



NICOLE CHAFFEY

north: remembering country

MPhil EXHIBITION 11 February to 28 February 2015



**IMAGES FRONT AND
BACK COVER**

The Liquidity of Light

oil and beeswax on Arches paper, 76 x 57 cm
courtesy the artist

The Gap, Ellenborough

oil and beeswax on Arches paper, 76 x 57 cm
courtesy the artist

IMAGE BELOW LEFT

Storm Front

oil and beeswax on Arches paper, 76 x 57 cm
courtesy the artist

IMAGE BELOW RIGHT

As Light Follows Dark (Part II, Light)

oil and beeswax on Arches paper, 76 x 57 cm
courtesy the artist

IMAGE OPPOSITE LEFT

Channel Islands, the Coast Off Old Bar

oil and beeswax on Arches paper, 76 x 57 cm
courtesy the artist

IMAGE OPPOSITE RIGHT

Creek Mouth

oil and beeswax on Arches paper, 76 x 57 cm
courtesy the artist

During the journey northwards on the Pacific Highway, the creek crossings become markers of progress, identifying the crossing into Biripi country north of Buladelah. The granite topped mountains and steeply undulating pastures comprising the valley's edges recede to reveal open land stretching from Nabic, the birthplace of my mother, to the wide river flats belonging to the Manning and the distinctive mountains in the distance further north. It's a country I love to traverse.

Exploring the concepts of discontinuity of culture, familial connection and emotional relationships to country, this body of work explores the role of landscape painting to act as conduit to a felt connection to place that no longer exists in the present day.

While the paintings themselves depict the deeply personal aspects of my relationship to my memories, my family and the Country from which they spring, the research has surveyed the history of Aboriginal creative practices. Expanding on a long and intensive study of humanity's relationship with the Australian landscape, I have turned my investigations toward exploring concepts of contemporary Aboriginality, memorial and emotional ties to the country of my forbears, and the intricate familial relationships that keep it all connected.

From Namatjira's representative expressions of the Western Arrernte country and their political ramifications, to the contemporary art coming from Australia's metropolitan centres, I've considered notions of an evolving Aboriginal identity and expression, bi-cultural identity and the reality of living away from one's ancestral homelands.

Traditional paint mediums and paper surfaces evoke a deep history of attachment to place, and skyward looking imagery become reminders of the transience and evolutionary nature of identity.

