

1978 - 2008 Celebrating 30 Years of Australian Art



## ABSTRACT EARTH: THE PHOTOGRAPHY of RICHARD WOLDENDORP

20 June – 03 August 2008

*The aerial perspective is an inspiring one especially in Australia because of its flatness and lack of roads in the outback and some coastal areas, all of which make for an interesting approach from which to appreciate the variations and abstractions in our landscape.* Richard Woldendorp, 2008

Richard Woldendorp is one of Australia's leading photographers renowned for his original and awe-inspiring aerial images. For more than 40 years, Woldendorp has documented this country's unique landscape from the sky as a pioneer of aerial photography with numerous books, awards and exhibitions to his credit.

Now at age 81, Richard Woldendorp has a major exhibition of his work in Sydney, presented by the National Trust S.H. Ervin Gallery and selected by leading arts writer and critic John McDonald with photographer R. Ian Lloyd.

Intrigued by the uniqueness of the Australian landscape, Dutch-born Richard Woldendorp became a landscape photographer after studying painting in his early years. When Woldendorp bought his first camera in 1955, he looked through the lens with the eye of an artist – an approach he has maintained throughout his career.

Woldendorp's aerial images of the environment have established a fresh visual vocabulary for the Australian landscape, capturing the vastness of the outback, distinctive coastlines and man made landscapes in a way that combines both realism and precision with the power and presence of large-scale abstract paintings. Each picture bears more than a passing resemblance to the canvases of Abstract Expressionists, Colour Field painters and to the works of indigenous artists. While these photographs reveal marvels of topography and geology, they are also the sacred places where ancestral beings have left their footprints and stories.

Richard Woldendorp's work has been exhibited in Australia and overseas and is represented in the public collections of the National Gallery of Australia, Art Gallery of NSW and the Art Gallery of WA. In 1991 Woldendorp was made a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Professional Photography, in 1998 an Honorary Life Member and in 2002 was admitted into the ACMP Hall of Fame. In December 2004 Woldendorp was honoured as a State Living Treasure, Western Australia, for his outstanding contribution to the visual arts, his skill, talent and intensity as a photographer and his original and inspiring vision of the Australian landscape. He is the author of 16 books.

*Richard Woldendorp Abstract Earth: A view from above.* (2008 Fremantle Press), accompanies this exhibition. Book available from Gallery Shop at \$49.95 (plus postage). Mail orders welcome. PH: 02 9258 0173 for details.

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**PUBLIC PROGRAM of Guest Talks - Sundays at 3pm.** view our website for up-dates on guest speakers.

#### NATIONAL TRUST S.H. ERVIN GALLERY

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\$6 / \$4 national trust members & concessions

Guest Talks Sundays at 3pm. (subject to availability & may change without notice)

Trust Café, Arts Book Shop & Parking onsite

Richard Woldendorp images: L to R - all images © the artist

*Ploughing Variations / Irrigated rice fields, Mareeba, Queensland / Small tidal river with Flood Plain, east of Darwin, Northern Territory / Pinnacle Desert, Nambung, National Park, Western Australia / Harvesting Hay Toowoomba, Queensland / Lake Hillman near Wubin, Western Australia*