

# Shapeshifters



University of  
**Southern  
Queensland**

Original Work in Trio Exhibition (Visual Arts)

Featured artists: David Usher (UniSQ), Gary Abkin and Peter Berner

Curated by Summer Aldis (Lethbridge Gallery)

**[Original Work Submission Year: 2022]**



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***Shapeshifters*** is a trio exhibition with artists David Usher (UniSQ), Gary Abkin and Peter Berner at Lethbridge Gallery in Brisbane with further planned exhibitions in the planning for 2023. The exhibition resulted in discussion between Usher and Abkin about future exhibition concepts. Usher and Abkin have collaborated previously but there is an opportunity to expand on this idea with respect to each artist working directly into the other artist's work. There is also the potential for a ceramic's collaboration in 2024.

**Curator:** Summer Aldis

**Artists:** David Usher, Gary Abkin and Peter Berner

# Shapeshifters

## Lethbridge Gallery, Brisbane

### Research Statement



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#### Background

Australian artists Elisabeth Cummings and Euan Macleod continue a long tradition of *en plein air* practice that involve processes of transferring the light encountered in nature through sketches and paintings completed in the artist's own studio. There is still much to be explored in the ways of interpreting contemporary landscape painting from the *en plein air* approach and its subsequent impacts of also working in studio environments upon the individual artist's experience.

#### Contribution

The original paintings and ceramic works in *Shapeshifter* trio exhibition are a direct response to making new work mostly in the studio environment based on previous studies done in the landscape. This represents a continuing shape-shifting-like process of exploring ways of reinterpreting themes within the landscape painting genre. The contribution of this research offers insights into art-making processes in which artists select specific works to exhibit together through dialogue and response to each others work. In turn, exhibiting with fellow landscape artists effectively expands on the artist and audience experience of the *en plein air* genre and provides a further contribution for viewers to engage in re-evaluating their respective understandings of what landscape painting is.

#### Significance

This exhibition has been well received with attendance of a hundred visitors at the Lethbridge Gallery with further invited exhibition involvement being planned for 2023. The Lethbridge Gallery in Brisbane has gained a reputation for organising a series of high profile National exhibitions. The *Shapeshifter* exhibition resulted in being invited to plan future exhibitions with international artist, Gary Abkin. This exhibition represents the beginning of a potential theme for these artists to exhibit again, building on concepts of collaboration. The significance of this research offers opportunities for investigating art-making processes in which artists work directly into each others artworks over a period of time.



**David Usher**

*Paradise is on My Mind*

Artwork from Shapeshifters 2022

Acrylic on canvas

122cm x 92cm



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**David Usher**

*Shapeshifter Vessels #1, 2, 3*

Artwork from Shapeshifters 2022

White raku (1280\*)

38cm x 25cm



**David Usher**

*The Hills are Hollow*

Artwork from Shapeshifters 2022

Acrylic on Canvas

122cm x 92cm



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**David Usher**

*The Trees Move (among us)*

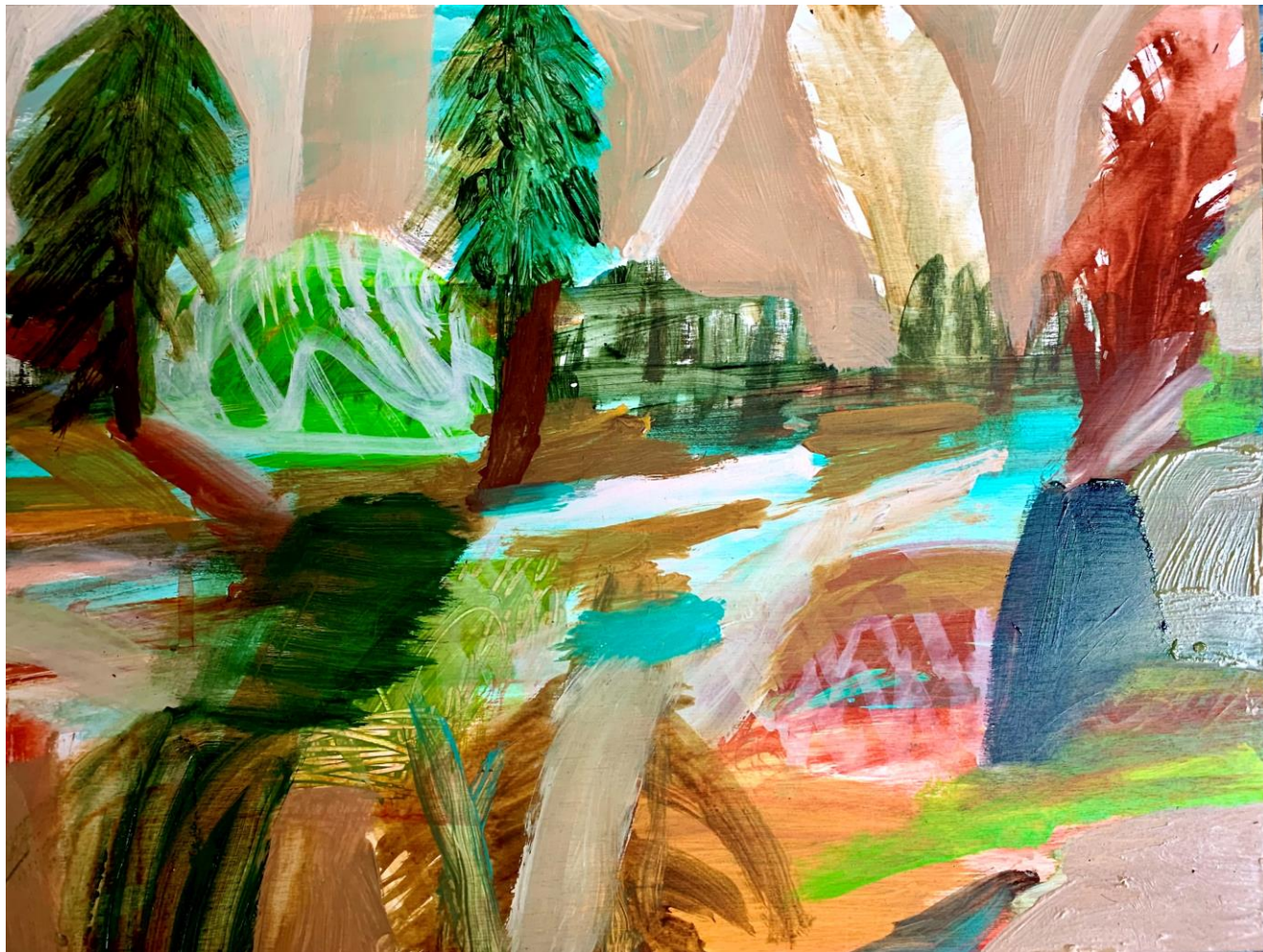
Artwork from Shapeshifters 2022

Acrylic on Canvas

109cm x 74cm



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**David Usher**

*Hampton Drive*

Artwork from Shapeshifters 2022

Acrylic on board

40cm x 30cm



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**David Usher**

*In Between*

Artwork from Shapeshifters 2022

Acrylic on Canvas

104cm x 79cm



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