

## There Is Something Missing From Your Magic Realism

4 – 27 November 2010

This body of work was motivated by two, perhaps incongruous points of concern. The first is my growing interest in Psychedelic, 'Visionary', or Fantastic art and Magic Realism. Recently, I've been drawn to practices associated with these terms and the discussions that often accompany them. While I don't want to oversimplify these expansive bodies of work, my interests are largely in the formal properties and concerns of the digital and commercial art associated with these terms.

Whether in oil paintings, screen savers, greeting cards or t-shirts, contemporary Magic Realism is characterised by its combination of realism with the fantastical. These are images that we often associate with new age kitsch. They commonly display distorted and transformed objects, rendered in ultra realism. It is this investment in realism and 'the possible' that is said to differentiate its practices from Surrealism. And it is this hopeful balancing act between realism and fantasy that I have been particularly interested in making the work for this show.

It is not that my engagement with Magic Realism is insincere, but what I find most compelling about such works is not just their high key colour combinations, intense detail and patterning, but also their over-investment in figurative techniques and their spiritual and mythological themes. It is also the extent to which these awkward combinations and seemingly earnest portrayals often provide an unintentional humour. To a large degree, this kind of work is predicable, stable even. It's frequent use of jungle cats, expansive landscapes, skylines meeting land mass, journey men meeting hot ladies, rainbows, cracked eggs, friendly hybrids, waterfalls, ancient architecture, Classical bodies and selective mythology, is comforting even when slightly creepy. At the very least it is consistent. It's as if these imagined or fantasy spaces can't envisage a range of uncomfortable forms or experiences. Despite its fantastic focus it cannot imagine formlessness.

The work in the show is directly engaged in what this realistic imagining of fantasy omits: instability, horror and fragmentation. As the title of the show suggests I want to play with some of the joy and humour of Psychedelic art and Magic Realism, but reinsert some of what is largely missing from it.

That I chose to do this in the form of wallpaper speaks to the second point of concern in the work. Consistent with my practice previously, I am interested in the palatable and the unpalatable in relation to a decorative aesthetic. Each panelled work in the show is a design for wallpaper. The animations, made in collaboration with Isobel Knowles provided a means of 'activating' the wallpaper designs (much like the jewel encrusted turtle activates the Turkish rug in Huysmans's novel *A Rebours*). It is my contention that the manner in which decoration and the decorative is so readily dismissed as peripheral lends itself to subversion. It was in the hope of subverting the predicable imaginings of Magic Realism that the work in this show was made.

Natalya Hughes, 2010.

Thank you to Isobel Knowles and Colin Trechter for their collaborative efforts in the making of this show.



level 1 / 30 Guildford Lane Melbourne Victoria 3000  
Ph: (03) 9670 4443 [info@beamcontemporary.com.au](mailto:info@beamcontemporary.com.au)

Natalya Hughes  
There Is Something Missing From Your Magic Realism  
4-27 November Beam Contemporary



1  
Natalya Hughes,  
*Bloodflowers*,  
giclée print, 90 x 140cm, 2010.  
Ed. of 10 + 2 AP



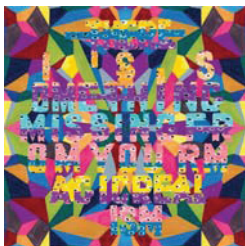
2  
Natalya Hughes,  
*Violent Ubu's Magic Miracles*,  
giclée print, 90 x 140cm, 2010.  
Ed. of 10 + 2 AP



3  
Natalya Hughes,  
*Kaleido-cheetah*,  
giclée print, 90 x 140cm, 2010.  
Ed. of 10 + 2 AP



4  
Natalya Hughes,  
*Party Pooper*,  
giclée print, 90 x 140cm, 2010.  
Ed. of 10 + 2 AP



5  
Natalya Hughes in collaboration with Colin Trechter,  
*There is Something Missing From Your Magic Realism*,  
giclée print, 90 x 140cm, 2010.  
Ed. of 10 + 2 AP



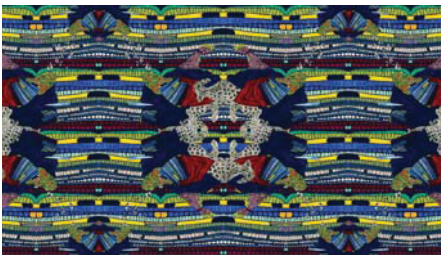
6  
Natalya Hughes,  
*Clusterfuck*,  
giclée print, 90 x 140cm, 2010.  
Ed. of 10 + 2 AP

\* All prices include GST

Natalya Hughes  
There Is Something Missing From Your Magic Realism  
4-27 November Beam Contemporary



7  
Natalya Hughes  
in collaboration with Isobel Knowles  
*Bloodflowers*,  
2D animation quicktime file, 2010,  
Ed. of 4 + 2 AP



8  
Natalya Hughes  
in collaboration with Isobel Knowles  
*Kaleido-Cheetah*  
2D animation quicktime file, 2010,  
Ed. of 4 + 2 AP



9  
Natalya Hughes  
in collaboration with Isobel Knowles  
*Party Pooper*,  
2D animation quicktime file, 2010,  
Ed. of 4 + 2 AP



10  
Natalya Hughes  
in collaboration with Isobel Knowles  
*Clusterfuck*,  
2D animation quicktime file, 2010,  
Ed. of 4 + 2 AP

Animation files are provided with a media player allowing playback on any monitor or television.

Prints 1-6 are also available as extremely limited custom wallpaper designs or installations. Please contact the gallery for information.

\* All prices include GST



Natalya Hughes  
There Is Something Missing From Your Magic Realism  
4-27 November Beam Contemporary

Display Area



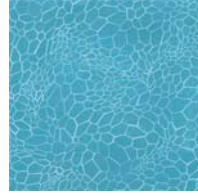
1



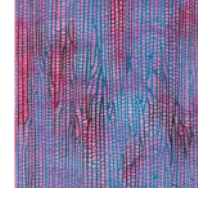
2



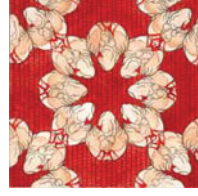
3



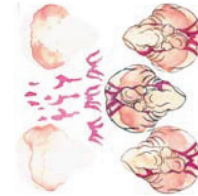
4



5



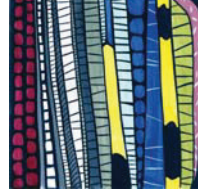
6



7



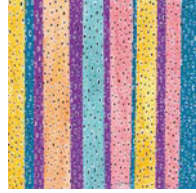
8



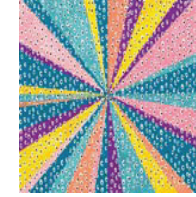
9



10



11



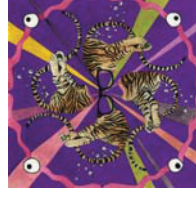
12



13



14



15



16



17

From left to right:

1. 1st Cluster, watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010
2. Cluster Pieces 1, watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010.
3. Cluster Pieces 2, watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010.
4. Cells, watercolour on paper, 15 x 15cm, 2010.
5. Wing Haze, watercolour on paper, 15 x 15cm, 2010.
6. Bloodflower (Red), watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010.
7. Blood Pieces, watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010.
8. Cheetah, watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010.
9. Weave, watercolour on paper, 15 x 15cm, 2010.
10. Neo Geo, watercolour on paper, 15 x 15cm, 2010.
11. Spotty, watercolour on paper, 15.5 x 15.8cm, 2010.
12. Wheel 2, watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010.
13. Lightning, watercolour on paper, 15 x 15cm, 2010.
14. Miracles, watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010.
15. Party Pooper, watercolour on paper, 20 x 20cm, 2010.
16. Pooper Pieces, watercolour on paper, 15 x 15cm, 2010.
17. Wheel 1, watercolour on paper, 15 x 15cm, 2010.



beam contemporary