

# OUR HOUSE

26 July to 16 August 2017

Tania Alexander

Victoria Lobregat

Nuha Saad

Opened on Saturday 29 July, 2-4 pm  
by Annalisa Capurro

Interior Designer | Design Educator | Architectural &  
Design Historian | Architectural Photographer | Writer

Exhibition coordinated by Lisa Jones

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# Our House

A house contains and surrounds us. It provides both a physical and cultural space where we develop personal and social rituals and relationships.

In *The Poetics of Space*, French philosopher Gaston Bachelard states, 'Our house is our corner of the world ... it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word.' He considers that every house is first a geometrical object of planes and right angles, bare rafters and strong framework, and that it welcomes human complexity.

Tania Alexander, Victoria Lobregat and Nuha Saad explore the psychological complexities of our house through their interactions with colour, geometry, pattern and form. In reinterpreting the all-familiar, private spaces of the home, they invite us to notice the subtle tonality of their responses to inhabiting and experiencing this space.

The artists bring varied material choices to this exhibition, from paint to found objects, and each explores the idea of the house as an accessible space filled with subtle links and personal associations to family, memory and imagination.

Tania Alexander uses the geometry of angles and lines to remind us of the patterns that we use to personalise our home. She reveals this geometry in layers of decorative washi tape and links the gendered hobby craft nature of the material to the art of abstract painting.

The inspiration for Victoria Lobregat's gouache paintings and installations is drawn from houses in her Newcastle area and reveals her nostalgia for the bland suburban homes and bright fabrics of 1950s Australia. She approaches the home with nostalgia and senses a loss for the ordinary scenes taken for granted and quickly changing.

Through ornament and colour, Nuha Saad transforms spaces using readymade interior moldings and wallpapers. She references the world of Federation and Victorian interiors, strengthening and intensifying their patterns and colours in her sculptural/painting installations.

Thank you to Tania Alexander, Victoria Lobregat and Nuha Saad for creating art that allows us to experience their corner of our world.

Mary Faith  
Director Grace Cossington Smith Gallery  
July 2017



*Token XXXIX, 2017*  
Washi tape on board  
31 x 31 cm



*Triangle, 2017*  
Washi tape on board  
43 x 50 cm



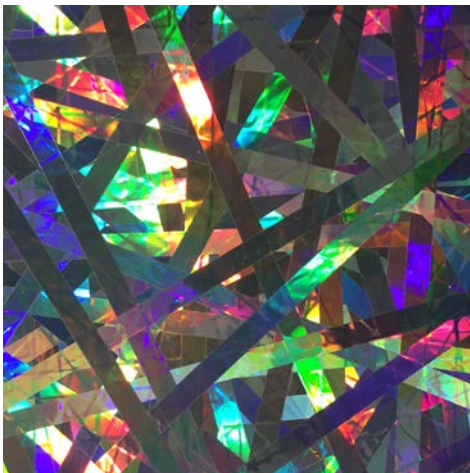
*Token XXXIV, 2017*  
Washi tape on birch plywood  
60 cm diameter



# Tania Alexander

Tania Alexander comes from a background in architecture, and is a multidisciplinary artist with a practice firmly anchored within the formal aspects of painting. This includes installation work, soft sculpture, light based media and most importantly, materials sourced from the everyday such as fabric, fur and tape. Through the use of coloured Washi tape, her work is linked to the craft-based practice of scrapbooking, a predominantly female, therefore gender specific hobby. Her work draws on the vocabulary of Modernism, and the use of readymade colour is crucial to her art practice, as is the transformative aspect of her work, from low art or craft to high art. What appear to be hard-edge abstract paintings are actually boards wrapped in Washi tape; readymade colour, non-archival and ephemeral. This prompts reflection on the prevailing values of our consumer driven culture, which exploits the speculative nature of the art market in our current era of Late Capitalism. Her studio practice is process driven and emerges from a strict discipline of rules and systems including the element of chance. This current body of work explores themes of contingency, ephemerality, obsolescence and decay, with reference to the fragility of life as both transient and fleeting.

Tania Alexander is a Sydney based artist, who has just completed her Master in Fine Arts in painting at the National Art School (NAS) in Darlinghurst. Tania has recently returned from the NAS Onslow Storrier studio residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts, in Paris. Her work is in collections in Sydney, Paris and New York, and she regularly exhibits in Australia and in Europe.



*Bonheur, 2017*  
Washi tape on birch plywood  
31 x 31cm



*Bubble-gum House, 2016*  
Gouache on Arches heavy  
watercolour paper  
60 x 50 cm



*Crop Circle House, 2016*  
Gouache on Arches heavy  
watercolour paper  
53 x 67 cm

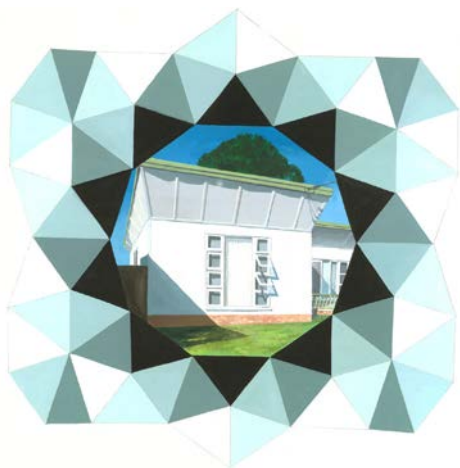
# Victoria Lobregat

Victoria Lobregat draws inspiration from uniquely Australian sunlight, weatherboard houses and a sense of place, sometimes minutely observed in the gardens and vistas in her part of the world. Her gouache paintings use pattern as a sensory device, and the images embedded within coloured, geometric waves and lines seem to be of latent memories of a certain place or of an era which is fast disappearing.

Lobregat has a fascination with objects and uses them in different ways to generate meaning. The objects that she chooses are imbued with a collective significance as they are domestic objects from mid-last century. The juxtapositions of the objects in her work suggests that she is investigating a more private layer of meaning. The dialogue between the artwork and the set up object/installations has to do with what is contemplated and remembered. They choreograph the viewer between object and interpretation, and seem at once to refer to domesticity and cultural context.

Since her multi-panelled installation in Primavera at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Sydney, Lobregat has collected signs and symbols, juxtaposing different notions of culture and spirituality with decorative motifs. As an artist, she is conscious of operating comfortably within different cultural modalities and this inevitably informs her imagery. During her Australia Council Residency at the Barcelona studio, Lobregat investigated symbols and images.

She has been a finalist in the Wynne Prize at the Art Gallery of NSW, the Portia Geach Memorial Exhibition and the Mosman Art Prize.



*Geometric House, 2016*  
Gouache on Arches heavy  
watercolour paper  
60 x 50 cm



*Flock Fall*, 2016-17  
Flock wallpaper, upholstery pins  
and acrylic on board  
33 x 33 cm



*Velvet Constellations*, 2017  
Flock wallpaper, acrylic, satin  
254 x 212 cm



# Nuha Saad

Velvet Constellations is an installation of new works by Nuha Saad that brings together the materials of wallpaper, perspex, upholstered forms and furniture works alongside the concepts of minimalism, ornament, memory and identity.

The project is seen as a type of reassertion of the margins. In his book *Chromophobia*, the British artist and critic David Batchelor argues that within Western art and culture there is an aversion to colour that has led to it being degraded and associated with terms such as 'femininity', 'orientalism' and 'ornament' and dismissed as superficial. Through the use of architectural forms and colour, Saad hopes to engage with this debate and offer a counterpoint to this 'phobia'.

Items of furniture and upholstered floor pieces are reworked to reveal the hidden narratives of lived places. The furniture's forms are sympathetic to the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery space – with its ceiling roses, cornices and skirting boards – forming a type of architectural alliance or knowing, while the upholstered components add liveable tactile moments to the installation.

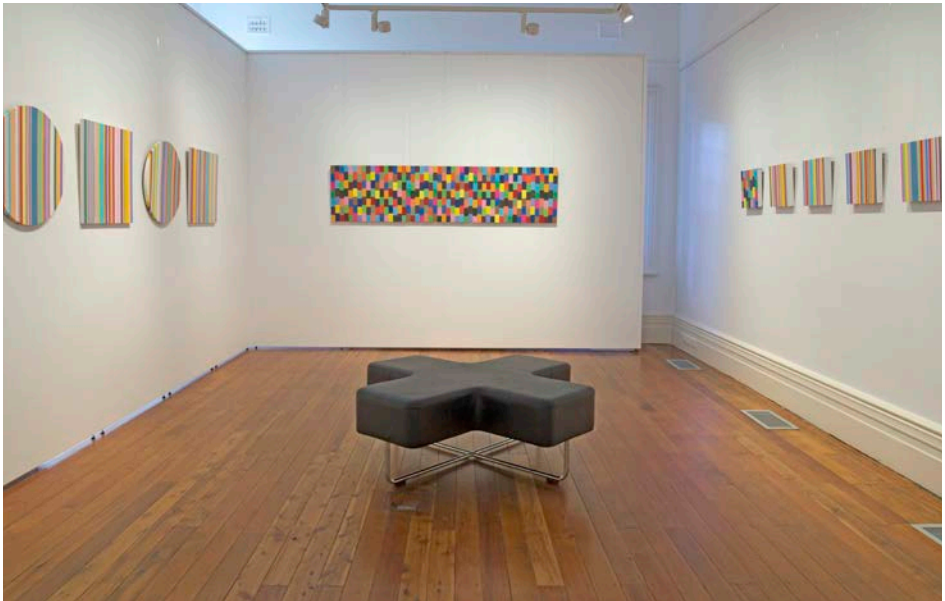
Ornamental forms and colours create reimagined interiors, where Federation, Victorian and other rooms are invoked. The tactile and rough surface of flock wallpaper creates a useful relief; its raised ornaments are largely a pastiche, yet these arabesques are charged evocative forms. The flat surfaces between these shapes are the 'ground' in this work and site(s) for transformation. Vivid colours are worked and placed here, theoretically in one gesture through tertiary and secondary colour relationships, yet in another gesture or movement of the brush, there is a narrative of dissolution, through the diminishment of pure tone and hue.

Velvet Constellations is seen as an archaeological dig of sorts, though here a fine brush simultaneously adds and reveals, attempting to capture memories and their slowly diminishing traces.

Nuha Saad is a Sydney based sculptor working in the areas of installation, galleries and public art. Her works feature in public buildings and urban renewal projects including large scale commissions for City of Sydney (Wulaba Park at Green Square and the Skippedy Skip Fence in Glebe) and Transport NSW. Saad has exhibited extensively in both solo and group exhibitions including projects for the Art Gallery of New South Wales; Artspace; RMIT Gallery; UTS Gallery; Tin Sheds Gallery; Hazelhurst Regional Art Gallery; Casula Powerhouse; Newcastle Regional Gallery NSW; Benalla Art Gallery Victoria and Queensland University of Technology Art Museum and was recently short-listed for the Meroogal Women's Art Prize and the Paramor Art + Innovation Prize.

# Installation views







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