

Grace's World by Betty Nolan

Grace's work falls somewhere between Antipodean expressionism and folk art. Her paintings and sculpture reference the dolls of poor children, the grittiness of fairy tales and edgy storybook narrative. Grace told me she visited Dunmoochin, the artist's retreat founded by Clifton Pugh. When she walked in the bush in the night she saw the sleeping birds in the trees and the quiet shapes of wallabies in the dark. In this portrait I have imagined her in the moonlit bush near a white Eucalyptus Viminalis and a Sheoak. She is surrounded by her soft sculpture animal creations and the Tasmanian marsupials from her paintings.

I love Mannerist painting and the strange oppressive light that suffuses the work of painters like Tintoretto and have emulated that while using contemporary metallic oil paints to add to the unreality. I have also chosen a palette that is discordant in order to disrupt the "prettiness" of the scene.