

# Michael Muir

## *Based on a true story*

8 – 26 August 2023

Michael Muir's paintings are predominately inspired by his experience of the landscape, particularly places he has travelled to for the first time. Born in Scotland, Muir's childhood was spent moving throughout South East Asia before settling in Sydney. This peripatetic beginning has shaped the way Muir makes sense of his surrounds, balancing the thrill of new possibilities with the comfort of the familiar.

"I realised over time, that my approach to finding subject matter relates back to my personal experience of shifting homes and countries at a young age. There is a mix of excitement and trepidation when you arrive at a new place, and a natural instinct to seek out what is familiar and inviting within a new environment. When I travel now, I am often making quick sketches and gouache paintings, looking for a sense of vibrancy and belonging in the surroundings, and not necessarily capturing all the details. When I bring the sketches back to the studio and start working on a larger scale, I slowly unravel the interplay of colour, composition, and form. The paintings in '*Based on a true story*' purposely blend truth and fiction. They are all loosely based on recent trips to Tasmania but also connect with early personal memories that set me on a path to looking at the world around me."

– Michael Muir, 2023

Working from loose sketches and using only a palette knife to apply the rich oil paint, his flattened surfaces are delineated in the most deliberate way. He reintroduces texture and detailed marks into areas of flat colour, using the palette knife much like a pencil to create depth and dimension.

Michael Muir's paintings are strikingly optimistic, playfully shifting between memory and reality and exploring the tension between abstraction and figuration.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Muir has had regular solo exhibitions in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne since 2010 and this is his seventh major exhibition at Jan Murphy Gallery. He was the winner of the Mosman Art Prize 2014 and has been a finalist in a number of awards over the past decade including the Wynne, Sulman and Fleurieu Art Prizes. His work is represented in Australia's Artbank collection, Parliament House Art Collection and private collections throughout Australia and Internationally.