

#NOLAN 100

NO 72. CARCASE IN SWAMP - ELPIDA HADZI-VASILEVA



I was invited to do an artist in residency at Sidney Nolan Trust in September 2016. This was two weeks of living and working at The Rodd and an opportunity to learn more about how Sidney Nolan worked.

While there I visited a local abattoir and collected alimentary tracts from various animals including cattle. I wanted to explore an idea of capturing detailed patterns while the skin is decomposing; capturing a moment of time. With the help of Michael Hancock we worked on exploring this idea and for the first time I made monoprints. The results were amazing and fast.

At the same time I came across Carcase in Swamp, 1955. This is a painting that Nolan did as part of a commission to capture and record the catastrophe of the worst drought in Australia where, by August 1952, one and a quarter million cattle had rotted in Queensland and the Northern Territory. Nolan travelled to find thousands of carcasses strewn over vast areas, drying and decaying in the relentless heat. He did many drawings and took numerous photographs of the petrified and twisted remains of cattle.

This painting (if seen upside down) also reminds me of a work I did called 'Haruspex', commissioned for the Pavilion for the Holy See for the Venice Biennale in 2015 - an installation created using pig's caul fat, lamb intestines and cow's omasum."
<http://elpihv.co.uk/works/haruspex>

Elpidia Hadzi-Vasileva, artist. Elpida's work 'Reoccurring Undulation VI' is showing as part of Coastal Currents Arts Festival in Hastings. On 7th September she received the GRAND PRIX na OSTEN BIENALE na NAGRADENI AVTORI 2017 in Gevgelija, Macedonia. Elpida was shortlisted for the Sidney Nolan Trust's International Residency Prize, part of our 2017 Sidney Nolan Centenary programme; her work is showing at The Rodd until Saturday 30th September.

Sidney Nolan, Carcase in Swamp, 1955, oil on hardboard, 91.4 x 121.9 cm, Tate, London, © Sidney Nolan Trust.