

• Art Collector



WHAT NOW

Art Collector interviews six SPRING 1883 artists about their recent work.

PETER ATKINS

Can you tell me about the new work you will be showing with Tolarno Galleries at SPRING 1883?

It's a very intimate project titled *Love Letters*. It comprises nine small paintings and a hand-drawn multiple in five parts. The works relate to a series of letters and aerograms sent to me in the mid-to-late 1980s by my partner, Dana Harris. The works are the exact scale of the original airmailed envelopes sent by Dana, from Australia, New Zealand and Japan as I travelled through Asia the Middle East, Europe and later through Central and South America. Each work is titled with the destination address. For example, Accademia Britannica, Via Gramsci 61, 00197 Rome, Italy.

How will the work be exhibited in The Windsor Hotel?

Each work will be placed on the antique writing desk inside the Prince Albert Suite. This spectacular object, which in itself is so evocative of a romantic, bygone era, will be used as a platform, or carrier of the love letter narrative. The writing desk and works will operate together, acting as emotional triggers for the viewer, evoking their own personal experiences of love and longing, of being separated from home and loved ones. I remember those days clearly, the relentless homesickness, and those endless hours spent writing, recording events and desires...and then waiting for a reply.

What books, films, or plays have influenced you recently?

I'm currently re-reading Paul Theroux's *Great Railway Bazaar* from the mid-1970s. It ties in nicely with the concept of obsolescent experience. There is a great line where he says "allow at least half a day to organise an onward ticket in Peshawar" then goes into elaborate detail about station clerks, ledgers, notes for other clerks, trips across town and back again...it is those obsolete human interactions I find so incredible...and to think in our lifetime this has become a relic of the past. Now of course we can just go online and purchase any ticket going anywhere in five minutes!

Who are the artists - living or from the past - who you most admire?

Too many to list though a few favourites are **William Turner**, especially the late seascapes, and **James Whistler's** Nocturnes, two greats who prefaced impressionism and paved the way for abstraction. **Mark Rothko** for his ability to eliminate everything except colour, yet still magically reference or evoke sensations of the landscape. **William Scott** and his unrivalled ability to exquisitely place form perfectly within a picture plane. **Colin McCahon's** *Angels and Bed* series are sensitive explorations of death and mortality. **Josef Albers'** Bauhaus colour studies, a master class in colour relationships. **Andy Warhol** for presenting the world back to us and both **Rosalie Gascoigne** and **Robert Macpherson** for their unique interpretations of the great Australian highway vernacular.

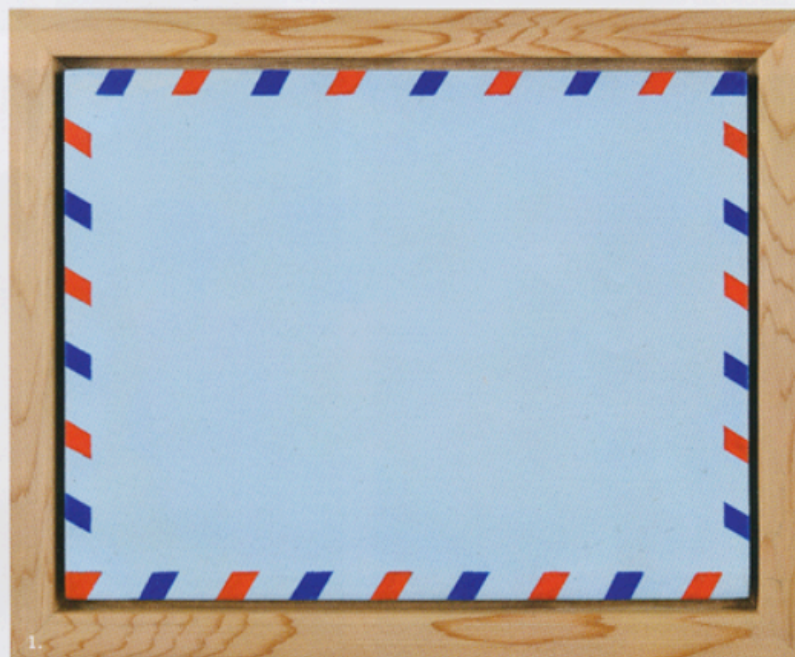
Dr Peter Hill

PETER ATKINS IS EXHIBITING AT THE TOLARNO GALLERIES ROOM AT SPRING 1883 (ROOM 107).

1. // Peter Atkins, *Accademia Britannica Rome*

2. // Peter Atkins, *Love Letters - a hand drawn multiple in five parts*

COURTESY: THE ARTIST THE TOLARNO GALLERIES, MELBOURNE





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