

An abstract artwork by Christophe Stibio. The composition is dominated by vibrant orange and red tones. Overlaid on this background are numerous strips of blue paper, which have been torn and layered to create a complex, three-dimensional, and somewhat chaotic structure. The strips of paper are arranged in various directions, some forming loops and others extending across the frame. The overall effect is one of dynamic movement and layered depth. The text 'CHRISTOPHE STIBIO' and 'WARNING: SEVERE WEATHER' is printed in white, bold, sans-serif font in the center of the image.

**CHRISTOPHE STIBIO**  
**WARNING: SEVERE WEATHER**



CHRISTOPHE STIBIO

WARNING:

SEVERE WEATHER

03-13 JUNE 2022

Presented by MAGMA Art Projects

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# MARATHON MAN

By way of introduction, for the uninitiated, the background of Christophe Stibio is paramount in understanding his art as well as his character. From the earliest days of deciding to be an artist, Stibio has been running a marathon, thinking deep into the future, planning and making calculated moves like he makes his paintings. Layer by layer. Line by line. Steady, monumental and tirelessly energetic. Art training began for him in his home city of Bordeaux, France, at the University of Bordeaux III. An inherently rebellious nature and dissatisfaction with the status quo teachings of the European art schools led him to master fluent Mandarin with the sole intention of continuing formal art education in China. This move came naturally to Stibio, as from the outset he was able to distance himself from the romanticised idea of an artist favoured by Eurocentric communities still today. One that is caught in deep-rooted historical and social doctrines. Artists with their feelings and sensitivities. Flirting with this idea and that idea. Being depressed a lot of the time and creating beauty from the turmoil, etc, etc. Stibio rejected these preconceived notions and searched for something less typical but to him more truthful. In 1989 he left Europe and spent the next four years at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, China, with specialist training in calligraphy and traditional Chinese landscape painting. Stibio's art needs to be considered under these pretenses because it is this unique background which underpins his unique art form.

Christophe Stibio is a rare artist who tactically combines the best of Eastern art principles with the best of Western art principles. As an example, during his training, Stibio mastered the techniques of traditional Chinese guohua ink wash painting - the multi layering process that makes certain layers appear further forward in a painting whilst other layers appear backward. The effect is an illusion of depth which occurs in the natural world. Today this is a staple technique of Stibio's work. On the other hand, from the Western perspective, Stibio is still an individual. He has never been inhibited by authoritarian governance which restricts artists but instead leans toward Western beliefs that serve the individual, such as the total freedom to express oneself in one's art practice. In Australia, this is where this freedom has flourished.

Stibio has spent the last two decades surveying the Australian landscape. Curator Georges Petitjean (AAMU, The Netherlands) commented in 2012:

“ Christophe Stibio is not afraid of the land. He endeavours to plough it mentally. He is determined to go deeper, to explore what is under its skin. His art is the visual and tangible result of profound mental geology of a country which has both physical and spiritual dimensions. ”

To Stibio, what you see is not what you get. As Petitjean suggests in the above passage, the pursuit of capturing the quintessential feeling of a subject is and always will be a lifelong goal of his art. He is focused on uncovering the great mystery of a landscape. To reveal the infinite nuances and details. The untrodden path. Reaching beyond what is simply seen, to something more essential. All possibilities are left open in a Stibio work and he does not intend to give you the answers, only suggestions. From afar, a Stibio painting is almost certainly a striking image. Imaginative, animated and free. Totally void of restriction. Explosive in colour interplay. Red with blue. Blue with orange. One plays off the other, together forming stronger versions of themselves. The same type of complimentary relationships between elements occur in nature. Like the land, it is the infinite details that come together to form a cohesive picture. Searching Stibio's paintings up close reveals this same phenomenon. It is the endless details and twists that make them monumental works of art. Hidden messages, moments of intrigue and secrets are packed into every avenue of the surface. Every square centimeter of a Stibio canvas is meticulously surveyed, considered and realised. Every square centimeter is a painting in itself.

But the marathon does not end there for Stibio. His practice has increasingly captured a timely conceptual narrative and in this regard, his running pace is increasing. The signature medium of a Stibio work since 2009 is shredded classified documents. This is an art medium he invented. Literally information, on paper, which has been authored, utilised and eliminated before being given a second life with the artist. But shredded classified documents serve far more than being visually beautiful elements in the paintings. It's fundamentally about using less, which is a protest against the current system of using more. It is also about "secret information", which is the way decisions with consequences are made in power structures like our own. Like the decisions of governments and corporations with respect to the environment. The physical process of recycling the strips, and the tireless labour of placing them methodically on a canvas also serves as a metaphor. Renewed material echoes the urgent need for the lands renewal. The marathon-like stamina required to lay down the strips echoes the work ahead.

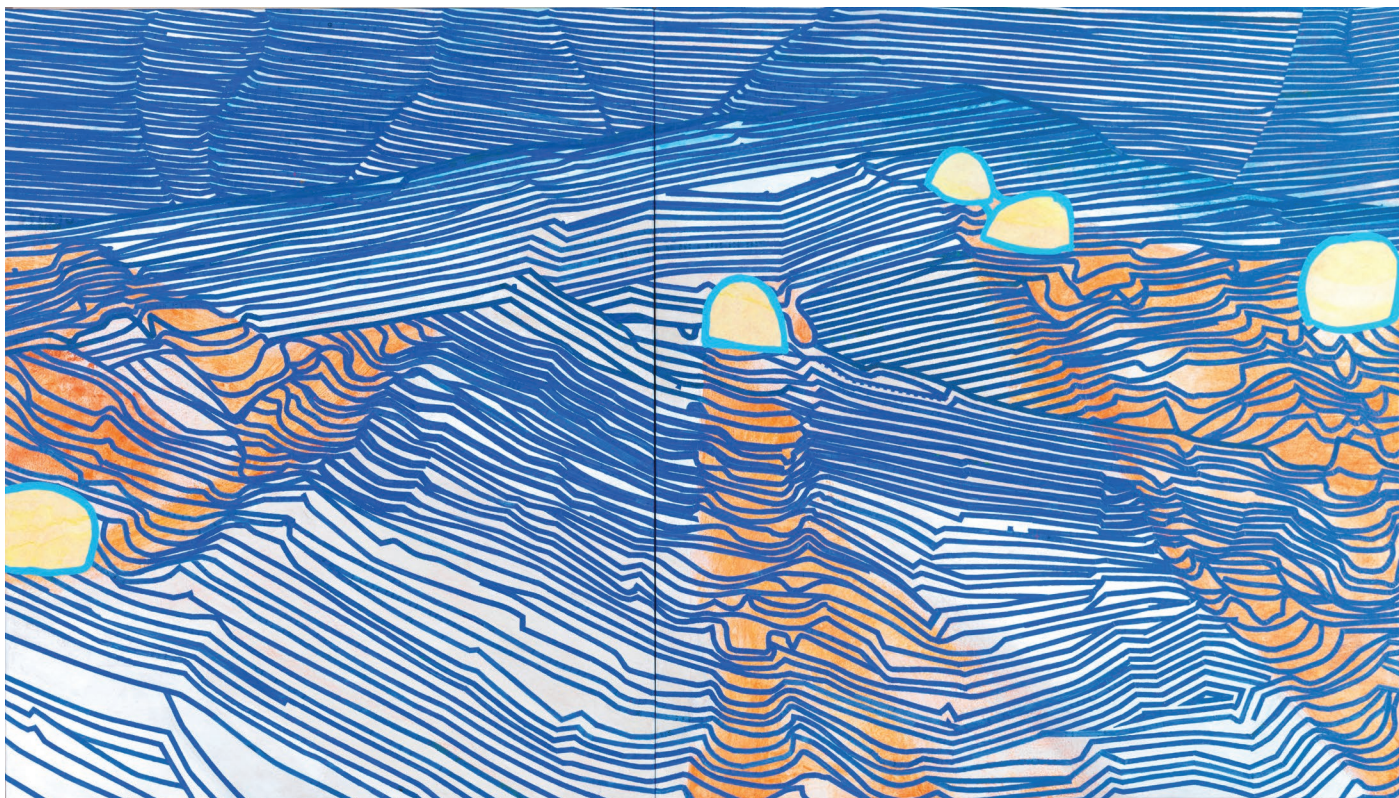
The contemporary responsibility of an artist living at the beginning of the 21st century has shifted from the contemporary responsibility of an artist living in the middle of the 20th century. The focus on land and the rapidly increasing use of the earth's natural resources has been growing. Stibio is dealing with modern politics through the thoughtful decisions he is making and applying to his practice as an artist. And the total process is circular. The strips are recycled. The glue is homemade from a Chinese recipe. Stibio's political stance is therefore shown by his actions and the materials he is using. The title of the show itself, WARNING: SEVERE WEATHER eliminates himself as the protagonist and not so subtly reminds everyone that something bigger is at play. And the conversation continues, as does the marathon where the pace is set to increase. And the message is clear... iWARNING!

Jake Taylor

MAGMA Art Projects, May 2022







From One Rock To Another. Getting Closer to Sunset. (diptych), 2020  
Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck  
85 x 150 cm



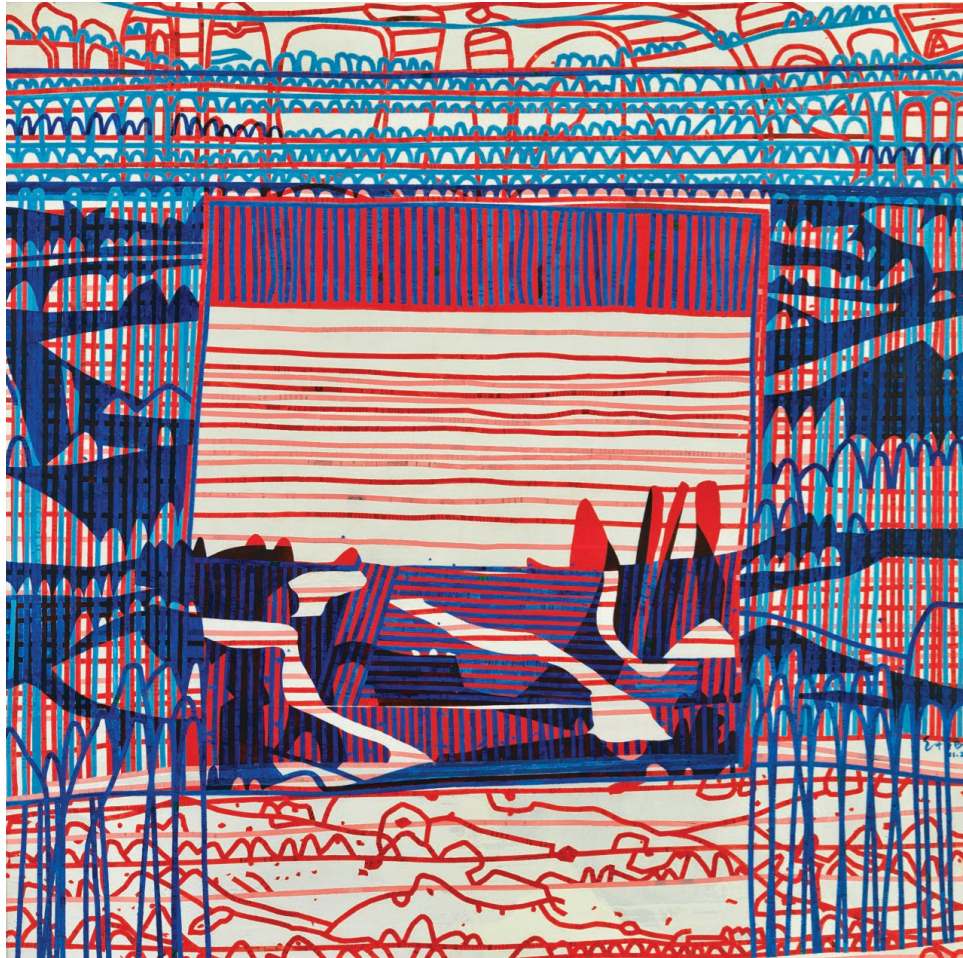
Flinders Ranges (study), 2002  
Natural pigments and rice paper on cotton duck  
45 x 55 cm





Flinders Ranges, 2021  
Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck  
130 x 180 cm





Worturpa Gorge 6:53pm, 2021  
Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck  
105 x 105 cm







Finalist: Wynne Prize 2022, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney.

Lake Mungo, 6:10am (diptych), 2022

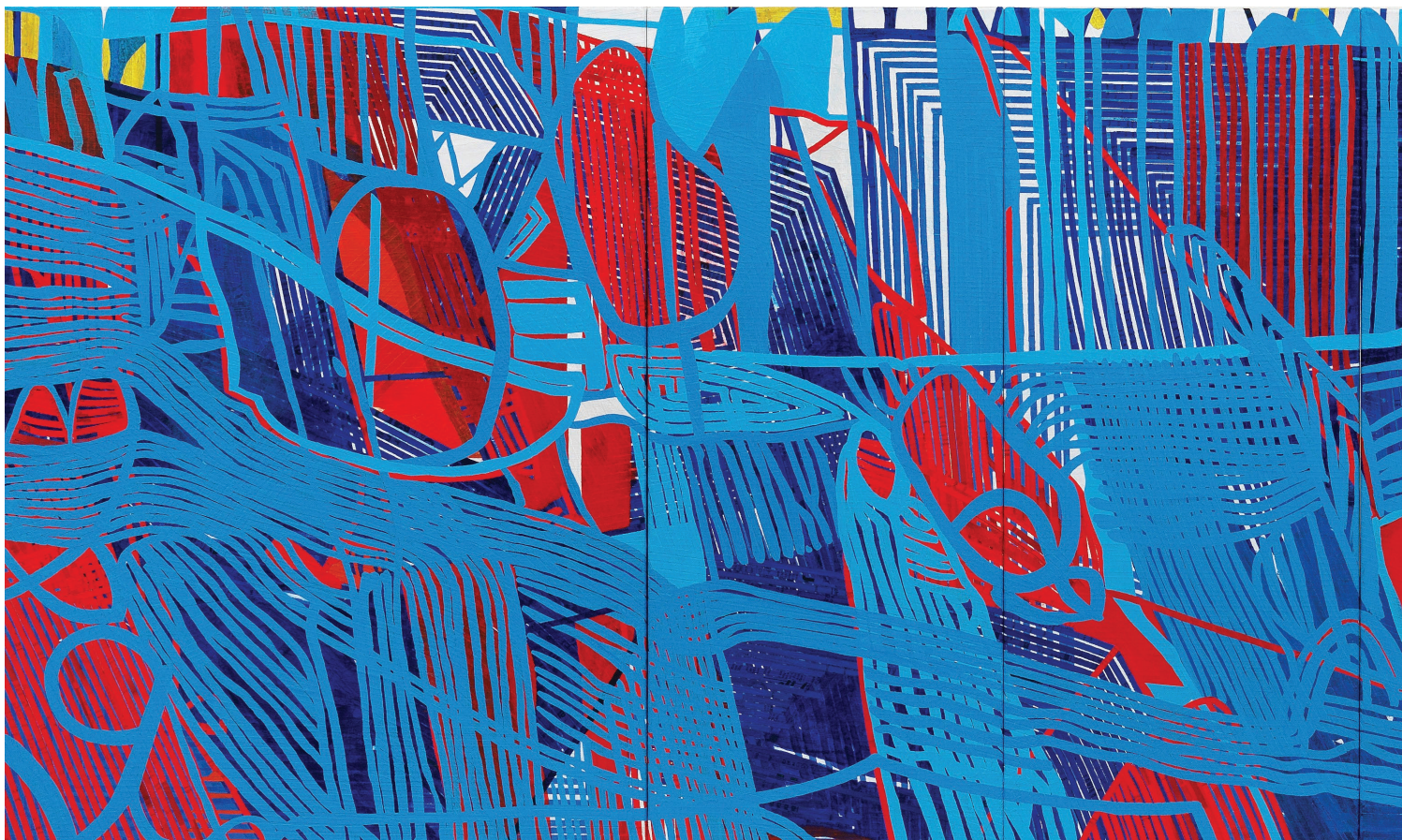
Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck

65 x 120 cm





Elder Ranges, 2003  
Natural pigments and rice paper on cotton duck  
35 x 130 cm



Elder Ranges II (pentptych), 2021  
Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck  
80 x 270 cm







Amidst Stanley Chasm Morning Mist , 2022  
Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck  
75 x 55 cm





Walls of Lake Mungo 6:28am, 2022  
Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck  
130 x 200 cm







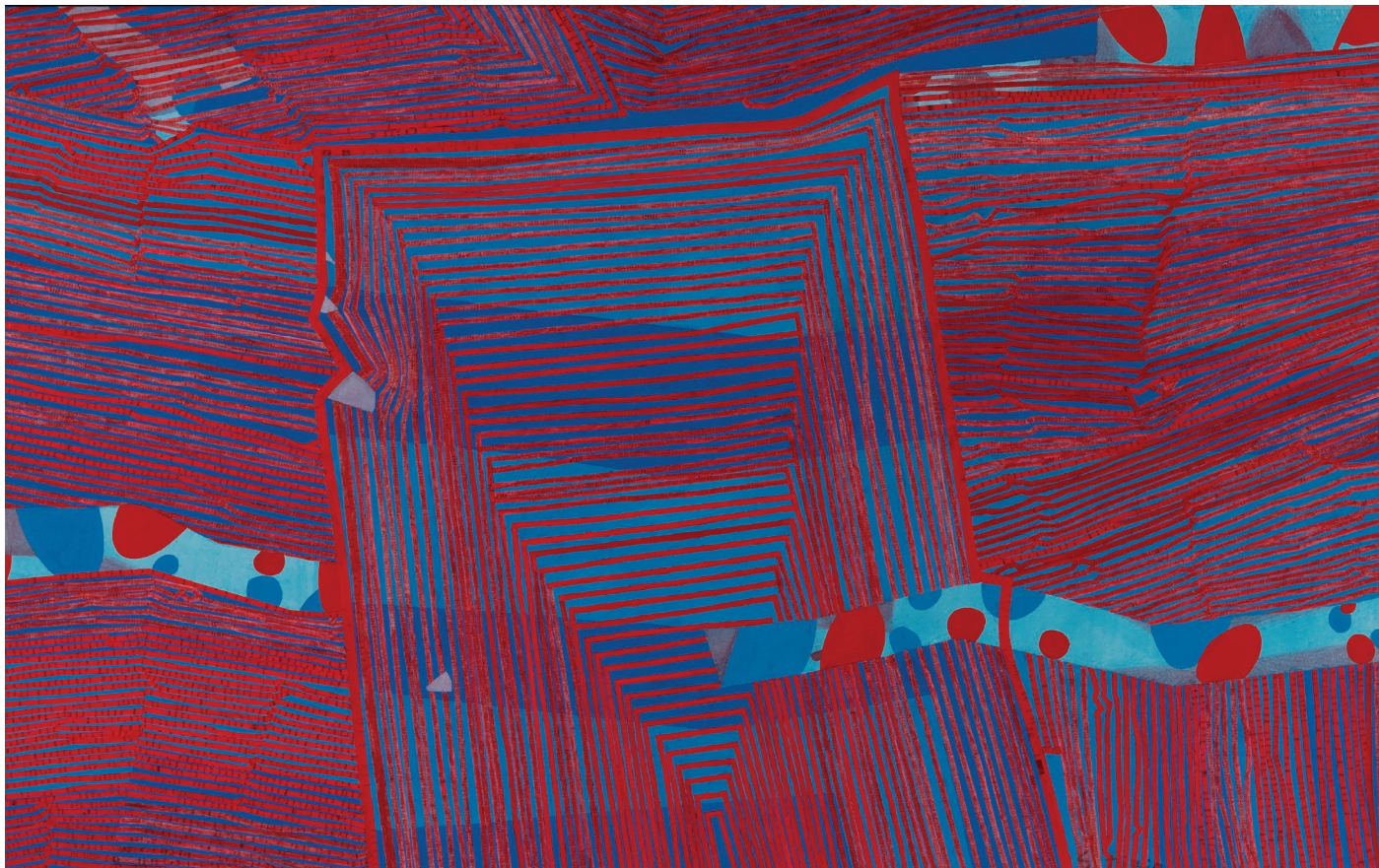






Early Morning. Leaving Worturpa Gorge, 2020  
Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck  
110 x 190 cm



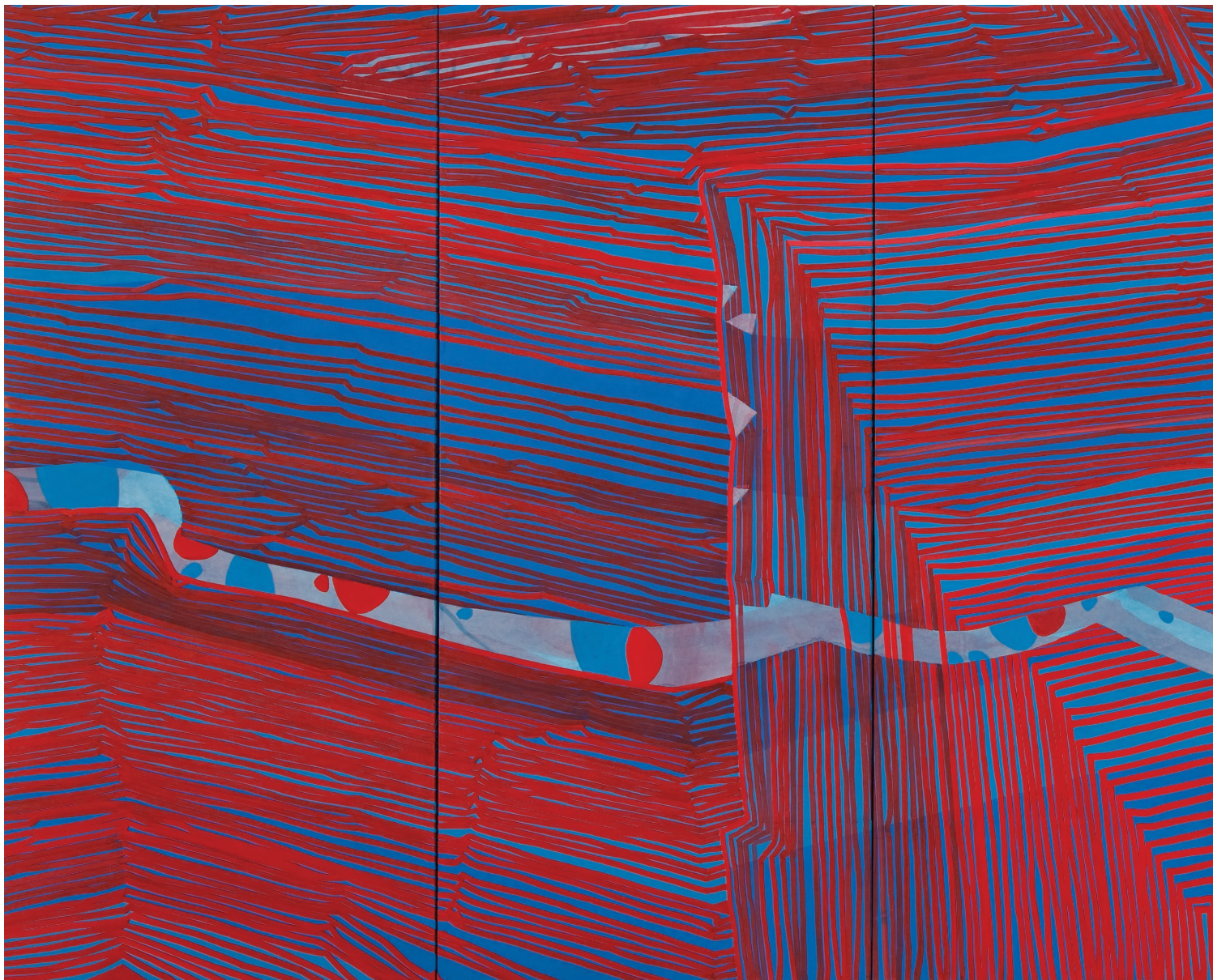


Tracks of Lake Mungo II, 2019

Shredded classified documents, acrylic, natural pigments, rice paper on cotton duck

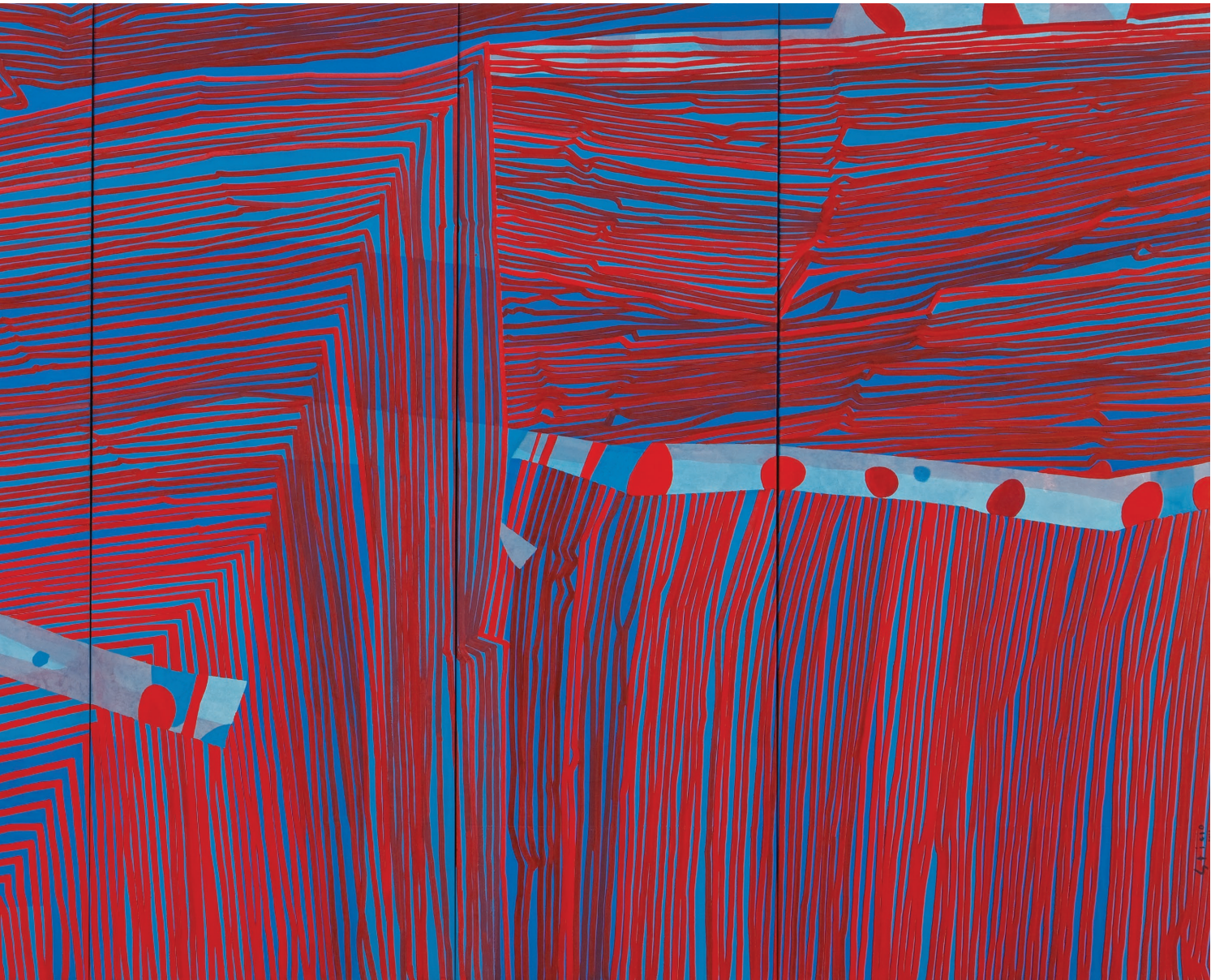
95 x 155 cm





Tracks Of Lake Mungo (sixtych), 2010  
Natural pigments and rice paper on cotton duck  
230 x 530 cm





# CHRISTOPHE STIBIO | CV

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Born in Bordeaux, France

- 1988-1989      Masters degree in Visual Arts. Bordeaux III. Faculty of Arts.  
Bachelors degree in Chinese Arts and Civilisation. Bordeaux III.
- 1989-1993      Graduates from the Traditional Landscape Painting Department at the  
National Academy of Fine Arts, Hangzhou, PRC, where he also studies  
human figure, birds and flowers painting, seal engraving, the five styles of  
calligraphy and paper and silk conservation/restoration.
- 1993-1996      Lives in Melbourne and travels regularly to the Flinders Ranges and  
Gammon Ranges. Teaches Chinese calligraphy in Melbourne and Sydney.  
Works as a consultant/translator in Chinese contemporary Art for the First  
Asia-Pacific Triennial with ACCA (Australian Centre for Contemporary Art)  
and the Shanghai Contemporary Art Museum.
- 1997-1999      Goes back to France and stays three years in the South West of the  
country, his region of origin where he keeps painting and exhibits his work.  
Travels again to China.
- 1999            Lives in Melbourne. Develops further the exploration of the landscape,  
travels extensively in the Flinders Ranges, Central Western Desert,  
Western Australia, Lake Mungo National Park and Royal National Park in  
New South Wales.

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1994            Moore Gallery. Melbourne.
- 1996            Moore Gallery. Melbourne.
- 1998            URISA. Artists Foundation. Bordeaux. France.

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS (CONT)

- 2001 LANDAU Gallery. Melbourne.
- 2002 Footscray Community Arts Centre. Melbourne.
- 2003 LOST NOT LOST. Port Jackson Press Gallery. Melbourne.
- 2007 LAKES MUNGO - ARUMPO Series 1. SPAN galleries. Melbourne.
- 2008 LAKES MUNGO - ARUMPO Series 2. Artist studio solo show. Melbourne.
- 2009 LAKES MUNGO - ARUMPO Series 3. Artist studio solo show. Melbourne.
- 2010 LAKES MUNGO - ARUMPO. Series 4. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne
- 2012 MAPPING THE LANDSCAPE. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne.
- 2013 SURVERYING THE EXCEPTIONAL. Survey show. Latrobe Regional Art Gallery. Morwell.
- 2014 NEVER REAL, ALWAYS TRUE. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne.
- 2015 LE PAYSAGE REVE. Galerie Luc Berthier. Paris.
- 2016 NEVER REAL, ALWAYS TRUE 2. William Mora Galleries. Melbourne.
- 2017 AN ANGEL IN THE SWAMP. William Mora Galleries. Melbourne.
- 2020 FRAGILE AND DANGEROUS. Nura Gallery. Sorrento.
- 2021 ADIEU À MARY ST, MAGMA Art Projects, Melbourne.
- 2022 WARNING: SEVERE WEATHER, MAGMA Art Projects, Melbourne

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1992 International Group Exhibition. «Ink and Contemporary Art». Museum of Fine Art. Haikou. China.
- 1992 Annual Forum. Exhibition Hall of the National Academy of Fine Arts. China.
- 1993 Duet Exhibition. Museum of Contemporary Art. China.
- 1993 Young Shanghainese Artists. Museum of Contemporary Art. Shanghai. China.
- 1994 Australian Chinese Painting Society. Sydney. NSW.
- 1995 International Exhibition. Taipei Xin Culture Foundation. City of Taipei. Taiwan.



## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS (CONT)

- 1997 Galerie Bouscayrol. Bordeaux. France.
- 2000 Metropolis Gallery. St Kilda. Melbourne. VIC.
- 2001 Finalist Outback Acquisitive Art Prize. Broken Hill City Art Gallery. NSW.
- 2001 LANDAU Gallery. St Kilda. Melbourne. VIC.
- 2002 Finalist 32nd Alice Springs Foundation Acquisitive Art Prize. Alice Springs. NT.
- 2002 Southside Arts project. Artefact show. Treasury Place. Melbourne. VIC.
- 2004 120° of Separation. Linden Gallery. Melbourne. VIC.
- 2004 The World We Live In. WORLD AIDS DAY. Melbourne Museum. Australia Gallery.
- 2005 Y.E.A.H (Youth Empowerment Against Aids) The World We Live In. Melbourne Museum.
- 2006 Y.E.A.H. The World we Live In. World Aids Day - 01/12/2006 Melbourne Museum.
- 2006 Y.E.A.H. The World We Live In. World Aids Day Charity show and Auction.
- 2007 TREASURES. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne. VIC.
- 2009 VIEW FROM HERE. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne. VIC.
- 2010 FRESH. New artists. Flinders Lane Gallery. Melbourne. VIC.
- 2010 Finalist Stanthorpe Acquisitive Art Prize. Stanthorpe Regional Gallery, QLD.
- 2010 Finalist Paddington Art Prize. Sydney. NSW.
- 2010 Finalist Gold Coast Art Prize. Gold Coast City Gallery. QLD.
- 2011 Finalist Lethbridge Art Prize. Lethbridge Gallery. Sydney. NSW.
- 2011 Finalist Prometheus Art Prize. QLD.
- 2011 Finalist Fleurieu Landscape Art Prize and Fleurieu Water Prize. MacLaren Vale. S.A. Jury high commendation for SCARCITY (triptych).
- 2011 Finalist Gold Coast Art Prize. Gold Coast City Gallery. Queensland
- 2012 Finalist SCOPE Galleries Art Award – Art Concerning Environment, Warrnambool. VIC.
- 2012 John Leslie Art Prize. Gippsland Art Gallery. Sale. VIC.
- 2013 Finalist Gold Coast Art Prize. GC City Art Gallery. QLD.
- 2013 Finalist Hazelhurst Art Prize. Hazelhurst Gallery and Arts Centre. NSW

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS (CONT)

- 2014            The Melbourne Collective. Cooks Hill Galleries. Newcastle NSW.  
2014            Melbourne International Art Fair. Flinders Lane Gallery. VIC.  
2021            Finalist, Southern Bouy Studios (SBS) Landscape Prize 2021, Mornington, VIC.  
2022            Finalist, Wyndham Art Prize, Wyndham Cultural Centre, Werribee, VIC  
2022            Finalist, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW

## PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Deakin University. Sydney

Macquarie Bank. Australia

Artbank. Melbourne

## PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Loti & Victor SMORGON collection. Melbourne

Sandra & David BARDAS collection. Melbourne

Sandra & Barry SMORGON collection. Sydney

Ian ROGERS collection. Melbourne

Anita CASTAN Contemporary Art collection. Melbourne / Sydney.

Fiona BROCKHOFF Australian Contemporary Art collection. Melbourne.

MURDOCH Collection. Melbourne.

BENETTON Collection. Milan

FIORA Collection. Lugano

Private collections in France, Belgium, England, Spain, and Switzerland.

Catalogue cover:

Flinders Ranges, 2021 (detail)

Shredded classified documents, acrylic, rice paper on cotton duck

130 x 180 cm

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