

WHAT NEXT?

EMILY
HARTLEY-
SKUDDER**Why pay attention?**

Barely out of art school, **Emily Hartley-Skudder** has already confidently stepped into the public and private sphere. She graduated from Ilam School of Fine Arts in 2012 and Christchurch Art Gallery presented her solo show *Showhome* in a suburban showhome this February. The 25-year-old exhibited in Sendai, Japan, as part of an exchange between artists affected by earthquakes, and in another earthquake-inspired show at Mandurah Performing Arts Centre, West Australia. Closer to home, teachers singled out Hartley-Skudder as a model artist, teaching her technique to high school students. The artist displayed the students' resulting works at ArtBox, a public space in downtown Christchurch. Hartley-Skudder recently relocated to Wellington where she is represented by {Suite} Gallery. Her first solo show at {Suite} sold out weeks before its August opening.

What do they do?

The precise, colourful compositions are rooted in the real world and yet eerily off kilter. Hartley-Skudder paints tiny representations of everyday items she finds trawling toy shops and thrift stores, gleaning inspiration from Lego or Sylvanian Families. She photographs these miniatures in carefully choreographed assemblages. The

photographs serve as preparatory drawings for her garish oil paintings in which she seeks to maintain an uncanny blend of artificial ordinary.

What's it about?

Hartley-Skudder has a fascination with the still life's ability to transcend time. A bunch of grapes painted today are just as recognisable as a bunch of grapes painted four centuries ago. However, her grapes are plastic, catapulting them into our commercialised world. While revelling in a domestic idyll, Hartley-Skudder's work prods at a discomfoting awareness of the current day.

The artist says...

"I like playing with the realism of tight representational painting combined with the artifice of plastic miniatures and toys," Hartley-Skudder says of her work. "I really enjoy having a playful aspect in there, and also a bit of irony, but then I really love miniatures. It's an odd thing. I almost celebrate them at the same time."

Where can you see it?

Emily Hartley-Skudder's next exhibition opens at {Suite} Gallery in Wellington on 28 November and runs until 21 December 2013.

Frances Morton



1.
Emily Hartley-Skudder, *Material Prokstillevet*, 2013. Found objects.

2.
Emily Hartley-Skudder, *Prokstillevet*, 2013. Oil on calico, 22.5 x 33.5cm.

3.
Emily Hartley-Skudder, *Kitchen Still life with Poultry*, 2013. Oil on calico, 18.8 x 28.5cm.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST AND {SUITE} GALLERY, WELLINGTON