

## Tracey Moffatt

TYLER ROLLINS FINE ART

529 West 20 Street

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“Spirit Landscapes,” Tracey Moffatt’s latest exhibition, could be considered a collective artwork in itself, one that probes the inexorable qualities of nostalgia. Inspired by Moffatt’s return to her native Australia after years of living abroad, she presents six distinct installations of photographs, all of which she has digitally manipulated to take on spectral proportions. The works plumb boundaries between the artist’s personal narrative and her Aboriginal heritage, getting at the ways in which individual and collective experiences can entwine to invest specific places with symbolism. In “Suburban Landscapes,” 2013, black-and-white photographs of suburban sites, such as fenced-in backyards and strip malls, are juxtaposed with brightly colored text detailing events from the artist’s childhood that occurred in those places. The captions are remarkably personal—from “bullying” to “guitar lessons”—investing emotional force in the otherwise banal images. As in the greater exhibition, these layers of content force the viewer to choose between word and image—and, ultimately, between subjective experience and objective information.

This tension is a constant motif: Moffatt calls upon it to reconcile the specificity of personal history, connections to ancestry, and the resonant connection to place by virtue of the past. Another series, “As I Lay on My Ancestral Land,” 2013, pointedly emphasizes such blurring of boundaries. These digital prints capture and formally transform the panorama of sky and trees taken in by the artist while she lies on the soil. Within the images, cloud formations veer toward abstraction, allowing the artist to subtly superimpose female nudes upon and within them. This unity is enhanced by a monochromatic filter that blends the two in varying shades of color, rendering neither fully identifiable. Again, technical manipulation mirrors the contextual blurring between body and land: This series is a deeply vulnerable portrait and timeless landscape—the makings of nostalgia made inexplicably visual.



Tracey Moffatt, *Picturesque Cherbourg No. 1*, 2013, digital print collage on handmade paper, 22 x 31".

— Britany Salsbury