

# Robert Malherbe

## *Better a private dream world*

23 April – 11 May 2024

Jan Murphy Gallery is pleased to present *Better a private dream world*, a new solo exhibition by Robert Malherbe.

For over 25 years Robert Malherbe has confidently explored and returned to the sensuality of the natural environment and the intimate landscape of the human form. His landscapes, nudes and still life's all share a sense of immediacy born from painting 'alla prima' (a direct painting technique where a work is completed in one session, often by applying wet paint in layers).

"I live in the Blue Mountains and have been going on family holidays to Currarong, a south coastal town in NSW, for the last twenty years. When painting there, I make images that strive for an independent life while visually staying true to the surroundings. I don't consider what I do as realism.

When painting, either landscape, still-lives, or figurative work, I'm constantly taking liberties with what is there to transform my sensations into convincing images that excite and surprise me. I think the most beautiful and sensual art ever made was done by individuals in a dream state, busy discovering, with little or no desire to affect the world.

The title of the exhibition *Better a private dream world* comes from a line by writer TJ Clarke from his book 'Picasso and Truth' - better a private dream world than a glib facsimile of the common good."

– Robert Malherbe, 2024

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Immigrating to Australia in 1971 from Mauritius, Malherbe worked as an animator before spending a decade living and travelling in Europe. He has been a regular finalist in some of Australia's most prestigious art prizes including the Archibald Prize, the Wynne Prize, the Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, and the Kilgour Art Prize. This year Malherbe is artist in residence at Tweed Regional Gallery.

His artworks are held in important public collections including NSW Parliament House, Redland Art Gallery and Blue Mountains City Art Gallery as well as numerous private collections nationally and abroad.