

James Guppy

The Consolations

10 – 28 May 2022

Jan Murphy is proud to present James Guppy's forthcoming solo exhibition *The Consolations*.

Having exhibited with the gallery for almost 20 years, he is well known for his exquisitely executed, evocative paintings that have a surreal edge. Guppy is based in the Northern NSW hinterland, and although his home and studio were safe from the recent catastrophic floods, his community was badly affected. Given the timing of this exhibition, there is something bittersweet about these thoughtful works that look towards the skies for consolation.

"Living on the North Coast of NSW, friends and family are continually swapping anecdotes with me along the lines of: "Did you see the sunset last night", "The clouds on Saturday were amazing" and, because I paint clouds: "The other evening I really thought of you when I saw the sky".

In the past my works were often premonitions or dark warnings. I used clouds to conjure troubling skies- calamitous and strange. My figures were often depicted at the end of the day, just before darkness descends. These new works use both these strategies with a profoundly different intention.

Lately there's been a lot of back and forth conversations about fond memories and thankfulness for how shiny and blessed our lives have been. Now, when all around are harbingers of doom... the natural beauty of the evening sky somehow softens the blow of what is lost. However ephemeral that joy is; I find the beauty of a sunset a deep consolation." **James Guppy, 2022**

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Guppy's art displays courage and honesty in the way it explores human emotions, identifying and commenting on the cultural and emotional legacies with which we live.

London-born, Guppy gained a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Literature from Lancaster University. He spent several years in the United States as adjunct professor of arts and media at Long Island University and exhibited in New York and Texas. In Australia, he has lectured at Queensland College of Art, Griffith University and the Byron School of Art.

His work is held in many public collections, including QAGOMA, Artbank, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Griffith University, Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra and Lancaster University in England. His work is held privately in Australia, Asia, Europe and the United States. Guppy has been a finalist in many awards including the Sulman Prize, the Gold Coast Art Prize and the Paddington Art Prize. He has also been the recipient of several awards, including the New South Wales Fisher's Ghost Art Award in 2004.