

An abstract artwork featuring a textured teal background. A prominent, wavy, orange-brown shape with a mottled pattern runs horizontally across the upper left. To the right, there are several dark blue, angular shapes that resemble fragments of a larger structure or perhaps stylized architectural elements. The overall composition is layered and textured, with various shades of blue and orange creating a rich, tactile visual field.

CHRISTOPHE STIBIO

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21 MARCH - 21 APRIL 2024

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CALLIGRAPHED LANDSCAPES

With this new body of work Christophe Stibio invites us into an immersive panorama. The Australian landscape - ever present - forms a fundamental starting point. Stibio's answer to the landscape stems from profound observation, which results in an intimate interpretation where intuition and the cognitive meet. Country as a living entity is what the artworks endeavour to capture, to translate and to communicate.

However, the physical place is necessarily absent in these pictorial renditions. Stibio's art is a means of attempting to grasp the very substance of country and to make its presence evident. The viewer mentally completes that landscape with an entire register of emotions that each of us relegates. This is the truest paradox – it is the ultimate inability of any human to reproduce nature, to reveal the fleeting nuances occurring in the landscape. Stibio builds bridges between the invisibilities in nature and makes them present in the mind of viewers, shifting absence to presence. The mind takes the leap it wants to take, because the suggestion is left in the line.

Since his first significant encounter with Lake Mungo in Southwest New South Wales in all its magnitude and power, in the summer of 2004, Stibio has continued to explore its vastness, both in his travels and through his practice as an artist. Stibio's paintings derive from actual imagery of the landscape at a given moment in time, his imagery recreating a similar emotional charge and sensation to that which the artist experienced in that place.

The titles of the artworks refer to existing and precise places. They speak of a very personal, intimate relationship with that country, and at times they reflect the conversation that the artist has with the landscape. What else can

be deduced from the titles ‘And Where Were You That December Morning at 5.40am? (Lake Mungo)’ or ‘Moro Gorge Says: ”And Now? Do you see me?”’ ? Lived memories, personal knowledge and the physical sensation of the landscape merge.

In other pictures, the titles allude to a nexus between historical temporal dimensions and the vastness of geological time. The element of time measurement, which perhaps typifies the European mind, enters into a symbiosis with the ancientness and timelessness of country. Yet ultimately, there is no chronological or thematic reading of the landscape, no wish to control or subdue the country.

Tale of a Mungo Morning Mist Moment, as other works do, embodies a metaphor for a life-cycle. In blue and red tonalities and half-tones, Stibio captures the sensation of experiencing early morning mist which fleetingly coats - or shimmers across - the features of the landscape. The inspiration derives from a particular enigmatic and vaporous blue hue that reveals itself at Lake Mungo at early dawn. This phenomenon is visible only for a few minutes. These are observations of natural hues which dictate the colour palette of the artworks.

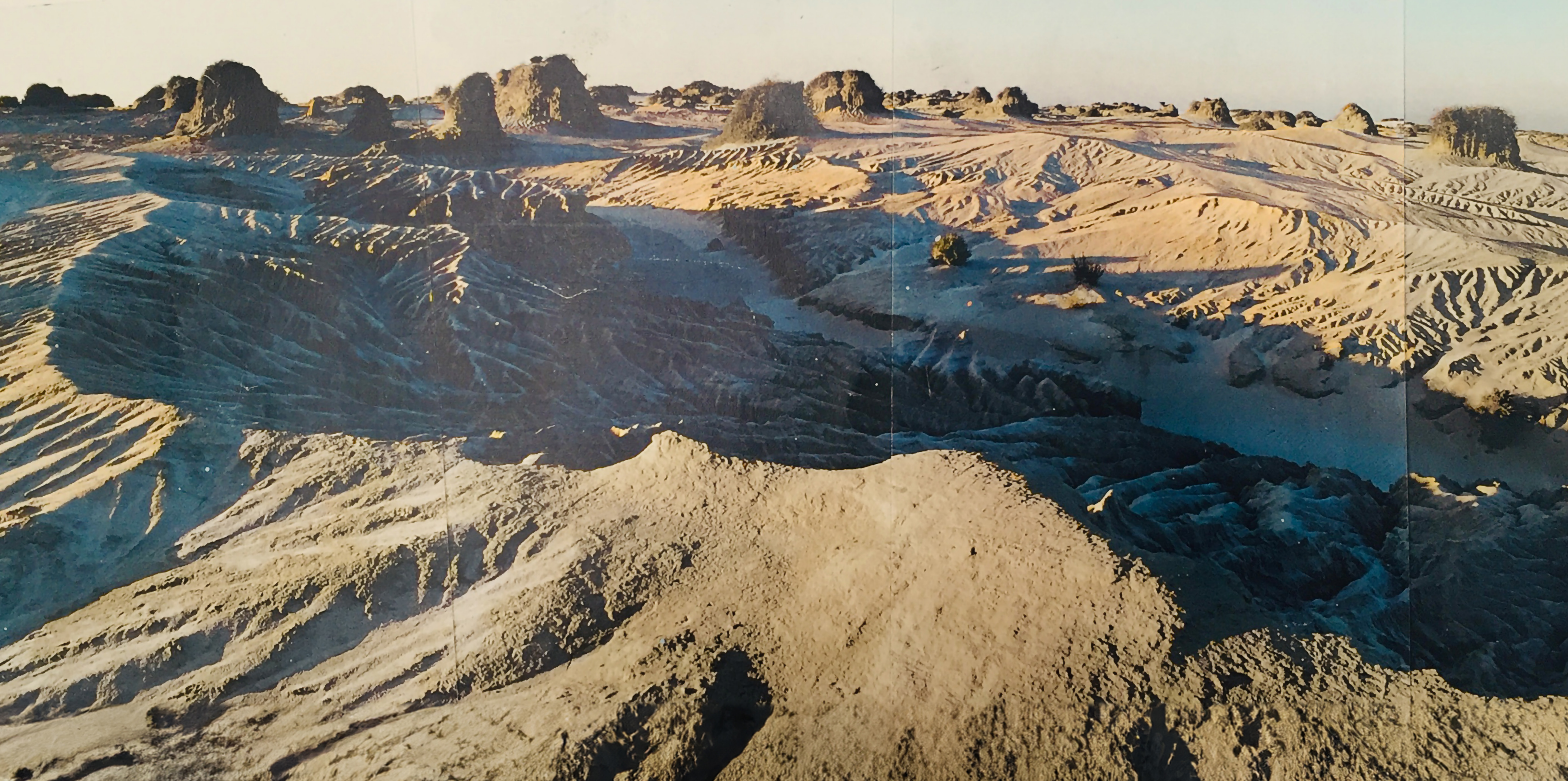
The directness of country is reflected in a restrained colour palette, and a strong language of forms with powerful compositions. Combining painting on rice paper and collage heightens the illusion of strata and suggests the vividness and ever-changing light conditions of the land. Repetition of motifs like the embedded and multiple parallel lines and patterns in *Melody at Night with Worturpa Gorge*, emphasise the resonance of the landscape,

the sound - or the vast silence - of a land immemorial. The picture is bestowed with a hypnotic quality. Further, strips of shredded classified documents with their indecipherable text and marks - the debris of a society obsessed with numbers - make sharp contrast with the natural organic landscape. The use of iridescent white intermixed with colour also introduces shimmer. This is a kind of calligraphy, reminiscent of Stibio’s artistic formation in China, which builds up the painting.

Working on composition, as writing, is a continual process. Structuring space in accordance to the primal image felt original by Stibio, develops into what could be called a personal calligraphy of the landscape. Entire segments or even just a line is sometimes left unfinished, setting off the possibility to complete in the mind’s eye what has been left incomplete. The perception of the subject matter is deliberately and continually questioned. This forces viewers into a calligraphy of the landscape in their own minds. Optically destabilising effects, compel the viewer to have a different perception of the land. One that is ultimately intimately intuitive.

The landscape is not a European sensitivity. This landscape breathes and pulsates. So does both the maker and the viewer of the pictures. All belong to the same source.

Georges Petitjean
Art Historian and Senior Curator - Fondation Opale, Switzerland, 2024





And Where Were You That December Morning At 5.40am? (Lake Mungo), 2024
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
100 x 100 cm (diptych)



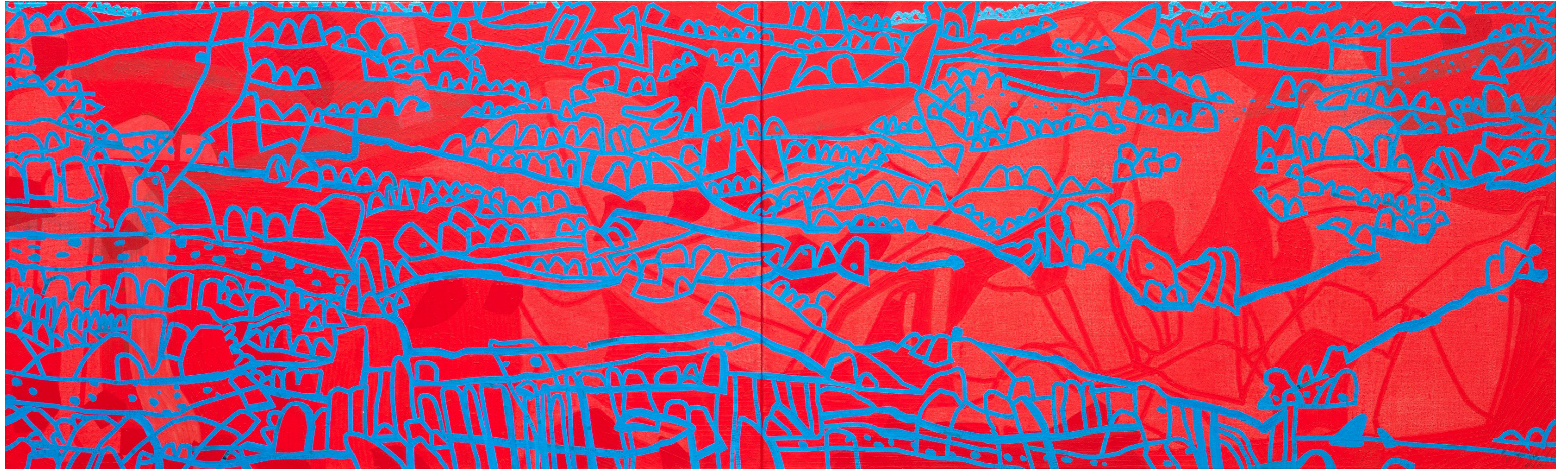


Lake Mungo 5.25am, 2023
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
65 x 90 cm (diptych)



Lake Mungo 6:03am, 2024
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
80 x 120 cm (diptych)

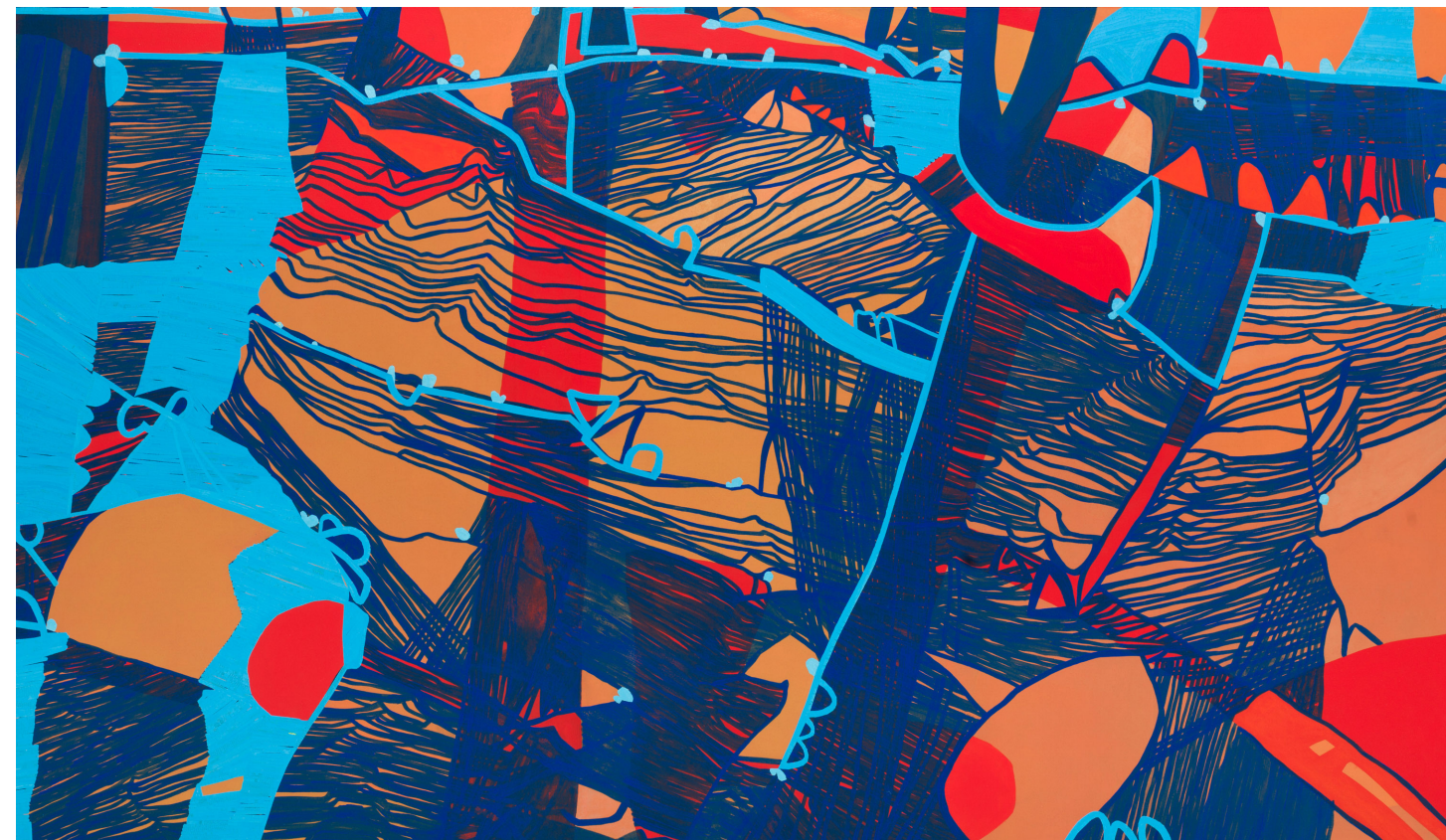




Moro Gorge Says: "And Now? Do You See Me?", 2022
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
65 x 215 cm (diptych)



In The Land Of Quiet Evenings (Moro Gorge), 2023
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
130 x 190 cm



The Melody At Night With Worturpa Gorge, 2023
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
140 x 240 cm



Dusk at Simpsons Gap. North Side, Looking South, 2023
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
35 x 80 cm (diptych)





April 6:40pm. Behind Standley Chasm, 2023
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
75 x 65 cm



Simpsons Gap, Further Back, 2023
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
60 x 110 cm (diptych)



West MacDonnell Ranges, 2022
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
155 x 185 cm

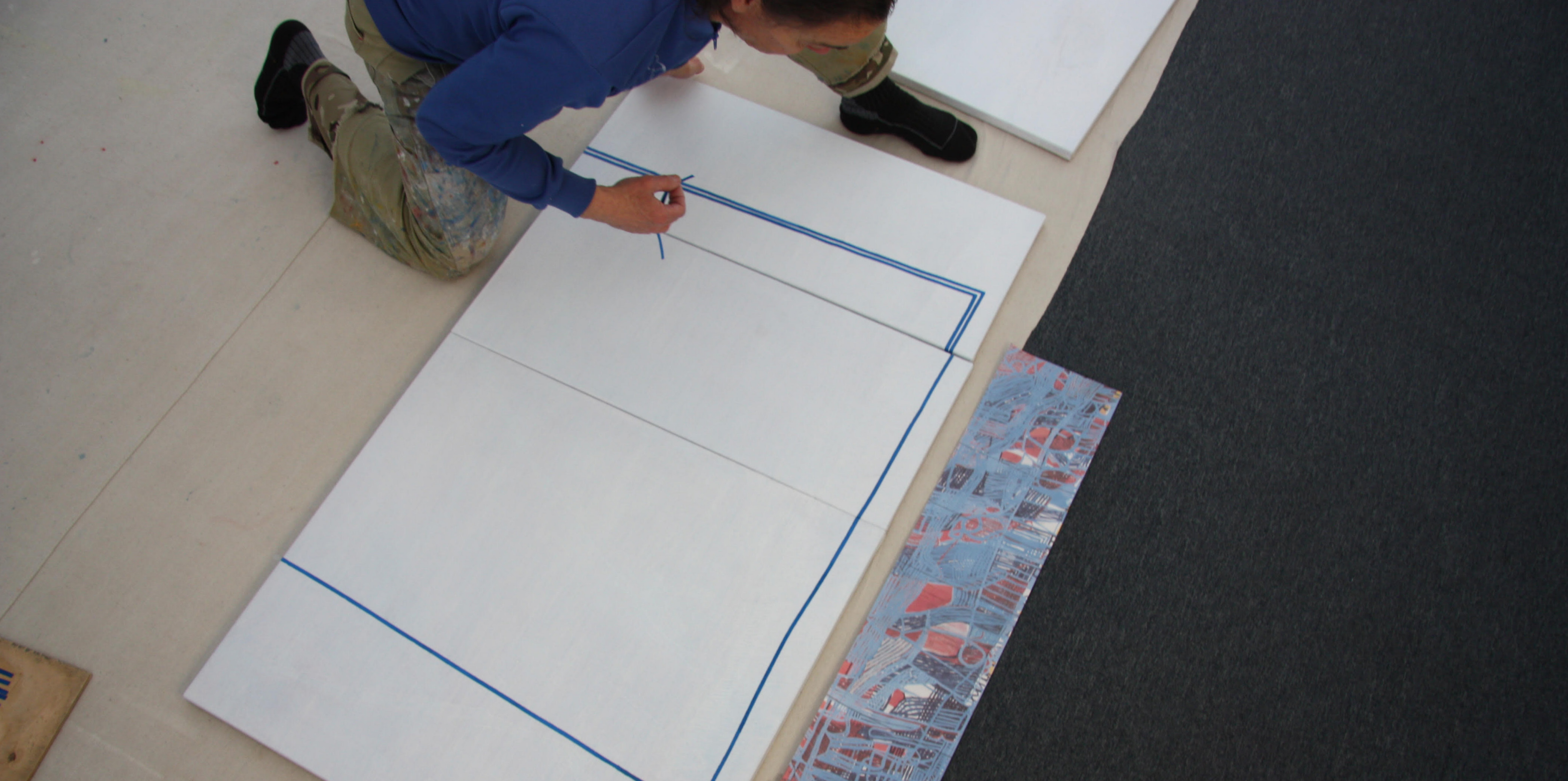




Tale Of A Mungo Morning Mist Moment, 2024
Acrylic, shredded classified documents, rice paper on cotton duck
155 x 185cm







CHRISTOPHE STIBIO | CV

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Born in Bordeaux, France

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| 1988-1989 | Masters degree in Visual Arts. Bordeaux III. Faculty of Arts.
Bachelors degree in Chinese Arts and Civilisation. Bordeaux III. |
| 1989-1993 | Graduates from the Traditional Landscape Painting Department at the National Academy of Fine Arts, Hangzhou, PRC, where he also studies human figure, birds and flowers painting, seal engraving, the five styles of calligraphy and paper and silk conservation/restoration. |
| 1993-1996 | Lives in Melbourne and travels regularly to the Flinders Ranges and Gammon Ranges. Teaches Chinese calligraphy in Melbourne and Sydney. Works as a consultant/translator in Chinese contemporary Art for the First Asia-Pacific Triennial with ACCA (Australian Centre for Contemporary Art) and the Shanghai Contemporary Art Museum. |
| 1997-1999 | Goes back to France and stays three years in the South West of the country, his region of origin where he keeps painting and exhibits his work.
Travels again to China. |
| 1999 | Lives in Melbourne. Develops further the exploration of the landscape, travels extensively in the Flinders Ranges, Central Western Desert, Western Australia, Lake Mungo National Park and Royal National Park in New South Wales. |

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

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|------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1994 | Moore Gallery. Melbourne. |
| 1996 | Moore Gallery. Melbourne. |
| 1998 | URISA. Artists Foundation. Bordeaux. France. |
| 2001 | LANDAU Gallery. Melbourne. |
| 2002 | Footscray Community Arts Centre. Melbourne. |
| 2003 | LOST NOT LOST. Port Jackson Press Gallery. Melbourne. |
| 2007 | LAKES MUNGO - ARUMPO Series 1. SPAN galleries. Melbourne. |

SOLO EXHIBITIONS (CONT)

2008	LAKES MUNGO - ARUMPO Series 2. Artist studio solo show. Melbourne.
2009	LAKES MUNGO - ARUMPO Series 3. Artist studio solo show. Melbourne.
2010	LAKES MUNGO - ARUMPO. Series 4. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne.
2012	MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne.
2013	SURVERYING THE EXCEPTIONAL. Survey show. Latrobe Regional Art Gallery. Morwell.
2014	NEVER REAL, ALWAYS TRUE. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne.
2015	LE PAYSAGE REVE. Galerie Luc Berthier. Paris.
2016	NEVER REAL, ALWAYS TRUE 2. William Mora Galleries. Melbourne.
2017	AN ANGEL IN THE SWAMP. William Mora Galleries. Melbourne.
2020	FRAGILE AND DANGEROUS. Nura Gallery. Sorrento.
2021	ADIEU À MARY ST, MAGMA Art Projects, North Melbourne.
2022	WARNING: Severe Weather, MAGMA Art Projects, North Melbourne
2024	DAYS WILL BE DAYS, NIGHTS WILL BE NIGHTS, UNTIL...

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1992	International Group Exhibition. «Ink and Contemporary Art». Museum of Fine Art. Haikou. China.
1992	Annual Forum. Exhibition Hall of the National Academy of Fine Arts. China.
1993	Duet Exhibition. Museum of Contemporary Art. China.
1993	Young Shanghainese Artists. Museum of Contemporary Art. Shanghai. China.
1994	Australian Chinese Painting Society. Sydney. NSW.
1995	International Exhibition. Taipei Xin Culture Foundation. City of Taipei. Taiwan.
1997	Galerie Bouscayrol. Bordeaux. France.
2000	Metropolis Gallery. St Kilda. Melbourne. VIC.
2001	Finalist Outback Acquisitive Art Prize. Broken Hill City Art Gallery. NSW.
2001	LANDAU Gallery. St Kilda. Melbourne. VIC.
2002	Finalist 32nd Alice Springs Foundation Acquisitive Art Prize. Alice Springs. NT.
2002	Southside Arts project. Artefact show. Treasury Place. Melbourne. VIC.

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS (CONT)

2004	120° of Separation. Linden Gallery. Melbourne. VIC.
2004	The World We Live In. WORLD AIDS DAY. Melbourne Museum. Australia Gallery.
2005	Y.E.A.H (Youth Empowerment Against Aids) The World We Live In. Melbourne Museum.
2006	Y.E.A.H. The World we Live In. World Aids Day - 01/12/2006 Melbourne Museum.
2006	Y.E.A.H. The World We Live In. World Aids Day Charity show and Auction.
2007	TREASURES. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne. VIC.
2009	VIEW FROM HERE. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne. VIC.
2010	FRESH. New artists. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne. VIC.
2010	Finalist Stanthorpe Acquisitive Art Prize. Stanthorpe Regional Gallery, QLD.
2010	Finalist Paddington Art Prize. Sydney. NSW.
2010	Finalist Gold Coast Art Prize. Gold Coast City Gallery. QLD.
2011	Finalist Lethbridge Art Prize. Lethbridge Gallery. Sydney. NSW.
2011	Finalist Prometheus Art Prize. QLD.
2011	Finalist Fleurieu Landscape Art Prize and Fleurieu Water Prize. MacLaren Vale. S.A. Jury high commendation for SCARCITY (triptych).
2011	Finalist Gold Coast Art Prize. Gold Coast City Gallery. Queensland
2012	Finalist SCOPE Galleries Art Award – Art Concerning Environment, Warrnambool. VIC. John Leslie Art Prize. Gippsland Art Gallery. Sale. VIC.
2013	Finalist Gold Coast Art Prize. GC City Art Gallery. QLD.
2013	Finalist Hazelhurst Art Prize. Hazelhurst Gallery and Arts Centre. NSW
2014	The Melbourne Collective. Cooks Hill Galleries. Newcastle NSW.
2014	Melbourne International Art Fair. Flinders Lane Gallery. VIC.
2021	Finalist, Southern Bouy Studios (SBS) Landscape Prize 2021, Mornington, VIC.
2022	Finalist, Wyndham Art Prize, Wyndham Cultural Centre, Werribee, VIC
2022	Finalist, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW
2022	ALPHA: MAGMA Galleries Collingwood Launch, Collingwood, VIC
2023	Summer Group, Magma Galleries. Collingwood, VIC.
2024	MAGMAVERSE 24, Magma Galleries. Collingwood, VIC.

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Deakin University. Sydney

Macquarie Bank. Australia

Artbank. Melbourne

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Loti & Victor SMORGON collection. Melbourne

Sandra & David BARDAS collection. Melbourne

Sandra & Barry SMORGON collection. Sydney

Ian ROGERS collection. Melbourne

Anita CASTAN Contemporary Art collection. Melbourne / Sydney.

Fiona BROCKHOFF Australian Contemporary Art collection. Melbourne.

MURDOCH Collection. Melbourne.

BENETTON Collection. Milan

FIORA Collection. Lugano

Private collections in France, Belgium, England, Spain, and Switzerland



Catalogue cover:

Dusk at Simpsons Gap. North Side, Looking South, November 2023
Acrylic, shredded classified documents and rice paper on cotton duck
35 x 80 cm (diptych)

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