

anthony
Edwards

SEDUCTION OF PLACE

2 FEBRUARY - 18 MARCH 2007



Bottom Of The Spout | 2006

Phone Booth | 2006

We all believe in something, it is our task to find out what it is that drives us, what makes us continue to do what we do. This concept is relatively easy for some of us, but when applied to the life of an artist this journey takes on a whole new perspective.

Art students are encouraged to take risks within their practice, to try new things, to break the rules and explore the range of experiences that life has to offer. Some take the challenge literally a push beyond where it is a calculated risk to where it becomes dangerous.

Anthony Edwards knows this place, there is a thin line that separates us from them, *Seduction of Place* aims to sort out the risky from the memorable and use his experiences to reshape our awareness of this liminal place.

The Townsville city precinct may not be Soho in New York, but it does have alternative zones that function outside of the everyday gaze. Not surprisingly the art practice of many regional artists fails to engage with the dark side, preferring the joyous celebration of life and our semi-tropical environment. This 'Pollyanna effect' is the antithesis to Edwards' work; his practice conducted from his suburban double garage conjures up the seedy and wanton aspects of the Townsville city zone. His work seeks out the inky blues, the flat black patches, the slippery silvers and murky browns only to be found in the out-of-the-way places of the city.

As a student, Edwards had a studio in the Bank Court building in Ogden Street, this facilitated his access to the city from a different perspective. Most of us see just one or two sides of the central business district - its retail, offices and night club zone - but the artist engages at a more visceral level. Edwards speaks about the long sessions of work punctuated by drifting into the café s, bars, or music haunts. There is the moth-like need to seek out the light to meet, engage and experience; to suck up dregs, to consume in excess and to lose control in a place that represents the underside of the real world. *Seduction of Place* speaks to these causes.

This exhibition references a memory revealed in visual notation, like the poetry of the Beat generation - a nod or wink are code for "Yes... you were there, I remember seeing you," but no context is necessary. The paintings are more like riffs from a song that leave you with a picture; not clear but alluding to something, something beyond reach - but you know it is there.

Edwards speaks of using songs as catalysts to open up the pictures, his respect for international bands like *Paradise Lost*, *Moon Spell*, *Dark Tranquillity* and *Sentenced* attunes his vision and pulls focus into glimpses of his past. In many of the less objective works, sections of song lyrics give the artist confidence to work though ideas, pushing beyond the obvious, but with a focus of something more like an idea or memory. In other works it maybe a phone box or a bridge which provides the impetus to make a picture and reactivate a thought.

Making art is not about reproducing something it is about creation, enabling the audience to be part of a new experience of seeing the world though someone's else's mind. Vulnerability is always paramount, the artist can never anticipate how the audience will react, you just have to put it out there - and try.

Seduction of Place is Anthony Edwards' fifth solo exhibition and perhaps his most ambitious. In a solo show there is nowhere to hide: it is just you and your work. There are not many in the community who are prepared to put their work up in such an overt fashion, here we see the artist standing before us fully exposed. It is a gift to the audience, an insight into where the artist has come from and perhaps something of their future. In looking at these works we gain a sense of excitement and perhaps a longing. How do we read the stillness of some of these works as they hang like a lingering moment? Why do we feel there is much more sitting beneath the surface, is he holding back or just pushing us to try a little harder to understand?

Solo shows are really big, they make us doubt our worth and they make us re-assess our practice. Edwards refutes the cliché labels, there is no one mentor in this show; on the walls we see something of Jon Cattapan and Jeffrey Smart, but neither has imposed a style on this exhibition. We could look back in time and see glimpses of Edward Hopper, J. M. Whistler, even the evocative stillness of Piero della Francesca but the work is ultimately Anthony Edwards, it belongs to this place and this time.

In the context of this exhibition I think the artist himself speaks most eloquently:

After my crash I left the city limits, and sorted through the photographs I had taken as I sorted through my life,

There are paintings in this show that take us to a remote place, they call for us to reflect and contemplate, other works are more quizzical, they tempt and tantalize, they give us no clues just an experience. The show is about the night, the dark, the unknown; but it also provides glimpses of hope, shafts of illumination that break through, giving the audience a chance to project something of ourselves into the space. The light may or may not be celebratory, as the artist states, "not all that glitters is gold," sometimes it is the light that is the problem.

resolved that I would turn the wasted years into something productive. The images in Seduction of Place and the lyrics of the bands that were the sound track to my journey tell the story of my journey. They only make up a small part of the Seduction of Place, but enough for the story to be told. (Edwards 2006)

Stephen Naylor

Into The Blue | 2006



Curriculum Vitae | ANTHONY EDWARDS

Education

2000 Graduated James Cook University with Honours

Solo Exhibitions

2005 Broken Spirit, Umbrella Studio. 482 Flinders Street

2004 Emotive Landscape, Umbrella Studio. 482 Flinders Street

2002 Into the City, Umbrella Studio. Northtown on the Mall

2000 Ascending the Mountain, Pinnacles Gallery. Thuringowa City Council Complex

Group Exhibitions

2005 Mixed Media, James Cook University Vincent Campus

2005 Strand Ephemera, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery

2004 Birthday Umbrella Studio Members Show

2004 Sculpture by the Sea, Sydney

2003 Construction/deconstruction Umbrella Studio Members Show

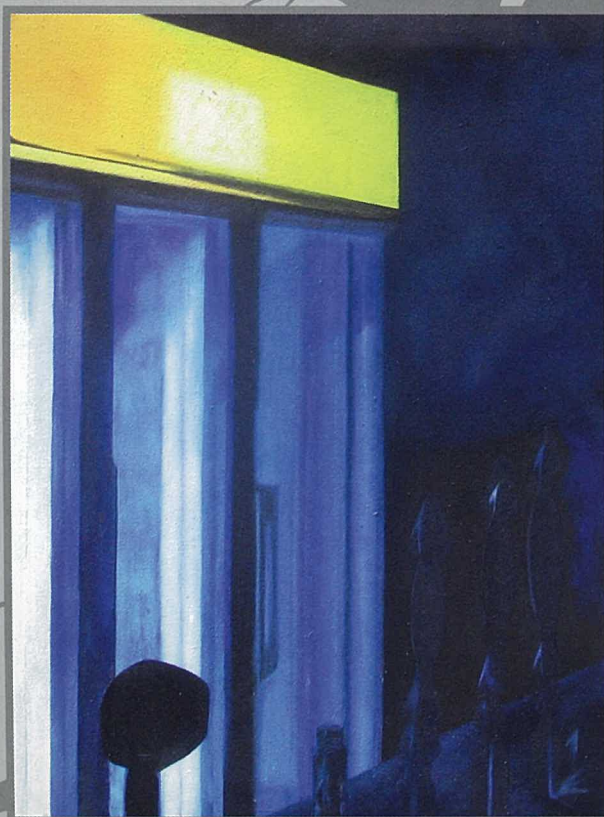
2003 Clear Reflections, 2003 River Festival Public Art Exhibition

2003 Construction Deconstruction, Umbrella Studio Members Show

2002 Games, Umbrella Studio Members Show

2001 Parallax, Umbrella Studio Members Show.

2000 Tropologic, an exhibition showcasing 24 Young Emerging North Queensland Artists



Contemplation On Tap | 2006



Ecstasy When I Dance | 2006

Cover Image | | Can't Remember | 2006



If I Could | 2006

Still in his 20s, Anthony Edwards is a passionate young artist. Painting is his obsession: he must spend time in his studio every day.

Anthony Edwards graduated with a Bachelor of Visual Arts from James Cook University in 2000. In 2001 he undertook a traineeship at Perc Tucker Regional Gallery followed by a further year of mentorship in 2002. He continues to work in the visual arts as an exhibition officer at Pinnacles Gallery.

Anthony is well-known in Townsville as a painter, exhibiting in solo and group shows in Townsville, Brisbane and Sydney. His influences are diverse, including Anselm Keifer, Jeffrey Smart and Jon Cattapan. He manages to synthesise these diverse influences into distinctive paintings that take as their theme what is well known to him: his immediate surroundings. By this one could understand the celebrated tropical environment of north Queensland, but for Edwards it is the seamy underside of the night. Music, too, is a great influence in his work and he plays music incessantly while painting, many works inspired by the lyrics.

Perc Tucker Regional Gallery encourages the development of young artists through its youth program: an annual curated youth exhibition, youth focus groups and ongoing traineeships. Anthony Edwards has been the beneficiary of a Gallery traineeship and has developed a strong relationship with the Gallery. It is gratifying to welcome him back as a fully fledged artist in his first major solo show at Perc Tucker, presenting a body of work developed over a number of years.

Thanks to the artist Anthony Edwards, Stephen Naylor for his essay and, as always, to the Gallery team and volunteers.

Frances Thomson
Director



Gallery Team

Director	Frances Thomson
Public Programs	Marg Naylor
Exhibitions and Collection	Jo Lankester
Public Art Officer	Amber Church
Administration	Penny Skerritt
Design	Clint Searston
Gallery Officer (weekends)	Wendy Bainbridge
Honorary Editor	Mary Gallagher

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