

# 9.

## Adam Norton

Adam Norton is an artist not so much on the world stage as his work is bounced back to Earth from outer space. Science-fiction (sci-fi) themes feature prominently in a compelling body of work including painting, performance, video and installation. “It’s become quite well accepted a meme in art as a method of talking about possibilities,” says Norton of his interest in sci-fi and space. “It’s a method of fixing your imagination on an understandable metaphor. Without making it too complicated you can play the roles of imagined people in imagined places.”

Norton was recently curated into *The Hope of Wrecks* at St Albans Museum in the United Kingdom.

Through the work of several artists including David Shrigley and Martin Kippenberger, the exhibition used the romanticism of Caspar David Friedrich’s *The Wreck of Hope* as a starting point to examine how certain artists produce works that have an inherent optimism when the world or its inhabitants have seemingly hit rock bottom.

Fittingly, a video created while in residence at Broken Hill Regional Gallery called *The Mars Project* was shown at St Albans. Garbed in orange spaceman suit Norton appears in the video surveying a rocky – rock bottom? – desert terrain. Australian artists have long been preoccupied with the menacing otherness of the remote landscape.

For Norton – who was originally from the UK but spent his early childhood in Africa – the otherness of the landscape is amplified by the lone determined figure occupying it. He is a stranger in a strange land whose journey has no discernible narrative arc; he simply exists within it and in doing so evokes an entire library of recognisable twentieth century sci-fi tropes.

*Daniel Mudie Cunningham*

Adam Norton will have a solo show at Gallerysmith in Melbourne from 22 August 2014.



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Opposite:  
Adam Norton, *The Mars Project (Gorge)*, 2013. Film still, 28 min 51 sec.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST, GALLERY9, SYDNEY AND GALLERYSMITH, MELBOURNE

This page:

Adam Norton, *The Mars Project (Red Creek)*, 2013. Film still, 28 min 51 sec.

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