

Statement

Rachel Campbell

‘If art isn’t playful, it’s nothing. Without play we wouldn’t be anywhere. Play is incredibly important; it’s deeply serious as well. It’s hardly a criticism of my work to call it playful; on the contrary, it is flattering!’ David Hockney

I make medium-sized colourful oil paintings on canvas. I am a visual storyteller. My paintings are about commonplace moments that intrigue me. I look for the beauty in unexpected places. I choose to paint with abstract realism. The places and images are clearly recognizable. I use colour and manipulate composition to interpret the story I want to tell. I ask myself how do I want to depict my relationship to this experience or space. My visual stories often reference nostalgia and memory. Others reference moments that bring me joy, and I want to put them into a painting. There is an absence in my work as well. People are implied but not often depicted. How I draw the viewer into the work influences its scale. If a painting is larger than one half of the human body, the viewer is drawn into the painting and feels more a part of the work. Smaller work invites interpretation so the relationship is different. My work is influenced by artists who involve playfulness as a part of their philosophy—David Hockney, Henri Matisse, Paul Klee, Laura Owens, and Jonas Wood, to name a few.

- Rachel Campbell

“I want to visit the places Rachel Campbell depicts in oil on canvas. These are real places—London as seen from the South Bank, a trailer park, a simple white house on a suburban street. But something about the way Campbell depicts them renders them absolutely magical, at once true to how they exist in real life, and yet utterly dreamy and luminescent. I want so much to visit these places and thanks to Campbell I have, as best one possibly can. These places—at least how they are depicted here—do not exist out in the world. They exist in Campbell’s own experience and memory. How fortunate that she has the technical ability and generosity of spirit to have expended the effort of translating them onto painted canvas for us all to see. The hope then is that her vision can color ours, encouraging others to see the wonders she sees out there.”

Lori Waxman

60 minute Art Critic

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