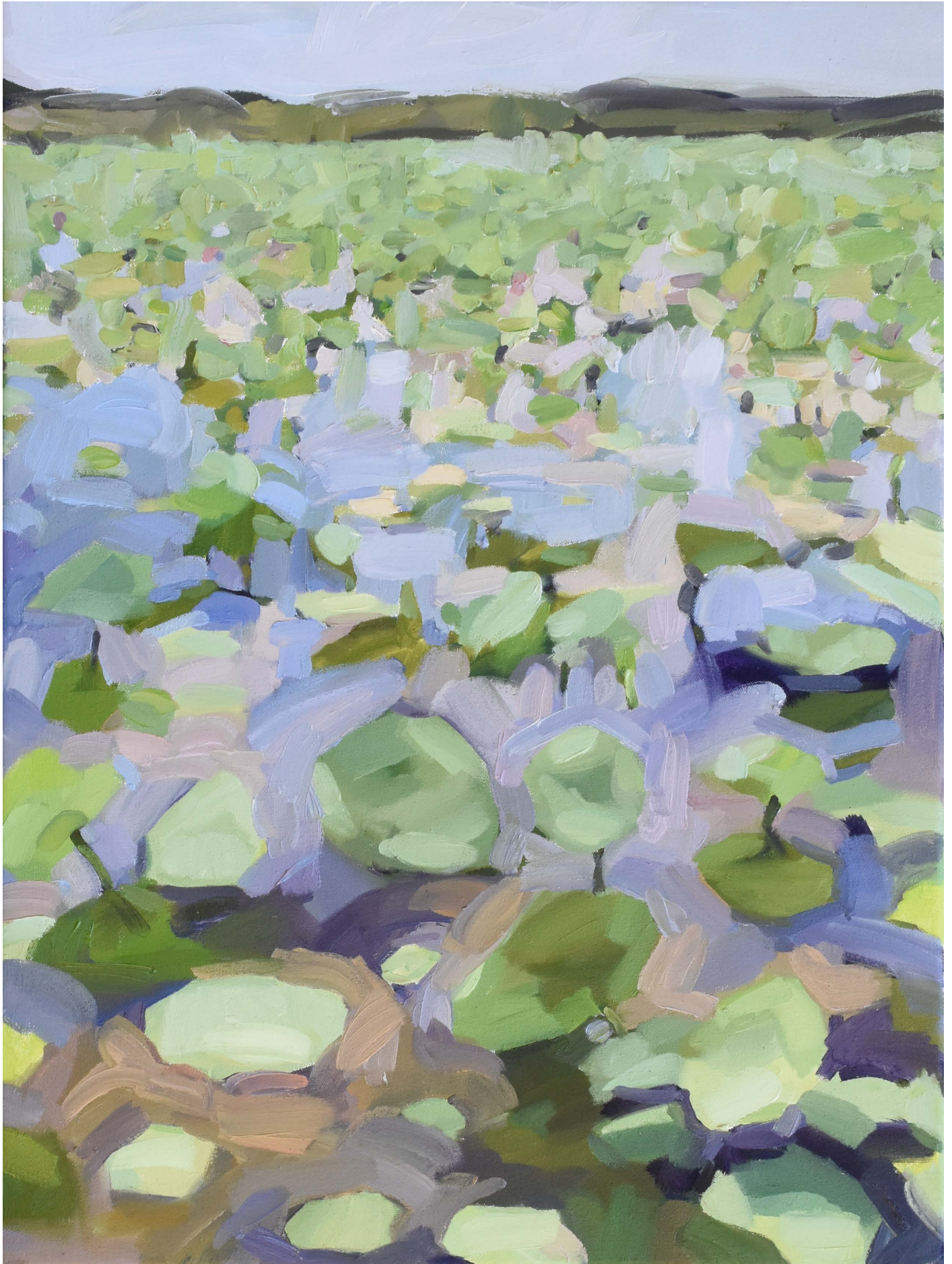


JAMES
MAKIN
GALLERY

MAX BOWDEN: THE MANY GREAT SAGES,
KINDA EQUAL TO HEAVEN



MAX BOWDEN: THE MANY GREAT SAGES, KINDA EQUAL TO HEAVEN

15 - 29 JUNE 2024

Available works are subject to change, including prices and availability. All prices include GST.

Max Bowden grew up watching the television show *Monkey*, the live-action fantasy adventure series based on one of the four great classical novels of Chinese literature, *Journey to the West* by Wu Cheng'en published in the sixteenth century. It's protagonist, Sun Wukong, was referred to as the 'Handsome Monkey King' and 'Great Sage, Heaven's Equal'. The latter moniker resonated with Bowden as she painted her latest body of work, weaving together a poetic reflection on the paradoxes of existence.

In particular, Bowden was interested in the Great Sage's ongoing battles; the idea of so many powerful gods and creatures, scarred from the battle, caught between improving the self and helping the many. The artist saw this paradox unfolding around her. In contemporary society there are many ideas that swirl uncomfortably within the flux of the 'I', the 'they', and the 'we' – population expansion and healthcare, the wisdom of crowds and the knowledge of specialists, the joy of community and the depth of solitude.

Bowden found her metaphor for this paradox not in gods or deities, but in the trumpet lilies that abound at a local water system, Fogg Dam, found an hour's drive from her hometown of Darwin. Each exquisite plant in a sea of many, demanded her attention, watching her like many Great Sages. This subject matter necessitated Bowden to focus on painting the whole as equal to the individual. Painting en plein air, the artist was also required to dance between action and contemplation, with weather from the heavens often interrupting her movements and reminding her that she and her pursuits are merely singular things in a grand ecosystem of many.

Rather than a negative experience, Bowden sees this humbling aspect of nature – and of painting – as encouraging. She reflects:

"I like seeing something complex and slowly pulling it apart into simple shapes that own a space only in relation to where all the other shapes are. It makes me feel more confident about the complexities and stressors in my life knowing that they only exist in relation to the way I perceive them, and that even though I feel alone, that I can't be, because I belong in a space too and other shapes must be around me, interacting. Again, it comes back to the individual and the group, alone, but not alone. Everything is in this swell, moving together as much as separately."

In *The Many Great Sages, Kinda Equal to Heaven* Max Bowden's contemplative approach to painting and the paradoxes of existence flow upon the canvas in expressive marks. Lilies, beaches and urban streets articulate the artist's pursuit to capture life in its complexities and simplicities – another paradox. Through painting, Bowden finds a way to replay life slowly and see it all moving together.

Max Bowden was born in Melbourne, Australia, and now lives and works in Darwin. She studied visual arts at the Central School of Art in Adelaide, receiving the school's first scholarship. Bowden holds a Bachelor of Visual arts from Charles Darwin University and a Postgraduate Degree in Psychology. In 2022 Bowden was named a finalist in Hadley's Art Prize and the winner of the Hadley's Residency.



MAX BOWDEN


The distant and immediate past, 2023

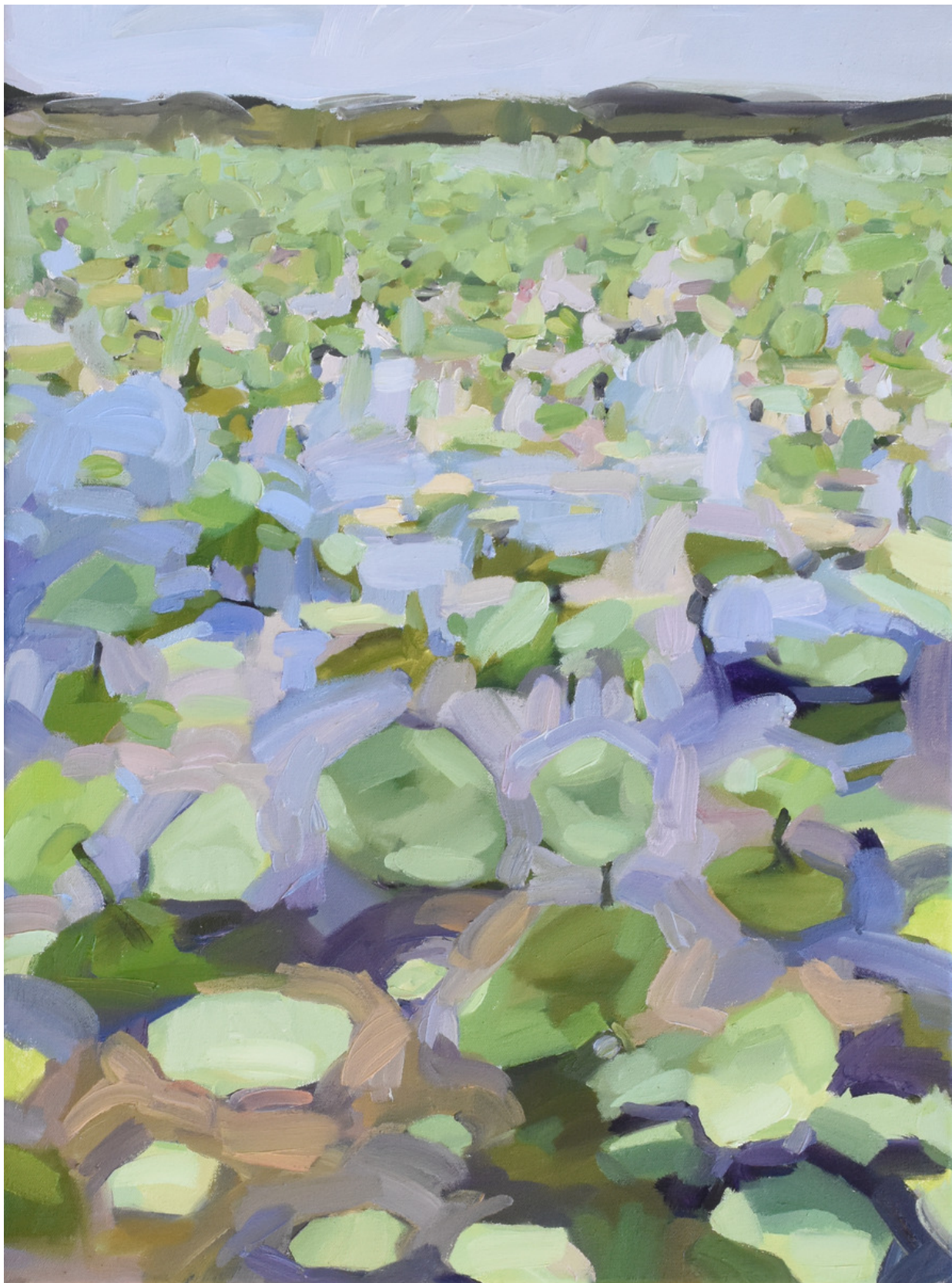
oil on linen

40 x 30.5 cm

AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
Tradition, 2023
oil on linen
40.5 x 30 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
To grow, 2023
oil on linen
61 x 46 cm
AUD 



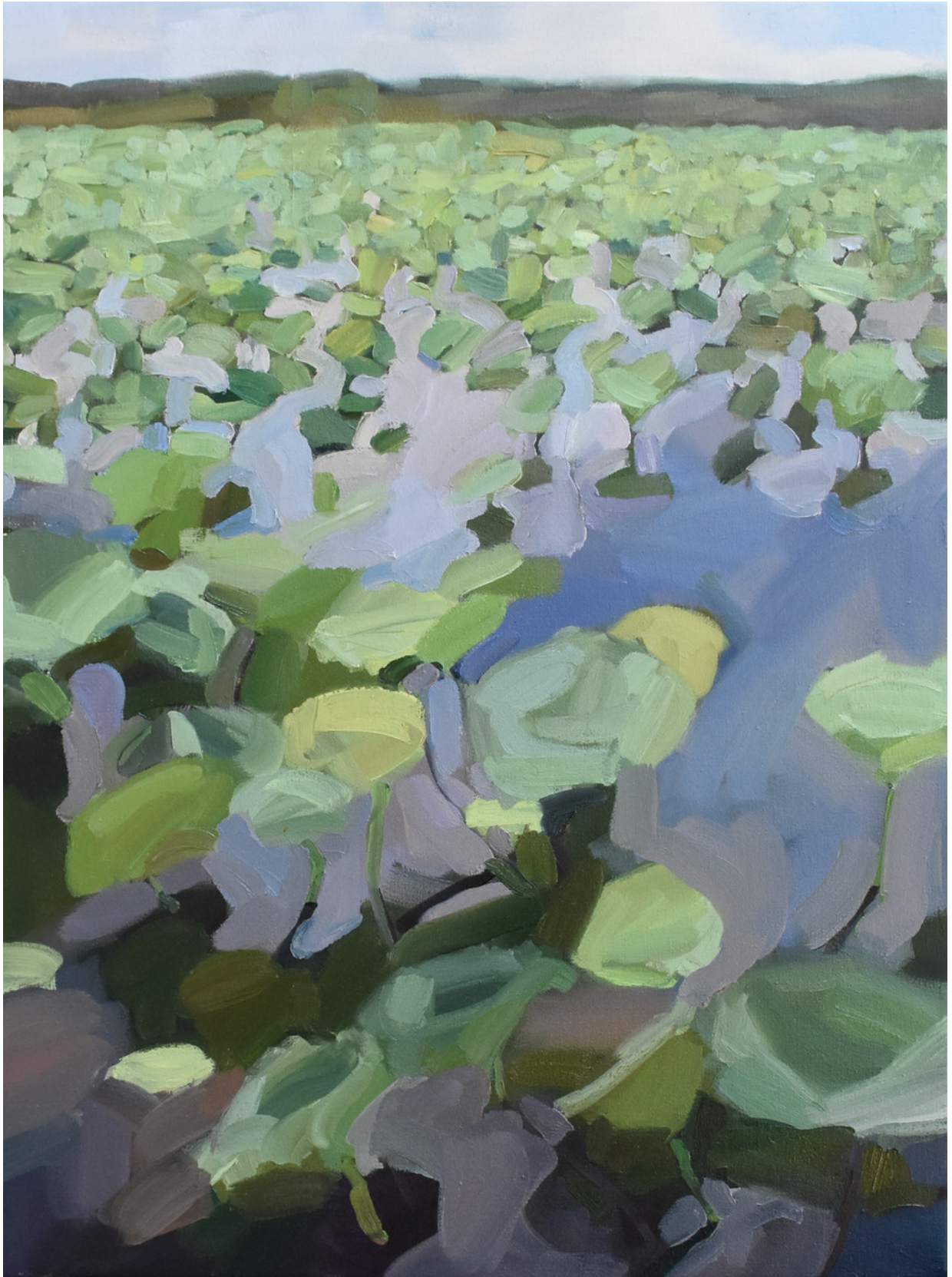
MAX BOWDEN

Same same different, 2023

oil on linen

41.5 x 30.5 cm

AUD 



MAX BOWDEN

All of us, 2023

oil on linen

61 x 46 cm

AUD 



MAX BOWDEN

Comparison is the thief of joy, 2023

oil on linen

50 x 40 cm

AUD 



MAX BOWDEN


Online, 2024

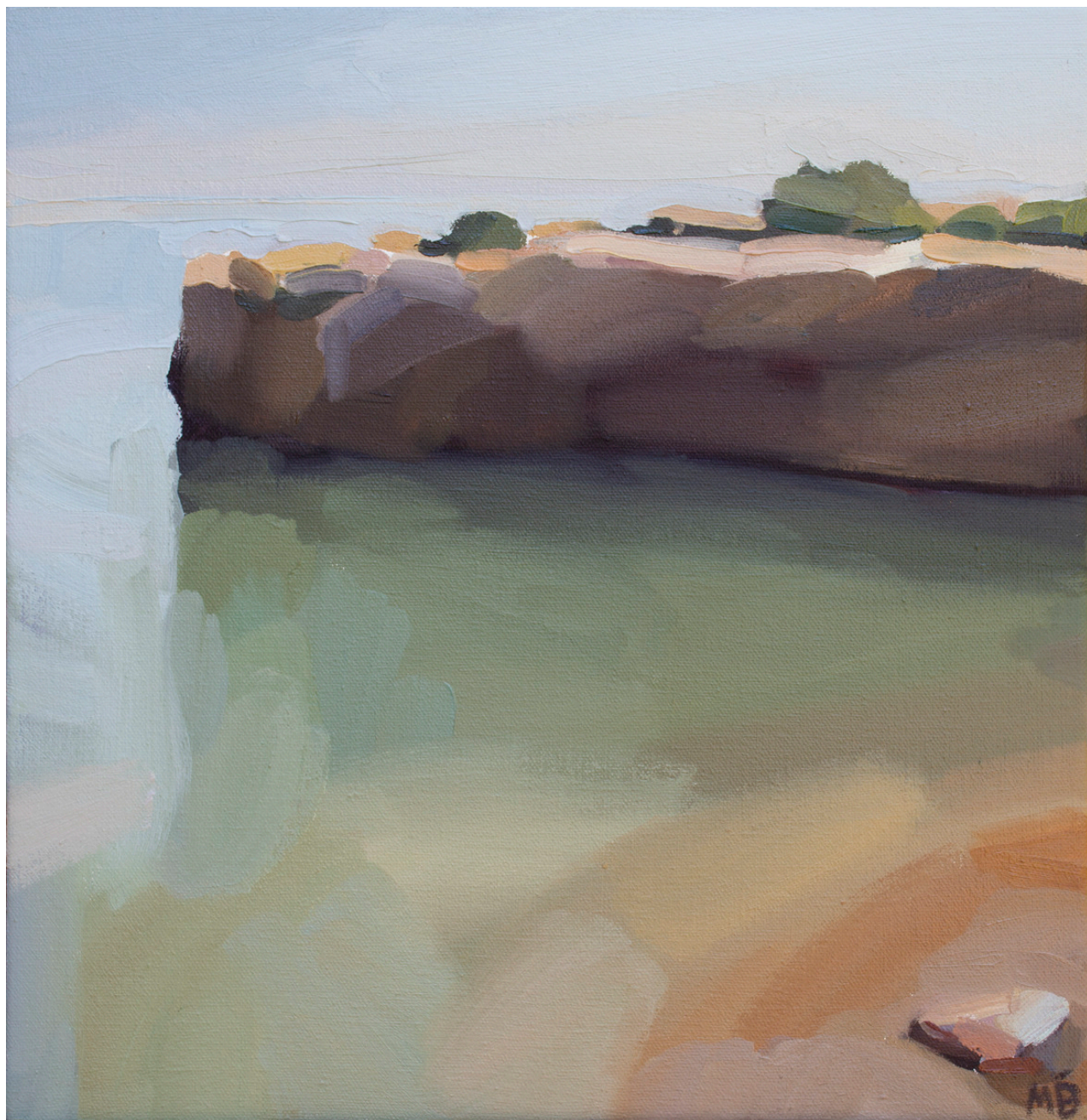
oil on linen


60 x 49 cm

AUD 




MAX BOWDEN
My crew, 2024
oil on linen
63 x 30 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
When you feel, 2023
oil on linen
31 x 30 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
The minority, 2024
oil on linen
30.5 x 40 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN

Friends, 2023

oil on linen

30 x 30 cm

AUD 



MAX BOWDEN


Us, 2024

oil on linen


60 x 50 cm

AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
Not today, 2024
oil on linen
21 x 32 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
Bystander, 2023
oil on linen
21.5 x 40 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN


Not my circus not my monkey, 2024

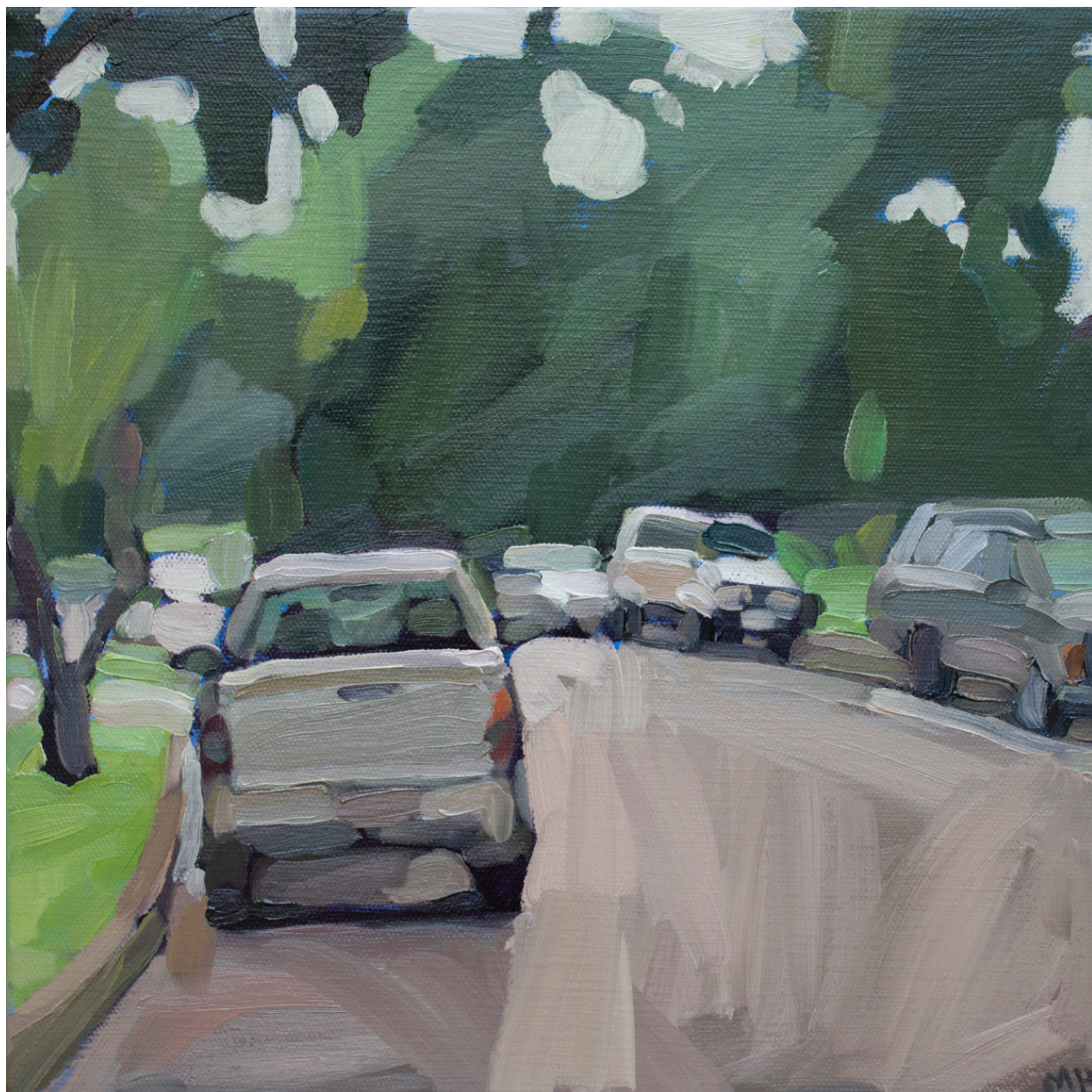
oil on linen


22 x 33 cm

AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
Look busy, 2024
oil on linen
22 x 33.5 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
Group think, 2024
oil on linen
30.5 x 30.5 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN


Best laid plans of mice and them, 2024

oil on linen


45 x 35 cm

AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
My response, 2024
oil on linen
21 x 32 cm
AUD 



MAX BOWDEN
The individual, 2023
oil on linen
21.5 x 40 cm
AUD 

MAX BOWDEN

Lives and works in Darwin, NT

EDUCATION

Postgraduate Degree, Psychology, Charles Darwin University, Darwin

Bachelor of Visual Arts, Charles Darwin University, Major in Oil Painting

Certificate of Visual Arts, Adelaide Central School of Art, Adelaide

Inaugural Scholarship Adelaide Central School of Arts, Scholarship, Adelaide

AWARDS, GRANTS AND PRIZES

2024 Bayside Gallery Finalist, 'Bayside Painting Prize', Melbourne

2023 Hadley's Art Prize, One Month Residency, Tasmania

2022 Finalist Hadley's Art Prize, Tasmania

2022 Winner Hadley's Art Prize Residency

2019 Finalist Rick Amor National Portrait Prize

2019 First Prize WAGS Art Exhibition

2019 Artist in Residence, Territory Wildlife Park

2013 First Prize WAGS Art Exhibition

2007 High Commendation. 24HR Art Graduate Art Award, Darwin

2007 Raft Gallery Award, Graduate Art Exhibition, CDU

2001 First Prize Whyalla Art Prize, Young SA Artist's Award,

1995 Scholarship - Adelaide Central School of Art,

(under Rod Taylor, Anna Platten and Christopher Orchard)

1995 Studio Residency: Carclew Youth Arts Centre, Adelaide

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITION

2023 Limited release, James Makin Gallery, Melbourne

2022 Pendulum, James Makin Gallery, Melbourne

2021 Habits, James Makin Gallery, Melbourne

2020 What Was Supposed to Happen, Paul Johnstone Gallery, Darwin

2005 Bookends, Solo show, Wood Street Gallery (DVAA), Darwin

2002 'ME' Carclew Art Space, Solo Exhibition, Adelaide

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITION

2024 Bayside Gallery, 'Bayside Paintig Prize', Melbourne

2023 Summer New, James Makin Gallery, Melbourne

2023 Northern Contemporary Cebtre of Art, 'Too Bloody Hot', Darwin

2023 Hadley's Hotel 'En Plein Air Hobart', Tasmania

2022 Hadley's Art Prize, Hadley's Orient Hotel - Hobart

2022 Summer New, James Makin Gallery - Melbourne

2022 Monochrome, Mitchell Fine Art - Brisbane

2022 Northern Centre for Contemporary Art, '24hr Art' - Darwin

2021 Monsoon, Paul Johnstone Art Gallery - Darwin

2021 Twenty, Mitchell Fine Art - Brisbane

2020 Paul Johnstone Art Gallery - Darwin

2019 Rick Amor National Portrait Prize - Melbourne

2019 WAGS Art Prize - Darwin

2019 Don Whyte 'Off Cuts' - Darwin

2019 Territory Wildlife Park – Threatened species - Darwin

2018 Katherine Art Prize - Katherine

2018 Don Whyte 'Off Cuts' - Darwin

2013 WAGS Art Exhibition - Darwin

2005 Blind Date, Wood Street Gallery (DVAA) - Darwin

2005 Cooperblack, Darwin Festival - Darwin

2005 UNI38 Graduate Art Exhibition, Charles Darwin University - Darwin

2004 Raw, Wood Street Gallery (DVAA) - Darwin

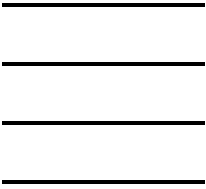
2003 'Ramp' 24 HR Art Gallery (members show) - Darwin

2002 Fringe 2002 'Open Sandwich' - Adelaide

2001 SALA 'conversations 9 by 5' - Adelaide

2001 Whyalla Art Prize 'Onesteel Young SA Artists Award' - Whyalla

2000 Fringe 2000 'Melisma' - Adelaide



+61 439 770 362
info@jamesmakingallery.com
jamesmakingallery.com

89 Islington St
Collingwood Victoria 3066
Australia