

## EXHIBITIONS Josh Robbins *Roost* 5th May 2015 - 23rd May 2015

Roost is Josh Robbins' third major exhibition with FLG and his most ambitious. Standing amongst the vivid, circumferential bushland the 2m x 8m *Roost* takes the viewer on an exotic journey through a colourful canopy of feathers, flowers and fascination. It is both a perfect and imperfect celebration of nature, beauty, and the extraordinary bird life that come to roost in our imaginations.



### Roost

Melbourne artist Josh Robbins offers us an alternative to the often loaded and over-conceptualised works that are now dominating gallery walls. Inviting us to share in his internal dialogue that expresses nothing more than beauty, he articulates a desire to inspire and invigorate not through complicated symbolism but through an appetite to capture fluidity in form that simply disrupts and stops us in our tracks.



As individuals, in a world where lines are drawn and rules are enforced across most of which defines our human existence, it could be said that often we try to locate and harness a balance between two extremes. Where some may feel content within the confines that are provided for them, others are compelled to create their own balance of uniformity and control with a looseness, a vagueness, that allows them to exude uniqueness and reside in a realm of their own creation – pushing boundaries, creating their own conclusions. Robbins also appears to create within this musing – his birds, and birds they are, reference the real, the scientific, the defined, but he applies an innate creative licence to push them beyond this. He masterfully captures a delicate balance between tight, controlled detailing and loose, playful brushstrokes. Letting the paint well and fall he both controls, and yet uncontrollably follows, instinctual mark-making that defines his canopy.



Josh Robbins  
*Big A* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
130cm x 90cm



Josh Robbins  
*Come Get You Some* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
130cm x 90cm



Often we habitually seek out familiarity in what lies before us – allowing us to define and translate to align with our own reality – yet it is here that Robbins makes the loose and the unexpected triumphant. Where Monet used light in this way, to evoke feelings and responses greater than the scenes themselves, so does Robbins but with form. As he transforms and contorts the birds that inhabit his imagined terrain, their bright plumage poised in order for us to properly observe them for a moment, they lie beyond what we can imagine and so cause us to contemplate a world beyond our own.



Roost is Robbins's most ambitious painting to date, and for the artist it was a way for him to be completely at the mercy of a landscape that is of his creation. Scale, it seemed, was a natural way for Robbins to skilfully respond to the very ideas of infiltrating tight detailing and brushwork over an extensive area, and what had begun as a vision to create eight individual pieces, he decided, would be best kept as this whole, exceptionally executed masterpiece.



The painting invites the viewer into an immersive, surreal and fantastical world where time stops, birds flock, tree branches meander and respite is offered from the busy world that surrounds. Resting one's eye on a branch, or a feather, one can truly escape and admire the colourful, serene display that has been granted.



Josh Robbins  
*Condor & Friend* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
130cm x 90cm



Josh Robbins  
*The Offering* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
90cm x 130cm



Josh Robbins  
*Victoria & the Autumnal Shower* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
76cm x 56cm



Josh Robbins  
*In the Vines* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
76cm x 56cm

His feathered creations reference birds that are familiar in our repertoire – a white heron cranes its neck, perched on a branch that extends from the water below; a barn owl sits silently, poised, its eyes flashing as it settles on the limb of an Australian Snow Gum, and smaller finches flutter over an arbour that glistens with moss moist from tropical rains. But due to his free-form approach to painting he thrusts these new species into our imaginations. And there, they take flight.

by Melanie Caple, BArts(FA) MArts, 2015

Interview with Josh Robbins on [The Art & The Curious](#), March 2015



Josh Robbins  
*Black Cock* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
76cm x 56cm

[JOSH ROBBINS PROFILE](#)  
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Josh Robbins  
*O! Ringneck* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
76cm x 112cm



Josh Robbins  
*The Tale of Goldtail* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
76cm x 56cm



Josh Robbins  
*Three Pomegranates One Bird* 2015  
oil, charcoal, and floor stain & saw dust on linen  
76cm x 65cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #1- #8* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 800cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #1* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 100cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #2* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 100cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #3* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 100cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #4* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 100cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #5* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 100cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #6* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 100cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #7* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 100cm



Josh Robbins  
*Roost #8* 2014  
oil on linen  
200cm x 100cm

