



Jacquie Colley
We played here once



Azo 2023 oil on canvas 1200 × 1400mm

Cover: **We played here once** 2023 oil on canvas 1200 × 1400mm

Jacqui Colley

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Jacqui Colley's artworks are dynamic acts of painting and remembering. Each one is a visual statement within which are embedded moments of deliberation and serendipity, a fitting together of thoughts, actions, and reactions to the physical immediacy of making.

Expressionist painting seeks to capture an experience rather than provide a faithful reproduction of its implied reality. The experience might be emotional or psychological, sensory or physical, but we are drawn in by something familiar within the painting.

With abstraction the figurative suggestion is stripped away so the experience is devoid of external references, but this does not erase the artist, rather the content of each artwork is the essence of the artist laid bare. The painter's presence is integral to the subject matter. In 1952, Harold Rosenberg coined the term "action painting" and described the canvas as "an arena in which to act". Jacqui Colley's practice sits within this same arena, her paintings are rich with movement and suggestion, it is impossible to experience them without being aware of the physical act, the stretch of the arm.

These larger scale paintings require constant shifts in perspective, the back-and-forth needed to fully experience the works is the point of them. As in any relationship distance and intimacy provide perspective. From distance it is

possible to experience the relationship as a whole, but closeness underpins understanding. Close viewing of a painting signposts the entirety, it becomes clear how one looping arc of colour is essential to the structural whole, how busier brushstrokes are counterpoints to calm.

This technique has been described as “painting backwards”, where the painter finds a balance between the deliberate and the spontaneous. Part of this manipulation is the counterbalancing colour palette Colley employs. Colour is the essential element, it expands or contracts the visual space, blurs or delineates the structure, and acts as a clue to the titles.

Colley is an award-winning New Zealand artist, she won the \$20,000 Parkin Award in 2018, a 2019 Private residency in Germany and was awarded the 2020 the James Baird Residency in St Johns, Canada. After her highly successful show of 2021 the 2023 exhibition at Orexart will be her second significant show with the gallery.

Thanks to Lisa Wilkie.



Sleep Walking 2023 oil on canvas 1200 × 1400mm





Sedimentary 2023 oil on canvas 1200 × 1400mm



Magenta Remains 2023 oil on canvas 1200 × 1400mm



Arpeggio 2023 oil on canvas 1200 × 1400mm

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