

ELENA PAPANIKOLAKIS

b. 1984 Cootamundra, Australia

Lives and works in Sydney, Australia

Represented by ReadingRoom, Melbourne

Elena Papanikolakis lives and works in Sydney, Australia. Her practice melds together found materials, personal and cultural remnants and memory to probe the nature of experiences, function and authenticity. She is interested in exploring the periphery of understanding and the potential presented when observations are unravelled through degrees of abstraction. Her works are heavily invested in material processes and often consist of painting, collage and text.

Elena Papanikolakis' practice utilises painting, collage, text, photography, and drawing to explore the abstraction and suggestion of narrative. Informing her works are fragments of characters, events or scenes gathered from archives of personal and found material. Her practice pivots between representation and abstraction and is concerned with exploring the construction and deconstruction of understanding via painted spaces, words, and photo-based imagery.

She has surrendered herself to the logic of illegibility and, in doing so, examines the mechanisms (and agency) of abstraction. Yet this engagement with abstraction does not simply pivot on an attempt to render familiar form unrecognisable. Rather, by making us conscious of our attempts to negotiate abstraction...Papanikolakis forces us to reflect upon the very act of looking at, and engaging with abstract images.

—Isobel Parker Philip, Curator of Photographs, Art Gallery of New South Wales, from the catalogue essay for the series *Unbound*, included in *Primavera 2017: Young Australian Artists*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia 2017

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2022 *Inside, inside, outside*, ReadingRoom, Melbourne, Australia

2019 *Then, Closer*, ReadingRoom, Melbourne, Australia

2018 *Parting Words*, Verge Gallery, Sydney, Australia

2015 *Trips*, Firstdraft, Sydney, Australia

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2021 *Slippery When Wet*, Olsen Annexe, Sydney, Australia

2019 *Light Matter*, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney, Australia

- 2019 *Power, Process, Structure*, Tributary Projects, Canberra, Australia
- 2019 *There is Fiction in the Spaces Between: 2019 John Fries Award*, UNSW Galleries, Sydney, Australia
- 2018 *hold tight to your silence and wait*, ReadingRoom, Melbourne, Australia
- 2018 *Painting Amongst Other Things*, ANU School of Art Gallery, Canberra, Australia
- 2018 *New Sacred*, Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2018 *National Works on Paper Prize*, Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Victoria, Australia
- 2017 *PRIMAVERA 2017: Young Australian Artists*, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, Australia
- 2017 *Young Moderns*, Penrith Regional Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2016 *YOU ARE INVITED*, Watters Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2015 *Parramatta Artist Studios @ Artspace*, Artspace, Sydney, Australia
- 2015 *Annual Auction*, Firstdraft, Sydney, Australia
- 2015 *Art on Paper Award*, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2015 *Going Steady*, ANCA Gallery, Canberra, Australia

PRIZES AND GRANTS

- 2019 *Hazelhurst Art on Paper Award* (Finalist)
- 2019 *John Fries Award* (Finalist)
- 2018 *Ursula Hoff Institute Award for Postgraduate Excellence in Visual Art and Music*, Melbourne (Winner)
- 2016 *Fisher's Ghost Art Award*, Sydney (Finalist)
- 2016 *Cité Internationale des Arts Paris residency program*, Paris (Recipient)
- 2016 *Eva Breuer Travelling Art Scholarship*, Paris (Winner)

- 2015 *New South Wales Artists' Grant, National Association of Visual Arts, Sydney (Recipient)*
- 2015 *Art on Paper Award, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery, Sydney (Finalist)*
- 2013 *City of Whyalla Art Prize, Whyalla (Highly Commended)*
- 2012 *Arts ACT Project Funding Grant, Canberra (Recipient)*
- 2008 *Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship, Sydney (Finalist)*
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RESIDENCIES

- 2018 *Megalo Print Studio + Gallery, Canberra, Australia*
- 2017 *Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France*
- 2015 *Parramatta Artist Studios, Sydney, Australia*
- 2014 *Parramatta Artist Studios, Sydney, Australia*

PUBLICATIONS

- 2019 *Critic's Choice*, by Isobel Parker Philip. *Art Collector*, Oct-Dec
- 2019 *Then, closer*, by Zara Sigglekow. *Art Guide Australia*, Nov-Dec
- 2019 *Artist Elena Papanikolakis on breaking the mould and pursuing her passion*, by Anastasia Tsirtsakis. *Neos Kosmos*
- 2019 *In the Galleries: Five Shows to See this September*, by Will Cox. *Broadsheet Melbourne*
- 2019 *Process: Elena Papanikolakis*, *Artist Profile*, Issue 47
- 2018 *New Sacred*, *Artist Profile*
- 2017 *Young Artists Look to their Ancient Futures in Primavera*, by Naomi Gall. *Art Guide Australia*
- 2017 *"Free, noisy, fickle and brilliant": Primavera's Ancient Futures Have Arrived*, by Nicholas Carolan, *Grazia*

- 2017 *Primavera*, by Chloe Wolifson. ArtAsiaPacific
- 2017 *Primavera 2017: Young Australian Artists*, by Sophia Kouyoumdjian. Published by the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia
- 2016 *Elena Papanikolakis* by Alexandra English
- 2015 *Review, Going Steady* by Jessica Oliver

COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Victoria

Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery

The Molonglo Collection

ACT Legislative Assembly

EDUCATION

- 2007 Bachelor of Arts (Visual) Honours (First Class), Australian National University School of Art.