



CURATORIAL+CO.

Natural Habitat

13 – 30 NOVEMBER 2024

MELISSA BOUGHEY

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Melissa Boughey's exhibition, *Natural Habitat*, carries manifold meanings in that it is both a celebration of her home ground on the family vineyard in Denmark/ Kwoorabup country, Western Australia, and captures the creative zone where her artistic practice can flourish. Having lived and worked the land for over three decades, Boughey's life experiences are embedded in this place. From this place, she has raised a family, established a home and continued to physically tend to the land for her family's livelihood. Her daily, monthly and yearly routines are bound by the farm's requirements and seasonal routines. Each year, once the harvest of grapes has ended, Boughey is released back to her art practice. This starts with routinely getting away from the farm - on a road trip up north or further along the south coast. This break is integral to her practice as it allows her to re-approach the land with a renewed connection and fresh eyes.

During the winter months, Boughey spends time in the landscape sketching en plein air or painting from her studio, which too inhabits a place on the farm. Her larger paintings emerge from her smaller studies, capturing the moments from her daily life in the environment. Over the years, she has built an intuitive but formulaic way of approaching her paintings. Boughey begins to augment the representation of the landscape by laying the canvas flat and working from thin layers to thick - oscillating between adding paint and scraping back, each gesture leaning further into abstraction. Each decision comes as a reaction to the past, moving away from recognisable forms but embedded with the marks of her experience. Working from muscle memory, she is immersed in the dance of paint across the canvas, building landscapes in a way that honours the organic nature of the subject she engages. Like the natural environment, the paintings become a dense tapestry of colour, marks and shapes.

Boughey tends to the painting as she tends to the land. Her connection to where she lives is intrinsic to her artwork and is a recurring theme in her visual language. The paintings are an ode to the land she has rehabilitated and planted - to the biodiversity of the wetlands full of life and a constant source of nourishment. They hold glimpses of her life from walking the dog down the tree-lined driveway, seeing reflections of paperbarks in the wetlands, swimming in the ocean and catching the early morning light of a sunrise. The studio becomes a sanctuary where she brings herself to it, laid bare, to trust in the not-knowing. When the world feels too much, she leans into her creative practice to be present in her other 'natural habitat'.



Granite to Coastal Plain, 2024
Oil and wax medium on linen
155.5 x 155.5 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak
\$ 8,500



En Route (Coastal Plains and Headlands), 2024

Oil and wax medium on linen

155.5 x 155.5 cm

Framed in Tasmanian oak

\$ 8,500



Inlet to Sea (Ocean Swimming), 2024

Oil and wax medium on canvas

113 x 138 cm

Framed in Tasmanian oak

\$ 6,200



Cross Current (Coastal), 2024
Oil and wax medium on canvas
113 x 138 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak
\$ 6,200



Wonderground I, 2024
Oil and wax medium on linen
103 x 185 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak
\$ 7,000



Wonderground II, 2024
Oil and wax medium on linen
103 x 185 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak
\$ 7,000



Tree Bark (Melodic Hum), 2024
Oil and wax medium on clear primed linen
103 x 93 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak
\$ 3,800



Tree Bark (Spotted Gum), 2024
Oil and wax medium on clear primed linen
103 x 93 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak
\$ 3,800



Forest Walk (Habitat), 2024
Oil and wax medium on clear primed linen
103 x 93 cm
Framed in Tasmanian oak
\$ 3,800



Natural Habitat (Pinjar Series) IV, 2024
Conte, graphite powder, ink on 300gsm Arches paper
40 x 56 cm
\$ 850



Natural Habitat (Pinjar Series) III

Conte, charcoal, graphite powder, ink + watercolour on 300gsm Arches paper

40 x 56 cm

\$ 850



Natural Habitat (Pinjar Series) II, 2024

Conte, graphite, ink and watercolour on 300gsm Arches paper

40 x 56 cm

\$ 850



Natural Habitat (Pinjar Series) V, 2024
Conte, graphite powder, ink on 300gsm Arches paper
40 x 56 cm
\$ 850



Natural Habitat (Pinjar Series) VI, 2024

Conte, graphite powder, charcoal, pastel, ink and watercolour on 300gsm Arches paper
40 x 56 cm

\$ 850



Natural Habitat (Pinjar Series) I, 2024
Conte, watercolour on 300gsm Arches paper
40 x 56 cm
\$ 850



Natural Habitat (Pinjar Series) VII, 2024

Conte, graphite powder, ink, mica, gouache on 300gsm Arches paper

40 x 56 cm

\$ 850



Photography: Bo Wong



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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.