



CURATORIAL+CO.

THE SHAPE OF SHELTER

AMBER HEARN

13-30 MAY 2026

AMBER HEARN



AMBER HEARN (b. 1987, Orange NSW) explores notions of the feminine, birth, motherhood, and the body, alongside her personal history and childhood, reflecting experiences that are both individual and universal. Interior spaces and symbolic forms, woven into the landscape, serve as both a representation of current place and memory, and as a lens through which she investigates deeper narratives, allowing the works to function as self-portraits. Amber draws on her long-standing relationship with the bush and the natural world she has inhabited throughout her life. Deeply interested in ancient history, symbolism, and particularly women, she further explores these themes through colour, form, layering, repetition, and primal gesture.

Hearn is a visual artist working on Dharug and Gundungurra Land, Blue Mountains, Australia. She grew up in both Tamworth, regional New South Wales, and Papua New Guinea, where she was immersed in nature and developed a strong connection to land, and place. Her primary practice is painting but she has also worked in installation, performance, video, and virtual reality. Amber graduated from The National Art School with a Bachelor of Fine Art (Honours) in 2014. She has been exhibiting since 2012 and represented by Curatorial+Co since 2019. Amber has been a finalist in several major prizes including Paddington Art Prize, Glover Art Prize, Fishers Ghost Art Award, and Blacktown City Art Prize. Amber has exhibited in both solo and group shows across Australia including Caboolture Regional Art Gallery. Hearn's work has been featured in Artist Profile, Art Almanac, Art Edit, Inside Out and Real Living.

THE SHAPE OF SHELTER

Amber Hearn's latest body of work, *The Shape of Shelter*, unfolds within an internal architectural landscape; a space that sits between memory, body, and place. Although traces of the external world are present, the paintings shift away from representing the landscape and move toward exploring the structures through which experience is held and felt.

Engaging with notions of the feminine, birth, motherhood, and embodiment, these works emerge from personal history while remaining connected to a more universal, collective reading. The recurring vessel form operates as both body and space within the works, not just as containers but as sites of shelter held within the body itself. Positioned within shifting landscapes and interior frameworks, they act as a stand-in for the body while also suggesting what it carries. Drawing from domestic and ceremonial references, they function as abstracted self-portraits, holding memory, emotion, and lived experience as they move through the spaces they inhabit.

"When making these works, I experienced myself move as a mirror, both in scale and form, pushing and spilling into the canvas as I brought the forms to life. Searching to find a balance between tension and spaciousness, breathing space and moments of noise, I utilise the landscape or interior to explore more personal narratives, memories, and experiences, allowing them to take form in the works, often through a process of creation and destruction, with layers upon layers taking place in each piece."

Architectural elements structure each painting's composition, echoing windows, thresholds, and enclosing planes. These structures create space for life-sized vessels, positioning the viewer simultaneously within a room and within a body, as if moving through an interior that is both physical and abject. Hearn's long-standing relationship to the Australian bush underpins her language, not through direct depiction but as something absorbed and reconstructed over time, manifesting in the work as atmosphere, rhythm, and form.

Across the series, the vessel shifts from a recognisable form into something more immersive, less an object to observe and more a space to enter. Here, the body becomes a site of shelter, a place formed over time, where protection and vulnerability exist together, and where what is held can shift, soften, expand, and dissolve.

Through layering, repetition, and primal gesture, Hearn's visual language continues to evolve through a raw, intuitive, and deliberate approach. Rooted in a personal inheritance from a long line of farming women, where connection to the landscape is both lived and remembered, the work is informed by ancient matriarchal systems and the continuity of embodied practices. It traces lineage and what is carried through women across time. Across this body of work, a sense of somatic history emerges, something held, carried, and at times overflowing.



Resting on This Quiet Ground, 2026
acrylic on canvas
171 x 141 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,800



She Emerged Through the Land and Stood Still, 2026
acrylic on canvas
171 x 141 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,800



I Rested Where the Light Broke Open, 2026
acrylic on canvas
171 x 141 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,800

“When making these works, I experienced myself move as a mirror, both in scale and form, pushing and spilling into the canvas as I brought the forms to life.”





Bathed in the Rain, Memories in the Earth, 2026
acrylic on canvas
156 x 141 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,500



The Light Found Me and Did Not Let Me Go, 2026
acrylic on canvas
156 x 141 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,500



The Horizon That Held Me While I Spilled Over, 2026
acrylic on canvas
141 x 116 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200



Under a Sky That Knew How to Carry Me, 2026
acrylic on canvas
141 x 116 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200





Held Between the Waters, 2026
acrylic on canvas
141 x 116 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200



The Ground Opened and I Stayed, 2026
acrylic on canvas
141 x 116 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200



A Place That Formed Around Me as I Grew, 2026
acrylic on canvas
141 x 171 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,800



A Place to Hold the Sky, 2026
acrylic on canvas
141 x 171 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 6,800



Gathering at the Edge of Light While it All Fell Apart and Came Back Together, 2026
acrylic on canvas
116 x 141 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200



Holding Memories, and Special Things, in Many Places, 2026
acrylic on canvas
116 x 141 cm
framed in Tasmanian oak
AUD 5,200



All That I Held Without Knowing, 2026
paper clay, found clay
75 x 40 x 40 cm
AUD 2,200



I Gathered Myself From the Earth, 2026
paper clay, found clay
60 x 40 x 40 cm
AUD 2,000



CURATORIAL+CO.

ART GALLERY + CONSULTANCY

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Photography courtesy of the artist

We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this gallery stands. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, skies, and culture. We honour the rich artistic traditions that have existed on this Country for tens of thousands of years, and we recognise that First Nations people are the first artists, storytellers, and custodians of culture. We are committed to listening, learning, and working in respectful collaboration with First Nations communities.