



SALVATORE ZOFREA

Days of Spring

AUSTRALIAN GALLERIES
MELBOURNE

MEDIA RELEASE

Exhibition Dates: 24 August - 16 September 2018

35 Derby Street Collingwood VIC 3066

Open 7 days 10am to 6pm

Australian Galleries is delighted to present *Days of Spring*, a comprehensive new body of work by renowned Italian-born artist Salvatore Zofrea, who is now one of Australia's most distinguished landscape painters. In what will be his first show in Melbourne in over 40 years, *Days of Spring* is a celebration of the rich and diverse beauty of the Australian bush in spring.

Inspired by the native flora and fauna surrounding his home and studio in Kurrajong, a small community between the foothills of the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury River region, *Days of Spring* is a personal record of Zofrea's observations of and experiences with the natural world around him. Staying true to his standard of scale and quality, the exhibition includes a five-metre-long quadriptych work titled *Joy of spring* that poetically narrates the splendor of spring in full bloom. While this work sets the tone of the exhibition, Zofrea also uses an impressive range of mediums including oil, watercolour, woodblocks and etchings in order to communicate the various textural and transformative layers of spring.

The concept of seasonal change is a recurring theme within the artist's practice, as notions of re-birth and fertility are explored in this body of work. In *Days of Spring*, Zofrea captures the natural cycle of colour, life and regeneration in the Australian bush, as native birds and wildflowers create a unifying sense of life throughout the exhibition. In paintings such as *Days of spring – irises and grevillea*, Zofrea depicts the early morning light, as pockets and beams of sunlight reflect through the foliage and radiate off the canvas. Similarly, in other works like *Noon in spring*, the artist's use of light creates a deep sense of purity and euphoria for the viewer, as this painting, along with all of the works in the exhibition, are charged with the energy and sensory elements that define springtime. Sounds, sights and even nostalgic aromas are embodied within the works, as Zofrea skillfully captures the feelings and richness of spring.

A distinctive trait of Zofrea's practice is also the use of lapis lazuli. This ancient material contains sacred and symbolic meaning and was used throughout the centuries by the Egyptian and Byzantine Empires, as well as during the Italian Renaissance. In this exhibition the presence of this semi-precious stone adds both a visual and symbolic eminence to the paintings, as it creates a glistening of celestial blue that reinforces the transient notion of life and light in the Australian landscape. Here, the ultramarine pigment not only pays homage to the Masters and civilizations that have gone before, but also to the diverse colour of Australia's native flora that Zofrea pertinently depicts in works like *Wildflowers and lapis*.

As Sasha Grishin articulates, *Days of Spring* is a collection of "joyous and memorable paintings that transcend that which can be seen by the eye". Immersive and arresting, *Days of Spring* is a harmonious unity of light, colour and energy that creates an unavoidable aura and sense of presence for its audience. This exhibition is an exciting and passionate new series that reinforces the artist's ongoing relationship and connection to the natural environment.

Days of Spring is current until 16 September 2018.

For more details or images contact:

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