
miscellaneous



67

‘Russian Shaman.’ St. Petersburg. Russia.

B&W. 6”X4” plastic plate.

This image is based on a full size model of a Russian shaman from Siberia in the Ethnographic Museum in St. Petersburg. As I see artist as shaman I am very intrigued by the role of the shaman who often serves as a human conduit between the spirit and material. Kandinsky was also very much interested in the ethnography of Siberia and his so called abstract paintings are often filled with shaman patterns and symbols.



61

‘The Human Spirit Rests.’

B&W. 4”X 2.5”. copperplate.

This ‘spirit’ is based on one of many charcoal drawings I have made from attending a life drawing class which a friend had encouraged me to go to; while she elegantly drew accomplished likenesses of the model before us I would ‘scratch away’ with charcoal. Although this work is not overtly mythological I toy with the idea of doing a series of etchings based on these drawings with - perhaps - a mythological theme. I have a strong interest in Ancient History & Ancient Mythology especially as it shows me the consistency of both the folly, horror and goodness of human nature, fate and the gods. I highly recommend reading *Meditations* by the Stoic Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius.



53

‘Angel Seat.’ Brunswick St. Melbourne.

B&W.4”X6”. copperplate.

I quite like Brunswick Street which has a lively, diverse character and so I thought it was rather befitting to spot this arty seat on this Melbourne road. .





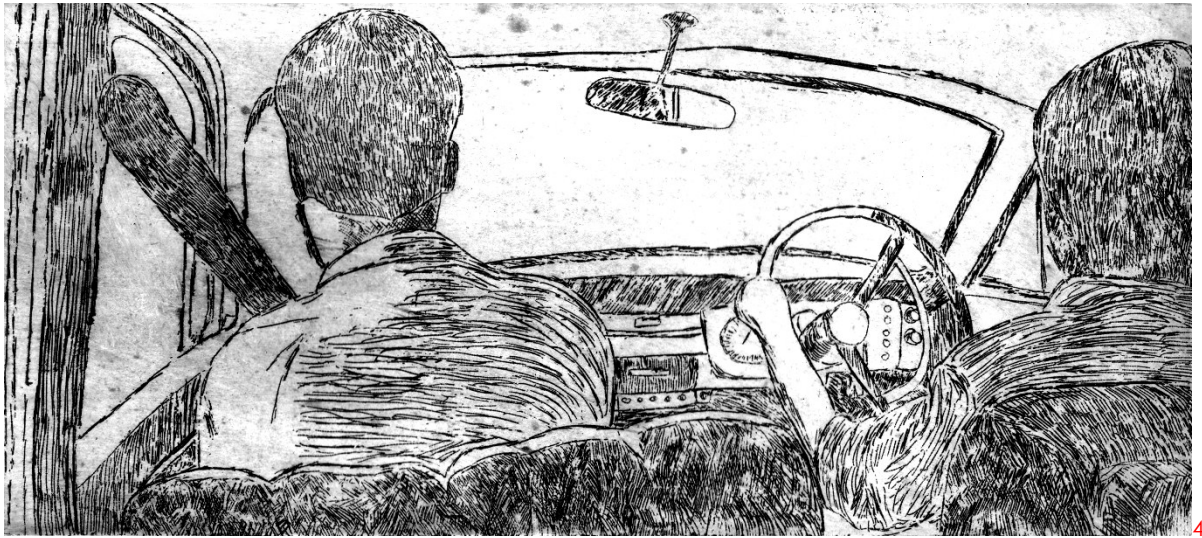
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‘View from Mt. Sinai.’

B&W. 6"X7". zinc plate.

This rather ordinary scene achieved with scratching steel wool across the wax on the plate belies a night in which a very strange event occurred. There were nine of us staying overnight on Mt. Sinai (we had all arrived more-or-less individually) and early on we sighted these seven or eight amazing vertical ‘pillars’ of pulsating green light hovering just above the dark horizon line. We had no idea of what they were – and to this day I still wonder about this phenomenon – yet as we also watched hundreds of shooting stars above us it was concluded that it was possible to imagine the many larger-than-life things that happened in this terrain during Old Testament times. An Australian woman kept playing Vivaldi’s Four Seasons on her walkman (she used two clear Moroccan glasses to amplify the sound) and as it was the very first time that I had heard this music I still associate it with this very unusual evening.





7

‘Indian Magicians. Brunswick Heads.’

B&W. 10"X 4.5". zinc plate.

These two Indian guys approached me in Byron Bay at a time when I was staying with old friends in Bangalow. They had spotted me with this clunky SLR camera and asked if I would accompany them to Brunswick Heads where they would be performing magic tricks on the main street. Although I only had black & white film in the camera – I agreed. The photos would eventually be sent to their Newcastle address). Along with taking photos of them performing rope tricks, having silver balls mysteriously coming out mouths ecetera, etcetera I had also took a couple of shots – from the backseat – of the back of their heads and the ‘antique dashboard’ of their old ‘sixties something’ black Valiant sedan. This rather obtuse image which probably doesn’t mean anything but to me is the final result of those two joined photos. However, I thought the whole experience had a tinge of ‘magic realism’ to it which I think most people would appreciate.

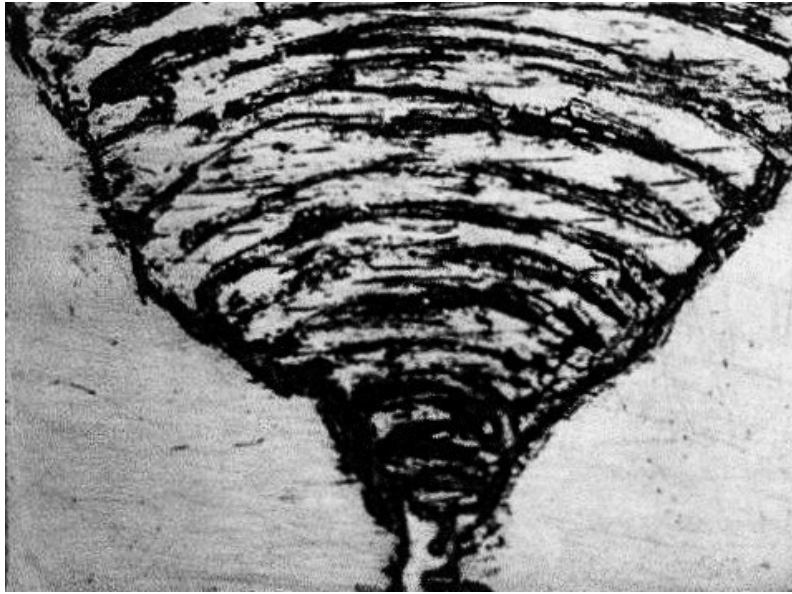


‘Berlin Orpheus.’

black on grey. 3" X 8.5" zinc plate.



The well-known Berlin landmark: the Victory Column (made more famous by the German movie *Wings of Desire* directed by Wim Wenders) is surrounded by a roundabout and there are underground tunnel walkways that pedestrians can take to get to it. I was meandering along the footpath circumference of this road circle when I heard this haunting saxophone sound; it was very clear and crisp and was like a movie soundtrack such was the surreality of this music. (I couldn't help but think of the worldly black woollen coated middle-aged male angels in *Wings of Desire*...). It was inconceivable to comprehend to work out where it was coming from; at first I wondered if it was coming from a car circling around the Victory Column and then it became somewhat clear that it was arising from one of the underground causeways. Like some apparition I saw a saxophone player playing in the darkness. It was explained to me that the pedestrian tunnels had excellent acoustics and that 'Orpheus' was a regular visitor to these subterranean passages; I was entertained to my own private concert. Afterwards I was driven by 'Orpheus' to his flat and I was given a cassette tape of his saxophone music. Finally, this wistful movie-like travel vignette came to an end as I was driven by my host to the Berlin *bahnhof* where I was catching an overnight train to the east.

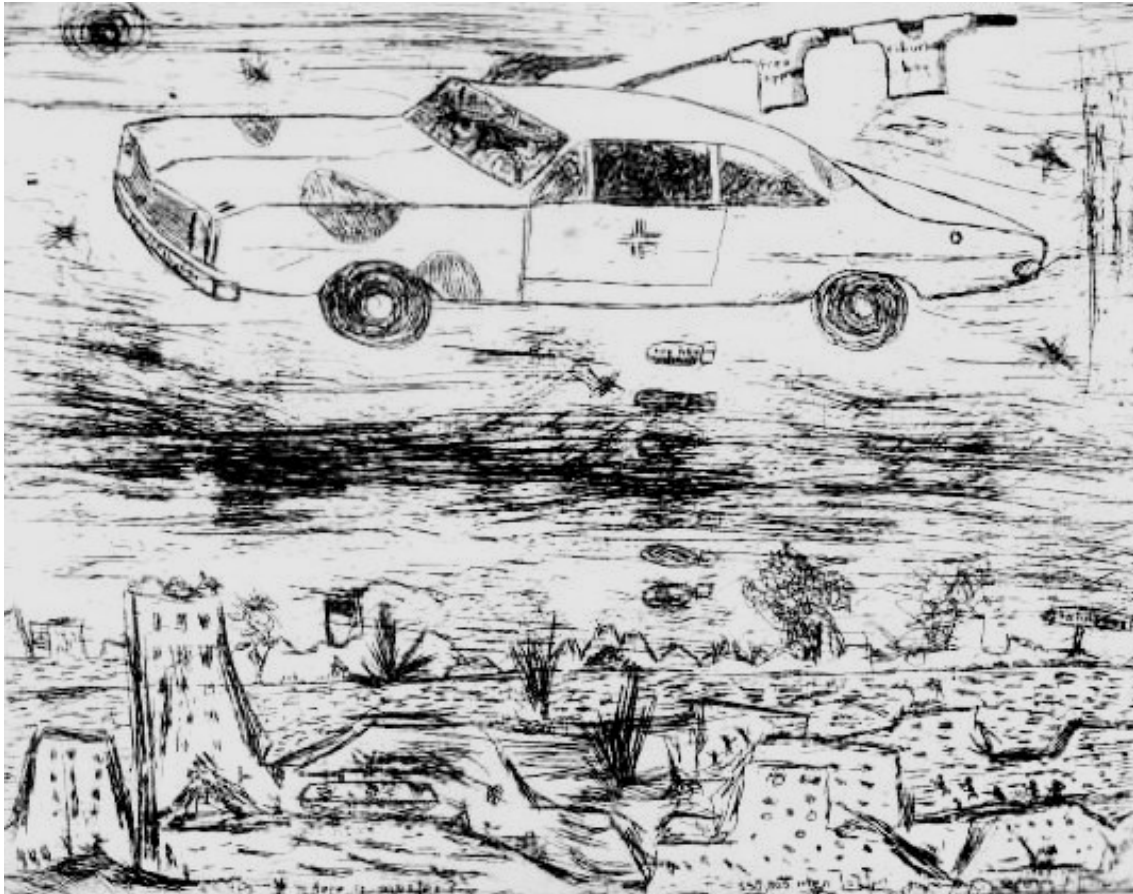


114

‘Circles of Hell.’

(After an image by Boticelli based on Dante’s Inferno)

B&W. 10cmX7.5cm.sugarlift. zinc plate.



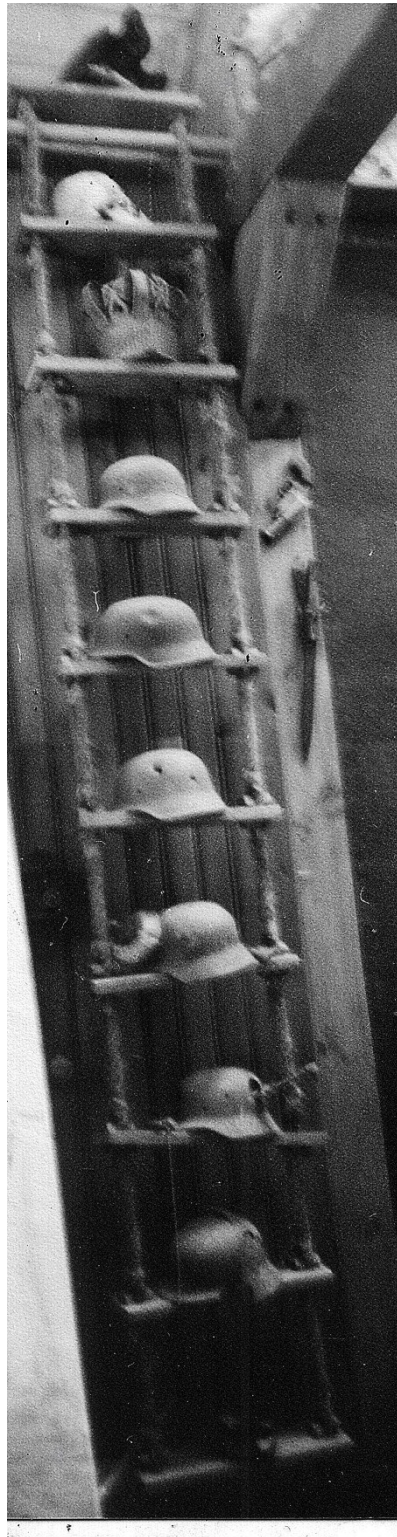
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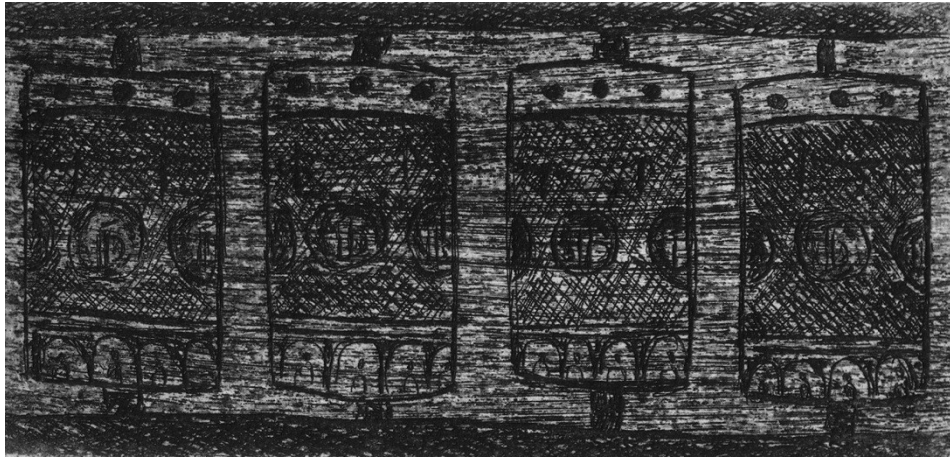
‘Herr Baker and Frau Bishop on the way to Stalingrad to give Herr Nicola his two t-shirts.’

Commemorative etching to the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Stalingrad. 1943-1993.

sepia on white. 8"X 10". zinc plate.

A wry reflection amongst friends on the human absurdities that are within our ultimate absurdity: war. ‘Herr Baker’ owns a Valiant thus its ‘valiant use’ in this ‘rescue mission.’ The two t-shirts which read Free Cyprus & Suburban Boy - is in reference to the *Wehrmacht* not supplying its soldiers with any winter clothing due to their cockiness that the Soviet campaign would be won before the onset of the bitterly cold Russian winter.





55

‘Prayer Wheels.’ Xining. Ghansu province. China.

B&W. 2" X 4". copperplate.

This work is based on a photo I took at a far away remote Tibetan monastery in Ghansu province. China. This part of China is actually in an area of Outer Tibet and is thus occupied territory. All that is to be said is this monastery was large, very isolated and surrounded by a grand and vast snow-covered mountainous terrain. From what I understand prayer wheels serve the spiritual function of being spun to aid the pilgrim’s prayers rising to the divine; twirling drums which also typify for me the circling life drama entwined in the law of return which is labeled as karma.

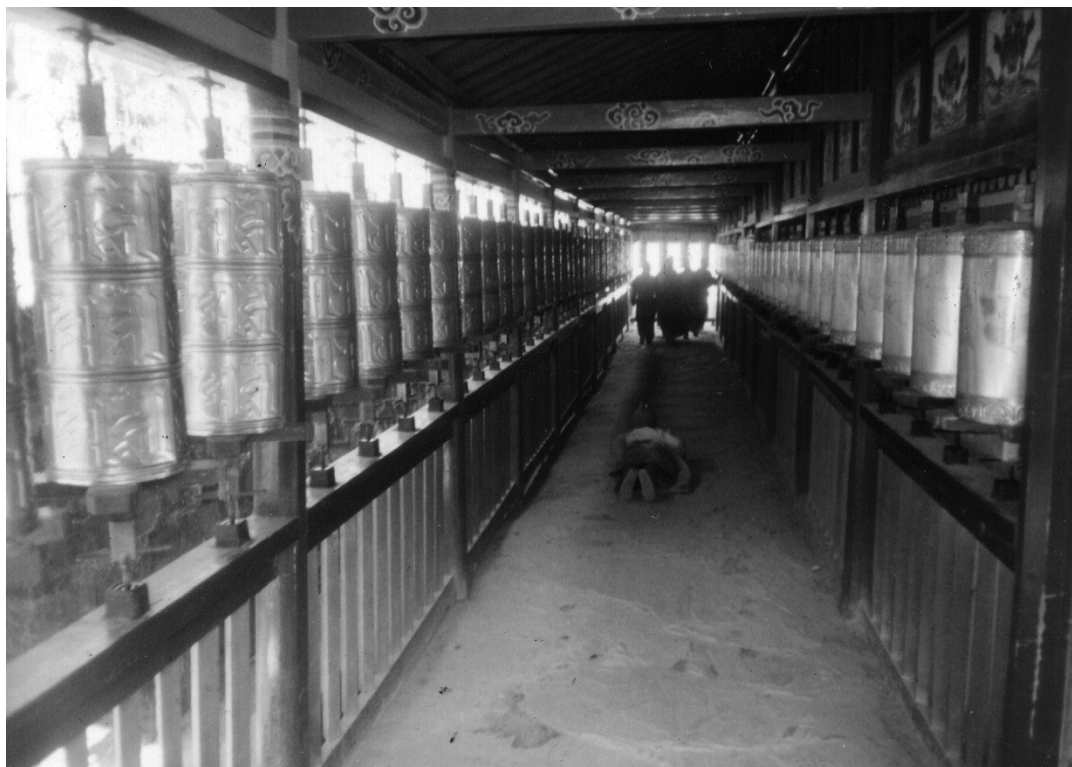








Venturing out amongst the surrounding mountain terrain that surrounds Xiahe I - and my travel companion Kristina - glanced back to sight a lone pilgrim underneath a row of weatherworn Tibetan prayer flags walking in the wilderness. The vision of this one single figure was in stark contrast to the knowledge that there were thousands of Tibetans milling in Xiahe for Tibetan New Year. Below are photos of dedicated Tibetan pilgrims; it was said that one man had lifted and then stretched out his whole body on the ground for hundreds of miles to reach the temple in Xiahe. The photo on the far right shows pilgrims in front of a row of singing monks. The large bottom photo shows a pilgrim on the ground between two rows of temple prayer wheels.





The first photo is of a wishing tree covered with prayer flags at Xining. The second photo is of a Himalaya scene outside Muktinath, Nepal. I have a vivid memory of another lone, lean pilgrim wearing scraggly robes and a wooden staff practically limping along a path to reach Muktinath which is situated in a wilderness that borders China. There is a Buddhist temple there built upon the site of a strange natural phenomenon of a flame emerging from a stream of water. It is hidden behind a curtain and is revealed to you on request by the monks.





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‘Comrade Plato’

B&W 6”X4” aquatint. zinc plate.

A bust of Plato added to a Socialist Realist statue of a ‘Great Leader’. Although I appreciate some of Plato’s philosophical ideas I find his politics and ‘social engineering’ questionable (bordering on fascism to say the least) after reading his *Republic*. With that said the rather sardonic title still allows the viewer to visually read the image positively or negatively depending on one’s own approach to Plato’s political writings.

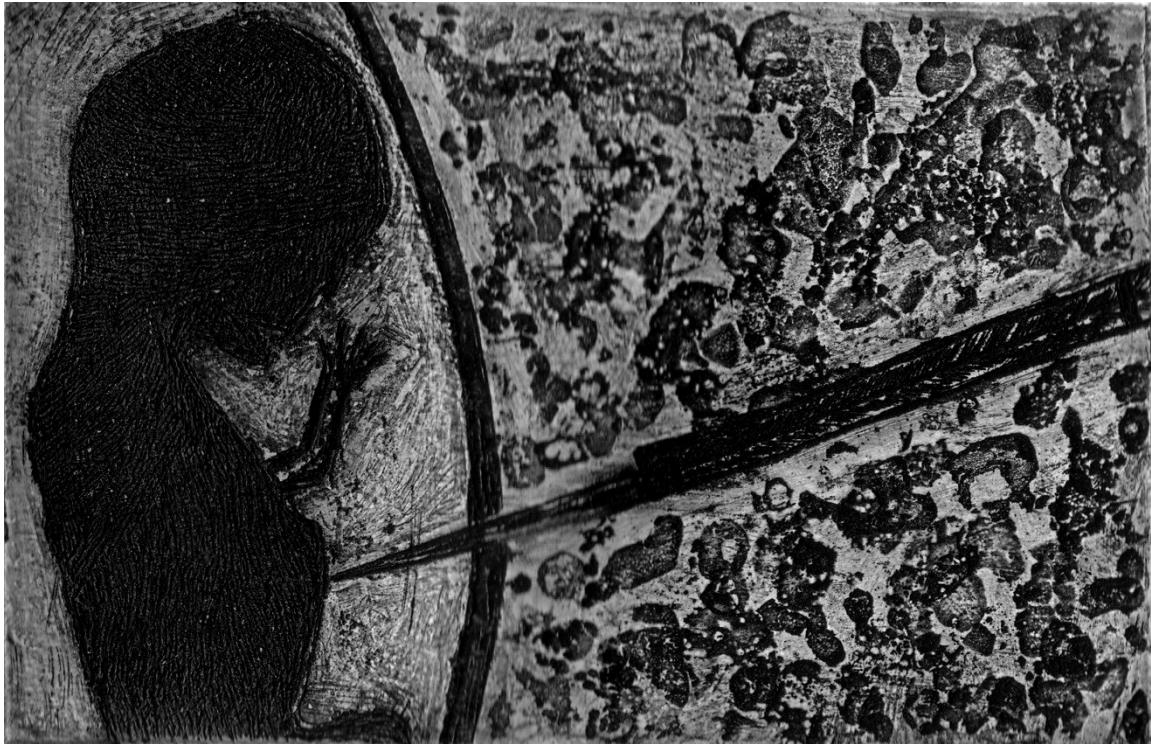


90

Dada Lenin

B&W 6"X4" aquatint. zinc plate. zinc plate.

Somehow this humorless fellow doesn't get quite the same bad press as Stalin even though he set up the 'parameters' of the totalitarian state that was to be fully developed. While in exile in Zurich he probably went to the Cabaret Voltaire organized by those zany anti-war absurdists the Dadaists as he lived in the same street as the cabaret theatre. I've dressed Lenin up as an absurdist Dada performer to mock him and to highlight his own blood drenched 'theatre of the absurd': the Bolshevik seizure of autocratic power under the guise of power to the workers. Finally, it should be noted that this etching was done after reading '*A People's Tragedy. The Russian Revolution 1891 – 1924.*' by Orlando Figes.

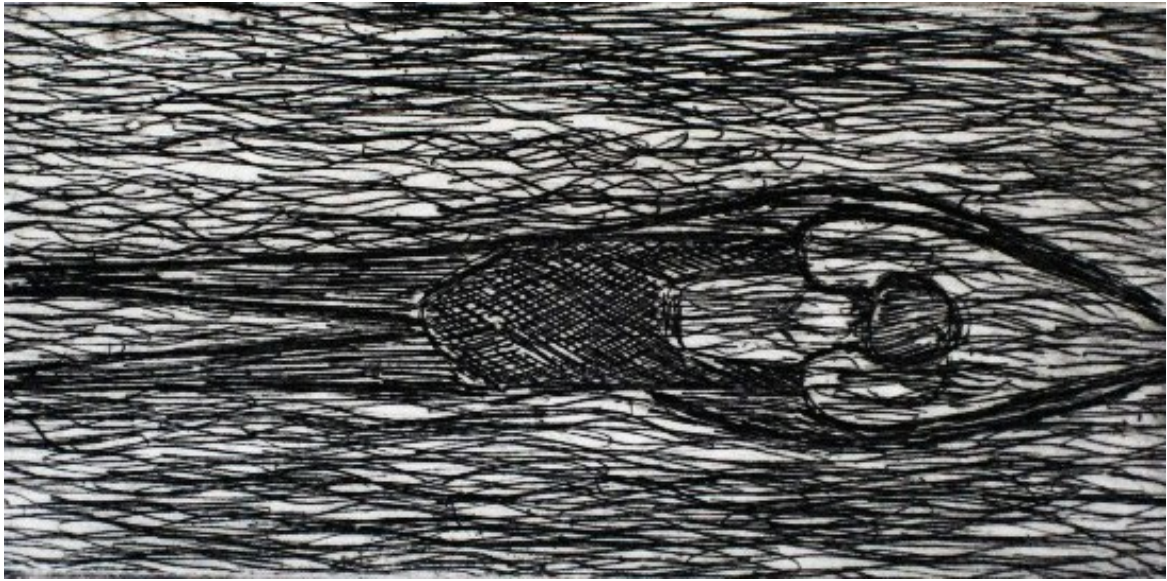


90

‘White Fella Embryo Technology’.

B&W 6”X4” zinc plate.

Perusing through Judy Watson’s *blood language* which is an excellent book looking at this indigenous artist’s work I started to read about a massacre carried out by the Native Police on Aboriginal men, women and children at a place in North Queensland called Lawn Hill. Judy Watson’s great great grandmother was a survivor. I read how the pregnant women were not shot and thought for a mere second that there was at least some sort of moral limit to this bestiality to only then go on to read that these women with yet to be born children inside them were bayoneted instead so as to save on bullets. Taking in what I had just read it was with bitter irony I also considered a government news item on the television at the same time about how there had been a recent medical breakthrough whereby medical science had advanced to the point that a diseased embryo in the womb could be healed to produce a normal healthy child. Yet, for the unborn indigenous innocents of a hundred years ago there was only the criminal ‘modern science’ of cold steel blades slicing into their yet unformed precious bodies.



91

‘The Swimmer.’

B & W. 4"X 2". zinc plate.

Here is an image of a typical Australian summer pastime which tugs at our memories to so many relaxing meditative lazy, sunny days by water.



'Sydney Skylight Sapien.'

B&W. 2" X 4". zinc plate.

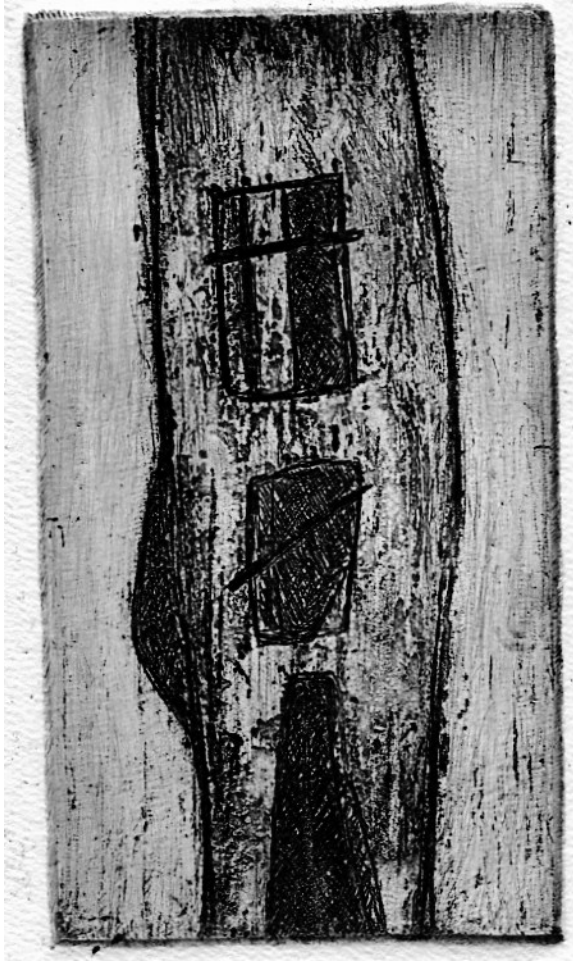


‘First World Tourist’

B&W. 4” X 4”. zinc plate.



GROUP PHOTO OF FIRST WORLD TOURISTS ON 7 DAY PACKAGE TOUR OF INDOCHINA. (ANKOR WAT).



'Baby Tree Graves.' Indonesia.

B&W. 4" X 2". zinc plate.