

IDRIS
MURPHY

Active Surrender


ACTIVE SURRENDER

6 JUNE - 1 JULY, 2023

King Street Gallery 
on William

10am – 6pm Tuesday – Saturday
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front cover (detail)
Shadows Rock Water Hole 2023
acrylic and collage on aluminium
150 x 140cm

'Active Surrender' with thanks to Jeanette Winterson.

IDRIS MURPHY





N'Dhala Gorge, East MacDonnell 2023
acrylic on aluminium
115 x 115cm





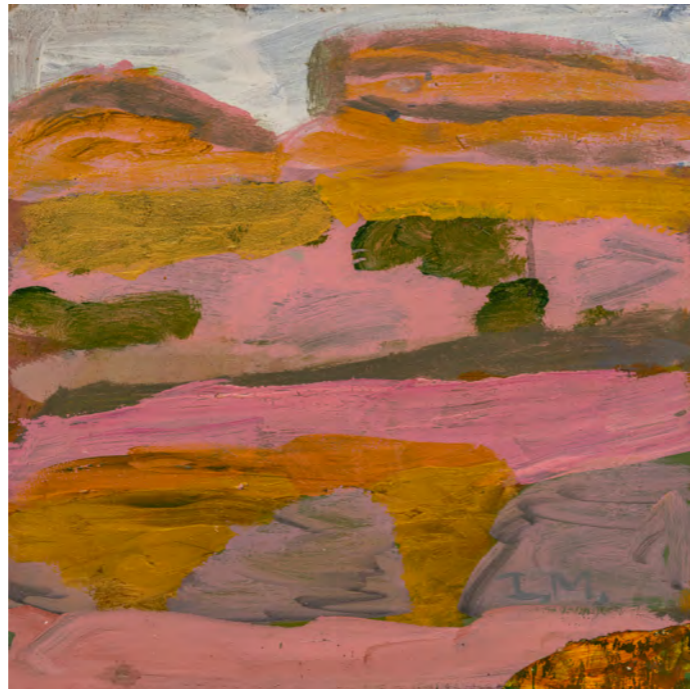
Chain of Ponds 2023
acrylic and collage aluminium
150 x 140cm

“For some years colour in the hands of this painter was verdant, almost humid in sensuality and ripely inviting. His vision of the centre and the desert was a startling Medina, pouring water on the wound of the ‘dead heart’ and all that dry red earth. Colour, re-invented in his spectrum, explained all the mutations of weather and mass and cloud with a raw and brisk hand. Laying it down and moving into it’s core, his palette rarely seemed perplexed. Instead there was a conversation occurring within its own lexicon and the language was bold. Untethered from the burden of light source, Murphy cleaved Australian landscape away from its perpetual obedience to tonal humility. In fact he heaved us out of the mud once and for all.”

Anna Johnson
Cutting In
October, 2017



Gorge Country, East MacDonnell 2023 acrylic on board 40 x 40cm



Driving, Artunga 2023 acrylic and collage on board 40 x 40cm



The Gap 2023 acrylic on board 40 x 40cm



Evening Lights, Burawang 2023 acrylic and collage on board 40 x 40cm

Floating Reflections 2023
acrylic and collage on aluminium
115 x 115cm



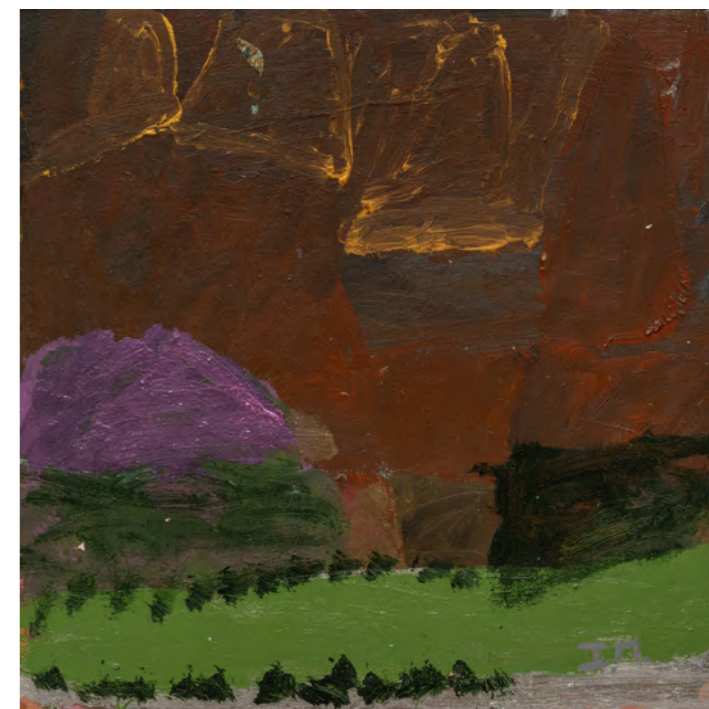
“Music, if I may say so, is the vapour of art. It is to poetry what daydreaming is to thinking, fluid to liquid, the ocean of the clouds to the ocean of the waves. In other words, it is the indefinite of this infinite.”

William Shakespeare
L'homme qui rit [translation: John Doherty]
1864

White Ochre 2023
acrylic and collage on board
40 x 40cm



N'Dhala Gorge, Weight 2023
acrylic on board
40 x 40cm





Trepina Gorge, Sandtalk I 2023
acrylic and collage on board
31.5 x 45cm



Trepina Gorge, Sandtalk II 2023
acrylic on board
31.5 x 45cm



Black Trees 2023
acrylic and collage on board
32 x 33cm

Other Reflections 2023
acrylic and collage on aluminium
115 x 115cm





Running Clouds, East MacDonnell 2023
acrylic and collage on board
60 x 60cm

Murphy is not trying to create an exact record of the landscape – he allows the mood and atmosphere of a place to find distant echoes within his own sensibility.

...

What seems at first profoundly unnatural, is revealed as merely another way of portraying what is most natural – to get beneath the skin of appearances and unearth the fundamental character of the country. To be more literary, one might call it the genius loci - the spirit of place.

...

The colours Murphy uses are as much a product of his mind as they are of the landscape. In this sense he is more of a Symbolist than an Impressionist, relying on the 'inner eye' rather than the retina. He takes the data of the physical world and sifts through it, like a prospector panning for gold, seeking to capture what is most valuable. He is not merely responding to what he sees, but to the feelings a scene engenders in his own peculiar psyche – and I'm not using the word 'peculiar' in a derogatory manner.

John McDonald
From *Original, Consistent, Bold and Unsung*
Sydney Morning Herald
March 2023



Green Tree Flats, Southcoast 2023
acrylic and collage on aluminium
115 x 115cm



Wind Flag, Fowlers Gap 2023
acrylic on board
45 x 45cm



Wattle Reflection 2023
acrylic on board
45 x 46cm



The emergence of an indigenous viewpoint and vision of the land is also something that, as a painter in this country, any serious artist has to get around or through. This is at the core of these new works – a way to incorporate the great Western tradition that Murphy is part of and can't escape –with a new, direct depiction of the land based on spirituality and meaning.

“Beauty doesn't have an agenda in itself – we just respond.” says Murphy. “That's what makes us human and the possibility of being more human. Great pictures do this.” The works of Idris Murphy gives us a chance to know that the possibility of Australian landscape painting isn't exhausted –it's only just beginning. It weaves in and out of so many histories and contexts. In Murphy's head, there is an amazing exhibition that draws upon his work and ties it up with the work that has inspired him. It reflects the living and working life of the artist. On the reel screening in Murphy's mind, a steady stream of ideas, writing and images ebb and flow, with the constant being a need to rearticulate the world in new and dynamic ways.

In the end, it comes down to producing works that hold their own place in the world and that move amongst us, that change as we change, as our friends change, as ideas or places we once held dear move away from the centre, like the light changing from dawn to evening and the sun hitting a patch of grass.

As Murphy says “I just have to make something that is the best thing I can make.”

Glenn Barkley
Curator MCA, Sydney
Courtesy: Artist Profile Magazine
Issue 3 pp 44-49, 2008



Rock Waterholes Series I, Chain of Ponds
2023 acrylic on board 28 x 35.5cm



Rock Waterholes Series II, Chain of Ponds
2023 acrylic on board 28 x 35.5cm



Rock Waterholes Series III, Chain of Ponds
2023 acrylic on board 28 x 35.5cm



Rock Waterholes Series IV, Chain of Ponds
2023 acrylic on board 28 x 35.5cm



Rock Waterholes Series I, Trepina Gorge
2023 acrylic on board 29.7 x 36cm



Rock Waterholes Series II, Trepina Gorge
2023 acrylic on board 29.7 x 36cm



Rock Waterholes Series III, Trepina Gorge
2023 acrylic on board 29.7 x 36cm



Rock Waterholes Series IV, Trepina Gorge
2023 acrylic on board 29.7 x 36cm

*"Doubt is the acute awareness of the
existence of alternatives."*

Philip Guston
Artist





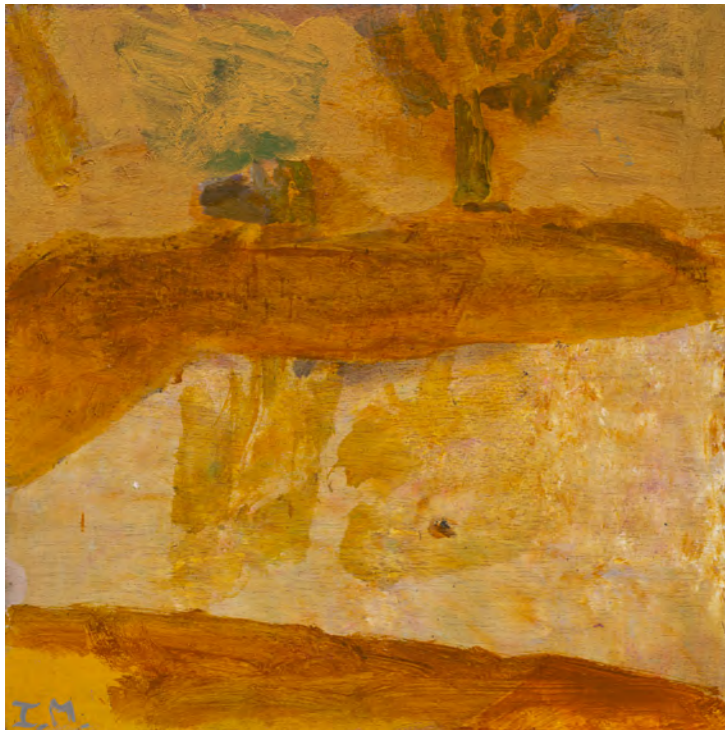
Tree and Light tetrptych 2023
acrylic on board
60 x 78cm



Full Tide Dancing Water 2023
acrylic and collage on aluminium
115 x 115cm



Fowlers Gap, Hot and Windy 2023
acrylic on board
40 x 40cm



The Dam at Fowlers Gap 2023
acrylic on board
40 x 40cm



Jessie Gap 2023
acrylic on board
40 x 40cm



Road with Running Clouds 2023
acrylic on board
40 x 40cm

Black Water Play 2023
acrylic and collage on aluminium
150 x 140cm





The Gorge, Aritunga 2023
acrylic on board
40 x 40cm



The Sea 2023
acrylic on board
45 x 45cm

Idris Murphy

Born

1949 Sydney, NSW, Australia

Studies & Work

1988-2007 Lecturer, College of Fine Art, University of New South Wales, Sydney
1997 Head of Drawing, National Art School, Sydney
1994 Doctorate of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, NSW

Solo Exhibitions [selected]

2023 *Active Surrender* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
2022-23 *Backblocks*, The Drill Hall Gallery, ANU Canberra, ACT; Orange Regional Art Gallery, Orange, NSW; SH Ervin Gallery, Sydney
2022 *Now and Then*, Mitchell Fine Art, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane, QLD
2021 *The Abundance* King Street Gallery on William
2019 *Empyrean: scattering of stars* King Street Gallery on William
2017 *Real Presence* King Street Gallery on William
New Work Alcaston Gallery, Melbourne
2016 *Drawing Breath [works on paper & heliographs]* King Street Gallery on William
2015 *Tide-Lands* King Street Gallery on William
2014 *Landscapes Inscapes* King Street Gallery on William
Edgelands Idris Murphy & Paul Martin, Warburton Art Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
Everywhen King Street Gallery on William
2011 *Interrogating Appearances* King Street Gallery on William
2010 *I & Thou: Survey Exhibition* 1986-2008 Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery, Broken Hill, NSW
Idris Murphy at Bett Gallery Hobart, Tas

Group Exhibitions [selected]

2022 *Earth Canvas* National Museum of Australia, Canberra
2021 *Tree of Life: A testament to endurance* S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
2020-21 *Earth Canvas* [Touring Exhibition] Albury Library Museum, NSW
2019 *Conversations with Alice* Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios, Sydney
Inside/outside King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
2018-20 *Salient - Contemporary Artists at the Western Front* New England Regional Art Museum, NSW; ANZAC Memorial, Sydney; Bank Art Museum Moree, NSW; Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre, NSW; Tweed Regional Gallery, Murwillumbah South, NSW
100 years on King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
Salient Melbourne Australia Club Melbourne, Vic
National Art, Part One National Art School, Sydney
Gallipoli Drawings Newcastle University Art Gallery, Newcastle, NSW
Hadley's Art Prize Hadley's Orient Hotel, Hobart, Tas
A Painted Landscape Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
The Art of Friendship Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios, Sydney
2017 *Artist Profile Australasian Painters* Orange Regional Gallery, NSW
Hadley's Art Prize Hadley's Orient Hotel, Hobart, Tas
2016 *Paint my Place* Coffs Harbour Regional Art Gallery, Coffs Harbour, NSW
2015-17 *Country & Western: landscape re-imagined* [curated by Gavin Wilson], launching at Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Qld-travelling Qld, NSW, Vic, NT

Hazelhurst Works on Paper Award Hazelhurst Regional Gallery
NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize Parliament House, Sydney
Your Friend the Enemy, 100 Years On, Gallipoli The Drill Hall Gallery
Your Friend the Enemy, 100 Years On, Gallipoli Travelling: S.H. Ervin Gallery, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery
A Salute: Drawing Show Goulbourn Regional Gallery, NSW
2014 *Oz to Waiheke* Waiheke Community Art Gallery, NZ
Gallipoli Art Prize Gallipoli Club Sydney
2012-2013 *Not the Way Home [curated by Owen Craven]* S.H. Ervin, Sydney & traveling
2012 *KIAF/12 Korean International Art Fair*, COEX Building, Seoul
Virtual Reality: Interpreting the Landscape [King Street Gallery @ Newcastle University Gallery] Newcastle, NSW

Residencies & Awards

2019 State Library of New South Wales, Sydney
2017 The Western Front, France
2016 Moonee Beach Artist in Residence, Coffs Harbour Regional Art Gallery, NSW
2014 Gallipoli Art Prize [winner], Gallipoli Club Sydney
Gallipoli 'En plein air' project conceived by Robert Linnegar- in association with Artist Profile Magazine
Waiheke Island Residency in association with Waiheke Community Arts Centre, New Zealand
2013 Gallipoli 'En plein air' project conceived by Robert Linnegar- preliminary visit
2011 Working tour of Fowlers Gap & Broken Hill, NSW by invitation of Artist Profile Magazine
2009 Working tour of New Zealand's North Island by invitation of Artist Profile Magazine

Collections

Allens Arthur Robinson
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Artbank, Australia
Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra
Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW
Cowra Regional Art Gallery, NSW
Gallipoli Memorial Club
Australian Graduate School of Management
Australian Library of Art, State Library of Queensland, Qld
Bendigo Regional Art Gallery, NSW
Bibliothèque National de Paris
Brisbane Grammar School, Qld
Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery, NSW
Charles Sturt University, NSW
Clot/Bramsen et Georges Studio, Paris
Kedumba Drawing Collection, NSW
Long Gallery & Art Collection, University of Wollongong, NSW
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Library of Australia, Canberra
Northern Rivers CAE, NSW
Orange Regional Gallery, NSW
Parliament House, Canberra
Rockhampton Regional Art Gallery, Qld
State Library of New South Wales
Telecom Collection, Melbourne
Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Ireland
UBS Warburg, Sydney
University of New South Wales
Westpac Collection, Australia

Full CV available on
www.kingstreetgallery.com.au
www.idrismurphy.com



N'Dhala Gorge 2023
acrylic on board
45 x 45cm

Idris Murphy shares his thanks to all First Nations people, upon whose land he has walked and worked.