

Amanda Penrose Hart

Dragonflies



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29 August - 23 September 2023

King Street Gallery 
on William

10am-6pm Tues - Sat | Sun - Mon by appointment
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Amanda Penrose Hart in studio, Duffys Forest
Photo Courtesy: Riste Andrievski

Front cover
Hanging Weight 2023
oil on canvas
122 x 152.5 cm

Blue Holes 2023 oil on canvas 122 x 153 cm





Bobundra NSW 2023
oil on linen
121.5 x 198.5 cm



Line in the Sand NSW 2023 oil on board 40 x 40 cm



Drift 2023 oil on board 40 x 40 cm

Dragonflies

Dr Sarah Engeldow 2023

An artist regards a group of her own works differently from a viewer who comes to it fresh and unawares. The artist brings layers of experience with her: of technical struggles or triumphs with particular canvases, yes, but of moods, thoughts and events that coincided with their creation, too. For the artist, compartmentalisation may be achieved for as long as it takes to get a show together; but looking at a body of work some months on, something apparently tangential may seem to bear strongly upon it, float up and fix in the artist's mind as fundamental to it.

Looking at these tempestuous skies of hers, Amanda Penrose Hart thinks of dragonflies.

From the beginning of 2023, Amanda inhabited a house in Duffys Forest, Sydney that teeters above a timbered gully. Over summer, she observed the acrobatic insects, hovering, darting in and out of her space. She noted facts about them. She felt grateful to them for eating mosquitoes. She thought it was pretty funny that when they mate they make a heart shape. With their long tail sections they reminded her of the gliders she flew in her twenties, watching the horizon rise and tilt. Juveniles are wingless, and she thought of senior painters she knows, making their freest works late in their journey through life and art.

Reading Tennyson's poem about a dragonfly – a living flash of light – she fixed on the idea that an inner impulse would rend the veil of one's old husk. She wanted that, as an artist. The little creatures kept her company until they disappeared around winter.

The paintings she worked on in the studio amidst the dragonflies were conceived in the open air. On the way to full realisation, they transformed from views of specific places into evocations of atmosphere. The clouds throughout are carefully placed, compositions forming and reforming on the canvas. While she made clouds from paint, Amanda thought about how real clouds enhance our lives, providing rain and shade, holding heat into the surface of the earth. As she painted permanent clouds, striving to evoke presence and immateriality at the same time, she thought about the changeability of real clouds, and of people. She thought about the inseparability of people and their so-called surroundings; we are never 'out in the elements', we comprise the elements ourselves. As she worked to bring the painted air, water and earth in her pictures into harmony within the confines of the canvas, she brooded on the idea of the yield point – the point of stress at which the structure cannot hold and deformation occurs, the catastrophic point of giving way.

Ah the insistent poetry of the language of weather, the words we use for clouds. The terms and phrases float across the brain, cirrus cumulonimbus stratus fractus; mackerel sky. Clouds roll in, they pile up, they scud, they sweep across the land, they billow, they are rent by currents. They loom, mass, threaten, they are fluffy or lowering. They conjure up creamy curds; cushiony puffs; streamers, wispy and ragged. Clouds are hard edged or blurred; sitting separate from sky, merging with it at a place that can't be pointed to. Are they white, pearly, fringed with brilliance? They throw shadows on the land and water, turning it sulky and murky. But they enfold shadows, too; clean greys, dirty yellows, oyster pink and streaky mustard. And when the sun breaks through! Through torn holes of blue sky, light turns cracks and sheets of water glittering silver and gold.

Amanda caught her breath as she watched the dragonflies change levels in the hot air. She recalled her exhilaration as her glider dipped and soared and the horizon moved up and down. In her long career, grounded and analytical, she has allocated radically different ratios of canvas to sea, earth and sky. In many of these paintings the superb drama of the sky dominates the landscapes below. The hills, columnar trees, twigs, dry branches, ponds and rivulets anchor the skies in the pictures.

You cannot catch a cloud no matter how much you would like to. Yet in the end, the opposition of solid land and ephemeral, elusive cloud is not so great. In the flowering of scientific enquiry of the Victorian age, it hit home to philosophers that mountains, deserts and coastlines shift and transfigure over aeons. Seventeen years after he immortalised a dragonfly, in 1850 Tennyson reflected

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands;
They melt like mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

In paintings there is stillness. Looking at these ones, Amanda Penrose Hart sees herself looking for peace. As a painter and a person she says now

I want to go lightly yesterday today and tomorrow
I want to go lightly as a meadowhawk.



Amanda Penrose Hart's studio, Duffys Forest
Photo Courtesy: Michael Bradfield Photography



Mystery Bay 2023 oil on linen 92 x 244.5 cm



Selling Sand 2023 acrylic on board 76 x 102 cm



Under Mount Ainslie 2023 acrylic on board 76 x 102 cm



Shepherds Lookout ACT 2023
oil on linen
121.5 x 198.5 cm



Cloud 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Furrow 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Grand Pacific Drive 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Wallaga Lake National Park 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Puckey's Lagoon 2023 acrylic on linen 60 x 180 cm



The Road South 2023 acrylic on linen 100 x 245 cm



Blue Skies 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Scored Deep 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Coastal Pool 2023 acrylic on board 76 x 102 cm



Amanda Penrose Hart painting en plein air, Wollongong, 2023
Photo Courtesy: Michael Bradfield Photography



Snow 2023 oil on paper 30 x 37 cm



Deep Deep Blue 2023 acrylic on paper 28 x 36 cm



Headland 2023 acrylic on canvas 122 x 153 cm



The Crossover 2023 oil on canvas 122 x 153 cm



Cuttagee Beach NSW 2023 oil on linen 92 x 244.5 cm



Puckey's Lagoon with Pines 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Sleeping Quiet 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Shoreline 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



The Creek was Grey 2023 oil on board 30 x 30 cm



Wollongong 2023 acrylic on linen 90 x 245 cm



White Grasses 2023 oil on linen 101.5 x 152.5 cm



The Backwater 2023 oil on canvas 122 x 153 cm



Ground Truthing 2023 oil on linen 92 x 244.5 cm

Amanda Penrose Hart

Born 1963 Brisbane, Qld, Australia

Studies 1981-83 Diploma Fine Art, Queensland College of Art, Brisbane
1989-91 Bachelor of Visual Art, Griffith University, Brisbane

Solo exhibitions

2023 *Dragonflies* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
2021 *The long view* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
2019 *One fine day we'll see* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
2018 *Beautiful one day perfect the next* Mitchell Fine Art, Brisbane
2017 *High Tide* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
New Paintings Redot Gallery, Singapore
2015 *Coast* King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
2014 *Acid Free works on paper show* King Street Gallery on William
2013 *Manly: Somewhere on the Australian Coast* Manly Art Gallery & Museum, Sydney
Manly: Somewhere on the Australian Coast King Street Gallery on William
2011 *New Paintings* King Street Gallery on William
2009 *Livin' Green* King Street Gallery on William
Green it up Kristian Pithie Gallery, Melbourne
Caravans in the Mist Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, Bathurst, NSW
2007 *new paintings* king street gallery on burton, Sydney
2005 *new paintings* king street gallery on burton
35 small paintings Waterfront Place Gallery, Art Promotions Queensland, Brisbane
2004 *Painting* Chapman Gallery, Canberra, ACT
2003 *painting* king street gallery on burton
2002 *Painting* Chapman Gallery
Recent Work Brisbane Institute, Brisbane

Awards and Residencies

2022-23 *Wollongong Art Gallery*, Artist in Residence
2021 *Brisbane Portrait Prize* [Performing Arts and Music section]
2020 *Mountains to the sea*, Grafton Regional Art Gallery, Residency and exhibition 2021
2019 *Clayton Utz Award*, Brisbane, QLD
2017 *Gallipoli Art Prize*, Sydney
Artist in Residence, Creancey, France
Western Front Painting tour, France and Belgium
2016 Artist in Residence, Queenstown NZ
Artist in Residence, Moonee Beach, Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery
Artist in Residence, Queenstown, NZ
2014 Artist in Residence, Bruny Island Tasmania and Workshop
Waiheke Artists in Residence, and Exhibition NZ
Gallipoli Painting Tour, Turkey
2013 *Gallipoli Painting Tour*, Turkey

2011 Artist in Residence, Fowler's Gap, University of Sydney
2010 Artist in Residence, Taronga Zoo Foundation, Sydney
2009 Artist in Residence, Riverside Girls School, Sydney
2006 Hill End Residency [Haefliger's Cottage], Hill End, NSW
2004 *Winner, Hills Grammar Art Prize*, The Hills Grammar School, Qld
1994 *Winner, Maroochydore Shire Council Art Prize*, Qld
1993 *Winner, Polo Club Heritage Art Prize*, Brisbane

Artwork Collections

Allens, Sydney
AMP, Brisbane
Artbank, Australia
ANZAC Memorial Museum, Hyde Park, Sydney
Anglican Greater Schools Collection, Brisbane
Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney
The Australian Club, Sydney
The Australian Club, Melbourne
Australia National University, Drill Hall Gallery Collection
Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW
Broken Hill Regional Gallery, NSW
Brisbane Polo Club
Clayton UTZ Collection, Sydney
Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery
The Gallipoli Club, Sydney
Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Qld
Hawkesbury Regional Art Gallery, NSW (Allan Cleary Collection)
Macquarie Bank, Australia
Maitland Regional Gallery, NSW
Manly Regional Art Gallery and Museum, Sydney
Parliament House, Canberra
Sydney University Art Collection
NSW Bar Association
Outback Art Inc., Qld
Redcliffe Regional Gallery, Qld
Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane
Sydney University Art Collection
Thomas National Transport, Brisbane
Waltzing Matilda Centre, Winton, QLD

Full CV available at www.kingstreetgallery.com.au

www.amandapenrosehart.com.au



Together 2023 oil on paper 18 x 27 cm



Guerrilla bay 2023 acrylic on paper 28 x 37 cm



Monkey Hill 2023 oil on paper 26 x 18 cm

*Thank you to the Lawson Family
for the use of the Duffys Forest
residence, where I found peace of
mind to prepare for this
exhibition.*



Amanda Penrose Hart in studio, Duffys Forest
Photo Courtesy: Michael Bradfield Photography