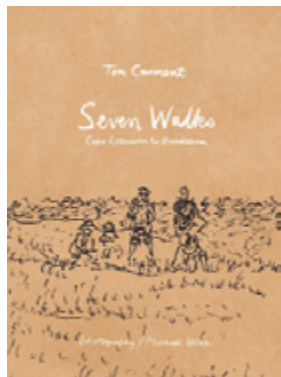




01



SEVEN WALKS CAPE LEEUWIN TO BUNDEENA

A NEW BOOK BY TOM CARMENT

SYDNEY ARTIST AND city dweller Tom Carment is highly regarded for his lively landscape paintings, works on paper and expressionistic portraits. He often travels far from his much loved Sydney painting haunts to refresh his palette, and most of the time he prefers to paint solo. Tom is also known for his writing and has collaborated with photographer Michael Wee to produce a refreshingly quirky and beautifully illustrated book which comes out this month and chronicles his recent travels with Michael to remote parts of Australia.

Four years ago over a coffee at his local inner-city cafe his good friend Michael Wee managed to convince Tom to go on some walks into the 'wild' parts of Australia. As both were inexperienced long-distance bushwalkers, Michael and Tom had to brush up on their tramping skills the hard way – en route as they traversed hot, rainy, snow-covered, and bushfire-blackened terrain. Tom says, "We approached this project as a pair of amateurs. Our previous experience of bushwalking had been day excursions, for family picnics, photography and painting."

The book features Michael's haunting, dramatic photographs, and Tom's delicately observed watercolours and drawings. Accompanying these lyrical creations are stories of each walk, interweaving history with anecdotes, humour and first-hand observation. *Seven Walks* is the companion book to their adventures and captures the feeling of heading out on foot along a narrow track, into a beautiful untamed landscape.

Helen Garner is a fan and has written: "Tom Carment's writing, like his art, seduces quietly: austere, highly articulate, always fresh, with a dry sense of the absurd. In this calm, modest register he commands great territories."

In one of the passages Tom writes: "I remember one summer going there with my parents, pulling up alongside the other big family sedans in the gravel and walking half a mile to the summit. Once we reached the black trig I assume that cigarettes were offered and smoked by the adults who would have gazed out across the rocky treeless landscape, much like Scotland. My father,



Helen Garner is a fan and has written: 'Tom Carment's writing, like his art, seduces quietly: austere, highly articulate, always fresh, with a dry sense of the absurd.'

who liked to be doing something, would have shot a sweeping panorama with his 'Standard 8' wind-up movie camera.

"The next time I walked to the Summit was in 1983 and, by then, the eight-kilometre road from Charlotte Pass was closed to vehicles. After doing some drawing on the slopes of Kosciuszko, I spent the night in Seaman's Hut, three kilometres away, sharing it with a bearded German trekker, who had earlier surprised me, rapping on the door after dark. He ate raw onions, hard cheese and black bread for his supper and warned me, as he crawled into the wire mesh bunk opposite, 'Do not be alarmed if I talk in my sleep'. He did, loudly, for what seemed like most of the night.

"I probably shouldn't have been using that hut as casual accommodation, but 30 years ago, there were fewer people about during summer in the alps.

"The hut was built in 1929 as an emergency shelter, paid for by the parents of an American cross-country skier, Laurie Seaman, who died nearby, with his companion Evan Hayes. Seaman's body wasn't located until the beginning of the thaw, and in one of his pockets there was a camera. The film was undamaged and they had it developed. The last shot on the roll was taken at the summit of Mount Kosciuszko: a skier leaning into a snow drift, next to a rock cairn, the landscape behind, whited out by an approaching blizzard." ■

Seven Walks Cape Leeuwin to Bundeena is out now.
www.sevenwalks.com

01 Burnt bush, Margaret River, 2012, watercolour on paper, 29 x 27cm
Courtesy the artist