

## POINTS OF ORIENTATION

In early May, Jensen Gallery is making an exhibition titled *Points of Orientation*. The exhibition brings into conversation contemporary painting and sculpture with a range of museological objects from Europe, the Americas, Asia and Oceania.

The exhibition will include works by Helmut Federle (Switzerland), Gunter Umberg (Germany), Callum Innes (Great Britain), Tomislav Nikolic (Australia), Imi Knoebel (Germany), Jude Rae (Australia), Geoff Thornley (New Zealand), and Winston Roeth (USA). Also presented in this exhibition and shown for the first time at Jensen Gallery/Sydney will be works by celebrated artists Rover Thomas (Australia), Vija Celmins (USA) Karin Sander (Germany) and Isabel Nolan (Great Britain).

*Points of Orientation* seeks to re-engage the viewer with the notion that cultures have, for thousands of years, been making and re-making objects of both practical and metaphorical importance and that this repetition provides critical co-ordinates that cross spiritual, social and existential dimensions. One further implication of this collision of objects spanning 6000 years is that the notion of "newness", particularly as a valid criteria for justifying attention, let alone meaning, is revealed as conceptually bankrupt.

*...In ancient cultures artists sought to make the same things as had the generations before them. Artworks were also existential points of orientation. In this capacity they fulfilled their moral obligation. Meaning and its materialised manifestations, was not called into question. The artwork had the dignity that was due to it – something that I do so dearly miss today.*

Helmut Federle 1992.

*Aboriginal Creation myths tell of the legendary totemic beings who had wandered over the continent in the Dreamtime, singing out the name of everything that crossed their path - birds, animals, plants, rock, waterholes - and so singing their world into existence.*

Bruce Chatwin 1998

Perhaps more than ever before, we are in need of art works that resist the current climate of pastiche and irony. It is both the modesty and the seriousness of the aspiration to make and remake, to see and to understand, that allows for a patient accrual of meaning and - if Helmut Federle is correct – brings to the artwork some weight of moral obligation.

Andrew Jensen 2013