

Hayley Megan French

BORN

1987

PRICE RANGE

\$1,500 – \$2,500

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An intense palette, naïve shapes and movement cast in thickly layered acrylic paint characterise the work of Sydney-based artist **Hayley Megan French**, whose intelligent painting practice is going from strength to strength.

French's large-scale abstract paintings incorporate warm orange, stark white and black, with forms that oscillate across the canvas. They are visceral and sensitive observations about the Australian landscape and painting. And, more recently extending from French's current PhD in painting at the Sydney College of the Arts, the conceptual and experiential potential the canvas offers Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal painters and contemporary artistic responses – an important line of research for a young Australian artist and which aesthetically offers audiences scope for their own reflection.

In 2012 Artbank purchased French's *Black, White and Orange Painting* and *Cadmium Orange* for its collection. The works feature vibrant crescents that appear to rise and fall, beautifully illustrating French's engagement with painting's vocabulary – colour, form, space, movement, the horizon and frame – and the striking orange that the artist loves, and that persists due to ties with the Australian outback.

French appears regularly in Sydney's exhibition calendar. Her work has been shown in the Damien Minton Gallery Annex Space and in *Glow* at the SCA Gallery. In 2012 she presented a paper and exhibited at the SCA PhD conference, *Critical Thinking: Research + Art + Culture*. She has also exhibited in artist run spaces across Australia and is a current committee member of MOP Projects, one of Sydney's most influential artist run spaces which has introduced many of the city's most successful artistic talent.

This year French enjoys her first solo show with the MOP Projects affiliate Galerie Pompom as part of its exciting expanded program. This stunning new series extends French's investigation into concepts of landscape, imagined through the perspective of living in Sydney and influenced by work (including a residency and volunteering) and travel in the Northern Territory. This is also reflected in the physicality of the large canvas that expands this experience of landscape to the viewer. These paintings contain shots of abstract orange and white floating within dark interiors, reminiscent of the Australian imagination adrift in the landscape. Or as if embroiled in a dance, a negotiation of place, orientation and identity – like the relationship French's research and art practice endeavours to articulate.

Altair Roelants

Hayley Megan French exhibits new work from 28 May to 22 June 2014 at Galerie Pompom in Sydney.

1.

Hayley Megan French, *Drift*, 2014. Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 150cm.

2.

Hayley Megan French, *Black, White and Orange Painting*, 2011. Acrylic on canvas, 200 x 200cm. Collection of Artbank.

COURTESY: THE ARTIST



1.

“They are visceral and sensitive observations about the Australian landscape and painting.”



2.