



Francis Upritchard *Tourist* 2012, Collection of Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki (gift of the patrons of the Auckland Art Gallery).

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Francis Upritchard: Jealous Saboteurs

28 MAY - 16 OCTOBER 2016

About the Exhibition

Jealous Saboteurs surveys twenty years of work by London-based, New-Zealand-born artist Francis Upritchard. The show ranges from model landscapes she made at art school to her recent figurative sculptures. It also includes faux-Egyptian and faux-Maori artefacts, collections of talismans and totems, sloths and monkeys made from discarded fur coats, and curious arrangements of figures on furniture. Upritchard borrows from anthropology and museology, folklore and the counter culture, and from a diversity of art and craft traditions. Her work blurs the lines between the ancient, the current and the futuristic.

About the Artist

Francis Upritchard was born in 1976 in New Plymouth. A graduate of Christchurch's Ilam School of Fine Arts, she moved to London in 1998, where she became one of New Zealand's most successful international artists. She maintains a close relationship with New Zealand, returning and showing here regularly. She is well known for exhibitions combining objects, figurines and furniture. These included collaborative installations with her husband Italian furniture designer Martino Gamper and German-born, New Zealand-based jeweller Karl Fritsch. Upritchard won the Walters Prize in 2006 and represented New Zealand in the Venice Biennale in 2009, with an arrangement of small figures on large tables of her own design. The tables implied spacious landscapes across which the figures interacted. She has enjoyed major solo exhibitions in museums around the world, including the Vienna Secession in 2009, Nottingham Contemporary in 2012, Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Centre in 2012, MIMOCA in Kagawa, Japan, in 2013, and the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, in 2014.

Artist's Quote

'When I first started making figurative sculptures I was looking at carved wooden sculptures from medieval Germany and tried to make something that approximated that tradition. Then I thought "How can I move my sculptures away from the past and make them feel futuristic?", so I added some colour. I think it's important the sculptures don't seem really pristine and I prefer texture and depth. I really love the way you can see light and translucence underneath. It's almost like the colour and pattern on the skin is a projection onto the character. There are no pupils in any of my figures. The eyes are always closed, covered or facing downwards. The eyes are the window to the soul, but my sculptures have no soul, they are kind of like zombies. The skin is made from sculpey that is applied over a welded metal armature, which is then baked in an oven and painted. For the clothing I collect fabrics and keep them until it makes sense how I'm going to use them. I recently met an amazing weaver from New Zealand, and she made these woollen textiles for me, and the fabric layer underneath is some silk that I bought from a charity shop. I like to mix the found and the new. The steel plinths are designed by my husband Martino Gamper. They have a very strong, rationalist and masculine feel which I think is very good for my works because it emphasises their lightness.'"—Francis Upritchard, in conversation with the MUMA Director Charlotte Day.

Further Information

Read a review for *Jealous Saboteurs*:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mutualart/francis-upritchards-exoti_b_9341704.html

Listen to an interview with the artist on ABC Radio National Books and Arts.

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/booksandarts/francis-upritchard/7163800>

Francis Upritchard: Jealous Saboteurs is a joint project by City Gallery Wellington and Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne. This resource was developed by their respective Educators Claire Hopkins, Helen Lloyd and Melissa Bedford.

Pre-Visit Discussion

- Look at Upritchard's sculpture *Tourist* (overleaf) and read the artist's quote (opposite). Have a class discussion. What are you expecting to see at the Gallery? What are you curious to find out?

Post-Visit Discussion and Activities

Refresh your memory of the Gallery visit using these discussion points, then choose one of the following activities, which can be adapted to suit age and interest.

- Look carefully at *Tourist* and describe what you see. Is the figure male or female? What do you notice about their body language, facial expression, clothing and accessories? How has the artist used colour?
- Based on what you've noticed, speculate about the character of *Tourist*.
- Imagine yourself embodying the character of this sculpture. How might they be feeling?
- What is an archetype? Does Upritchard's sculpture depict an archetypal tourist? How does the title influence the way you understand the work?
- What time and place might *Tourist* belong to? Where have they come from? Where are they going?

Figure and Body Language

- Strike poses that embody the following feelings: aggression, fear, power, confusion, excitement, boredom.
- Working from real life or from photographs, capture these poses as a series of quick life-drawings, using pencil, charcoal or watercolour. Work quickly and intuitively, focusing on the shape of the body, posture and gesture, rather than detail.
- Develop one of your drawings into a small-scale mixed-media sculpture using wire, polymer clay (such as sculpy) and found textiles inspired by the figurative sculptures of Francis Upritchard. Use watercolour to paint the skin of your sculpture. Design and make your own plinth to display the artwork.

Imagined artefacts

- What is an artefact? What Upritchard works did you see at the Gallery that reminded you of artefacts? Which artworks were displayed as if they were part of a museum collection?
- Make an artefact from the past and an artefact from the future, imagining things that people from past and future civilizations might use or wear. To make your artefact, try incorporating and modifying found objects, or, alternatively, modelling and painting air-drying clay.
- Create a museum in a corner of your classroom to display the objects, with descriptive labels to accompany each piece.

Art and English

- Francis Upritchard often invites fiction authors to write about her work. Use the sculptures in the exhibition as a starting point for your own piece of creative writing. Generate an outline for a short story incorporating a person, place and thing from the exhibition.

Art Terminology

Anthropomorphise – to ascribe human characteristics or qualities to an animal or object.

Archetype – a typical example.

Armature – a framework around which a sculpture is built to provide structure and stability.

Artefact – an object made by a human being, typically one of cultural or historical interest. A cultural remnant.

Figurative sculpture – Sculptures that represent the human body.

Found object or 'readymade' – Art created from things that are not normally considered art.

Plinth – a base to support or display a sculpture.

Sculpey – a type of polymer modelling clay that hardens on baking.