

## Albert Tucker: Explorers and Intruders

17 August 2013 to 10 March 2014  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Gallery  
Curator: Sue Cramer

**HEIDE**  
MUSEUM  
OF MODERN  
ART



Albert Tucker  
*Explorer and Parrot* 1963  
oil on composition board  
89 x 120.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation

Albert Tucker began painting outback themes while living in Italy in the mid-1950s during an extended period abroad, his interest in Australian myth and by extension Australian identity sharpened by his distance from home. Portrayed as outsider figures trespassing upon an indomitable and primeval land, his explorers and intruders display qualities of fortitude and sorrow and, like his iconic Antipodean heads, seem to be built from the same craggy and fissured textures as the land.

Returning home to Melbourne in 1960, Tucker continued to develop this theme. In doing so, he drew on the advances of European modernism—Expressionism, Surrealism and the built-up, collaged surfaces of Art Informel—but was equally inspired by the classical and religious art he had seen in Italian churches and galleries. His gaunt and scarified protagonists, pitted against desert or rainforest wilderness, are like the martyrs and saints of European tradition, recast in a distinctively Australian drama. 'After thirteen years absence you realise what a unique, prehistoric beast the Australian landscape is', he reflected at this time.

Often drawn to the darker aspects of human experience, Tucker has sometimes portrayed the ill-fated pioneers Burke & Wills and Ludwig Leichhardt, but mostly he paints anonymous figures that to him were 'a melding together of all the explorers we've had'. Sourced from imagination and memory, these archetypes are also emblematic of broader themes of human existence and survival. In a shift from his 1940s paintings that attended to the city's seamy underworld and its 'ladies of the night', Tucker characterises the Australian outback as an exclusively masculine frontier.

Tucker became an ardent environmentalist in the 1960s and his concern for the devastating effect of human encroachment upon the land underlies these works. Symbolising the tension between nature and man, vivid parrots scrutinise or attack intruders by 'shooting through the air like bullets'.

# List of works

This catalogue is arranged chronologically. Measurements are height before width.

## Albert Tucker

born 1914, Melbourne, Victoria. Lived and worked Melbourne. Died 1999



*Explorer* c.1957  
oil on canvas  
49.5 × 39.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Explorer* 1958  
synthetic polymer paint on  
composition board  
202 × 81 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



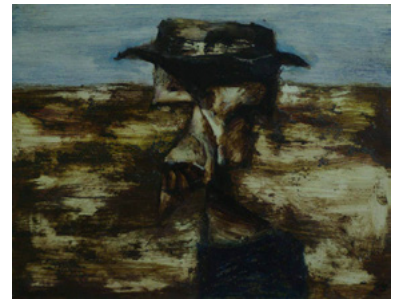
*Explorer III* 1958  
synthetic polymer paint and PVA on  
composition board  
203 × 81.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Gift of Barbara Tucker 2005



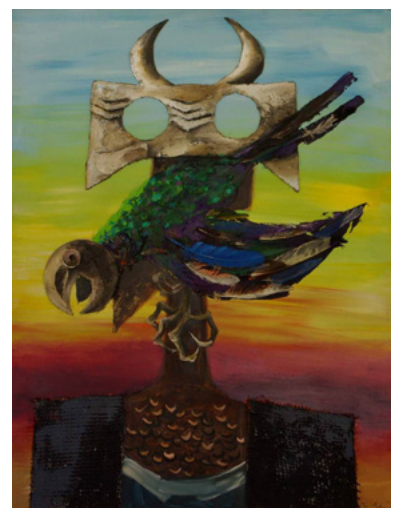
*Explorer with Parrot* c.1960  
oil on composition board  
81.5 × 66 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Explorer and Parrot* 1963  
oil on composition board  
89 × 120.5 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation



*Explorer* 1964  
oil and pastel on cardboard  
22.5 × 32.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Masked Figure Attacked by Parrots* 1964  
synthetic polymer paint on  
composition board  
119 × 90 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Gippsland Intruder* 1965  
oil on composition board  
60.5 × 75.6 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
Gift of Lyn Williams from the  
Estate of Fred Williams 1998

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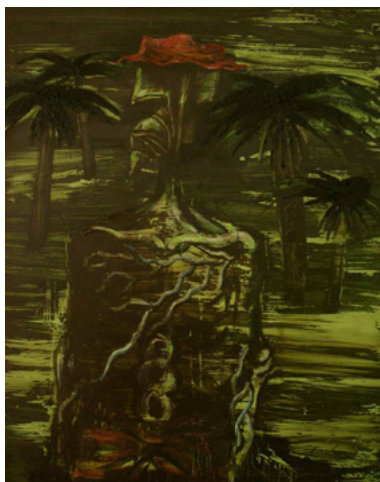
*Explorer in Desert* 1965  
oil on composition board  
90 × 70 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation

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*Gippsland Intruder I* 1965  
synthetic polymer on composition board  
152 × 122 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Gippsland Intruder 2* 1965  
synthetic polymer paint on  
composition board  
152 × 122 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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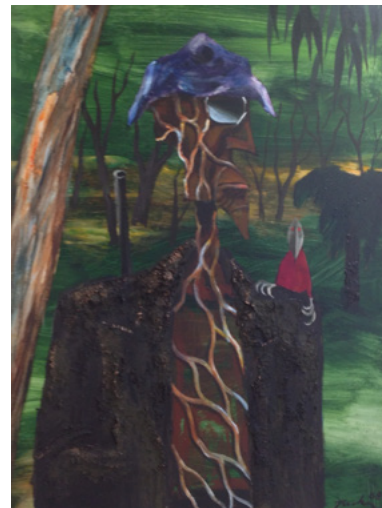
*Intruder Resting* 1965–66  
synthetic polymer paint on composition  
board  
122 × 152 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
On long-term loan from the  
Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation

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*Explorer Crossing River* 1967  
synthetic polymer paint on canvas  
91.5 × 122 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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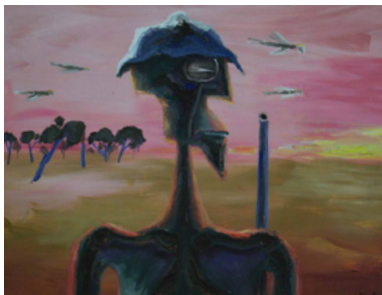
*Explorer* 1968  
oil and collage on composition board  
101 × 75 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer and Bird* 1968  
oil on composition board  
106.5 × 137.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer and Cockatoos* 1968  
synthetic polymer paint on  
composition board  
91 × 122 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Explorer Resting* 1968  
pastel and pencil on paper  
28 × 20 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Head* 1968  
synthetic polymer paint on  
composition board  
75 × 59.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Intruder I* 1968  
synthetic polymer paint on  
composition board  
122 × 91 × cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Intruder II* 1968  
synthetic polymer paint and polyvinyl  
acetate on composition board  
120 × 90 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



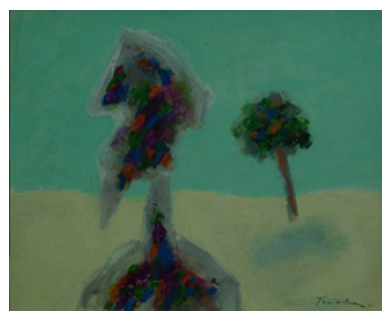
*Explorer with Camel* 1970  
watercolour and pastel on paper  
26.5 × 36.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



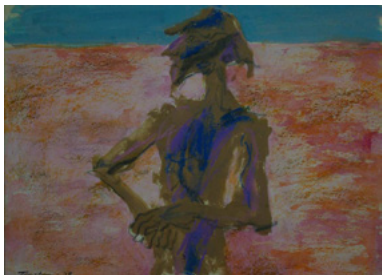
*Man and Parrot* 1970  
oil on composition board  
70 × 55 cm  
Heide Museum of Modern Art  
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*Explorer* 1974  
fibre-tipped pen, pencil and oil  
pastel on paper  
21.7 × 14.7 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Explorer* 1977  
synthetic polymer paint on cardboard  
25.5 × 31.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne



*Explorer* 1978  
watercolour and crayon on paper  
31.5 × 43 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer* 1982  
watercolour and pastel on paper  
20 × 12.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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## ANCILLARY MATERIAL

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*Explorer* c.1957  
monoprint with synthetic polymer  
paint on paper  
32 × 22.1 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer* c.1957  
pastel, pencil and biro on paper  
31.1 × 16 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer Sketch 3* 1957  
fibre-tipped pen on paper  
17.8 × 12 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer Sketch* c.1960  
fibre-tipped pen on paper  
15.5 × 10.9 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer Sketch 2* c.1960  
fibre-tipped pen on paper  
16.1 × 11.1 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer with Beard* c.1960  
fibre-tipped pen on paper  
11.1 × 7.5 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorers with Hats* c.1960  
fibre-tipped pen on paper  
10.2 × 12.6 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Three Explorers* c.1965  
fibre-tipped pen and pencil on paper  
20.9 × 27 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Gippsland Explorer with Parrot* 1965  
fibre-tipped pen on paper  
12.7 × 20.3 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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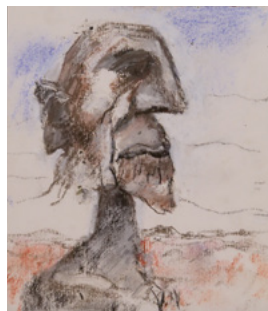
*Explorer with Cork Hat* c.1968  
pencil on paper  
27.5 × 37.8 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer with Camels* 1970  
oil on paper  
25.5 × 36 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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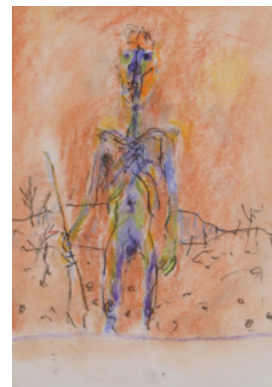
*Explorer* c.1990  
pastel on paper  
25 × 17.9 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Explorer with Parrot* c.1990  
charcoal on paper  
15 × 14.8 × cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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*Naked Explorer* c.1995  
fibre-tipped pen and pastel on paper  
20.3 × 12.7 cm  
Private collection, Melbourne

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