

ARTIST Q & A: Madeleine Kelly

Who was your earliest/biggest influence artistically?

My parents always had the Paul Klee print Landscape with Yellow Birds in the house and in retrospect I think I subconsciously learned a lot about composition and poetic content from that as a young child. We also had a variety of Peruvian tapestries and clothing which may have laid the foundation for the mythological content in some of my work. I don't really have a 'biggest influence', but I love work by Max Ernst, Goya, Daniel Richter, Casper David Friedrick, Paula Rego and Maurice Denis, to name a few.



What media do you use and why?

At the moment I am using oil on canvas because of its potential to create translucency and realism in an image. These properties have the potential to convey the ephemeral which is an important part of the aesthetic sensibility I wish to create.

What study have you undertaken, in art and other disciplines, and how has this contributed to your practice?

When I first left school I enrolled in Science, Psychology, and Philosophy courses at the University of Queensland with an aim to enter some kind of cognitive science field. I was particularly interested in theories of memory and entertained by the fact that no real metaphor had been found to describe it. In turn, I began to be interested more in the notion of metaphor and was driven to making puzzling pictures instead of trying to solve puzzling problems. My aesthetic has also been influenced by scientific images, such as photographs of translucent vascular tissues and linear diagrams. To date I have completed a Bachelor of Fine Art with First Class Honours and a Bachelor of Secondary Education.

What is the biggest source of inspiration for your work?

I am not that sure. I feel inspired by almost everything and I usually do not have a plan before I start a painting, the painting takes on a life of its own and inspires me to keep working on it, it is a symbiotic relationship. I take photos, draw and collect pictures from different places and have them all on call to form conjunctions whenever I feel it is appropriate.

Is there a dominant message that you try to convey through painting to your audience?

I want people to question the meaning of the painting's content and the relationship between the images within it. Through this, I often try to present humanity's relationship to nature, and more ideologically its relationship to the burning of fossil fuels.