

My paintings are often very large, sometimes entire wall paintings, or else very tiny. Portraits can be very unnerving, especially when they are much larger than life. As opposed to that, the small girlie paintings are meant to be adorable, desirable and cute, to the point of being ridiculous. The large paintings avoid being too dominant on such a large scale, because they are almost too silly in their sexy poses, and in their banality, seem light and decorative. They are strong and bold images of women, free of overt critique, but at the same time ambiguously balancing between being dominating and exploitative.

Some of the images have come from men's magazines and present women the way these publications depict women. They are main stream images, some from car magazines and Asian soft porn which are not too explicit about sexuality, but verge on being pornographic in the same way as most advertising is. Men's magazines sometimes depict women as mere sex objects, but the images of women in them are mostly straight forward, and uncomplicated compared to the representation of women in women's magazines. These can be equally if not more undermining to women's image and are in some ways just as manipulative and ridiculous to women as pornographic images. The paintings of men usually are much more bland and have less expressive poses than those of the women. This is the way men are represented in the mainstream media as role models, and it seems that there is much less interest in images of men there than of women.

Painting from photos is a much more artificial and mediated process than painting from life or from imagination, and an image can be more removed from reality than photographic images. In painting a lot can be edited and exaggerated. I often work in series and like to have my portraits en masse, emphasising their similarities and the formalities of style, gesture and desire.

The depiction of dress and hair style, the look of glamour in splashy and spontaneously painted surfaces can be very sensuous and rich. Fashion and pose have always been the indicators of personality, sexuality and wealth in real life and in representation and are much more easily read and revealing than the eyes and face. It's like in early still life painting and 16th century English portraiture where the roles of objects and people were inverted. In these paintings the figures often look stiff and doll-like and in the still life and Vanitas paintings in particular, objects were meant to tell stories about a person and in some ways were more descriptive of a person than face and figure. In these early portraits and still life paintings most attention was given to the dress and objects around a figure defining the sitter's social role and position.

The types in my portraits are not types like important dignitaries, rather they are seen as sex object. My work draws on the traditions in painting of representing women mostly as a passive muse rather than heroic. The modern day muse is the woman on the real-estate billboards, or the porn models on the internet. When the artist is a woman, painting images which look like they could be made for the voyeuristic heterosexual man and when the scale is very heroic or so small that its too cute and possessable, the effect is not that of a usual portrait or girlie picture. There is something unnerving behind the smiling model's face.

The house paintings are a bit like the portrait paintings of models. The houses used in these works are presented as still life objects representing a dream life, or model life in the same way the portraits are about a model life and an unattainable dream or fantasy. They are old fashioned houses, more like fairy tale houses, or homes seen in American or European movies. Rather than being local Australian houses they are like dolls houses or picture book dream homes.

The images of objects as well as the figures are mostly isolated in an empty colour field, out of any context, mute and without reference. They float in the middle of their canvases staring out as they do from magazine pages trying on a seductive look with such obvious come-on, a look which is a bit rude and discomforting. It's surprising that we are sometimes uncomfortable when the subjects of exploitation and sexuality are present in art when they are so common in daily life. In art it makes us realise that the banality and seduction of glamour exist together all the time.

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