

New Works

Andrew McIlroy

Lumière

When viewing the ethereal canvasses of Andrew McIlroy's "Lumière", one might be struck by a sensation of living deep within 19th century Romanticism; such is the strength of emotion conveyed in these billowing cloudscape and heavenly views.

Transformed by a recent study tour to the museums of France, McIlroy's exposure to John Constable's vastness of sky and cloud, Théodore Géricault's awesome power of nature, and the "painter of light" J.M.W Turner's great mastery of atmosphere, is certainly apparent.

In technique too, McIlroy has learned much from the masters. Employing the methodical techniques of the Dutch tradition, 100's of hours layering transparent glazes has achieved his goal of capturing an "authentic experience" of landscape. As active participants within these works, we are drawn towards an intensity of feeling, expressed cleverly through McIlroy's limited palette and tonal variation. Indeed, that most romantic of 19th Century poets, Samuel Taylor Coleridge could be proud!

Yet McIlroy's obsession with sky alone in these vast scaled, semi abstract oils, has allowed him the freedom to explore colour intensity, mood and the "Australianness" of light, as entities themselves, thus placing him firmly within 21st century art practice. In this, he is closer still to one of the greatest of modern Australian painters, Lloyd Rees.

Rees, who was also preoccupied with depicting the effects of light, similarly employed Turner-like simplicity to convey serenity within the Australian landscape-a harmony between man and nature. Like McIlroy, Rees' canvases always showed the influence of European traditions, particularly those of Italy and France, which he visited a number of times throughout his long career.

By referencing the great European Romantics and the forefathers of the landscape tradition, like Rees, McIlroy forms a bridge between traditionalism and modernity. As McIlroy explains,

"I hope to make people pause for just a moment. My inspiration is simple. To create a beautiful contemporary work that is tangible, familiar and enduring. My struggle then is to capture 'Australianness' without reacting against European influences or composition."

Brenda Colahan, 2008

Cover: *Lumière*, oil on linen, 183 x 168 cm



Art Equity Presents

Andrew McIlroy

Lumière

Opening Thursday 11 Sept 2008, 6–8pm

Exhibition current until 26 Sept 2008

Art Equity Gallery hours

Monday–Friday, 9am–5.30pm or by appointment

RSVP

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Breaking Light After Storm, oil on linen, 214 × 185 cm
Right: *Cerulean*, oil on linen, 185 × 214 cm

