

THE PARLOUR

THE OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ARTIST SETKEN

ENCOUNTER IN RAMTHONG LANE TRIPTYCH



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Setken at one of the entrances to David and Annabella Syme's tomb in Kew Cemetery, from a photospread and interview with Jimmy Hornet Magazine (see next page)
Photograph by Anthea Palmer



Based on and inspired by a short story I wrote (and recorded as a 30-minute audio drama), Encounter In Ramthong Lane features the appearance of the Egyptian god Banebdjedet in an alternate world Melbourne named after John Batman: Batmania.

Over the course of an evening, the protagonist of the story (seen in the same bottom right position of each three paintings) has an encounter with a divine being that is absurd, frightening, and surreal.

The inspiration partly came from a dinner at Seamstress in Lonsdale Street with my friend Jan (who is actually featured in the first of the triptych in my version of the venue, renamed Tailor Tattle Tavern in my story).



In the second painting the god appears in a lounge called "Bar Up" (inspired by Melbourne bar / restaurant venues Naked For Satan in Fitzroy and Hail Lilith in Footscray).

Finally, the god appears in one of Melbourne's famous graffiti laneways, outside of the fictional Bar Up where a strange ritual mesmer has unfolded.



Ramthong Lane in my story is a street where in colonial times mediums and spiritualists set up shop. In actuality these locations were numerous and all over Melbourne and the colony of Victoria.

The original idea behind the (postponed) Enchantment exhibition was to explore this aspect of Melbourne's past, which is richer and more complex than is currently understood in the popular narrative of settlement.

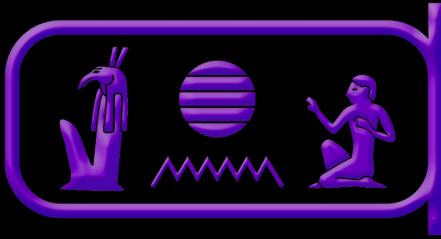
The triptych of paintings exist independent of the story upon which it is based and is ultimately a commentary on the nature of the numinous, the sacred, and deity, and how these concepts might appear in a contemporary context.

For the study of the pieces please see the next page.

Encounter In Ramthong Lane I, II and III
3 x Acrylic on Belle Arti panel
100cm x 70cm
November 2024

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SETKEN FEATURE IN JIMMY HORNET MAGAZINE ISSUE 6

I am proud of this 8-page feature and especially how well my paintings are presented. There is a rare glimpse into my studio! Jimmy Hornet is a print-only glossy that is produced in Melbourne and my favourite mag right now. You can order your copy to read the interview [here](#).



A VISIT WITH EGYPTOLOGIST DR. JASMINE DAY

In September I had the pleasure of meeting Egyptologist Jasmine Day, who is based in Western Australia and was visiting on business.

One of Jasmine’s specialties is Egyptomania, and we found ourselves discussing the subject in great detail throughout the course of her visit.

Jasmine visited my studio and had some wonderful and insightful things to say about my paintings:

“So many people just try to recreate Ancient Egyptian art or emulate it in some way; you are not afraid to interpolate it with modern imagery because you’re taking the view of a modern Ancient Egyptian viewing today’s world, including its Victorian and Edwardian heritage, and you’re viewing it through their eyes. Ancient Egypt itself is what is looking, who is looking, not just what is being looked at, and I think that’s the originality in your art, that’s the great appeal of it.

“I think that for you Ancient Egypt never ended, and you’re therefore looking at the world through Ancient Egyptian eyes as much as you understand it.

“It’s kind of like an archaeology of understanding, and I think it’s interesting that western people said the dinosaurs died out and then we found out that from a certain point of view they didn’t - the animals or the birds that are with us are the dinosaurs; they’ve transformed: they’re still with us.

“I think what you’re saying is that Ancient Egypt didn’t disappear - and that’s another Western intervention: that Ancient Egypt is a mysterious and dead civilisation. It’s neither mysterious or dead - there are things we just don’t know about it yet”.



*Dr. Day and Setken at the Ogg Mausoleum in Brighton General Cemetery, September 2024
Photograph by Jasmine Day*

STUDY FOR ENCOUNTER IN RAMTHONG LANE TRIPTYCH

*Study For Encounter In Ramthong Lane Triptych
Acrylic on wood panel
16" x 12"
July 2024*



BEHIND THE TOMB

I recently posted on my (secret) blog the story of my research into David Syme’s tomb. I am presenting the new, longer version of the talk about my findings at public venues in 2025. See blog post [here](#).



Coming In Issue 13

*Beloved Of HetHrt
Seventeen Divine Shau Sphinxes IV
The Parlour Archive*