Inheritance (2011) – Stewart Macfarlane

Stewart belongs to an exclusive group in today's art world.

Firstly, he is a painter in a time when we often hear the pronouncement 'Painting is dead'; secondly he works from life (increasingly, artists today work from photography) and finally he is a skilled practitioner who uses his imagination in conjunction with his finally honed skills to make compositions that are not only aesthetically pleasing but provide sustenance for the viewer.

Good painting has an immediacy, a vibrancy and a tactility that many contemporary art forms fail to provide.

Good painting is timeless. It is worth collecting, worth looking at regularly and will allow the viewers to continually reinvent its relevance sending them on flights of fancy. Good art can be traded, can appreciate in economic terms, can be ideological, excellent 'conversation pieces' and can even be decorative.

Stewart MacFarlane is a good painter.

His work rarely fails to link directly with his audience- a closeness that is very satisfying and doubly so if the image sparks off an understanding of the human predicament. We all at times, dream, ponder and wonder. MacFarlane's works serve as a springboard for our thought processes. They are painted with strength and certainty (yet the subject matter is delightfully ambiguous) with great illustrative appeal and an excellent use of clean and satisfying colour, strong lines and unusual viewpoints.

Each of his paintings are transformed under our gaze.

MacFarlane's works are open to multiple interpretations. They are not intellectual exercises but instinctive responses to situations via broad ranging skills, which through decades of hard

work and dedication have resulted in a body of outstanding and memorable paintings. For him the act of painting is all important. We are voyeurs to what the artist finds fascinating.

Stewart MacFarlane's work takes us further than just the surface; they take us into his strangely idiosyncratic world and make us wonder.

Eric Hiller

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