



Alexander Boynes' *Last Light*, pigment and enamel on aluminium, 120cm x 120cm, 2018.

Exhibition exploring a critical issue

ART REVIEW

LAST LIGHT

By Alexander Boynes. Beaver Galleries, 81 Denison Street, Deakin. Tues to Fri 10am-5pm; Sat and Sun 9am-5pm. Until Sunday, September 2.

BY Sasha Grishin

In the 14 years since graduating from the gold and silversmithing workshop at the Australian National University School of Art, Alexander Boynes has been plunged into frenetic artistic activity. There has been a spate of exhibitions, collaborative ventures and curatorial activities.

There are three features common to many of his activities. The first is the belief in new and experimental technologies; the second is the involvement with Australian Indigenous culture and with Indigenous peoples; and the third is the general



Alexander Boynes' *Precipice*, pigment and enamel on aluminium, 120cm x 120cm, 2018.

Last Light consists of 15 paintings on aluminium panels plus a video installation. Boynes' technique of work resembles the dematerialisation of the image – as if on a

Last Light has a slightly eerie and menacing atmosphere.

foreground, there is frequently a glowing image with a somewhat violent radiation-like aura offset by a dark and slightly menacing background.

Thematically, the exhibition is preoccupied by the idea that fossil fuels are choking our planet and, in Australia, they are having a devastating impact on the traditional Indigenous owners. Boynes notes in the catalogue, "This merging of landscape and industry speaks of our failure to invest in a renewable future, as coal, oil and gas extraction dominate the power industry. Meanwhile, standing in a rapidly changing environment, the figure represents both the catalyst and the

finds tangible expression in the billowing smoke. Whereas in his earlier exhibition Boynes was concerned with calligraphic movement and an almost pulsating techno beat, here the movement is slower, more deliberate, and the prevailing mood is one of pathos.

A painting like *Accelerant* has the billowing smokestacks of the Hazelwood power station in the background, while hovering in the foreground is an apparition-like figure whose identity is left deliberately ambiguous. A cemetery-like monumental quiet prevails over this scene that seems to be set at sunset.

In *Empty Time* and *Last Light*, there is a similar compositional structure with spectral figures in the foreground and scenes of heavy industry in the background. The message is quite clear; fossil fuels are bad for all living creatures, including humans.

Alexander Boynes creates a powerful and