

CONTEMPORARY EDITIONS

LARA MERRETT

LARA MERRETT'S COLOUR-RICH PAINTINGS HAVE BEEN COMPARED TO THE ROMANTIC PAINTERS OF THE LATE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES—BOTH IMAGINE GEOGRAPHIES OF SPACE, ATMOSPHERE AND PHYSICALITY. FOR MERRETT, IT'S THE 'INQUIRY INTO THE PICTURE PLANE AND SURFACE, BALANCE OF INK AND ACRYLIC, OF DEPTH AND OPACITY, CHAOS WITH ORDER AND THE REFERENCE TO OTHERNESS' THAT INSPIRE HER WORKS.¹

TRAVELS THROUGH INDIA AND SPAIN AS A YOUNG ARTIST HAVE ALSO INFORMED MERRETT'S AMORPHOUS AND ORGANIC ARRANGEMENTS, WHICH ARE REALISED THROUGH THE LAYERING AND POURING OF WATER-BASED MATERIALS DIRECTLY ONTO THE CANVAS. NO WORK IS EVER PRE-PLANNED; 'IT'S LIKE MAGIC WHEN THE UNEXPECTED STARTS TO HAPPEN. I LOVE IT—IT'S COMPLETELY INTOXICATING. FROM START TO COMPLETION, A WORK CAN TAKE ANYWHERE FROM THREE DAYS TO SIX MONTHS. EACH WORK HAS ITS OWN PERSONALITY AND THEREFORE TAKES ITS OWN TIME.'

MERRETT STUDIED PAINTING ABROAD AT THE CIRCULO DE BELLAS ARTES IN MADRID, SPAIN, BEFORE COMPLETING A BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS AND MASTER OF ARTS AT THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES, SYDNEY. SHE HAS RECENTLY BEEN COMMISSIONED FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS AT THE VICTORIAN TAPESTRY WORKSHOP FOR ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, MELBOURNE AND THE SOFITEL HOTEL, MELBOURNE AND IS REPRESENTED IN NUMEROUS PRIVATE AND PUBLIC COLLECTIONS INCLUDING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES, THE BUNDANON ESTATE, ARTBANK AND THE MACQUARIE BANK AND THE UBS COLLECTIONS. MERRETT CURRENTLY LIVES AND WORKS IN SYDNEY.

1. LISA BYRNE, 'LARA MERRETT', CATALOGUE ESSAY, MELBOURNE: KAREN WOODBURY GALLERY, 2007