



HYPERactive

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**BIANCA BEETSON
CLAUDIA CHASELING
JAY YOUNGER
RICHARD GRAYSON**

**CATHY LAUDENBACH
JAY KOCHER
REBECCA SELLECK**

CURATED BY DAVID BROKER

A common thread running throughout *HYPERactive* is that works are the result of ambitious projects that produce ‘larger than life results’. My initial interest in Claudia Chaseling’s work developed as the result of her ‘spatial paintings’. These extravagant endeavours are sometimes reminiscent of the flamboyant design of comic-strips, literally bursting from the walls and into the gallery. Smaller paintings on canvas might be integrated into vast zones of flat pigment that occupy the architecture of the space including floor, walls and ceiling; an intense explosion of hard edged colour and form. From the series *Infiltration*, the three works in *HYPERactive* possess a similar vitality and graphically envisage a current global malaise that anticipates the ever-increasing power of the military industrial complex and its inextricable association with capitalism and politics. With occasional figurative elements, Chaseling abstracts a bleak future for humanity, which she sees as being detached from the perils of its own misguided progress.

The title *Akimbo* (2015) comes from the phrase “Army arms akimbo” and refers to the position of standing astride with hands on hips and elbows pointing outwards – a pose sometimes associated with the military who might be dressed in fatigues and/or captured in the act of shouting orders. There is nothing quite so explicit in Chaseling’s painting, however, its sombre colours and potent forms containing smoke and explosions convey a sense of relentless aggression. Within its agitated imagery lies a critique of governments’ deluded military aspirations as a path to glory rather than destruction. Darth Vader’s almost discernible space-craft backgrounds imminent catastrophe symbolised through a dark Hollywood legend that implicates the United States of America as a major player on the irrevocable course towards annihilation. In similar vein, the golden silhouette of a Fairchild Republic A-10 Thunderbolt II war-plane carrying a depleted uranium rocket is underlined by an extensive dark shadow in *Dog* (2014). Beyond the development of military hardware lies an abstract view of the aftermath, a mutated dog and rubble. Mutation is also central to *Beetle* (2014) where a beetle of unrecognisable taxonomy seems to struggle through an abstracted landscape that is merely a ghost of its former self.

2017 and every day we are confronted with images of cities in Iraq and Syria laid waste by the bombs of so many armies it is almost impossible to pinpoint blame. Even conflict has lost the clarity of defined warring factions and is justified by lies (such as Iraq's possession of WMDs). In the dynamic abstracted form of Chaseling's paintings there is a censorious tone suggesting that more than ever, understanding global events is complicated by the dubious and yet seductive idea of 'fake news', where truth and objectivity become redundant concepts - undermined by an unholy alliance of political self interest and corrupt media. *HYPERactive* addresses an intensifying global anxiety through artworks that reflect the on-going decline of certainty that has generated the malaise articulated in Chaseling's paintings.



CLAUDIA CHASELING *Beetle*, 2014, Egg tempera and oil on canvas; 138 x 138cm



CLAUDIA CHASELING *Akimbo*, 2014, Egg tempera and oil on canvas; 148 x 148cm



CLAUDIA CHASELING *Dog*, 2015, Egg tempera and oil on canvas; 148 x 148cm

It is as if the 'devil' is laughing at us, having removed our tenuous grip on reality once and for all. This is most clearly and comprehensively expressed in Richard Grayson's *Possessions_inc* but also exists in Cathy Laudenbach's work where it is impossible to believe in the ostensible transparency of photographs. Jay Younger's exploration of gender politics through a mirror of memory and meaning associated with familiar objects in unfamiliar arrangement destabilizes the security of reliable experience. Jay Kochel further questions the authenticity of artefacts that generate responses way beyond their material capacity. Rebecca Selleck seduces the audience by way of a conflict that arises from the idea that loveable furry creatures possess the capacity for widespread environmental destruction. Similarly Bianca Beetson's Elmo skin cloak is designed to undermine the shelter of childhood recall with an abject artwork that highlights continual waves of colonisation for Aboriginal cultures. More than a quarter of a century after Baudrillard and Eco captured the imagination of artists through their theories on hyperreality, they perhaps could not have imagined the extent to which fact and fiction have become one mercurial field of knowledge that defies rational interpretation.

David Broker,
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Richard Grayson is represented by Matt's Gallery, London and Yuill Crowley, Sydney

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Curated by David Broker

Catalogue by Alexander Boynes

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