

ARTIST STATEMENT

Overview

I am primarily an abstract painter. My paintings are complex, detailed, usually colourful and (I hope) intriguing. I work mainly with acrylic paint, sometimes incorporating other media, such as collage, ink, pencil and pastels. I began my artmaking by experimenting on paper, but soon found that I love to scratch and scrape into paint and sand back surfaces, to generate a 'backstory' for each painting, so now I work mainly on wood and canvas.

Why I paint

I paint because painting enables me to access and to express a part of myself that feels inaccessible and inexpressible through other means of communication. While I'm sometimes unsure about what a particular painting might be 'saying' (and am happy to leave interpretation to others), I do have a sense that painting is a way for me to connect my inner world with the outer world.

In a sense, painting has become a quasi-spiritual practice for me, a process in which the arrangement of colours, shapes, lines and textures symbolises a kind of meditative journey. Drawing on the world around me, painting helps me to process the external world, turning inwards and then expanding outwards again, emerging with an altered perception. While my paintings tend to be non-objective/nonrepresentational, they are certainly shaped by the environment around me, whether that be the urban landscape of city streets or the beautiful natural landscape of the area around where I live on the island of lutruwita/Tasmania, on the ancestral lands of the muwuninna and palawa peoples.

My influences

My art is undoubtedly influenced by the work of many abstract artists, from the early abstractionists, such as Hilma Af Klint and Vassily Kandinsky who were inspired by spirituality and theosophical thinking, through to the geometric and architectonic work of the Bauhaus school (I've always been drawn to Paul Klee's art). However, it is the work of the post-war abstract expressionists (such as Helen Frankenthaler), the lyrical abstractionists (such as Nicolas de Stael and Richard Diebenkorn) and the modernists (such as Grace Cowley) that most informs my current work.

My process

I work intuitively, usually beginning with no plan or intention in mind, other than having chosen a colour palette. I suspect these colours reflect my mood at the time. I like to add layer upon layer, sometimes removing as much paint as I add, until something emerges that resonates with my thinking brain. Sometimes what emerges pleases me; sometimes it doesn't – in which case, I start over!