

# DARREN WARDLE

## GHOST RESORT

25 November - 18 December 2010  
GALLERY I

OPENING THURSDAY  
25th NOVEMBER 6-8PM



**Darren Wardle's** exquisitely executed paintings of abandoned architectural sites explore the extended possibilities of painting. Using Modernist architecture to explore spatial illusion as well as to elaborate a vision of contemporary consciousness, he brings an obsessive technique to his depictions of surfaces, furniture, and other decorative elements in a given space. The resulting interiors, like that of *Lost Weekend*, seem schizophrenic in their attributes, and, along with the shifting perspectives he often employs within a single picture plane, give a portrait of the loneliness and confusion of contemporary existence as well as the failure of Modernism as a cohesive aesthetic movement.

**Ghost Resort** features works that shift between the hypertrophied spectacle of the pre economic meltdown West and decrepit structures from the old Eastern Bloc. Empty and abandoned, **Wardle's** paintings and screen-prints depict functional ruins, disinherit their formal integrity through entropy and decay. They ooze with nostalgia for a 20th Century promise of the future but now function as containers pulsing with the phantoms of distant utopian ideas awaiting resurrection. The other-worldliness of these spaces is amplified by **Wardle's** trademark use of extremely lurid colour, a delirious Post Modern counterpoint to the austerity of much chromophobic Modernist architecture.

Then there are the formal portraits; painted in a classical manner, softly blurred, yet highly confronting images with a photographic feel. These psychologically tense pieces act as narrative keys throughout the show, contemporary stand-ins for the Minotaur lurking in the Cartesian grid or Post Modern labyrinth. Based on celebrity plastic surgery, the modestly scaled *Head Case Studies* embody a damaged Id latent in the ideology framing Modernism and return us to one of the primal foundations of architecture, which is the body's relationship to space. They are **Wardle's** ghosts in the machine.

Having recently returned from a 3-month studio residency at Point B Worklodge in New York, **Wardle** was featured in *Sites of Memory*, curated by William Stover from the Boston Museum of Fine Art. This followed on from his critically acclaimed solo show *Design Anxiety* held at Stephan Stoyanov Gallery in New York late 2009. **Wardle** was also a part of *Vision*, curated by Diane Soumilas at Glen Eira City Council Gallery, in 2010. Working between Melbourne and New York, *Ghost Resort* will be **Darren Wardle's** 7th solo show at Nellie Castan Gallery. In 2010 **Wardle** was awarded a new work grant by the Australia Council for the Arts and gratefully acknowledges their support.

For images or further information please contact [shanley@nelliecastangallery.com](mailto:shanley@nelliecastangallery.com)



Australian Government

