

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anthony White at The Mark Rothko Art Centre

8TH JULY – 16TH OCTOBER 2022 Daugavpils, Latvia



The Mark Rothko Art Centre presents a major touring solo exhibition by Australian-born Paris-based artist Anthony White for the first time in Latvia. The exhibition was previously shown as the inaugural exhibition of Informality gallery in 2019 in the United Kingdom-*(The Curious Eye Never Runs Dry)* The 30 works across 380 square metres of the Rothko art centre see the artist revisit themes of involuntary detention, injustice, migration, and reflects upon the effects of Western capitalist civilization on our modern environment.

White's driving motivation for the exhibition draws from the literary sources: Foucault's cornerstone postmodern text "Discipline and Punish" (1977) and also Franz Kafka's short story "In the Penal Colony" The artist believes it is fundamental to raise questions about surveillance, detainment, and injustice and invites us to think about different states of being, using his practice as a vehicle for philosophy and ultimately emancipation.

To give a sense of the dynamic opening chapter of Foucault's book covering punishment in all its forms White has utilized various techniques of collage, spray paint, and direct paint applications. *Docile Bodies* is a large work incorporating collage and mixed media drawing directly from the opening chapter. The concept of punishment and the evolution of its history led me to respond to the text. The force of punishment has altered throughout the ages from being inflicted upon the body and being directed towards the soul of man.

The initial ball of rag turns into a sort of long arcing rag that whips across the surface of the painting. The paint applied in arcing loops across the surface of the support A flagellation of sorts, which brings a cohesiveness between technique and reference towards the source material

The exploration of involuntary detention becomes the new torture device has parallels with the political situation in Manus and Nauru Islands in the Pacific

In *Vedova* 2019, (pictured) White's salute to the Venetian mid-century avant-garde artist Emilio Vedova, a key figure of the Italian resistance movement, ribbons of paint like root masses move searchingly across the canvas recalling Vedova's description of all artists' 'eternal sense of investigation'. The same sense of communal action is felt in *Late Capitalism* 2019, a dark predominantly blue and black oil and collage work made from elements of Paris metro posters, which White explains refers to the Gilet Jaunes movement in its insistence on the collective as opposed to individual. [\[1\]](#)

L'effondrement I 2019, one of several collage works using graphic vinyl signage found on the streets of Paris, references the research of climate change experts Pablo Servigne and Raphaëlle Stevens. Their *collapsology* theory proposes that the collapse of industrial civilization is imminent without urgent collective action. These series of collages marry disparate forms, ranging from the spontaneous gestural work of doused rag imprints, gestural painterly touch, and hard-edged geometrical imagery.

The collages combine important forms of analog communication including posters of advertising and musical acts from the Paris metro. Drawing from the urban cultural history of Paris the artist uses these metro posters or "affiches" to build the image with tearing, re-cropping, and utilizing painterly interventions acting as a form of dissent and to dwell on modes of community and collectivity.

A commissioned text by the London based writer Robert Maconachie will also be featured in the accompanying catalog designed by Esther Rieser (Zurich)

[\[1\]](#) McConachie, Robert Extract from Catalogue essay Inverting the Panopticon

NOTES TO EDITORS

Anthony White's artistic work revolves around the notion of reclaiming the act of dissent through the production of cultural objects. His research is situated at the intersection of several fields in the social space including, politics, human rights, and postcolonialism. His practice is centered around concepts of design and its history as a form of social and political expression. He works with painting, drawing, collage, and printmaking. The references and the materials he uses mark his predisposition for modernist aesthetics, without this ever becoming the subject of his work. Through this practice, he tackles relevant questions to our time, to encourage emancipation and new ways of thinking.

Anthony White's artwork has been widely exhibited in Australia, Europe, and Asia. White has received support through cultural agencies such as the The National Association for the Visual Arts,(NAVA),Australia The Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) Australia and The Centre National des Arts Plastiques (CNAP) France
He has also received critical acclaim by recognition in the form of art prizes and reviews most notably The Marten Bequest Travelling Scholarship (2007) The Creative Arts Fellowship at The National Library of Australia (2020) and acknowledgments in The Australia Financial Review, Art Collector Magazine (AU) and also Elle Décor US edition

During his career White has been the recipient of the Creative Arts Fellowship at the National Library of Australia, (2020) The Marten Bequest Travelling Scholarship to the United States (2007), The Vermont Studio Centre Residency U.S.A.(2008), The National Art School Paris Studio Award at La Cite Internationale Des Arts (2009), The Leipzig International Art Programme Residency, Germany (2010) and the International Painting Symposium at The Mark Rothko Centre in Latvia during (2017)

His work has been included in over 50 group exhibitions Internationally including important group exhibitions in commercial galleries, art fairs, art centres and museum contexts. His work has also been hung among major art prizes painting in Australia including The Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship and the Elioth Gruner Prize both at The Art Gallery of NSW and The John Glover Art Prize (2018) (2021) and The Churchie Emerging Art Award (2005) (2007)

White's work is held in public and private collections internationally, including the Mark Rothko Art Centre in Latvia, Soho House London and The Tweed Regional Gallery Tweed Heads, Australia

Previous selected solo exhibitions include: The Curious Eye Never Runs Dry (2019) Informality Gallery Henley on Thames, United Kingdom, Signs of Civilisation (2018) and Crossing the Rubicon (2016) both at Nanda Hobbs Contemporary Sydney

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