

Robert Henri, painter and teacher wrote in his book *The Art Spirit*, 'You can do anything you want to do. What is rare is this actual wanting to do a certain thing, wanting it so much that you are practically blind to all other things, that nothing will satisfy you.'



Wildfire diptych 90 x 120 cm acrylic on canvas 2006 Private collection

Persistence and Perseverance

This is the fabric that binds an artist and keeps them working when all the odds are against them. The expectation of seeing years of work and struggle come together is paramount. When it does, it is pure joy. Everything fought with, tamed and then lost, comes back with a bang, big enough to start a new universe, or this is how it feels, at the time.

The realisation that another level has been reached, or a breakthrough has happened, can occur at any time during an artistic career, from a major exhibition, performance or the release of a publication, or when there is acceptance by a professional body that you see as important. If you are a determined personality, then things that have caused angst, like work that feels disjointed, or lacking in depth or feeling, can only be dealt with by persistence, and faith in your own ability. Recognition and acceptance may be only around the corner, but sometimes the vision seems as distant as the hills, for an artwork can only tell a story to the right audience. This audience can be difficult to reach.