

THE COMMERCIAL

PATRICK HARTIGAN

16/03/19 – 18/04/19



It is with pleasure that The Commercial presents a solo exhibition of works by Patrick Hartigan. For several years now, Hartigan has painted on found supports, canvases and boards, that provide some readymade direction for his abstract and figurative compositions. The ground of the painting and some suggestion of a sketch may already be there, a decorative frame already provided because the object is an offcut from a previous use within the cycling utility of materials and objects beyond the studio.

The action of finding and selection initiates a new work for Hartigan in a way that is different to choosing relatively neutral and informationless materials available for purchase in an art supply store. The irregular cut edge of a piece of found, unstretched canvas structures a composition. Crumples, footprints and exposed edges are essential to the expressive and gestural system of the work and the distinction between what is artist-made and what is artist-chosen is not important or apparent.

The economy of this artistic process is two-fold: both the minimisation of material waste, an imperative of our age, but more so the economy of substance or mark-making, the assertion that this is all the beauty we need. Further work or further expense would improve nothing at all. Regardless, the artist labours over his images, letting them emerge over long periods of dedicated studio time.

Hartigan's self-titled exhibition gleans visual language over centuries, millennia. A series of silhouette paintings on 1940s hardboard wall panels, (the supports themselves have been witnesses to other lives, conversations) are suggestive of a pre-Christian archaeology of objects. The signs of civilisations before us. Indeed, the exhibition is encyclopedic of history and style, journeying through numerous schools of painting, paying homage to icons, in a rumination around form, material and abstraction.

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Patrick Hartigan (b. 1977, Sydney) was awarded a Doctor of Creative Arts by the University of Wollongong in 2016. He has presented solo exhibitions in commercial galleries in Australia and New Zealand regularly since 2004, including Brett McDowell Gallery, Dunedin (2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015); The Commercial, Sydney (2017, 2019); Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney (2004, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015); Minerva, Sydney (2016); Neon Parc, Melbourne (2017, two-person exhibition with Hany Armanious).

Collections include the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth; the Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Auckland; Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne; the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney; the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; and Wollongong University Art Collection.

Patrick Hartigan has been the art critic for *The Saturday Paper* since its inception in 2014. His book of short stories, *Offcuts*, which engages critically with his visual art practice will be published later this year by [Gazebo Books](#).