

# Ben Fuog

Four Givens, The Great Pearl and Ikaria

28 October – 29 November 2016

Standing sentinel at the gateway to Ben Fuog's latest exhibition is a work that carries the hot bright days of a Mediterranean summer along in its wake, issuing in a season of warm, boisterous carousing. 'Judy', a black Salem goat stark against a clear blue sky, has her feet firmly placed on the thick lavishly textural earth of Ikaria.



*Judy*, Acrylic and varnish on canvas, 76 x 76 cm, \$3,300

Taking the Greek island of Ikaria as his subject and inspiration, Fuog immerses visitors in a landscape in which work, leisure, ceremony and mythology merge into a coherent whole. Likewise a diverse selection of materials including stained glass, neon, canvas and marine ply coalesce to provide a sensual material journey.



*Raches*, Oil on canvas, 300 x 200 cm, \$13,400

A philosophical substructure drawn from the existential psychotherapist Irvin J. Yalom has guided Fuog throughout, and recurrent themes mirror the paradoxical nature of Yalom's 'Four Givens': Life and Death, Meaning and Meaninglessness, Freedom and Responsibility, and Connection and Isolation.



Detail from *Venediktos and Sam of Emu Creek*, Gold leaf, timber stain, acrylic and varnish on timber, 234 x 122 cm, \$13,400 POA

Since his first journey to Ikaria with his Greek Australian wife in 2009, Fuog has explored Hellenic culture through studies of the city of Athens and through a portrait of former Greek Minister of Finance Yanis Varoufakis (whose stance during the Greek government-debt crisis was an inspiration to all independent nations). This exhibition therefore builds on an already accomplished body of work and is grounded in a fertile and deeply experienced exchange.



*The skipping girl told me she was Bo-Peep. I'm a goat*, Neon, 200 x 145 cm, \$13,400

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