

Industrial interpretations

Landscape painter Robert Habel recently applied the finishing touches to a series of oil paintings based on his photographs of Terramin's Angas mine at Strathalbyn.

With a passion for painting contemporary landscape scenes relevant to our times, together with a particular interest in human interventions in the environment, Mr Habel draws inspiration from new technologies and industry, including mine sites, solar and wind farms, and urban and industrial developments.

He was attracted to the Angas mine, primarily a zinc and lead producer, because of its smaller size, easy access from Adelaide, and the sensitive relationship it has with the local community and farmlands.

"A point of reference for me is the work of English painter John Constable, one of my favourite artists, who also painted new and developing technologies. Constable painted the Suffolk landscape in the early 1800s, documenting the change in farming practises and the beginnings of the industrial revolution," Mr Habel said.

His paintings – like Constable's – are bold and direct, evolving from a palette of tertiary colours that inject mood and drama to the scenes. The strong design and physicality of Mr Habel's work reflects the nature of his subject matter. The sculptural forms of heavy equipment, buildings and infrastructure have consistently featured in his paintings.

These include works made in Australia, China, Singapore, Italy, and Southern Africa.

"I find the many stages of the mining process fascinating – from exploration to extraction, waste management and reclamation," Mr Habel said.

"Painting these new developments in mining is exciting. The fact that there is an endless source of mining subjects to experiment with and document is extremely inspirational for me."

I find the many stages of the mining process fascinating – from exploration to extraction, waste management and reclamation

ARTS

41

