



# JOHN BOKOR

Interiors

# JOHN BOKOR

## Interiors

22 May – 16 June 2018

King Street Gallery **KS**  
on William **Gw**

10am – 6pm Tuesday – Saturday  
177 William St Darlinghurst NSW 2010 Australia  
T: 61 2 9360 9727 E: [art@kingstreetgallery.com](mailto:art@kingstreetgallery.com)  
[www.kingstreetgallery.com.au](http://www.kingstreetgallery.com.au)

Front Cover: *Rooftop view* 2018 oil on canvas 120 x 120 cm  
Opposite: *Studio* 2018





Studio 2018



*The sculptor's table* 2018 oil on board 140 x 120 cm

## IN THE LIVING ROOM

Rooms submit to the geometry of function, the availability of light and a stranger, though largely unspoken, organisational grid. The living room is a place of aesthetic conformity. Couch. Table. TV. You rarely walk in expecting to be startled. It is enclosed by non-negotiable conventions and sealed with an aura of stasis.

The viewpoint of John Bokor's paintings takes this idea and turns it inside out. His occlusion of the TV set as the ultimate focal point (and negating object) is replaced instead with it's viewpoint, taking the unusual vantage of looking into rather than onto an interior space. Things are still 'in their place' but the composition works as if we are looking out from inside the TV screen itself, like an oculus or a spy camera. Bokor approaches the banal with great tenderness. In a sweep of empathy, painterly innovation and pictorial mischief he both enlivens and subverts the predictable rigidity of a domestic interior. A low table is painted as if sliding across a tilted floor. The solidity of a couch breaks apart with the pure hues of its ornamental cushions and the carpet starts to vibrate like a sea of electric tiles studded with rich and candied colour. The high key of his signature palette creates a subtle interplay between ground and surface and the eye dances in the glitter rather than the gloom of a space partitioned by four walls. This is an artist who admits himself: "I am interested less in the realities of the space and more in the abstract possibilities of the picture".

In these new works, two major shifts have occurred. The first is that his interiors are being painted on a much larger,

almost monumental scale and the second is that the painter is engaging two disparate techniques on one canvas: the airbrush and the paint brush. Bokor describes the experience of spraying into paint that is still drying as being like working with wet plaster. The feeling of making a fresco heightens the sensuality of his surfaces and takes their imagery even further into a glazed ethereal realm. The airbrush makes some of his rooms look graffiti spattered (as 'the abandoned apartment' might be) and others seem more ornate. His passages of non-brushed detail assume a weightless quality.



Airbrush, studio 2018

Whether he is painting from the 'real' interiors of friend's houses or those composed by condensing photographs into a hybrid image, Bokor delights in the clumsy bulk and mute humility of things. Some of his rooms share

the logic of a dollhouse where proportion is replaced by ornament. The vase of crushing height or the meaningless composure of bottles gathered on tables as a nest in the name of decor. Here we begin to tread on the line that divides the interior from its design.

Somehow, his sprayed dribbles and impatient meaty brushstrokes open the seam between what is intended for a room and what really dwells there. When John Bokor began painting the private spaces of his friend's houses he urged them NOT to clean up. To leave everything as it really was: in the stream of chaos and the storm of life. Then, when he based a series of paintings on heavily styled magazine interiors, he found himself adding normal objects back into the composition. "Messing it back up".

This simple chronology of addition and subtraction serves as an ample metaphor for the painting process he prefers. Namely, to line up a gathering of over a dozen large canvases, and work on them concurrently for a year. Starting them. Abandoning them. Returning to interrogate them and pretty much having them all on the boil until the show is cooked. The demand and discipline of painting like this, contrasts the seemingly placid subject matter he has chosen; that of dappled windows and tatty plump pillows. Yet anyone who lives day to day, year to year within one domestic space knows that home is not always a sanctuary or a retreat. Familiar spaces enclose secrets, dead dreams and boredom. No matter how much we clean, over time the furniture starts to sag and memories leak out. Nothing is actually safe as houses.

What appears solid can burn, break, disintegrate or simply melt from view with the force of habit and use.

And so, the subject of the interior endures, because its' great tension is the coiled energy that nestles between what we make of a room and how we actually live in it. Artifice and expectation: that hopeful line between the real and the ideal is a trembling threshold. John Bokor paints that place with the colours of a carnival but the quiet eye of a playwright. Dwelling in the bloom of broad daylight long after dusk has fallen.

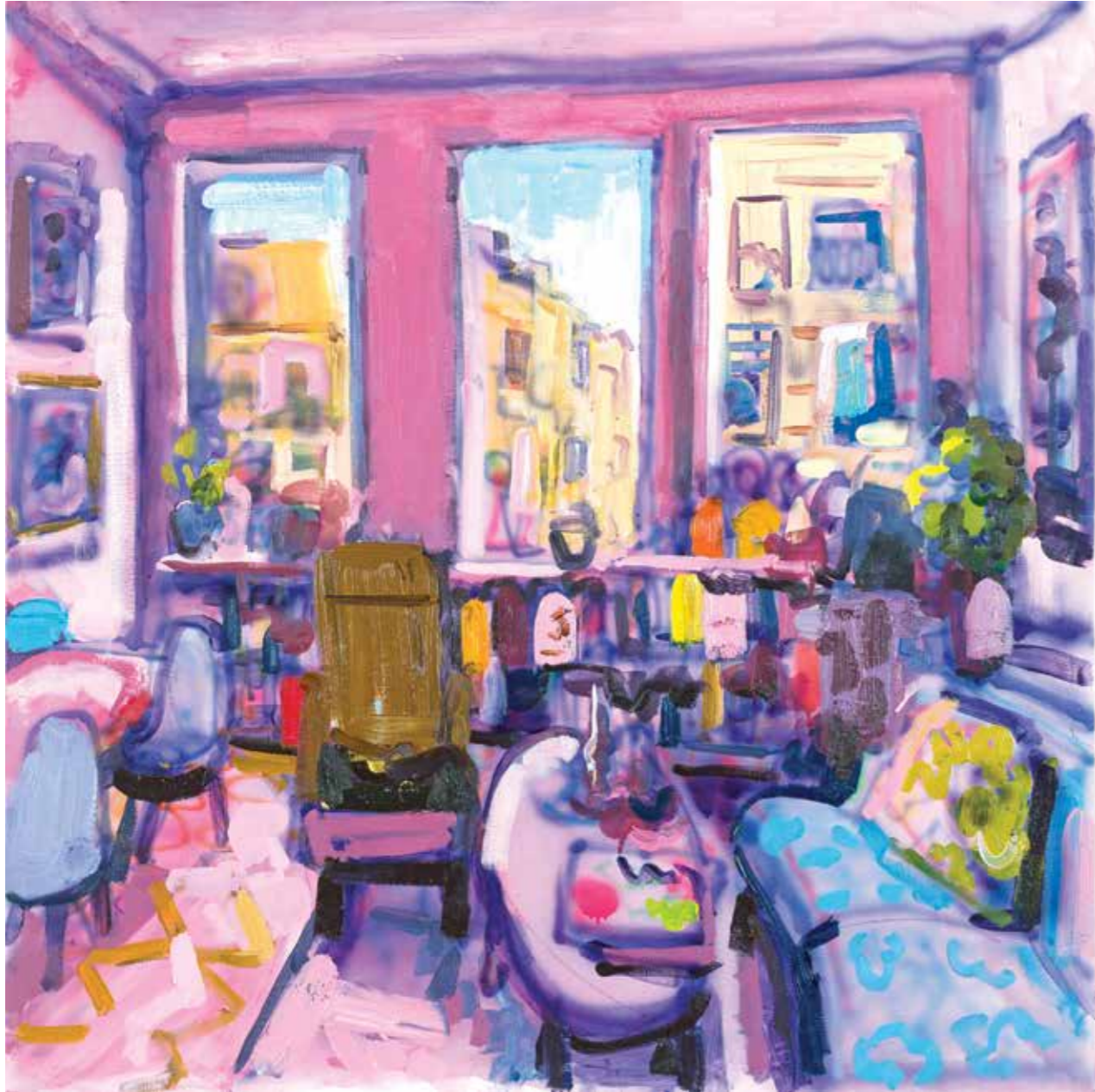
Anna Johnson, May, 2018



Abandoned apartment 2018 oil on canvas 120 x 120 cm



*Beneath the mirror* 2017 oil on linen 120 x 120 cm (detail)



*View of the street* 2018 oil on canvas 120 x 120 cm



*Colour study for 'View of the street'* 2018 carbon and oil on paper 21 x 27.5 cm



*The pink couch* 2017 oil on board 60 x 70 cm



*The green chairs* 2017 oil on board 60 x 70 cm



*Ma Jolie* 2018 charcoal and wash on paper 80 x 120 cm



*Through the archway* 2018 charcoal, collage and wash on paper 82 x 120 cm



*Evening interior* 2018 oil on linen 120 x 120 cm (detail)



*Behind the scenes* 2018 oil on canvas 112 x 122 cm



*The gilded frames* 2018 oil on board 100 x 120 cm



*Indoors* 2017 oil on board 60 x 70 cm



*An apartment in Paris* 2017 oil on board 60 x 70 cm

*In the kitchen* 2017 charcoal, wash and collage on paper 80 x 100 cm





*Room with two rugs* 2018 oil on board 120 x 140 cm



*The red velvet lounge* 2018 oil on linen 137 x 152 cm



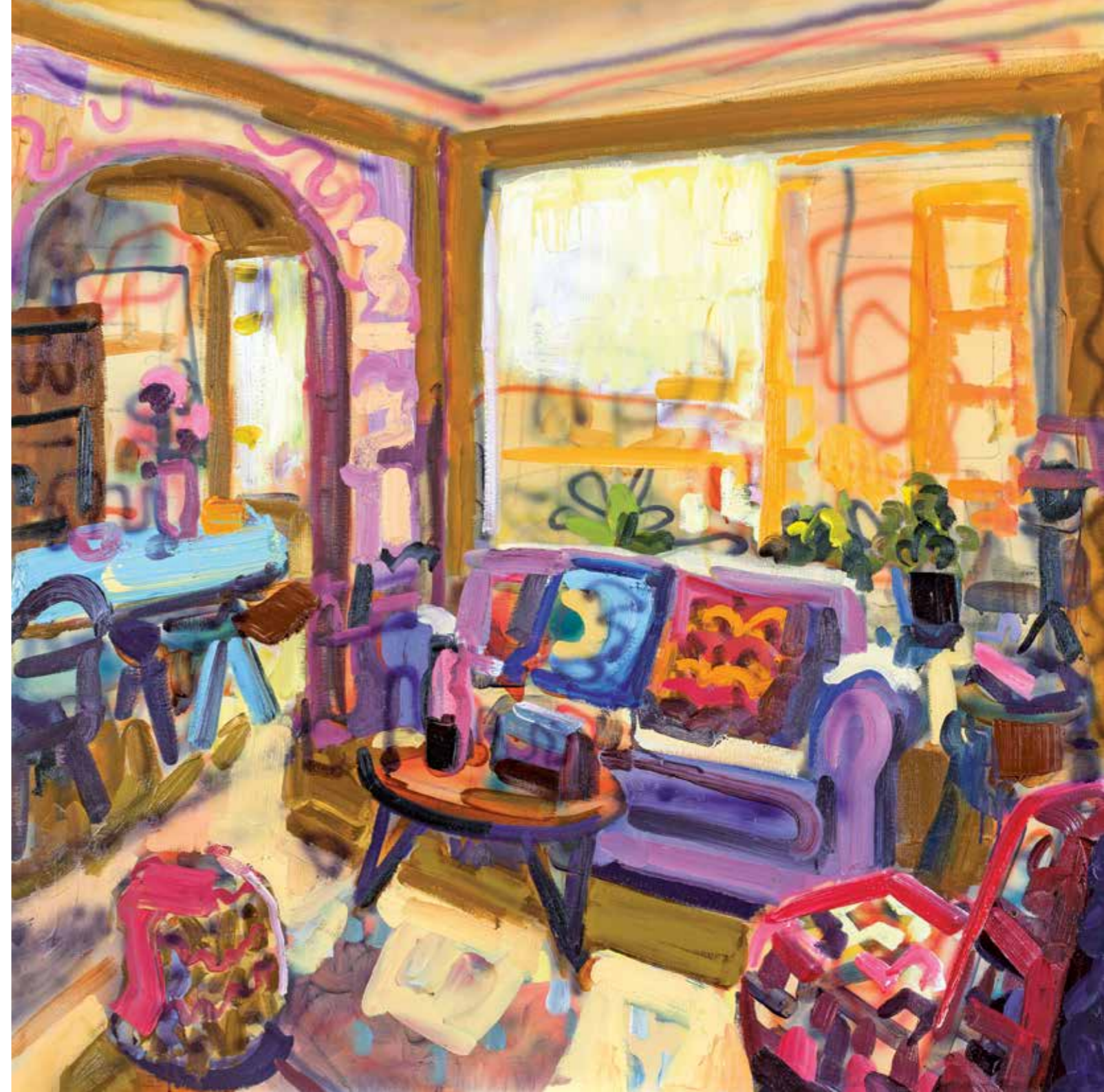
*The Englishman's apartment* 2018 oil on board 120 x 140 cm



*Colour study for 'Collector's sitting room' 2018 carbon and oil on paper 21 x 26.5 cm*



*Collector's sitting room 2018 oil on board 120 x 140 cm*



*Abandoned apartment* 2018 oil on canvas 120 x 120 cm (detail)



*The green room* 2017 oil on board 60 x 70 cm



*Yellow interior* 2017 oil on board 70 x 60 cm



*The world is hers* 2018 oil on canvas 120 x 150 cm

# John Bokor

<b>Born</b>	
1973	Sydney, NSW, Australia
<b>Education</b>	
1991-93	Diploma in Painting, National Art School, Sydney
2000	Bachelor of Fine Art [conversion course], National Art School
<b>Solo exhibitions</b>	
2018	<i>Interiors</i> King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
2017	<i>The Source</i> Wollongong Art Gallery, NSW
2016	<i>Everyday World</i> King Street Gallery on William <i>Artist in residence exhibition</i> Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW
2015	<i>Close to Home</i> King Street Gallery on William
2014	<i>John Bokor</i> Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery
2013	<i>The Still Life</i> King Street Gallery on William Union Club, Sydney [Courtesy of King Street Gallery]
2011	<i>Black Diamond District</i> King Street Gallery on William
2009	<i>Inside</i> King Street Gallery on William
2007	<i>Small World Paintings</i> King Street Gallery on William
2005	<i>Paintings</i> 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
<b>Group exhibitions [selected]</b>	
2018	<i>Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing</i> PLC, Sydney
2017	<i>Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing</i> PLC <i>Tattersall's Landscape Prize</i> Brisbane <i>Mosman Art Prize</i> Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney <i>Paddington Art Prize</i> Sydney <i>GLFC travelling works on paper exhibition</i> - Chart Art Fair, Copenhagen, Denmark; The Hole, NYC; Rod Bianco Gallery, Oslo, Norway; 0-0 Gallery, Los Angeles, California
2016	<i>Bokor, Ferguson &amp; McKenzie</i> Muswellbrook Regional Art Gallery, NSW <i>Planting Dreams</i> State Library of NSW, Sydney <i>Baked Goods</i> University City Arts League Gallery, Philadelphia, USA <i>Paddington Art Prize</i> Sydney <i>The Rick Amor Drawing Prize</i> Melbourne, Vic <i>Just Draw [travelling drawing exhibition]</i> Newcastle Art Gallery and Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW <i>Planting Dreams: Shaping Australian Gardens</i> State Library NSW <i>Kedumba Drawing Award</i> Orange Regional Art Gallery, NSW

2015	<i>Drawings from Artist in Residence</i> Amaze The Michael Crouch Gallery, Mitchell Library State Library, NSW <i>Kings School Art Prize</i> [winner] Kings School, Sydney <i>Mosman Art Prize</i> Mosman Art Gallery <i>Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing</i> PLC <i>Muswellbrook Art Prize</i> [winner] Muswellbrook Regional Art Gallery <i>Just Paper</i> Maitland Regional Art Gallery, NSW
2014	<i>Paddington Art Prize</i> Sydney <i>Kedumba Drawing Award</i> Wild Valley Art Gallery, NSW <i>Eutick Memorial Still Life Award</i> Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery <i>Rick Amor Drawing Prize</i> Ballarat Regional Gallery, Vic <i>Adelaide Perry Drawing Prize</i> Methodist Ladies College, Sydney <i>Fishers Ghost Art Award</i> Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW <i>A Landscape of Place and Name</i> King Street Gallery on William <i>En Plein Air Painting Prize</i> NSW Parliament House, Sydney <i>Calleen Art Prize</i> Cowra Regional Gallery, NSW
2013	<i>Last but not Least</i> King Street Gallery on William <i>Fishers Ghost Art Award</i> Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW <i>Eutick Memorial Still Life Award</i> Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery <i>Mosman Art Prize</i> Mosman Art Gallery <i>Looking Forward</i> King Street Gallery on William <i>Wilson Art Prize</i> Trinity Catholic College, Lismore NSW <i>Still Life</i> AGNSW, Sydney <i>Fleurieu Landscape Prize</i> SA <i>Calleen Art Award</i> Cowra Regional Gallery, NSW
2012	<i>Recent Acquisitions</i> Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW <i>Local Current</i> Wollongong City Gallery, NSW <i>City of Albany Art Prize</i> Albany Town Hall, Albany, WA <i>Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing</i> Adelaide Perry Gallery, Sydney <i>Eutick Memorial Still Life Award</i> Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery <i>Rick Amor Drawing Prize</i> Art Gallery of Ballarat, Vic <i>NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize</i> NSW Parliament House
2011	<i>Whyalla Art Prize</i> Middleback Theatre, Whyalla <i>NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize</i> NSW Parliament House <i>Nora Heysen Centenary Art Prize</i> Hahndorf, SA
2010	<i>Mosman Art Prize</i> Mosman Art Gallery <i>Stanthorpe Regional Gallery Art Prize</i> Qld <i>En Plein Air Prize</i> NSW Parliament House
2009	<i>Mosman Art Prize</i> Mosman Art Gallery <i>ANL Maritime Art Prize</i> Melbourne <i>Coffs Harbour Art Prize</i> Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery <i>Kenilworth Art Prize</i> Kenilworth, Qld <i>Paddington Art Prize</i> Menzies Art Brands, Sydney
2006	<i>Last Show of the Year</i> king street gallery on burton <i>Sustainable Living</i> NG Gallery, Sydney <i>No Place Like Home</i> NG Gallery

2005	<i>Agri / culture</i> Hawkesbury Regional Gallery, NSW <i>Bon A Tirer-Prints from the Studio</i> Mosman Art Gallery <i>Dog Trumpet</i> Michael Nagy Gallery, Sydney
2004	<i>Project Parkinsons</i> Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute
2003	<i>Hazelhurst Works On Paper Exhibition</i> Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney <i>Mosman Art Prize</i> Mosman Art Gallery <i>Waverly Art Prize Exhibition</i> Sydney
2002	<i>Brett Whitley Travelling Art Scholarship Exhibition</i> Sydney
2001	<i>Young Australian Artists</i> Bartley Drey Gallery, London
2000	Jackman Gallery, Melbourne Mary Place Gallery <i>Lloyd Rees Memorial Art Award Exhibition</i> ABC Gallery, Sydney <i>Waverley Art Prize Exhibition</i> Sydney
1999	<i>Brett Whitley Travelling Art Scholarship Exhibition</i> <i>Cityscapes</i> Level Gallery, Sydney
1997	<i>Glebe Art Show</i> Sydney
1994	<i>Fishers Ghost Exhibition</i> Campbelltown Bicentennial City Art Gallery, NSW

Awards & residencies

2016	Sawtell Artist in Residence, Coffs Harbour, NSW
2015	NSW State Library Artist in Residence [2 weeks], Sydney <i>Kings School Art Prize</i> The Kings School [winner] <i>Muswellbrook Art Prize</i> Drawing Section, Muswellbrook Regional Art Gallery [winner]
2014	South Hill Yellow House Residency Goulburn NSW
2013	<i>Eutick Still Life Memorial Art Award</i> [winner-first prize] <i>Wilson Art Award</i> Trinity Catholic College, Lismore [winner-first prize]
2012	<i>NSW Parliament en Plein Air Prize</i> Sydney [winner] <i>Eutick Memorial Still Life Award</i> Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW [sponsor's prize]
2006	<i>Loquat Valley Anglican School Art Prize</i> Sydney
2004	<i>Waverley Woollahra Art Prize</i> Sydney <i>Allan Gamble Art Prize</i> Sydney
2003	<i>Waverley Art Prize</i> [local subject] Sydney
1997	<i>Peoples Choice Award</i> Glebe Art Show, Sydney

Collections

Art Gallery of Ballarat, Victoria	State Library, New South Wales
Art Gallery of New South Wales	The Australia Club, New South Wales
Charles Sturt University Art Collection, New South Wales	Trinity Catholic College, Lismore, New South Wales
Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, New South Wales	UBS Warburg, Australia
Kings School Art Collection, Sydney	University of Sydney, New South Wales
Macquarie Bank, Australia	University of Wollongong, New South Wales
Maitland Regional Gallery, New South Wales	Waverley/Woollahra Council, Sydney
Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre, New South Wales	Wollongong Art Gallery, New South Wales
New South Wales Parliament Art Collection	

**Bibliography [selected]**

2016 Talking with Painters, Maria Stoljar podcast, Sept 29  
<http://www.talkingwithpainters.com/2016/09/29/ep-8-john-bokor/>  
Fortescue, E, Subjects a bread and butter issue, Daily Telegraph

2015 Aitken, R, Planting Dreams: Shaping Australian Gardens, New South Publishing, Sept 1  
Hynes, V, Close to Home Art Collector, issue 72, April/June  
Fortescue, E, Drama in the State Library, John Bokor begins two-week artist residency, The Daily Telegraph, March 19  
Perkins, C, State Library NSW Autumn p43  
Johnson, A, Room with a Viewpoint, House and Garden, April 15, p88  
Raven's Review, John Bokor at King Street Gallery on William, April 8

2014 Moorcroft, R, A brush with Bulli, South Coast Style Magazine, p57

2013 Fortesque, E, Energetic influence on still life, The Daily Telegraph

2012 Garrard, B, Urban Poetry, Australian Art Review, Issue 36 Nov-Dec, p28-30  
Gorton, R, Airing his views, somewhat reluctantly, The Daily Telegraph, May 10, p3  
Beaumont, J, The Land and It's Psyche, Macquarie Collection p36-37  
Allen, C, Drawing's alchemy spins gold, The Australian, Arts, May 2  
Douglas, T, Bokor's the parliament pick, The Australian, Arts, May 10, p16  
Fitzgerald, M, Art Prize, Sydney Morning Herald, May 10, p16

2011 Jinman, R & Fitzgerald, M, The Best of Art, Sydney Morning Herald, June 30  
Magnusson, T, The Strokes, GQ Magazine, June/July Issue, p34

2010 Duncan, E, Fresh air provides plenty to paint, Wollongong & Northern Leader, May 13, p17

2009 Kidd, C, Inside, catalogue, published by King Street Gallery on William, June/July

2005 Fortescue, E, Memories are awake in paint, Daily Telegraph, Oct 21, p65

2004 McDonald, J, 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, S, Street Art, Sydney Morning Herald, Apr 6  
Bootes, J, City Sites, The Sydney Hub, Apr 8

1998 Mason, M, Radio Interview, RRR

1997 James, B, The Poet of Parramatta Road, Sydney Morning Herald, Oct 17

1996 Smee, S, The Height Stuff, Sydney Morning Herald, May 10

Opposite: Studio 2018

Back cover: *Study for 'Rooftop view'* 2018 carbon and oil on paper 21 x 27.5 cm





King Street Gallery **KS**  
on William **Gw**

10am – 6pm Tuesday – Saturday  
177 William St Darlinghurst NSW 2010 Australia  
T: 61 2 9360 9727 E: [art@kingstreetgallery.com](mailto:art@kingstreetgallery.com)  
[www.kingstreetgallery.com.au](http://www.kingstreetgallery.com.au)

Published by King Street Studios P/L  
Photography: Bernie Fischer  
Sean O'Brien  
Jessica Maurer  
John Bokor  
Design: Ella Burrett  
ISBN 978-0-6480863-6-9



@kingstreetgallery