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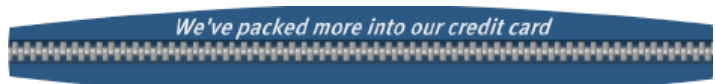


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Outback inspires Cape's best work

KATE CRAWFORD

Wednesday 28 May, 2008 3:01pm

MOSMAN artist Ann Cape's recent paintings have evolved from a recent trip to Arnhem Land, including being airlifted by helicopter into remote areas.

Cape went on the trip with what she describes as a "diverse group of women" including good friend and fellow artist Jenny Sages. The group was accompanied by Aboriginal elders.

"We were off the tourist track and had to get a special permit to visit places that are rarely seen," Cape said.

"The rock art was fascinating layer upon layer, with some pre-dating the last ice age. It is mind-boggling that these images have been there for so long."

Cape said the whole experience had a profound effect on her painting.

"The vast landscape also makes you realise your insignificance in the universe," she said.

As a result of her trip, Cape has created a number of works where landscapes or rock faces are painted, overlaid by charcoal drawings of Aboriginal women.

The paintings will feature in new solo exhibition entitled Presence and Place at the NG Art Gallery in Chippendale.

The exhibition will also feature nude paintings by Cape, who lives in Mosman and is a member of the Middle Head artists' community.

Cape's portrait of Mosman artist Kerrie Lester was hung in this year's Salon des Refuses exhibition and Cape has been a finalist in both the Archibald Prize and Portia Geach Portrait Award.

Prominent artist Steve Lopes said Cape has captured the spirit of the landforms in her Arnhem Land paintings.

"In a number of paintings from the new series, the Aboriginal people she has represented move through this world as almost ghostlike 'presences' that have a connection with their traditions," he said.

"Through their warmth and understatement, the Arnhem Land pieces will force you to delve into their nuances and share that journey."

The exhibition will be held at the NG Art Gallery at 3 Little Queen St, Chippendale, until June 14.

Cape and two other woman artists, Kerrie Lester of Mosman and Lucy Culliton, will discuss how they approach portraiture at a special dinner at The Mission restaurant, downstairs from the gallery, next Tuesday, June 3, at 6.30pm. Bookings: 9318 2992.

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- ▶ [Tran's tops for tasty nosh](#)
- ▶ [Outback inspires Cape's best work](#)
- ▶ [Teens: a meeting of the mums](#)
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