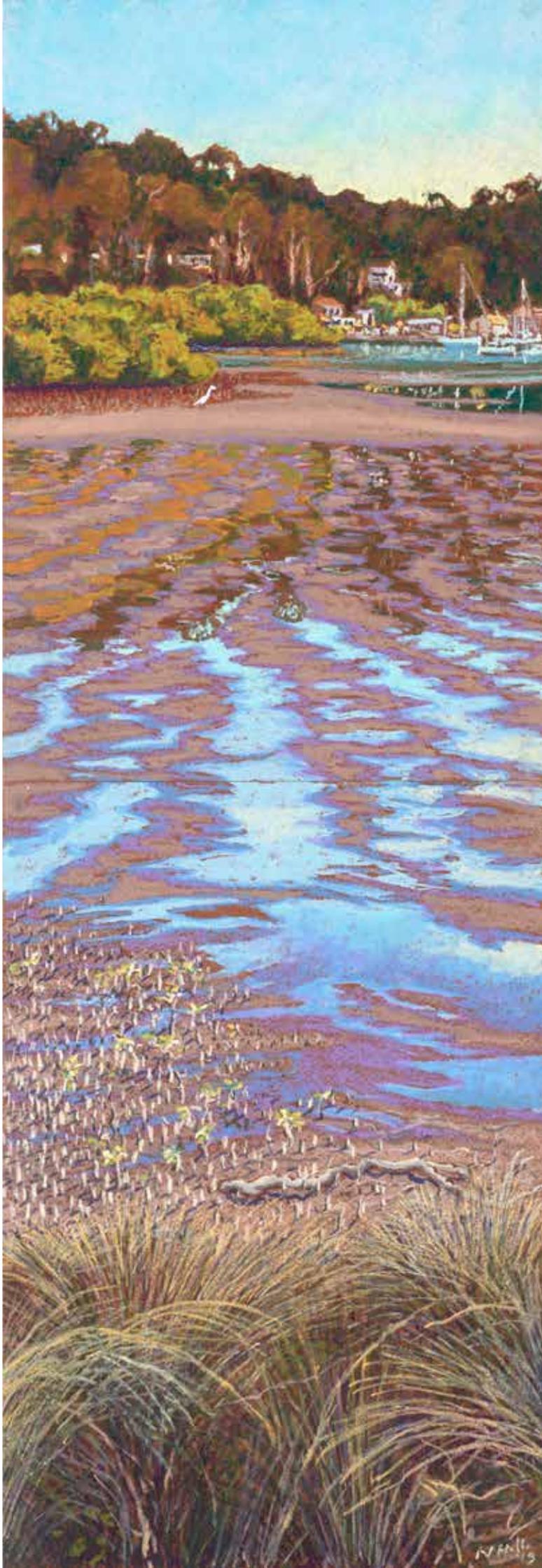


INTO THE LANDSCAPE

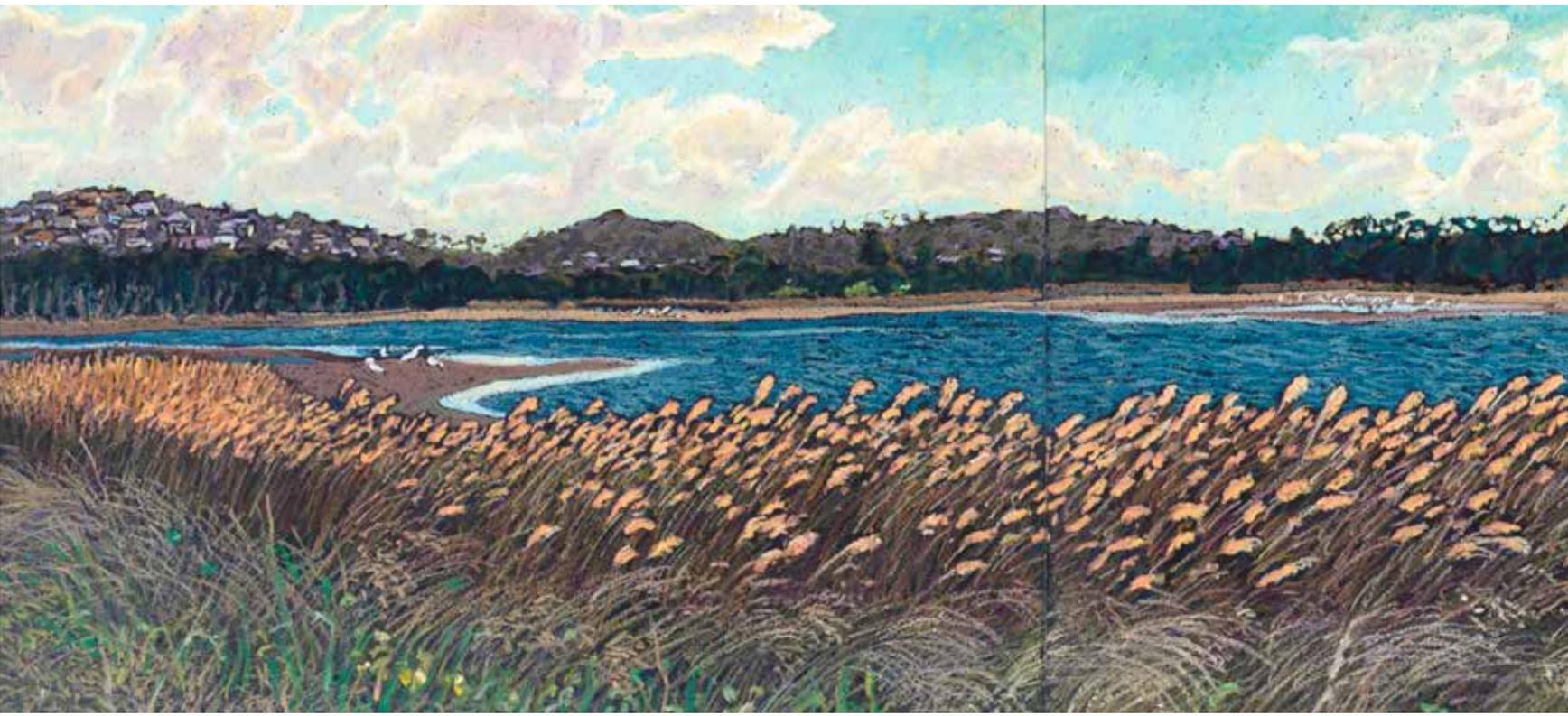
Careel Bay



NICK HOLLO 'WATERWAYS'

The Northern Beaches area of Sydney is known for its string of surfing villages clustered along an idyllic stretch of iconic Australian coastline. Think of Manly, Dee Why, Queenscliff, Freshwater... Weather features on this coast—heavy rains which together with high winds create the notorious east coast lows that blast in from the South Pacific, and from across the Tasman. Sheeting rain, huge waves and pounding surf. So much water. Little known are the myriad waterways connecting these beaches with the hinterland, a network of creeks and lagoons that is a living part of a 21st century metropolis.

Nick Hollo is an architect, urban designer and artist who lives and works by this foreshore. He has an accumulated knowledge of the natural and cultural formations and their significance to the community and the environment. He



Above: Narrabeen Lagoon from Billarong Reserve, 29.7cm x 84cm

Left: Aerial view of Northern Beaches, 2020, pastel on paper, 126cm x 60cm

Opposite: Curl Curl Lagoon

has completed a series of oil pastel drawings of the creeks, lagoons and waterfalls for an important new exhibition at Manly Regional Art Gallery and Museum.

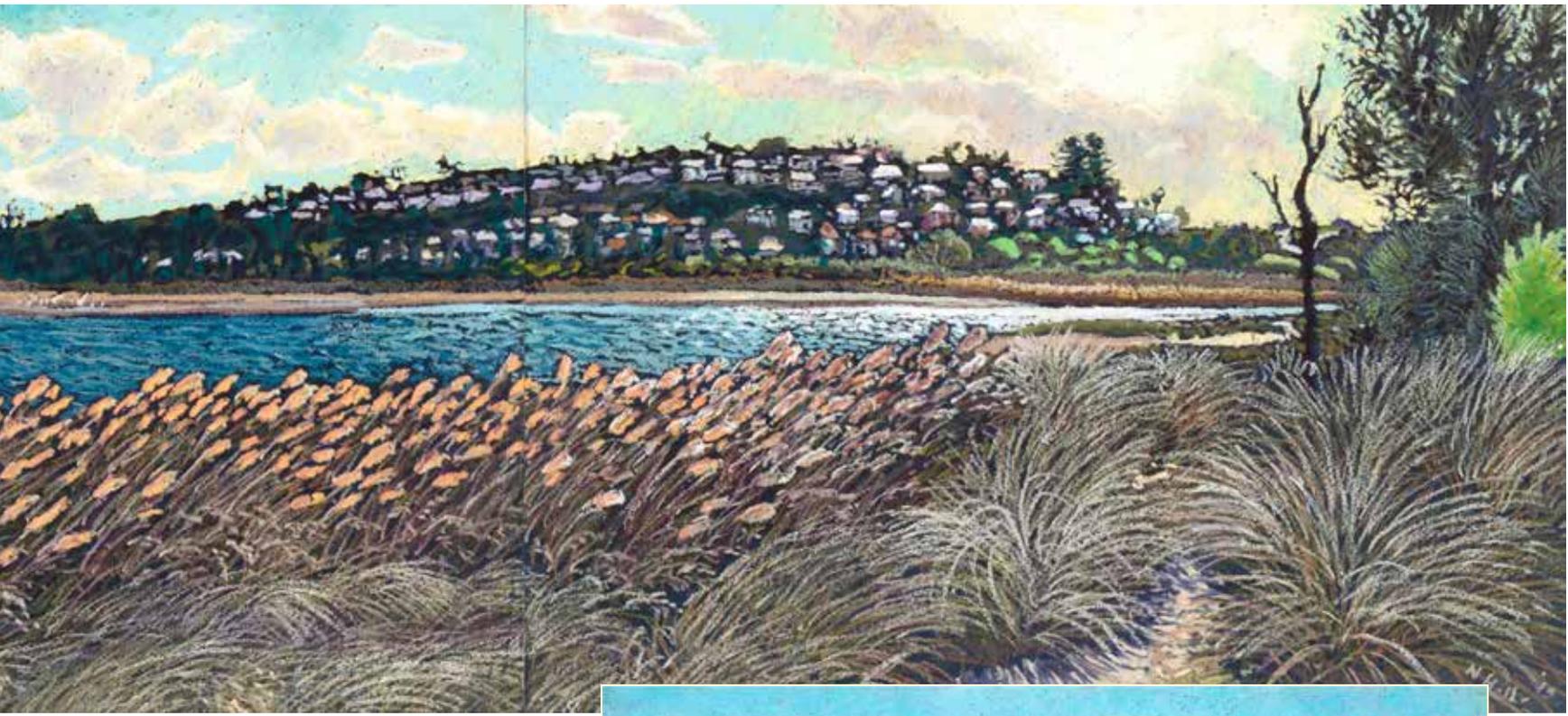
'Waterways' was to have been held from April this year but while the exhibition has been postponed, the Northern Beaches Council is continuing with plans for a related program of walks created in partnership with Environment & Climate Change, and an accompanying guide to accessing this little known network of waterways.

Lagoons, marshes, creeks and waterfalls form the prevalent ecological and geological pattern of the whole of the Australian east coast and they have provided the inspiration for this new series which depicts thirteen key sites, from Pittwater's Careel Bay to Dee Why Lagoon to North Head at Manly.

'Visiting and drawing at these places was a revelation,' says Hollo. 'I'd arrive at a quiet spot, and once I'd settled, it came alive with the sounds of frogs and birds. The fish and the insects created ripples on the water surface. It was so peaceful.

'However, I was saddened by how many of the waterways were hidden away and neglected or had been filled in over many years.. But I was also heartened to see where they were being restored and were thriving. These places provide





'The breeze comes from the water. It always comes from the water. Clusters of clouds migrate - like a never-ending caravan of refugees streaming across the horizon, reflections in the water.

Always there is water...

'The light here is sharp and clean, it flickers and sparkles, glances off the water... Wide wide vistas and shady places with secret waterfalls...

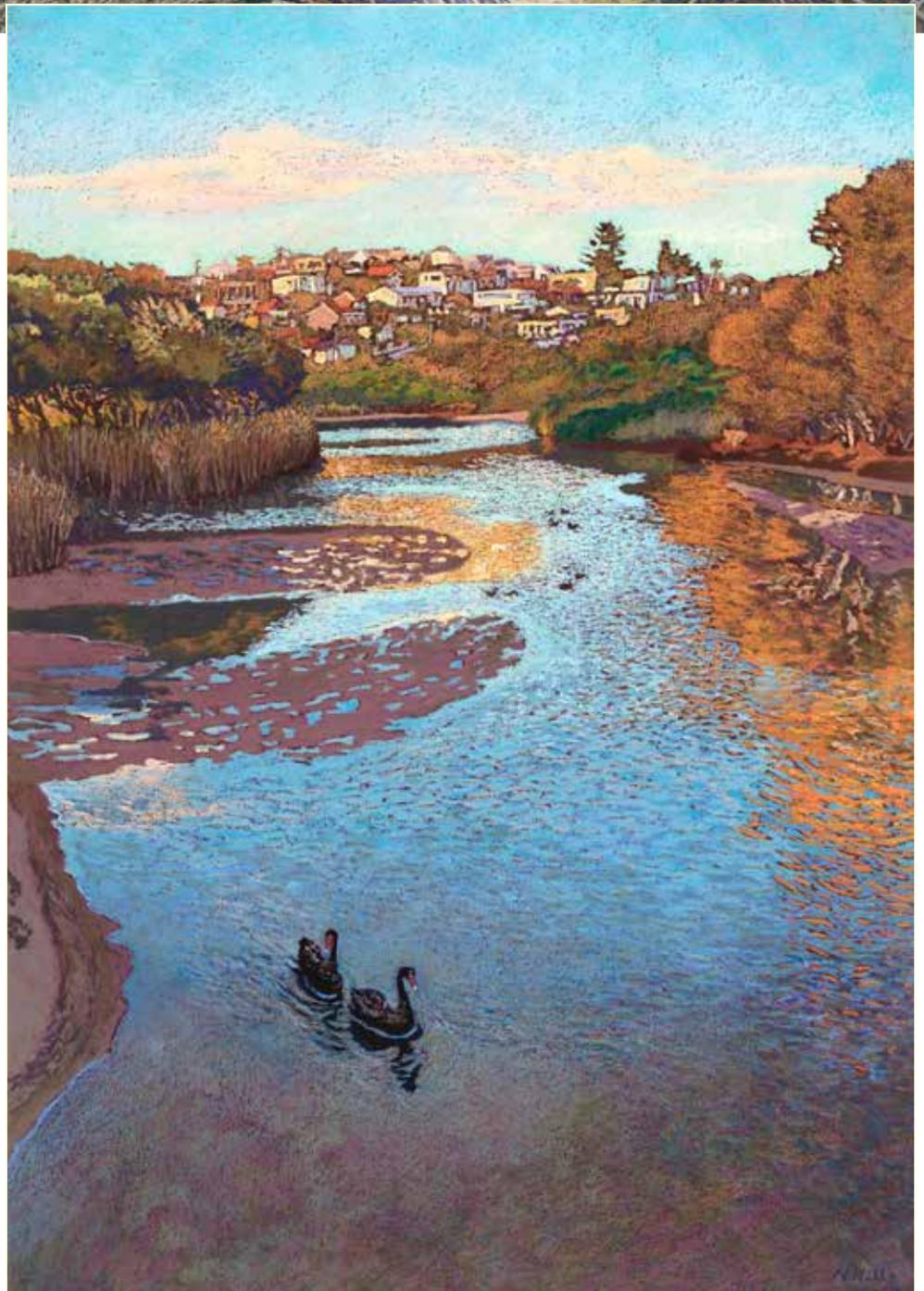
And then there is the air, of saltiness and sun-baked earth...'

*We lived in Manly,
RA Rayward, 1919*

important habitat as well as places of tranquillity for us in the burgeoning city. Our waterways and their catchments should be the centrepiece of our planning for the future.

'I am particularly interested in capturing the movement, reflections and translucency of water and the quality of light. I work quickly and make pictures on location—near where I live or on my way around Sydney Harbour or when I travel. Many of my works are made up of a number of panels since for practical purposes they are made with what I can carry.'

Each year since 2000 Hollo has held solo exhibitions depicting local scenes at



Gallery East in Clovelly, Sydney. He has also exhibited at the Historic Houses Trust Members' Lounge, The Mint, Macquarie Street Sydney, at the Historic Houses Association in Juniper Hall, Sydney and at the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust with exhibitions depicting particular aspects of Sydney Harbour and the Sydney coastline.

Until recently Hollo was the Deputy Executive Director of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust which is conserving and opening up to the public a number of former Defence sites around Sydney Harbour, such as Middle Head, Georges Heights and Chowder Bay in Mosman, Cockatoo Island, Woolwich Dock and the former Artillery School at North Head.

In the 1980s Hollo's artworks were used as illustrations for educational purposes, such as energy and soil conservation.

He wrote and illustrated the book, *Warm House Cool House* which describes how to live comfortably without air conditioning in Far North Queensland, be cosy and bushfire-proof in the Australian Alps, and how we can

better cope with temperature fluctuations in cities like Melbourne and Adelaide – about practical low energy house design to suit Australia's climates (revised edition UNSW Press/Choice Books 2012).

Hollo lived in Nigeria from 1977 to 1979, teaching Architecture at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He presently teaches a course in Sustainable Architecture Practice at the University of Sydney.

Clearly Hollo has a strong pedagogical leaning and the works in 'Waterways' are perfectly suited to a public gallery setting. The motivation for this series is as much instructive as it is to please the eye.

A number of the works are large panoramas. 'The Lacework of Waterways in the Northern Beaches', which he describes as an overview picture, tying the exhibition together, is an aerial view of the Northern Beaches waterways and Hollo invites viewers to find where they live.

Light and reflections on the water are the features that trace through these artworks. Water is shown in relation

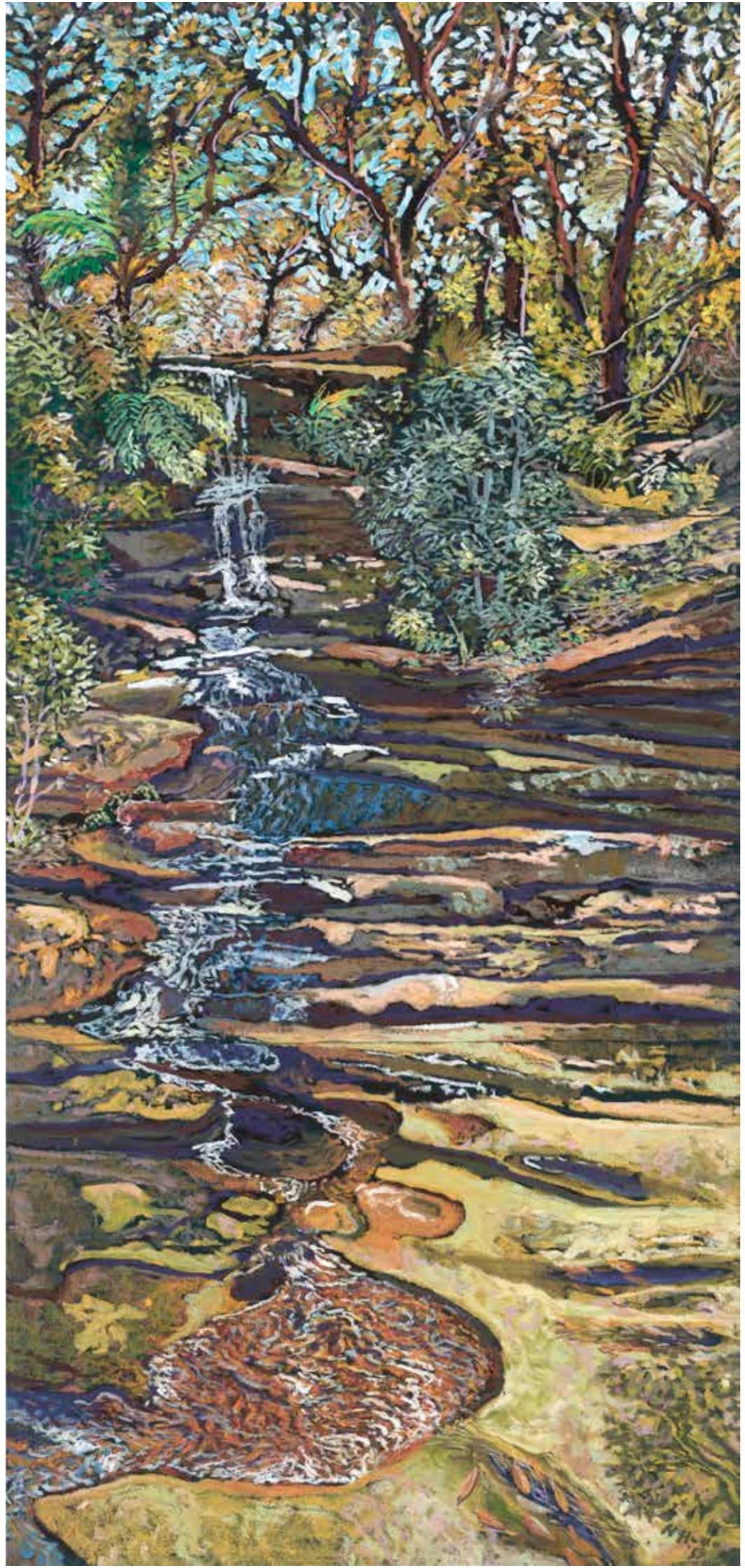


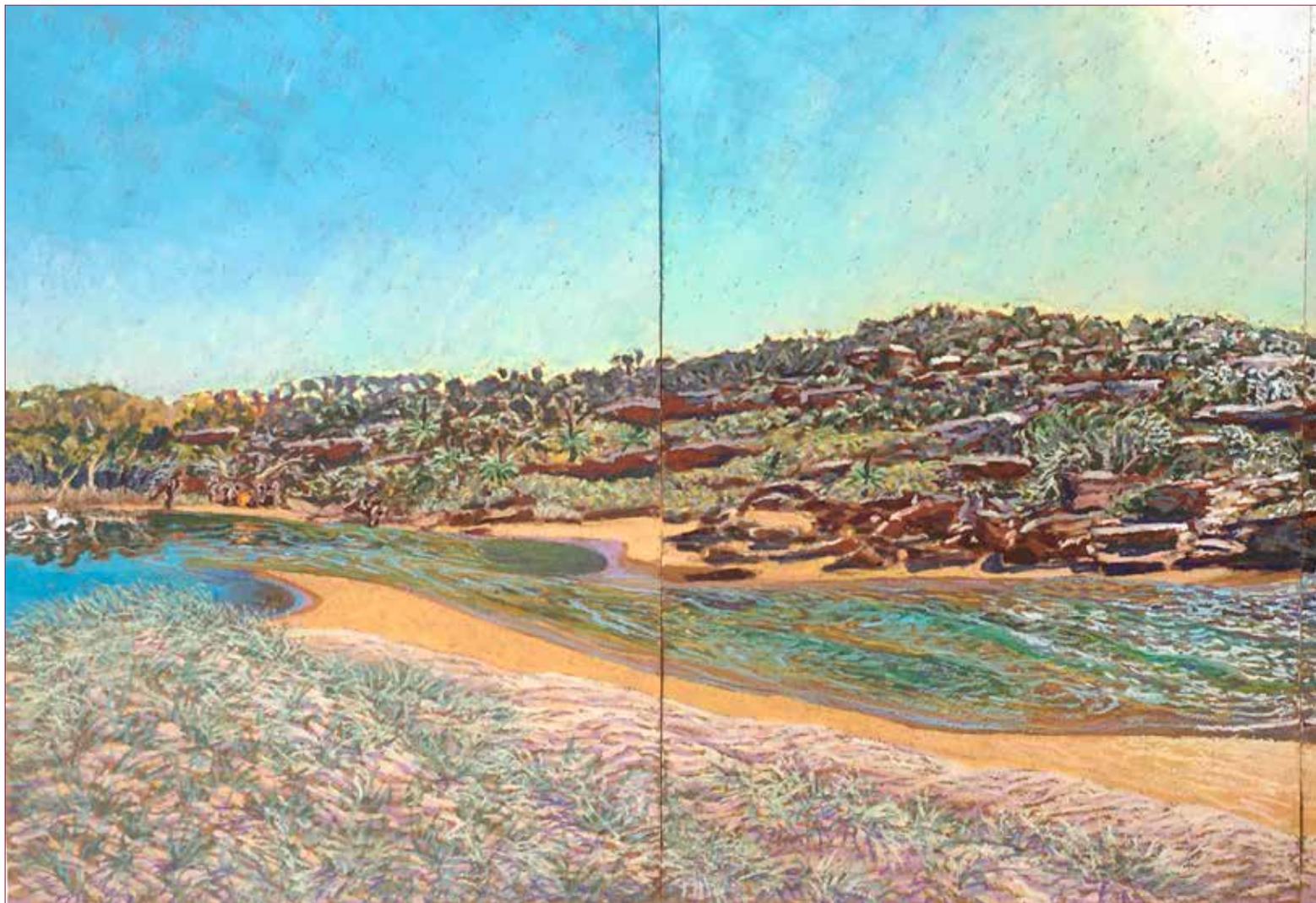
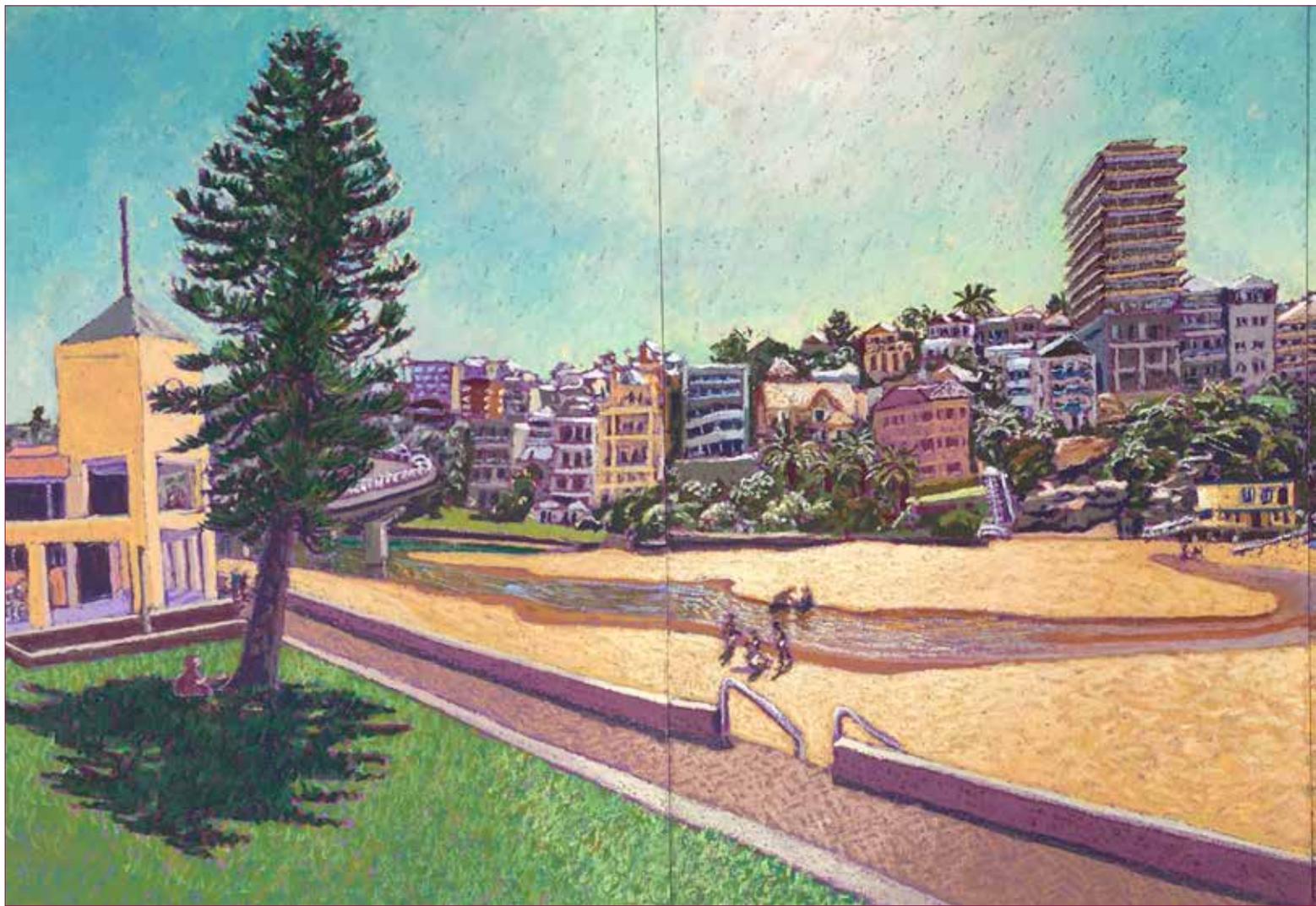
*Water is shown
in relation to
the folds of the
land and how
it winds its way
between the
hills and the
coast.*

This page:

Allenby Park
Waterfall,
89cm x 42cm

Below:
Deep Creek







to the folds of the land and how it winds its way between the hills and the coast. You can see how extensive the waterways network is in the low-lying areas and how much more expansive the wetlands and creeks might become in heavy rain and with wild seas.

Some of the stormwater channels—in Brookvale and North Narrabeen/Warriewood—are shown as creeks to illustrate the waterway system they are part of and Hollo has slightly exaggerated the scale to give them greater emphasis. This illustrates the relationship of the overall development pattern to the landform. Networks of roadways, parks and built-up areas obscure our ability to see the connections between these waterway environments. Some are terminated or confined as they pass through industrial estates and sports fields.

The waterways retain and filter water after rain and provide a buffer for coastal storm surges. The connectivity between the varied habitats is important for aquatic life such as fish, shellfish and crabs, as well as birds, reptiles and insects. Many species need to move between habitats at different stages of their life cycle. Hollo depicts the typical waterway habitats between the coast and the hills and the estuarine bays of Pittwater.

Two works in the 'Waterways' series are of Queenscliff. One shows how the mouth of Manly Lagoon might have looked before 1788. The mouth of the lagoon, when open, would have provided a wide wash of water across the sand. The dune would have varied over time and been stabilised by a succession of plants and low grasses on the ocean side and low shrubs and trees on the lagoon side. The extent and shape of the lagoon would have changed in response to water flows from rains as well as from the ocean tides. It provided shelter and a rich habitat for fish, shellfish, crabs and birds.

Today the mouth of Manly Lagoon at Queenscliff features a waterfront promenade, the surf club on the sand dune, tidal swimming pool along the rocks of the peninsula and a familiar seafront skyline of apartment blocks.

Carolynne Skinner

For details of the re-programming of Nick Hollo's 'Waterways' at Manly Regional Art Gallery and Museum
artgallery@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au
www.magam.com.au

Top: The Mouth of Manly Lagoon at Queenscliff Now, 42cm x 89cm

Below: The Mouth of Manly Lagoon at Queenscliff 1788, 42cm x 89cm

