

STEPHEN ELLIS

Stephen Ellis (b.1957 Aotearoa, New Zealand) is an artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. With a background in film, the artist is known for his unique process where he builds dioramas, from which his compositions are derived. In his recent series 'Each to Each' (2021), 'Unfolding' (2022) and 'Lamp Black' (2023) the artist has combined these handmade models with prompts entered into AI image generators, this layering of imagery resulting in artworks that possess a surreal and dream-like quality.

'Ellis' meticulously rendered drawings poetically engage the materialisation of climate change, once considered a "theory" yet now demonstrably manifesting in volatile physical forms both felt and lived. Ellis positions his imagery in the shifting, uncertain terrain between our imaginings of climate change and our representations of it. He depicts the Earth overwhelmed by the resulting natural forces: stormy seas and brooding skies feature prominently, also connecting Ellis to aesthetic traditions of the Sublime. His complex iconography adds an anthropogenic overlay, given our knowledge that these extreme phenomena are, in part, of our own making' - Emil McAvoy

Recent exhibitions include Lamp Black (solo), Sanderson Contemporary, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (2023) Unfolding (solo), Sanderson Contemporary, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (2022), Headforemost, Te Uru, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (2019); Headforemost, Tauranga Art Gallery (2018-19) ; Guidebook, Long Gallery, The Arts House Trust, Pah Homestead, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (2015); Pataka Art + Museum, Pōneke Wellington (2014).

Ellis was the winner of the Glaister Ennor Graduate Art Award (2015) and the New Zealand Painting and Printmaking Award - Supreme Award (2014).

BIOGRAPHY

BORN: 1957, Ōtepoti Dunedin

LIVES: Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland

EDUCATION: Master of Design, Unitec, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (Distinction); Diploma of Fine and Applied Arts, Otago Polytechnic (Distinction)

AWARDS: Glaister Ennor Graduate Art Award - Winner (2015); The Wallace Art Awards - Jury Award

SANDERSON

(2014); The Wallace Art Awards - People's Choice Award (2014); New Zealand Painting and Print-making Award - Supreme Award Winner (2014); Parkin Drawing Prize - Finalist, Judge's Mention (2014); David Con Hutton Memorial Scholarship, Otago Polytechnic (1978)

COLLECTIONS: The James Wallace Arts Trust, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland; The Vela Collection, Kirikiriroa Hamilton; The Museum Hotel (Parkin) Collection, Pōneke Wellington

EXHIBITIONS: Unfolding (solo), Sanderson (2022), Headforemost Te Uru, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (2019); Headforemost Tauranga Art Gallery (2018-19) ; Guidebook, Long Gallery, Pah Homestead, TSB Bank Wallace Arts Centre, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (2015); The Wallace Art Awards, Pah Homestead, TSB Bank Wallace Arts Centre, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, Pataka Art + Museum, Pōneke Wellington, Wallace Gallery, Morrinsville (2014); New Zealand Self Portraits, CSA, Otautahi Christchurch (1990)

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY: 'The Landscape of Technology and Art' ArtZone Interview (2022) <https://www.artzone.co.nz/post/the-landscape-of-technology-and-art>; 'Under a Red Sky: Stephen Ellis Reports from the Front' by Richard Wolfe, Art New Zealand Number 177, Autumn 2021; 'Art Collector Alert' by Warwick Brown, New Zealand House and Garden, Jul 2016; 'The Power of Penmanship,' Denizen, Issue 18, Autumn 2016; 'On Point' by Warwick Brown, New Zealand House & Garden magazine, Mar 2016, p 160; '2015 Undiscovered Artists' by Sue Gardiner, Art Collector, Issue 72, Apr-Jun 2015, pp 104-105

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