

## Dolly Thompsett

### A Thousand Years to Unpack

21 April – 21 May 2017

Opening reception Thursday 20 April | 6–8 pm

**Born in London, where she continues to live and work, Dolly Thompsett trained at the Byam Shaw School of Art (2000–2001) and Goldsmiths College (2002–2006).**

Since graduating, with a PhD in fine art, she has had many solo shows, particularly with prestigious London galleries, most recently, Art First. She has featured in many group exhibitions in the UK, Europe and the US and was a finalist in the Jerwood Drawing Prize in 2008 and winner of The Artsway Prize in 2009. The Pontone Gallery is delighted to be exhibiting her recent paintings.

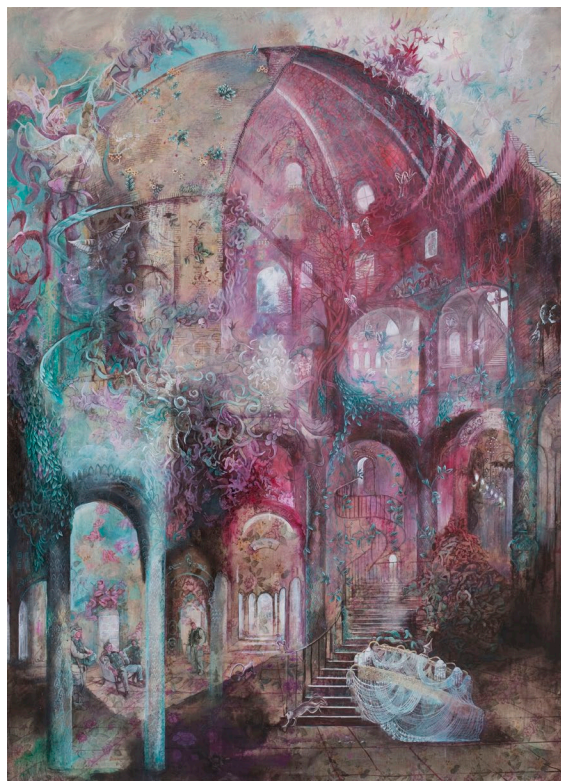
This work is rooted in an intensely absorbed activity of image making. There is a sensuous concern to animate and transform the surface; to make it emotionally and intellectually evocative. Densely packed and layered narratives mix all kinds of personal and art historical references into a lather of associations and resonances.

We see paintings that show a world of dream and fantastic reverie, some like the crowded, hallucinogenic topographies of Richard Dadd, others alluding to the haunted monuments of Piranesi, others still, present us with a lush landscape of rococo vegetation containing fleshy animal or human incident: bits of Boucher and Gainsborough break the surface and tease us with their associations. The artist's appetite for material sets up a slipstream into which all kinds of such references are dragged, assimilated and processed.

Stylistically the pictures deploy skilful draughtsmanship and an elegant, highly wrought handling of paint. Images of birds and animals inhabit a vegetative world of nests and florid tendrils, which has sometimes overrun an architectural ruin or landscape. The sumptuous surface is layered and enriched with decorative embellishment.

It is important to locate this work in a tradition of a specifically English sensibility, a pre-Freudian personal vocabulary of significant ciphers, characters and eccentric actors. They evoke Arthur Rackham's illustrations, Lewis Carroll's startling inventions, the obsessively forensic, botanical studies of Maria Sibylla Merian; the weird and wonderful characters of a Victorian opium-induced reverie. At the core of a whirlpool of associations and references lies this interest, a way of accessing and mediating the artist's dreaming, a way of externalising the internal.

These pictures arise out of the hermetic dream space of the artist's studio, where she processes what she calls 'the peculiar, the particular and the personal'. This is a space with metaphorically steamed up windows, a hothouse of activity. We could see her as a kind of Alice, continually asking questions, as she travels through her fantastically conjured and imagined landscapes.



**Grand Interior Space**  
2013 | Mixed Media on Patterned Upholstery Fabric  
230 x 166 cm (90.5 x 65 in)



**Huddle**  
2015 | Oil Acrylic and Mixed Media on Patterned Upholstery Linen  
132 x 96 cm (52 x 38 in)



# Pontone

GALLERY

## DOLLY THOMPSETT

Born in London.

### EDUCATION

**2002–2006**

Goldsmiths' College - Practice-based PhD Fine Art

**2000–2001** Byam Shaw School of Art - MA Fine Art

**1993–1994**

Goldsmiths' College - PGCE (Secondary, Art & Design)

**1992** Hilderstone Collge - RSA (Cert) in TEFL

**1989–1992**

Manchester Metropolitan University - BA (hons) Illustration

### SOLO AND TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS

**2016** Art First, London

**2015** The Secret Life and Other Stories, Art First Projects, London

**2013** Haruko Maeda, Dolly Thompsett, All Visual Arts, London

**2012** Vigo Gallery, London

**2010** ArtSway, Hampshire

**2009** Ritter/Zamet, London

**2007** Fred [London] Gallery

**2005** Ritter/Zamet, London

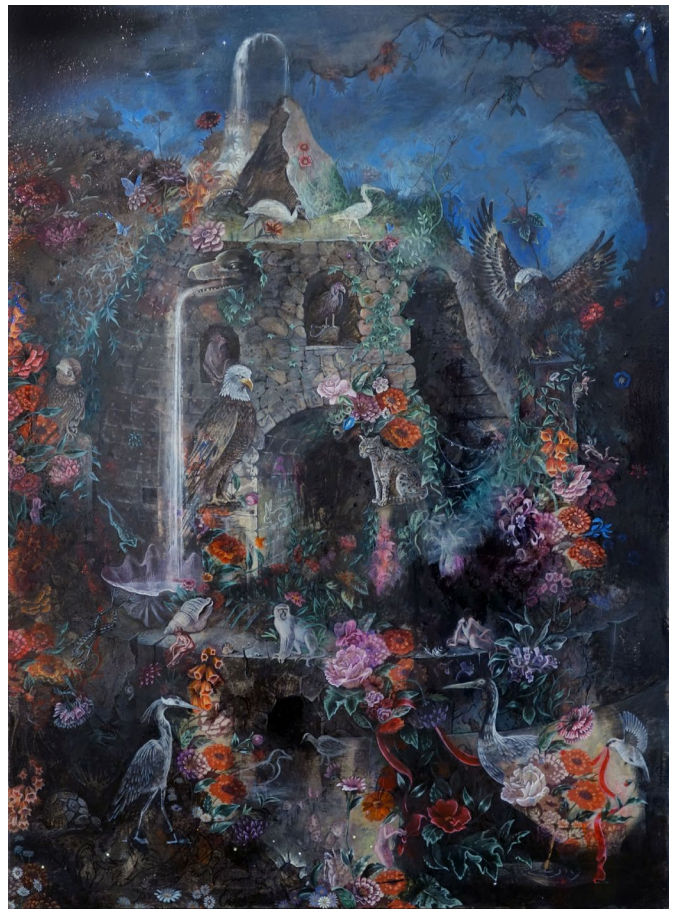
### RECENT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

**2017** Drawing at the Workers Café, Dalson, London.  
Curated by Carolina Ambida

**2016** Selected from the Ingram Collection, The Lightbox, Woking  
Artist Portfolio, Dolly Thompsett 'Drawing from the Quiet Side, Transition Gallery

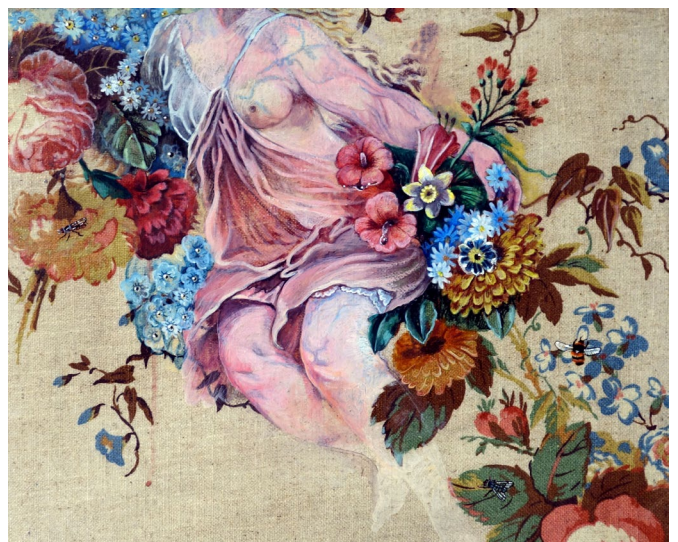
**2014** Fleurs du Mal with Neal Rock, Emma Bennett, Bernhard Martin, Michael Boffey; Lion and Lamb, London touring to Charlie Smith Gallery, London  
Mr and Mrs Andrews, Transition Gallery, London  
Platform Projects, Athens  
The Future Can Wait, Charlie Smith/Saatchi Gallery, Bloomsbury Square, London  
This Landscape, Majors Parlour Gallery, London

**2013** Viewing Room, with G.L. Brierley, Jason Brooks, Jake & Dinos Chapman, John Isaacs, Kate MccGwire, Polly Morgan, John Stezaker, Tim Noble & Sue Webster and others; All Visual Arts, London  
Art Britannia Miami, curated by Ben Austin, with Gordon Cheung, James Capper, Henry Acloque; Miami  
On Deck, Charles Hinman, Chris Jones, Karlyn de Jongh, Angelika Krinzinger, Martha Mysko, Entang Wiharso; Marc Straus Gallery, New York  
Wunderlust, Contemporary Arts Society, London  
It's About Time, curated by Paul Carey-Kent, ASC Gallery, London  
The Collection, The House of St Barnabus, London



**Fortress**

2016 | Mixed Media on Patterned Upholstery Linen | 150 x 110 cm (59 x 43.5 in)



**Europa**

2014 | Mixed Media on Patterned Upholstery Linen | 33 x 41 cm (13 x 16 in)