

VOXEVOS



CURATORIAL+CO.

SIMON CARDWELL

19 AUGUST – 5 SEPTEMBER 2026

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Simon Cardwell is a photographic artist best known for dramatic, painterly imagery exploring identity, freedom, and isolation – from botanical still lifes to portraits referencing historical and classical imagery. For Cardwell, the shutter marks a beginning, not an end: each image undergoes painterly manipulation of colour, composition, and form. His practice draws on painting and early photographic traditions as a counterpoint to machine-generated imagery, which calculates pattern and probability but carries no interiority, no memory, no pulse. Cardwell's images demand the volatility of lived experience filtered through an intuitive process where mood shapes light and shadow as much as technique.

Symbolism runs throughout; plants signify growth and resilience, birds evoke freedom and transcendence, and the human figure carries the weight of memory and myth, each bridging the earthly and the spiritual. Blending reality and imagination, Cardwell's practice traverses universal themes rooted in mythology and human experience, guiding viewers toward new insight into our shared search for meaning and connection.

Simon Cardwell (b. 1960s) lives and works in Sydney, Australia (Gadigal land). Born in Adelaide, he studied Visual Art at the University of Adelaide and Photography at the Academie voor Beeldende Kunsten, Netherlands. His practice spans photography, digital media, and collaborative projects. A finalist in several esteemed art prizes, including the Moran Prize (2012), Josephine Ulrick & Win Schubert Photography Award (2012), PX3 Fine Art, Paris (2011), Illustrators Awards (2012, 2013), Hazlehurst Art Prize for Works on Paper (2013), Museum of the Avant-garde Prize, Switzerland (2024, 2025), and the Burwood Art Prize (2025). His works are held in the National Gallery of Australia and the Art Gallery of Western Australia. In 2026, he presented with Curatorial+Co. at the Aotearoa Art Fair.

VOX EVOS

For me, the click of the shutter is never the destination; it is merely the beginning of the artistic process. VoxEvos (Latin for “the voice of evolution”) represents a deliberate departure into the uncharted territories of my image-making, serving as a visual testament to creative metamorphosis. In this series, the traditional boundaries of narrative and form are treated not as limits, but as thresholds to be crossed. This work exists as an intentional exercise in pure creativity, where conceptualising the idea happens far beyond the mechanical constraints of traditional photography. The final piece is less about the photograph itself, and entirely about the psychological, narrative, and emotional journey constructed from it.

I intentionally reference neoclassical painting and historical photography as a conduit for this idea. This active, deeply human methodology stands in stark contrast to the shifting landscape of modern technology. While artificial intelligence exists as a passive tool, digesting every artwork across history to generate imagery by calculating mathematical averages, probabilities, and pattern recognition – it lacks a pulse. A machine can render a perfect sunset, a classical composition, or a hyper-realistic figure, but it has no interiority. It mimics the surface of human expression without ever having lived the experience. It does not know what it feels like to lose someone, to feel the warmth of the sun on skin, or to carry the weight of a heavy memory.

By grounding this work in the anchors of art history, I highlight the deeply human, volatile creative process that machines merely copy.

Crucially, AI does not dream.

True creation demands the full volatility of emotion, the complex filtering of personal history, and an innate understanding of what it means to exist, suffer, and evolve. This series is a direct manifestation of that intuitive process, where the subconscious acts as a vital collaborator.

In the early stages of developing this exhibition, I dreamt of creating a specific shadow, visualising the exact digital steps to achieve it through my sleep-state. Upon waking, I went straight to my computer, followed the blueprint of my subconscious, and loved the result – so it stayed, becoming a permanent technique and an anchor within the work. The specific mood carried into the studio dictates how light, shadow, and composition are ultimately shaped; every relationship, memory, and personal milestone filters into the frame, turning a raw digital file into an allegorical landscape.

Moving through these diverse, meticulously constructed visual worlds is a singular, recurring character who inhabits every frame, clad in a 10,000-piece sequin bodysuit I hand-created over two months. This figure serves as a vital anchor – a silent witness and a constant reminder of the human thread that binds these disparate environments together.

As the aesthetics shift and the surroundings transform, this character remains, navigating the tension between the familiar and the surreal. They act as the viewer’s proxy, a focal point of stillness within an ever-evolving artistic cosmos.

Ultimately, VoxEvos asserts that true evolution is not technological, but rooted in the depth of human imagination. It is an invitation to look past the passive surface of the image and step into the deeper, unspoken truths of the human condition – tracking the journey of creation from a single spark of an idea into infinite possibilities.

~ Simon Cardwell, 2026 ~



Neoclassical Nude Male, Seaside, 2026
eco-solvent print on cotton rag paper, wax



Shrouded Hollywood Star, Dramatic Circular Light, 2026
eco-solvent print on cotton rag paper, 24-carat gold leaf, wax



Solitary Figure, Black Coat, Dramatic Oil Painting, Cloud, 2026
eco-solvent print on cotton rag paper, wax



Athlete's Nude Silhouette, Goddess, Grass, 1936 Olympics, 2026
eco-solvent print on cotton rag paper, wax



Mythic Woman on Mountain Rocks, Starry Night, 2026
eco-solvent print on cotton rag paper, wax



Eighteenth-Century Boy, Shiny Blue Silk, Dramatic Landscape, 2026
eco-solvent print on cotton rag paper, wax



Dancer and Muse, 2026
single-channel moving image, 1 min 5 sec, 16:9 aspect ratio
edition of 5
AUD 10,000

PRICE LIST + FRAMING INFORMATION

MEDIUM

Image size: 110 x 82.5 cm

Framed size: 112.5 x 85 cm

Print only: AUD 4,350 | 24-carat gold leaf: AUD 5,150

Framed: AUD 5,200 | 24-carat gold leaf: AUD 6,000

Edition 5 + 1AP

LARGE

Image size: 150 x 110 cm

Framed size: 153 x 113 cm

Print only: AUD 5,300 | 24-carat gold leaf: AUD 6,500

Framed: AUD 6,500 | 24-carat gold leaf: AUD 7,700

Edition 4 + 1AP

X LARGE

Image size: 200 x 150 cm

Framed size: 203 x 153 cm

Print only: AUD 6,500 | 24-carat gold leaf: AUD 8,300

Framed: AUD 8,500 | 24-carat gold leaf: AUD 10,300

Edition 1 + 1AP

DETAILS

Print: eco-solvent print on cotton rag paper

Frame: eco-solvent print on cotton rag paper, mounted on aluminium, framed in Tasmanian oak stained black, shadowbox frame (no glass)

Paper can be wiped clean for care

Each photograph is individually signed with a unique wax seal on the front



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ART GALLERY + CONSULTANCY

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Portrait image: Michael Carn

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.