

### Luke Sciberras Out There

28 March – 22 April 2017

The thrill of a welcome, to be traversing country that it's custodians have opened to you is a delight all its own. When the farmers, indigenous owners or key holders give a painter carte blanche to run in any direction and respond to any old place they please, the sense of embrace is most keenly felt. To find an affection for and an intimacy with a landscape is to learn it and to observe closely it's most particular nuances and I realise more and more that the making of picture postcards gleaned on the side of the road just doesn't cut it. There has to be time spent in places and usually repeat visits over varying seasons to truly be able to wrest an image that is about a place rather than just of it.

To see a place through the eyes of the people who know it best and to then make an attempt at painting it is leavened by the information and permission given by its occupants who more often than not hold a particular fondness for and pride of the subject.

This exhibition is dedicated to those friends.

Luke Sciberras

Alice Springs, 2016

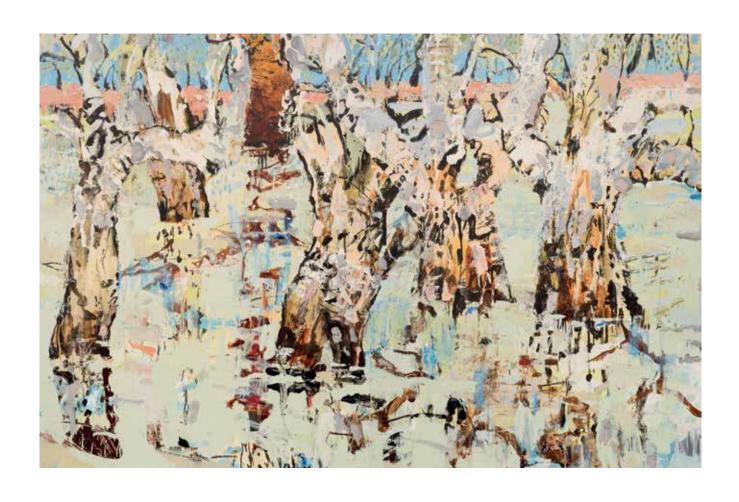








Darling flood study, 2017, gouache on paper, 56 x 76 cm



Darling flood Wilcannia, 2016, oil on board, 160 x 240 cm

### Fureka Man

There are two kinds of painters. One feels constant beckoning of the so-called destination or eureka painting; that which summarises everything which came before. Such paintings, usually sought by museums, impart a certain grace to even the most disappointing, previously unresolved works, suddenly imbued with an unexpected evolutionary significance.

Jeffrey Smart, the least prolific of Australian artists, constantly sat in front of his easel wondering if this was it, the one he always dreamed would define his vision emphatically and make sense of everything he had done. Each composition was subject to a slow process of rational construction, and the prospect maybe of a little death at the search because the search was over.

Russell Drysdale, Smart's most revered Australian artist, may have felt the same finality of deliberation about so many of his masterpieces – for example *Sofala* – which could explain his prevailing reluctance to break the eternal stillness of the next blank canvas.

The other kind of painter rarely entertains such thoughts. Individuals of the alternative persuasion move ahead less sedately, driven by a more fluid instinct from one creation to the next. They stay on the move at varying pace pending the scale and complexity of their conceptions, dancing as best as they can to manage any self-doubt. Luke Sciberras belongs to this category.

Ever since his ambition to be a painter found fruition studying at the National Art School in Sydney during the mid-1990s, haunting the studios of various artists with especial admiration for Elisabeth Cummings at Wedderburn, he has built up a consistent body of work suffused with gloriously sensual, open-minded ambiguity. Brush in hand scooping colour from the tiny pillars of his Turner-like palette he has pushed and dragged his pigment at the behest of his talent and amazingly diverse experiences of the Australia-wide spiritus locus and beyond.

It must be said however, Sciberras' exciting method of layering does flirt with an element of danger, where the shapes, not quite allowed to settle comfortably on the picture plane, are vulnerable to becoming destabilised and lost in uncertain textures and coefficiencies of deeper space. For he eschews – is maybe even afraid of – stasis, and any form of classical discipline. Thus any effort to define a destination picture, one that calmly holds the fort and pulls the rest into line, is difficult. In any case, Scibberas himself declares, and rightly so, this is not really his business, but clearly the role of the curator and critic.

Yet, when we look at paintings here such as *Portsea*, with its dizzy slab of rocks and trees looking out and down across a splendid expanse of sky and sea; the burning red of Rembrandt Hill, Northern Territory, its jagged dark contours colliding with shimmering hills of biblical fire against a pale sky almost leached of colour; and Behind the stars when the conflagration of a desert day has been quelled by the cool blue-black of Goya and a brilliant night sky; and above all Midday sun, Wilcannia, with its brave, ravishing slabs of pink; we can feel evidence of Sciberras respect for earlier generations including Streeton, Nolan and Olsen, to whom he has added his own special inflection of poetic energy. There is no doubt he is aware how in the end reputations of painters settle on certain iconic moments; and to make those moments happen takes more reflection and hard work than may appear at first glance.

In the silent centre of his studio at Hill End, a deconsecrated Methodist church, it is reassuring to be aware that Sciberras paints with his easel in a precise position next to a window where daylight rakes left to right across the surface, picking out ridges and lumps like visual braille, and defining the tones with impeccable reliability. He may be submitting himself through unlikely elisions of awkwardness and elegance to an autonomous flux of nature, and even try to emulate nature itself, but under the watch of a mysterious order – daylight – which before the invention of electricity, has been a commandant of painters and their evolution for time immemorial.

And so, although unwilling perhaps to contemplate the idea of a eureka painting, Sciberras, in spite of himself, is unconsciously allowing us to glimpse it in the shards, shadows, accidents and luminous flashes of his instinctive language. He might not be interested to consciously seek such a phenomenon at this stage of his life, but through his deep love of painting and the landscape and peoples – including indigenous inhabitants – of his world, he doesn't need to. It will surely come and, at its own convenience, reveal itself to him its arrival. Maybe it is already here.

#### Barry Pearce

Emeritus Curator of Australian Art Art Gallery of New South Wales February 2017



Napperby, 2017, gouache on paper, 56 x 76 cm





Study for Cormorant country, 2016, gouache on paper, 31 x 42 cm





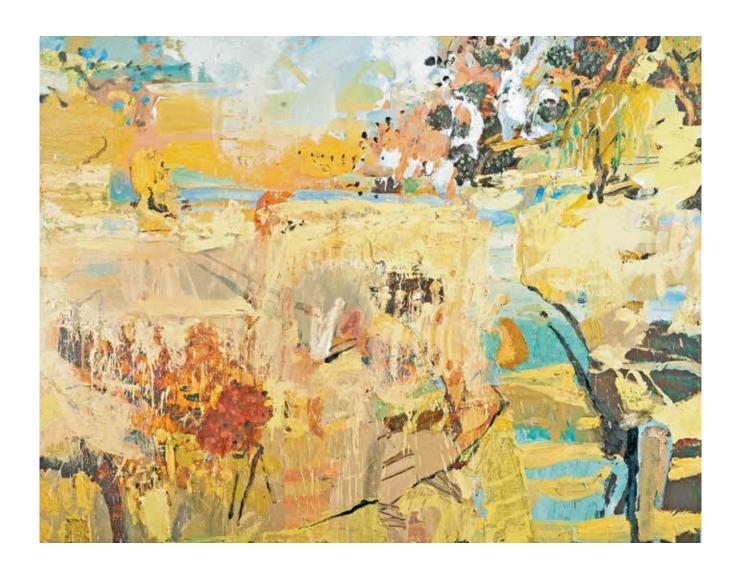
Wilcannia country, 2017, gouache on paper, 56 x 76 cm



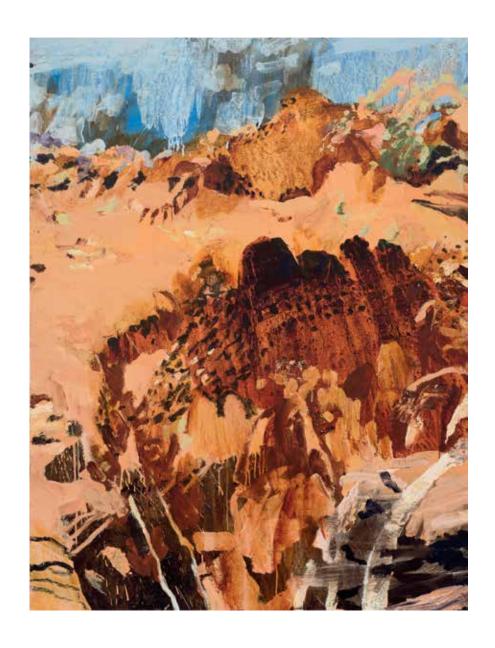
High spring, Wilcannia, 2017, oil on board 120 x 160 cm



Raven III, 2016, ink on paper, 60 x 60 cm



Lake George, 2017, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm



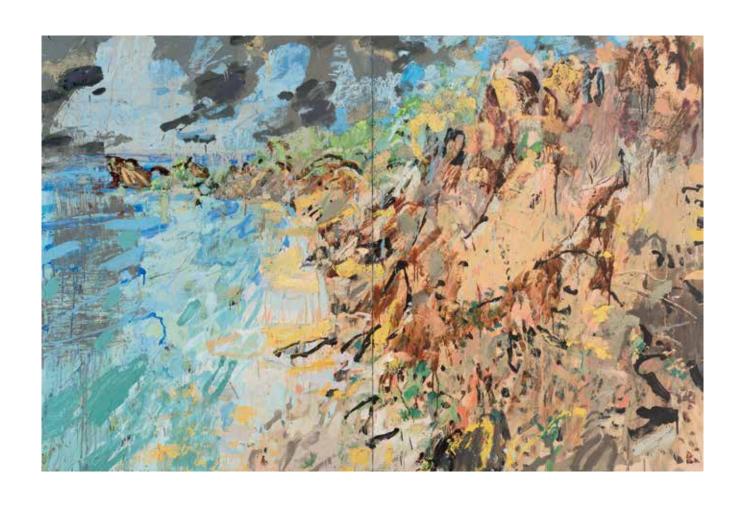
Fish Hole Creek NT, 2016, oil on board, 180 x 120 cm



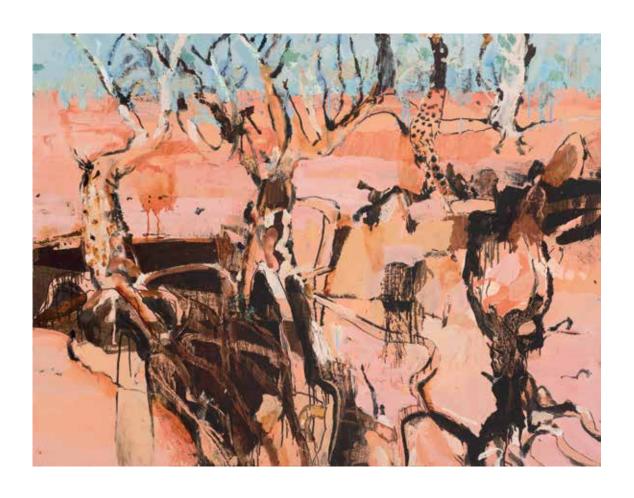
Midday sun, Wilcannia, 2017, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm



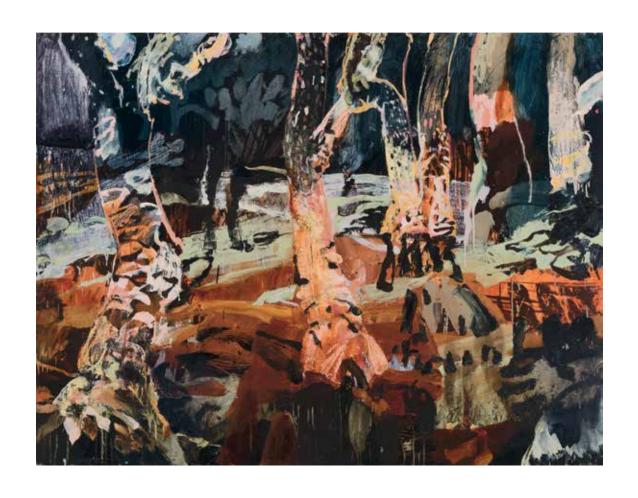
Over Portsea, 2017, oil on board, 60 x 80 cm



Squall, Sorrento, 2017, oil on board, 160 x 240 cm



The Ram Paddock Wilcannia, 2017, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm



Stella Creek NT, 2016, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm



Raven I, 2016, ink on paper, 60 x 60 cm



Morning Fish Hole Creek NT, 2016, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm



Katherine NT, 2017, oil on board, 60 x 80 cm



Juka Juka Yuendumu, 2017, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm



above

MacCullochs Range, 2016, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm

right

Rembrandt Hill, 2017, oil on board, 60 x 60 cm



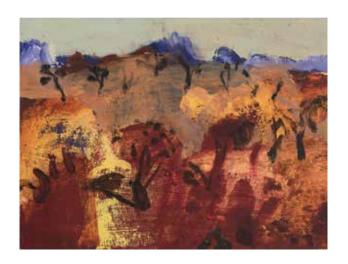


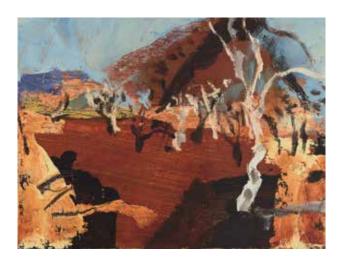
Scrub Bull NT, 2016, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm



Napperby Station, 2016, oil on board, 120 x 180 cm







above left

Larapinta, 2017, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm

above right Mt Sonder, 2017, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm



River Gums Wilcannia, 2016, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm





above left

Afterglow NT, 2016, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm

above right Hamilton Downs, 2017, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm



Rembrandt Hill Napperby, 2017, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm





above left
East of Wilcannia, 2016, oil on board, 60 x 60 cm

above right  $\label{eq:bound} \textit{Hill End and Summer}, 2017, \textit{oil on board}, 60 \times 60 \textit{ cm}$ 





top Broken Hill, 2016, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm above Larapinta Drive, 2017, oil on board, 60 x 80 cm



Buckley's Chance Portsea, 2017, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm









top

Moonee study II, 2017, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm

above

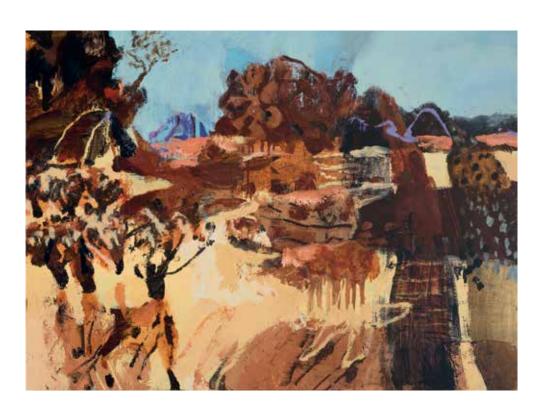
Moonee study IV, 2017, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm

top

Moonee study V, 2017, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm

above

Moonee study VII, 2017, oil on board, 30 x 40 cm



above
The Jump-up Tanami, 2017, oil on board, 60 x 80 cm
right
Tanami Road, 2017, oil on board, 60 x 60 cm





Towards the Tanami, 2017, oil on board, 120 x 160 cm

## Luke Sciberras

#### **Born**

1975 Sydney, NSW Australia

#### Studies & Employment

1995-97 Fine Arts, National Art School1995-98 Studio Assistant to several artists







#### Solo Exhibitions

2017	Out There, King Street Gallery on William, Sydney				
2016	West of the Darling, King Street Gallery on William, Sydney				
	About Place, Scott Livesey Galleries, Melbourne				
2015	Flying Goose Hill, with Elisabeth Cummings, Nock Art Foundation,				
	Hong Kong				
	Human Condition, Olsen Irwin Gallery, Sydney				
	Human Condition, Port Macquarie Regional Gallery				
2014	On Country, Scott Livesey Galleries, Melbourne				
	From My Travels, Olsen Irwin Gallery, Sydney				
2013	Tu-Whit! Tu-Whoo!, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
	Tu-Whit! Tu-Whoo!, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery				
2012	Signs of Life, James Makin Gallery, Melbourne				
	Road Show (with Guy Maestri), Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
2011	Highways and Other Recipes, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
2010	Under a High Desert Wind, James Makin Gallery, Melbourne				
2009	More the Desert Reveals, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
	Fugues and Furrows, Moree Regional Gallery, NSW				
2008	Flipside, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
	Plum Blossom Time, James Makin Gallery, Melbourne				
2007	Persimmon Season, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
	Windswept and Picked Clean, James Makin Gallery, Melbourne				
2006	When the Sun Comes Out, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
	Art Sydney06, Royal Hall of Industries, Sydney				
	Plucked and Gutted, Port Jackson Press, Melbourne				
	Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne				
2005	A Painter's Progress, Bathurst Regional Gallery, Bathurst, NSW				
	Dogdays and Deluges, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
	Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne				
	Windswept and Picked Clean, Port Jackson Press, Melbourne				
	Art Sydney05, Royal Hall of Industries, Sydney				
2003	Luke Sciberras & Tristan Lanceley, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
2002	Monaro Country, Ben Grady Gallery, Canberra				
2001	Back up the Monkey, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
2000	An Uncertain Something, Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney				
	Exhibited as finalist in Brett Whiteley Scholarship, Surry Hills				
	Exhibited as finalist in Kings School Art Prize, Parramatta				
	Meet 2×2, Tim Olsen Gallery				
999	Solo Exhibition at ABC Centre, Ultimo, Sydney				
	Exhibited as finalist. Brett Whiteley Scholarship, Surry Hills				

top left: Paroo River

above left: Plein Air Painting Wilcannia

left: Mount Murchison

Selected Group Exhibitions			Selec	Selected Bibliography		
2017	The Hill End Table, Art Food	Fire, Bathurst Regional Gallery,	2017	Pearce, B: Out There, Catalogue Essay, King Street Gallery on		
	Bathurst			William, Sydney		
	Nine Lives - A Cat's Tale, He	eiser Gallery, Brisbane, QLD		Alvarez, L: Hill End Table, Art food fire, Brandl & Schlesinger		
2016	Paint my Place Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, NSW			p8–9 18–19		
	Wynne Prize, Exhibition, Art	Gallery of NSW		Russo N: Art of Gold, Australian Geographic Magazine		
	Animals, Gallery 81, Sydney		2016	Sciberras, L. 'On Country' Artist Profile Magazine, Issue 37		
		mba Regional Art Gallery, Qld		p128–131		
2015	5 Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of NSW			Margo, J: How heart flu changed the way Luke Sciberras paints,		
	-	poli Exhibitions, S H Ervin gallery		AFR Magazine, Australian Financial Review, August		
		U Canberra, Goulburn Regional		Country Style Magazine, Art Issue, March p77		
	Gallery & Bathurst Regional	•	2015	Fortescue, E. 'Going Bush', Artist Profile, Issue 31, 28 July		
	The Tattersall's Landscape Art Prize, Tattersall's Club Brisbane			(Cover Story)		
	The Art of Shakespeare, Sydney Opera House, Commissioned by			Human Condition, Catalogue, Port Macquarie Regional Gallery		
	Bell Shakespeare  Outback Art Prize, Broken Hill Regional Gallery, Broken Hill			and Olsen Irwin Gallery  Your Friend the French Callingli, Artist Brofile, Special edition		
		Maestri and Ben Quilty, Bathurst		Your Friend the Enemy, Gallipoli, Artist Profile, Special edition In Style Magazine, Art House, November		
	Regional Gallery, Bathurst N			Rosenlund, K. Shelter, Murdoch Books		
2014	•			McDonald, J. Flying Goose Hill, catalogue essay, Nock Art		
2014	, , , , , ,			Foundation, Hong Kong		
2006	Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Ex	* * *	2013	Moorhouse. F, (Catalogue essay) Tu-Whit! Tu-Whoo!, Bathurst		
2000	Kedumba Drawing Prize, Sy	_	2010	Regional Art Gallery		
2005				Robba, L. Australia Day: The Nation in Landscape, SMH Australia		
2000	Brett Whiteley Travelling Art S	•	2012	Day edition.		
	Kings School Art Prize, Parra			Fulton, A: Painters Renew Brush with Bush, Sydney Morning		
1999	-			Herald, July 10		
	, ,	, ,	2011	Meacham, S. A Brush with Greatness, SMH Spectrum, 20 August		
B 11 B 4B1				Albert, J, Art Throbs, Harper's Bazaar, May		
Resid	ency Program & Prizes		2010	Buchanan, T, The Luxe Factor, Belle Magazine, June/July		
2017	Tweed River Regional Art Gallery Artist in Residence		2008	The Artist's Lunch, Sarah Rhodes and Alice McCormick, Murdoch		
2016	Nock Art Foundation Artist in Residence, Hong Kong			Books		
	Coffs Harbour Regional Art Gallery, Moonee Beach			Lopez, A. Boxoffice-Art, Sydney Magazine September		
2014	D14 Bruny Island Bull Bay		2007	Studio: Australian Painters on the Nature of Creativity, John		
	Broken Hill Regional Gallery			McDonald and Ian Lloyd		
2013	213 Xucun 1 Month Residency China			Lopez, A. Masters and Apprentices, Sydney Magazine		
			2006	Huxley, J. Places of the Heart, Sydney Morning Herald, December		
Collections			2005	Westwood, S. Cool Hand Luke, Vogue Australia, August		
				McDonald, J. Exhibition Review, SMH Spectrum		
	Artbank Pat Corrigan Collection			Fortescue, E. Cool and Handy Luke, The Daily Telegraph, July		
•		Neil Balnaves Collection	2002	Hynes, V. Seasonal Work, Sydney Morning Herald, August		
Port Macquarie Regional Gallery		Parliament House ACT	2001	Hynes, V. Critic's Picks, The Metro, SMH, August		
The Kings School Parramatta Alberts Music			2000	Brennan, B. Living Art, Vogue Living, July		
Broken Hill Regional Gallery APRA  Orange Regional Gallery Coffe Harbour Regional Gallery						
Orange Regional Gallery		Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery	full CV	available on www.kingstreetgallery.com.au		

Bathurst Regional Gallery





Contributor: Barry Pearce

Design: Stephen SmedleyTonto Design

Photography: Gus Armstrong; Brenton McGeachie; King Street Gallery

Publisher: King Street Studios P/L ISBN:978-0-9924229-8-1





# King Street Gallery on William

10am - 6pm Tuesday - Saturday 177 William St Darlinghurst NSW 2010 Australia T: 61 2 9360 9727 F: 61 2 9331 4458 art@kingstreetgallery.com www.kingstreetgallery.com.au

