

Stanley Street gallery

Spalding

Artist statement

I see how weather beaten and charred our mountain landscape has become since the 2003 bush fires, with the snow just covering much of the scarring. While it provides a winter wonderland and playground for visitors, many who come are ill prepared, with very little respect for the radical changes in weather.

A yellow rain coat placed over tracksuit pants seems to do the trick and the all-important sport of snow play begins; stand in rows and learn the skills of the plough. The Australian beginner skier has guts and is the most intrepid of all, with not a care about hypothermia or a twisted knee. I have had 40 years of painting the landscape and observing these fascinating little yellow mountain maniacs.

I am inspired by the clarity of light at altitude and the quality of the air. The higher you climb the more vivid the colours become and the landscape has a very broad palette. In many ways the name 'Snowy Mountains' seems inadequate to describe a place with such environmental diversity and cultural history.

Artist Biography

Spalding lives in the Snowy Mountains of Australia. His artwork is strongly influenced by the majestic and raw beauty of the alpine environment, capturing the spirit of the mountains and the constantly changing colour and light.

Spalding first exhibited in 1979 after graduating from the Bendigo Art School, Victoria. His early influences included Australia's Fred Williams, whom he studied under during his time at Bendigo. Spalding then went on to study at the School of Art, Melbourne.

After graduation, Spalding lived and worked in Europe for the next ten years where he studied the masters and was involved in symposiums and took part in exhibitions in central Europe. His works from this period are to be found in many private collections throughout Germany, Austria and Holland. In spite of his long periods spent overseas, Spalding's paintings are devoid of the picturesque images that many are accustomed to in the European tradition; his interpretation of the alpine environment is uniquely Australian.

Snow is a constant theme in Spalding's painting, he captures the vast and unforgiving nature of the alpine region in some of his works, in others he incorporates humor in his playful portraits of skiing in Australia.

In 1994, Spalding's painting Old Friends won first prize in the 'Roof Top of Australia' exhibition in Thredbo NSW and again in 1995 when his painting Main Range won the contemporary section. His innovation can be seen in the creative nature of his works, some of which feature in prominent locations around the Thredbo Village.

In 2000 Spalding's portrait of Stuart Diver was selected for the Archibald Salon. In 2007 he held a solo show at Arthouse Hotel, Pitt St, Sydney and in 2009 he exhibited at Moulton Galleries, Mosman.

Spalding was the Thredbo Ski School Director from 1994-2006 and is now the owner/operator of Wildbrumby Distillery on the road to Thredbo. He feels a great sense of connection to the landscape of the mountains and the people who live and visit there.

July 2017