

William Robinson

Queensland Australia

William Robinson AO is a living Australian painter.

Figurative expressionist painter William Robinson is considered one of Australia's foremost living artists. He is recognised for his unique interpretation of the Australian landscape as well as his whimsical portraits and narrative scenes.

Robinson held his first exhibition in 1967. He rose to international prominence as a part of the exhibitions Australian Perspecta in 1983 and The Sixth Biennale of Sydney in 1986.

He has won the Archibald Prize for portraiture twice: first in 1987 for *Equestrian self portrait*, then in 1995 for *Self-portrait with stunned mullet*.

He has also won the Wynne Prize for landscape painting in 1990 (*The rainforest*) and 1996 (*Creation landscape – earth and sea*).

Is an accomplished pianist – in his youth he performed.





Dark Tide - Bogangar 1994 1.8 x 4.4m

Stages

- **Homage to Bonnard**
- **At the Farm**
- **Mountain and Sea**
- **Late Interior views**

... Robinson's "knowledge of art history is exceptional". His paintings, in particular the self portraits, make clever references to those such as Francisco de Goya (Equestrian self portrait 1987), Hans Holbein (Self portrait with basket 2003), and William Hogarth (Self portrait with stunned mullet 1994),

1936 Born in Brisbane

1950-53 Attends Brisbane State High School, South Brisbane. In 1953 sees the exhibition 'French Painting Today' in Brisbane, which leaves a lasting impression.

1954-56 Commences training as a primary school teacher at Queensland Teachers' Training College.

Studied art at Ballarat High School from 1955 to 1956.

1957-62 Appointed instructor in art at Central Technical College

1958 Marries Shirley Rees, a former commercial art student at Central Technical College. the first of their six children is born in 1959.

1963-69 Commences six-year tenure as an art lecturer at Kedron Park Teachers' College.

1970-71 Family moves to a three-hectare farm at Birkdale on Brisbane's eastern outskirts. Lecturer in Art at Kelvin Grove Teachers' College

1971 travels to Sydney to see 'Pierre Bonnard' exhibition, which exerts a strong influence on his art, apparent in his compositions of domestic interiors.

1975 Begins focusing on landscapes of Redland Bay district and Moreton Bay. Moves to Toowoomba for 6 months

In 1984 moves with family to 80-hectare farm at Beechmont in Queensland's Gold Coast hinterland and begins to paint the precipitous landscape of this subtropical rainforest area.

1987 Awarded the Archibald Prize for portraiture.

Completes first 'Creation' painting in 1988.

In 1989 leaves teaching and starts working full-time as an artist.

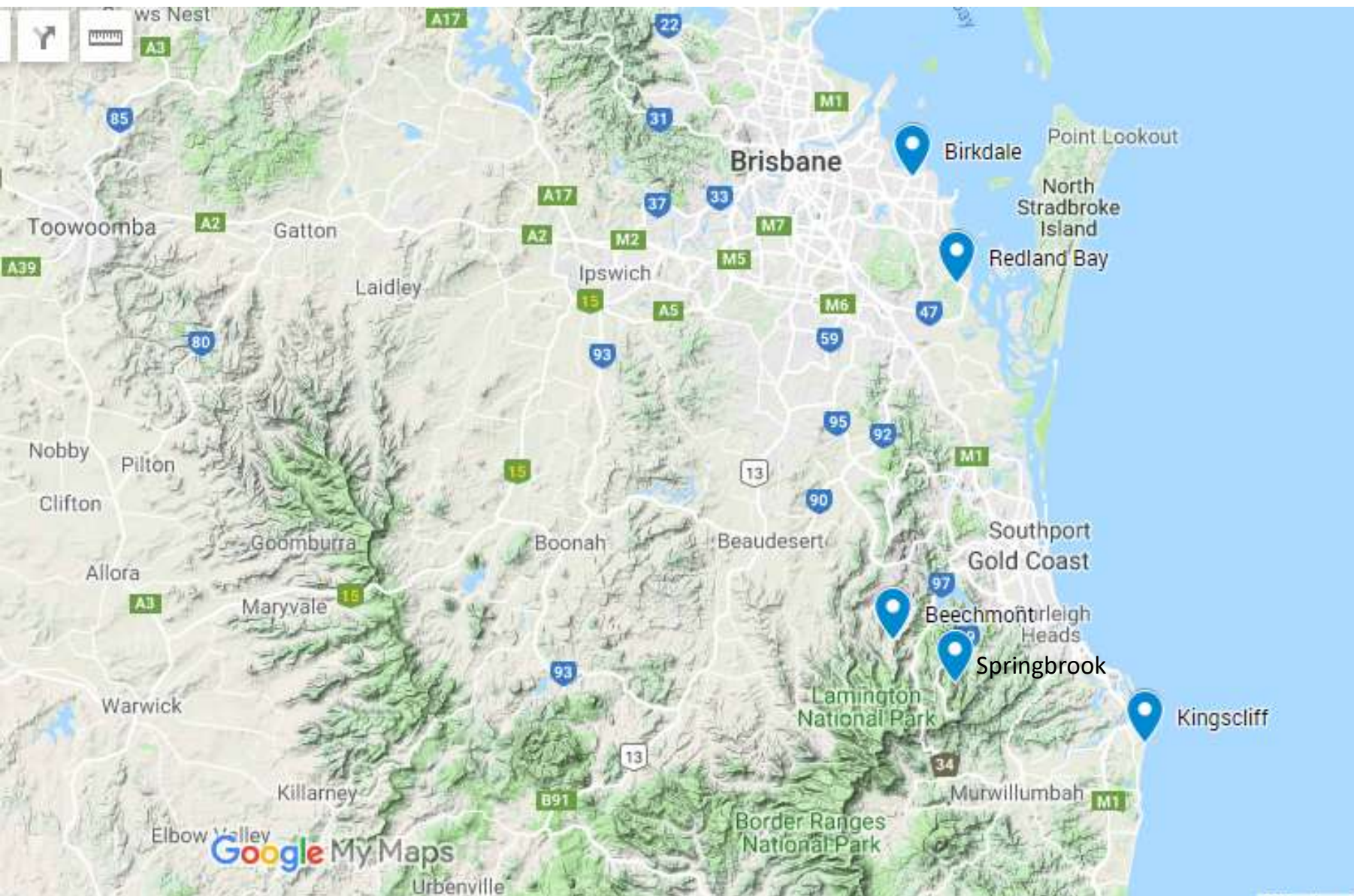
1990 Travels overseas for the first time (aged 54) visiting Greece, England, France, and Italy.

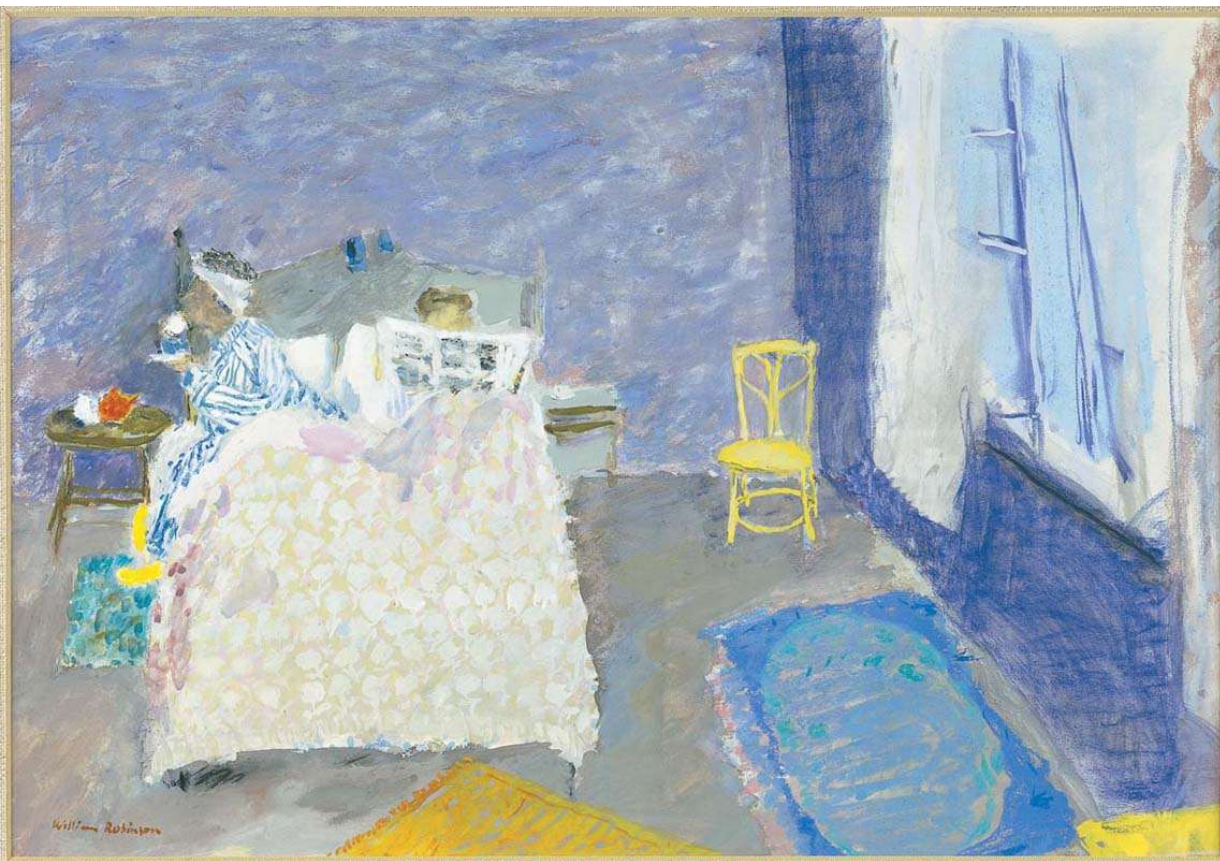
1992, commences 'Mountain' series, which the artist considers among his finest work.

1994-96 Moves to Kingscliff on the northern New South Wales coast where the changing moods of sea and sky become a primary inspirational focus for his work. Acquires rainforest studio at Springbrook in the adjacent hinterland.

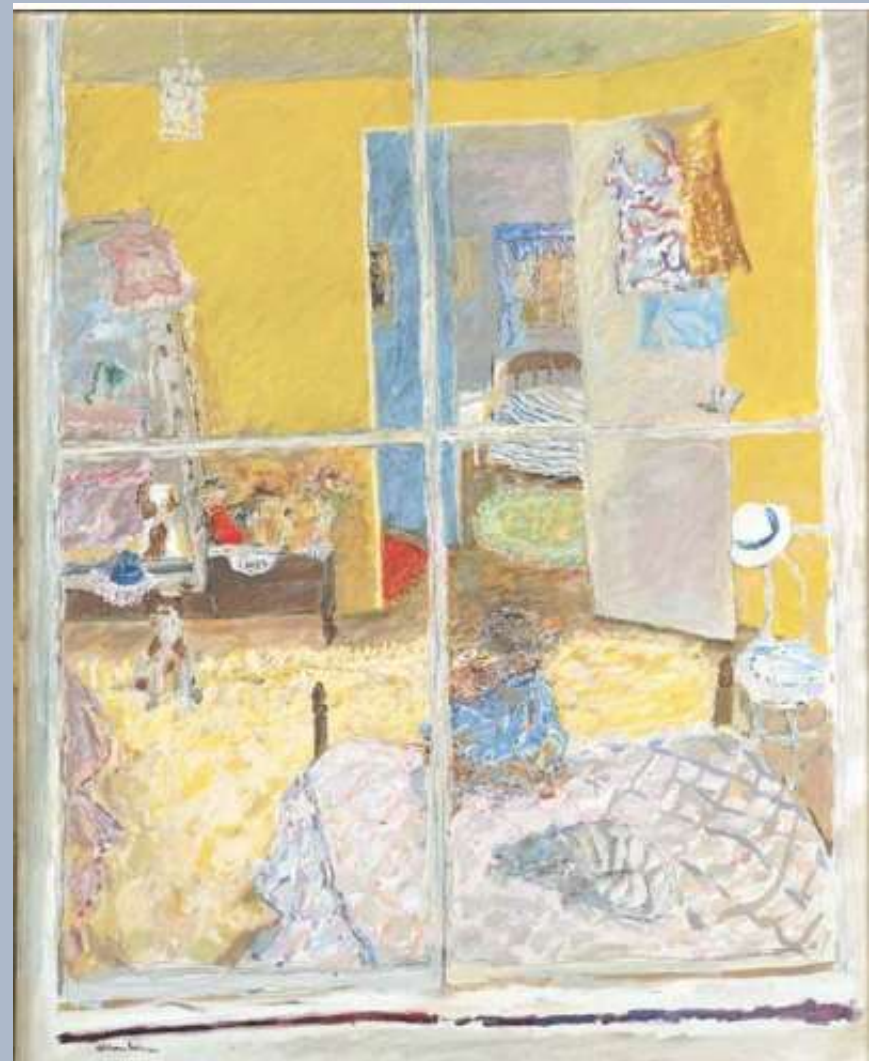
2001 Returns to live in bayside Brisbane. Purchases coastal retreat near Byron Bay and sells property at Springbrook.

2009 The William Robinson Gallery opens at Queensland University of Technology.





Early Interiors





Equestrian Self Portrait (Winner 1987)

Archibald Prize Winners



Self-portrait with Stunned Mullet (Winner 1995)



**Professor John Williamson and
his brother William. 1992**

Most of his portraits are of himself, wife and other family members and in respect of himself are self-parodies



Farm Pictures





25/100

WILLIAM ROBINSON
PARK



Ophelia by John Everett Millais



Landscape with Bathers –
Auckland Art Gallery



Mostly paints in oils but has exhibited pastels, lithographs, etchings and painted ceramics

Landscapes are based on real places – does field sketches in watercolour with written colour notes – but actual paintings are often largely done from memory and with extreme transformation of perspective so the connection to the original is of the essence rather than photorealism.

“... music is integral to William Robinson's artistic practice" He says he needs to listen to music in order to paint. Robinson's favourite composers, Bach, Handel, and Schubert, take him to a heightened state of consciousness and guide him in creating his compositions

... his "knowledge and love of Bach's music that proved so useful to him in working out" the pictorial space in his multi-perspective paintings of hinterland and rainforest landscapes

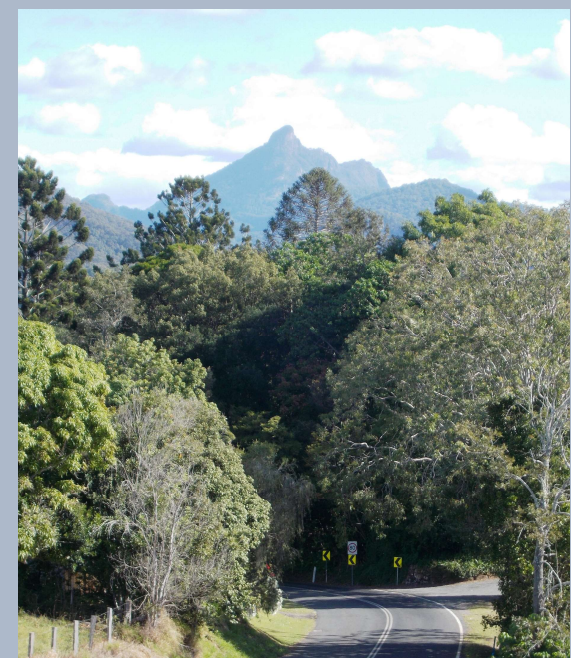
... he wanted to "move away from observing the picture as some sort of representation. I want to sweep the observer down the gullies and up into the sky. The observer is drawn into the landscape-not physically but as a sort of connection with memory.”

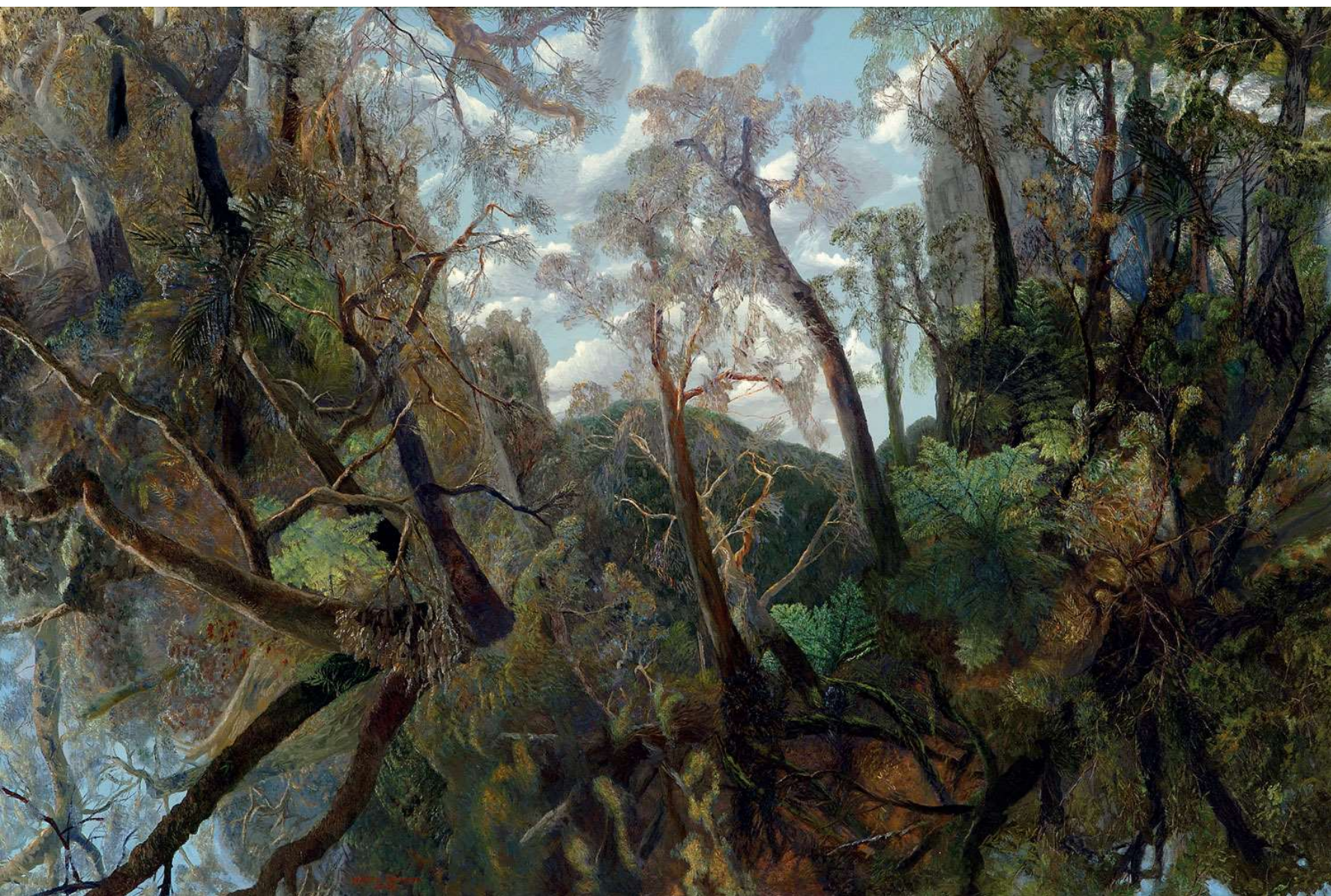


Golden light,
Springbrook 2001



Fading light,
Numinbah 2001

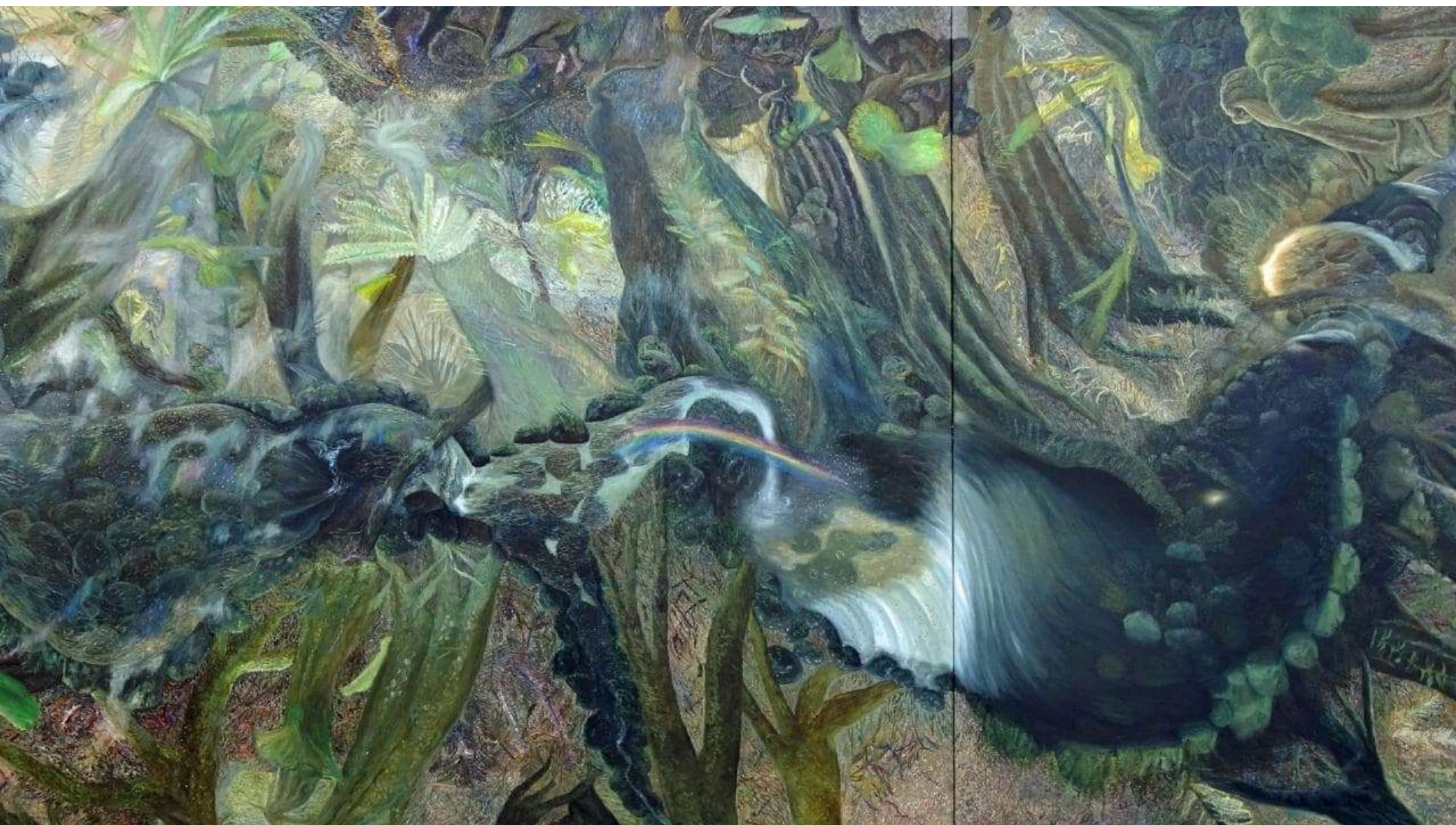




Purling Brook
escarpment
2005



The Passage of Mount St Gothard
by JMW Turner, 1804







Creation Landscape: Earth and Sea
(1995) 183 x 730 cm





Evening landscape with pandanus, 2006

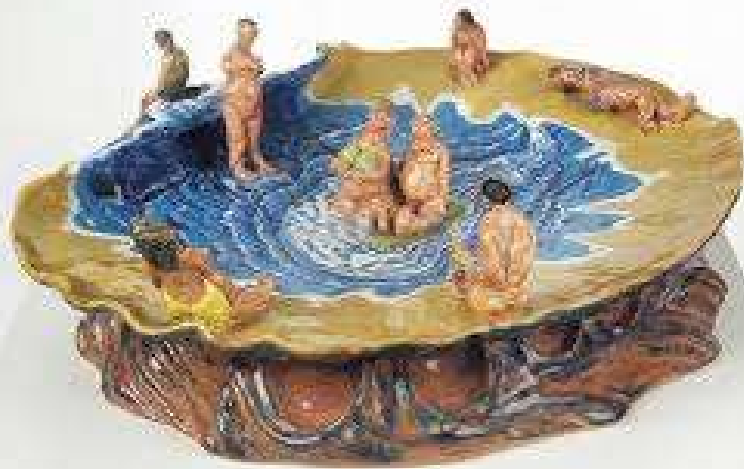


William Robinson Still life with Majolica jug 2012, oil on linen.

With the onset of arthritis has given up painting at a large scale and his recent outputs have been a return to very traditional still lives / interiors.



**Painted ceramics – bodies
commissioned from
others.**





William Robinson Gallery, Old Government House

QUT Campus – next to the old Botanic Gardens –
Gardens Point, Central Brisbane.

Collection donated by the artist – valued at the
time at \$5M

Other Collections:
National Gallery of Art Canberra
MET New York

