John Bokor

Inner world

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27 October – 21 November 2020



10am – 6pm Tuesday – Saturday 177-185 William St Darlinghurst NSW 2010 Australia T: 61 2 9360 9727 E: art@kingstreetgallery.com www.kingstreetgallery.com.au

Front Cover: A single rose 2020 oil on board 60 x 70cm (detail) Opposite: John Bokor in his studio, Bulli, NSW, 2020 Photo courtesy Riste Andrievski





White flowers 2020 oil on board 70 x 60 cm



Country escape 2020 oil on board 120 x 140 cm

This year will be remembered for many things, not least the inordinate amount of time we spent indoors, unable to see friends, family members or colleagues. Yet for artist John Bokor, who works from a studio beneath his house in Bulli, south of Sydney, lockdown only sharpened his eye as to the pictorial potential of the spaces and objects we found ourselves scrutinising at all hours: bright, busy, lived-in lounge rooms, and dining tables loaded with plates, dishes, cups, flowers and books.

It's a minimalist's worst nightmare - and, Instagram aside, the way most people's interiors look most of the time. Somehow, though, Bokor's oil paintings improve on reality by transforming quotidian clutter into compositional delight, coaxing his domestic forms into being with a radiant, almost hallucinatory palette and a lively yet confident hand. As fond of a palette knife as he is of a wide, flat, Filbert brush, the artist builds up and scrapes away repeatedly, lending the surfaces of his boards and canvases an active, tactile quality.

Bokor's interiors are devoid of people, which helps to account for their dazzling serenity and encourages the beholder to project themselves into the space. Could I live here? Is that striped couch long enough to lie down on? These rooms and tables don't belong to us, yet in recognising them as signifiers of safety, comfort and a kind of worn-down familiarity, we register a similar affective charge. They feel like 'home'.

But to whom do these homes belong? Everyone and no one. They are hybrid compositions, based on images the artist has seen in magazines or online. "I might draw one of these up and start painting," says Bokor, "then add elements of another one, so it becomes something else." He used to paint interiors that were familiar to him, parts of his own home or those belonging to friends, "but I was overly concerned

with where everything sat, because spatially it had to be a reflection of that room". He wondered what it might be like to paint a room he'd never entered. "Could I be cavalier and leave things out, or alter or move things?"

Yes, he could. The breakthrough, which occurred several years ago, has honed his powers of design while augmenting the visual impact of his style. "I make them what I want them to be, rather than what they started off being." Still, he might add a personal item - an old cup, a sugar bowl - if the composition requires it.

By contrast, the artist's high-viewpoint still lifes are based on photos and drawings of personal and household objects he's arranged himself. Again, however, he views them as jumpingoff points rather than blueprints. "You particularly don't want a tight, slavish painting that adheres totally to a photograph, because a photo is static."

Around the same time, Bokor purchased an airbrush and began mixing his own oil-based spray-paint, a technique of which he has since become very fond. "I like the softfocus, hard-focus aspect, and that you can draw with it," he says. "When you load up a brush with paint, it only lasts so long, whereas with an airbrush, you can keep going. It's also similar to drawing a line on an etching plate, in that it's slippery. You don't have great control and it comes out a bit loose. You feel like a kid again."

Notable for their vigorous, open brushwork, Bokor's paintings contain broad, buttery sweeps of pigment, alongside nervous zigzags, curves, swerves and spots (often echoed in spraypaint) and passages of gleaming impasto. Rich in pastel and jewel tones - pink and purple is a favoured combination his carefully balanced palette can make even a brown vinyl swivel chair appear inviting.

Intriguingly, whether using brush, palette knife, airbrush or underdrawing pencil, Bokor resists the urge to finish off one area before moving on to another. "I want it always to be in a state of flux," he says. It's this free, open-ended approach that enables him to embrace ambiguity of form, one of his key objectives as an artist. "I also like to show all aspects of the work, from the early drawing stage to something that's finished. I want people to see the hand in it."

Complementing the oils is a selection of drawings in charcoal and wash with elements of collage, alongside smaller works on paper in carbon pencil, wash and oil paint. "Some are studies for paintings, and some are records of a painting midprocess. Often, I'll draw a painting if I'm stuck or can't move forward." Composed with an energetic line, the large works are striking for the contrast achieved between (thin) charcoal pencil and (thick) compressed charcoal, and for their cutand-paste aesthetic, which hints at fracture, double vision, erasure and, of course, Cubism. Meanwhile, the small colour studies, with their indicative dabs of pigment, offer tantalising insights into the genesis of several of the oils.





Bokor's pictures of living spaces bedecked with pictures on every available wall will, in some cases, end up on the walls of similar rooms. Which begs the very 'meta' question: Does he paint versions of his own paintings on the walls of the rooms he's painting? "Occasionally," he laughs. "Often I'll draw something I've seen somewhere, but from memory. One painting-within-a-painting was meant to be a man serving drinks in a bar, but it looks like a monkey -- I'm happy with that. You can have a lot of fun with what's on the walls. I have a lot of fun with what's in the room, too, but I really like what's on the walls."

Tony Magnusson September 2020





Colour study, after the rain

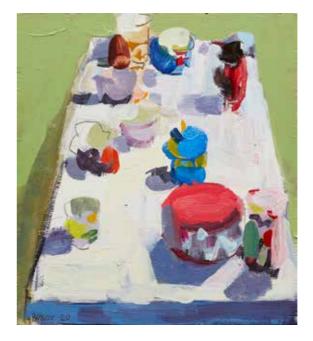
2020 carbon pencil, wash and oil on paper 21 x 27 cm



After the rain 2020 oil on board 100 x 120 cm



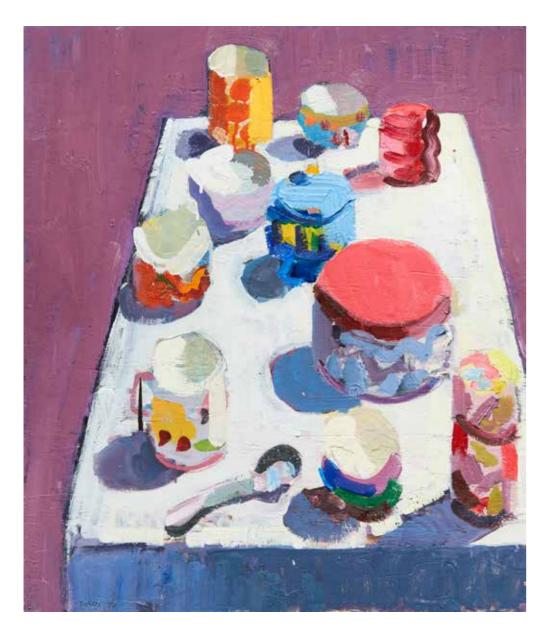
Afternoon rose 2020 oil on board 60 x 70 cm



Afternoon tea study 2020 oil on board 28 x 25 cm



Yellow still life 2020 oil on board 28 x 25 cm





Poppies 2020 oil on board 28 x 25 cm

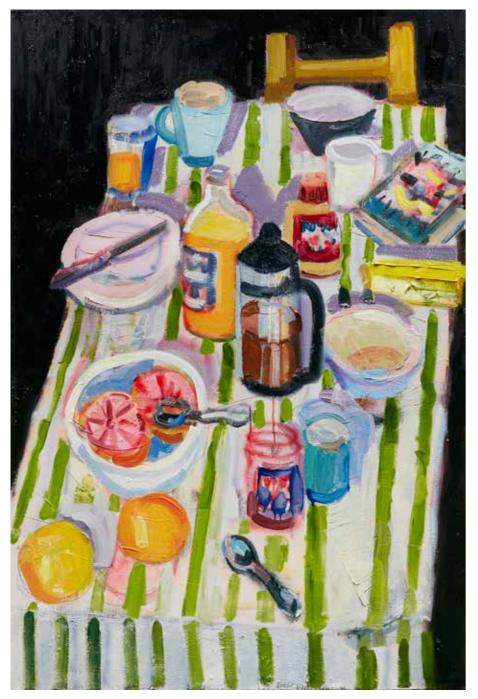
Afternoon tea 2020 oil on board 70 x 60 cm



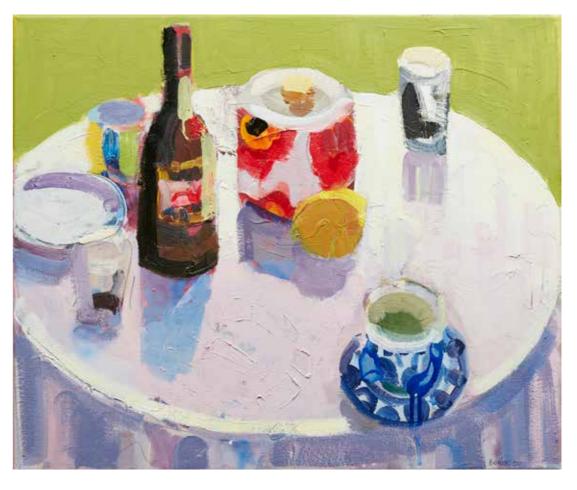
Chocolate bar and silver pot 2020 oil on board 28 x 25 cm



Blue interior 2020 oil on board 120 x 140 cm



Breakfast table 2020 oil on linen 137 x 92 cm



Brandy and tea 2020 oil on canvas 50 x 60 cm



A single rose 2020 charcoal, wash and collage on paper 56 x 76cm



Water jug and books 2020 oil on board 25 x 28 cm



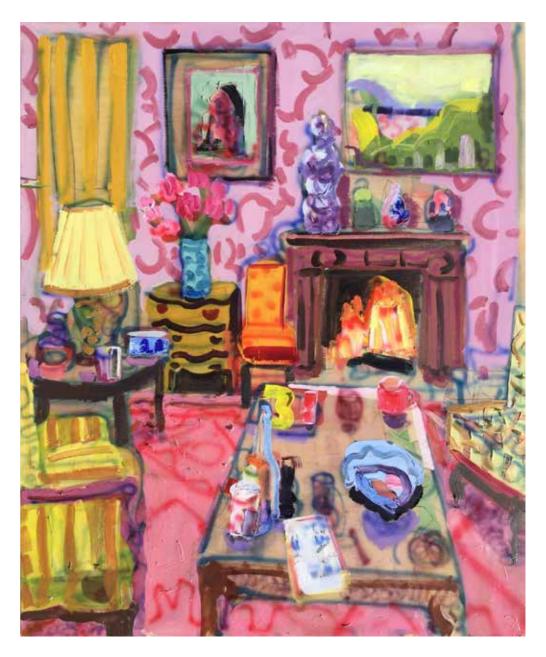
Water jug and pencils 2020 oil on board 25 x 28 cm



Afternoon rose study 2020 oil on board 25 x 28 cm



Drawing at the table 2020 oil on board 25 x 28 cm



Fireplace 1965 2020 oil on board 120 x 100 cm





Autumn interior 2020 charcoal, wash and collage on paper 56 x 76 cm

Pencils and oranges 2020 oil on board 60 x 70 cm







Memories of Spain 2020 oil on board 120 x 140 cm



Studio, 2020 Photo courtesy Riste Andrievski





Biscuit tin study 2020 oil on linen on board 27 x 30 cm

Gypsy plate 2020 oil on board 27 x 30 cm



Patterned plate 2020 oil on board 25 x 28 cm

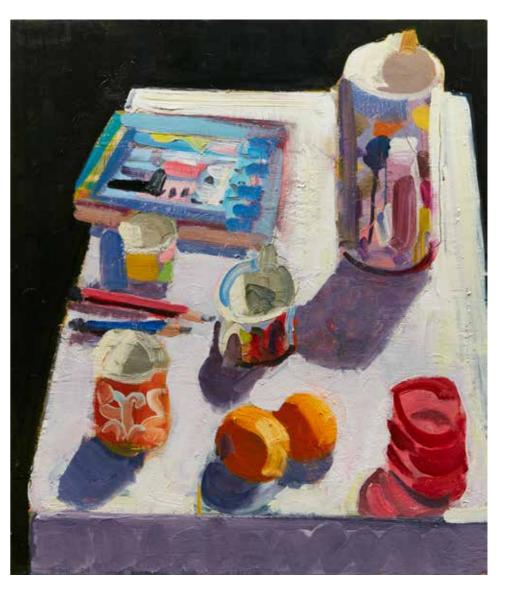


Knife and blue plate 2020 oil on board 25 x 28 cm



The sitting room 2020 charcoal, wash and collage on paper 56 x 76 cm





Biscuit tin 2020 oil on board 60 x 70 cm

Red glass 2020 oil on board 70 x 60 cm





Glass table top 2020 oil on board 80 x 60 cm





Rose and lemons 2020 oil on linen on board 27 x 30 cm

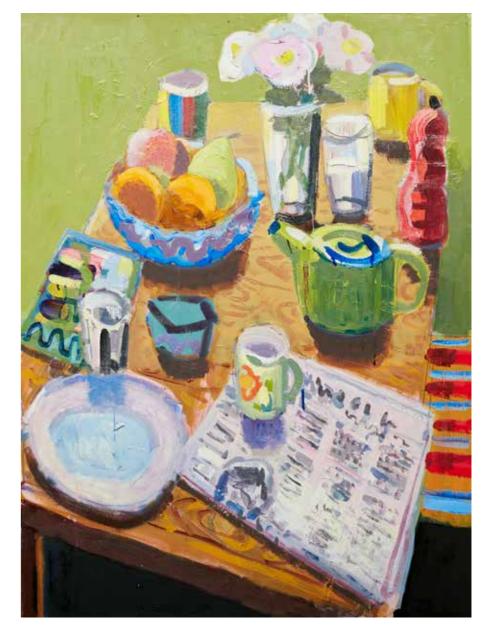
Spoonful of sugar 2020 oil on board 27 x 30 cm



Spotted napkin 2020 oil on board 27 x 30 cm



Two blue plates 2020 oil on board 27 x 30 cm



The newspaper 2020 oil on canvas 122 x 100 cm

John Bokor

Education 2016 1901 93 Diploma in Painting, National Art School, Sychoy 2017 2000 Bachelor of Fine Art (conversion course), National Art School 2018 2010 Increased of Fine Art (conversion course), National Art School 2019 2020 Increased of Fine Art (conversion course), National Art School 2019 2019 Between the Walk Nucholas Thompson Gallery, Melbourne Art Mr Table Edukan Colletes Gallery on William 2019 2018 Interiors King Street Gallery on William 2019 2017 The Source Wolkingong Art Gallery, NSW 2019 2018 Interiors King Street Gallery on William 2019 2014 John Bokor Colls Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW 2019 2015 Clease to Home King Street Gallery on William 2019 2014 John Bokor Colls Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW 2014 2014 John Bokor Colls Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW 2014 2015 Clease to Home King Street Gallery on William 2019 2014 John Bokor Colls Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW 2014 2015 Mark Breet Gallery on William 2019 2007 Mark Ward King Street Gallery on William 2019 2009 Anside King Street Gallery on William 2014 2007 Mark Breet Gall	Born 1973	Sydney, NSW, Australia	
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2017 Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing PLC			

Tattersall's Landscape Prize Brisbane Mosman Art Prize Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney Paddington Art Prize Sydney GIFC travelling works on paper exhibition - Chart Art Fair, Copenhagen, Denmark; The Hole, NYC; Rod Bianco Gallery, Oslo, Norway; 0-0 Gallery, Los Angeles, California Bokor, Ferguson & McKenzie Muswellbrook Regional Art Gallery, NSW Planting Dreams State Library of NSW, Sydney Baked Goods University City Arts League Gallery, Philadelphia, USA Paddington Art Prize Sydney The Rick Amor Drawing Prize Melbourne, Vic Just Draw [travelling drawing exhibition] Newcastle Art Gallery and Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW Planting Dreams: Shaping Australian Gardens State Library NSW Kedumba Drawing Award Orange Regional Art Gallery, NSW Drawings from Artist in Residence Amaze The Michael Crouch Gallery, Mitchell Library State Library, NSW Kings School Art Prize [winner] Kings School, Sydney Mosman Art Prize Mosman Art Gallery Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing PLC Muswellbrook Art Prize [winner] Muswellbrook Regional Art Gallery Just Paper Maitland Regional Art Gallery, NSW Paddington Art Prize Sydney Kedumba Drawing Award Wild Valley Art Gallery, NSW Eutick Memorial Still Life Award Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery Rick Amor Drawing Prize Ballarat Regional Gallery, Vic Adelaide Perry Drawing Prize Methodist Ladies College, Sydney Fishers Ghost Art Award Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW A Landscape of Place and Name King Street Gallery on William En Plein Air Painting Prize NSW Parliament House, Sydney Calleen Art Prize Cowra Regional Gallery, NSW Last but not Least King Street Gallery on William Fishers Ghost Art Award Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW Eutick Memorial Still Life Award Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery Mosman Art Prize Mosman Art Gallery Looking Forward King Street Gallery on William Wilson Art Prize Trinity Catholic College, Lismore NSW Still Life AGNSW, Sydney Fleurieu Landscape Prize SA Calleen Art Award Cowra Regional Gallery, NSW Recent Acquisitions Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW Local Current Wollongong City Gallery, NSW City of Albany Art Prize Albany Town Hall, Albany, WA Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing Adelaide Perry Gallery, Sydney

	Eutick Memorial Still Life Award Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery Rick Amor Drawing Prize Art Gallery of Ballarat, Vic			
	NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize NSW Parliament House			
2011	Whyalla Art Prize Middleback Theatre, Whyalla			
2011	NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize NSW Parliament House			
	Nora Heysen Centenary Art Prize Hahndorf, SA			
2010	Mosman Art Prize Mosman Art Gallery			
2010	Stanthorpe Regional Gallery Art Prize Qld			
	En Plein Air Painting Prize NSW Parliament House			
2009	Mosman Art Prize Mosman Art Gallery			
	ANL Maritime Art Prize Melbourne			
	Coffs Harbour Art Prize Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery			
	Kenilworth Art Prize Kenilworth, Qld			
	Paddington Art Prize Menzies Art Brands, Sydney			
2006	Last Show of the Year king street gallery on burton			
	Sustainable Living NG Gallery, Sydney			
	No Place Like Home NG Gallery			
2005	Agri / culture Hawkesbury Regional Gallery, NSW			
	Bon A Tirer-Prints from the Studio Mosman Art Gallery			
	Dog Trumpet Michael Nagy Gallery, Sydney			
2004	Project Parkinsons Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute			
2003	Hazelhurst Works On Paper Exhibition Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney			
	Mosman Art Prize Mosman Art Gallery			
	Waverly Art Prize Exhibition Sydney			
2002	Brett Whitley Travelling Art Scholarship Exhibition Sydney			
2001	Young Australian Artists Bartley Drey Gallery, London			
2000	Jackman Gallery, Melbourne			
	Mary Place Gallery			
	Lloyd Rees Memorial Art Award Exhibition ABC Gallery, Sydney			
	Waverley Art Prize Exhibition Sydney			
1999	Brett Whitley Travelling Art Scholarship Exhibition			
	Cityscapes Level Gallery, Sydney			
1997	Glebe Art Show Sydney			
1994	Fishers Ghost Exhibition Campbelltown Bicentennial City Art Gallery, NSW			
Awards & residencies				
2016	Sawtell Artist in Residence, Coffs Harbour, NSW			

2010	
2015	NSW State Library Artist in Residence [2 weeks], Sydney
	Kings School Art Prize The Kings School [winner]
	Muswellbrook Art Prize Drawing Section, Muswellbrook Regional Art Gallery [winner]
2014	South Hill Yellow House Residency Goulburn NSW
2013	Eutick Still Life Memorial Art Award [winner-first prize]
	Wilson Art Award Trinity Catholic College, Lismore [winner-first prize]

2012	NSW Parliament en Plein Air Prize Sydney
2012	Eutick Memorial Still Life Award Coffs Harb
2006	Loquat Valley Anglican School Art Prize Sy
2004	Waverley Woollahra Art Prize Sydney
	Allan Gamble Art Prize Sydney
2003	Waverley Art Prize [local subject] Sydney
1997	Glebe Art Show Sydney [Peoples Choice /

Collections

Art Gallery of Ballarat, Victoria Art Gallery of New South Wales Australian Catholic University Charles Sturt University Art Collection, New South Wales Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, New South Wales Kings School Art Collection, Sydney Macquarie Bank, Australia Maitland Regional Gallery, New South Wales Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre, New South Wales





ey [winner] rbour Regional Gallery, NSW [sponsor's prize] Sydney

e Award]

New South Wales Parliament Art Collection State Library, New South Wales The Australia Club, New South Wales Trinity Catholic College, Lismore, New South Wales UBS Warburg, Australia University of Sydney, New South Wales University of Wollongong, New South Wales Waverley/Woollahra Council, Sydney Wollongong Art Gallery, New South Wales



Studio, 2020 Photos courtesy Riste Andrievski



10am – 6pm Tuesday – Saturday 177-185 William St Darlinghurst NSW 2010 Australia T: 61 2 9360 9727 E: art@kingstreetgallery.com www.kingstreetgallery.com.au

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