

John Bokor  
THE STILL LIFE





*Still Life with Paintings* 2012 Oil on canvas 90 x 120cm



# John Bokor

2012: THE STILL LIFE

FRONT: (Detail) *White Tablecloth and Pen Jar*  
2012 Oil on canvas 90 x 120cm

## King Street Gallery on William

10am – 6pm Tuesday – Saturday  
177 William St Darlinghurst NSW 2010 Australia  
T: 61 2 9360 9727 art@kingstreetgallery.com  
www.kingstreetgallery.com.au  
Directors: Robert Linnegar and Randi Linnegar

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*The Bottle of Rose* 2013 Oil on canvas 120 x 150cm



*Poppies and Teapot* 2013 Oil on canvas 46 x 35.5cm

## John Bokor

*... painting and drawing ... should be approached like you have never seen the subject in front of you before.<sup>1</sup>*

There is an electric current in John Bokor's work. It positively sparks. His paintings are an infectious compendium of loaded brushstrokes, dabs, squiggles and dribbles in vibrant, vivid colour, that sets his work apart from most of his contemporaries. And he draws in complementary bold fluid graphite strokes that are freely edited and re-adjusted with washes of white acrylic gesso. His subjects are all close at hand – the scatter of things on kitchen bench or occasional table, suburban streets with cars and telegraph poles, wheely bins, fences and terra-cotta rooftops, gardens a riot of almost impossible verdure – everything that is utterly familiar is, in his hands, unrestrained and exciting.

In the mid 1990s, post art school, John Bokor occupied studio space in the city. His paintings then were of bleak, crowded, traffic-congested territory, but after moving to the inner-city suburb of Marrickville and newly married, he began painting and drawing with an up-beat enjoyment that has remained to this day. Since moving to the heights of Bulli with his studio in the back basement of his house and a two-year-old son to watch over, his subjects have become joyously domestic.

John Bokor can be described as a modern day fauve. He has much in common with the strident colour and daring shorthand of early Matisse, Derain and Marquet. An admirer of one of Sydney's elders of painting, Kevin Connor, and a former student of another, Elisabeth Cummings, he is one of a younger generation of artists who are reinvigorating figurative painting in Sydney with new

energy and enthusiasm. Direct and unambiguous about his love of painting and drawing, he is also refreshingly free of arty posturing or wordy explanations. Everything is in the manipulation of colour and form with instant unambiguous brushstrokes, unencumbered by dogged polemic and tedious narrative.

Just as the elements that comprise his suburban iconography are arranged in bold simplifications created in the act of painting, the many and various objects of his informal still lifes are reinvented through spontaneous gesture – a cut glass vase, vegemite jar, teapot, cup, plastic spray bottle, fruit or flowers – re-made in paint on impulse, unpremeditated, free of artifice and with daring childlike simplicity.

As Matisse wrote in 1953:

*... courage is essential to the artist, who has to look at everything as though he saw it for the first time: he has to look at life as he did when he was a child and, if he loses that faculty, he cannot express himself in an original, that is, a personal way.<sup>2</sup>*

Playfulness, humour and joy are rare commodities in art, to be prized rather than dismissed or overlooked. Instinctively John Bokor, like Matisse and the artists of CoBrA, values each. His art is testimony to just such qualities and thereby genuinely uplifting to the spirit.

Hendrik Kolenberg

<sup>1</sup> John Bokor to HK 12 February 2013

<sup>2</sup> Henri Matisse 'Looking at life with the eyes of a child' Art News and Review London 6 February 1954 p3 from Jack D Flam Matisse on art Phaidon, London, 1973 p148



*White Tablecloth* 2012 Oil on board 90 x 120cm





*Blue Tablecloth* 2012 Oil on linen 61 x 46cm



*Jar of Vegemite* Oil on linen 45 x 35.5cm



*Glass Vase and Mango* 2012 Oil on canvas 90 x 120cm





*Crowded Table* 2013 Oil on canvas 60x60cm



*Burgundy Still Life* 2012 Oil on canvas 120 x 90cm



*To HM with Love* 2012 Oil on canvas 90 x 120cm



*White Tablecloth and Pen Jar* 2012 Oil on canvas 90 x 120cm



*Vase of Poppies* 2013 Oil on canvas 61 x 46cm



*The Glass Vase* 2012 Oil on linen 122 x 92cm



*The Kid's Table* 2012 Oil on linen 46 x 35.5cm



*Orange Still Life* 2013 Oil on linen 92 x 122cm





*Three Teapots* 2012 Oil on canvas 35.5 x 46cm



*The Pen Jar* 2012 Oil on linen 35.5 x 46cm



*Small Jonquils* 2012 Oil on canvas 35.5 x 46cm



Still Life 1 2012 Graphite & gesso on paper 50 x 60cm



Still Life 2 2012 Pencil & gesso on paper 50 x 60cm

## John Bokor

### Born

1973 Sydney, NSW, Australia

### Education

1991-93 Diploma in Painting, National Art School, Sydney  
2000 Bachelor of Fine Art [conversion course], National Art School

### Solo Exhibitions

2013 *The Still Life* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney  
2011 *Black Diamond District* King Street Gallery on William  
2009 *Inside* King Street Gallery on William  
2007 *Small World Paintings* King Street Gallery on William  
2005 *paintings* king street gallery on burton, sydney  
2004 Mary Place Gallery, Sydney  
2002 Mary Place Gallery  
1999 ABC Gallery, Sydney  
1998 Crawford Gallery, Sydney  
1997 Crawford Gallery  
1996 Crawford Gallery  
1995 Mary Place Gallery

### Selected Group Exhibitions

2013 *Looking Forward* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney  
2012 *Recent Acquisitions* Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW  
*Local Current* Wollongong City Gallery, NSW  
*City of Albany Art Prize* Albany Town Hall, Albany, W.A  
*Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing* Adelaide Perry Gallery, Sydney  
*Eutick Memorial Still Life Award* Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW  
*Rick Amor Drawing Prize* Art Gallery of Ballarat, Vic  
*NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize* NSW Parliament House, Sydney  
2011 *Whyalla Art Prize*. Middleback Theatre. Whyalla  
*NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize* NSW Parliament House  
*Nora Heysen Centenary Art Prize*, Hahndorf, SA  
2010 *Mosman Art Prize* Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney

2010 *Stanthorpe Regional Gallery Art Prize* QLD  
*En Plein Air Prize* NSW Parliament House, Sydney  
2009 *Mosman Art Prize* Mosman Art Gallery  
*ANL Maritime Art Prize* Melbourne  
*Coffs Harbour Art Prize* Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW  
*Kenilworth Art Prize* Kenilworth, Qld  
*Paddington Art Prize* Menzies Art Brands, Sydney  
2006 *last show of the year* king street gallery on burton  
*Sustainable Living* NG Gallery, Sydney  
*No Place Like Home* NG Gallery Sydney  
2005 *Agri / culture* Hawkesbury Regional Gallery, NSW  
*Bon A Tիրer-Prints from the Studio* Mosman Art Gallery  
*Dog Trumpet* Michael Nagy Gallery, Sydney  
2004 *Project Parkinsons* Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute  
2003 *Hazelhurst Works On Paper Exhibition* Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney  
*Mosman Art Prize* Mosman Art Gallery  
*Waverly Art Prize* Exhibition Sydney  
2002 *Brett Whitley Travelling Art Scholarship Exhibition* Sydney  
2001 *Young Australian Artists* Bartley Drey Gallery, London  
2000 Jackman Gallery, Melbourne  
Mary Place Gallery, Sydney  
*Lloyd Rees Memorial Art Award Exhibition* ABC Gallery, Sydney  
*Waverley Art Prize Exhibition* Sydney  
1999 *Brett Whitley Travelling Art Scholarship Exhibition*  
*Cityscapes* Level Gallery, Sydney  
1997 *Glebe Art Show* Sydney  
1994 *Fishers Ghost Exhibition* Campbelltown Bicentennial City Art Gallery, NSW

### Awards

2012 Winner, NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize  
2nd Prize [sponsor's prize], Eutick Memorial Still Life Award, Coffs Harbour, NSW  
2006 Loquat Valley Anglican School Art Prize, Sydney  
2004 Waverley Woollahra Art Prize, Sydney  
Allan Gamble Art Prize, Sydney  
2003 Waverley Art Prize [local subject] Sydney  
1997 Peoples Choice Award, Glebe Art Show, Sydney



### Collections

Art Gallery of Ballarat, Vic  
Art Gallery of New South Wales  
Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW  
Charles Sturt University Art Collection, NSW  
Macquarie Bank, Australia

New South Wales Parliament Art Collection  
University of Sydney, NSW  
University of Wollongong, NSW  
UBS Warburg, Australia  
Waverley/Woollahra Council

### Selected Bibliography

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Gorton, Renata: 'Airing his views, somewhat reluctantly,' The Daily Telegraph, May 10, pM3  
Allen, Chrisptoyer: 'Drawing's alchemy spins gold,' The Australian, Arts, May 2  
Douglas, Tim: 'Bokor's the parliament pick,' The Australian, Arts, May 10, p16  
Fitzgerald, Michael: 'Art Prize,' Sydney Morning Herald, May 10, p16
- 2011 Jinman, Richard & Fitzgerald, Michael: Sydney Morning Herald  
Sydney Magazine: 'The Best of Art' June 30
- 2011 Magnusson, Tony: 'The Strokes,' GQ Magazine, June/July Issue, p34
- 2010 Duncan, Emily: 'Fresh air provides plenty to paint,' Wollongong & Northern Leader, May 13, p17
- 2009 Kidd, Courtney: 'Inside,' catalogue, published by King Street Gallery on William, June/July
- 2005 Fortescue, Elizabeth: 'Memories are awake in paint,' Daily Telegraph, Oct 21, p65
- 2004 McDonald, John: 'Judge's Report,' Mosman Art Prize, July 24  
Metro- Sydney Morning Herald, May 7  
Great Women Chefs Catalogue, 'Project Parkinsons,' Sept 13, p13
- 2000 Asher, J.: 'Unloved Landscapes,' The Inner West Courier, May 3  
'New Work,' The Melbourne Age, Oct 25
- 1999 'Tunnel Vision,' The Wentworth Courier, Nov 3  
Smee, Sebastian: 'Street Art,' Sydney Morning Herald, Apr 6  
Bootes, J.: 'City Sites,' The Sydney Hub, Apr 8
- 1998 Mason, Maggie: Radio Interview, RRR
- 1997 James, Bruce: 'The Poet of Parramatta Road,' Sydney Morning Herald, Oct 17
- 1996 Smee, Sebastian: 'The Height Stuff,' Sydney Morning Herald, May 10



*Sink with Panadol* 2012 Oil on canvas 46 x 35.5cm



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