

MELBOURNE ARTIST FIGURES HER FUTURE IN NEW YORK CITY

Melbourne painter Debra Luccio captures the beauty of New York dancers in her forthcoming exhibition



From the Light (2007) Monotype 76x52cm



The Dance (2007) Monotype 76x56cm



The Dancer (2007) Oil on Canvas 123x61cm

At a recent performance of the New York City Ballet, Melbourne's Debra Luccio sat in the stalls with a sketch book balanced on one knee, utterly inspired and drawing frenetically in the dark as the dancers created scenes that matched her own artistic fascination with the figure in motion, which she details in her brilliant new solo exhibition, ***New York Figures***, opening on **4 September 2007 at Steps Gallery** Carlton.

Debra's latest show presents the beauty she captured in ten weeks in New York of drawing, painting and printmaking in studios, at performances and rehearsal. Her subject is the figure, which compels her art across a classical range of media, from painting, to drawings and the print-making method of monotypes.

"I went to watch the ballet – it was Romeo and Juliet – precisely to draw the dancers in performance, something I had never done before", Debra says.

"I knew instantly when the dancers appeared on stage that to make the work that I needed, I had to spend time with dancers, observing their performance, their physical expression," she says.

What then followed for Debra was an arduous search against the clock for a New York dance company willing to share with her the full range of public and private moments of the dancers. A series of encounters with generous New York dance patrons, dancers and life models led to Debra partnering informally with one of the city's leading modern dance outfits, the Tiffany Mills Company (TMC). It is the TMC dancers who provide most of the subjects in the show.

The experience culminated in *New York Figures*, which delivers on the promise of her first solo show in early 2006, an exploration of the fractured beauty of the female form that plainly suggested the talent now fully expressed here.

Throughout her career Debra has assiduously developed her power to render emotion in the gesture, flight and freedom of the human figure, grounding her talent in the discipline of daily drawing. It is a discipline she loves, and as her latest work shows, it has given her the ability to depart from conventional techniques intelligently and expressively.

The result is an innovation of style, colour and technique that bursts across canvasses and paper in a series of works that establish Debra's place as an artist pushing her understanding – and ours - of the possibilities of the figure.

New York Figures: Dancers and Life Models of New York City ***Paintings, Monotypes, Drypoints & Drawings*** **4 September – 30 September 2007**

Opening Night:

Tuesday 4 September 7pm - 8.30pm

(with special performance by Steven Crosby of the Victorian Opera Company)

Floor Talks (free entry):

Wednesday 5 September 9.30am

'Monotypes in Australia: Ghost threads in painterly print.'

Speaker: Thomas A. Middlemost, Art Curator, Charles Sturt University

Saturday 15 September 2pm

'Artist Talk'

Bookings essential for talks. To book please email info@debraluccio.com

Steps Gallery:

62 Lygon Street Carlton South Vic 3058 Hours: Monday- Sunday 10am–6pm

To contact the artist please email Debra on debra@debraluccio.com

For further information such as Debra's artist history, images of Debra working and additional images of artwork, please go to www.debraluccio.com
