

FUTURES

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The Age



EXHIBITION

MATTHEW HARRIS: THE BRITISH MUSEUM

FUTURES Gallery, until December 9

Across British and Irish cultural institutions there are more than 39,000 Aboriginal objects in storage, most of them stolen. Many artists today deal with institutional archives, giving voice to histories and objects kept silent – yet Matthew Harris depicts this sheer accumulation in *The British Museum*, likening the English institution to an episode of *Hoarders*. In paintings of white ochre on hessian, Indigenous cultural objects are rendered in their simplest forms, endlessly stacked, floating across the canvas. Continuing his repetition and seriality (like previous paintings of perfectly replicated tiny koalas with angel wings), Harris has sidestepped his trademark vivid colour. What remains is an interest in how the quantitative can be as provoking as the qualitative. Harris captures abundance itself, the literal surface of objects in storage, mirrored in the flatness of his painting style. There is no metaphor; only the brute fact that colonisation steals and stores. It's smart, political and emotive. **Tiarney Miekus**

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Thursday-Saturday, 12-5pm