



This Moment with You

Hobart is one of those truly unique cities in the world where the only company in your adventures can be the country itself. Just you, the rocky outcrops, dancing she-oaks and briny water that surround you. Not a single sound made by unnatural forces.

That's where Fazey takes us with this exhibition.

This Moment with You is a love letter to secret places- places you only discover once you've had the courage to take the time to go where the day takes you. Into secluded crevices like Pirate's Cove, into hidden gulches and the watery secrets held by Southern Tasmania's coastline.

A landscape painter can only share what they see, what they sense- it's their viewpoint which either draws us closer to a sense of place or alienates us from it. Many settler artists throughout history have romanticized the Australian landscape, super imposing the English light across rugged and brutal southern landscapes, or placed themselves as masters of their domains, seeking to conquer and claim, rather than be in relationship with country.

The view shared in this exhibition is a bit like Fazey herself- grounded, humble, transparent and sparkling with a sense of curiosity and adventure.

In *This Moment with You* Fazey gently invites us to reconnect with our own wild places without judgement. Not with the impending terror of climate change, the dogmatism of politics or the fear of the unknown. "These places are where I'm feeling my connections. And so if they were to remind someone to connect with their own place, then that would be great. I'm really hoping that when someone looks at one of my pieces, they're feeling something coming back to them" Britt Fazey.

Crucial to Fazey is the idea that regardless of what you feel you've done to the land or despair of all that is going on in the world, that country loves you anyway. "I feel like we need healing as people, and so does the land, and I think coming from a place of guilt and shame is not the way to do it. My work comes from a place of love. So when I'm out there and I'm bobbing around, I'm feeling the love."

When Fazey speaks about bobbing around she is talking about the process she uses to find and explore those secret places. Balanced (sometimes precariously) on a stand-up paddleboard, utterly present, focused in a place of absorption and resonance. It is here that she is chasing the conversation with place.

There's something really special about the way Fazey intimately translates the salty waters of Tasmania onto her canvas. It's like a kind of liquid velvet that simultaneously envelops the viewer and takes them adventurously far away from the safety of the shore.

From the darkness of water overshadowed by craggy coastlines and dancing she-oaks in works like *I See You*, to the transparent green and turquoise glassiness of the shallows in *Fell into the Light*, she flips the landscape and with it our expectations. Fazey often sees the world from the water instead of looking out into it. Her own horizon welcomes a more intimate conversation.

The level of careful detail in each of the works reminds us again of the hours spent in the studio paying homage to these places, honing in on a closer, more intimate perspective.

This collection of 14 works asks you to travel on a journey from the certainty of sand under your feet in works like *History & Hope* to the unpredictability of walking chest deep in the water in works like *It's Something Deeper*. Not adrift, but surrounded, seemingly held by country.

"I am trying to make someone feel that lovely connection and that space where they can be there their most human selves. And vulnerable." Britt Fazey

And like we find in life there are some dead ends too. Perhaps that's when we feel our most vulnerable? When there's no easy way forward? In Fazey's work you see these dead ends from the water - steep vertical inclines of uninviting rock. The solidity of the impassable dead end. It's in this point of possible reflection or revelation where we can find a place not to run from but to stay still and seek to understand our uncertainty. We see this idea explored in this exhibition in works like *WayPoint*.

This Moment with You's love letter is written in contrasts. In places of new beginnings, turning points and endings. In turquoise, glassy green and grey- and occasionally in the uniquely Tasmanian silver and golden light revealed in a work like *Lay Down Your Arms*.

What would country say in return in those quiet moments when it was just you there? It's only by spending that moment with them that you can drop your guard and listen, really listen to the other half of the conversation and it's here where Fazey believes the biggest change can come.

Kath Melbourne
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