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Phillip George: Tranzlution
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Stills Gallery
Sydney
6 December 2000 – 10 February 2001

Think of all the words that can work for cross-purposes ☐ transition, translation, transparent, transitory, transpire, transverse, transmission, transport, transform, transpose, transmute.

Phillip George has created an effective one word summary for pages of dictionary definitions ☐ "tranzlution". It covers all cross-purposes, all fleeting moments of creation from one persona to another. Such an effective word, for such a radical concept.

George is an artist of curious contradictions. Technically he is one of the most adept at working with new media, but is not interested in discussing the mechanics of his work. Instead he uses the tools of the modern day alchemists (a.k.a. software designers) to make his own magical worlds.

In Tranzlution he has created a place of fantastic cliffs and deep blue sea, where relics of older civilisations are carved into the rugged cliff faces or are exposed by the waves as they wash on the beach. The carvings and paintings at times seem to emerge like ghosts. It is as though there are stories to tell ☐ of peoples come and gone, of glorious pageants, conquerors from out of the sea, and past defeats ☐ but the artist cannot tell.

For those who know and love the sea around Sydney there is the added visual pleasure of recognising some of the landscapes in these rocky cliffs and bays. But even without the addition of the ghosts of possible pasts, this is not Little Bay as most have seen it. Instead he has intensified all colours and exaggerated all details to make it a landscape of dreams where every image is so vivid it lingers in the mind for ever.

The visual tradition George is tapping into with these works is as old as the western canon. This is not art as illustration, with the artist telling a visual story that the viewer knows well ☐ which is essentially the subject matter of most religious and mythological art.

Rather George is the artist as a narrator of a concealed narrative. He implies his stories and their mythology while leaving the details to the viewer's imagination. His art is the trigger. For George it is important that the viewer is drawn into the world he has created, and believes that every detail is actuality. In these works the virtual becomes concrete.

The other important aspect of Philip George's work is that it is beautiful. "I'd like to bring back the beautiful", he says. That attitude signals a change of direction for art and the bay.

In 1969 Christo wrapped the coast along Little Bay in the largest public artwork seen in this country. The purpose was didactic as much as aesthetic. Christo eliminated the colours of nature with monochrome form ☐ the most successful photographs of the event are in black and white.

George enhances the colours as a part of his seduction of the viewer, so that we believe that there is a place in a land we may know where ancient heroes once made their home.

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