

LILLI WATERS

ANTHROPOCENE

THE AGE OF HUMANS

A VIRTUAL EXHIBITION OPENING ONLINE 9 JUNE 2020



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ANTHROPOCENE

THE AGE OF HUMANS

Depicting the female form in landscapes that are eerie and post-apocalyptic in their starkness—rough-hewn incarnations of the Garden of Eden—this series draws inspiration from biblical narratives of creation and the fall of man (woman). The marble skin of these figures, luminous in dark, uninhabited landscapes conjures images from myths and fairy tales that allude to a state of innocence and wonder.

Yet while the fall was characterised by torment and shame, a loss of grace, the presence of the women in these untamed landscapes has a dream-like ambiguity. Rather than being helpless, or in need of protection, the women offer a more expansive expression of the feminine: beauty combined with strength, nonchalance and indomitability.

In the Anthropocene epoch, there is a profound disconnect with nature, yet these images situate humans within nature, cocooned in sensuous repose and unfurling into a state of awareness with the possibility for communion with nature.



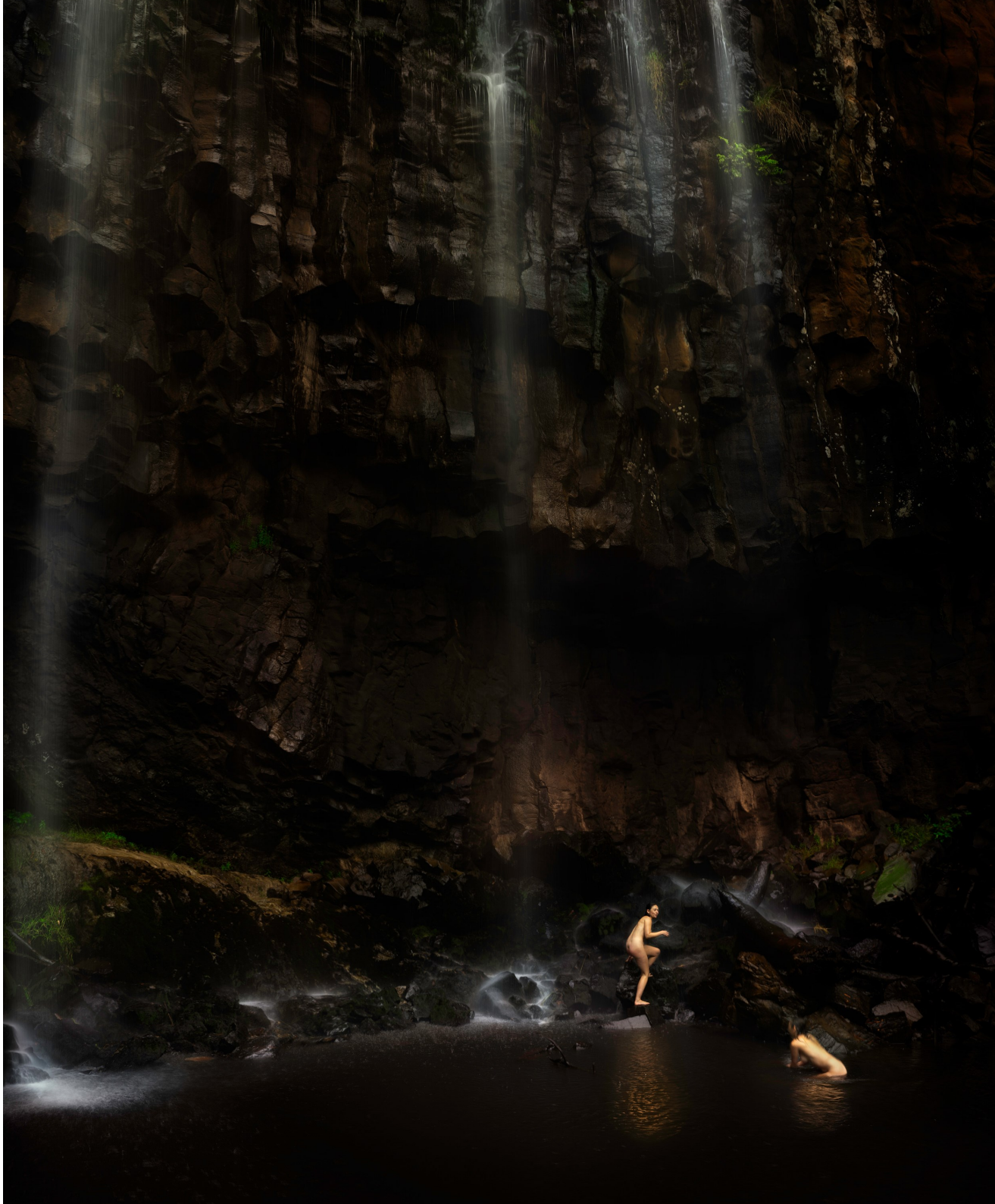
AFTER THE FIRE

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 94cm | \$2400

134cm x 122cm | \$3750



LAST DAYS

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 94cm | \$2400

134cm x 112cm | \$3750



PORTRAIT OF A FACELESS WOMAN I

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

78cm x 112cm | \$2400

110cm x 160cm | \$3750



PORTRAIT OF A FACELESS WOMAN II

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 112cm | \$2400

150cm x 150cm | \$3750



ANGEL

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

78cm x 112cm | \$2400

110cm x 160cm | \$3750



ISOLATION

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

78cm x 112cm | \$2400

110cm x 160cm | \$3750



WHAT WILL BECOME OF US
Archival pigment print on fibre rag
Edition of 8 + 1AP
78cm x 112cm | \$2400
110cm x 160cm | \$3750



A CHANGE OF WORLD

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 112cm | \$2400

150cm x 150cm | \$3750



EDEN

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 112cm | \$2400

150cm x 150cm | \$3750



LIFE AND DEATH

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 112cm | \$2400

150cm x 150cm | \$3750



EXTINCT

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

78cm x 112cm | \$2400

110cm x 160cm | \$3750



THE VEILED WOMAN I

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 117.7cm | \$2400

150cm x 157.8cm | \$3750



SECOND WAVE

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 112cm | \$2400

150cm x 150cm | \$3750



THE VEILED WOMAN II

Archival pigment print on fibre rag

Edition of 8 + 1AP

112cm x 112cm | \$2400

150cm x 150cm | \$3750

THE JOURNEY

For ANTHROPOCENE, my muse and dear friend and I embarked on a five-day road trip in January 2020. We packed her 4WD to the brim with props and bags of fabric from op shops, and took off in search of utterly beautiful landscapes. With bushfires raging all across the country, our options were extremely limited, so on a whim I decided to head towards the Murray-Sunset National Park, about seven hours from Melbourne. After a few days in the small town of Sea Lake, we decided to abandon our original route and turn towards the more lush Grampian Ranges in search of water.

These creative working trips, venturing into the Australian wilderness, are always a whirlwind of jumbled sensations; exhilaration, trepidation, pressure and exhaustion. Senses seem heightened, as things normally passed by, now have a weight of the possibility of becoming a hopefully powerful image. I question; does this vista draw me in with the promise of some elusive magic, or is it just the ordinary? Sometimes the lines are blurred.

These days often feel like the longest of our lives. Rising at 3.30am eagerly anticipating the early morning light, we sit anxiously in the dark ready for the small window of magic glow before the sun peaks over the horizon. Long hours of driving between destinations are peppered with the odd side meander if the clouds are feeling generous, while always keeping the approaching last light of the day in mind. So we make haste in pursuit of dusk, smuggling some leftover cheap wine in with my cameras as we trek into the unfamiliar bush like pack horses, in search of a scene which intuitively feels like 'something', like butterflies in your stomach. As we walk, we are aware of the gamble, that this could easily (and often does) result in failure.

Working alone with natural light in the environment and a nude model can, at times, be overwhelming. The beauty of nature comes with its unpredictability, and so too its tourists. It is also in, and because of, these moments of frustration, battling high winds, sinking mud, incessant rain and all that goes wrong, that I feel a deep appreciation for that very moment, the power of nature, and the insignificance of humanity but also the joy of feeling alive and awake. This challenging work has meant that I have been witness to, and immersed in, such beautiful Australian landscapes, at times stark and eerie, lush and dense; these moments have been some of the most breathtaking and magical experiences of my life. Nature is my creative playground and where I feel most at home.

ABOUT THE WORK

For ANTHROPOCENE I used lace for the first time. I often source secondhand fabrics, but have been hesitant to use lace specifically. Perhaps it was too old fashioned and laden with inherent meaning, but days before embarking on the five-day road trip, I succumbed to my love for it. For me, lace represents romanticism, the feminine, a single thread of delicate beauty combined with the strength of many intertwining threads, and in many ways, symbolises the way in which I aim to represent the female figure, an honest beauty combined with strength. Lace has often been symbolic of modesty and obedience, of rites of passage, of fragility and chastity, but also debauchery. I am drawn to the idea of playing with and challenging stereotypical notions of the feminine.

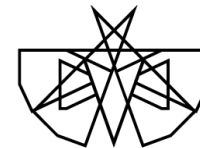
Working on the raw images during isolation and the deep uncertainty of the beginning of the virus, married with the images themselves coming out of the direct aftermath of the bushfires, have shaped the final works into some of my darker images. Fear, grief and a sense of foreboding are all intertwined with glimmers of hope and a feminine power the world seems to be yearning for, reflecting the precarious times we find ourselves in.

Hair is another fascination as a veil, a protective layer, magical and possibly dangerous, often symbolically depicted with an ability to communicate social meaning; associations of blonde hair with purity and dark hair with passion, historically hair has been a tool to measure sanity. Unkempt hair as a symbol of chaos and immorality, unbridled, unhinged sexuality. For me, hair also conjures up the dark and mysterious fairy tales we all grew up being shaped by—women who needed a prince to rescue them, but also ancient legends of powerful queens and mysterious women often forgotten by a history mostly written by men.

Finding myself studying film photography by accident as a young person, and deep in that world of scouring black and white photography books, I became heavily inspired by the works of women photographers Julia Margaret Cameron and Francesca Woodman, and painters John William Waterhouse and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Images from another time, another world. This love for the Pre-Raphaelite era became a profound driver behind a lot of my work. There is a rare beauty mixed with torment and melancholy in these paintings that has always deeply resonated.



VIEW EXHIBITION
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