

CONTEMPORARY EDITIONS

JASON BENJAMIN

JASON BENJAMIN RESISTS THE DOMINANCE OF IDEAS IN CONTEMPORARY ART—HE PREFERS TO CHAMPION ART AS EXPERIENCE. BENJAMIN'S EXQUISITELY RENDERED OIL PAINTINGS, WITH THEIR CAREFUL DISTILLATION OF LIGHT AND SPACE, INVITE CONTEMPLATION AND EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT. DESPITE NOW BEING BASED IN SYDNEY, THIS COUNTRY'S LARGEST CITY, BENJAMIN ENGAGES WITH THE VISUAL LANGUAGE AND TRADITION OF LANDSCAPE PAINTING. HOWEVER, WHILE HIS MEMORY AND EXPERIENCE OF PARTICULAR LOCATIONS MAY IGNITE EACH NEW BODY OF WORK, BENJAMIN'S LANDSCAPES ARE RARELY LITERAL OR PRECISE. ELUSIVE AND PROPHETIC TITLES INVITE A NARRATIVE AND AN ATTACHMENT BETWEEN VIEWER AND PAINTING, ONE BASED ON HOPE AND RENEWAL.

BENJAMIN CITES A FASCINATION WITH CHINESE LANDSCAPE TRADITIONS, THE INFLUENCE OF WHICH CAN BE DETECTED IN HIS CALLIGRAPHIC GUM TREES. HE CONFESSES HIS LOVE FOR THE ELEGANT MINIMALISM OF CANADIAN BORN PAINTER AGNES MARTIN AND THE ESTRANGED MELODIES OF ESTONIAN COMPOSER ARVO PÄRT. LIKE THEM, HE IS COMMITTED TO REFINING HIS IDIOM BY STRIPPING AWAY ALL UNNECESSARY ELEMENTS. CERTAINLY, A MINIMALIST SPIRIT HAS CREPT INTO BENJAMIN'S MOST RECENT PAINTING—HIS PALETTE IS MORE RESTRICTED AND HIS SUBJECTS MORE SPARTAN. SUBMITTING TO SIMPLICITY HAS LIBERATED BENJAMIN AND LEAD TO A NEW FOUND SERENITY, FOR BOTH THE ARTIST AND HIS PAINTINGS.

HIS WORK HAS MET WIDE CRITICAL ACCLAIM, AND IS REPRESENTED IN NUMEROUS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS WITHIN AUSTRALIA, INCLUDING THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA, THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, ARTBANK AND MANY REGIONAL GALLERIES AROUND AUSTRALIA. BENJAMIN HAS WON NUMEROUS PRIZES INCLUDING THE KINGS SCHOOL AND MOSMAN ART PRIZES, AND HAS RECENTLY BEEN A FINALIST IN THE PRESTIGIOUS ARCHIBALD AND MORAN PRIZES. HE EXHIBITS EXTENSIVELY THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA, AND IN LONDON, TOKYO, HONG KONG, SINGAPORE, ROME AND NEW YORK.