



IMPRESSIONS *of* NATURE

ARTIST **RHONDA CAMPBELL** USES ALL HER SENSES TO CONNECT WITH THE PLACES SHE PAINTS. **ANNIE TONKIN** WRITES.

WHEN PAINTING or printmaking, artist **Rhonda Campbell** does not focus solely on what she can see. Instead, she allows what she can feel, smell and hear to all affect her. The result is a practice that celebrates the complexity of nature. Based in Orange in rural New South Wales, Rhonda delights in capturing the Australian landscape in her works. Whether it be desert, bush or wetlands, the artist seeks to convey her relationship to the land through each piece. “I have developed a vocabulary of colours, textures and markings to express myself and the feeling I have for a particular place,” she says. “While many aspects of the landscape inform my work, the feeling of just being there – the mere presence of nature, the sheer beauty of the landscape – is really important.”

Rhonda is most creative when she’s in one of her two studios – one for painting, one for printmaking, and both surrounded by nature. “My process is one of layering, both in painting and printmaking,” says the artist. Using a variety of mediums including acrylics, oils, pastels, graphite, oil sticks and cold wax, Rhonda is able to draw, scrape and scratch into the work. The finished products are stunning visual journeys into the Australian landscape. Spontaneous splashes of colour, textured surfaces and expressive markings reveal abstract visions of nature, ultimately allowing viewers to create their own connections to and opinions about the scenes they see: “Rather than recreating a subject, I aim to express its essence and to capture its richness.”

Rhonda’s next solo exhibition *Notes from the Wetlands* will show at The Peisley Street Gallery throughout October. Read more about it in our What’s Hanging section.



1 Rhonda Campbell in her studio.

2 Rhonda Campbell, *In the Wet*. Acrylic on canvas, framed in white box frame, 106 x 106cm.

3 Rhonda working in the wetlands.

4 Rhonda Campbell, *Swamp*. Acrylic, graphite and pastels on Birch panel, framed in white box frame, 104 x 104cm.

5 Rhonda Campbell, *Birds in Dry grasses*. Acrylic, graphite and pastels on canvas, framed in a white box frame, 80 x 80cm. COURTESY: THE ARTIST

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- ✂ artedit.com.au
- 🌐 rhondacampbell.com.au
- ✉ rcampbellartist@bigpond.com
- ☎ 0418 635 246
- 📘 Rhonda Campbell Australian Artist & Printmaker
- 📺 [rcampbellartist](#)

