



## Media Release

Embassy of Australia  
Office of Public Affairs  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Megan Doughty  
(202) 797-3237

### **Leading Australian landscape artist chases clouds to Washington**

The Embassy of Australia will proudly host *Vapour Trails: Recent Paintings by Philip Wolfhagen*, a collection of oil paintings by celebrated Tasmanian landscape artist Philip Wolfhagen, from 17 May to 13 July.

*Vapour Trails*, Wolfhagen's first international exhibition, follows his ongoing quest to capture the perfect cloud on canvas.

"It all started when I was waiting for my daughter to get off the bus one day," Wolfhagen said. "This wonderful cumulonimbus anvil drifted past, and much to her annoyance, we took off and chased it."

Over the next few months, Wolfhagen filled his studio with photographs of clouds, and they soon transformed into striking works of vaporous white and ominous grey.

As one of Australia's leading contemporary artists, Wolfhagen is a prominent member of a new generation of painters rethinking the traditions of Australian landscape art. He is influenced by a wide range of landscape painters, from Cézanne to Constable, and draws inspiration from the bleak, spare landscapes of his island home.

Wolfhagen is widely regarded as one of Australia's pre-eminent landscape artists. His exhibitions routinely sell out, and many of his buyers submit requests before the gallery doors have opened.

Such wild popularity comes from an unlikely place: a bare-boards-and-beams studio in the peripheral village of Longford in northern Tasmania. This atmosphere still feels natural to Wolfhagen, who was born on the island in 1963. He grew up on a sheep farm in remote central Tasmania, and remembers a childhood of tickling trout in streams, herding sheep and roaming the dry grasslands.

"The landscape is everything where I was born," he explains. "My painting is about connectedness with place and connection to the natural world."

And this particular show, he explains, is designed to express his uneasiness about the changing weather, and therefore the future of the natural world.

"I want to convey this latent anxiety, of anticipation something important might be about to happen," he notes. "It is for the audience to speculate on what that event might turn out to be."

Wolfhagen studied printmaking at the University of Tasmania and went on to complete a graduate diploma in painting from Sydney College of the Arts. Since he began painting in 1988, he has held 20 solo exhibitions and multiple group exhibitions in Australia's major cities. His works are featured in public and private collections in Australia and abroad. He is represented by Bett Gallery Hobart in Tasmania, Australia ([www.bettgallery.com.au](http://www.bettgallery.com.au)).

The Embassy of Australia is located at 1601 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC. Gallery hours are 10 am – 2 pm Monday to Friday or by appointment : 202 797 3383.