



Hannah Gartside in her Melbourne studio with her creations *Illusion Quilt* (2015–17, black-and-white, on wall) and *Who Are You and How Did You Get Here?* (2016, grey-and-white, on floor); *Little Miss* (2105, inset).

## Hannah Gartside

VISUAL ART

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where projected light, painted backdrop, prop and performance artfully conspired to lend textiles their own language. “I was fascinated by the way material read on the moving body,” says Gartside. “A dancer’s spin, lift or jump could exclaim in the floating fall of silk — such a sensuous punctuation mark.” She believed this syntax of cloth was deserving of further study and enrolled in the sculpture and spatial practice degree at the Victorian College of the Arts at the University of Melbourne, winning a National Gallery of Victoria Women’s Association Art Award in 2016. Further acclaim followed. “So why have I stayed in Melbourne?” asks

London-born Gartside. “Big cities have a great capacity for supporting niche interests and Melbourne is so supportive of the arts.” There’s also an endless source of her material supply in a city obsessed with fashion, which Gartside is currently articulating into an amorphous creature stitched from pre-loved leopard print blouses and scarves. “I’ve collected them for six months,” she says, envisaging her creature animated into groping life with industrial fans. “I see its imaginary arms calling you in from the distance of a 1980s glamour shoot. No fabric is too garish, no fiction too fantastic.” **VL**

How do you suggest stories in the stitching of fabric? That question was posed and considered by Hannah Gartside during her four-year tenure in the costume-making department of the Queensland Ballet. As an alumnus of the fashion design degree at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and a former employee of artisan label Easton Pearson, she was practised in the contrivance of character from cloth. The potential to nuance a narrative in fabric was clarified from the edge of the stage,

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