

Matthew Hawkes

Paintings



Sous-bois, 2002, Oil on Canvas, 21 x 17"



Cyclamen and a Mirror, 2010, Oil on Card, 11¾ x 8¾"

Figurative painting is always and has always been about the eye of the artist and the viewer as they join to share an experience of an object, a place or a person. We look in paintings for something that is familiar, something that sparks an idea or most simply something we delight in looking at. In these quiet subjects of portraits, landscapes, seascapes and still-lives, Matthew Hawkes asks us to look and to feel not just the act of looking but the very action of painting.

This exhibition offers a survey of Hawkes's artistic practice and we develop a close understanding of his focus. We grow to appreciate his concentrated study of familiar spaces, which create a lived topography of the artist. Working often in series, his subjects are frequently seen from subtly different viewpoints. So, as viewers, we build a shared sense of vision and art: the houseplants slowly shift along the windowsill with the changing light of the seasons; in the series at Littlehampton, we share in Hawkes's seeing the movement of water, the tides and light along the shore.

In each work, the surface of paint and its very physicality are brought to the fore and, at the same time, the rhythm of both seeing and painting. The visible brush strokes are a dominant note that celebrate the process of painting and the delight Hawkes takes in it. *The Large Windowsill* (2013), in particular, has a dynamism of excitement as the process of depicting becomes more intense and focused, capturing the patterns of plants' leaves, texture and light, thereby pushing towards abstraction. As spectators we appreciate not just the act of painting and the movement of the brush but we find ourselves looking anew at the textures of things - say at an African violet leaf so easily dismissed at home - seeing these fleshy leaves with a new appreciation for their complexity.

The choice to limit colour, to concentrate on grey and white, becomes in Hawkes's work a revealing experience of the technical qualities of art. He invites us to consider how an artist can capture depth, movement and light in the base elements of shades and tones. This invitation reveals the struggle as an artist to make sense of contrast and texture and here again his paintings ask us to look harder, to follow and participate in his close study. *Cyclamen and a Mirror* (2010) is a study of texture, light and shade in grey and white yet it conveys a full sense of this potted plant with its delicate flowers caught in the light. *Sous-bois* (2002) has precisely the same sense of light and texture but here in colour, and the patterns of greens and dark shadows play in a similar fashion. Through this comparison, we understand so much more about the process of painting and seeing.

In all of his paintings, Hawkes invites us into a conversation, a conversation between artist and spectator. These paintings may appear deceptively simple at first glance - we have all had a potted cyclamen or sat on the beach staring out at the water - but in looking closely and in sharing that concentration with Hawkes we see so much more.

- Dr Chiara O'Reilly, The University of Sydney



Gulls Taking Off, 2013, Oil on Plywood Panel, 9¾ x 12"



Large Windowsill, 2013, Oil on Panel, 15 x 18"



From Devil's Dyke, 2004, Oil on Canvas, 17 x 21"



Kennington Park #4, 2007, Oil on Card, 8 1/4" x 10 1/4"

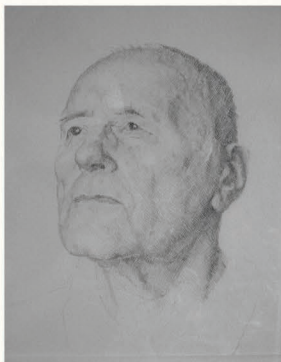
Commissions



Portrait, 2012, Oil on Plywood Panel, 12 x 15"



Portrait, Pencil, 9 x 7"



Portrait, Pencil, 9 x 7"

I am happy to accept commissions for portraits and landscapes. Portraits can be painted in live sittings or from photographs which I will come and take myself. I offer both pencil drawings and oil paintings.

I can be reached by phone on 0776 272 6574 or email at meh@mehawkes.com
More work can be seen at www.mehawkes.com