IMANTS TILLERS
METAFISICA AUSTRALE

ARC ONE

17 MAY - 18 JUNE 2016

ARC ONE Gallery is thrilled to present Imants Tillers' latest exhibition, *Metafisica Australe*. An opening reception will be held on Thursday 19 May, 6-8pm.

As one of Australia's most important living artists, Imants Tillers has been at the forefront of contemporary art for over four decades. He has forged a reputation as a highly sophisticated artist recognised for his intellectual rigour and insight. Using his signature canvas boards, Tillers employs appropriation and textual references to create highly personal and thought-provoking paintings that explore themes relevant to contemporary culture.

Dechirican Melbourne, 2016, acrylic, gouache on 24 canvas boards, 153 x 143 cm

In this exhibition Tillers presents a continuation of a new series of works he terms 'Metafisica Australe'. Here, the artist finds common ground between certain aspects of contemporary Western Desert painting and the profoundly influential, metaphysical paintings of the 20th Century Italian master, Giorgio de Chirico. In doing so Tillers creates a remarkable connection between de Chirico's well-known modern European aesthetic and ideology and the rich indigenous art and cultural heritage of Australia's remote interior.

The title image for the show, *Dechirican Melbourne*, also celebrates serendipitous links between the Australian city and de Chirico's oeuvre, with 'Melbourne' invoked in the first few sentences of de Chirico's famous surrealist novel *Hebdomeros* – first published in Paris in 1929. According to Tillers, "There is a view that the remote and exotic place 'Melbourne' entered de Chirico's imagination when he was sent a postcard of the *italianate* Treasury Building in Melbourne (designed by J.J. Clark to house the abundant bounty flowing from the Victorian goldfields) by his expatriate Roman friend Gino Nibbi."

Metafisica Australe continues the premise of the exhibition, *Dreamings: Aboriginal Australian art meets de Chirico* curated by Ian McLean and Erica Izett at the Carlo Bilotti Museum in Rome in 2014, in which seven of Tillers' works (from 1986 – 2014) formed a bridge between the 18 works of Giorgio de Chirico on permanent display in the museum, and the exhibition of Western Desert paintings from the Sordello Missana collection from Antibes, France.

Imants Tillers has exhibited widely since the late 1960s, and has represented Australia at important international exhibitions, such as the Sao Paulo Bienal in 1975, Documenta 7 in 1982, and the 42nd Venice Biennale in 1986.

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Major solo surveys of Tillers' work include Imants Tillers: works 1978–1988 at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (1988); Imants Tillers: 19301, at the National Art Gallery, Wellington (1989); Diaspora, National Art Museum, Riga, Latvia (1993); Diaspora in Context at the Pori Art Museum, Pori (1995); Towards Infinity: Works by Imants Tillers, Museum of Contemporary Art (MARCO) in Monterrey, Mexico (1999); and in 2006 a major retrospective of his work, Imants Tillers: one world many visions, was held at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. Tillers has also exhibited in numerous group exhibitions around the world, including An Australian Accent at PS1, New York (1984); Antipodean Currents at the Guggenheim Museum, Soho (1995); Australian Perspecta (1981, 1987-89); The World Over/Under Capricorn: Art in the Age of Globalisation at the City Gallery, Wellington and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1996); the Biennale of Sydney (1979, 1986, 1988, and 2006); Kunst Nach Kunst (Art After Art), at the Neues Museum Weserburg, Germany (2003); Prism, at the Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo (2006); Australia at the Royal Academy of Arts in London (2013): and Dreamings: Aboriginal Australian art meets de Chirico at the Museo Carlo Bilotti in Rome (2014).

Tillers was the winner of the Art Gallery of New South Wales' Wynne Prize for landscape painting for two consecutive years (2012-2013). He has received numerous awards and commissions, such as the Osaka Triennale Prize (Gold in 1993, Bronze in 1996, and Silver in 2001), and the inaugural Beijing International Art Biennale Prize for Excellence (2003). Major commissions include: Written in water (hymn to Sydney), a major painting for the Commonwealth Bank Building in Martin Place, Sydney (2015); Avenue of Remembrance, a tapestry design for the Australian War Memorial commemorating the Centenary of the ANZAC landing at Gallipoli (2015); the Federation Pavilion, Centennial Park (1985-87); the Founding Donors Painting, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (1991); and two key sculptures for Sydney Olympic Park (2002). Imants Tillers was a Trustee of the Art Gallery of New South Wales from 2001 to 2009. In 2005 he was awarded a Doctor of Letters honoris causa for 'his long and distinguished contribution to the field of arts', by the University of New South Wales. The Latvian Museum of Art in Riga, Latvia, is currently preparing a major exhibition of Tillers' work for June 2018 coinciding with the centenary of Latvian independence.

For all enquiries, interviews and images please contact ARC ONE Gallery at mail@arc1gallery.com