

# James Guppy

## *The Venal Garden*

9 – 27 October 2018



Based in Northern NSW and originally from the UK, painter James Guppy has been exhibiting in Australia for over three decades. His upcoming exhibition, *The Venal Garden*, is characteristic of the gentle absurdist style he uses to consider contemporary society.

In these works, I am playing with the history of paint and value. I started with details from Dutch flower paintings created around the time of the Tulip Boom in the 1600's. These still life paintings were esteemed as an expression of affluence for the burgeoning mercantile class.

Contemporary capitalism has its roots in Holland and Britain during this period. The Tulip hysteria of this time was the first modern economic bubble and the tulip bulbs created the first "futures market". One of the great outcomes of this economic frenzy are the Dutch Baroque paintings. Without this boom we would probably not have the works of artists such as Vermeer, Rembrandt, Artemesia Gentilleschi, Willem van Aelst or Rachel Ruysch.

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### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Guppy's work is held in many public collections, including QAGOMA, Artbank, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Griffith University, Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra and Lancaster University in England. His work is held privately in Australia, Asia, Europe and the United States. He has been the recipient of several awards, including the New South Wales Fisher's Ghost Art Award in 2004.

Image credit: James Guppy *Weighing the options* 2018 acrylic on polycotton 180.0 x 120.0 cm

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