

JOSHUA YELDHAM

HAWKESBURY RIVER

HAWKESBURY RIVER, the much anticipated follow up to his highly regarded series *Solitude's Bride* and *Bird Nest Diaries* which will open at Arthouse Gallery on the 13th of September, 2006.

This new body of work continues to explore Yeldham's spiritual connection and journey into the Australian landscape. In the past we saw the artist draw deeply on his solitary desert experiences from excursions into remote western New South Wales over an eight year period. The paintings of *HAWKESBURY RIVER* take us into a new landscape, a place he knows and loves well. Yeldham's connection to his muse is deep and dates back to his childhood spent on the family farm at a bend in the river known as Swallow Creek Ridge.

Sydney is edging towards her waters and the artist has recorded in *HAWKESBURY RIVER* her beauty, history and glory. The Prussian blue, burnt orange and rich brown palette takes us to it's banks, past it's jagged sandstone cliffs and convict trails, alongside it's twisted spotted gums and through it's oyster leases.

With the aide of a dental drill and a 12 volt battery on his boat, Yeldham carves into the painted surface of each clay board. The stunning effect achieved gives the work texture and a strong rhythmic feeling reminiscent of the ebb and flow of the river tides. Unusually, this is a technique he has also used in many of the works on paper, working up ridges and gullies to beautiful effect on what is conventionally considered a fragile medium.

Yeldham spent much time traveling by boat painting en plein air and recording the Hawkesbury with its many faces. When speaking of his inspiration the artist quotes from Mark Twain:

'The face of the water, in time, became a wonderful book - a book that was a dead language to the uneducated passenger, but which told its mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once and thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell every day.'

- *Life on the Mississippi*

Hawkesbury River is an inspiring body of work and in our opinion a milestone in the career of this accomplished artist.

For further information, images or an interview with the artist please contact Dallas Moore at Arthouse Gallery on 9332 1019 or contact@arthousegallery.com.au