

# TRAVEL JOURNAL

*an exhibition by jessie beard*



23 October - 6 November  
109 Victoria Street, Taree

GATHER  
+PLACE  
*the store*

'Travel Journal' explores overseas locations Jessie has travelled through reimagined abstractions. Reflecting on both the landscape and location visually, as well as the emotions and memories connected to them. The works have been inspired by photos, souvenirs, fleeting visions or a combination of all. Jessie is drawn to distinct colours of places, a key focus in these recollections. They tell stories from what can be felt as a lifetime ago, especially within the travel banned reality of today. This is Jessie's alternative to a photo album or journal to document the world. Depicting experiences and unique perceptions that only an artwork has the ability to express. Without being able to jump on a plane to fulfil wanderlust, then art should be used to reminisce and satisfy what the soul seeks.

*jessie beard*



*Grown to flourish. 2021*

Acrylic & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm

\$1480

One of the first pieces I started for this body of work. I was reflecting on an image that I took at Cambridge Botanic Gardens. It was an overcast day, raining on and off but the sun still found a way to beam into the glasshouse, saturating the vines of green and purple with warmth and giving sparkle to the droplets of water on the glass. As I painted I began to consider how I really wanted to portray my travel moments, to extend further than the visuals of the location and connect the emotions from that time with those that are present today. As this work took a turn, becoming exaggerated, blooming ecstatically to life, I realised that it is me. I am the plant inside the glasshouse. With the light beaming on me, it's now my time to show who I am and how I can grow and thrive even within my walls. And with that thought it paved the way I would approach each work for my exhibition.



*Electric atmosphere, 2021*

Acrylic, oil pastel & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm

\$1480

Buskers filled the streets with lively music to accompany the laughter of the unashamedly tipsy people. Coloured bunting strung across the pub facades and houses wore pastel doors. Tracking down all the spectacular street art even as it began to rain added to the adventure of the city. I would go back to Dublin in a heartbeat to get lost in that electric atmosphere.



*Made on mosaic, 2021*

Acrylic & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm

\$1480

I was very intrigued by the architectural and mosaic work of Antoni Gaudi across Barcelona. This piece was particularly inspired by snippets of the mosaic detail within Park Guell. Art on top of a hill, meticulously designed so you are not only appreciating the work but the skyline of the city it organically becomes a part of.



*Silk and spice. 2021*

Acrylic & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm  
\$1480

The moment I stepped inside the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul, Turkey and scanned around at all the market stalls, my senses were wonderfully overwhelmed. Yes, I was also physically overwhelmed, anxious about the idea of haggling for items and clutching tightly to my backpack that held my passport and money, but I was in heaven. Brightly coloured scarves, vibrant patterned plates, rows of various Turkish delights, baklava and nougat, and mountains of spices in every shade of orange and red. If you could get high off the aroma of fresh paprika and cumin, then that was the place to be. I left with two silk scarves and a satisfied stomach.



*Cinque Terre dreaming, 2021*

Acrylic on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm  
\$1480

When thinking of Cinque Terre, immediately seen is the pastel coloured buildings sitting right on the coast and staggered up the hills. I remember returning to Riomaggiore where I was staying, exhausted after trekking to the neighbouring village. It was the end of the day and sunset was near. I sat on some rocks on the cliff where others were gathered, eating pistachio gelato and listening to someone playing the cello on a balcony. As the sun came down dipping into the ocean on the horizon, swimmers were now splashing around in glistening ripples. I turned my head and admired the way the old pastel buildings had been tinted with warmth and as the sun disappeared for the arrival of night the tones became cool. I returned the next day and the next, to grasp at this moment again but it wasn't quite the same. Maybe I was selfish wanting more, for as I look back now and paint moments such as this, albeit fleeting, I feel incredibly fortunate to have lived such beautiful, dreamlike memories in my lifetime.



*First snowfall. 2021*

Acrylic on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm

\$1480

I was on my second shift for the day at The Salisbury Hotel where I worked whilst temporarily living in England, when a colleague came running up to me shouting "Jessie it's finally snowing!". Everyone knew I hadn't seen snowfall before so the excitement was shared. My partner at the time went out the front door and stood in the street to see. I'm not sure why I didn't follow, the cold wouldn't have bothered me. Instead I went upstairs to the empty function room where the lights weren't on and I stood at the big windows. Outside I could see the sparse snowflakes dancing ever so delicately down from the sky, through the warmth of the street lights where they were most visible, until they rested on the old paved road. I had butterflies in my stomach and a smile across my face like that of a child on Christmas morning. I think subconsciously I knew I'd want to look back at this being a special memory that belonged only to me.





*Rain won't stop the carnival, 2021*

Acrylic & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm

\$1480

It had been raining on and off and extremely windy all day whilst I was exploring Southend. Darkness was beginning to fall and I was back in my hotel room ready to settle in for the night. Between the curtains I could see the neon lights of the carnival turn on and the rides starting to go. It was only sprinkling now and temptation was growing. Before I knew it I was running out the door with my coat and inner child.



*Monasteries of Meteora, 2021*

Acrylic, oil pastel & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm

\$1480

A scene that needed to be depicted less abstract and more to its likeness. A place in Greece called Meteora, in English meaning “suspended in air”, where Monks had built monasteries on top of huge limestone rock formations where they then lived out their days, many with no simple way of return. This location was a stop on the Europe tour I was on which I hadn’t researched beforehand. That was the case for quite a few of my destinations as too often when we travel are we trying to experience the picture perfect image seen on the internet. A truly captivating landscape unfamiliar to anywhere else.



*Where the roads wind, 2021*

Acrylic & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 94cm  
\$1480

Road tripping with my husband through New Zealand, I looked out the passenger window feeling every kilometre driven was worthy of stopping to admire. Crisp blue lakes, snow-capped mountains and open spaces. Somewhere between Lake Tekapo and Queenstown we walked up a small hill track leading to a viewpoint. I was pregnant, it was very windy and very cold, which was the case most days, but that didn't stop our desire to not miss a thing. At the top we looked out to the rolling mountains all in tones of brown in this area. We could see the windy road that we just travelled weave between them. After a few short moments spent, we left with what would be our favourite landscape photo of the trip.



*Blue Pools. 2021*

Acrylic & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 124cm

\$2100

Another day travelling New Zealand's South Island, another long walk to reach not just another site in nature. River rock covered ground edging the water that lives up to its name. Crystal clear and perfectly blue, I almost forget the icy temperature wondering what it would be like to emerge my body within it.



*Above and below Similan Islands. 2021*

Acrylic & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 124cm

\$2100

Being on a speedboat for two hours literally fearing for my life as we launched up waves in the roughest of seas, all became worth it when we reached Similan Islands. It felt good to be on land with my toes digging into the hot sand. Climbing to the top of large rocks and looking down upon the picturesque beach I could appreciate how aqua the water was. The type of waters you imagine when considering what paradise is. I felt weightless and soothed when my body finally got what it craved, to have those refreshing blue waters hold me. We went to a few spots to snorkel around the island, drifting slowly over coral and striped fish, noticing how warm the water remained even as a sprinkle of rain arrived. On the boat trip back to mainland Thailand, the fear was almost non-existent as I laid my head on my new husbands' shoulder allowing my eyes to close softly.



*Halcyon. 2021*

Acrylic, oil pastel & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 124cm  
\$2100

Plitvice Lakes in Croatia, a location that I can only describe as nature's finest presentation of tranquillity and purity. Tiered lakes connected by waterfalls small and large trickling into one another. Every shade of vibrant blue and green surrounding you. Hours upon hours can be spent exploring up and down the boardwalks through the trees and around the untouchable, glass like water without a wavering in captivation. A place I will never lose interest in painting.



*Close to home, 2021*

Acrylic & posca on canvas framed in oak, 94 x 124cm

\$2100

I was naïve about what a bushfire could do to a seaside town before we experienced the full extent of one in 2019, having to flee our home.

The bush track I walked only days before had become unfamiliar. What once was lush and homed wildlife, you could now see between the trees revealing only more charcoal sticks and a floor of ash that still smoked. The sand dunes were on fire and not in a metaphorical sense. How quickly the landscape can change.

Within a matter of a week I began to see vibrant green sprout through again on the trees and ground. A beautiful contrast in the harsh surroundings. As further time passed I observed the truest form of resilience take place in nature. Determination to thrive again. Two years on, I regularly walk that bush track close to home, especially during lockdown where it is my place to breathe. I stop to appreciate the way life continues to return. Wild flowers of purple and yellow that I don't recall seeing before, surround and climb up the trees that still wear blackened memories. Beauty from tragedy. I have always been inspired by my natural surroundings but it took a bushfire for me to form a deeper appreciation and realise my yearning to tell stories of our landscapes.