

Artist's Statement

Tony Windberg

Compositions
Solo Exhibition
Gunyulgup Galleries 2010



Windberg working on *Decomposition I* outside his studio in Northcliffe WA

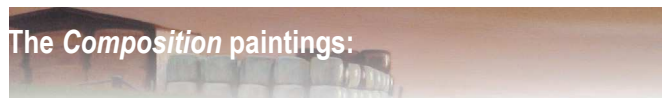
The hint of smoke, ominous ash-clouds, the unseen threat - nature out of our control...

This theme of our anxious relationship with Nature has its roots in Romanticism. I was repeatedly confronted by this 'man versus nature' battle, this sense of contested country, before and after I left Perth in 2002. Since setting up my studio in Northcliffe, Western Australia in 2006, I have drawn heavily upon the elements of my surrounding landscape: the burn-offs, the blue-gum plantations, the silage bales...



The Containment paintings:

Against a background of billowing ash-clouds or smoke haze, the silage bales depicted in the Containment paintings are quite literally nature wrapped and contained. References to trees also crop up regularly in my work. In each of the paintings in the Containment series, the state of one particular lone tree in the paddock is seen over consecutive years. I started my artistic career painting close-ups of trees, a subject I still indulge in.



The Composition paintings:

Like the composition process of constructing an artwork, the human intervention in the natural world involves selecting, modifying, ordering, arranging, rearranging, and removing... The arrangement of coloured bales in a silage stack begs the question: is this a chance or deliberate composition?

I find the incongruity of the plastic wrapped bales in the landscape poignant. The fortress-like stacks seem to have a monumental self importance and to be an apt metaphor for the weight of European cultural (and farming) tradition in the Australian landscape.



The Decomposition paintings:

In a modern take of the long European tradition of painting drapery, I enjoy the challenge of painting the tarps that drape haystacks and the plastic wrapped silage - the aesthetics of synthetics!

The Decomposition paintings were inspired by a row of abandoned silage bales. The deflated bales' wrap had loosened, one billowing in the breeze. I found it fittingly reminiscent of the sail on *The Raft of the Medusa* by the 19th Century Romantic painter Gericault, and this set the scene for the Decomposition paintings...

Tony Windberg
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