

# Andrew Harper Visual arts



## Awash with creativity

Ocean's Edge Reverie,  
by Rosie Hastie

MONUMENT PASSIVE DISCOVERIES, Rosie Hastie, Bett Gallery, Hobart,  
Until June 29; Price range: \$2400-\$4400

**T**he eerie, fascinating landscapes of Rosie Hastie have an established, recognisable aesthetic, which is one way of saying she really knows what she's doing.

What's so impressive about this show is the sheer number of new ideas being presented here – if you have seen Hastie's work before, you will know it instantly, but there are surprises. There's an entire new series, 66 Horizons: colours of Istanbul which is a collection of tiny 7cm by 10cm works – that seem to be tight shots into the distance – but are actually close takes of a notebook in different light. It's beautiful and also a bit of sleight of hand, but this is what Hastie does.

Hastie's landscapes are no such thing; they're constructions of crumpled paper, controlled indoor light and a bit of errant smoke, and they look vast but aren't – they're just created that way. Hastie is very, very skilled and completely understands how her medium functions, so she's able to re-create the images of the vast exterior in a

tiny interior. It's amazing, but it's also about showing what you can do with photography, if you understand what the medium is capable of. Hastie truly does, and she's used her impressive skillset to interrogate the clichés of Tasmanian landscape photography in previous shows.

Here however, she's shifted her sharp, critical eye to another discussion, and it could not be more pertinent. Hastie has used her usual process, making paperscapes and using glass for the ocean, but she has taken that image and expanded out the edges of it to make a larger image using an AI process. Now this is bold. There's quite a panic going on about AI right now in a number of circles, not in the least in the visual arts. It could be warranted, but the most interesting artists I'm seeing are looking at how to bend AI to their art practice, how to use it to say something or make something interesting. It's interesting to recall that in 1840, on seeing a very early daguerreotype, the French painter Paul Delaroche said, "from today, painting is

dead". He was very wrong, but he was right that photography would have a cultural impact, and it's certainly possible that the invention of photography pushed painting towards all the expressionism, abstraction and every other wild change that has happened since. AI may well do something similar to photography, so artists like Hastie could not be more crucial at this moment in history. Using a tool rather fearing it is a key understanding its possibilities. Hastie is doing what she's always done, but she's also asking anew what an image is, how is it made, and what can we do to manipulate that process when we do grasp it?

It helps that Hastie has retained her satirical bite in her work – I find Hastie's art surgically funny, and this show really brings that home with the hilarious titles for each new work here, apparently generated using the notorious ChatGPT chatbot. Hastie is doing something very well thought out here, that's very rooted in this moment in history, but she's also making art that just looks stunning, and that deserves to be seen.

**ANIMAL PRESTIGE**  
Duncan Hose  
Moonah Arts Centre  
Until June 22

Price range: \$200-\$10,000

A dense rogue's gallery of famed and infamous historical characters mixes in with some beautiful people and eccentrics. Duncan Hose has made some 65 images of humans in an effort to examine how people present themselves to exert forms of influence and possibly power. It's a wild selection of people who are charismatic for varying reasons, from Anita Pallenberg to the Marquis De Sade. Hose can certainly capture mood well – all the images are expressive, as if we have caught each person depicted here right in the middle of some sort of large event. The drawings are funky and alive, their energy hard to miss.

Hose has excellent line work that uses space with great aplomb, and his renderings of eyes really succeed. There's a strong sense of fun and playfulness, but there's also a feel of slight danger to some of the people here – which is what Hose is examining. He's wise enough to see that charisma can have a venomous aspect to it, and some of that feral attraction is at play here – there's some real venom in the smile from De Sade, sitting in a throng like a villain at a gathering.

Hose isn't trying to draw accurate representations – rather he's more interested in capturing the energy of seduction and charm, and the manner in which his work is displayed, almost like a periodic table of human attraction. This is a fun, sly show with more going on than is revealed in the initial encounter.

