



**James Tylor**

Fire Country, Malua Bay 1 2022

digital photograph on hahnemuhle paper

50 x 50cm

# James Tylor

## Artist Statement

The Fire Country series addresses the physical and cultural significance of fire in Australia. It draws the burnt landscape into the domestic space, revealing its intrinsic beauty as part of key environmental mechanisms. These works are representative of our contemporary relationship with fire and potential for better engagement in the future.

The black and white photographs on burnt timber frames features photographs taken from various ecosystems in NSW, ACT and SA that have experienced catastrophic fires in recent years. We live on a continent whose unique ecosystems have evolved in a symbiosis with fire. Most of the country's plants and animals rely on seasonal burns for germination, regeneration, and preservation from catastrophic fires. Emblematic of this is the Eucalypt genus, whose shoots we see emerging from burnt limbs.

Fire is always here. First Nations people learnt over millennia how to control destructive wildfires and turn them into low intensity cultural burns. These burns are distinct to each ecosystem and timed perfectly to ensure the best outcome for the germination of seeds, clearing of dead plant material for new growth, and the safety of endemic flora and fauna. Contemporary Australia lives in fear of fire. With colonisation, First Nations' knowledge of Country was overlaid with incompatible perceptions of land management. Urban

sprawl, land clearing, and avoidance of fire has led to a point today where catastrophic wildfires cost lives, species and ecosystems.

Fire Country attempts to embrace fire in Australia as a part of our collective culture. Referencing the symbiotic relationship that fire has with our continent's landscapes, the work captures the intrinsic beauty of this interplay through the iconic Eucalypt. Through this series of photography we want to offer not just sorrow for what we've lost, but also hope for our future.

## Biography (b.1986)

James Tylor is a multi-disciplinary visual artist whose practice explores and recontextualises Australian cultural ideas and representations through the perspectives of his multicultural heritage, that comprises Nunga (Kurna Miyurna), Māori (Te Arawa) and European (British, Dutch and Norwegian) ancestry.

Tylor is interested in Indigenous and European colonial history with a particular focus on South Australia and the indigenous plants and landscape of the Kurna people and how this history plays into present day issues around cultural identity and the environment. The artist specialises in experimental and historical photographic processes often employing a hybrid of analogue and digital photographic techniques to create contemporary Daguerreotypes. He turns the objectifying gaze of 19th century photography from one that documented a 'disappearing' Aboriginal culture onto our current landscape and our shared future care and responsibility to this ecosystem. He opens up new ways of seeing place, environment and culture.

Initially Tylor trained and worked as a carpenter in Australia and Denmark before dedicating himself to an intense period of art studies where following a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Photography) at South Australian School of Art, Adelaide in 2011 he completed Honours in Fine Arts (Photography) at the Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart and then graduated with a Masters in Visual Arts and Design (Photography) at SASA in 2013. The year after graduating Tylor won the Macquarie Group Emerging Artist Prize and in 2021 he was awarded the prestigious Bowness Photography Prize in addition to being a finalist in major awards over the last eight years.

Tylor's work is regularly selected by curators for inclusion in group exhibitions that include the Adelaide Biennial: Free State, AGASA (2022), The National,

AGNSW (2021) and Cutting-edge: 21st century photography, Monash Gallery of Art.

Tylor is widely represented in major public institutional collections and notable international collections including Kluge Ruhe Collection, USA.

**James Tylor is represented by GAGPROJECTS, Adelaide & Berlin and Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne**