

## *Illuminated Vista*

### **Barrie Norman**

Influenced by the natural element of light I explored ideas behind our connectedness to the land. It's more than blue skies as I transform perceptions about nature's ability to reclaim a time and place revealing the transition between dawn and twilight. *Illuminated Vista's* open 360 panoramic vista illuminates the natural spirit of an untouched land, its warmth generating a sense of belonging.

It's with the suggestion of entering a trompe-l'oeil style view that gives the viewer the impression of movement as the landscape wraps around the lamp shades hard edges. The gestural marks and tonal values control the reality blending night and day, which helps strengthen the perspective. The landscape's shifts of light and shadows supports the rise and fall of the mountain range's perspective, which is similar to the tonal work and harsh use of light of a Tom Roberts landscape. Our values create living movements, adding weight to the sense of theatre the combined paint and light creates.

In my search for translucent light qualities and spiritual connections to place I connected with Indigenous watercolourist Albert Namatjira. His story telling like mine reveals blended elements of Aboriginal and European ways showing detailed patterning and textures on trees, long shadows, high horizons in the landscape. I have successfully responded to Namajitra's skilful layered spaces using distant blue purple hazes at twilight and rich bronzed rocks symbolising daytime. I refined these characteristics throughout my final synthesizing natural forms finding my personal aesthetic.

Discovering artist Hans Heysen's aesthetic connections with nature reminded me of 1890s Heidelberg School's very Australian use of golden tones to reveal the natural order. His approach showed me how the intensity or diffusion of light embraces a space to show my journey across my land. This is shown through the subtle glow along the horizon line moving upwards using contouring catch light strokes to define and contrast the darker tones on the ridges and clouds. This painterly effect reflects a calm ambience and dreaming.

*Illuminated Vista* romanticised appearance merges like a Claude Monet's Hay Stack changing light. His Impressionist techniques inspired my dry brushstroke process as I reworked the shadows underpainting the structure then overlaying specific colour blends, (brown, ochre and olive over yellow, (daylight), and blue or purple hues over pinky reds, (twilight)), to help describe bush or range features. These strokes created visible textures enhancing the idea of a living country. The transition from dawn to dusk express my philosophy about how rich my heritage is and how two worlds can become one.

Emphasizing the landscape's interior are lights arranged to illuminate the delicate layers of paint revealed a lively tone that changes the space beyond a flat canvas surface like a Tom Robert's sky.

I realise this natural world preserves the liaisons between people, land, time and place. My successful painting has given nature a voice, suggesting the power of light to colour our world. Art is talking about land as it's a lifelong journey of respectful connections to culture and staying strong.