



"There's something about how timeless painting is that makes me feel connected to all the painters who've come before," says Kate Tucker (below right). Her work includes cover art for Missy Higgins (above), collaborations with Tai Snaith (top right & centre right), and solo paintings - here is a beautiful detail of a work titled *Self Similar #3* (below left).



ART PROFILE

Kate Tucker

This acclaimed Melbourne creative is a master multi-tasker, but she's often happy with just a paintbrush and canvas **WORDS LEE TRAN LAM**

Kate Tucker doesn't need to worry about becoming a one-hit wonder - her skills spill over into everything. The artist has crafted jewellery, shaped ceramics, designed sneakers for Gorman and even collaborated on a project with her sister that was described as "Martha Stewart on LSD". Kate's CV also includes a stint in video games: "I spent most of my time in that job making textures for totem poles." That experience was brief, but it did have the excellent side effect of introducing Kate to her husband, Tom. And while she has teamed up with many great collaborators throughout her career - photographer Brooke Holm, artist Tai Snaith, jeweller (and aforementioned sister) Jessie Willow Tucker to name a few - Kate has also done most of her powerful work with only a set of paintbrushes, some tubes of oils and acrylics, and a blank canvas for company. It's an approach that resonates strongly with the artist. "Painting is very finite, whereas digital images can be saved in endless iterations and you can always undo mistakes or go back with new perspectives. With painting, it feels like everything is at stake, and that makes it very alive," she says. "You can copy and manipulate a digital image so easily; and yet, if you enlarge it past a certain point, it just becomes pixels - you can only go so deep. In contrast, you can get so close to a painting that you can smell the paint." This incredibly physical connection is evoked not only in her new solo exhibition, 'Unstable Elements', but it's also seen her gain recognition as an Archibald Prize finalist and the cover artist of Missy Higgins' last album, *The Of Razzle Dazzle* (which shot to number one). Despite all the acclaim, Kate insists she works in a very humble medium. "Everybody can relate to the sensation of pushing paint around." ✦



* 'Unstable Elements' runs from July 5-26 at Helen Gory Galerie in Melbourne's Fitzroy. Visit katarzynkha.com.