

# Daryl Austin Recreates History with Fictional Portraits

DECEMBER 6, 2016 



**Fictions 2016 continues Daryl Austin's experimental portraits which audiences saw in his last exhibition at Greenaway Art Gallery in 2013 – also titled Fictions.**

Like the 2013 series this latest body of work takes anonymous, vintage photographs found in antique stores, flea markets and on the internet and recomposes and reconfigures them to create a new image.

While the works have a vintage feel, once Austin has finished reconstructing the portraits they become a fictitious character. He titles each portrait with a place and a year, which further influences the way the audience views the work and makes them more accessible.



*Daryl Austin, Wien 1942 V2 (2016)*

“It’s about the way people identify with what might be familiar,” Austin says. “As soon as you know who they are and you know they belong to a certain age they start having their own reality and people can go into them. They may associate with the time or they may associate with the place I am describing.”

The 2013 series mainly focused on the eyes (all the subjects had different coloured eyes – heterochromia) but in these latest works the faces are much more reconfigured and the backgrounds dissolve into and out of each other.



*Daryl Austin, Pennsylvania 1957 (2016)*

“I do a whole lot of things: reverse their face, drop the eye, move some of the features around,” Austin says. “I melt some things into the background and change the colours a lot more.”

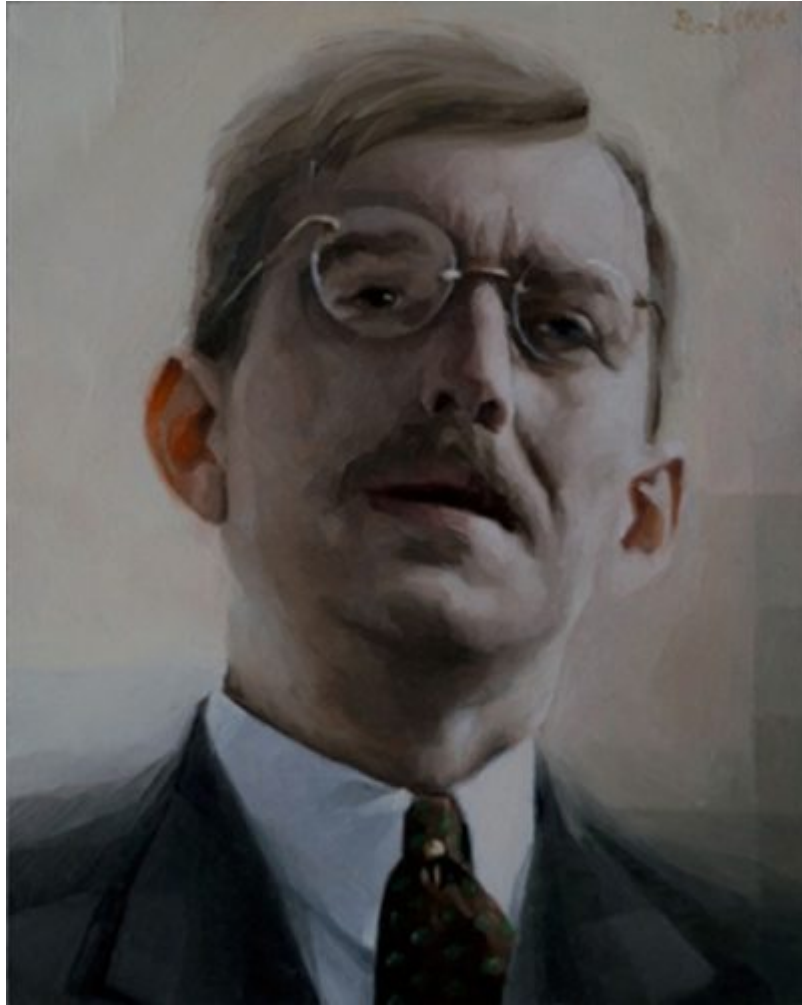
These recent works are also a lot more fluid than the earlier series. “Last time a lot of it was geometric cutting so you could really see the geometric disfigurement but these are more organic.”



*Daryl Austin, Installation view, Fictions 2016, GAGprojects*

Another evolution is the way these works are displayed. In the exhibition in 2013 the paintings were displayed in a continuous line around the gallery, however, in this latest exhibition they are staggered in groupings – reminiscent of how people might hang family photographs in the home.

Austin has already started work on his next series where he continues to experiment with the same style and ideas as *Fictions* but takes it further by looking at different subjects. Using travel photographs, in particular people on a ship, he is applying the same principles as he did with the portraits.



*Daryl Austin, Madrid 1956 (2016)*

By taking old photographs and reconfiguring them through his painting, Austin is not just breathing new life into these images of the past but he is creating his own history. He is particularly fascinated with how audiences view the portraits and create their own reality of who and what the portraits represent.

***Daryl Austin: Fictions 2016***  
**GAGprojects/Greenaway Art Gallery**  
**Wednesday, November 30 to Tuesday,**  
**December 20**  
**[greenaway.com.au](http://greenaway.com.au)**

*Header image: Daryl Austin, Toronto 1971 V2 (detail.) (2016)*