

TRISH  
CLARK  
GALLERY



HEATHER STRAKA | ... *another dissection*  
1 November – 21 December, 2019

Press Release

TRISH  
CLARK  
GALLERY

## TRISH CLARK GALLERY PRESS RELEASE:

HEATHER STRAKA | ... *another dissection*  
1 November – 21 December, 2019

Trish Clark Gallery is pleased to present Heather Straka's third solo exhibition, ... *another dissection*. True to her word, Straka takes another deep-dive into perceptions of socio-political and cultural lives, this time exploring the shifts in gender and cultural power, particularly in the arts and film, that have exploded in the wake of Harvey Weinstein's downfall.

Heather Straka's insightful explorations, through her different approaches in the dual mediums of paint and film, have created a significant body of compelling and often controversial work. With an MFA in Film, Straka demonstrates technical control of her medium and coupled with a finely modulated handling of her contentious subject matter, she deftly questions tradition, challenges the politically correct, and subverts expectations. This latest series of photographs expands on her two previous series, *The Anatomy Lesson* and *Blood Lust*, bringing together a new team that explicates Straka's usual subversive dark-humoured play with stereotypes, this time focussed on efforts at extinguishing the status quo via the torching of that cultural referent widely recognised as symbolic in cultural life in New Zealand-Aotearoa through the Jane Campion film of the same name, the piano.

Power dressed as if in a uniform of black and white punctuated with red, long black rubber gloves and goggles, women wear the trappings of domination; the symbols of colonial repression are incinerated; a non-binary African airline hostess and the return of a burqa babe illuminate high-vis diversity; while men parade in a frivolous array of hoses and foam; it's a fresh Straka take on the mad world, in advertising, in film and in reality.

Everything is grist to Straka's mill, with no apologia. Unafraid to confront racist and sexist stereotypes, Straka's engagement with such debate is a core part of her practice, her caustic gaze skewering and illuminating her subject matter.

# TRISH CLARK GALLERY

Graduating BFA in Sculpture at the University of Auckland's Elam School of Fine Arts in 1994, Straka honed an acute attention to detail later carried through to her painting practice, developed over several years spent in France. Straka returned to New Zealand to her first exhibition of paintings in 1998, later graduating with an MFA in Film from Canterbury University's Ilam School of Fine Arts in 2000. Since then Straka has been awarded several scholarships and residencies: in 2002 she was presented the Pierce Low Award for Excellence in Painting from the Royal Overseas League, London; was awarded New Zealand's esteemed Frances Hodgkins Fellowship in 2008; and the William Hodges Fellowship in 2011. Her work is held in all New Zealand's major public collections.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, IMAGES AND QUERIES PLEASE  
CONTACT THE GALLERY

[info@trishclark.co.nz](mailto:info@trishclark.co.nz)

09 379 9556 / 021 378 940