Trent Parke: The Crimson Line

Born in the steel city of Newcastle, and growing up with his father working at Tubemakers it was only a matter of time before Trent Parke was drawn in by the industrial landscape that surrounds the Adelaide beachside suburb he now lives in. One of Parke's only early childhood memories is accompanying his mother to pick his dad up from work, travelling through a landscape dominated by ship yards, chimneys, and the BHP steelworks.

There have been two incidents in Parkes personal life which he describes as major influences in his work. The death of his mother while still a young boy, the catalyst for The Black Rose, Art Gallery of South Australia, 2015 and the water birth of his sons with his partner in life and fellow artist Narelle Autio. Life and death, light and shadow, space and time, memory. These are the themes that have always been at the forefront of Parkes work. The Crimson Line continues to explore these ideas.

Throughout his career Parke has always been interested in the transformative powers of light, but it was the ephemeral changing colours of dawn and dusk, the multitude of different reds that made him curious about the colour crimson. He discovered the colour that is used in commercial products is harvested from the crushed and boiled bodies of the female scale insect, the Cochineal. A tiny minute insect who inhabits the pads of the prickly pear cactus and who are farmed for their crimson dye. A dye now used primarily in cosmetics and food colouring.

Scarlet, magenta, orange, and crimson, are the coloured dyes produced by the Cochineal and also seem to feature spectacularly in the colours of creation, as seen in an Eagle Nebula during the birth of a new star and recorded by the Hubble space telescope... one of Parkes favourite photographers. These colours of birth and blood Parke also remembers from the bath water, the umbilical cord and placenta, at the birth of his sons.

Cinematic in his vision, Parkes work has always been firmly established in film noir. Like his previous published books; Minutes to Midnight and The Christmas Tree Bucket, Parke builds a narrative that twists and turns. From the micro to the macro, science, genetics, factory lines, laboratories and processing plants. Global warming, consumerism and beauty, his landscapes provide a backdrop that frames a dark and foreboding narrative of strange truth and fiction.
The Crimson Line [series]
Untitled #01, 2019
pigment print

108 x 162 cm
dition of 8 + 2 AP
$8,800, unframed

36.5 x 55 cm
dition of 4 + 2 AP
$2,200, unframed
The Crimson Line [series]

Untitled #02, 2019
pigment print

108 x 162 cm
edition of 8 + 2 AP
$8,800, unframed

36.5 x 55 cm
edition of 4 + 2 AP
$2,200, unframed
The Crimson Line [series]
Untitled #23, 2019
pigment print

108 x 162 cm
dition of 8 + 2 AP
$8,800, unframed

36.5 x 55 cm
dition of 4 + 2 AP
$2,200, unframed
The Crimson Line [series]
Untitled #16, 2019
pigment print

162 x 108 cm
edition of 8 + 2 AP
$8,800, unframed

55 x 36.5 cm
edition of 4 + 2AP
$2,200, unframed
The Crimson Line [series]
Untitled #08, 2019
pigment print
108 x 162 cm
edition of 8 + 2 AP
$8,800, unframed

36.5 x 55 cm
edition of 4 + 2 AP
$2,200, unframed
*The Crimson Line [series]*

*Untitled #07*, 2019
pigment print

162 x 108 cm
ddition of 8 + 2 AP
$8,800, unframed

55 x 36.5 cm
dition of 4 + 2 AP
$2,200, unframed
The Crimson Line [series]
Untitled #03, 2019
pigment print

108 x 162 cm
dition of 8 + 2 AP
$8,800, unframed

36.5 x 55 cm
dition of 4 + 2 AP
$2,200, unframed