
• nellie castan gallery

MEDIA RELEASE

Darren Wardle: Random LAnd

6 – 27 November 2004

Hyper reality. Hard banality. Can you have both? Yes you can, says **Wardle** speaking about the city of Los Angeles from where he has recently returned from a three month Australia Council Studio residency.

Having spent time there previously, Los Angeles holds a fascination for **Wardle** who describes it as **supra-visual**. Wardle's new paintings are intense cityscapes and housescapes painted with saturated colours, devoid of human inhabitants. This recent body of work engages a heightened level of abstraction, unprecedented in **Wardle's** work, alongside new depictions of aberrant architectural motifs from L.A.'s sprawl.

We could call Wardle's Los Angeles an overexposed city. It's a hallucinatory vision of a utopian city emptied out of real occupants, with the buildings left as vivid, startling signs – advertising signs and computer rendered architectural prototypes – for the real estate that they have eclipsed or overtaken. This is an artificial world, like the world of the Big Brother Household, made seductive and even delicious by Wardle's ultra smooth, slinky brushwork that depicts a world in which there are no shadows, no air and there is no depth.¹

2004 has been an exciting year for **Wardle**, showing major works in numerous exhibitions in New York and Los Angeles including *Stay Inside* at Shoshana Wayne Gallery, LA; *Surface Tension* at the Chelsea Art Museum, New York and *Stop & Stor* at Luxe Gallery, New York. This will be **Wardle's** 3rd solo exhibition at Nellie Castan Gallery.

Wardle's career has spanned more than a decade exploring suburban themes and the interface between digital image technology and painting. His work has been included in prominent texts, such as Dr Chris Mc Auliffe's "Art and Suburbia", and numerous articles. His paintings are held in significant corporate and public collections including the National Gallery of Victoria.

Images and further information available on request: dana@nelliecastangallery.com.au

nellie castan gallery level 1, 12 river street, south yarra, victoria 3141

opening: 2-5pm saturday 6 november

exhibition ends: saturday 27 november

gallery hours: tuesday to saturday 11am-5pm

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¹ Edward Colless, *Darren Wardle Preview*, Art Collector Issue #30, September 2004