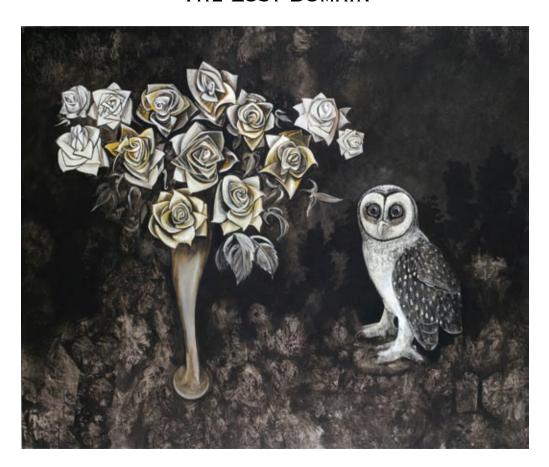
VICTOR RUBIN THE LOST DOMAIN



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Front Cover: "White Rose Wood Owl and other Images", 2007, acrylic on linen, 152 x 183cm

Victor Rubin – *The Lost Domain*, 2007 Mahoneys Galleries.

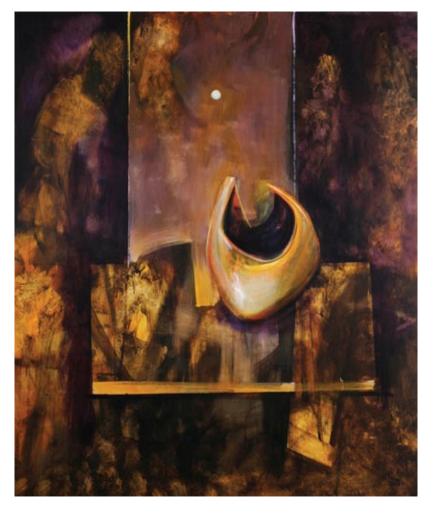
In an earlier interview Rubin stated that, "The history of art is in my work". Since his first show in 1971 Rubin has indeed taken inspiration from various semi-abstract modernist painters such as Cubist artist Pablo Picasso, and Surrealist artist Max Ernst. He has then reworked the techniques of these artists into his own unique style that endeavours to recreate the recognisable. To do this, Rubin combines the ancient alchemical method of deciphering symbols of wisdom called Hermeticism, with the Cubist method that goes under the same name of Hermetic (or Analytical) Cubism. In recreating the recognisable, Rubin states that he is depicting the creative exploration of trying to recover the lost domain. For Rubin the lost domain is an Arcadian place where there exist the ultimate civilised luxuries, yet it is also a primal place that relates to the primitive, much like the yearnings of many of the modernist painters. The intention of his current show is that such a process of yearning will thus be projected through the viewer's own psyche and personal response to the works.

The first work in this 2007 series named *Vessel and Voyage*, reads like an alchemical drawing found on the pages of one of the first ever scriptures. The vertical lines that Rubin has created on the canvas divide the work into three sections so it can be read as a triptych from which we can begin our psychic contemplation or voyage. The foreground symbol is a depiction of an empty vessel left open for us, showing us what

there is to explore, while the moon in the background can be read as an astronomical symbol reminding us that wisdom will be gained when we know how it influences the earth.

The lost domain is also emphasised through the peculiar sense of lighting created by Rubin. He states that he likes to create an uncanny form of lighting from which the audience cannot decipher whether it is daytime or night, and strange shadows are cast from each of the objects depicted. The piece titled *The Lost Domain* is brightly lit but the shadows are depicted so that they are drawing inwards and the audience is invited to enter into the time of day that is twilight, a zone of obscurity in which anything can happen.²

Since he first began making art, Rubin recalls that the personal symbol of flowers has been a recurring theme. The Lily, the Orientals, and the Birds of Paradise exist as the reconstructed figurative elements of this show, while the roses are painted both as abstract and existing in their full form. Rubin states that there appear to be a number of operational vortexes within the structure of the rose, as they come in many natural compositions. He postulates that the depiction of the vortex shape of the rose invites the viewer back into the painting in an abstract sense. In the work titled *White Rose, Wood Owl and Other Images*, Rubin accentuates the formal ambiguity of the rose by stripping it back to its barest hues, and reducing



"Vessel and Voyage", 2007, acrylic on linen, 183 x 152cm

the outermost forms to flat Cubist inspired shapes. The theme of altering the composition of the rose is then mirrored in the Hermetic formation of Rosicrucian - or the symbolic formation of roses into the shape of a cross. The lack of colour evident in this work also draws the eye to the layer of paint in which he has used the Surrealist technique of decalcomania, which involves the pressing of rags against the wet canvas surface, from which new and interesting shapes can be conjured up by the minds eye.

The piece titled *Paradiso*, the Song from the Sea Shell is a powerful and brightly coloured work that contains more angles and vortexes than any of the other works in this series. To Rubin, the Birds of Paradise are a masculine symbol because of their protrusions, but the surrounding objects represent the multiple levels of the human psyche. This work suggests that perhaps with an acceptance of the many levels of wisdom comes the Arcadia that was originally thought to be lost.

Penelope Trotter Melbourne April 2007

¹ Victor Rubin, cited in David Thomas, "Victor Rubin: An Original", catalogue essay for Victor Rubin – A Survey Exhibition, Metro 5 Gallery, Melbourne, 2002.

² Victor Rubin, studio interview, Melbourne, 2007.



"The Lost Domain", 2007, acrylic on linen, 183 x 152cm



"Paradiso the Song from the Sea Shell", 2007, acrylic on linen, 152 x 183cm



"Rose Bay Retreat", 2007, acrylic on linen, 183 x 152cm



"Red Rose Trio", 2007, acrylic on linen, 152 x 132cm



"Dancing the Rose", 2007, acrylic on linen, 183 x 152cm



"Enchanting the Place", 2007, acrylic on linen, 183 x 152cm



"Red Rose Duet", 2007, acrylic on linen, 152 x 132cm



"Paradiso and the Shape of Idols", 2007, acrylic on linen, 152 x 183cm



"Flower Flowering I", 2007, acrylic on canvas board, 51 x 41cm



"Flower Flowering III", 2007, acrylic on canvas board, 51 x 41cm



"Still Life Australis I, 2007", acrylic on composition board, 120 x 90cm

Victor Rubin Curriculum Vitae

Solo Exhibitions:		1982	Axiom Gallery, Melbourne
		1981	Student's Gallery, Sydney (Now Mori Gallery)
2007	Mahoneys Galleries, Melbourne	1981	Stanfield Gallery, Melbourne
2006	Kenthurst Galleries, Sydney	1981	Closet Gallery, New Zealand
2005	Drummond Street Gallery, Melbourne	1981	Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, NSW
2004	Kenthurst Galleries, Sydney	1978	Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
2004	Metro 5 Gallery, Melbourne	1978	Student's Gallery, Sydney
2003	Kenthurst Galleries, Sydney	1978	Warehouse Gallery, Melbourne
2003	Qdos Gallery, Lorne, Victoria	1977	Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
2002	Metro 5 Gallery, Melbourne	1974	Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
2002	Gallery Irascible, Melbourne	1971	Yellow House, Sydney
2001	Boutwell Draper Gallery, Sydney		
1999	Gallery Irascible, Melbourne		
1998	Renard Wardell Gallery, Melbourne	Selected Gro	oup Exhibitions:
1997	Annandale Galleries, Sydney		
1996	Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne	2006	Blake Prize Finalist, Sydney
1995	Annandale Galleries, Sydney	2006	Sir John Sulman Prize – Finalist, AGNSW, Sydney
1993	Rex Irwin Art Dealer, Sydney	2005	After Van Gogh: Australian Artists in Homage to
1993	Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne		Vincent. Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery
1992	Greenaway Gallery, Adelaide	2004	Return of the White Bull, Geelong
1991	Realities Gallery, Melbourne		Regional Gallery, Victoria
1989	Roslyn Oxley 9 Gallery, Sydney	2004	Sir John Sulman Prize – Finalist, AGNSW, Sydney
1988	Realities Gallery, Melbourne	2004	Doug Moran National Portrait Prize – Finalist, Sydney
1988	Michael Milburn Gallery, Brisbane	2001	A Studio in Paris: Australian Artists at Cite
1987	Realities Gallery, Melbourne		International des Arts, S.H.Irwin Gallery, Sydney
1987	Roslyn Oxley 9 Gallery, Sydney	1999-2000	We are Australian Originated Victorian Arts
1986	Realities Gallery, Melbourne		Centre and Touring
1986	Michael Milburn Gallery, Brisbane	1997	Highlights from the Permanent Collection, Swan Hill
1985	Mori Gallery, Sydney		Regional Art Gallery
1984	Realities Gallery, Melbourne	1996	Doug Moran Portraiture Prize, National Gallery of
1983	Mori Gallery, Sydney		Victoria & Touring
1982	Mori Gallery, Sydney	1996	Re-Mix, Manly Art Gallery, New South Wales

	Recent Acquisitions of Contemporary Australian Art,	Selected Collections:	
1994	National Gallery of Victoria Identities: Art from Australia, Taipei Fine	Acceptable National Calles Carles	
1994	Arts Museum, Taiwan	Australian National Gallery, Canberra	
1994	The Bailleu Myer Collection of the 80's, Museum of	National Gallery of Victoria	
1994	Modern Art Heidi	Art Gallery of New South Wales	
1004		Queensland Art Gallery	
1994	The John McCaughey Memorial Art Prize, National Gallery of Victoria	Darwin Art Gallery & Museum, Northern Territory	
1002	<i>,</i>	Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand	
1993	Nuclear Age, Monash University, Victoria	Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan	
1992	Interiors, Noosa Regional Gallery, Queensland	Museum of Modern Art at Heide, Victoria	
1989	Mindscapes, Art Gallery of New South Wales	Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery, Victoria	
	Modern Muses, S.H.Ervin Gallery, Sydney	LaTrobe University Art Collection, Victoria	
1988	Advance Australian Painting, Auckland	Museum of Contemporary Art, New South Wales	
	City Art Gallery, New Zealand	Woollongong Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales	
1987	Five Artists in Manly, Manly Art Gallery, New South Wales	Geelong Regional Gallery, Victoria	
1987	Urban Anxieties, Australian National Gallery	National Maritime Museum, New South Wales	
1987	Young Australians, National Gallery of	Riddoch Regional Art Gallery, South Australia	
	Victoria & Touring	Arthur Robinson (formerly Allen Allen & Hemsley) Sydney & Perth	
1987	A New Romance, Australian National Gallery	Ansett Collection (ex)	
1987	Age of Collage, Holdsworth Gallery, Sydney	Bank of Melbourne	
1986	33 Male Painters - The Male Sensibility,	State Bank of New South Wales	
	Heide Park Gallery, Victoria	Budget Collection (ex)	
1986	The Sixth Biennale, Art Gallery of New South Wales	Taim Management Collection	
1985	Australian Perspecta, Art Gallery of New South Wales	ICI Contemporary Collection	
1983-84	Vox Pop - Into the Eighties, National Gallery of Victoria	Minter Ellison Collection, Melbourne	
	Form - Image - Sign, Art Gallery of Western Australia	Lowenstein Sharp Collection, Melbourne	
	Soft Attack, Artspace, Sydney	Melbourne Cricket Cub Collection, Victoria	
1983	Australian Perspecta, Art Gallery of New South Wales	The Hon. J. Kennett Collection	
	A Different Perspective, Artspace, Sydney	Late Miles Davis Collection, New York	
1983	A Biennale Survey of Contemporary Australian	Late Patrick White Collection, Sydney	
	Art & Touring	• • •	
1974	Sir John Sulman Prize – Finalist, AGNSW, Sydney	Also represented in private collections in Australia, Asia,	
		Europe, UK & USA	
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