

Guy Warren

New work +

14 April – 9 May 2020



King Street Gallery
on William



www.kingstreetgallery.com.au

Photography: Graham Miller



Jamberoo Brush 2020 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm

GUY WARREN

Guy Warren has reached an age when he might claim the title of Elder Statesman of Australian art. The only problem is that Warren is not at all statesmanlike. There's something ponderous about such a title and Warren has never been anything but light on his feet.

Unfailingly positive, always ready to experiment, Warren is an artist who takes his work seriously, but has never felt the need to trumpet his own achievements. He is all activity, no destructive egotism or anxiety. Rather than a statesman he might be compared to one of those ancient Chinese *literati*, painting happily in the wilderness while the world spirals out of control.

Warren's paintings are a good reflection of his personality. They appear spontaneous but are actually a mixture of observation, memory and reflection. Looking at a landscape he jots down details in a kind of iconographic shorthand, but each new setting conjures up recollections of previous landscapes. The result is a picture that refers to a specific place and time but draws freely on the visual experiences of a lifetime.

In many cases he goes even further. Looking at a set of tiny figures clustered around a big red rock, we see Warren connecting his own work with those anonymous artists of the past who painted on bare, stony surfaces. He is celebrating the essential timelessness of the artistic impulse – whether it be an instinctual need to make images, the compulsion to create signs with religious or magical significance, or simply the artist's pleasure in recording the world in which he finds himself.

For Warren that world is to be viewed expansively – it is physical and metaphysical, sensuous and intellectual – with all reflections made with brush in hand.

By this stage of his career Warren has earned the right to play the Chinese sage but it's still not a perfect fit. He might rightfully say, with Dr. Johnson, "I have tried too in my time to be a philosopher; but, I don't know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in."

John McDonald, 2020

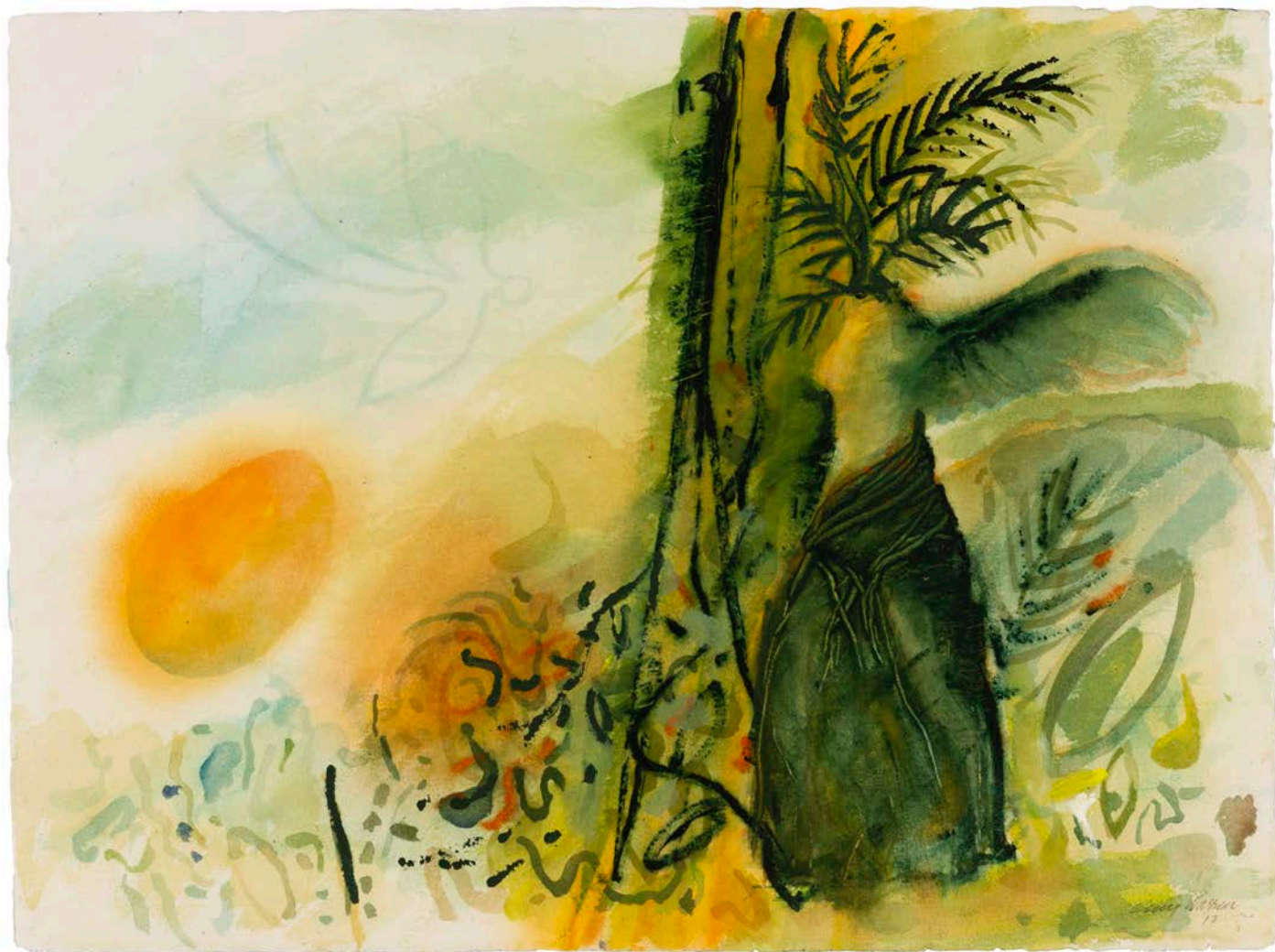
(Art critic for The Sydney Morning Herald)



Big red rock with figures 2012 watercolour on paper 57 x 65 cm



Brush strokes near Cairns 2019 watercolour on paper 56 x 60 cm



Flights of fancy 2017 watercolour on paper 57 x 65 cm



Guardian 1 2016 oil stick & wax crayon on paper 58 x 77 cm

“Guy Warren is part of the landscape of Australian art, which may be the reason he has been so often overlooked. An exact contemporary of artists such as Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd and Jeffrey Smart, Warren has lived happily enough with a much lower profile. This is partly a reflection of his personality, which displays a good humour and modesty quite at odds with the competitive nature of the Australian art scene.”

John McDonald, 2017

(Art critic for The Sydney Morning Herald)



Water marks – Shoalhaven River series 2019 watercolour on paper 57 x 65 cm



Forest mask 2018 watercolour on paper 38 x 45.5 cm



Forest and figures 2019 watercolour on paper 32 x 45 cm



Somewhere north of Cairns 2019 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm



Somewhere north of Cairns 2 2019 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm

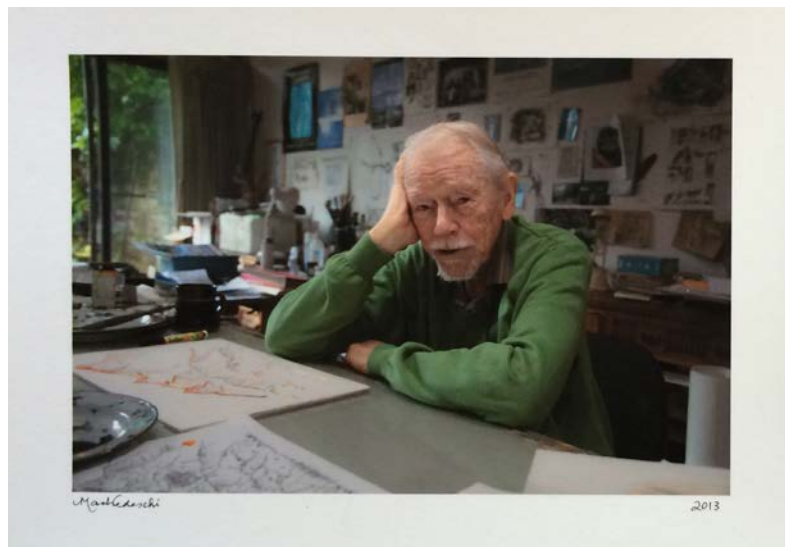
“To attain such Zen-like equanimity one suspects Warren has never allowed his art to completely dominate his life. He has worked as hard as anyone in the studio but without the fearsome anxieties Van Gogh bequeathed to the modern artist. Despite the fact that today’s most successful contemporary artists resemble company directors and advertising executives, we still like to believe all great painters are within a hairs-breadth of reaching for the razor and hacking away at an ear.

This is where Warren parts company with popular mythology. He hasn’t stood around waiting for inspiration to strike, but pushed on industriously, creating paintings, works on paper and a range of more experimental work.

Although he has never abandoned the process of drawing from observation, Warren also shuffles through his memories, dredging up images from different periods of his life, most notably the months he spent in the rainforest of Bougainville during the Second World War and his continuing visits to Jamberoo, on the South Coast NSW.”

John McDonald, 2017

(Art critic for The Sydney Morning Herald)





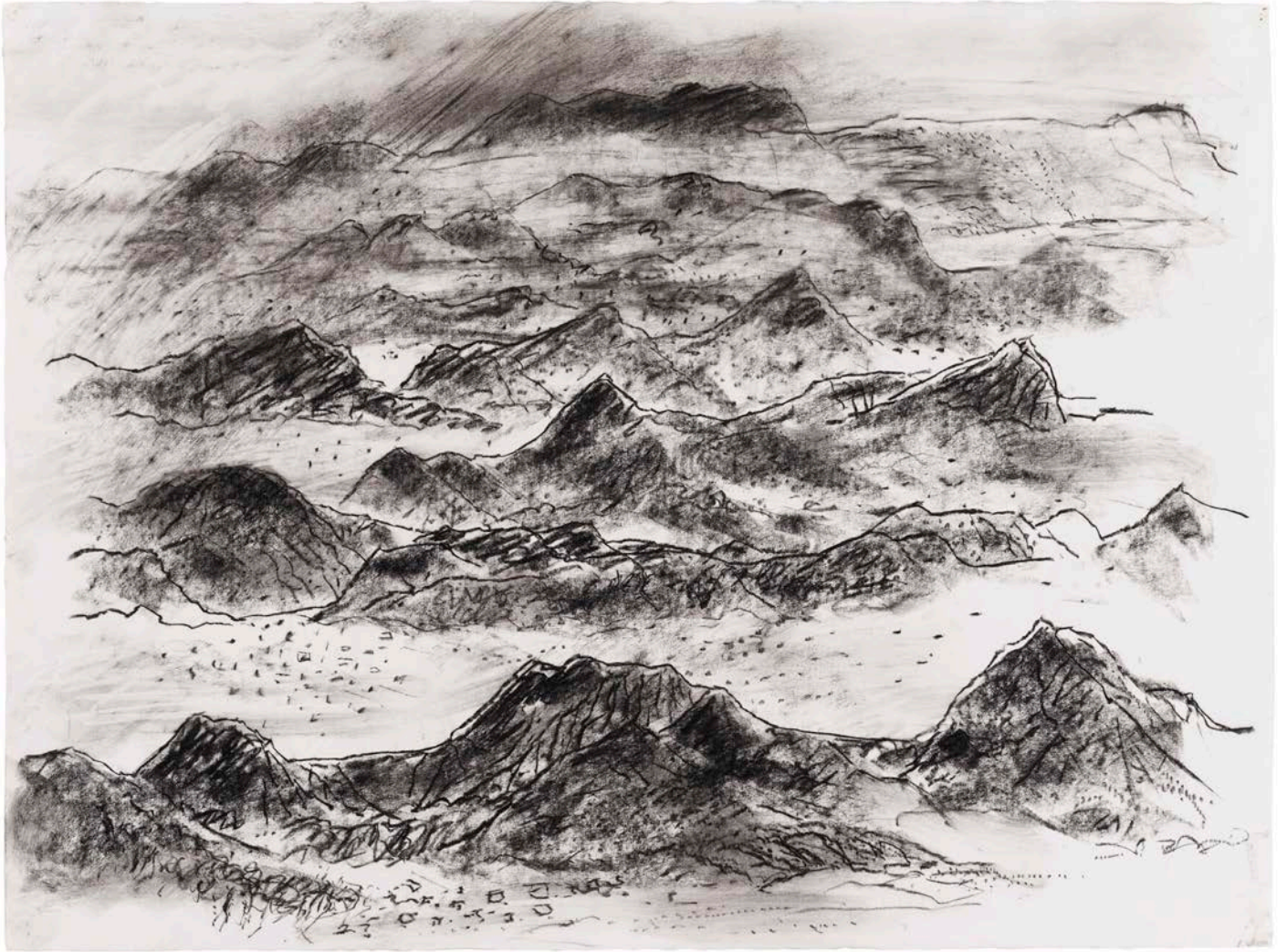
Orange walk with dead trees Alice - Ross River series 2019 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm



Water marks – Shoalhaven River series – welcome 2007 watercolour on paper 57 x 65 cm



Hill with figures Ross River series near Alice 2019 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm



Mountain marks Andes pastel on paper 58 x 77 cm



Big yellow rock with figures near Alice 2019 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm

*“..he is producing work as fresh as the day
he first picked up a paint brush.”*

Barry Pearce, 2018

(Emeritus Curator of Australian Art Art Gallery of New South Wales)



Lunch in the forest 2005 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm



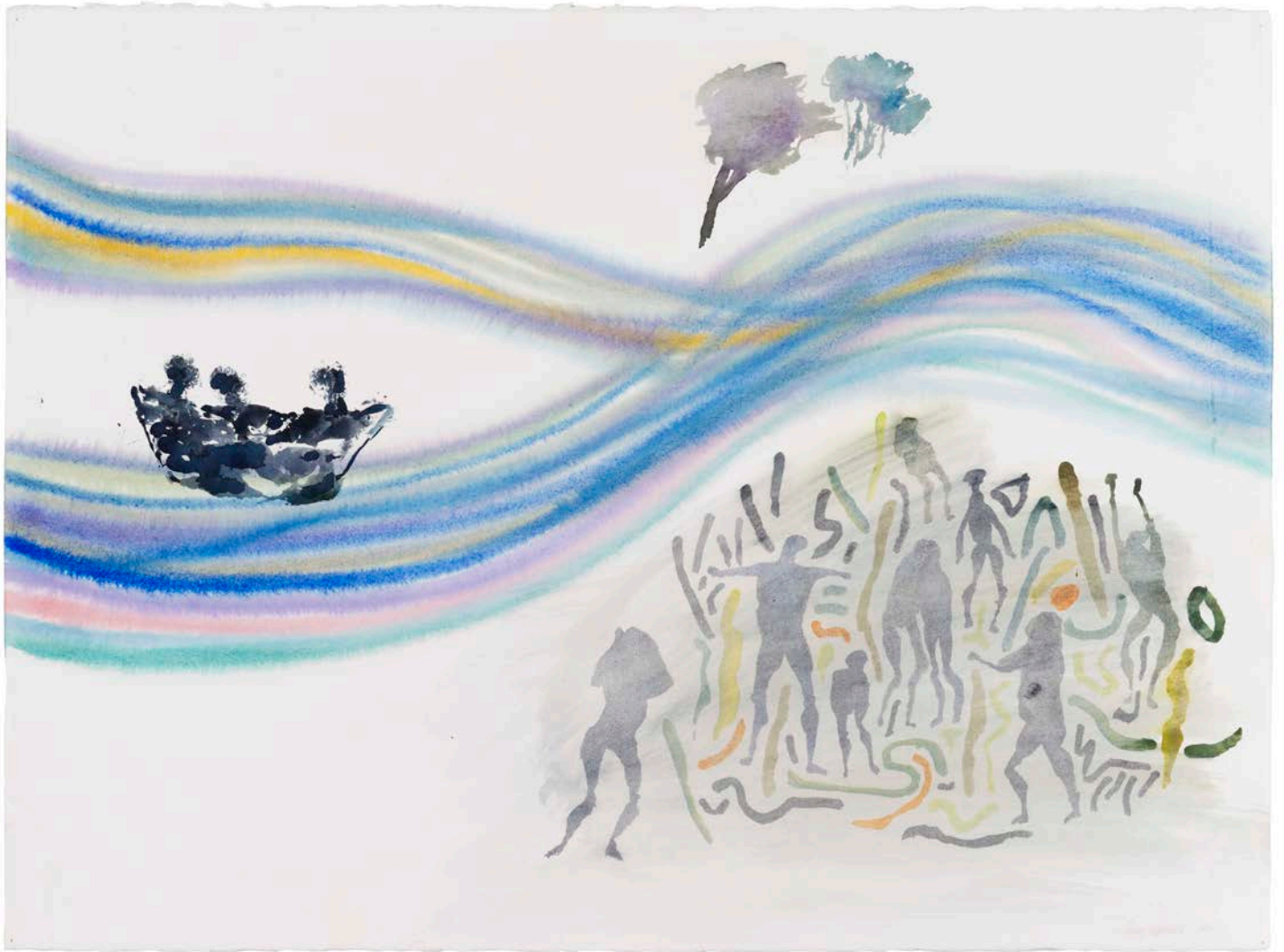
The outback bride 2015 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm



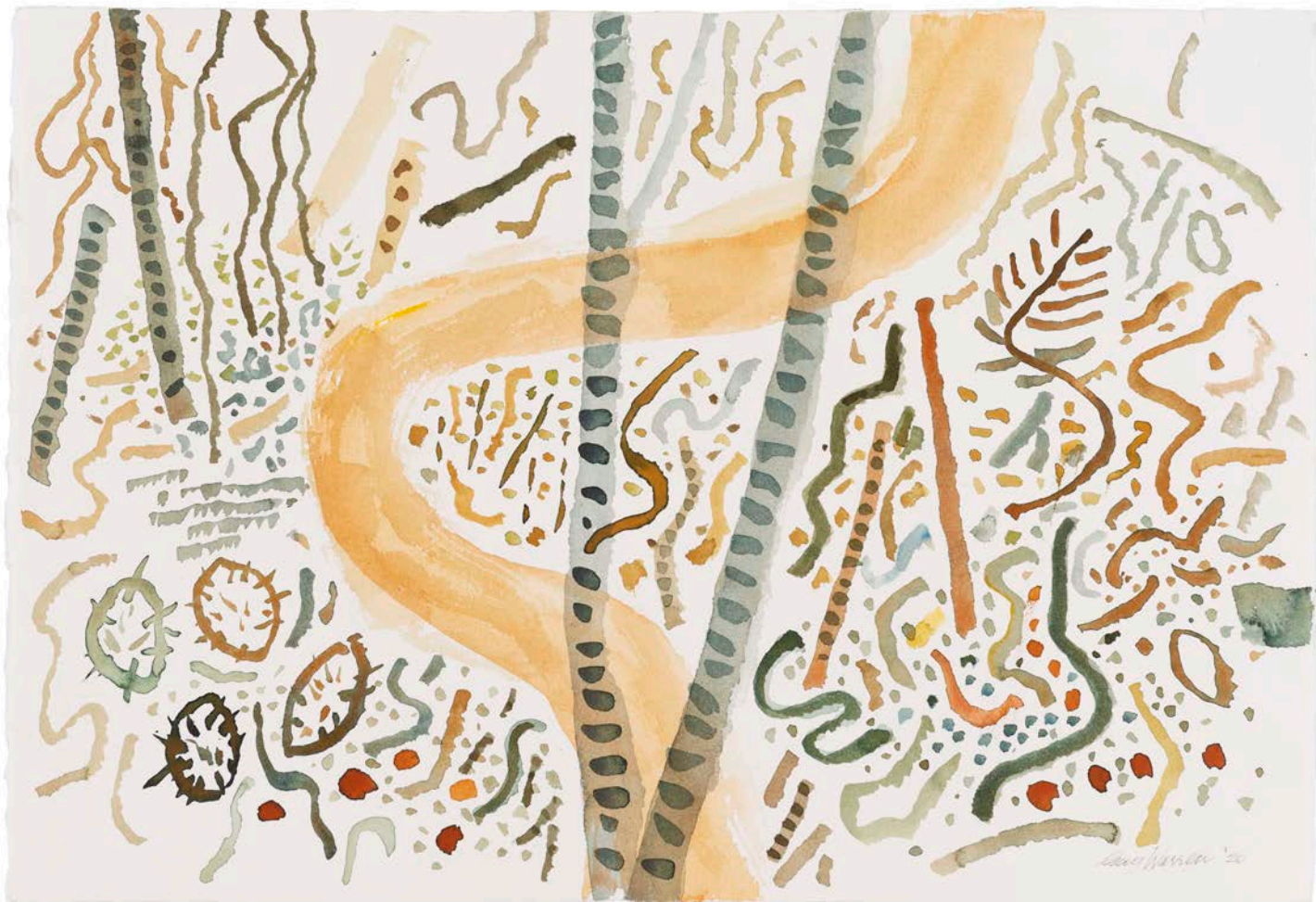
Walking through the Andes 2014 crayon on paper 58 x 77 cm



Water marks – Shoalhaven River series – yellow river 2 2007 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm



Water marks – meeting – Shoalhaven River series 2007 watercolour on paper 58 x 77 cm



Bend in the track 1 2020 watercolour on paper 38 x 57 cm



Marking the bend in the track 2 2020 watercolour on paper 37 x 57 cm



Figured forest 2020 watercolour on paper 37 x 57 cm



Untitled oil stick & charcoal on paper 58 x 77 cm



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on William 

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