



**EUAN MACLEOD**



**EUAN MACLEOD** MEMORIES OF FORGETTING

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NIAGARA GALLERIES MELBOURNE **9 FEBRUARY - 05 MARCH 2022**

**NIAGARA**

245 Punt Road  
Richmond Melbourne  
Victoria 3121 Australia

+61 3 9429 3666  
mail@niagaragalleries.com.au  
www.niagaragalleries.com.au

Wed - Sat  
12noon - 5pm  
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**agaa**

## MEMORIES OF FORGETTING

In March last year, New Zealand opened its borders to Australia after over a year of closure. Sensing this would not last long, our family jumped on the chance to get back, and as part of the trip, to visit my 89 year old grandmother in Christchurch's Church Bay.

We are all keen walkers, and while on a previous trip my sister Freya and I (in our defence, then both aged under 10), had to be offered a cash reward to climb Mount Herbert; this time we were the ones encouraging exploration. After exhausting the paved and signposted coastal trail, Dad suggested a walk from Camp Cove to an old school house at Little Port Cooper, though he mentioned it was private farmland and access may not be possible. Undeterred, Freya's husband Harry found a contact for the owners and gained permission for the four of us to cross. This was incredible countryside with dramatic hills rising out of the harbour. Following a rough track through scrubby grass, a steady climb through dry farmland, populated only by sheep, opened up to a seemingly unending vista of sea and sky, broken occasionally by protruding headlands and eventually the port of Lyttelton across the harbour.

Throughout the walk Dad took photographs and did quick drawings, occasionally directing Freya and me to pause or walk ahead at a prime spot. This was not uncommon, we are occasionally used as models, but as more of a placeholder, with resulting works featuring the anonymous figures emblematic of Dad's paintings. However, in a number of works in this series, such as *F & B Down towards Camp Bay, 2021* we are more recognisably ourselves, through our walking posture and clothing. These details are still there in *Big Bridget, Little Freya, 2021* but in this configuration Freya has been shrunk down in size, requiring my hand and an arm out for balance, rendered vulnerable and childlike. The figures in *Stairs to Church Bay, 2021* are similarly positioned, but the smaller figure is now notably male and the larger obscured by cloud from the torso up. The smaller figure also seems to be leading the larger, so too in *Two Figures in Light, Lyttelton Harbour, 2021* when all distinguishing features have been removed from the figures.

This landscape is imbued with memories of family for Dad. He walked the hills with his father in his youth, and now travels to the area to see his mother. Coupled with this, Freya was four months pregnant with his first grandchild at this time. In this context, these double portraits can be seen as an exploration of parenthood, the identification and roles of child and parent shifting and changing, along with memories of place.

A month or so after our return from New Zealand, Australia was plunged back into an extended lockdown. Looking back, this trip felt even more precious, where we enjoyed uninterrupted time with family, who we would soon be separated from for months. It offered great comfort to be reminded of it as Dad sent through images of working sketches and then finished paintings of our time in Christchurch, reconnecting us despite the distance.

### **Bridget Macleod December 2021**

Bridget Macleod is an Australian Arts writer and curator. She studied Art History and Museum Studies at the University of Sydney. She currently works at the Shoalhaven Regional Gallery, Nowra and lives in Jervis Bay, New South Wales. Bridget is Euan Macleod's daughter.



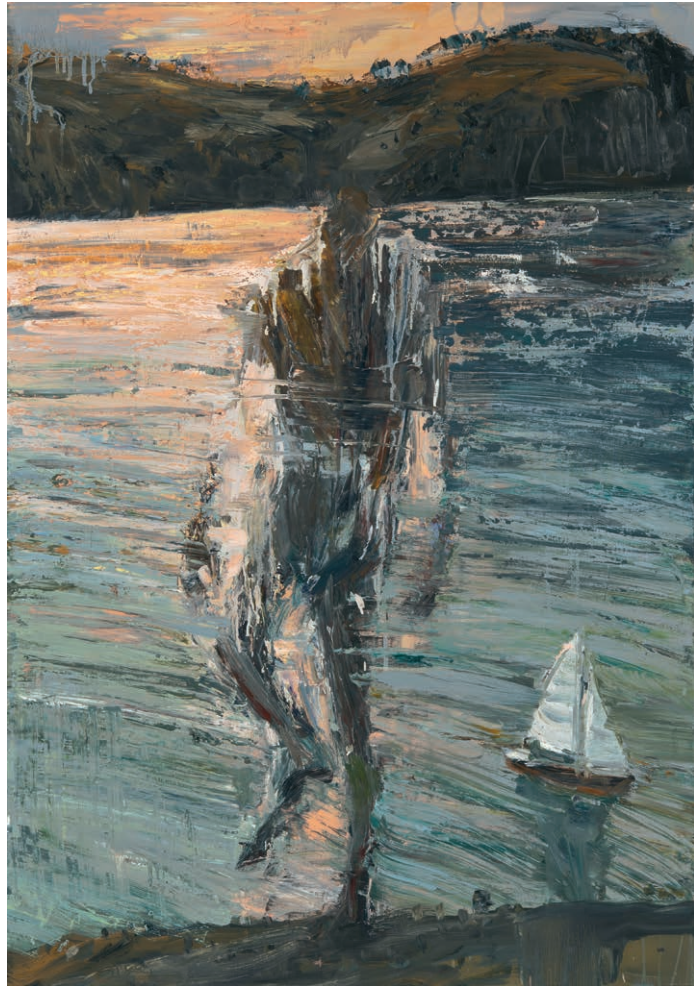


1. *Figure in Moonlight Heading North*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
120 x 84cm



2. *F & B Down Towards Camp Bay*, 2021  
acrylic on polyester  
120 x 84cm

3. *Figure & Yacht, Lyttelton Harbour*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
120 x 84cm



4. *Large fire painting*, 2019-20  
oil on polyester  
250 x 180cm



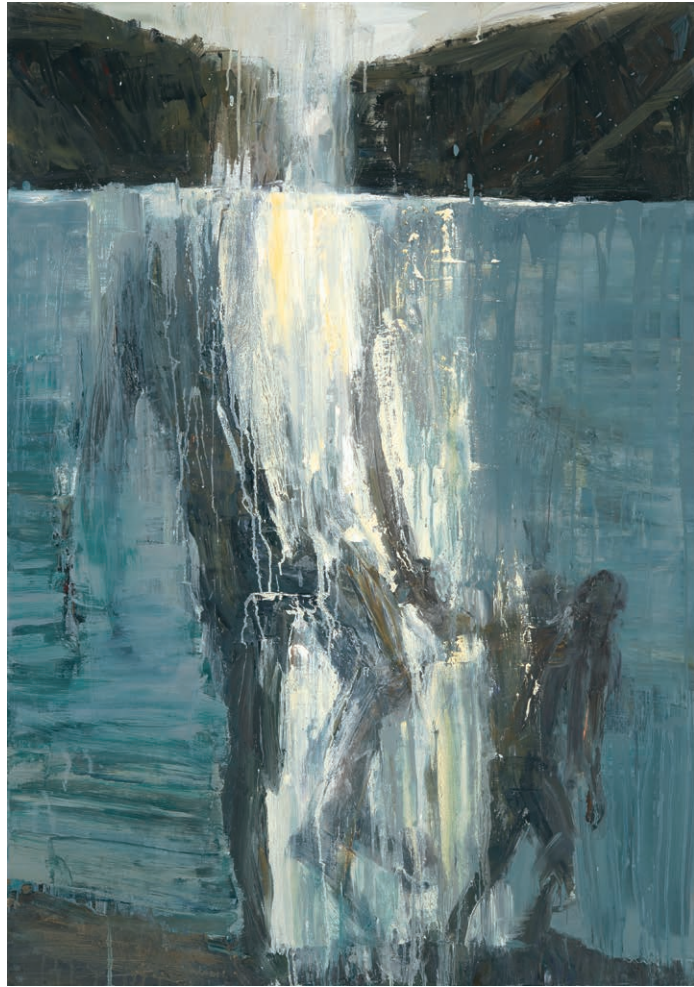


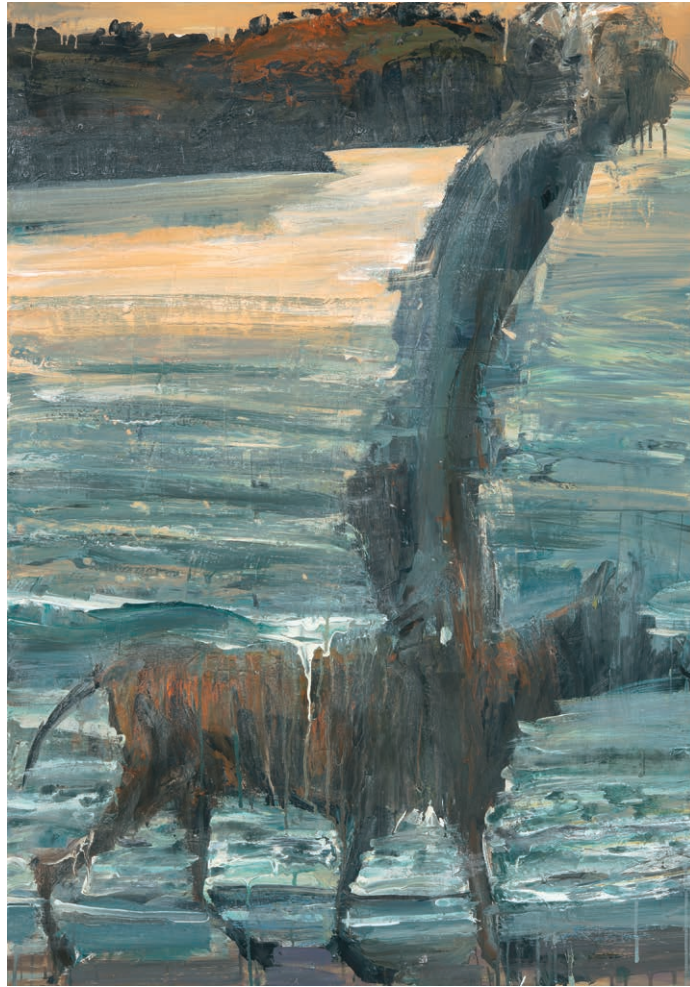


5. *Night Belay*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
180 x 150cm

6. *Two Figures in Light, Lyttelton Harbour*, 2021  
oil and acrylic on polyester  
120 x 84cm





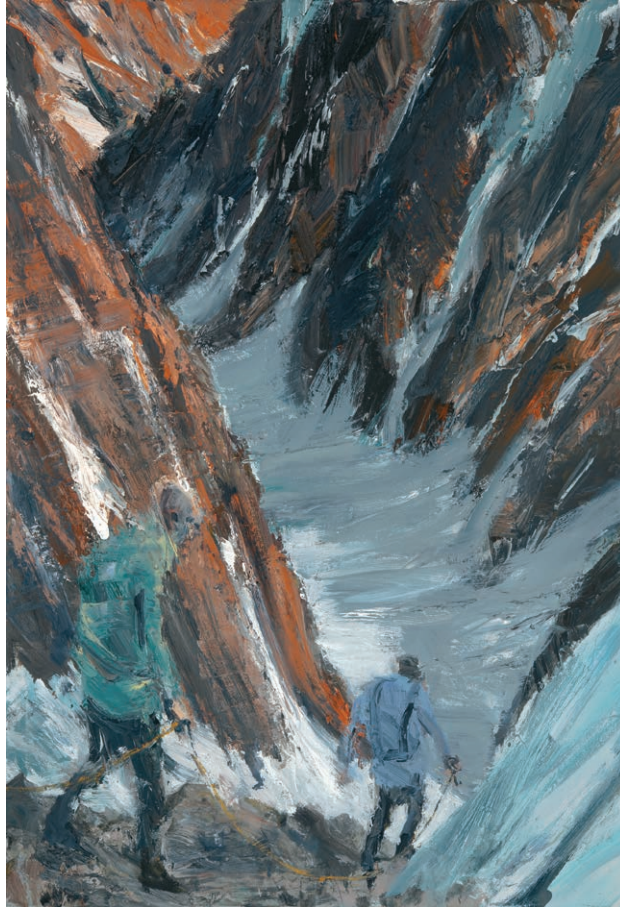


7. *Dog Man*, 2021  
acrylic on polyester  
120 x 84cm

8. *Little Port Cooper*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
124 x 100cm







9. *Study Walking Down*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
91 x 62cm

10. *Godley Head & 2 Figures*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
100 x 124cm





11. *Campsite & Moon*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
150 x 180cm





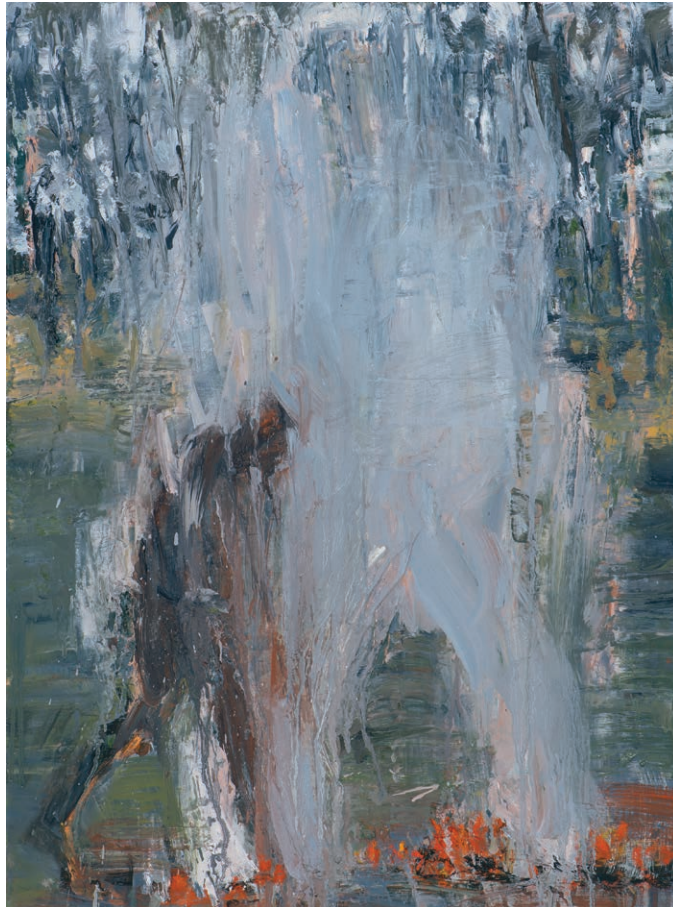




12. *Ripapa Island*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
100 x 124cm

13. *Tall fire figure*, 2019  
oil on polyester  
136 x 61cm





14. *Fire Man Meets Smoke Man*, 2018-21  
oil on polyester  
76 x 56cm

15. *Ledgeman*, 2018-21  
oil on polyester  
180 x 137cm







16. *Big Bridget Little Freya Camp Bay*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
124 x 100cm

17. *White Spider*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
200 x 150cm

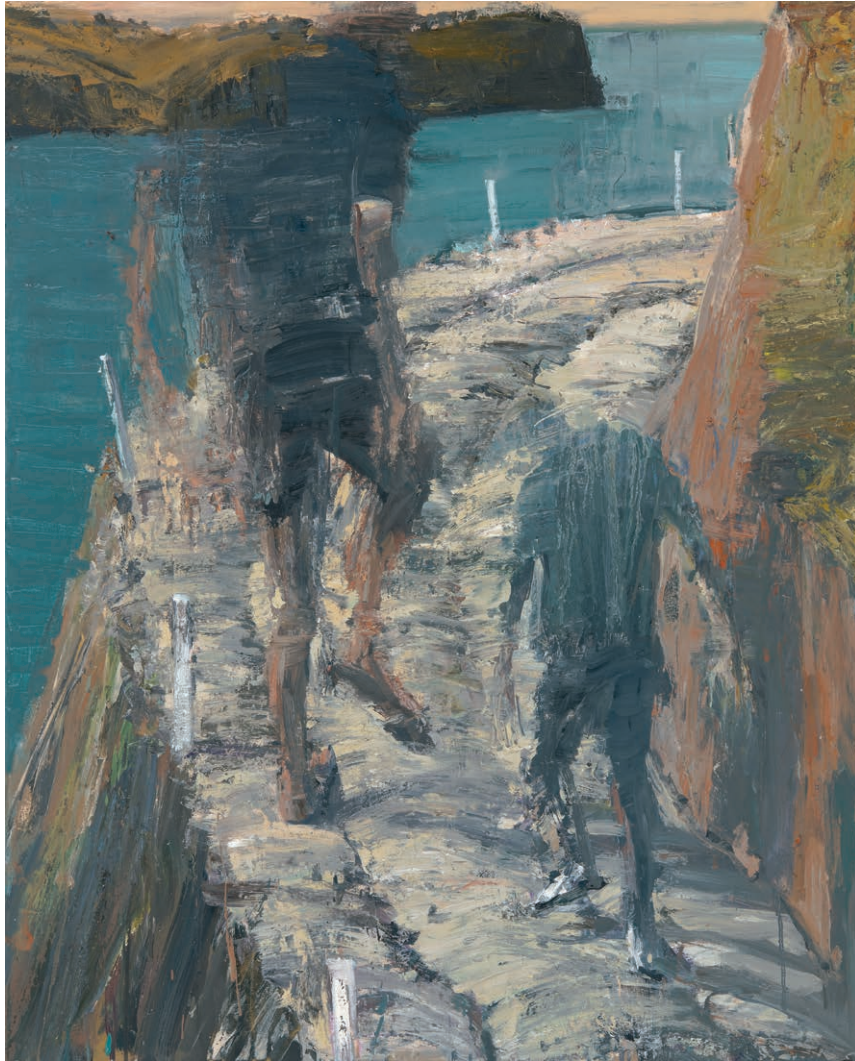




18. *Fire stick painting*, 2019  
oil on polyester  
124 x 100cm







19. *Godley Head & Path to Little Cooper*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
124 x 100cm

20. *Stairs to Church Bay*, 2021  
oil on polyester  
100 x 124cm



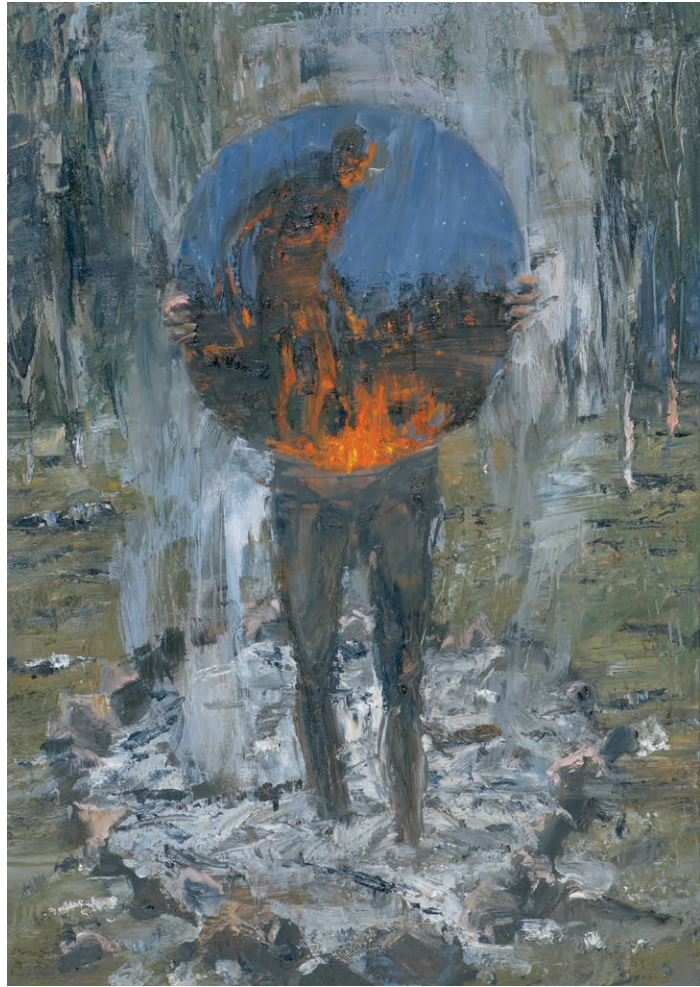






21. *Boxing Day*, 2019-20  
oil on polyester  
120 x 84cm

22. *Mirror (End of 2019)*, 2018-21  
oil on polyester  
120 x 84cm



## CATALOGUE NOTES

4.

*Large fire painting*, 2019-20  
oil on polyester  
250 x 180cm

*Exhibited*

*Stirring the ash*, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, Bathurst,  
5 June - 25 July, 2021

*Reference*

*Stirring the ash*, exhibition catalogue, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery,  
Bathurst, 2021, p. 16 (illus.)

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*Fire stick painting*, 2019  
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*Stirring the ash*, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, Bathurst, 5 June - 25  
July, 2021

*Reference*

*Stirring the ash*, exhibition catalogue, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery,  
Bathurst, 2021, p. 20 (illus.)

**Euan Macleod**

Memories of Forgetting  
9 February - 05 March 2022

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Front cover image:

4.

*Large fire painting*, 2019-20  
oil on polyester  
250 x 180cm

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