



Title	<i>The Spirit of a Scarecrow</i>
Artist's dates	Born 1979 - 46 y.o.
Gallery/source	Michael Reid
Date of purchase	1/8/25
Buying Circle	Sarah George, Fiona Hardie, Wendy Kozica
Shadow members	Fiona Brockhoff, Fiona Edwards, Susan Jones
Dimensions (H X W)	140 x 100cm
Medium	Oil on linen

CONTENT/SUBJECT/AESTHETIC QUALITIES

- This painting is titled *The Spirit of a Scarecrow* yet its abstract qualities leave its 'subject' to the imagination of the viewer. The colours of the painting are striking - pale yet strong, with varying light and shade; and the shapes too surge and recede as you observe.
- Characteristically, Kathy uses a visual device, this time vague circle outlines (sometimes they are animal shapes), just below the centre of the painting. This device is designed to create a visual focal point in contrast to the abstract quality of the painting.

TECHNIQUE

- Daniel Soma at Michael Reid, himself a painter, described Kathy's painting technique is highly skilled, reflecting an assiduous attention to technique, and achieving a remarkable evenness across the work. Her choice and use of colour creates an ethereal effect of both colour and light.

CONTEXT

- Liu had her first solo show with Michael Reid earlier in 2024, which reinforced their aspirations for her, selling quickly.
- Kathy was born in Harbin, China and moved to Australia in 2003 aged 24. She has university qualifications in engineering and commerce, and has said she didn't feel supported culturally, as a young person, in her desire to be an artist.
- Only after moving to Australia did she feel she could pursue her passion. She gained a Diploma in Visual Arts, then went to the Julian Ashton Art School, and finally completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the National Arts School in 2022. As her gallerist wrote to us, 'The fusion of Kathy's logical mind with her creative sensibilities is responsible for her wonderfully well-executed visual language'.
- Writing in 2023 after Kathy's work *At the Circus Night* was shortlisted for the 2023 National Emerging Art Prize, Harry Roberts described her work as follows: 'What might begin as an exercise in loose, tonal abstraction can take a delightfully unexpected turn as amorphous pools begin to coalesce, and playfully enigmatic inchoate figures emerge through diaphanous wafts of colour'. Kathy says her paintings 'reflect my subconscious mind, bringing up themes and narratives from my past life that I have almost forgotten. Lost memories of childhood, my love of mythology, some distant lines of poetry, all of these are unburied and rediscovered through my work'.
- Kathy lives with her husband and two teenage children in Beecroft, Sydney.

COLLECTION STATEMENT

- Fiona H. came upon Kathy's work on a visit to Sydney in May, and registered interest with the gallery. When the work earmarked for the Murrurundi group show in August arrived in the gallery, Daniel Soma contacted her. Luckily she was going to Sydney the following week and was able to view it, and video it for the Buying Circle. Wendy and Sarah loved the work on sight, and Wendy was able to talk to the gallerist when Fiona was there with him.
- In addition to the strong connection it makes with the viewer, we liked this work for The Circle Collective given Kathy's cultural background and career stage; practically it was a good price, size and is well framed; as well as adding a beautifully executed and evocative painting to the collection.