



Kathy Barber – *Peripheral*



As restless as we are 2023 acrylic and oil glaze on linen 1400 × 950mm

Cover: ***To the earth below*** 2023 acrylic and oil glaze on linen 1050 × 800mm

Kathy Barber

Peripheral

There is a word, 'spelunking', this is reserved for those special humans that get a kick out of exploring the labyrinths of cave systems and tunnels – not questioning the journey but believing that the destination will be worth it. This blind faith in my practice has led me to the works in *Peripheral*.

For many years my paintings have evoked a sense of place, but these new works are somewhere I can't put my finger on. Still embedded in some kind of land, there has been a desire to widen perceptions, to conjure up limitless skies hinged to grungy horizons. These works are derived from a montage of scratchy memories and lands out of reach, clashed together as a type of utopia minus the end of the world.

Large sweeping gestures I have affectionately coined as sidewinders flood all of the works. It is this action and its repetition that allows this element to linger in the works. Blurred and rubbed, it rummages through the undergrowth, tethered to seductive skies.

My focus on upscaling this kinetic gesture has its bodily limitations, and as I lean into the action from the way it loops – it is much derived from writing. Through the excessive repetition, words have become letters, letters have become gestures, all reduced to a vernacular of its own. An asemic language where there is nothing to be read, but offering up a plethora of different conversations.

There is familiar mark-making; the scratchy language exists in its various states, be it scribbled, blurred or carefully over-brushed. The meaning weaves through the layers of colour. Early applications of a painting build a foundation and composition through not only the accumulation of paint, but more importantly the removal of it. Just as the paint and ideas mix, one has to sit comfortably with the other, each has to blend so neither dominates.

These paintings have been a leap of faith. Much like sinking into the unknown and bizarre world of a Murakami novel, we accept the unreality as reality, and go along for the ride. The trust in my process has allowed for me to make shifts in scale and composition, and to embrace an enhanced colour palette. These paintings are my peripheral – a wider vision of somewhere not seen.

Kathy Barber



Beneath the sound 2023 acrylic and oil glaze on linen 1050 × 800mm



Pointed at the dawn 2023 acrylic and oil glaze on linen 1400 × 2000mm





Double cross 2023 acrylic and oil glaze on linen 1400 × 950mm



Shakedown 2023 acrylic and oil glaze on linen 1350 × 920mm



June bug 2023 acrylic and oil glaze on linen 1050 × 800mm

orexart

est. 1990

Published on the occasion of the exhibition, Kathy Barber – *Peripheral*, at Orexart, 7 – 30 September 2023.

Copyright 2023. Orexart, 221 Ponsonby Road, Auckland, New Zealand.

All artworks copyright of Kathy Barber.

All rights reserved. No part of this catalogue may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any other information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

ISBN 978-1-99-117424-6

Text by Kathy Barber

Design by Vic Segedin

Photography by Kathy Barber

Printed and bound in New Zealand by PDQ Print

Overleaf: *Live wire* 2023 acrylic and oil glaze on linen 1350 × 950mm



orexart
est. 1990