging within the surroundings. When I bring these working ideas and studies back to the studio and start working on a larger scale, I slowly unravel the interplay of colour, composition, and form. The paintings purposely blend truth and fiction but also connect with early personal memories that set me on a path to looking at the world around me."

Muir was the winner of the Mosman Art Prize 2014 and has been a finalist in several awards over the past decade including the Wynne, Sulman, and Fleurieu Art Prizes. His work is represented in Australia's Artbank Collection, Parliament House Art Collection, and private collections throughout Australia and internationally.

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

Selected 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, Seoul, 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

JD MALAT GALLERY

- 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

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- 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

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

Selected Artworks



Michael Muir
Holding On, 2024
Oil on linen
54 x 48 in
137 x 122 cm



Michael Muir
Oceans away, 2024
Oil on linen
78 x 65 3/4 in
198 x 167 cm