

WILLIAM ROBINSON: GENESIS

RETURNING FROM PARIS FOR EXCLUSIVE TWO-VENUE NATIONAL TOUR

Hamilton Gallery is one of the only two Australian venues to present this exhibition and the only Victorian venue of the tour.

Exhibition Opening: Thursday 24 May 2018, 5:30 – 7:00pm

Guest Speaker: Mrs Maria Myers AC, Philanthropist, Chair of the Kimberley Foundation Australia, Chair of the State Library of Victoria Foundation

Exhibition dates: 25 May – 22 July 2018



William ROBINSON (1936-)

THE SEA WITH MORNING SUN FROM SPRINGBROOK 1996

Oil on linen 137,5 x 183cm

QUT Art Collection

Purchased 2013 through the William Robinson Art Collection Fund and partial donation by Michael Gleeson-White

A major international exhibition of artworks by one of Australia's most esteemed artists, William Robinson AO, will travel to Victorian audiences for the first time to be shown at Hamilton Gallery in South West Victoria from 25 May, before travelling to Sydney to the S.H. Ervin Gallery from August. *Genesis: William Robinson* includes over 60 artworks from the QUT Art Collection as well as private collections, and is the first major exhibition of the artist's work to travel to Victoria.

Robinson is recognised as one of Australia's most important contemporary landscape painters, celebrated in particular for his original and powerful approaches to depicting the Australian environment through a multi-dimensional viewpoint. For over five decades, he has produced works of great originality and vision that have informed a new vernacular of the Australian landscape. Hamilton Gallery Director Sarah Schmidt said, "this exhibition echoes the power of the ancient landscape of the Gariwerd (Grampians National Park), which is nearby to Hamilton. Often the majestic landscape paintings by Robinson look almost representative of a Grampians landscape."

The exhibition returns to Australia from Paris where it has been received by a "genuinely enthralled audience", said exhibition curator, Vanessa Van Ooyen.

Genesis's strong reception by international audiences shows that Robinson's work stands the rigours of being in dialogue with any of the 'Greats' overseas. According to France's

Beaux Arts contributor Marie Fantozzi, entering *Genesis* is “A dreamlike and surprising journey... the great care given to the light and its different variations according to the day and the seasons, the work on texture, the multiplication of points of view inside the canvas and the strong *onirism* which emerges from his compositions are key elements. Before travelling to Paris, *William Robinson: Genesis* was on display at the Australian Embassy in Washington and in his opening remarks, Australian Ambassador, his Excellency, the Honourable Joe Hockey, claimed it to be the best exhibition that they had shown at the Embassy during his term.

William Robinson: Genesis is the first major touring exhibition of the artist’s work in fifteen years, since S.H. Ervin Gallery organised a touring exhibition of Robinson’s work in 2003 titled *William Robinson: The revelation of landscape*. The current exhibition explores Robinson’s works on paper to show that, rather than being a minor interest, this medium has contributed greatly to the development of his major canvases. Since the 1960s, Robinson has produced hundreds of works in watercolour, graphite, gouache, and ink, as well as lithographs and etchings, created both as studies related to paintings and as independent works.

The exhibition brings together a selection of rarely seen works alongside those that have been exhibited more widely, allowing the viewer to clearly see the development of Robinson’s distinctive use of colour and the artist’s move towards the multidimensional perspective for which his large landscape paintings are so acclaimed.

The inclusion of a select group of major paintings—such as *Creation landscape: The dome of space and time 2003/04*, *The blue pools: Springbrook to Beechmont 2000*, and the Archibald Prize winning self portrait, *Equestrian self portrait 1987*—further reveal connections to his works on paper. They illustrate how, over time, this often-overlooked medium has contributed significantly to Robinson creating a pure, singular style that has seen him become one of Australia’s greatest living artists.

BACKGROUND

Robinson is one of the most successful Australian artists of his generation. In 2001, the Queensland Art Gallery mounted a major survey exhibition of his work, which later toured to the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. In 2007, the artist was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for his outstanding achievements and service to the arts. Robinson’s work has been the subject of more than 43 solo exhibitions and he is represented in some 33 public collections in Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Vatican City.

The William Robinson Gallery is testament to the importance of the artist’s work within Australian art history. The William Robinson Gallery is like no other in Australia in that it is a gallery dedicated to the permanent exhibition of work by a living artist. The Gallery opened on 27 August 2009 and is located in Old Government House at Queensland University of Technology’s (QUT) Gardens Point campus. Honouring the life and work of this distinguished contemporary Australian painter and QUT alumnus, the gallery

presents exhibitions drawn from QUT Art Collection's extensive holdings of the artist's work, as well as works from public and private collections.

The William Robinson Art Collection—a specific collecting area of the QUT Art Collection—is the largest public collection of the artist's works. It consists of over 180 artworks spanning from the late 1960s through to works produced in the last year, and covers Robinson's landscape, farmyard, self portrait, interior and still life genres.

Vanessa Van Ooyen, William Robinson Gallery Senior Curator, said the exhibition traces a development of Robinson's style and interests: "The exhibition brings together works in a range of styles and mediums to show the influence that Robinson's works on paper have on his wider practice," said Vanessa Van Ooyen. Emeritus Professor Sasha Grishin AM FAHA of Australian National University said Robinson's most recognised interests are depicted within his works on paper. "...the family chook yard, cows with dreamy eyes and cavorting goats; the various landscapes and beachscapes that have surrounded William Robinson; and the faces of those who are dearest to him. These subjects, which are well known and deeply loved, have evolved in tandem with the artist's circumstances," said Grishin. "Never one to blindly and mimetically follow his model, Robinson is an artist who, with humour, beauty and faith, provides us with testimony to that which he has witnessed," Grishin continued.

A bilingual publication, with essays by Professor Sasha Grishin AM FAHA and Vanessa Van Ooyen, will be available alongside the exhibition in Hamilton and Sydney, so that audiences can gain an insight into the processes of the artist and how he has captured a unique vision of Australian life and landscape.

William Robinson: Genesis

24 May to 22 July 2018
Hamilton Gallery
107 Brown Street, Hamilton VIC 3300

3 August to 7 October 2018
S.H. Ervin Gallery
Watson Road, Observatory Hill
Sydney NSW 2001

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Selection of high-res images available.

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