



▲ Bill Taylor 2007 Pastel on paper 70.5 x 93.5 cm



▲ Gill Taylor 2007 Pastel on paper 70.5 x 93.5 cm



▲ Wayne Brookes 2007 Pastel on paper 70.5 x 93.5 cm

The relationship between painting and drawing has its own mythological and historical tradition. As a structural foundation, drawing's role was that of a map that anchored the masterpiece. The 'mark' represents the beginning of the adventure for the artist as it follows the parable of how drawing was invented. According to Pliny the Elders' first century tale, a Corinthian maiden, wanting a memento of her lover, traced his silhouette on the wall from his shadow.

Nathan Taylor has always offered us an absolute reflection of reality. The familiar devices of everyday life are rendered with such virtuosity that he liberates them to that of a precious object. The alchemist in him turns the lawnmower or the Hills Hoist into a national treasure. They become 'brick Vermeers' with such masterful surfaces, they enlighten us to the paradise of chrome, corrosion and coffee percolators. He is the maestro of the suburban appliance, with domestic devices attaining iconic status within his scrutiny. His skill requires absolute knowledge of the object. Just as Leonardo used drawing to catalogue his world, Taylor uses it as an 'instruction booklet' to formally describe its essence. But while this structure is hidden from view beneath the surface of the paint, Taylor also possesses equal command of this discipline as a more expressive option.

Although Taylor's paintings contain the effigies of hardware life, his drawings are the language of an alternative universe. This is both the world of the figure and the world of people. However, much like the fragments of a private Film Noir; his heavily cropped, dramatic, tenebrist images from 1999 and 2002 revealed a more sinuous style, much like 'Organic Mannerism'. Yes, the objects

were passionately executed, but here he sought the substance of the portrait from beneath the surface. The skin, the fabric, the object were all unified within his fluid application of the pastel.

With his current drawings, Nathan has evolved and edited his obsessive modes. While the avid autobiography of his previous work has morphed into a more objective rationale, his choice of material still represents a satellite selection of associates within his life. His gallerist, his partner, his family and fellow artists, are all a hovering echelon within his practice. But here, his previous penchant for theatre is denuded; clearly now he cuts to the chase, no longer distracted by all the ancillary, delicious surfaces that contained or framed the persona. He mines his subjects to expose what is essentially within them.

Here is a commitment to the individual, the personality and not just the authentic facade. Each character is identified within a single homogenous, if not spontaneous gesture, a fragment in time that somehow encapsulates a defining moment for that entity. The fumbling with spectacles, the sighing between sentences, the guffaw, are all indicative of the subtle nuance of their being. This, much like the maiden, is essentially his own unique tracing of memory.

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Wayne Brookes is an artist and educator. He holds a Master of Fine Art in painting and is currently completing a doctorate at the University of Tasmania.



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▲ Steven Joyce 2007 Pastel on paper 70.5 x 93.5 cm



▲ Stephen Lees 2007 Pastel on paper 70.5 x 93.5 cm



▲ Geoff Dyer 2007 Pastel on paper 93.5 x 70.5 cm



▲ Dave Edgar 2007 Pastel on paper 93.5 x 70.5 cm

▶ Jane Barlow 2007 Pastel on paper 70.5 x 93.5 cm



Portrait:
New drawings by
Nathan Taylor

23 November - 19 December 2007