

GHOST LAKES | GARY STEER

21 OCTOBER - 9 NOVEMBER 2014

ARTIST STATEMENT

In the interior of the Australian continent there are vast areas of depressions in the land where nothing grows. These are 'lakes', many of which have a ghostly white appearance caused by salt that has been deposited in them over the ages.

These haunting landscapes are deserts but not perpetually so. Far from where they exist clouds billow and gather moisture as the monsoon season builds up in the north.

These pale, nebulous masses grow dark, brood and rumble as they swell and labour with their damp burden. Then waters break from the heaving clouds and pelt the land. Creeks flow to rivers that become major arteries pulsating with massive flows of red, muddy water, lifeblood of the continent's arid regions.

Floodwaters that spill into the lakes produce a mixed, ochre media of sand, salts, clay and mud that slurries across the white 'canvas' of the land. Then the mystical forces of nature become the artist. The raw materials are sculpted and painted by the elements - floodwaters, wind, rain, heat, ice and the dust of willy-willies.

For a short time the deserts thrive but the lakes are at the mercy of a relentless sun and rapidly begin drying up. For salt lakes, or 'ephemeral lakes', life ends quickly. Like a desert mirage, these waters born of the monsoon - the Ghost Lakes - vanish into thin air.

However, at all stages of flooding and drying remarkable works of art of the earth are in progress. The scale is so vast that, from the ground, their magnificence cannot be perceived. Viewed from the air it is different and the lakes appear as compellingly beautiful landscapes, some realistic, others like watercolour paintings in abstract.

My aim in the Ghost Lake project was to find and reproduce in photographs some of these remarkable works of nature.

BIOGRAPHY

Gary Steer was born and has lived mostly in Sydney, Australia.

His principal line of work was as an independent TV documentary producer though over the last 10 years he has concentrated on still photography. A flight over central and northern Australia in a small aircraft revealed a rich tapestry of landscapes below, especially those of the salt lakes of the inland deserts. He has concentrated on photographing these and the exhibition, *Ghost Lakes*, is the result of this work.

As an independent documentary film-maker his subjects were wildlife, travel/ adventure, history and indigenous cultures. He made his own productions as cinematographer, writer, producer and director.

He has produced over 25 hours of television documentaries, many of them award-winning, co-producing with broadcasters such as National Geographic, Discovery Channel, BBC, ABC, SBS, Australian commercial channels, ZDF and ORF Germany, NHK Japan.

MEDICAL RESEARCH FUND RAISING

The Ghost Lakes exhibition is in support of St Vincent's Curran Foundation and the Arrow Bone Marrow Transplant Foundation for leukemia research.

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SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Palette & Palate Summer	2013	Artist's Studio, Newtown, Sydney
Recaptured Relics*	2012	Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney
Beauty in the Beast *	2012	Gallery Lane Cove, Sydney
Where on Earth *	2011	New North Gallery, Melbourne, Victoria
Fine Art, Fine Wine	2010	Artist's Studio, Newtown, Sydney
Second Nature	2009	Brunswick Street Gallery, Melbourne
Visions of Gold*	2009	Ballarat International Foto Biennale
Frameworks–Lightwave*	2009	Manly Art Gallery and Museum
Unearthly	2008	Meyer Gallery, Sydney
The Spirit of Sport*	2008	Q-Centre Gallery, Queanbeyan
The Spirit of Sport *	2008	Alliance Francaise Gallery, Canberra
WaveSong	2006	Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney
Foodbank Art Exhibition	2006	Sydney Grammar School
SummerLight*	2005	Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney
A Different Light*	2005	St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney
Illusions*	2004	Icon Gallery, East Redfern
Wild Impressions	2003	The Arthouse Hotel Dome Gallery

**Solo Exhibition*

SELECTED AWARDS

2014	International Award of Wildlife and Nature Photography, Natural History Museum, Genoa, Italy. Finalist in three categories.
2014	Asferico Concorso Internazionale di Fotografia Naturalistica, Italy. Landscape, Highly Commended.
2014	WetlandCare Australia Photography Prize, NSW Office of Environment & Heritage. 2nd Prize Flora.
2014	Eurobodalla Photographic Competition. Winner, Activities Category.
2013	International Loupe Awards. Category: Science and Nature, Silver Award, Category: Sport, Bronze Award.

SELECTED AWARDS (CONT.)

2013	International Fine Art Photography Award, Paris, France. Juror Award of Merit.
2013	Macquarie Photography Prize. Second in Wildlife category.
2012	Global Photo Awards. First Place Still Life Photographer, Second Place Abstract Photography.
2012	International Wildlife Photographer of the Year. 2 Finalists Landscape, Creative Visions.
2012	International Loupe Awards. Three Bronze Awards in People & Portraits, Landscape, Science & Nature.
2012	Bowness Photography Prize, Monash Gallery of Art. Finalist.
2011	International Loupe Awards. Sport category – 2 Bronze Awards; Abstract Illustrative – 2 Bronze Awards; Science and Nature – 1 Bronze Award.
2011	NSW Parliamentary Plein Air Landscape Photographic Prize, Finalist.
2010	International Aperture Awards. Silver Award, Portrait; Bronze Award, Landscape; Bronze Award, Sport; Bronze Award, Abstract/Illustrative
2010	Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition, Natural History Museum London and BBC, Finalist, Creative Visions of Nature
2010	National Photographic Portrait Prize, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, Australia. Finalist.
2009	International Nature Photography Competition – “Asferico” – Italy. 9 Finalists in 4 categories.
2008	Nature's Best Windland Smith Rice International Awards Smithsonian Washington. Highly Honoured Winner in two categories.
2008	International Aperture Awards. Five Bronze Awards in categories; Landscape, Abstract, Sport.
2007	BBC/British Natural History Museum/Shell Photographer of the Year Competition. Highly Commended in Creative Visions of Nature.
2006	ANZANG Nature Photographer of the Year Competition. Landscape Photographer of the Year.

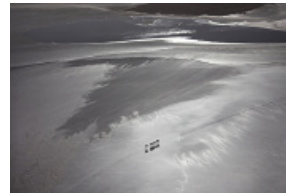
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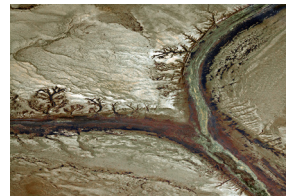
- 1 **Ghost Lake**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
113 x 126 cm
Edition of 10
\$4,700 Framed



- 2 **Camel Crossing**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
123 x 93 cm
Open Edition
\$2,750 Framed



- 3 **Pulse**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
123 x 93 cm
Open Edition
\$2,750 Framed



- 4 **Illusion**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
123 x 93 cm
Edition of 10
\$ To be auctioned



- 5 **Watercolour**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
123 x 93 cm
Open Edition
\$2,750 Framed



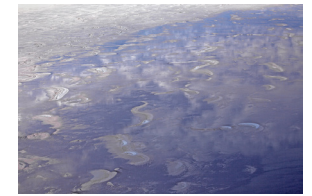
- 6 **Canvas of Salt Crystals**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
123 x 93 cm
Open Edition
\$2,750 Framed



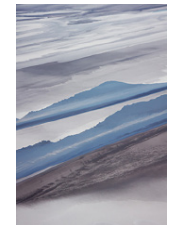
- 7 **Ephemera**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
123 x 93 cm
Edition of 10
\$3,250 Framed



- 8 **Desert Dreaming**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
123 x 93 cm
Edition of 10
\$3,250 Framed



- 9 **Apparition**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
93 x 123 cm
Edition of 10
\$3,250 Framed



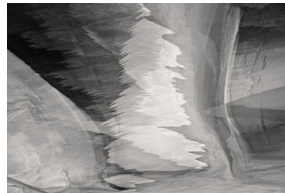
- 10 **Shrouds of Salt I**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
62 x 45 cm
Open Edition
\$1,350 Framed



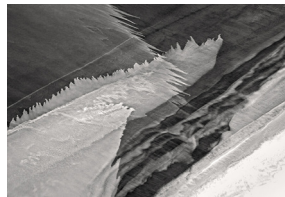
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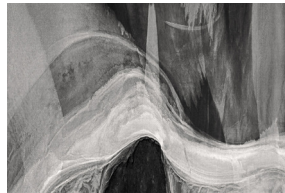
- 11 **Shrouds of Salt II**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
62 x 45 cm
Open Edition
\$1,350 Framed



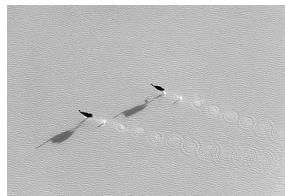
- 12 **Shrouds of Salt III**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
62 x 45 cm
Open Edition
\$1,350 Framed



- 13 **Shrouds of Salt IV**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
62 x 45 cm
Open Edition
\$1,350 Framed



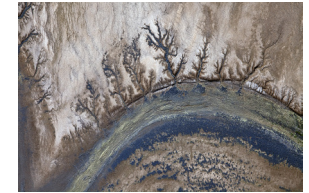
- 14 **Spooked**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
97 x 73.5 cm
Open Edition
\$ To be auctioned



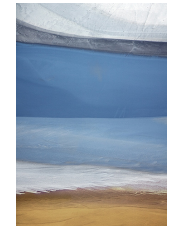
- 15 **Haunting**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
73.5 x 97 cm
Edition of 10
\$2,300 Framed



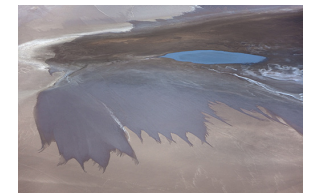
- 16 **Unearthly**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
97 x 73.5 cm
Open Edition
\$1,900 Framed



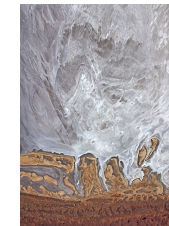
- 17 **Water and Wind as Artist**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
73.5 x 97 cm
Edition of 10
\$ To be auctioned



- 18 **Mirage**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
97 x 73.5 cm
Open Edition
\$1,900 Framed



- 19 **Desert Art**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
73.5 x 97 cm
Edition of 10
\$2,300 Framed



- 20 **Limited Palette**
Pigment print on Canson Arches Aquarelle Rag
97 x 73.5 cm
Open Edition
\$1,900 Framed

