

david edgar —

the look draws me in



Trained in lithography and woodcut at the National Art School in Sydney and the University of Tasmania, I resolved in 2005 to streamline my artistic practice by focusing exclusively on drawing. Within six months, I further refined this approach by committing solely to charcoal as my medium. This deliberate restriction opened a multitude of new possibilities, enabling a renewed emphasis on composition, technique, and process, alongside an intensified observation of the world through the lens of mark-making found in nature.

Subsequent academic pursuits, including a master's degree and a PhD, complemented by numerous exhibitions and extensive fieldwork across varied natural landscapes, facilitated a lengthy process of trial and error. My observational approach evolved to become more analytical, attuned to the rhythms inherent in the natural marks produced by the environment, and their expressive potential for translation through charcoal.

Themes of time—both fleeting and enduring—along with shadow and light, the impermanence of memory, and the act of forgetting, emerged as fundamental to my understanding and interpretation of the world. These concepts subsequently informed the creative process within my studio, where marks were made, altered, and erased.

This exhibition features three distinct sets of drawings.

The first series captures spatial observations gathered while walking with my brother along the many trails around Hobart. Immersed in conversation, these inward-looking works reflect the energy of nature and the quiet rhythms of being in the bush — the minutiae, the flow of movement, and a deep sense of presence.

The second series is shaped by old memories visiting Cape Wickham lighthouse on the northern edge of King Island. These recollections are defined by fierce winds, wild weather and the relentless sea pounding the land adjacent to the lighthouse.

The final and principal focus of this exhibition centres on presenting detailed observations of the dynamic interplay between rock and sea. Over recent years, I have witnessed wave after wave rise upwards from beneath the crags shattering into tiny pieces before retreating into the unfathomable liquid substance of the sea below. Standing at the precipice of this abyss, my imagination is profoundly engaged by the elemental forces at play.

Expressive and turbulent these drawings encompass an introspective focus and an outward gaze. Shifting from previous work that contemplated slow-moving landscapes to those characterized by greater ephemerality, speed and violence. Yet, time remains an elusive force, as the act of drawing unfolds at an inherently different pace and tempo. Consequently, these works necessitated the development of alternative mark-making methodologies to engage fully with this temporal complexity.

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