

media release from tracy dods

15/9/09

Dods's Ongoing Pursuit Of Corporate Angst Warns Us All

After an interval spent creating several series of commissioned works, Tracy Dods returns to exhibiting this October. In *The Expedition*, at Sydney's Soho Galleries, she further develops her theme of the journey through corporate anguish and clearly identifies it as a metaphor for wider social isolation.

The exhibition of twenty-five major acrylics on large canvas elicits haunting suggestions of malfunction in the western business lifestyle. "But it's more than just corporate anguish and implied suicide. It's really a representation of the loneliness which surrounds us all today, which we seem scarcely even to notice anymore", says Dods. "Society is making us all so completely separate that I believe we're close to losing an understanding of how to be, and behave as, a community. Media messages constantly instruct us to be individuals. We obey, and so it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. We're lost and anxious and we see social distress all around us and we project that this must be the way we're supposed to live now. It isn't".

She styles herself an archetypal symbolist – this is her fourth show on this theme. Her worn out corporate monoliths invariably clutch briefcases limply by their sides. Water laps against expensive designer shoes. Comb-overs fly wearily in the breeze. By placing these agonized figures inside a panoramic beach format, Dods perceptively suggests either a dramatically large, or sometimes a smaller and understated, expression of impotence in this characteristically essential element of Australian life. Either way, it works powerfully and she paints them as if they are observed remotely, like a body you might unthinkingly step over on a pavement. And thus she invites the viewer to consider society's general absence of empathy.

"It started one Friday evening when I watched what seemed like a herd of businessmen at 5.00 pm, homeward bound for the weekend and looking unimaginably depressed". Her theme became a complete symbol of a nine to five, cradle to grave male condition, leading to a life one hardly knows how to live.

Dods is considering varying her theme for future exhibitions to include the drabness of urban building design and has started painting this subject matter. For now, though, it remains focused on the beach and the allure of water. *The Expedition*, which also contains a number of smaller works on paper, runs from October 16th (opening 17th) for one month at Soho Galleries in Cathedral St, Sydney (sohogalleries.net, tracydods.com).

... ends 400 words

further contact:

Tracy Dods (+61) (0)425 208 089, tracy@tracydods.com