

Sarah Joseph

Digital Visual Arts Portfolio

Contents

- *Artist Statement*1
- *Early Work*.....2
- *2016*.....3-4
- *2017*.....5-9
- *2018*.....10-16
- *Current Project*.....17
- *Contact Details*.....18

Artist Statement

My practice challenges the issues underlying Western social constructs, and has explored enquiries including: racism; sexism/misogyny; impossible beauty standards; as well as the commodification and destruction of nature. Other ideas my practice has explored that have been less politically driven include: hope and regrowth; abstractive and narrative satire; romance; and disturbing or distorted surrealism.

The mediums employed in my work have been traditional art-based materials such as acrylic and oil paints on different types of surfaces. Furthermore, the works have had an emphasis on the aesthetic and composition (rather than materials utilised) to critique ideas in the works. The techniques and processes used in my practice have been highly influenced by baroque and renaissance painting styles, while in other instances they have been focused on realism and/or surrealism techniques and processes found throughout post-modern art history.



Midnight Meeting 2013,

oil on canvas

45x61cm.

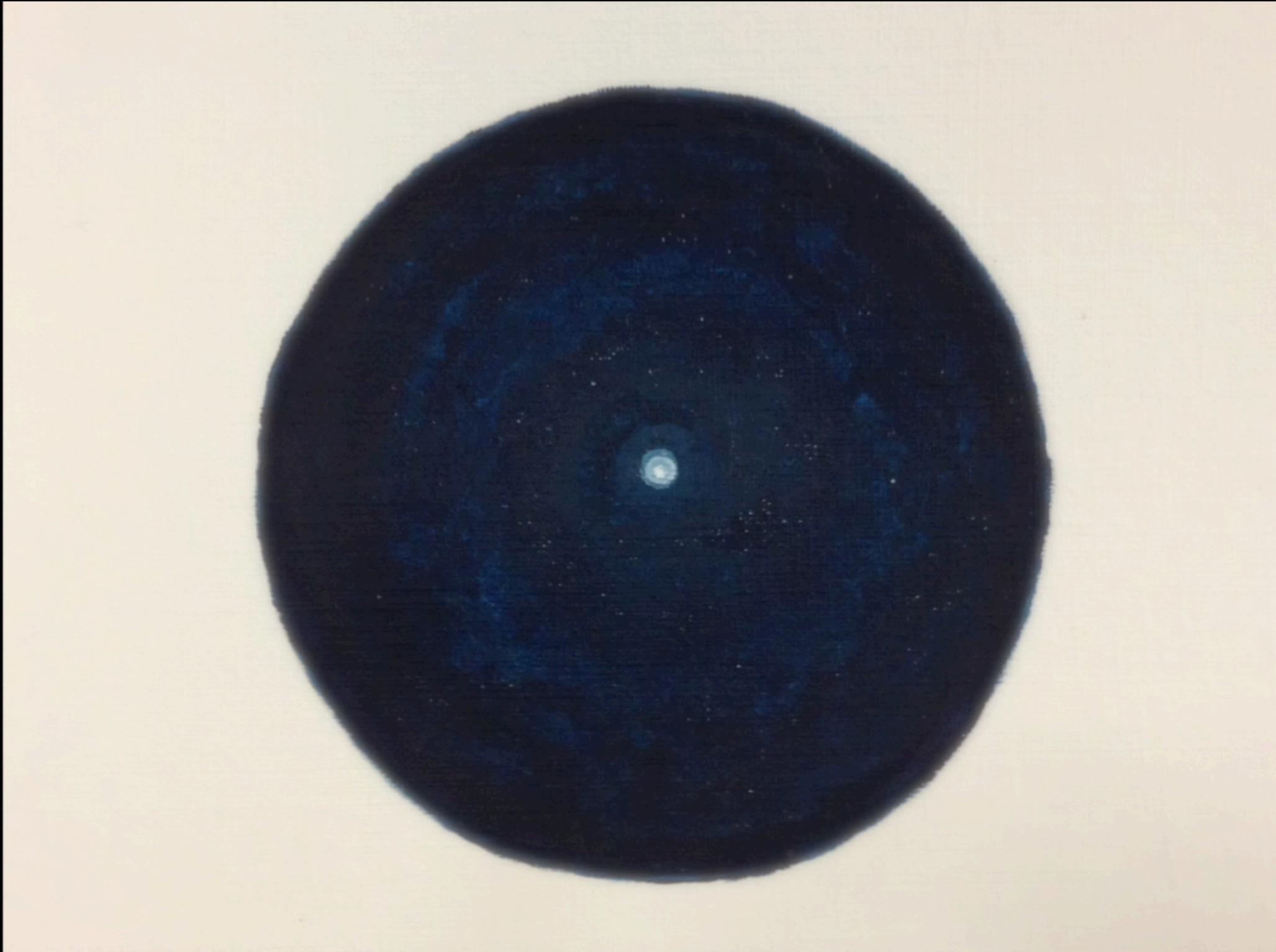
This is one of several early works created during VCE Visual Arts studies. *Midnight Meeting* was inspired by Leonid Afremov's unique romantic style and his painting technique of applying oil paint on the surface of the canvas using a palette knife to elevate and create texture.

Brownie, 2016
acrylic on canvas,
50.8x50.8cm.

Brownie critiques the notion of racism in society and how it affects the individual. This particular work was a self-portrait as a form of reflection, and the composition and technique was influenced by post-modern Indigenous Art exploring racism.



Wormhole Exploration 2016,
stop motion film (acrylic on canvas paper),
duration; 1.14min.



Wormhole Exploration was a non-political examination of a chosen interpretation of 'space' using painting medium. The interpretation of space used the theme of galaxy and a surreal narrative, of a viewer exploring and encountering stars that enchant them to enter the wormhole. The project experimented with different processes that used painting on canvas paper, and stop motion film was the final process employed for a more interactive experience for the audience.

5

This series focuses on the distortion of the female body to examine the perfection sought in beauty standards and the way Western society glorifies or idolises these standards. Both explore these notions using Baroque style inspired painting techniques and disturbing surrealist composition.

Glorified Perfection (I & II) 2017,
oil on flat canvas (framed),
2 x 30x40 cm.



High Tea Invitation
(Untitled), 2017
 digital and mixed media print,
 14.8x21cm.

I volunteered my services to create a commissioned High Tea Invitation Design for St Gerard's Parish High Tea fundraiser, for SOS Chrétiens d'Orient to rebuild Iraq and Syria (the future of persecuted Christians in the Middle East). It was created via hand-drawn mixed media elements scanned and then manipulated in various digital programs. The client had the finished digital project printed and distributed.



Bee-Vamped 2017,
second-hand denim jacket, thread, repurposed tassels, fabric and puff paints,
glitter, Mod-Podge glue/finish, 50x90x20cm,
Frankston Art Centre *It's Our Rubbish* Wearable Art Exhibition.

32

Sarah Joseph
Bee Vamped

This second hand jacket was considered almost worthless when I found it. The material was plain, (is still) rough, and no one wanted it. For this reason I chose it to be my piece of revamped wearable art. The symbolism of the bee on this piece is for its representation of a forager and a survivor, just as items used to make this piece are repurposed. Thus, these items have been made resilient against obsolescence, as I have renewed the simple worn jacket into an interesting piece.

\$80.





Protectress 2017,
oil on canvas,
50x60cm,
Frankston Art Centre
Connections exhibition 2017.

This piece challenges the notion of industrialisation at the cost of destroying nature and animal habitats. It uses surrealist style, composition and narrative, to suggest alien intervention on Earth to protect the animals. Thus the work is titled *Protectress*. The project was made for a group exhibition focused on the idea of 'Connections', and the work emphasises the connection between nature and humans.

Dance on Hell's Reef 2017,
acrylic on canvas,
121x50cm.

Dance on Hell's Reef is an abstract satirical project contextualising dance imagery and incorporating hell, deep ocean and anatomical-mortality themed imagery. On the bottom left corner of the work, a dance equation was written then layered with paint, which demonstrates the spontaneous layering process of this particular abstract piece. It's satire is displayed through the absurdist dynamic between imagery, for example, the skull biting the dancer's body, or the facial figure above the heart drinking the blood from the dancer's artery, or an eye ball swimming in the coral reef.



10 *Mother Nature* group exhibition, 2018, Frankston Art Centre, installation view.





M'Other 2018,
 acrylic and oil on canvas,
 59x90cm, *Mother Nature* exhibition 2018,
 Frankston Art Centre.

This series explores ideas around nature and a greater entity that watches over it (Mother Nature). This particular piece from the project looks at a hybrid deity that is surrealistically interpretive of her appearance.

11

Sarah Joseph

M'Other

Acrylic and oil

M'Other has been watching over the flora and fauna of the Earth for millennia. She has been immortalised in a portrait of acrylic and oil.

An image of her alien-esque form only familiar by her woodland antlers and moss covered hair, treading down her neck, blooming ripe mushrooms. She hides herself in nature and watches us from clearings in the trees, hoping we will come to our senses, and protect her and what she stands for.

\$300

12 *Hope 2017*

oil on canvas,

60x90cm, *Mother Nature* exhibition 2018,
Frankston Art Centre.

This project was a commission that used imagery of the burning and regrowth of a forest to symbolise hope. It was for a drug and alcohol counselling facility, to act as a reminder to clients that 'it gets better'.

It was exhibited with permission from the owner at Frankston Art Centre for artist invite only group exhibition *Mother Nature*.



13

Photoshop and Interview with a Doe 2018,
acrylic and oil on canvas,
50x70cm, *Mother Nature* exhibition 2018,
Frankston Art Centre.

12

Sarah Joseph

Photoshoot and Interview with a Doe

Acrylic and oil

"Doe, a deer, a female deer!" is on the cover of the magazine, next to the "Get Rich Quick" scheme. On page 2 her article reads, "The deer who worked her way to stardom has become one of us, and is now speaking profanity on protecting the forest". In all her efforts to be heard, Doe has just become another cover girl; another entertaining read for the waiting room. Her sad face not looking towards the camera, she slouches a little, accepting the bane of her existence. No longer able to run free, and sucked into the vertigo of human pop culture.

\$150

This piece in the series looks at the commodification of nature and how human pop culture sugar coats world issues and reality, particularly for western society through magazines and editorials.



14 *General Gumtree 2018,*
acrylic on canvas,
30x40cm, *Mother Nature* exhibition
2018, Frankston Art Centre.

10

Sarah Joseph

General Gumtree

General Gumtree is the first Koala to represent Australia's defence of endangered species. He wears the weight of his kind on his shoulders. Gumtree has spoken on the value of Australia's native animals and later climbed the military ladder to become the general he is known as here and today. As humans, we should follow in his footsteps and take a stand in the protection of Kangaroos, Cockatiels and Koalas alike!

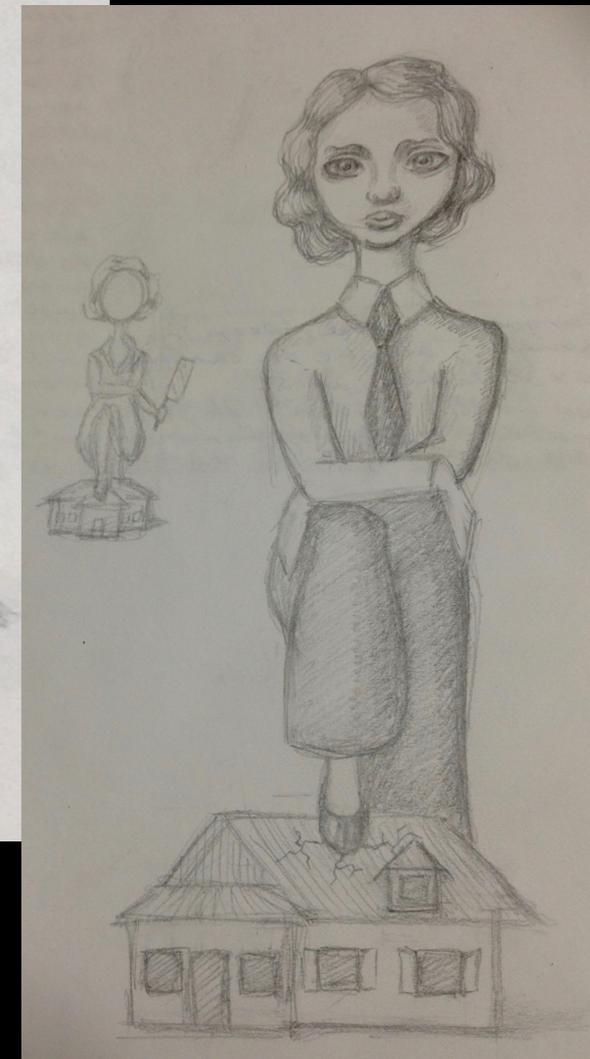
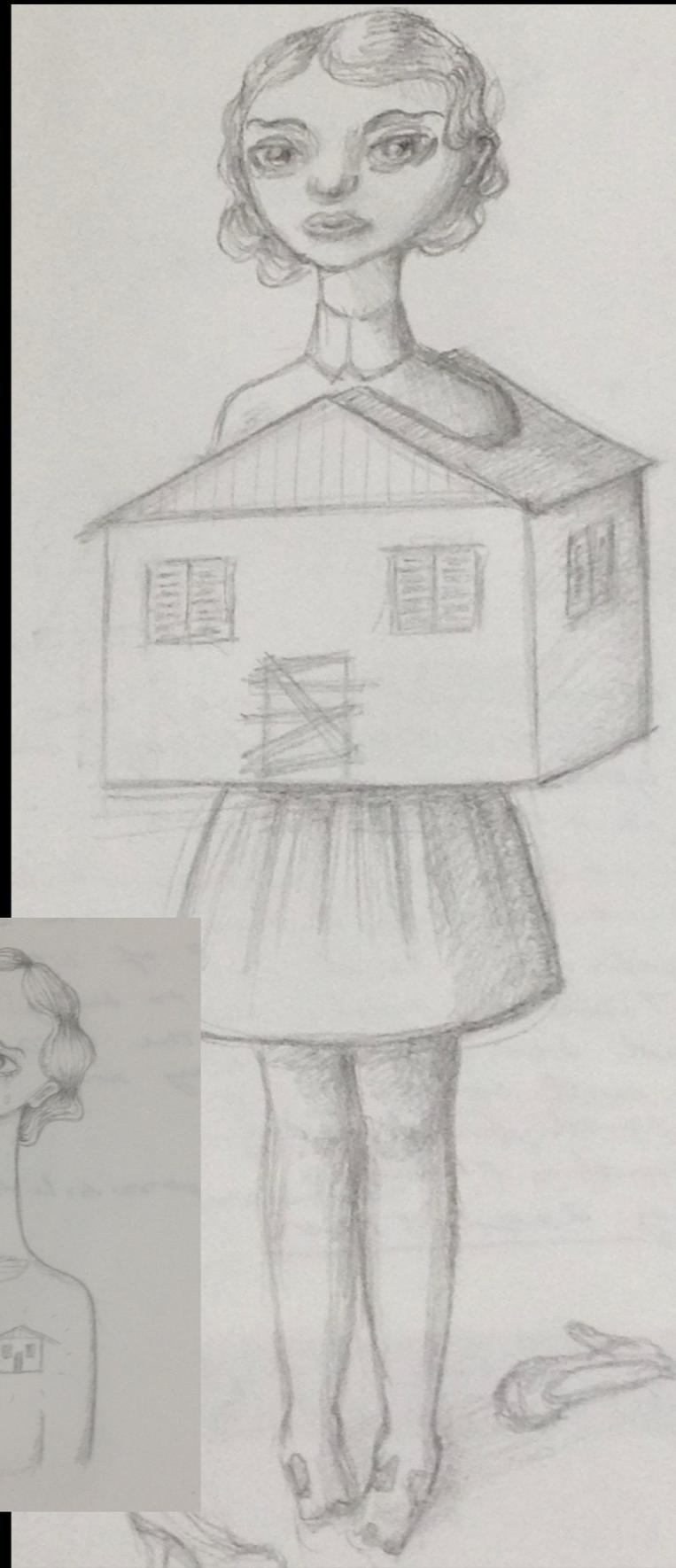
\$95

This artwork, sold at the *Mother Nature* exhibition, criticises humanity's involvement in endangered species and animal extinction. It presents a surreal endearing narrative of animals defending themselves against humanity.



15 *Woman's Craft 2018,*
fabric, cardboard, acrylic paint and mixed
textiles media on canvas, 120x60cm.

This project explores female domesticity and the stigmatised role of women in society. The work emphasised feminist imagery and childlike innocence in surrealist style, to de-sexualise the subject of the piece and rather focus on the idea of entrapment in the home.



Conceptualising sketches.



Misogyny: Female Inferiority is Male's Complex 2018,
 dryer lint, kneadable eraser, multi-purpose tack, Play Doh, moulded
 plastic/ABS filaments from 3D printing pen, embroidery, dry needle felting,
 wood & wood burning tool, clay with hundreds & thousands,
 10x5x5cm, 4 wall embroidery bands 20x20cm, *Chrysalis* Visual Art Graduate Exhibition 2018, Deakin University.

SARAH JOSEPH

Misogyny: Female Inferiority is Male's Complex, 2018

Dryer lint, Play Doh, Kneadable eraser, Multi-purpose tack, Moulded plastic / ABS filaments from 3D printing pen, Embroidery, Dry needle felting, Wood and Wood burning tool, Clay with Hundreds and Thousands. (10cm x 5cm x 5cm, 4 wall embroidery bands 20cm x 20cm)

The project entails a small scale series which employs different/repeated 'female' related imagery through non-/traditional malleable materials including: multi-purpose tack, kneadable eraser, dryer lint, play-doh, moulded plastic, wood burning, clay, and hundreds and thousands. The project also incorporates textiles materials (historically stigmatised by society as woman's craft and 'low art') such as felting, as well as embroidery. The purpose of these malleable materials is to emphasise the way women are controlled, distorted, moulded and vulnerable within contemporary ideologies. The works seek to explore misogyny and female inferiority which continue to underlie many contemporary-societal values and constructs.



The project consists of malleable materials such as kneadable erasers, blu-tack and dryer lint to explore the way women's image is controlled and manipulated, particularly sexualised and commodified, by society and its misogynistic constructs. It also makes use of other feminist non-art materials such as textiles (felting and embroidery), food items and more unique processes such as wood burning and plastic moulding.

Current Project

The current project in progress titled *Mr. Bun* is produced using oil on wood panel and explores anthropomorphism of animals by humans; portraying animals with human characteristics in order for us to feel a sense of relation and familiarity. It takes inspiration from the artist's pet rabbit to further explore anthropomorphism through real-life experience and interaction. This artwork follows similar themes explored in previous work *General Gumtree* 2018. The project endeavours to be a series of oil paintings.



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