



**PAIN**

**PAINT**

**EBONY BUSK, EVELYN MARINA PAOLINO,  
JUNE SARTRACOM, LAUREN JONES, MITCHELL CHEESMAN  
& ODESSA MAHONY-DE VRIES**

NOOSA REGIONAL GALLERY

30 APRIL to 19 JUNE 2022





# FOREWORD

Remember that time when Paul Delaroche said painting was dead? Nah, neither do I – because it was about a century and a half before I was born. But that’s how long the debate’s been festering about the future and relevance of painting.

Our friend Paul might be cut some slack. He had just laid his eyes on an early daguerreotype – one of the first photographic images ever produced. By his reckoning, if this kind of faithful representation could be achieved through the simple exposure of a surface to light, there was no longer any point in labouring with pigment and brush to try to achieve the same.<sup>1</sup>

But this wasn’t the last time that painting was declared dead. Modernism saw artists try to capture light, time, movement, music and energy, among other less optically tangible things. In 1921 the Russian Constructivist, Alexander Rodchenko, painted a series of monochrome canvases titled *Pure Red Color*, *Pure Blue Color* and *Pure Yellow Color*, in which the surface of each canvas was evenly treated with flat coatings of the respective pigments – the three colours from which all other colours can theoretically be made. Rodchenko claimed that he had “... reduced painting to its logical conclusion [and] affirmed: this is the end of painting.”<sup>2</sup> Similarly, in 1951, American Abstractionist, Robert Rauschenberg created his infamous White Paintings. In a complete reduction of content and with the elimination of gesture,<sup>3</sup> Rauschenberg painted the surface of his canvases tonelessly and unchangingly white, arguably producing the most minimal work possible short of not applying any paint at all. There seemed to be nowhere else to go.

But, of course, painters continued to paint – reinventing the artform and reinterpreting and responding to their worlds in new and challenging ways.

The exhibition we are presenting here at Noosa Regional Gallery, came about through the exciting observation that painting has been experiencing a surge across the Sunshine Coast in recent years by younger and emerging artists. And even more excitingly still, each artist is embracing the medium with a bespoke vision and a unique voice. There’s no prevailing style or movement that binds them together. In fact, it’s the difference and diversity that makes each of their practices noteworthy. Noosa Regional Gallery is thrilled to be taking the opportunity to survey some of these new and innovative approaches to the medium through the work of Ebony Busk, Evelyn Marina Paolino, June Sartracom, Lauren Jones, Mitchell Cheesman and Odessa Mahony-de Vries. Rather than presenting the works of each of these artists in a shared space, *Paint* offers surprises at every turn, with a sequence of painterly installations snaking their way through the Gallery’s labyrinthine space.

Painting is alive and well.

**Michael Brennan**

Gallery Director, Noosa Regional Gallery

<sup>1</sup> Ziff, N., Paul Delaroche: *A Study in Nineteenth-Century French History Painting*, Garland Publishing, New York, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Gaiger, J. & Wood, P., *Art of the Twentieth Century: A Reader*, Yale University Press, London, 2003. P. 101.

<sup>3</sup> Dennison, L. & Spector, N., *Singular Forms (sometimes repeated): Art from 1951 to the Present*, Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2004.



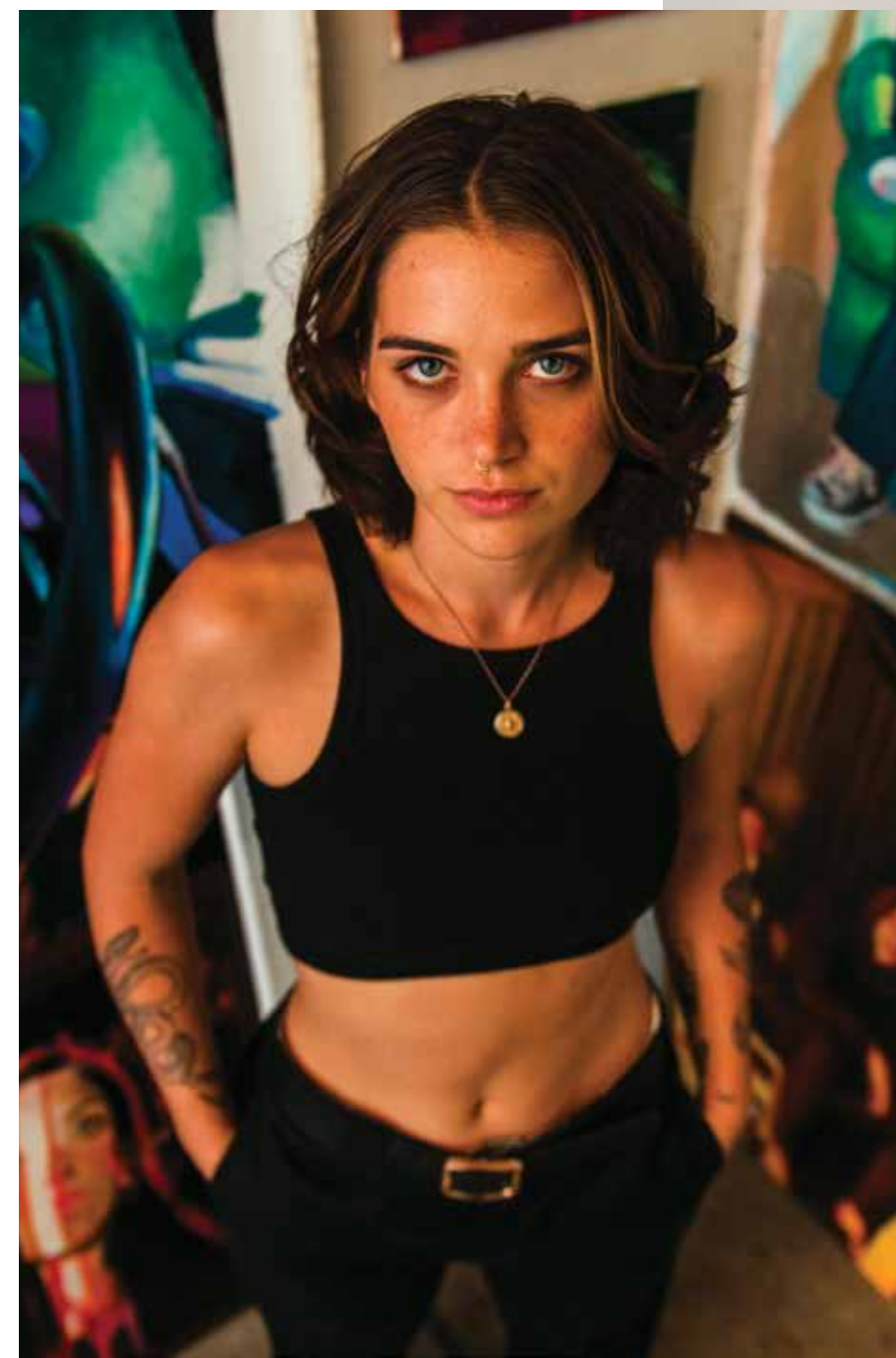
A woman with dark, wavy hair, seen from the back and side, is looking at a wall covered in various colorful, abstract art pieces. She is wearing a black ribbed tank top and dark pants. The art pieces include a large painting of a person in a green armchair, a painting of a person's face in warm tones, and several other abstract compositions with bold colors like blue, green, red, and yellow. The text "EBONY BUSK" is overlaid in large, white, bold letters on the lower left side of the image.

# EBONY BUSK





**Ebony Busk** paints figures and scenes with an immediacy that makes you feel like you were there. Capturing snippets of youth culture – skateboards and share houses; backyard beers and shared cigarettes – her canvases combine photographic distortion with classical compositions in a way which elevates stolen moments and celebrates beauty, intimacy and vulnerability. Combining a bold use of colour – both monochromatic and complimentary – with a dramatic use of light and shade, Ebony's paintings hit us front on with a cultural realism, relevance and generational insight that's too often dismissed by those who weren't invited.







**EVELYN  
MARINA  
PAOLINO**





**Evelyn Marina Paolino** is drawn to and captivated by the sea. But these paintings are no exercises in optical fidelity. Instead, Evelyn delves into a visual representation of abstract experiences of the ocean and the ways in which our other senses engage with the immensity and the immersiveness of its heave. The pervasive blue that washes through her work and the space in which it is seen is both contemplative and healing. With a European, island heritage firmly in mind, Evelyn boldly fuses expansive spaces with text and stylised forms, using considered and impulsive gestures that echo the conflicting states of stillness and surge with which the ocean is often loaded.





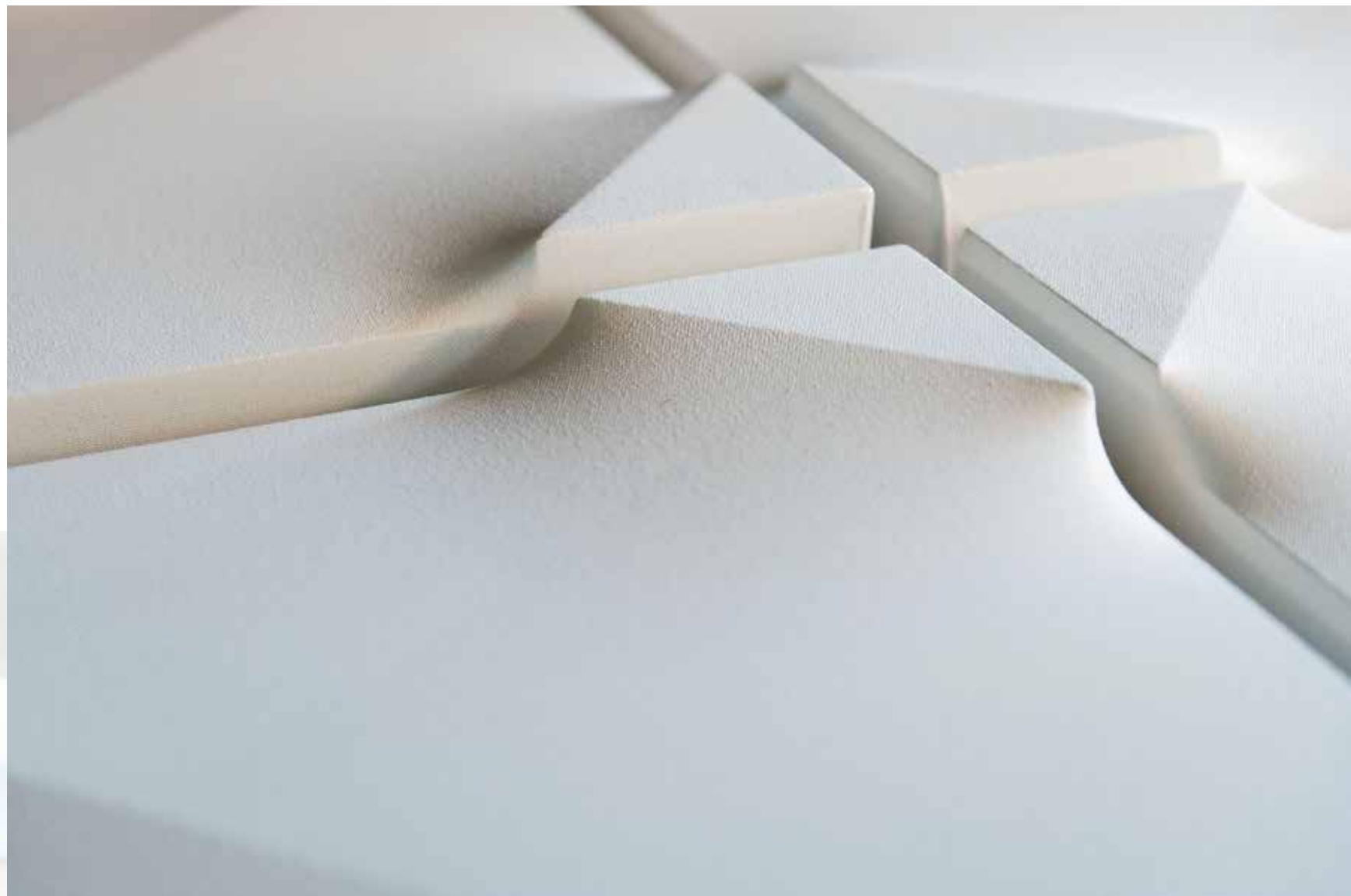


**JUNE  
SARTRACOM**





**June Sartracom** works somewhere between painting and 3D forms – and it is unclear exactly which has prominence (if that's at all important). Working with crisp, clean geometric shapes, June's surfaces rise in unison, creating forms that aren't necessarily there through the fall of shadow and the catching of light on pronounced edges and angular planes. Adding to the story of Reductive Abstraction, and with a nod to artists such as Robert Rauschenberg and Kazimir Malevich, June takes this journey towards the end of painting one step further, turning at the last minute to play with pattern, repositionable surfaces, and perhaps even the edges of Op Art.







**LAUREN  
JONES**





**Lauren Jones** embraces an *alla prima* method of painting, employing bold and impressionistic brushstrokes with a confidence that at once renders her works effortless and complex. Her still lifes capture fleeting moments in time; our attention oscillating between the delicacy and freshness with which a scene is realised and the lush materiality of the paint, which barely tries to be more than it is. So often speaking to a domestic intimacy, Lauren's paintings offer scenes for quiet contemplation, starting with the familiar, but subtly opening a space for thoughts that are larger and more expansive.







**MITCHELL  
CHEESMAN**

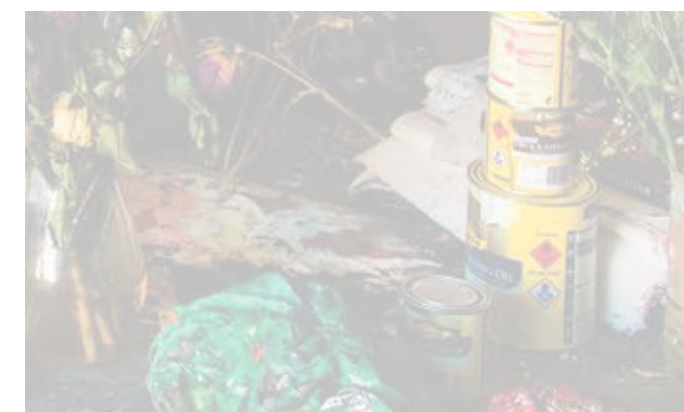




### Mitchell Cheesman

uses a lot of paint. I mean, A LOT of paint! His canvases are so heavily laden with pigment, the objects he depicts, at times, become sculptural in their form. Motifs from his everyday surrounds are captured with equal parts naïve immediacy and accomplished complexity in a way which diminishes neither and imbues his canvases with a rare sense of the authentic.

Mitchell's pictures are poems as much as they are paintings – although words appear nowhere but in their titles. Instead, elements are amplified; pushed to their limits; juxtaposed and rearranged. Parts are looked at from a different angle, even if that disrupts the space which they help construct. Everything added has a purpose and a meaning, even if that is to be simply meaningless paint. Perhaps Mitchell's works can be thought of as melancholic and romantic, scrutinising the fragility of things, the fleetingness of life and the impressions it leaves – much like the physical traces he leaves in his dense fields of paint.



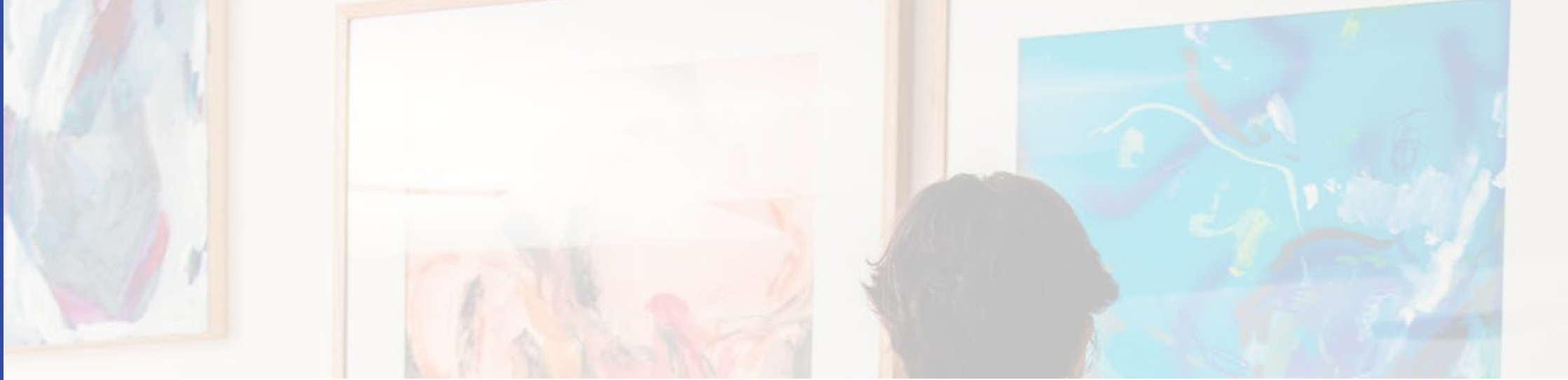




# ODESSA MAHONY-DE VRIES



**Odessa Mahony-de Vries** often dissolves the distinction between objects and paintings. That's not to say that she doesn't make things that can hang on a wall. However, with expressive mark making as a unifying motif, Odessa's 'paintings' span a gamut from fields of energetic brushwork barely contained by their frames, through to twenty-meter-long expanses of unstretched canvas – stained with pigment and scarred by bristled jabs – variously hanging from a ceiling, cascading across a floor, or even rolled into a column, feigning to become part of the architecture of the space it finds itself in. Odessa pushes painting to the edge of comfort, occasionally giving it one more nudge before wrangling it into an exhibition space. Her works disrupt the usual relationship between viewer and viewed, with scale and convention subverted, taking painting to a new place.





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Curator: Michael Brennan

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Photography: Warwick Gow

Lauren Jones is represented by Studio Gallery Group  
Mitchell Cheesman is represented by The Gallery Eumundi in QLD and Curatorial + Co in NSW.

Cover: Mitchell Cheesman, *The Limousine Lawn (Brown table)*, 100 x 80cm, oil on canvas, (2022) (detail)





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