



Ivan Durrant: Cellophane Silks

3 October–9 November 2025
Glen Eira City Council Gallery

Artist bio

Ivan Durrant

b. 1947 Melbourne, Australia

Ivan Durrant is a renowned Australian artist who has exhibited widely in major public galleries and private galleries throughout Australia. Durrant has received significant acclaim for his distinctive and innovative creative practice, encompassing painting, video, performance and film and diverse thematic concerns.

He has presented over 50 individual exhibitions in public galleries and private galleries since 1970 and participated in many group exhibitions since 1969. In 2020, the Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia presented the major survey exhibition *Ivan Durrant: Barrier Draw*, celebrating the breadth of his work and extensive career. Durrant has received many awards and residencies including the Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2009 and the Arts Council of Australia Artist in Residence, New York in 1976.

His work is held in many private collections and significant public gallery and museum collections in Australia and overseas including the National Gallery of Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of South Australia, Art Gallery of Western Australia, TarraWarra Museum of Art, National Portrait Gallery, Queensland University, Glen Eira City Council Art Collection, Bendigo Art Gallery, Gippsland Art Gallery, Latrobe Regional Gallery, Hamilton Art Gallery, Horsham Art Gallery, Rockhampton Art Gallery, Australian War Memorial, the British Museum, and the British War Memorial.

Cover image

Ivan Durrant
3 Jockeys 1975
Synthetic polymer paint on
composition board
83.7 x 106.6 cm
Courtesy of Ivan Durrant
© Ivan Durrant
Glen Eira City Council Art Collection

Curator's essay

In a career spanning more than five decades, Ivan Durrant has achieved considerable recognition for a fascinating, varied and exceptional creative practice. His unique and dynamic visual language has intrigued audiences since he emerged onto the art world in the early 1970s. By the mid-1970s, Durrant had already achieved critical success and was known for his technically refined photorealist style of painting, a fascination with the interplay of colour and light, and perceptions of the world around him.

Ivan Durrant: Cellophane Silks features a selection of celebrated Caulfield Racecourse, horse-racing, jockey, punter and spectator paintings from the mid-1970s. Living just off Neerim Road in Caulfield in the early 1970s, Durrant frequented his favourite racetrack with a new Pentax camera, observing the atmosphere and experience of a race day at Caulfield Racecourse and then re-created his own carefully constructed memory images or versions of the scenes.

3 Jockeys 1975 is a key work and the catalyst for this exhibition. Awarded first prize in the City of Caulfield's inaugural annual acquisitive exhibition in 1976, Durrant pays homage to Kevin Mitchell and Alan Simpson, jockeys he admired at the Caulfield Racecourse. In this poignant work, the jockey's room is veiled with an emotional intensity, pensive in preparation for the race, yet luminous in their colourful silks.

Shifting patterns of intense saturated colour and light pervade the series of dynamic out of focus horse-racing and jockey paintings from 2012 to 2016. Horses and jockeys merge in luminous works such as *Lime Silks* 2014 and *Diamonds* 2015, evoking the spectacle and power of horse-racing as they speed to the finishing post. Describing his technique as 'Supraphotolism', Durrant extends the boundaries of photorealism, painting action shots of race finishes by zooming in and blowing up images, blurring abstraction with reality, where forms dissolve, "... suggesting the aftermath of overwhelming perception".¹ Durrant exploits the visual phenomenon of an after image, "... pushing the world into a glorious, jewel-like universe"² which lingers in the viewer's eye.

Diane Soumilas

Curator of Ivan Durrant: *Cellophane Silks*

Glen Eira City Council Gallery

¹ Scott Robinson, Remnants of Perception, 'Ivan Durrant: Marmalade Skies Through Opal Eyes' and 'The Good', Artlink, Spring, 21 August 2024

² Ivan Durrant, Artist Statement, June 2025



Ivan Durrant
2 Jockeys 1975
synthetic polymer paint on composition board
81.0 x 122.0 cm
Collection of the artist
© Ivan Durrant



Ivan Durrant

Racing November Melbourne 1976

synthetic polymer paint on composition board

81.7 x 121.0 cm

TarraWarra Museum of Art collection

Gift of Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AO

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program 2012



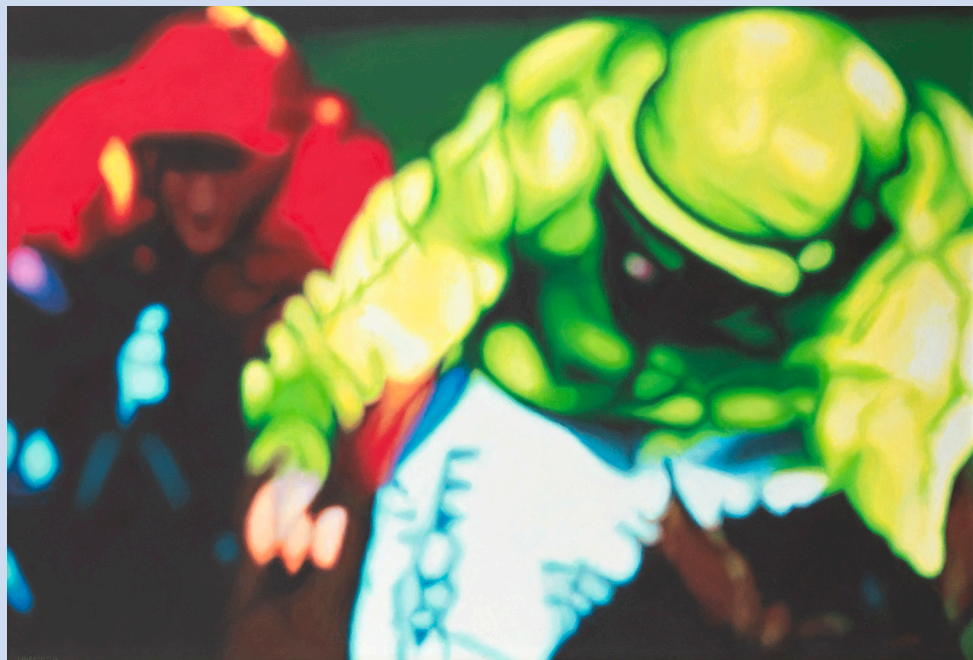
Ivan Durrant
Caulfield Cup Day 1975
synthetic polymer paint on composition board
81.5 x 122.0 cm
Collection of the artist
© Ivan Durrant



Ivan Durrant
A Day at the Caulfield races 1976
synthetic polymer paint on composition board
81.5 x 122.0 cm
Collection of the artist
© Ivan Durrant



Ivan Durrant
Diamonds 2015
synthetic polymer paint on composition board
102.0 x 148.0 cm
Collection of the artist
© Ivan Durrant



Ivan Durrant
Lime Silks 2014
synthetic polymer paint on composition board
102.0 x 148.0 cm
Collection of the artist
© Ivan Durrant

Artist statement

'Out of focus' Horse-racing and jockey paintings 2012–2016

Ever since I can remember, light and colour have held a fascination for me. At five years old, I collected caterpillars from the primary school's peppercorn tree. To this day, the yellow, lime-green and brilliant grass-green stippled with mauve spots on this plump intestine-shaped creature is sharp in my mind. I was hooked. Colour and reflected light was locked in my bloodstream forever: any wonder horse racing would become an obsession in my paintings.

TV race finishes with head-on close-ups – views not achievable at the races or even in the race – give me what I'm looking for. I'm still the observer, glorifying the combination of man and animal. Being so zoomed in gives the viewer of my paintings a real sense of startled wonder, drive, thrust, and risk-taking — a new experience like travelling on the ghost train with Disneyland River caves thrown in.

The language of art is fundamental to all my work, and the more modern the language, the more I can invite the viewer to understand my poetry — where I'm coming from. TV, digital photography and domestic digital printers, with their unreal, gaudy PCM colours, are now so commonplace we accept them as representing the real world. Combining all this into an out-of-focus image unites the paintings and therefore, the world, into a glorious, jewel-like, colour and light-flooded universe.

Artist statement

Caulfield Racecourse, horse-racing and jockey paintings 1975–1976

I was extremely lucky to become friends with some of the mid-1970s jockeys — Stan Aitken, Paul Jarman, Midge Cooper, and others.

At first, I was mesmerized by the jockey's silks flashing past in a kaleidoscope of opal brilliance as they thundered to the winning post. But it was the human emotion in the Jockey's Room that really moved me. These brave souls, small in stature, were big in heart and courage. One slip, one clip of a horse's heels, and they were done for. There was sometimes a little nervous joking preparing for the race, but generally they sat there with no banter, only with a quiet, knowing respect for each other's task ahead. I was so relieved when they walked back into the jockey's room: safe: with a conquering smile.

Glen Eira City Council Gallery

Glen Eira Town Hall

Corner Glen Eira and Hawthorn Roads, Caulfield

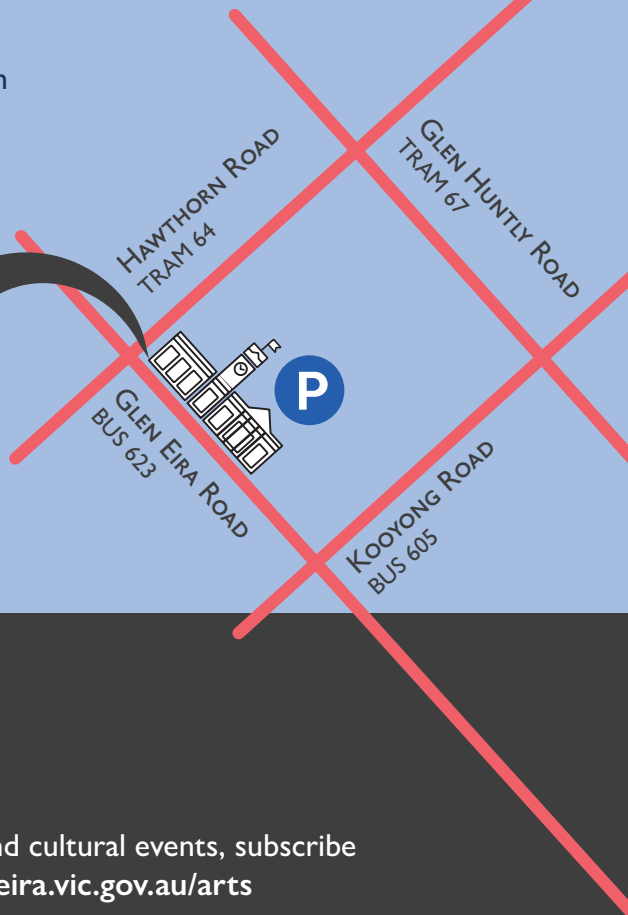
03 9524 3333

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm

Saturday to Sunday, 1pm to 5pm

Closed all public holidays.



Connect with us

For updates on all of our arts and cultural events, subscribe to our newsletter at www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/arts



@gleneiraarts



/gleneiraarts



Scan the QR code to see the
Galleries exhibitions.



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL