

Essence

Briony Downes

“Pare down to the essence, but don’t remove the poetry” - Leonard Koren

Essence is an exhibition of paintings examining the places where land meets the sea. To create this body of work I have focused specifically on the point where water meets rock, two very different forces coming together. Each of the works have been inspired by places where this occurs – Noosa Heads, Byron Bay and further afield to Johannesburg in South Africa and the beaches of Bali.

Where water meets rock, there is life. But there is also change. My work reflects this contrast through colour, texture and shape. When making my paintings I rely on water, gravity and air pressure to mimic the processes and formations of nature. Using white paint, I mask out areas that feel distracting or unnecessary. Doing this allows beautiful new forms to emerge within a soothing, meditative space.

For millennia we have been inextricably drawn to areas where land meets sea, where water erodes and shapes rock and rock guides and filters water. Their connection is necessary and enriching, and together water and rock remain essentially simple and complex. They are one of nature's most inspiring artistic pairings and within these complementary elements, nature manifests effortless beauty, comfort and life-giving good. *Essence* is my homage to these powerful forces.