

MICHAEL CARNEY



Fragments of the Forest

25 OCTOBER—4 NOVEMBER 2023



CURATORIAL+CO.

# MICHAEL CARNEY

## Fragments of the Forest

*"The forest is a place of fear and beauty,  
where the darkness can be both alluring and menacing."  
Sylvia Plath - The Forest*

Michael Carney grew up surrounded by the lush bushland of the Adelaide hills, which perhaps is where the roots of his recent subject matter took place. Today, however, like most of us, he consumes nature through a lens—fragmented, digital and ghostly. The forest manifests in some paintings as the villain, waiting to grow over society; in other compositions it plays the role of a sanctuary, a place of peace and beauty that we can look to for escape. In numerous instances, the paintings strive to meld these divergent aspects, constructing the imagery with layered complexity.

Fragments of the Forest draws inspiration from the atmospheric narratives of film noir, thrillers and post-apocalyptic cinema. The paintings offer a glimpse into a larger narrative, suggesting a sequence of events that unfolds beyond the canvas. The viewer is the director of their own experience, free to interpret the work in a way that resonates with their own thoughts, feelings and experiences. Winding through urban and natural environments that converge and intertwine, dimly lit by the moon or the numerous windows of an unidentified building, Michael delves into the noir tropes through his use of aesthetic symbols and compositional elements, whilst keeping us connected conceptually to his source of inspiration with an underpinning sense of a subversive atmosphere.

This body of work presents a paradoxical tapestry where beauty and unease coexist. In each painting, nature is a realm of both allure and peril, captivating and menacing. The viewer's journey into the forest is a journey into their own subconscious mind, and it is a journey of self-discovery.

Michael states: "My practice provides me with a creative space where I can engage in a kind of emotional and psychological alchemy. Within this space, I blend and experiment with sensations, aiming to evoke emotions that are simultaneously familiar yet elusive. For the past year or so, I've been delving into the theme of nature. It serves as an ideal, ever-shifting, and abstract subject in which to examine both ourselves and the world that surrounds us."

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*Fragment, 2023*  
Oil on canvas  
140cm H x 104cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3800



*Boundary*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*Haven, 2023*  
Oil on canvas  
140cm H x 104cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3800



*Forgotten, 2023*  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*Last Resort, 2023*  
Oil on canvas  
140cm H x 104cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3800



*Nocturnal*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*Lost*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*Nostalgia*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*The Dance*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*Verdant, 2023*  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*Verse*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*The Vandamm House, 2023*  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*Vertigo*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
124cm H x 94cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3500



*Above and Below*, 2023  
Oil on canvas  
140cm H x 104cm W  
Framed in Tasmanian oak  
\$3800



**CURATORIAL+CO.**

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Curatorial+Co. acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the country on which the gallery stands, the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and cultures.  
We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.