

'For in the true nature of things, if we rightly consider, every green tree is far more glorious than if it were made of gold and silver.'
Martin Luther



'Pretium1', Digital photograph, acrylic mounted

Ochre Gallery - Sept 2008



'Lost', digital photograph



precious
new work by Megan Evans



'Precious'

Megan has always wanted to create the "million dollar tree." This is not some venture capital doctrine for the further exploitation of our native forests but a straight up discourse about valuing trees for what they are.

This exhibition features two large wall installations. In 'Jewel', golden leaves sleep in their box frames eschewing 'ornamental beauty' and making a veiled reference to the rococo period of gilding; a value-adding process which carries with it the complimentary opposites of glory and corruption. The scars on the ungilded surfaces blighted by age, drought and disease are echoed in the epicentre of the paintings showing a slightly wounded universe avenging itself on the dystopian biosphere. But look at a leaf long enough and a miniature landscape will emerge along the infrastructure of its veins and stem, the surface suddenly appearing as country, place, identity; each one a micro-portrait representing the tree from which it fell.

Growing up in the bushland of Eltham, Megan's love of nature long predates the current conversation on climate change and she has used her art to explore the relationship between nature and the sublime. The photographic trio 'Lost' is an elegant reminder of this past.



'Troposphere', oil on canvas

Megan's current exhibition is an evolution of her earlier work. It is as if she has zoomed in on the landscapes and exposed a microstructure deeper than the contour maps of these locations, travelling to where matter begins to dissolve on the event horizon.

It is this point where the abstract works emerge from layers of colour, which vaporise into atmospherics, suggesting everything from medium level turbulence to a flotation tank of planets powered by psychic and meteorological phenomena. Like JWM Turner from the other end of the industrial revolution, Megan recognises the gaseous beauty of pollution, from turbocharged hydrocarbons through to calm, sinister indigos. The 'Glimmer' series reminds one of slightly out-of-focus light, pulsating like a recurring memory, luminescent and magical.

This work takes nature and makes it material, an object of desire and in doing so asks whether we can make the leap to a relationship with nature which belongs to an unattainable realm; unable to be possessed.

'Precious' will continue to resonate long after it comes down and should contribute to the ongoing dialogue regarding our relationship with nature.

John Ashton 2008