

# Lani Westerman

## *Pocket Views*

March 22 – April 8, 2025

*Pocket Views* is Lani Westerman's inaugural exhibition with Anthea Polson Art. She tells that not only does its title refer to the very small size of the works but also to "the small 'pocket views' that are often depicted within an overall scene." The nonfigurative works take as their source of inspiration an encounter with a specific location. However, they transcend classical landscape traditions, notions of perspective and depth are in flux. The imagery is broken down to serve structural design elements - the emphasis is on geometric purity of form and shape. Formal considerations and visual relationships are vitally important.

The now Sydney-based artist attributes her appreciation of abstracted interrelationships between a landscape's natural and constructed elements to early life experience in Canberra, a city that was planned by Walter Burley and Marion Griffin. Westerman's training and practice as an architect for over a decade has also conferred design acumen.



Describing her choice of subject matter, Westerman relays, "The Sydney Harbour and surrounding beaches are beautiful. I love that there is lots of bushland on the harbour foreshore. The spaces where the natural and the man-made environment intersect create interesting juxtapositions. I strive to capture the true essence of a place."

The *Parsley Bay* painting is a most interesting rendition with its blue-hued central section. "Parsley Bay is a narrow inlet. I wanted to express this in the composition with two skinny slices of the bushland on each side framing the view of boats and the harbour beyond," Westerman explains. "The colours help to emphasise the geographical 'sandwich' as well as distinguish the foreground from the background."

In the *Clifton Gardens II* work, dark bands at the base lighten in tone as they ascend into the picture plane where a 'pocket view' of the painting accepted into 2023 Paddington Art Prize is depicted on the upper left. That painting, *The Garden*, also won the Anthea Polson Art Award.

The *Ballast Point* picture celebrates the redevelopment of an industrial area on the Birchgrove peninsula into a public recreation space. It was so called because the site once quarried ballast for placement in the bilges of ships to ensure their stability. The imagery shows now current vegetation in front of huge concrete walls and between them the parkland beckons. "I was trying to capture the spirit of the past and present," Westerman imparts.

Epitomising Westerman's compositional aptitude and crisp geometric shapes is *The Edge (Wylie's Baths)*. A heritage listed tidal swimming pool, Wylie's Baths is situated below the cliffs in Coogee. "The juxtaposition between the jagged rocks and man-made elements make this place feel like the edge – the edge between the wild unknown depths of the sea and our leisurely repose," reflects Westerman. "I really love the scale of the timber structure overhead when down by the pool. It has this rickety and transient quality against the monumentality of the ocean."

What is astounding in Westerman's depictions on board is their incredibly small size, some only 20 x 20 cm! The viewer cannot help but be drawn into the 'pocket view' vistas and marvel at the detail and pictorial dynamics.

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