

# Life at the BSR

The blog of the British School at Rome

## March Mostra 2016/

## Meet the artists...

## Rachel Adams

Posted on [March 17, 2016](#)

*Our sixth and final interview for the [March Mostra on Friday 18 March](#) is Rachel Adams. Rachel talks in the below interview about the progression of her work over the last six months of living in Rome and how excited she is about the upcoming mostra.*

**Rachel Adams (Sainsbury Scholar in Painting and Sculpture)**



Rachel Adams' practice draws on a wide array of influences ranging from 1930s interior design to neolithic tools, classical sculpture and science fiction props. Her objects combine a variety of DIY methods, such as tie-dye and macramé, with contemporary techniques like laser cutting and digital printing. These works aim to highlight contradictions in both our perceived notions of history and the hierarchical structures of art and design.

**Within your first three months here you created [your curtain piece for the \*mostra\* which worked really well within the space of the Open Studio](#). Has the fact that this *mostra* is a shared gallery space changed the way you have approached your work?**

Definitely, because I know that it is a shared gallery space my work

can't be site specific in the way that the curtain I made was. That piece was created for my studio window, so it had to be a particular scale; the window dictated a lot of the decision making. For the first *mostra* it was really good for me to have that singular idea, whereas this time I have been making things in the studio the same way I would work in my studio in the UK.

It took me quite a long while to work out how to make work here: you need time to be able to get used to your materials and tools. So the work I have made for this exhibition is the first time I've made work in the way I do at home.

For this exhibition I have made a pair of chairs. They are based on chairs that I saw at the Villa Borghese museum, the chairs that you're not allowed to sit on. They are also influenced by a post-modern Italian design particularly the work of Nathalie Du Pasquier. Du Pasquier was one of the founding members of *Memphis* and she made these really incredible chairs. I have been looking at her work a lot, specifically how pattern covers her designs for furniture, and I've been really influenced by it. Another thing I've been thinking a lot about is the book fold marble; where you get a symmetrical pattern but with an irregular element. I've been using that idea when I create my dyed textures for these works as well.

**One of the things Ross [Taylor, Abbey Scholar in Painting] has said about being at the BSR for six months is that he feels that Rome is influencing his work for this *mostra* in a more obvious way than it did for the last one. Do you feel you agree with this?**

I think it could be, I always need hindsight to tell that sort of thing. The curtain was definitely very influenced by Rome and the marble in the churches. I was also using a new technique – it was the first piece I had managed to make using that. I think I have got more comfortable with Rome, and adding it back in to what I was doing before. With my pieces for this *mostra* I wanted it to be quite alien looking, referencing science fiction – that's why I'm going to have these metal brackets on the work so they have this hard/soft mechanical/organic thing going on. I also think Rome has allowed me to use Classicism again, I had partly rejected it recently even though it was very much present in my older work.

**You've mentioned Classicism. Do you think that that is the time period you have referenced the most?**

In Rome there is this feeling of the piling up of different time periods

within one space. I hope that is something that will become more apparent in my work. The way that things are layered is definitely interesting. One thing that has been really useful for me to see are all these Palazzi where you get a chair next to a sculpture, with a wall painting, and fake marble, and a gold frame. It is so over the top, which has allowed me to think that I can get away with using a mixture of techniques: tie-dye and macramé, one pattern upon another pattern. Seeing this has given me the confidence to go very bold in my art rather than feeling like I have to make things more muted or subtle.

### **Finally, are you looking forward to the show?**

Yes definitely. What is really exciting is having been in the other artists' studios I can see there is a very clear and intense use of colour. That's going to come out really clearly in the show and look very exciting and intense in the gallery space.

*Rachel's work will be exhibited alongside the other five resident artists in the March Mostra; open 16.30-19.00, Saturday 19 March until Friday 25 March 2016 (closed Sunday).*

Photo by Antonio Palmieri

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