

LOUNGE ROOM TRIBALISM (FOR GRAHAM FLETCHER)

Jack Ross

I've been living with this painting of Graham Fletcher's, from his *Lounge Room Tribalism* series, for quite some time. It used to be on the wall of our rather small flat, and somehow gave the impression of an extra space opening off the living room. It was very tempting to imagine stepping into that room, and even further: into the garden dimly visible beyond its well-lit expanses. Now it hangs in a much larger room, but it still has a tendency to transfix passers-by who can see it through the window. I imagine that it exerts a hypnotic influence over them, as it does over most of our visitors. The poem is an attempt to sum up some of the things I myself have seen in it over the years.

Dr Jack Ross works as a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at Massey University's Auckland Campus. His latest book, *The Annotated Tree Worship*, is due out in 2017 from Paper Table Novellas. He is also the managing editor of *Poetry New Zealand*. He blogs at <http://mairangibay.blogspot.com/>.

Graham Fletcher currently lives and works in Dunedin where he is a senior lecturer in painting at the Dunedin School of Art. Fletcher has exhibited extensively in New Zealand and abroad since the late 1990s. His works are held in collections around the country, including Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand and Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. Further abroad, collections include the National Gallery of Victoria, Australia and Queensland Art Gallery, Gallery of Modern Art, Australia. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Dear Stranger*, Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland (2016), *Spirit Rooms*, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne (2017), and an upcoming survey show to be exhibited at Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland (2018).

LOUNGE ROOM TRIBALISM

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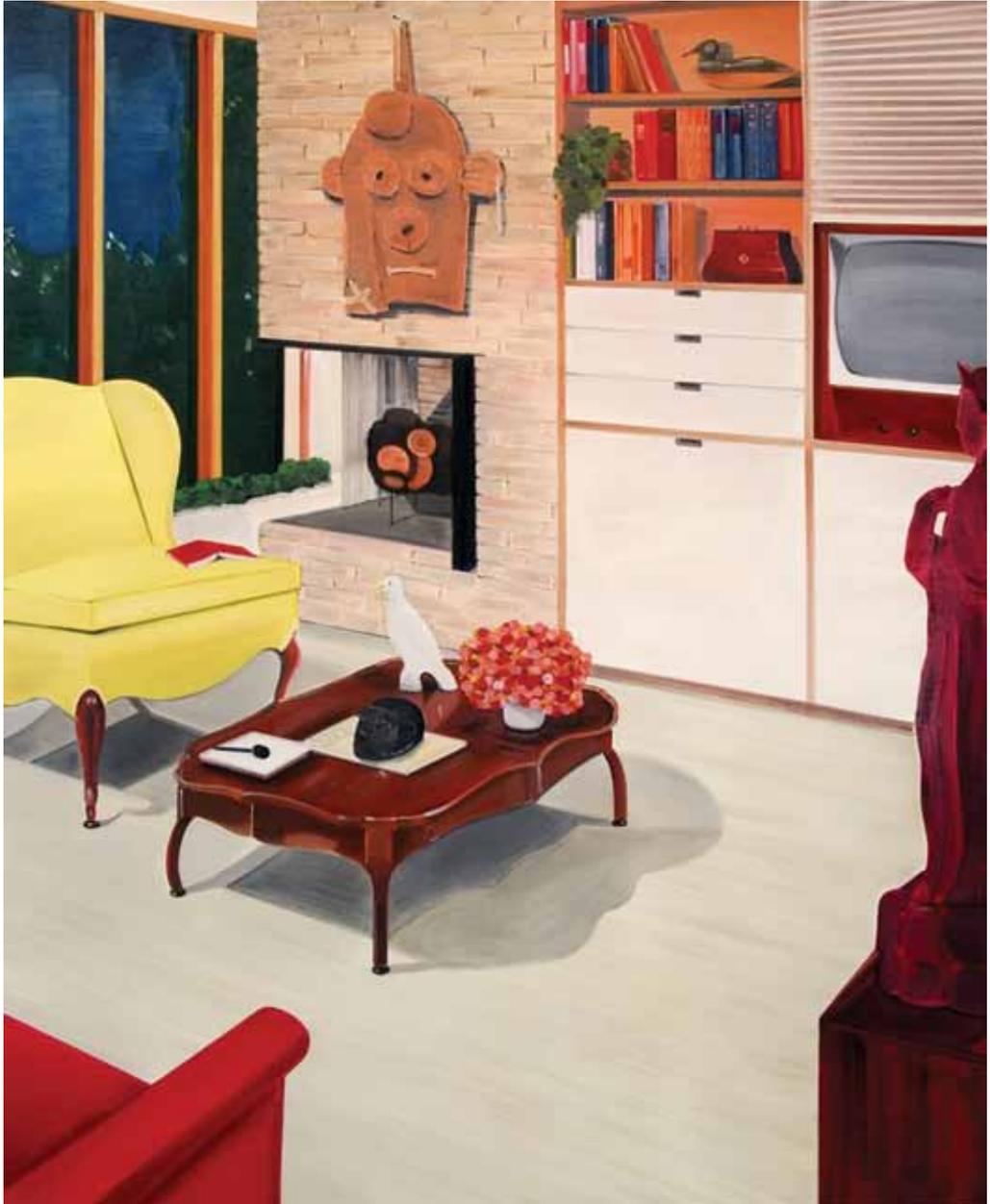


Figure 1. Graham Fletcher, *Untitled (Lounge Room Tribalism)*, 2009, oil on canvas, 1500 x 1200mm. Photograph: Alex North.