

## Artist's Statement

MaryAnne Hunt



'Expecting'  
Oil on panel  
32 x 43 cm (13 x 17 in)  
Signed

**M**y art practice is about my personal experience of the fragility of life; exploring the nature of domestic warmth and the outside risks that threaten to destroy it. I explore memories of motherhood and the subsequent grief through storytelling with childhood objects, vivid dreams and my imagination. These are the things left behind after a child has gone. The playful aspect of toys and puppets can be ambiguous; at once reassuring and yet unsettling, they serve to emphasise the owner's absence. And as often in life, things are not always as they appear to be on the surface and something more sinister can be going on behind the scenes. I aim to capture the feeling and atmosphere of those objects or memories, not only at that moment in time but also for what they represented in the past. Fragments of haunting memories.

I explore my ideas through drawing, painting and intaglio printmaking. Drawing from my imagination has become an increasingly important part of my work which flows into my watercolour and oil paintings. I use traditional gesso panels that I make by hand and build up the oil paint in layers to reveal the imagery with a worn, aged character. I also make miniature dolls and puppets out of clay to dolls' house 1:12 scale and set these up in domestic scenarios within a room which I can then draw from. Each doll has a particular meaning be it mother, child, nurse, carer or death itself.

*“If we had a keen vision of all that is ordinary in human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow or the squirrel's heart beat, and we should die of that roar which is the other side of silence.”*

Quote from ‘Middlemarch’ by George Eliot.

## The Ghost of Memory: Visiting MaryAnne Hunt

Mattea Gernentz

What is art if not memory? Edinburgh-based MaryAnne Hunt's striking art is a testament to the integral role of artistic creation in making sense of our present and past. Within her ethereal paintings, both absence and presence vie for the viewer's attention. Scattered children's toys, like a rocking horse or a teddy bear, are juxtaposed with bare rooms and shadowy corners. Intensely psychological, Hunt's paintings cause one to wonder what is lost. While her work may aptly be called haunting, it maintains a distinctly eerie quality without appearing morbid. There is a tender melancholy found throughout her art, an innocence found in the faces of her portraiture.

Although trained at the Glasgow School of Art in ceramics, Hunt's work is incredibly multidisciplinary, involving drawing, painting, and intaglio printmaking. As we wandered her light-filled home, she discussed the details of wanting to begin an ambitious new sculptural work involving an ironmonger. Her artworks vary in scale, ranging



'Crooked dolls house'

Oil on panel

43 x 53 cm (17 x 21 in)

Signed

from the aforementioned project to the minute shaping of clay dolls to pose in her doll's house. In her evocative images, a couple dances alone in a decrepit room or a ghostlike little girl reaches out her hand, seeming to dissolve. When asked about her artistic influences, Hunt listed Cézanne, Sir Robin Philipson (whom she fondly recalls visiting as a child), and Munch among others. In a similar sense to Munch, Hunt's art rests upon a united sense of loss—a quality which is sure to resonate with many viewers, each in a unique way. Just like a doll's house, in which endlessly varied stories are played out within the same walls, Hunt painstakingly presents personal memories in repeated motifs yet, in doing so, provides space for her audience to come to terms with their own grief.

MaryAnne with her latest sketches

