

u t o p i a a r t s y d n e y



John R Walker

Fireground

Press Release

Dates: 4 - 25 July

Australia's brutal fires of last summer drive the power and passion of John R Walker's exhibition Fireground at Utopia Art Sydney, July 4 through 25.

"John R Walker has captured scorching devastation. His paintings are central moments focused on the raw energy of fire and how it

consumes Australia, its land, the bush and its people" says Christopher Hodges director of Utopia Art Sydney.

"John experienced the fires. His paintings make us feel those moments: the colours; the heat; the immense life changing strength. He makes us wonder about the aftermath. These are powerful pictures of bush and fire.

"Braidwood, where John lives in southern NSW, was almost devoured before Christmas 2019. He's thought about those days a lot. Some of his pictures are green and gold; brownish and smoky grey. They are surprisingly delicate.

"Other works are dramatically lit up by yellows, deeply burnt browns; blacks: then centrally charged and ignited by fiery orange. All of these paintings capture the rage and personality of these fires.

"Many of the works use spare, often sparse mark making to show us a fragmented distant Australian landscape. The inferno pictures go further. They build marks, colours and lines into giant flames that flow up the canvas. They feel intense and furnace hot. These are paintings that rage and live in our imagination.

"What we all feared then, John R Walker saw, captured and turned into art. This is an exhibition about Australia and a fierceness that makes it unique." Hodges concluded.

John R Walker, one of Australia's most senior and accomplished artists, has had over 40 solo exhibitions, been a part of another 160 group shows, had a career stretching over 35 years and had his work collected by every major private and public institution and collection in Australia. He last showed at Utopia in 2018.



We're in the gallery so give us a call and we will organise everything, at a critical distance!

press are welcome for a preview in the gallery

Christopher Hodges is available for interview
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Images **top:** Fireground For Bruce, 2020, archival oil on polyester, 243 x 182 cm **above:** Fireground 2, 2020, archival oil on polyester, 82 x 76 cm **below:** Fire Cloud, 2020, archival oil on polyester, 76 x 76 cm **bottom:** Fireground Rebirth, 2020, archival oil on polyester, 97 x 117 cm

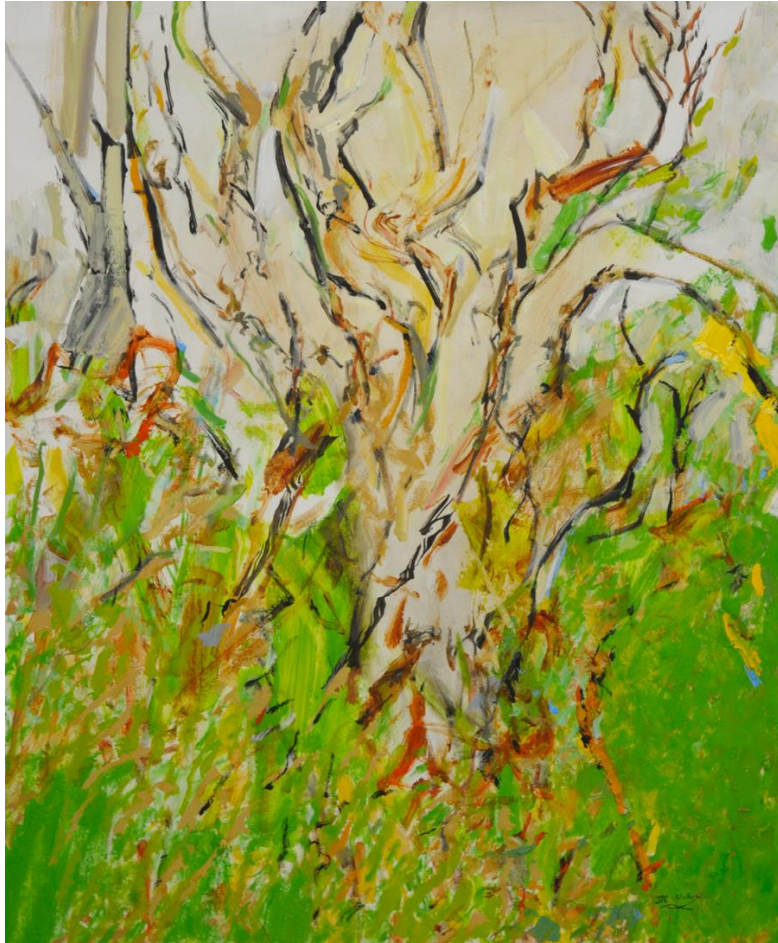


About Utopia Art Sydney.

Utopia Art Sydney is the leading representative of Central Australian Indigenous artists and is acclaimed as a leading Australian contemporary gallery. Opened in 1988 Utopia represents Australia's most prominent contemporary Indigenous artists; Emily Kngwarreye, Gloria Petyarre, Ronnie Tjampitjinpa, Yukultji Napangati & George Tjungurrayi.

Gallery artists like John R Walker, Helen Eager, Simryn Gill, Angus Nivison, Kylie Stillman, Peter Maloney, Marea Gazzard, David Aspden and Richard Larter define the look and feel of Australian art.

Utopia artists are always included in major showcase exhibitions including the Venice Biennale and Biennale of Sydney and strongly represented in Australia's most significant public collections. Gallery Director Christopher Hodges is a leading Australian sculptor and artist with a long established career.



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Open Tues to Sat 10am - 5pm

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