

STEFAN DUNLOP

"I would like my work to be received for what it is, a genuine "crack" at the medium. Painting has to work hard to stand up and stand out in today's environment. "

- Stefan Dunlop, May 2009

Stefan Dunlop is clearly passionate about the skill, execution and craft of painting. An artist that strives constantly to reconcile how to make his work better, Dunlop's vivacious figurative painting *oeuvre* is made distinct with its striking use of composition and colour. Living and working in the rural hinterland of Noosa, in the sunshine state of Queensland, this 37 year old artist is driven to explore the 'level' of the effect created, whether its in the painting techniques or colours employed, or the ambition and commitment found in an accomplished Old Master work.

His current emphasis on colour as a dominant element has been largely unintentional: the result being a distinct separation between unmodulated colour fields leading to a sharpness in his paintings. Marking a transition away from triangle composition towards 'unbalanced' diagonals, Dunlop is interested in paint and its possibilities. The viewer can witness a great physicality in his handling of paint; he relishes doing "dynamic and risky things with it."

Having long considered his paintings were simply beautiful objects containing all of the formal elements of painting, Dunlop is now toying with narrative in his work:

"To some degree I still subscribe to this but no matter how hard you try to de-intellectualise painting, narrative and some conceptual element always remains. I believe that I have only the vaguest control over the narrative in my work however it is there and I genuinely enjoy its presence."

With 10 solo exhibitions and countless group shows under his belt, Dunlop's paintings have been exhibited regularly since 2001 across Australia, Hong Kong, USA and the UK. Grants and prizes include a forthcoming University of Texas Artist Residency (Centraltrak) and being shortlisted for the Gold Coast Art Prize and Canberra Art Prize. Dunlop studies have included Brisbane Institute of Art, Chelsea College of Art, Slade School of Fine Art, and New York Studio School of Painting, Drawing and Sculpture.

The paintings on view are oil on linen works. Broadly speaking the subject matter deals with 'people' and harks back to traditional figurative paintings with the central point of differentiation being Dunlop's varied handling of paint. This subject matter has been chosen both for its compositional possibilities and with a vague narrative reference to conflict and resistance in the 21st century.

Never one to rest of his artistic laurels, Dunlop proves himself once more as a potent player in Australia's contemporary painting scene. The paintings reveal a combination of a more familiar action in painting and his latest interest in graffiti art, which he applauds for its 'wild style'. Dunlop's painting draws comparison to graffiti with a strong emphasis on colour, compositional rhythm, exploded space and complex form.

An artist who believes in chance and accident in painting, Dunlop's latest works display a "random accuracy" yet still featuring a real technical skill, energy and emotional component that he has become known for.