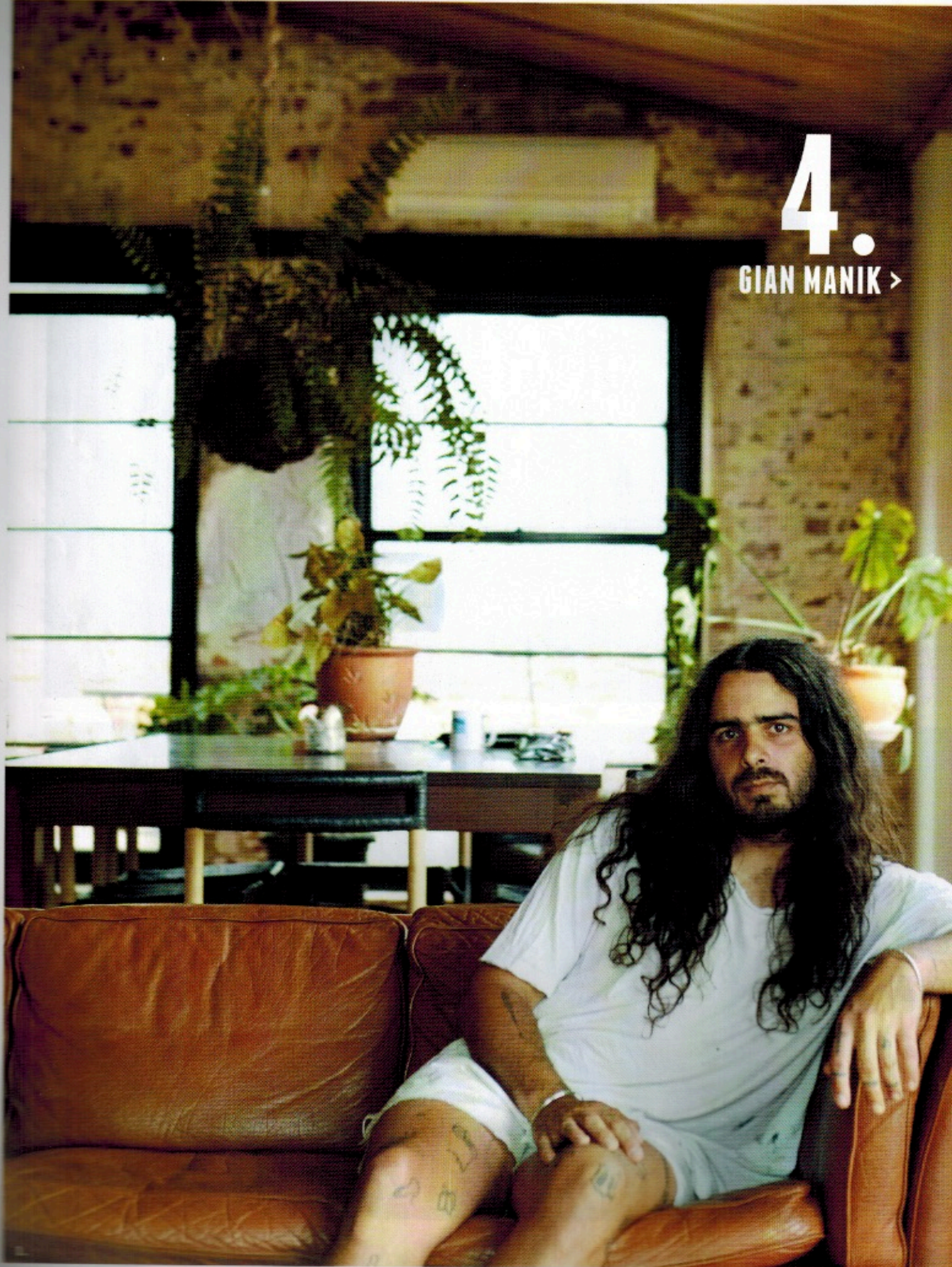


4.

GIAN MANIK >



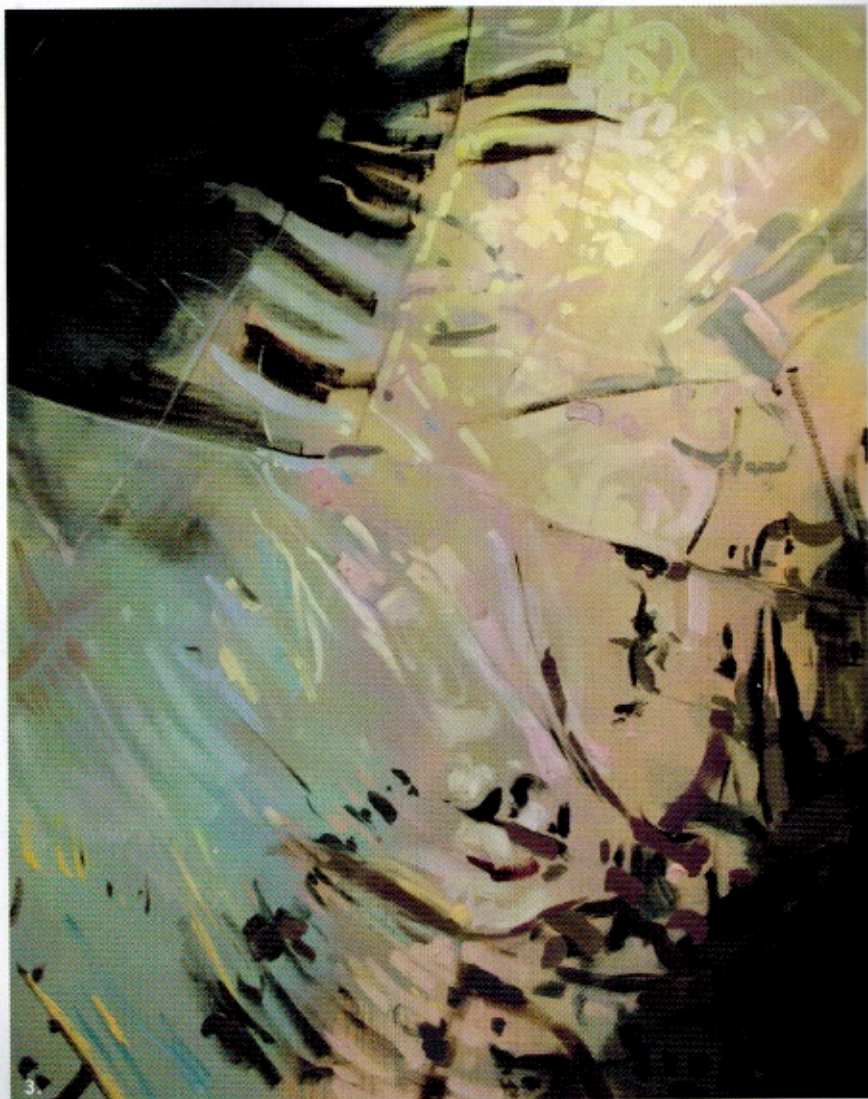
Gian Manik's emerging career in Perth saw him step away from conventional figurative painting, instead embarking on the rigorous conceptual investigation of an idiosyncratic palette of materials ranging from common hardware supplies to stockings, animal pelts, fake jewels, and his own and others' bodies. "I didn't want to paint anymore" he notes, however, the resulting sculptural works frequently ended up informing new canvasses, the artist "...slowly recognising that I was recording the same thing in multiple media, which I thought was unnecessary". Though something of a diversion therefore, this deliberation between objects and their painted representation has informed his work ever since.

After relocating to Melbourne to undertake his Masters in 2010, Manik's practice has involved a progressive honing of his interests back to painting, culminating in the impressive series, loosely titled *Foils*, that has largely occupied his attention over recent years.

An extended meditation on how paintings 'mirror' reality, these works are derived from close-up photographs of shiny or reflective surfaces such as aluminium foil, lamé fabrics, emergency blankets, photographic reflectors and, in a series shown recently at Fort Delta, GOMA's leather couches. Though rendered photographically, the resulting canvasses "vibrate" (to use Manik's term) in a liminal space between realism and highly gestural abstraction. Their content is dependent on whatever is reflected in the surface he is photographing at the time, meaning that most of them can also be read as abstracted self-portraits. Beyond this, they are simply stonkingly good oil paintings, good enough indeed to warrant his inclusion in ACCA's *Painting, More Painting* survey in 2016.

2017 will see Manik's second solo exhibition with Arterial, his representative gallery. He currently has plans to push the *Foils* into monumental scale, perhaps moving to a frieze format or painting directly on to the wall, while a forthcoming residency in the Western Australian Pilbara will allow him to capture the reflective surfaces of the region's iconic rocks and minerals.

Andrew Nichols



1. // Gian Manik portrait.
PHOTO: ZAN WIMBERLEY
2. // Gian Manik, *Untitled 3*, 2014.
Oil on canvas, 220 x 265cm.
3. // Gian Manik, *Untitled 9*, 2015.
Oil on canvas, 153 x 122cm.
4. // Gian Manik, *Untitled 2*, 2014.
Oil on canvas, 255 x 217cm.
5. // Gian Manik, *Untitled 7*, 2015.
Oil on canvas, 153 x 122cm.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND ARTERIAL
GALLERY, SYDNEY

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5.