

Building on the aptly named *Hustle*, her debut show at Two Rooms last year, Tira Walsh continues to test herself and the viewer with her latest body of work, negotiating action in the moment with visualisation and risk taking. Hustling is still a gesture the artist sees as a key to the dialogue between herself and her work. She has described how “it begins with a silent negotiation with the materials, creating a vibe between control and risk, problem solving and the tension of the unresolved”.

This ‘vibe’ or atmosphere is crucial to her practice. Now working from a studio at the old Auckland Railway Station that provides a backdrop of gritty inner city life all hours of the day and night, Walsh is once again drawn to the physical intensity of manipulating marks on large scale painted surfaces and accordingly she gives her exhibition a title usually associated with street slang.<sup>1</sup>

The process is very direct. Employing an intuitive visual language that references urban graffiti and stencilling marks, industrial and digital noise, and the element of chance, she utilises the entire stretched canvas from back to front, working flat on a large table, across a number of canvasses simultaneously. She makes decisions as she goes, both editing and layering, capitalising on something that works and eliminating what doesn’t.

Often photographing a canvas she senses is near completion, Walsh then uses a drawing app on her phone to create additional responsive marks. These are translated back into handmade marks on the canvas, leaving a trace of disruptive uncertainty around their origins. In the artist’s own words, she hopes “to give the viewer’s retina a jolt, aiming to maintain a sense of rawness in (the works’) making.”

Walsh has begun to accrue a notable exhibition history since graduating with a Master of Creative Practice from Unitec in 2018. Recent group exhibitions include *Next*, Sydney Contemporary (2019), Sydney, *Hustle*, Two Rooms Gallery, Auckland (2019), *Urbanize*, Te Po Gallery (2018); *Never An Answer*, 12 Abstract Painters, The Vivian, Matakana, curated by Linda Tyler and Lucinda Bennett (2018); *Drawcard*, State Gallery, Mt Eden, Auckland (2018); *My Hands are Visibly Soiled*, Snowwhite Gallery, Unitec, Auckland (2018); *Roundhouse*, TSB Bank Wallace Arts Centre, Auckland (2017-2018); Glaister Ennor Art Award Exhibition, Sanderson Contemporary, Auckland (2017). In 2019 Walsh was awarded the Kaipara Wallace Arts Trust Award, receiving a three-month paid residency at Altes Spital in Solothurn, Switzerland which she will be taking up in July 2020.

1. illest definition from the Urban Dictionary. To be among the best of something but in a unique ground breaking manner. To raise the bar.