

Greg Mallyon – Envisioning the Landscape

Greg Mallyon is an accomplished and highly-collectible mid-career Australian artist, with a gift for depicting the lyricism of landscape through topographical perspective.

With economy of line and thoughtful use of colour, he renders almost mystical landscapes, which reflect his childhood fascination with the land in outback Queensland as seen from a plane.

Greg has been exhibiting in Australia, Europe, Asia and the United States for more than two decades. He is represented in corporate, private and public collections, nationally and internationally, including Artbank, Qantas, BP, the Australian High Commission (Singapore), Theo Kondos and Associates (New York), the University of Melbourne, ANZ Bank and the Olivia Newton-John Cancer and Wellness Centre. Greg has held over 30 solo exhibitions and participated in more than 60 group exhibitions and international art fairs.

The centrepiece of this exhibition is *The Flightpath to Venice* Suite of etchings. While flying on Emirates from Melbourne to Venice via Dubai to take up the position of Post Graduate Artist in Residence at the prestigious Scuola Internazionale di Grafica (International School of Graphics), he was enchanted by the shapes and features of the land beneath him.

Using modern technological aids such as satellite and aerial photos and maps to provide detail unseen by the naked eye, Greg created a series of drawings which reveal a multi-layered perspective and which formed the basis of his April 2013 etching series produced and published in Venice.

Greg's early love of aerial views was strengthened when he gained knowledge of Aboriginal art. Aerial views became a major theme of his work when he was Managing Director at Port Jackson Press in the late 1980s, where he became exposed to and developed an admiration for the fledgling field of Aboriginal print-making.

Then as Manager of Northern Editions print-making workshop at Charles Darwin University and later Birrung Indigenous art gallery in Sydney, Greg worked with leading Aboriginal artists and art centres, including Paddy Bedford, Dorothy Napangardi and the Warlayirti art centre. This influence has perhaps been unconsciously reflected in his choice of subject matter and painting technique. Greg paints the canvas flat on the ground, working on it from all directions, just as Aboriginal artists and non-Indigenous Australian artists like Fred Williams have done.

Greg's work belongs to a significant global tradition of humans depicting the world for pragmatic, religious and aesthetic purposes – from Neolithic petroglyphs in Europe, to Indigenous Australians' depiction of Country, to Mediaeval maps, to the landscapes of modern Australian masters like John Olsen and Fred Williams. As Greg notes, mapping provides a "...very ancient perspective of the world." His work enables a connection to the physical world while having an almost ethereal quality.

The elevated viewpoint emphasises the similarities between different countries' landscapes (and perhaps the human condition) in a reductive and abstract manner, rather like an astral body floating above the world below. Above the landscape, yet one with the landscape. Distance, yet immersion.

Greg's work is also part of a solid Australian history of print-making. Just like John Olsen and Charles Blackman, Greg was originally a painter who produced a body of graphic work alongside his paintings and painting career. His prints and paintings are stand-alone artworks, which also enjoy a symbiotic relationship. Greg would often create a painting then simplify the composition and colour palette in an etching and from this etching do an even-more simplified painting. In this way, his prints frequently complement the paintings, while also being part of the process of conceptual refinement.

Following a recent and highly-successful exhibition in Sydney, Greg's work is now being exhibited for sale in Melbourne for the first time in a decade at Angela Tandori Fine Art in Collingwood.

This remarkable exhibition offers an opportunity to purchase sophisticated minimalist landscape prints, paintings and studies by an artist at the height of his career, including the recent ***Flightpath to Venice*** Suite of eight etchings (edition of fifteen). Each etching is signed and numbered by the artist with the embossed stamp of the Scuola Grafica Press. These sublime representations of unique – yet somehow universal – landscapes may be acquired as a suite or individually.

Finally, in the words of Professor Sasha Grishin in his seminal work, *Australian Printmaking in the 1990s*:

“The ability to easily ‘deconstruct’ the landscape through the new technologies; the awareness from Aboriginal art that below the surface lie the ancient ‘bones of a landscape’; and the concept in Asian art of working within the landscape, rather than recording it externally, have all conditioned a new approach to the landscape.”

By Dr Shireen Huda

Shireen Huda has written numerous articles on art and the art market, as well as a book on the history of the art auction in Australia. She has a PhD in Art History and Curatorship from the Australian National University and has extensive experience in research, curatorship, public programs and policy development in government and national cultural institutions. She currently manages a festival showcasing innovation in the creative – and other – industries in Melbourne and works independently as an art market analyst, art historian and consultant.