

Stanley Street gallery

August 2018

Michael Simms

Artist Statement

"I find human behaviour infinitely fascinating, and use my practice to investigate the evolving notion of portraiture in our culture that is increasingly proliferated with smartphone cameras. Through combining academic painting techniques, symbolic imagery and distortions my goal is to create work that comments on the gap between the authentic and virtual self, as well as the distortion of identity. Drawing inspiration from the gothic components of Romanticism and the French symbolist movement, the dream-like environment in my paintings attempt to reveal fundamental hidden truths about the human condition. The figures captured in this exhibition are overwhelmed with obsession, addiction, anxiety or a sense of isolation – themes that feel pertinent in our current digital climate."

Bio

Michael Simms is a multi-award winning artist based in Sydney. Born in Adelaide, he completed degrees in psychology and film at Flinders University before winning a scholarship to study art at the Julian Ashton Art School. Since then, Michael has brought together his interest in classical art and contemporary human behaviour to reveal hidden truths about his subjects. In 2018, Michael was the winner of the Royal Art Society of NSW Young Artist Award and the inaugural SBS Portrait Prize, and in 2016 was awarded the Cambridge Studio Gallery Portrait Prize and Cliftons Art Prize. He has been a finalist in several major art awards across the country, including the Doug Moran, Black Swan, and Kilgour Art prizes, and notable Australians who have sat for portraits include Thomas Keneally, Liz Ellis, Genevieve Lemon and Paul Capsis.

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CV

EDUCATION

- 2011 - 2014 Diploma of Fine Arts, The Julian Ashton Art School, Sydney (Recipient of the Sydney Mechanics School of Art Scholarship)
- 2006 - 2011 Bachelor of Behavioural Science and Bachelor of Arts, Flinders University, Adelaide

SELECT AWARDS AND PRIZES

- 2018 Young Artist Prize, The Royal Art Society of NSW - Winner
SBS Portrait Prize, Southern Buoy Studios, VIC – Winner
Kilgour Art Prize, Newcastle Gallery, NSW – Finalist
Hurford Harwood Portrait Prize, Lismore Regional Gallery, NSW –Finalist
Lethbridge 10,000, Lethbridge Galler, QLD – Finalist
Percival Tucker Portrait Prize, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery QLD – Finalist
Melt Portrait Prize, Brisbane Powerhouse, QLD – Finalist
Hunters Hill Art Prize, Hunters Hill Town Hall, NSW – Finalist
- 2017 Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, NSW – Finalist
Lethbridge 10,000, Lethbridge Gallery, QLD – Highly Commended
Mosman Art Prize, Mosman Art Galley, NSW – Finalist
EBNA, YSC Consultancy, NSW – Highly Commended
Fisher's Ghost Art Prize, Campbelltown Arts Centre, NSW – Finalist
Lyn McCrea Drawing Prize, Noose Regional Gallery, QLD – Finalist
Manning Art Prize, Manning Regional Gallery, NSW – Finalist
Marie Ellis Drawing Prize, Jugglers Art Space, QLD - Finalist
Contemporary Art Awards, QLD – Finalist
- 2016 Cliftons Sydney Art Prize, Cliftons Sydney – Winner
Cliftons Sydney People's Choice Award, Cliftons Sydney – Winner
Who Is Looking At You Portrait Prize, Cambridge Studio Gallery, VIC - Winner
Black Swan Prize for Portraiture, Art Gallery of WA, Perth – Finalist
Emerging Artist Award, Fortyfivedownstairs, Melbourne – Finalist
Percival Tucker Portrait Prize, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, QLD - Finalist
- Blacktown Art Prize, Blacktown Arts Centre, Sydney – Finalist
- Calleen Art Award, Cowra Regional Art Gallery, Cowra - Finalist
- 2015 Contemporary Art Awards, QLD - Finalist
Who Is Looking At You Portrait Prize, Cambridge Studio Gallery, VIC - Highly Commended
- 2013 Richard and Wenda Ashton Art Prize - Winner

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Sydney Mechanics School of Art Full-time Scholarship for The Julian Ashton Art School - Winner

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2017 Brink, Cambridge Studio Gallery, Melbourne

2016 Reverie, ArtWorld Studio Gallery, Brisbane

SELECT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2018 Temporal, Lethbridge Gallery (Bulimba), Brisbane

2017 The Other Art Fair, Australian Technology Park Eveleigh, Sydney

Medley II, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney

Exploration 17, Flinders Lane Gallery, Melbourne

Virtual Connections, No 1 Martin Place (Mezzanine Floor), Sydney

2016 Mythos, The Depot II Gallery, Sydney

Medley, The Depot Gallery, Sydney

Uncovered, Project [504], St Leonards, Sydney

2015 Vision, M2 Gallery, Surry Hills, Sydney

Opening Exhibition, Chancery Lane Gallery, Adelaide

2014 The Julian Ashton Art School Students and Teachers Exhibition, The Sydney Mechanics School of Art

PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA

- The Music, 'Top Talents to Watch in 2018', January 2018
- Talking With Painters The Podcast, Episode 24, 2017
- ABC Weekend Breakfast, 15 October 2017
- The Guardian Australia, 11 October 2017
- Western Sydney Local Health District News, Sydney Artist Paints Westmead Doctors in New Light', 19 January 2016
- The Parramatta Sun, 'People Person Paints Portrait', 27 January 2016.
- A Place To Call Home Season 3, Artist Hand Double, Seven Network, November 2015