

ART

Arts 'powerful whimsy'

LOVE OF ADOPTED AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE INSPIRES ARTIST'S WORK

Eleanor Pearson

TANYA Chaitow's paintings of animals may be child-like in style but on closer viewing they reveal a lot more.

"I want my work to be whimsical, but powerful," Chaitow said. "It's like life - things are not always as they appear".

In one of her paintings titled *Four Types of Ambiguity*, it seems four deer are standing in the snow with their antlers intertwined with the branches of trees.

On closer viewing the deer are floating eerily in the landscape, and one is wearing a camouflage mask.

Chaitow, 54, grew up in South Africa at the time of apartheid, and migrated to Sydney at the age of 21.

"Australia is such a wonderful country," said the mother of four adult children.

"For me it was a land of opportunity, freedom, peace, equal opportunity, and beautiful open landscapes."

In recent years Chaitow

EXHIBITION

WHAT: anim(us)

WHEN: Until March 17, Tues-Sat 11am-6pm

WHERE: Stella Downer Fine Art, 2 Danks St, Waterloo

COST: Free

has been able to focus on art full-time and had a Paris residency in 2007 at Cite internationale des arts.

She said her environment had always been a big influence and for this exhibition she spent time in her St Ives studio overlooking her lush garden.

For Chaitow the garden itself held mystery, and her child-like wonderment about her natural environment is reflected in her choice of a naive painting style.

"Some say it takes many years to paint like an adult, but it takes even longer to paint as a child," she said.

The exhibition *anim(us)* is a collaboration with ceramics artists Lynda Draper and Jacqui Hudson.



St Ives artist Tanya Chaitow.

Picture: ELEANOR TEDENBORG