

MEDIA RELEASE

Artist's garden inspires new exhibition

Landscape artist Leo Robba didn't have to look far for inspiration for his latest exhibition, *The Artist's Garden: Humanising the Landscape*, which opens at King Street Gallery on William on February 8 and runs until March 5.

The view from his studio in Springwood not only takes in his own expansive garden – complete with a bountiful vegetable patch, fruit trees, tree-shaded swimming pool and neat lawns – but also encompasses the untamed Sassafras Gully Reserve, part of the World Heritage-listed Blue Mountains National Park.

This juxtaposition of the formal and the natural, the manicured against the wild, is the inspiration behind Robba's new solo show. His new collection of landscape paintings show plant life neatly clipped and ordered by man backing onto uncontrolled natural habitat. It's this dividing line, this stark contrast, which intrigues Robba, who's embraced the rhythms of the seasons and the pleasures of gardening since moving from inner-city Sydney to a historic Springwood property four years ago. "When we look into a garden, we see more than a view - we see the result of human activity, we see potential, we see the past and we see the present," he says.

His new works not only include a massive triptych showing his own garden, Hillston, in all its pan-seasonal glory but the gardens of iconic rural properties from different regions of Australia. Loading his paints and canvases into his car, Robba travelled to Moree, where he painted the beautiful garden at Boolooroo, to Burrawang West Station near Condobolin in the NSW Central West, Windradeen near Adaminaby in the Snowy Mountains and Kingswood in Western Sydney. He also painted the historic Arkaba Station in South Australia's Flinders Ranges while leading a group of artists on a trek.

The artist, writer and curator was born in Bundaberg, Queensland in 1962. He's had more than 30 solo exhibitions over his long painting career, and is currently studying the relationship between artists and their gardens for his PhD research at ANU in Canberra. He has also written for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *Artist Profile* magazine and has curated a number of high-profile exhibitions.



King Street Gallery on William

177 William Street

Darlinghurst

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-6pm

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