

# India Mark

## *From Steel City*

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21 June – 9 July 2022

Jan Murphy Gallery is excited to present Protégé artist India Mark's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

Working predominately in still life, India Mark's paintings are intimate compositions that have been shaped and inspired by the artists immediate surroundings and her hometown of Wollongong, the 'Steel City' of Australia.

"Only in the last couple of years have I felt like Wollongong, the city where I live, on Dharawal land, is my home. Despite growing up in the Illawarra region I haven't always appreciated its cultural and natural vibrancy. Apartments are going up here now and, since Covid, people want to live here and rightly so. Wollongong is beautiful but it hasn't always been a destination for the bourgeois. It is still predominantly a working-class city. Anyone who grew up in Wollongong has immediate family members who have, at some point in recent history, worked at the Port Kembla steel works. My dad worked there in the 80s and my aunty worked there for about fifteen years.

My still life paintings don't directly reference Wollongong or the steel works, but they were made here. The colours and shapes of the surrounding industrial area have made their way into my work overtime. The more I look, the more I feel that the vessels in my paintings aren't too different from chimneys, light houses or new high-rise apartments, reaching up to the sky, emitting, reflecting and fracturing light. In making these works, I stayed at home in my studio. At night I walked my dog in the harbour and saw the container ships queuing to port and the sky go intermittently bright orange, pink and blue from the flames coming from the tops of the stacks. Staying at home over the last two years has completely changed the way I feel about Wollongong. Like all places, there is still hardship and poverty here but I feel deep joy in truly loving and belonging to this city." India Mark, 2022

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

India Mark (born 1993) graduated with a Masters of Fine Art (Painting) from Sydney's National Art School in 2018. She is a two-time finalist in the Archibald Prize and a finalist in the Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship. In 2021 Mark was featured in the hard cover publication 'Still Life', published by Thames and Hudson.