

John Borrack

A personal approach to landscape painting

OVER THE COURSE OF HIS SIXTY-YEAR CAREER, THE AUSTRALIAN ARTIST HAS DEVELOPED A TECHNIQUE BASED ON RESPECT FOR HIS SUBJECT AND THE ADDITION OF GOUACHE TO HIS WATERCOLOURS.



Under the Escarpment Kakadu, Northern Territory.
Watercolour on Modigliani paper, 76 x 102 cm.

My commitment to watercolour is personal. Its intrinsic physical properties, combined with the rapidity and spontaneity that this medium requires, are ideally suited to my desire to say something about landscapes. I quite often venture into the world of oil painting and I find that the reciprocity of these two media aids in the construction of my approach to painting. If a painter wants his/her work to truly become an expression of their interior world, he or she must be enthralled. In my case, this is manifest in a profound fondness for the natural and unchanging order of things, and studying my favourite

masters both in oil painting and watercolour. A lifetime spent contemplating the countryside in which I live and the wide open spaces of Australia, where I often go to resource myself, have given me the opportunity to take up the challenge of finding a way to express the unique qualities of this continent's landscapes, which are so different to those you find in Europe. Watercolour's inherent characteristics, such as its liquidness and transparency, must be well understood. It is essential to know the capacities and the limits of one's materials and chosen medium.



Haasts Bluff,
Northern Territory.
Watercolour on
Saunders
Medium paper,
76 x 56 cm.



Pears and a Glass.
76 x 56 cm.

Chris Krupinski

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, THIS AMERICAN ARTIST DISCOVERED WATERCOLOUR. SINCE THEN, SHE HAS BEEN PATIENTLY ELABORATING HIGHLY DETAILED AND COLOURFUL STILL LIVES, STRIKING IN THEIR BOLD AND COMPLEX COMPOSITION, BASED ON THE CONTRAST BETWEEN LIGHTS AND DARKS.

Your still lifes are above all remarkable for their elaborate composition. How do you find this balance in your paintings?

Before taking photos of my subject, I spend a lot of time thinking about colour and texture. Each element in my still lifes is there for a reason and has a signification. For example, the fabrics that I use play an important role in the general composition. Another element that I take into account is the relationship between the colour of the objects and that of the fabric. For example, if I decide to use a fabric with red stripes, I will complete my subject with red grapes and pomegranates in order to create a monochrome painting. Next I consider colour temperature that I use to create a certain tension in the work between cool and warm tones. If I take a piece of fabric with a wide variety of colours and patterns, I will balance out my composition with other coloured objects: as I often use fabrics that have complex motifs, I choose big pieces of fruit in order to create large coloured areas that will bring that balance. I also quite often use objects in glass or silverware to distort shapes.

The impression one gets from your paintings is that it is your treatment of light, in combination with your ideas on tonal values, that bring unity to each of your compositions...

Working with the differences in value is inherent to the way I paint. I try to create depth and volume. Lighter values cre-

A MISTAKE TO AVOID AT ALL COSTS

To effectively create harmony in your painting, you have to repeat colours in order to maintain equilibrium. The most common mistake is to make the colours you repeat less vivid. For example, if you want to repeat a bright yellow on the other side of your painting, on the opposite side to your centre of interest, the error would be to make this yellow less bright. On the contrary, the yellow close to the main subject will be juxtaposed with a warm dull blue in order to create a maximum contrast and on the other side of the painting, this yellow will be placed next to an analogous colour such as orange. In this way, the viewer's eye will not be drawn away from the main subject and you will maintain balance in your painting.

