

martin edge

Martin's Journey June 24 - July 8, 2023

The imagery in Martin Edge's new body of work reflects the many journeys throughout SE Queensland and interstate he has embarked upon from his Strathpine home and studio. However, in speaking of the exhibition's title he states, "Art is the journey!" Since first being represented by APA in 2011, his art has evolved with growing finesse in technique and subject complexities, as well as imaginative detailing and the need for compositional resolution.

One cannot help but respond to the sense of *joie de vivre* expressed in Martin's brightly coloured paintings. An unflinching positivity and sense of humour always accompanies Martin on his



journeys through both landscape and creative process. A prime example is *Martin And Winston On An Adventure*. He relays that the work is a tribute to the last outing he made with his 11 years old Labrador. Having been given a commission, Martin had been exploring the coastal attractions of Cleveland for inspiration. Despite it being a grey drizzly day, the scene is portrayed with yellow sun and clouds puffs amidst a deep orange sky. Martin is attired in a top of that same colour - his favourite - as is Winston's collar. Golden-hued companion bears a big grin to be sharing in this adventure.

Many of Martin's recent paintings depict urban landscapes frequently visited but he tells that each encounter "is like seeing the place for the very first time". The Story Bridge locale is such. Connecting Brisbane's northern and southern suburbs, the heritage-listed steel expanse is the longest cantilevered bridge in Australia. In the painting *City Cat and Story Bridge* it is rendered as transecting the picture plane. Beyond the meandering river, schematic, multi-coloured high-rise buildings reach up against blue sky. Across the aqua foreground an omnipresent city cat streaks, a wake of white-water trailing.

Martin's pictorial accounts of his expeditions include a work dedicated to his visits down to the Gold Coast with its stretches of sandy beaches populated by happy holiday-makers. Sydney, Martin's second favourite city, is another regular destination. The harbour and opera house never fail to stimulate his creative imagination.

The Boxes On The Beach (Brighton) a wonderful composition in the juxtaposition of vivid hues and angulated shapes. A suggestion had been made that he should perhaps do a work relating to Melbourne. In considering what he might paint, Martin recalled travelling south pre-COVID in 2018 and chancing upon the unusual bathing boxes along the shore at Brighton. He was amazed at the extent of these wooden structures that were built in the early 1900s and much admired their extremely colourful embellishments. Design considerations are again evidenced in this picture. The triangular roofed bathing boxes are outlined in yellow to evince the sun above beaming onto them. The deep orange hue of clouds and silhouetted figures enjoying leisure activities is complimentary to the blues of sky and ocean. A vibratory ambience envelops the setting.

Each work has taken many weeks to complete due to the detail intricacies and the multiple layers of acrylic paint that impart the rich depth to his colours. Martin's signature on the back of his paintings is always accompanied with a little drawing of a balloon and a cheery wish for "all the best."

Martin has achieved remarkable acclaim during his painting career. His *Postcards from the Edge* exhibition at HOTA last year attracted record crowds. He was recently commissioned to paint a large mural for the gallery café at the recent QAGOMA exhibition: *The Motorcycle: Design, Art, Desire*. Martin is a long-standing ambassador for Autism Queensland and so when Brisbane hosted the 2019 INAS Global Games, his paintings were projected onto the William Jolly Bridge's pylons each night for a week. His work appears in state and national institutional collections including: Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra; State Library of Queensland, Brisbane; Artbank Collection; Maitland Regional Art Gallery, NSW; Moreton Bay Regional Gallery, Queensland; St. James College Collection, Brisbane; Westmead Children's Hospital, Sydney; St. John of God Hospital, Perth; Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, Brisbane; Gold Coast University Hospital; Ken Done Private Collection, Sydney; Randa Collection, Melbourne.

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