



JOHN WOLSELEY

The Life of Inland Waters

AUSTRALIAN GALLERIES
MELBOURNE

MEDIA RELEASE

Exhibition Dates: 1 - 20 May 2018
28 Derby Street Collingwood VIC 3066
Open 7 days 10am to 6pm

Artist Talk: 3pm Saturday 12 May 2018

John Wolsley has spent considerable time over the last five years in the company of the great Yolngu artist Mulkun Wirrpanda as they both painted the floodplains and flora of the Blue Mud Bay region of North East Arnhem Land. In 2017, the results of this collaboration were exhibited at the National Museum of Australia as *Midawarr Harvest: The Art of Mulkun Wirrpanda and John Wolsley*. Wolsley's upcoming exhibition at Australian Galleries *The Life of Inland Waters* showcases paintings, sculptures and prints which are an extension and a distillation of that time spent in Arnhem Land. This exhibition will also include several significant works by Mulkun Wirrpanda.

John Wolsley writes, *'I have immersed myself in the life world of the creeks, rivers and billabongs of this incredibly rich and fecund region. In these paintings, I am trying to show how a tropical river ecosystem can be painted as a kind of microcosm of our earth. They both map the same dynamic systems of earth, air and water and enfold the lives of plants, insects and fish.'*

The Life of Inland Waters also includes the series of prints entitled *101 insect life stories*. When Wirrpanda adopted John as her wawa, or brother, she gave him the name llangurrk, which is a kind of beetle grub or larvae which burrows into mud and the yams which grow there. He feels that in some uncanny way this has led him to an obsession with making etchings, relief prints and frottages of the engravings made by beetle larvae as they tunnel under the bark of trees. Their tracks create extraordinary patterns which resemble aerial maps of road or river systems and form a tracery which is also a visual history of their life cycles. Wolsley has also made prints from the tunnelling and architecture of ship worms, ghost moths, termites and mason wasps.

The Life of Inland Waters presents an exciting collection of works across a range of media from this inspired, intelligent and deeply important artist, culminating in what can only be described as an evocative and exhilarating visual experience. This exhibition is current until 20 May 2018.

For more details or images contact:
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