

Imants Tillers: *As Soon as Tomorrow*

Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

26 November - 18 December 2021

In *As Soon as Tomorrow* Imants Tillers continues his explorations of landscape, which has been a major tenet of his work for over two decades. Yet, currently, at the close of 2021, the urgency and existential anxiety associated with this landscape context has reached fever pitch as we continue to experience the realities of climate crisis, pandemic, and social rupture. In works like *Terra Nullius*, *As Soon as Tomorrow* and *Prayer for Rain*, Tillers uses quotations from poetic and literary sources to variously mourn, give thanks, and insist upon the significance of the landscape which surrounds us and bears us: our collective histories, that is, and our present that toys nauseatingly with disaster.

Embedded as part of Tillers' images, text invites an alternative sort of engagement, emphasising how our cognitive and intellectual understanding of landscape is intractably related to its materiality and our tactile, sensory means of interacting with it. Tillers' synthesis of text and visual form manifests this dual way that landscape matters to us: as something both physical and metaphysical, which constitutes the material context in which we exist and the immaterial context in which we find, store, and make meaning. In looking at Tillers' landscape paintings our sense of what landscape is, and how we are, or exist, in terms of landscape, is re-oriented, deepened and expanded. Understanding and feeling landscape in this nuanced way goes far beyond the stark threat posed by its frightening ill-health consistently voiced in headlines. The latter are hard scientific facts; what Tillers' paintings describe are the intricacies of our embodied relationship to landscape - our imbrication as part of its complex fabric, and the vital, soul-sustaining power of this living context that is fundamentally at stake *now*.

Clare Fuery-Jones