

John Martin at Boutwell Draper Gallery 18 August – 13 September 2011

“As a young man John Martin was part of a movement that opposed all that was seen as traditional in Australian art, and landscape art was at the centre of that tradition. He condemned the so-called safe figurative tradition of the land. Throughout his career John Martin has explored the raw guts of Australian industry, investigating his own political soul and roamed far to Germany to understand what makes art and paint work. And now his ultimate destination is his own back yard or rather bush wilderness. The place that gives him nourishment is the land where he lives, the garden he digs, the light that defines. It is a journey that would be well understood by Arthur Streeton and other masters of the Australian landscape tradition. As for John Martin – he is an artist, working with paint.”¹

- “In recent years I have been trying to engage with the traditional interpretation of the land, as exemplified by Aboriginal painters and the language of Western abstraction in its alternative approach to that interpretation.”

- “The later painters of the Australian landscape, such as Fred Williams, came to understand the essential role of colour in our dialogue with nature.”

- “The paintings in this exhibition continue with my fascination with the colours in my surrounding landscape. They are not paintings of or even abstractions of the landscape but, in the tradition of both European Expressionism and Aboriginal painting attempt to evoke a spirit of place and time. ”

John Martin lives & works in the Hunter Valley and Berlin, Germany. This is his first exhibition with Boutwell Draper Gallery. He is also represented by Galerie Raab in Berlin.

¹ *Excerpt from 'John Martin' by Joanna Mendelsohn, Associate Professor, College of Fine Arts, UNSW*