

Arete No.2 & Arete No.3 Series

Gina Kalabishis

The word 'arête' has two possible meanings:

- A sharp mountain ridge, sometimes formed by glaciers. These arêtes are high points in the geographic landscape, the towering natural monuments of the vertical world, whose grandeur can simultaneously demand our attention and overwhelm us with wonder.
- In the Greek language, 'arête' is synonymous with 'excellence'. In philosophical terms, the word further embraces a sense that something is actively striving to be as good as it can be, as it yearns to reach its highest state and express the ideal form.

In Gina Kalabishis' latest paintings - 'Arête No.2' and 'Arête No.3' - the artist melds together the two meanings of the word and continues her playful homage to colonial representations of landscape, incorporating intriguing and unexpected inclusions of sensuous human forms, while amping up the visual acuity of her Ikebana-like sculptures of Australian flora.

Whether you're inclined to swoon at natural beauty or seek after the ideal form, these two works show the artist striving to share with us her own painterly 'arête'.

Bruce Copland, Curator
August 2016