

# THE COMMERCIAL

## NATALYA HUGHES



### LOOKING TWICE

FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER, 6-8pm

exhibition: 18/10/13 - 09/11/13

open Wednesday-Saturday, 11am-6pm

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Image: Natalya Hughes, *Looking Cute*, 2013, acrylic on plywood, 140 x 240 cm

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



Natalya Hughes (b. 1977, Macksville) is a painter but in recent years has extended her practice to include wallpaper, carpet and fabric design, upholstery and animation. Her practice is embedded in the history of decoration across cultures and the literature and language of decadence. Hughes takes whatever appeals to her from these places and incorporates them within her pattern-saturated realm in a palette suggestive of the boudoir. Pop-cultural references also figure in her allegories as do synecdochal elements contributing towards abstracted portraiture.

Symmetry, axiomatic to the logic of decoration, features prominently in Hughes' compositions whose inventiveness with thefts from the pattern book of history is indebted to the convenience of digital design programs. Antique Japanese kimono fabric designs are imported into a Beardsleyesque eroticism spread across x, y and z axes. We are reminded of the botanical world's strategy of luring sexual prey by means of visual excitation and morphological double entendre.

*Looking Twice*, Hughes' first solo exhibition at The Commercial Gallery, Sydney, consists of large scale acrylic paintings on plywood.

In March 2013, Hughes collaborated on a major painting with artist Tony Albert, exhibited in the group exhibition, *Speak to Me*, at Sullivan + Strumpf Gallery, Sydney. Solo exhibitions include Beam Contemporary (2013), Sydney Guild (2012), Milani Gallery, Brisbane (2004, 2008, 2011, 2012), DB Project, Sydney (2011), Substation Gallery, Singapore (2010), Neon Parc, Melbourne (2006).

Group exhibitions include [Contemporary Australia: Women](#), curated by Julie Ewington et al, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane (2012); *The James Souris Collection*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane and *New Psychedelia*, curated by Sebastian Moody, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane (both 2011); *Parallel Lives: TarraWarra Painting Biennale*, curated by Victoria Lynn, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Melbourne (2006); 2004: *Australian Culture Now*, curated by Jason Smith, Kelly Gellatly, Charles Green, Alexie Glass and Alessio Cavallero, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2004).

Hughes was a co-founder of the Brisbane journal, *Local Art*, (with Sally Brand, Grant Stevens and Dirk Yates). Seventeen issues of *Local Art* were produced between 2001 and 2005.

Hughes completed her Doctor of Philosophy, Art Theory/Art History at the College of Fine Arts, the University of New South Wales, Sydney in 2009 and her Bachelor of Arts, Visual Arts (First Class Honours) at the Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane in 2001. She is currently a lecturer Photography and Situated Media at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Her work is held in the collections of Artbank, The James C Souris Collection, Brisbane, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane and the University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane.

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