

Around the galleries Dan Rule

WHAT Marc Freeman: *Broken Canon*
WHERE Nellie Castan Gallery, Level 1, 12 River Street, South Yarra, 9804 7366, nelliecastangallery.com

RUNNING alongside James and Eleanor Avery's *Malleus Maleficarum*, Marc Freeman's new collection of abstract paint and collage works, right, find their resonance in technique and recurrence. Across three large-scale canvases and five smaller works on paper, the Melbourne artist revels in repetitions of materials, processes and motifs. Scrubbed, washed and faded oils are reconfigured and recast, echoed in various collaged forms; swathes of canvas from the larger pieces appear throughout the works on paper in a fascinating inversion of materials. With time, hints of figuration and gesture emerge — a skull-like shape seems of particular interest to Freeman — only to drift back into abstraction. It's a quality that permeates *Broken Canon* on several planes, evident in the treatment of the painted surface. Sponged and rubbed, it would usually invoke a weathered ambience, but Freeman's arresting use of collage gives the works a striking sensibility. We're left grasping at hints and clues. Freeman tests and defies his own bounds with every stroke, scrub, cut and layer. Tues to Sat, noon-5pm, until July 3.

WHAT Robert Jacks: *Floating Points*
WHERE Block Projects, Level 4, 289 Flinders Lane, city, 9662 9148, blockprojects.com

THERE seems a visceral, electric sense of instability to the works that comprise *Floating Points* on first pass. This stunning exhibition of historical paintings created by prominent Australian artist Robert



Jacks in Sydney and Melbourne during the 1980s, left, reveals an artist in the throes of change. Shards of colour clash and intersect; angular, geometric shapes disrupt and suspend one another. But there's also an unlikely sense of resolution. Though Jacks's colour palette — which consists of blood reds, deep greens, jarring yellows and muted blues

and greys — should seem grating, with time several of the works assume an unlikely balance and equalisation. Jacks's attention to surface plays a prominent role. He has lathered the paint on to the linen, only to scrape it off with his palette knife. It gives a softened, muted quality to even the harshest of shapes. But it's the show's title that acts as a defining statement. So abundant are Jacks's focal points — so void are his works of a clear subject or scene — that they essentially drift, suspended in and around our field of vision. Threads to cubism are offered but never fully realised. Instead, these paintings are, quite perfectly, neither here nor there. Wed to Fri 11am-6pm, Sat 11am-4pm, until July 3.

WHAT *Vision*
WHERE Glen Eira City Council Gallery, corner Glen Eira and Hawthorn roads, Caulfield, 9534 3333, www.gleneira.vic.gov.au

FEATURING the cross-sectional paintings of Jon Cattapan, virtual architectures of Darren Wardle and digitally altered photographic works of Stephen Haley, Kit Wise and Valerie Sparks among others, this group exhibition casts the contemporary metropolis as a fluid space — an interface between worldly cultures, architectures and virtuality. It's a perspective that's



reflected in several of the artists' practices. Sparks's photo-works merge sites of worship, cultural and geographical signifiers into melanges that prove intermittently uncomfortable and normalised. In Wise's *Xanadu*, below, we witness a metropolis of such architectural and topographic grandeur and sheen that it becomes all but grotesque. Mon to Fri 10am-5pm, weekends 1pm-5pm, until July 5.

WHAT Peter Cripps: *Towards an Elegant Solution*
WHERE Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 111 Sturt Street, Southbank, 9697 9999, accaonline.org.au

SPENDING time amid this first of the three episodic installations comprising ACCA's major survey of influential Australian minimalist Peter Cripps illustrates how central notions of space are to his longstanding practice. There's not a sculpture or installation in this collection of significant early and mid-career works that doesn't assume a vastly different guise or effect with proximity or distance. Navigating our way through huge works such as *Another History of H.B.* and *R.L.* or past his tiny *Mirror Works*, there isn't a moment in which we're not overtly conscious of our spatial relationship to the work. The viewer is an integral part of Cripps's structure and assemblage. Tues to Fri 10am-5pm, weekends 11am-6pm, until July 25.

