



NEW BROOME

Art House is proud to announce an exhibition of recent works by acclaimed Western Australian artist Helen Norton at its new exhibition space at 66 McLachlan Avenue in Sydney's Rushcutters Bay. Entitled *Love, life and death in the North West*, this show has already been very well received, and continues until 17 September.

A pioneer by heart, Helen Norton left her native Melbourne to explore life beyond the black stump. For the next decade she tried her hand at roo-shooting, fencing and droving; generally drifting around the country 'in a ute' with her dog.

It was only in 1986 when Helen settled in Broome with her husband Tony that her tenacious outback experience found its true artistic expression in her vivid paintings of the Australian West and its remarkable forms, figures and characters.

Without any formal training, Helen acknowledges the instruction of the great Australian painters before her, Nolan and Boyd in particular, and attributes her 'vivid

brush' to the profound heritage of their work. Her images in oil, gouache, acrylic, watercolour and charcoal feature in private collections nationally and internationally. Norton's style remains, however, distinctly unique. Her luminous landscapes, swirling skies, poignant characters and animals are a passionate 'wake-up' call to the political and cultural realities of the Australian heart.

A lonely figure cradling a kangaroo, broken figures and shanty huts, Aboriginal children and mischievous dogs are just some of the symbols of the artist's personal mythology. Issues of conflict between the white settlers, the Aboriginals and the land fuel a distinct sense of irony in her work.

While her vision is inclusive, Norton's sympathies lie with the strength of Aboriginal culture in a white Australian context. Says Norton, "Any national identity must come from the people whose very land we tread." For all enquiries regarding Helen Norton or Arthouse, ring Di or Ali Yeldham on (02) 328 7587 or 018 649 957.

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