

RICHARD BLUNDELL | Artist statement

Return to Earth

This painting is part of the *Return to Earth* series of more than 100 paintings made with a specific red ochre pigment as the unifying theme.

The red ochre used is a natural pigment from clay collected in 2013 during construction of the home of my son and his family at Mount Cotton. I extracted and refined the red pigment by breaking the clay into fine slurry to remove the red ochre. The resultant pigment is the colour essence of the native Australian landscape.



From *Away* series



From *Return to Earth* series

History shows the importance of colour in human affairs and the ways regional cultures have formed in response to the accessibility or rarity of particular colours in the environment. The red ochre pigment used in *Return to Earth* counterpoints the vivid ultramarine I used in a series of paintings called *Away* that I produced while traveling in Europe for five months in 2012. Both *Away* and *Return to Earth* use colour as a core element to explore links with cultural and gender roles, forms of family, pair bonding, and social relationships with the material world. The subject matter of *Return to Earth* responds to the unexpected and powerful mix of experiences and emotions I have had since my return to Australia.

RICHARD BLUNDELL BA DipAdVocEd FDIA
www.richardblundell.com.au
richardblundell47@me.com

Media
Natural ochre and Gouache on 190gsm
Saunders Waterford mould made, acid free
paper, St Cuthberts Mill, England
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