

Be Home Before Dark by Janina Green

Opening Thursday July 5, 6 – 8pm

Exhibition dates: July 6 – 28, 2012



By day the Australian bush is a strange and mysterious place – both idyllic and disorienting, it remains largely unfathomable to white Australians. At night the bush becomes positively perilous. Dark shapes leer out from all directions to a soundtrack of unidentified noises, our senses strain to register our surroundings, and innocuous shadows become the harbingers of hideous beasts and monsters. In concealing what is knowable and twisting what remains into new forms, the bush at night necessarily rouses the imagination to invent threats where there are none – especially in the mind of the child.

It is this imagined threat that underpins Janina Green's new series 'Be Home Before Dark'. Green leads us on a tour through Yalourn North, the scene of her youth. No rose-coloured trip down memory lane, the works instead explore the capacity for everyday objects and scenery to arouse an irrational sense of fear and dread. Green's landscapes, as Naomie Sunner has noted perceptively, 'do not refer to the landscape tradition but rather the psychological space induced within them'. The familiarity we sense within the works comes not from an evocation of place, but from their stirring of primal energies; thus they operate not as 'landscapes' but as 'psycho-scapes'. While the works have their geographical basis in the La Trobe Valley, Gippsland, we could be any place at any time, lost within our memories of childhood. - Simon Gregg

The images from *Be Home Before Dark* were photographed on film. Janina has retained and harnessed analogue photographic processes by hand printing the black and white images on large sheets of fibre based paper, pushing the limits of silver gelatin printing. Another dimension has been added to the finishing process by toning the images with Pelican Foto-Lasurfabre dyes, exaggerating the dark elements of the silver gelatin blacks. The blue tones throughout the images amplify the eerie, cold, immersive atmosphere. These works salute the heritage of the handmade, from the physical immersion of the taking in of the scene, to the reliving and remaking of that lived experience on paper. This experience, though grounded in the accuracy of the indexical nature of photography, is still partly a memory and a sensation. The works are about sensation and how that colours the factual nature of the real.

Janina has exhibited extensively in Australia and overseas. Her work is represented in many public and private collections such as the National Gallery of Victoria, State Library of Victoria and the Rotterdam Art Foundation, Netherlands. She has been a recipient of grants such as the Australia Council Visual Arts Grant and finalist in many prestigious prizes such as the 2011 CCP Documentary Photography Award. Janina is represented by M.33, who recently released the publication *Blush*, of her photographs from 1988- 2010.

www.m33.net.au/

www.colourfactory.com.au/gallery