

A.J. Taylor

On Surface

08 April – 10 May 2025

AJ Taylor's latest body of work 'On Surface', continues his exploration of the Queensland landscape, from places close to his home in the Sunshine Coast hinterland such as Stony Creek and the Mooloolah River National Park, to trips further afield in Carnarvon Gorge, Lamington National Park and the Bunya Mountains.

Taylor continues a long tradition of recording the Australian landscape, but the process that he uses to bring these paintings to resolution is unique. The works are closely observed and unambiguous depictions of specific landscapes - they could be nowhere else - but they are just as much about the process of seeing itself as they are about particular places.

Underlying all the works are distinctive underpainting surfaces, created through a process in which several discreet layers are spread across a relief of marks that suggest a chaotic system in nature such as the flow and ripple of water, or the fractal shapes of branches and leaves. After being sanded back to a completely flat surface, the ground still holds the memory of all those accumulated marks.

The nature of the ground – the colours, size and complexity of its marks – will then dictate the choice of subject, its mood and scale. In some places the ground marks happily stand in for elements of the represented image. Elsewhere, unlikely colours and anomalous shapes contradict visual logic, creating dynamic tension between ground and landscape image.

When unintelligible marks or disparate components seem to contradict the integrity of the image, we synthesise those parts into a unified whole. And it is this very real process of visual and mental synthesis that is of interest to the artist – the conspiratory relationship that is required between the artwork and viewer to fill in the gaps of perception. Taylor's work continues to explore the dynamic relationship between abstraction and realism, creating a unique visual language that reflects both the complexity and simplicity of the natural world.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

A.J. Taylor lives and works in the hinterland of Queensland's Sunshine Coast. He has been a finalist in a number of major prizes, including the Wynne Prize, Fleurieu Art Prize, John Glover Art Prize, the John Leslie Art Prize, and the Hawkesbury Art Prize. His work is represented in public and corporate collections, including the Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra, Artbank, Macquarie Bank and the Museum of Brisbane.