



## **David Naseby**

### **Defiant painter meets defiant landscape in a fierce love affair set on the Murray River.**

The ethereal, suffering riverscape of the once mighty Murray has inspired the series of works in Sydney painter David Naseby in a series he calls 'The Defiant Landscape'.

An established portrait artist - and regular Archibald exhibitor – Naseby's sensitive, painterly portraits of high-profile figures, including poet Les Murray, former PM John Gorton, writer Bob Ellis and the painter's close friend, cartoonist Bill Leak, have been acclaimed for many years.

But in recent times Naseby's artistic gaze has turned more and more intensely to the landscape, and this body of work has begun to join his portraits in established public and private collections including Rupert Murdoch and Macquarie Bank.

A chance visit to the Murray in 2001 began what has become an enduring, sombre love affair with the ailing river for Naseby.

Struck by the ghostly, figurative forms and leached colours of the increasingly salinated landscape, he could not get the images of the river out of his mind.

"The image of those trees, twisted and tortured, haunted me for a long time," he says. "It was as if they held a strange power. Initially I didn't realise quite what was happening to the Murray, but as I came to a better understanding, I felt more and more drawn to paint this crusty landscape as a symbol of the havoc we are wreaking on this great river."