

MICHAEL REID

S . H I G H L A N D S



# Brooke van Ruiswyk

## *A Place of Belonging*

The rugged countryside of Tasmania's north-west coast finds eloquent expression in Brooke van Ruiswyk's *A Place of Belonging*, her debut exhibition with Michael Reid Southern Highlands.

It is a landscape of rolling hills, sodden paddocks, heavy skies and winding waterways; a landscape marked by shelter belts and wind-pruned macrocarpa, by tidal inlets and rivers tracing their way through the countryside. It is also a landscape van Ruiswyk knows intimately.

Several generations of the artist's family have lived and farmed in this region, and the works gathered here emerge from a relationship with the land that stretches back to childhood.

"We'd look out the car window and just see these flashes," she says. "It's almost like a projector in my memory. Snippets of trees - and I was just taken by them."

Such familiarity is central to the exhibition's achievement. Returning to the same places throughout the seasons - and committing them repeatedly to paint - van Ruiswyk has become acutely aware of the ways this region continually remakes itself - how hills and inlets assume new qualities from one day to the next.

"By getting out in the landscape and photographing and sketching and going through that artistic journey when you're there, it pulls you back instantly," the artist says. "Straight away, I just feel I'm part of it again. I'm back on the land and it's part of me."

Returning to her studio in Launceston with these photographs and notations in hand, van Ruiswyk fixes her impressions onto the canvas.

Oil paint proves an especially sympathetic medium for the artist's purposes. The lustre of the painted surface echoes the moisture-laden atmosphere of the region, while rich passages of paint lend weight and structure to hills, waterways and stands of trees. Elsewhere, more delicate applications capture drifting fog, low cloud and the soft diffusion of light across the countryside.

Throughout the exhibition, weather emerges as a central presence. Vast cloud formations dominate many of the compositions. These skies shape the emotional tenor of the works themselves.

"I don't know that I would ever be painting a blue sky," van Ruiswyk says. "It's not something that, when I think of my memories of the land and the farm, I'm thinking of. Those blue-sky summer days were a little flash and they were gone."

Painted with extraordinary sensitivity, they possess both weight and luminosity, drifting and swelling across the canvas.

In 2024, van Ruiswyk received the People's Choice Award in the Henry Jones Art Prize. Her work has also been recognised through three selections in the Glover Prize — one of Australia's most prestigious awards for landscape painting — as well as finalist honours in the Lethbridge 20,000 Award in both 2022 and 2023.

\*Quotations in this essay are drawn from the StoryCraft podcast *Brooke van Ruiswyk on Art, Memory & Reconnecting with Place Through Collage* (2025)

### INTRODUCTION.

3

### ARTWORKS.

5 - 22

Gathering Clouds  
The Secret Valley  
The Old Farm Road  
The Shoreline Pipe  
Inlet Pine at Low Tide  
Together Always  
Drawn to You  
Early Spring Green  
At Low Tide  
Misty Morning Stillness  
Where the River Runs  
Misty Reflections

### ARTIST CV.

23

### GALLERY CONTACT DETAILS.

24





Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*Gathering Clouds* 2026  
oil on canvas  
92 × 92 cm  
\$5,400





Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*The Secret Valley* 2026  
oil on canvas  
30.5 x 30.5 cm  
\$1,550



Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*The Old Farm Road* 2026  
oil on canvas  
51 x 51 cm  
\$2,400

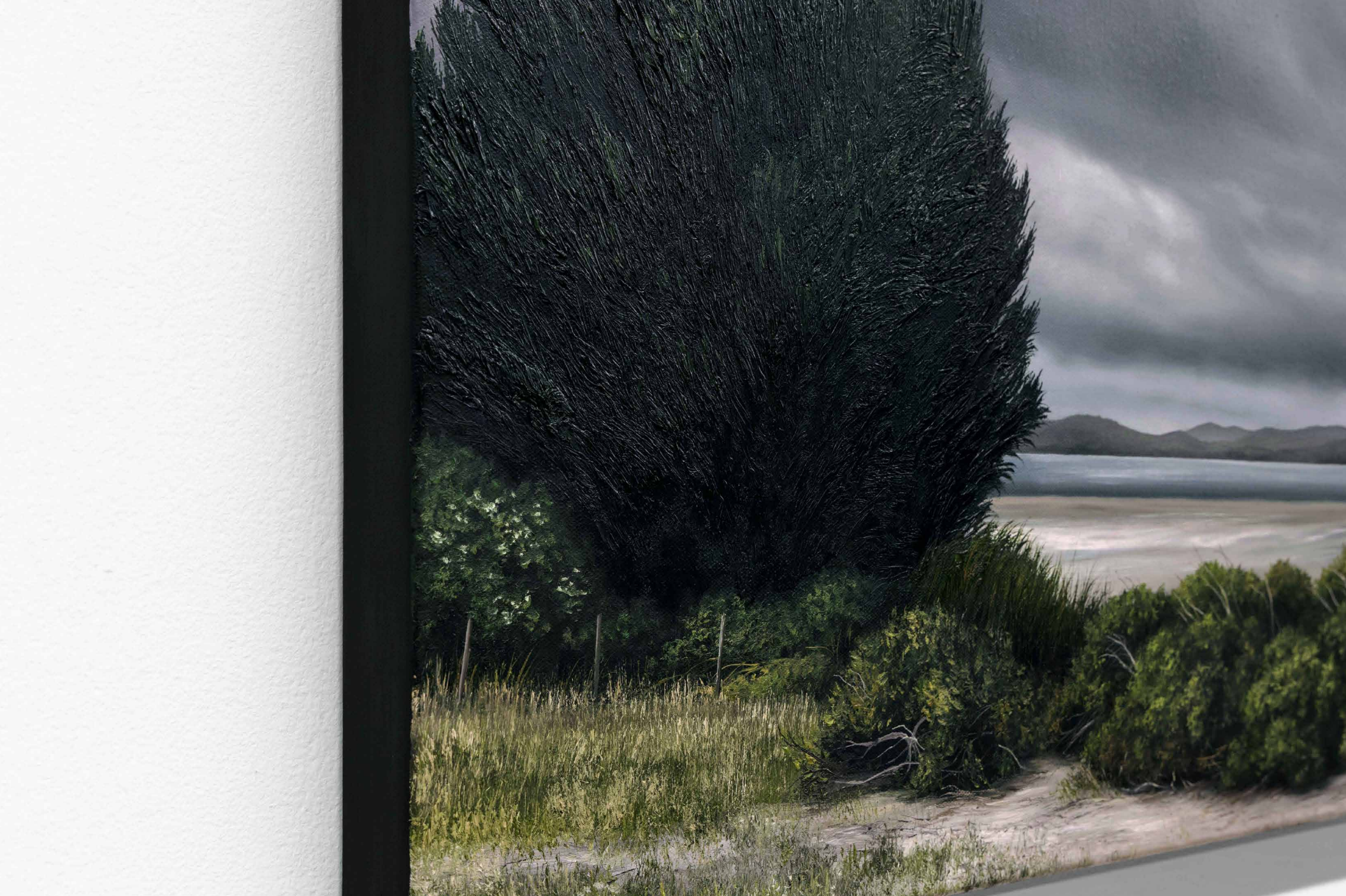




Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*The Shoreline Pine* 2026  
oil on canvas  
61 × 61 cm  
\$3,200



Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*Inlet Pine at Low Tide* 2026  
oil on canvas  
76 x 76 cm  
\$3,950





Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*Together Always* 2026  
oil on canvas  
76 × 76 cm  
\$3,950



Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*Drawn to You* 2026  
oil on canvas  
92 × 92 cm  
\$5,400





Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*Early Spring Green* 2026  
oil on canvas  
40.5 x 51 cm  
\$2,200



Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*At Low Tide* 2026  
oil on canvas  
30.5 x 30.5 cm  
\$1,550





Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*Misty Morning Stillness* 2026  
oil on canvas  
30.5 × 30.5 cm  
\$1,550



Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*Where the River Runs* 2026  
oil on canvas  
30.5 x 30.5 cm  
\$1,550





Brooke van Ruiswyk  
*Misty Reflections* 2026  
oil on canvas  
30.5 x 40.5 cm  
\$1,850



# Brooke van Ruiswyk b. 1986

## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2026

- Glover Prize, Finalist, Evandale, Tasmania
- The Edit Art Fair, Studio Gallery Group
- Summer Salon, Poimena Gallery
- Tidal Reflections, Manyung Gallery Sorrento
- The Summer Show, Blenheim Gallery & Garden

2025

- Memories from the Land, Solo Exhibition, Manyung Gallery Malvern
- Christmas Event, Manyung Gallery Art & Design
- The Doyles Art Award, Mudgeeraba, Queensland
- Summer Art Soirée, Manyung Gallery Sorrento
- Summer Salon, Poimena Gallery
- Affordable Art Fair, Melbourne

2024

- The Places We Know, Solo Exhibition, Manyung Gallery Malvern
- Glover Prize, Finalist, Evandale, Tasmania
- Bay of Fires Art Prize, Finalist, St Helens, Tasmania
- Tidal.24 Art Award, Finalist, Devonport Regional Gallery
- Henry Jones Art Prize, Finalist, The Henry Jones Hotel
- Summer Salon, Poimena Gallery
- Peninsula Panoramas, Manyung Gallery Flinders

2023

- Glover Prize, Finalist, Evandale, Tasmania
- Lethbridge 20,000 Small Scale Art Award, Salon des Refusés
- Fifty Squared Art Award, Brunswick Street Gallery
- Peninsula Panoramas, Manyung Gallery Flinders
- TATA Members Exhibition, QVMAG / Salamanca Arts Centre
- Northern Exposure, Poimena Gallery
- Henry Jones Art Prize, The Henry Jones Hotel

2022

- Lethbridge 20,000 Small Scale Art Award, Lethbridge Gallery
- The Doyles Art Award, Mudgeeraba, Queensland
- Fifty Squared Art Prize, Brunswick Street Gallery
- BlueThumb Art Prize
- Henry Jones Art Prize, The Henry Jones Hotel

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Monday - Saturday 10am - 5pm

Sunday 10am - 4pm

Michael Reid Southern Highlands acknowledges the Gundungurra and Tharawal people as the Traditional Custodians of the area now known as The Southern Highlands. We pay our respect to Indigenous Elders past, present and emerging.