

SILVIA A SELLITTO

69 Smith Street Gallery: *Back in 5 Minutes* (2016)

The Demands of Everyday

By Dr Julie Rees

Contemporary artist Silvia A Sellitto's (b.1974) new body of work, *Back in 5 Minutes* (2016) is a series of collaged self-portraits that draw inspiration from the demands of everyday life. Deliberately disrupting any sense of structured order, she visually reimagines the figure in unexpected ways. Each collage displays a disproportionate character juxtaposed against a white background. She combines disparate elements such as additional body parts, hair, clothing, bird feathers, wings, shoes and other objects in a way that informs and surprises the viewer. Some figures are arranged in still, awkward positions; others are in the act of moving. Silvia's motivations for creating these works were to expose the illusions—and break free from the bondage—of the multi-tasking roles in her life. As such, Silvia's self-portraits, *Back in 5 Minutes* (2016) explore the interchanging roles and rituals experienced in the everyday.

For authenticity, Silvia considered the roles (such as artist, arts educator, employer, wife, and mother) and rituals that she undertakes on a day-to-day basis. The self-portraits represent a transformative state, one that can be jarring and at times overwhelming. The use of collage to convey this concept symbolises the emotions felt by Silvia after intense activity. Overall, the works serve as a reminder that daily respite needs to be taken to help rejuvenate the energies required to achieve a work-life balance. It is these restful interludes that enable us to regenerate and alleviate daily pressures.

By using collage as her communicative medium, Silvia has the freedom to neglect visual logic and impose her own perceived vision on the interchanging roles and rituals performed throughout daily life. It is through this exploration that the works touch a deeper narra-

tive—one about the challenges we face when trying to maintain our schedules in a fast-paced modern society. Even though her work uses self-portraiture to narrate personal experiences, *Back in 5 Minutes* (2016) creates a space for viewers to reflect on their own roles and rituals and how it may affect them if they do not regularly take time to rejuvenate.

The collaged works throughout this exhibition are exquisitely crafted and display Silvia's technical mastery. Each figure presented appears to be an uncompromising invention that seems absurd, but in actuality, it reveals and expresses underlying issues that permeate many people's lives. *Back in 5 Minutes* (2016) is an innovative, visual interpretation resulting from the demands of everyday responsibilities. The Melbourne-based artist is a qualified secondary visual

arts teacher and, in 2006, completed a Masters of Visual Arts at Monash University.

On this page, 10:15pm. *Every Way I Move is the Wrong Way* (2016), collage on Lana drawing paper, 42 x 59.4cm.

Image courtesy of the artist

Silvia A Sellitto's solo exhibiton can be viewed at:
69 Smith Street Gallery, Fitzroy Victoria
19 October - 6 November 2016

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