

Natasha Bieniek

The power of the monument is well accepted. The gravitas of the miniature much less so. Natasha Bieniek lets her diminutive paintings lasso the viewer with a quiet grace, pulling the eyes in and halting the gaze. Hers are not the kind of pictures to take in with a passing glance and it is the physical tension between the image and its audience that motivates the artist. "I want to test the limits of the painter and the viewer's relationship, to take representation to the extreme."

Bieniek succeeds in this challenge by the most anachronistic means: the miniature portrait, first prominent in 16th century Britain, later made redundant by photography and now ubiquitous in contemporary form as the mobile-device digital photographs which, like their earlier counterpart, are always on hand as a memento of social belonging. In an age of face recognition technology, an acute human likeness rendered in the labour intensive craft of oil painting captivates with its sense of time invested and timelessness.

Natasha Bieniek (b. 1984, Melbourne) graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in 2006 and received the post-graduate Nino Sanciolo Art Scholarship to study ancient painting in Florence, Italy. She has been awarded significant art prizes including The Wynne Prize (2015), The Portia Geach Memorial Award (2015) and The Metro Art Award (2012) and is a twelve-time Archibald Prize finalist. Her 2016 Archibald Prize portrait of Wendy Whiteley was named highly commended and toured Nationally in 'Archie 100: A Century of the Archibald Prize'.

Other short-listed prizes include the Darling Portrait Prize (2020), Arthur Guy Memorial Painting Prize (2019), John Leslie Art Prize (2018), Geelong Contemporary Art Prize (2018), Glover Prize (2017), Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship (2015) and the Doug Moran National Portrait Prize (2012, 2013, 2014). Bieniek's work has been curated into major exhibitions at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, National Portrait Gallery, Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery and Warrnambool Art Gallery.

Natasha Bieniek

BIOGRAPHY	1984	Born in Melbourne
EDUCATION	2008	Graduate Diploma, Arts Management, RMIT, Melbourne
	2007	Certificate, Ancient Painting Techniques, Accademia d'Arte, Florence, Italy
	2006	Bachelor of Fine Art (Painting), Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne
SOLO EXHIBITIONS	2025	<i>Cocoon</i> , Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne
	2023	<i>White Gold</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane
	2021	<i>Halcyon</i> , Linden New Art, Melbourne
	2018	<i>Intimate Monument</i> , This Is No Fantasy & Diane Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne
	2016	<i>Bloombox</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane
	2015	<i>Biophilia</i> , This Is No Fantasy & Diane Tanzer Gallery, Sydney contemporary art fair, Sydney
	2014	Diane Tanzer Gallery + Projects, Art Basel, Hong Kong
	2012	<i>She Hangs Brightly</i> , Dianne Tanzer Gallery + Projects, Melbourne <i>She Hangs Brightly</i> , Gippsland Art Gallery, Victoria
	2011	<i>Petit Genre</i> , Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne
	GROUP EXHIBITIONS	2026
2025		<i>Garden Variety</i> , Manly Art Gallery & Museum, Sydney <i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Wynne Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2024		<i>Geelong Contemporary Art Prize</i> , Geelong Gallery, Victoria <i>Bayside Acquisitive Art Prize</i> , Bayside Gallery, Melbourne <i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Wynne Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Sulman Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
2023		<i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>In the company of Morris</i> , Art Gallery of Ballarat, Victoria
2022		<i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (cont)	2021	<i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Group show</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane <i>Archie 100: A Century of the Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
	2020	<i>Wynne Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Darling Portrait Prize</i> , National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
	2019	<i>Paintings 2019</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane <i>Arthur Guy Memorial Painting Prize</i> , Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria <i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Wynne Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Bayside Acquisitive Art Prize</i> , Bayside Gallery, Melbourne
2018	<i>A Fine Romance</i> , Gippsland Art Gallery, Victoria <i>Analogue art in a digital world</i> , RMIT Gallery, Melbourne <i>Obsession: Devil in the detail</i> , Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Victoria <i>John Leslie Art Prize</i> , Gippsland Art Gallery, Victoria This Is No Fantasy & Diane Tanzer Gallery, Art Basel Hong Kong, Hong Kong <i>Hadley's Art Prize</i> , Hadley's Orient Hotel, Hobart <i>Geelong Contemporary Art Prize</i> , Geelong Gallery, Victoria	
	2017	<i>Go Figure: Works from the collection</i> , Tweed Regional Gallery, NSW This Is No Fantasy & Diane Tanzer Gallery, Sydney contemporary, Sydney <i>John Glover Prize</i> , Falls Park Pavilion Tasmania
	2016	<i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney This Is No Fantasy & Diane Tanzer Gallery, Art16 art fair, London, UK <i>Sanctuary</i> , Glen Eira City Council Gallery, Melbourne
	2015	<i>Wynne Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Brett Whiteley Travelling Scholarship (Finalist), Art Gallery of New South Wales, Brett Whiteley studio, Sydney
	2014	<i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>In the flesh</i> , National Portrait Gallery, Canberra <i>Side Project</i> , Academy of Design, Melbourne
2013	<i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Figuration</i> , Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane <i>National Artist's Self Portrait Prize</i> , University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane	
2012	<i>Archibald Prize</i> , Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney <i>Doug Moran National Portrait Prize</i> , Moran House, Sydney	
2011	<i>High Definition</i> , Ausin Tung Gallery, Melbourne	

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (cont)	2010	<i>Lost In Painting</i> , Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne <i>The Grass is Greener</i> , Paradise Hills Gallery, Melbourne <i>Melbourne Art Fair</i> , Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne <i>White Hot</i> , Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Melbourne	
	2009	<i>Figure 1</i> , Pivotal Galleries, Melbourne	
	2008	<i>Seven</i> , Pivotal Galleries, Melbourne	
	2007	<i>Wieder</i> , Fortyfive downstairs, Melbourne	
	2006	<i>V.C.A Graduate Exhibition</i> , VCA, Melbourne <i>People and Places</i> , Mad Gallery, Victoria <i>Painting Department Show</i> , VCA student Gallery, Melbourne	
	COMMISSIONS	2018	Thai Polo Club, Pattaya, Thailand
		2016	Warnambool Botanical Gardens, Warnambool Art Gallery, Victoria
		2013	Portrait of Yael Bergman, Film Producer, Melbourne
		2007	Portrait of David Riley, CEO William Angliss Institute of Tafe Portrait of Hayden Kennedy, AFL Umpire
		2005	Portrait of Richard Jones, Victorian College of the Arts Lecturer
AWARDS & RESIDENCIES	2026	Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Finalist, Hadley's Art Prize, Hadley's Orient Hotel, Hobart Finalist, Bayside Painting Prize, Bayside Gallery, Melbourne	
	2025	Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Finalist, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney	
	2024	Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Finalist, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Finalist, Sulman Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Finalist, Geelong Contemporary Art Prize, Geelong Gallery, Victoria Finalist, Bayside Painting Prize, Bayside Gallery, Melbourne	
	2023	Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney	
	2022	Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney	
	2021	Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney	
	2020	Finalist, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Finalist, Darling Portrait Prize, Canberra	
	2019	Finalist, Arthur Guy Memorial Painting Prize, Bendigo Art Gallery, Victoria Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney	

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES
(cont)

- 2019 Highly Commended, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Finalist, Bayside Acquisitive Art Prize, Bayside Gallery, Melbourne
- 2018 Finalist, John Leslie Art Prize, Gippsland Art Gallery, Victoria
Finalist, Hadley's Art Prize, Hadley's Orient Hotel, Hobart
Finalist, Geelong Contemporary Art Prize, Victoria
- 2017 Finalist, John Glover Prize, Falls Park Pavilion Tasmania
- 2016 Highly Commended, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Finalist, Fleurieu Art Prize, Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum, Adelaide
- 2015 Winner, Wynne Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Winner, Portia Geach Memorial Award, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney
Finalist, Brett Whiteley Travelling Scholarship, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2014 Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Semi-Finalist, The Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, Moran House, Sydney
- 2013 Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Finalist, National Artists' Self Portrait Prize, University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane
Semi-Finalist, The Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, Moran House, Sydney
- 2012 Winner, The Metro Art Award, Metro Gallery, Adelaide
Runner Up, The Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, Moran House, Sydney
Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Finalist, The Redlands Westpac Art Prize, National Art School Gallery, Sydney
- 2011 Finalist, Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Finalist, The Doug Moran National Portrait Prize, The State Library of New South Wales, Sydney
- 2010 Finalist, The Royal Bank of Scotland Art Award, RBS Tower, Sydney
- 2009 Finalist, Metro Art Award, Metro Gallery, Adelaide
Finalist, James Farrell Self Portrait Award, Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, Victoria
Final 30, National Youth Self-Portrait Prize, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
- 2008 Runner Up (People's Choice), Metro Art Award, Metro Gallery, Adelaide
- 2006 Winner, Nino Sanciolo Art Prize, Scholarship to study at the Accademia d'Arte, Florence
Tolarno Hotel Painting Award, VCA Graduate Exhibition, Melbourne
Finalist, Wallara Travelling Scholarship, Melbourne

PUBLICATIONS

- 2020 Andrew Stephens, *It's the little things*, The Age, 25 January

PUBLICATIONS (cont)

- 2018 Amber Creswell-Bell, *A Painted Landscape*, Thames & Hudson
- 2017 Varia Karipoff, *Natasha Bieniek: Studio*, Art Guide Australia, 29 August
- 2016 Louise Martin-Chew, *Brisbane – Bloombox: Natasha Bineiek*, Art Guide Australia, November/December
- Phil Brown, *Tiny treasures*, Brisbane News, 9 November
- Jo Higgins, *Natural Magnetism*, Art Collector, October
- Andrew Taylor, *Archibald Prize 2016: Natasha Bieniek's small portrait captures Wendy Whiteley's great life*, Sydney Morning Herald, 15 June
- Carrie Miller, *Award Winners*, Art Collector, January
- 2015 Lucy Stranger, *Twice her luck – Natashia Bieniek wins Portia Geach Memorial Award*, Artist Profile, 22 September
- Dewi Cooke, *Natasha Bieniek wins Portia Geach Memorial Award for Portraiture*, The Age, 17 September
- Elizabeth Fortescue, *Natasha Bieniek wins Portia Geach Prize for women's portraiture at the S.H. Ervin Gallery*, The Daily Telegraph, 17 September
- Toby Fehily, *Natasha Bieniek Wins Portia Geach Memorial Award*, Art Guide, 17 September
- Elizabeth Fortescue, *Wynne, Sulman winners take the spotlight*, The Daily Telegraph, 25 July
- Nicholas Adams-Dzierzba, *Melbourne Artist Wins the Wynne Prize with Miniature Landscape*, The Age, 17 July
- Natasha Bieniek, *Observation Point: Why Portraiture?*, Portrait Magazine, issue 51
- Jo Higgins, *Sydney Contemporary Special Edition*, Australian Art Collector
- 2014 Sasha Grishin, *Review: In the Flesh at National Portrait Gallery*, The Age, 28 November
- Sally Pryor, *In the flesh – a show that explores what it is to be human*, The Canberra Times, 1 November
- Jo Higgins, *Art Basel Hong Kong*, Australian Art Collector, May
- Debbie Cuthbertson, *Australian Artists Kick Off Art Basel Hong Kong with Strong Showing*, The Sydney Morning Herald, 15 May
- Penelope Grist, *In the flesh*, Portrait Magazine
- 2013 U Sunday, *Little Likeness*, The Courier Mail, 17 April
- 2012 Annemarie Kiely, *Small Wonder*, Vogue Living, September/October
- Simon Gregg, *So Tonight That I might See: On beauty and longing in the work of Natasha Bieniek*, Catalogue Essay for *She Hangs Brightly*, Gippsland Art Gallery, Victoria
- Megan Miller, *Tiny details matter*, Herald Sun, 31 August
- Tim Douglas, *Life in miniature wins artistic largesse*, The Australian, 19 July
- Katrina Strickland, *Small portrait wins big prize for Melbourne artist*, The Australian Financial Review, 19 July
- Mark Ellis, *Painter's small world opens to panorama of possibilities*, The Age, 19 July

- 2012 Sally Bennett, *Miniature painting wins \$50,000 Metro Art Award*, The Herald Sun, 19 July
- 2011 Dan Rule, *Natasha Bieniek: Petit Genre*, The Age, 11 June
Ross Brundett, *How to pinpoint real art*, Herald Sun, 15 April
- PUBLICATIONS (cont) 2009 *Art Notes*, Art Monthly Australia, July Issue
Paul Riordan, *Painter in the finals at last*, Port Phillip Leader, 2 June
- 2008 Anaalise Walliker, *Artist's visual gag*, The Herald Sun, 23 June

COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Art Gallery of Ballarat, VIC

Gippsland Art Gallery, VIC

Tweed River Regional Art Gallery, NSW

Warrnambool Art Gallery, VIC