

RICK AMOR

New Paintings

21 September – 17 October 2013



Liverpool Street Gallery is pleased to announce Rick Amor's forthcoming solo exhibition, *New Paintings*, on view from 21 September – 17 October 2013, opening on Thursday 26 September 2013, 6-8pm.

One of Australia's most distinctive contemporary artists, Rick Amor is best known for his images of post-apocalyptic scenes where solitary figures are depicted in a landscape of monumental buildings, decaying structures, abandoned freeway off-ramps and vast coastal bays. Amor's compelling paintings, drawn from observation and inspired from the deep recesses of memory, resonate with a brooding disquiet. The upcoming exhibition will feature new paintings that continue Amor's investigation of a number of key subjects in the artist's oeuvre.

Amor masterfully manipulates tonal elements in his paintings by predominantly using dark, striking hues, which suggest a mood of melancholy, as seen in *Terminal* (2010) (above left), where ominous clouds swirl with sfumato effect behind an immense, towering rocky outcrop dwarfing a lone walking figure. The viewer is left with a sense of unease as Amor suggests a menacing storm is approaching.

Amor's dramatic paintings capture poignant, still moments, and often imply that behind mundane realities, something else is lurking. He states: "One of the main themes in my work is the passing of time, the vanity of human wishes, things pass, things decay and the passing of time seems to have an emotional resonance with me. I keep on returning to it over and over again." (Rick Amor, 'Standing in the Shadows', *McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park, 2005, p5*) Gillian Serisier writes: "These narratives are only similar to life, in that they are an open-ended glimpse of action rather than a story." (Gillian Serisier, 'Careering Forth', *Australian Art Market Report, issue 37, Summer 2010*)

Amor exaggerates the enormity of natural land formations, structures and buildings. *Lower Manhattan (after the hurricane)* (2012) (above right) employs his use of spatial illusion as a distressed figure is dwarfed by the commanding structure of the Brooklyn Bridge, surrounding buildings and debris. The melancholy, quiet moment is amplified with the use of dramatic shadows, strong architectural tensions and an encroaching dawn.

There are few Australian artists today who achieve realist painting with incredible intensity and originality, or who produce paintings of such clarity and refinement.

QUOTE SELECTION

“At any rate, it is a fine painting (*Grounded Boat, Western Port Bay, 1997*), one that in its strange mixture of dream and reality makes you want to spend time pondering it.” (**Christopher Allen, ‘Drawn from Nature’, *The Australian*, 26-27 January 2013, p13**)

“Don’t forget that art and the artist aren’t necessarily the same thing, I don’t dwell on doom and gloom, I just like painting those pictures – they’re the types of places I’d like to see. It’s my emotional world that I like to make concrete.”

(**Rick Amor in conversation with Kate Adams, ‘Rick Amor’, *Artist Profile*, Issue 8, 2009, p37**)

“I think one thing that’s stood out for me about Rick and his work is his independence of mind...He was really searching to find a unique voice and a personal style of painting and I think that’s something he’s achieved with great success. I really don’t think there’s another artist working like him at the moment.”

(**Linda Short, ‘Rick Amor: A Single Mind’, *Heide Museum of Modern Art*, 2008**)

“Amor has become well-known for his iconic depictions of monolithic forms: monuments, bridges, and ships, along with many other reverberant motifs that acquire an emblematic function, encoded with signs of human endeavor and its inevitable demise.” (**Linda Short, ‘Rick Amor: A Single Mind’, *Heide Museum of Modern Art*, 2008, p77**)

BIOGRAPHY

Rick Amor was born in Frankston, Victoria in 1948. In 1965 he completed a Certificate of Art at the Caulfield Institute of Technology, and from 1966 to 1968 studied at the National Gallery School, Melbourne where he received an Associate Diploma of Painting. He has been the recipient of several Australia Council studio residencies, which have allowed him to work in London, New York and Barcelona. In 1999 the Australian War Memorial appointed him as the official war artist to East Timor.

Amor has held over 50 solo exhibitions since first exhibiting at Joseph Brown Gallery in 1974 and has shown annually at Niagara Galleries for 30 years. A major survey exhibition of his paintings was curated by McClelland Gallery in 1990 and toured various regional galleries in Victoria and South Australia. In 1993 an exhibition mounted by Bendigo Art Gallery toured Victoria and Tasmania, presenting his work as a printmaker and graphic artist. An important exhibition of Rick’s bronze sculpture was undertaken by Benalla Art Gallery in 2002, including many maquettes never previously exhibited. In 2005, Robert Lindsay curated *Rick Amor: Standing in the Shadows*, the second major survey of Amor’s work to be presented at McClelland Gallery+Sculpture Park. In March 2008, Heide Museum of Modern Art presented *Rick Amor: A Single Mind*, a triumphant survey of Rick’s paintings and works on paper from 1968 – 2008, which also featured on the ABC program, Sunday Arts, 2008.

Gary Catalano’s biography *The Solitary Watcher: Rick Amor and his Art*, was published by The Miegunyah Press in 2001; and in 2008, The Beagle Press published Gavin Fry’s richly illustrated monograph, *Rick Amor*. In 2010, the Newcastle Region Art Gallery exhibited a selection of self-portraits from 1962-2009 titled, *Times Like These: The Self Portraits of Rick Amor*. Rick Amor is represented in the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, and numerous state gallery, regional and university collections throughout Australia. He lives and works in Melbourne.

Images: *Terminal*, 2010, oil on canvas, 36 x 46 cm (left)

Lower Manhattan (after the hurricane), 2012, oil on canvas, 97 x 130 cm (right)

Photography: Mark Ashkanasy

Images courtesy of the artist, Liverpool Street Gallery, Sydney and Niagara Galleries, Melbourne

For further information about the artist and exhibition, please contact Liverpool Street Gallery on 02 8353 7799 or info@liverpoolstgallery.com.au