
• nellie castan gallery

PRESS RELEASE

darren wardle: SOFT TARGET

7 november – 29 november 2008

Wardle is lured to LA by the very same things that repel him. The city possesses a hyper-reality, which Wardle uses as the genesis of his work.

I need to rework what is already out there... so that I can live with it. –
Darren Wardle, 2008

Describing himself as schooled in Post-Modernism, he gains certain satisfaction from the notion that Modernism was an unfinished project. Which he asserts, has led to his dystopian aesthetic.



Wardle draws similarity between the American and Australian landscape, both aesthetically and culturally, with potential negative ramifications, 'It's sleek and trashy, kind of dysfunctional, decentralized and unsustainable'.

The modernist architecture that dominates **Wardle's** painting exists in a realm uninhabited by humans. The only clue to their potential presence is the graffiti left on the walls. The other signs of degradation could merely be the effects of time and/or the work of natural phenomena such as earthquakes. However, there is no escaping the brooding sense of unease in these landscapes, as if man, through his mono-cultural pursuits is responsible for his own undoing.

Wardle's paintings are meticulously created. Although the work is compositionally refined in its preliminary stages, a sense of play exists. **Wardle** leaves room for spontaneity in parts of his process, which allows for some unforeseen results. This allows **Wardle's** painting to have the duality of beauty as well as the sense of the sinister. It is this push and pull in the work that makes it not only extremely engaging but also socially relevant.

Darren Wardle's work has been collected by significant public and private collections such as: The National Gallery of Victoria, Latrobe University Collection, National Australia Bank, Art Bank, BHP Billiton, RACV, Michael Buxton Collection, Smorgon Family Collection, and Corbett and Yueji Lyon Collection. He has had numerous solo shows both nationally and internationally in Melbourne, Sydney and New York. *Soft Target* is **Wardle's** fifth solo exhibition at Nellie Castan Gallery.

for images and further information please contact olivia@nelliecastangallery.com

level 1, 12 river street, south yarra, victoria 3141

opening: 6 - 8pm friday 7 november

exhibition ends: saturday 29 november

hrs: tuesday to sunday 12-5pm t: 03 9804 7366
