

K E R R Y J O H N S



Splendid Isolation

Artsite Galleries, Sydney 10 April — 2 May 2021



Splendid Isolation

The time of COVID was no dark age for me; I loved the seclusion it offered. Isolation meant a lack of distraction, of expectation, of interaction. Being confined to the house and studio meant that every day could be devoted to work.

I painted the same subject again and again, starting with the garden through the window or with a vase of flowers on the window sill in my south coast studio. Later in the Canberra studio where there is no view, I set up a complex still life and used different approaches to find a way through the intricate relationships.

The studio became a still life itself with familiar objects featuring repeatedly: a carved elephant, the white jug decorated with fruit, a patterned cloth, a primitive wooden goddess figure and bunches of flowers all reflected in the oval mirror.

What interested me were the spaces between the objects seen at close quarters. I treated these negative spaces as positives and this led naturally to an exploration of abstraction. It allowed me to choose the most complex subjects knowing there would be a way through.

Since working *en plein air* in recent years, I have realised how much I enjoy observation of perceptions and impressions and have found pleasure in introducing a naturalistic handling of the subject. Nevertheless freedom of approach is always available to me; developing one's paint language is a mysterious process.



Animated Lilies acrylic on canvas, 61 x 76cm 2020



Garden Shadows acrylic on canvas 61 x 76cm 2020



Gerberas and Onions acrylic on canvas 76 x 61cm 2020



Grevilleas in Window acrylic on canvas 61 x 76cm 2021



Wildflowers acrylic on canvas 70 x 80cm 2020



Lost Lilies acrylic on canvas 80 x 95cm 2020



Elephant in the Room acrylic on canvas 70 x 80cm 2020



Painting for Loss of Meaning acrylic on canvas 61 x 76cm 2020



Mirrored acrylic on canvas 90 x 110cm 2021



Lilies of the Field acrylic on canvas 76 x 61cm 2020



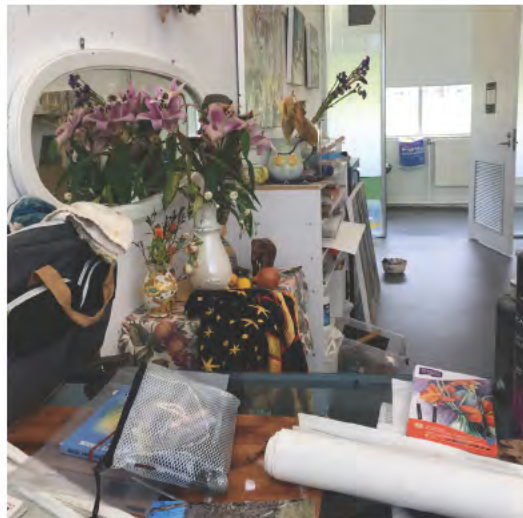
Jug of Roses acrylic on canvas 60 x 60cm 2021



Elephant on Patterned Cloth acrylic on canvas 60 x 60cm 2021



Johns' language is pleasingly idiosyncratic and celebratory, a stylised hybrid of abstraction and realism that results in some beautifully realised paintings. Review, *Forest Subjective*, by Peter Haynes, *Canberra Times*, 2015





Oval Mirror acrylic on canvas 60 x 70cm 2019



Pygmy Possum Habitat acrylic on canvas 60 x 60cm 2019



Bush Heart acrylic on canvas 80 x 95cm 2019



Endurance acrylic on canvas 60 x 70cm 2019



Stasis acrylic on canvas 60 x 70cm 2019



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kerryjohns.com

Born in 1947 Kerry Johns grew up in coastal Queensland. After graduating as an art teacher she studied painting with John Ogburn in Sydney then continued intensively studying and drawing from the Old Masters in Europe over a two-year period. She has exhibited consistently in commercial and public galleries over the last forty years in Australia and overseas, including major solo exhibitions in the Regional Galleries of Broken Hill, Caloundra, Penrith and Coffs Harbour and in Ezair Gallery

New York. She has won several awards including the Eutick Memorial Still Life Award 2016, M16 Drawing Award second prize, 2015 and the Basil Sellers Art Prize in 2008. She has been a finalist in national prizes including Paddington Art Prize, Calleen Art Prize, EMSLA, Fishers Ghost, Kedumba Drawing Award, NSW Parliament Plein Air Painting Prize. Johns works from her M16 ArtSpace studio in Canberra and is represented by Artsite Galleries, Sydney.

- 2021 *Splendid Isolation* Artsite Galleries, Sydney
- 2020 Paddington Art Prize (finalist)
- 2020 M16 Artspace Drawing Prize (finalist & People's Choice)
- 2018 *The Way of the Forest* Artsite Galleries Sydney
- 2018 NSW Parliament Plein Air Prize (finalist)
- 2018 *In the Company of Trees* Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery
- 2018 Calleen Art Prize Cowra (finalist)
- 2017 Eutick Memorial Still Life Award (finalist)
- 2017 *The Lie of the Land* Artsite Galleries Sydney
- 2017 *In Plain Sight* Ivy Hill Gallery Wapengo South Coast
- 2016 Eutick Memorial Still Life Award (winner) Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery NSW
- 2016 *On the Spot* (with Vicki Hersey) Form Studio & Gallery Queanbeyan
- 2015 *Forest Subjective* Form Studio & Gallery Queanbeyan
- 2013 *Under Southern Skies* Charles Hewitt Gallery Sydney
- 2012 *Taking Place* Chapman Gallery Canberra ACT
- 2011 *New work* Ivy Hill Gallery Wapengo NSW
- 2010 Calleen Art Prize Cowra (finalist) NSW
- 2009 *New work* Ivy Hill Gallery Wapengo NSW
- 2008 *New work* Katoomba Fine Art Katoomba NSW
- 2008 Basil Sellers Art Prize Eurobodalla (winner)
- 2008 Paddington Art Prize Sydney (finalist)
- 2007 *Art of the South East* Moruya NSW
- 2006 Basil Sellers Art Prize Eurobodalla (finalist)
- 2006 *Passages* Katoomba Fine Art Katoomba NSW
- 2005 Kedumba Drawing Award (acquired Kedumba Collection)
- 2004 *Landmarks* Ezair Gallery New York
- 2004 *Land out of Time* Penrith Regional Gallery Penrith
- 2003 *Returning* Caloundra Regional Art Gallery Qld
- 2002 *Homeground* Fremantle Arts Centre Fremantle WA
- 2002 *All the wild ephemera* Ezair Gallery New York
- 2002 *Memory & Mountains* Penrith Regional Gallery Penrith
- 2000 *Homeground* with Marianne Penberthy Caloundra Regional Art Gallery Qld
- 1999 *Blue Air Red Earth* Broken Hill City Art Gallery NSW.



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