

# Jane MacNeill

Jane MacNeill's richly worked oil paintings have an icon-like quality and a quiet dream-like intensity. Recurring motifs include figures, trees, birds, animals and moths, all treated in Jane's characteristically restrained and sensitive style. Simple composition, subtle colour relationships, close tonality, and rich surface quality give the paintings a feeling of stillness, and a sense of the otherworldly.

Whether she is painting a glimpse of landscape, a tree, a bird or a portrait, Jane is getting to the essence of things. She paints at least at one remove, making use of drawings from life, and her vision is fed by the influence of memories, folklore, and myth. She simplifies, striving to reduce noise, and in the process she applies many layers of paint as scumbles and glazes, adding to the richness of the surface texture.

She uses colour to inspire or refer to feelings, often using gold, for instance, as a way of stirring up a sense of duality, of strangeness, and also to confirm the notion that her paintings are objects of value to be looked at and through, like icons, rather than windows onto a scene or a story. Indeed some of MacNeill's paintings have been overtly icon-like, showing figures with golden haloes. She uses the subjects of her paintings as shapes with meaning, rather than guides through a narrative. She does not paint them in context, but makes them the sole subject and object, making the paintings very much about what they represent, and at the same time, much more.

Jane's work is imbued with the sense of a relationship with nature which is sacred and mysterious and at the same time every-day and down to earth. She says;

"The idea of a mystical garden from which we have become spiritually separated figures large in my work. I paint the figures, landscapes, creatures and plants that interest me, enjoying them for what they are, whilst exploring the rich layers of symbolism and mystery created by memories of folk tales and biblical allegory."

Jane MacNeill was born in Aberdeen in 1971 and brought up in Aviemore in the Highlands of Scotland. She studied drawing and painting at Edinburgh College of Art, graduating with First Class Honours in 1996, and completed the Master of Fine Art course there two years later as a post graduate. During her time at Edinburgh College of Art she won several awards including the prestigious Richard Ford Scholarship which enabled her to spend time studying in Madrid. She was invited to take up a position at ECA as a tutor of drawing and painting, which she held until 2000 when she left in order to pursue her career as a painter. She now lives on Culloden Moor, near Inverness.

Jane MacNeill's work can be found in the collections of the Royal Scottish Academy and the Wakefield Art Gallery as well as in many private collections worldwide. Her paintings were featured on Yorkshire Television's documentary programme "The Day I met an Angel" in 1999.

## EXHIBITIONS

- Royal Scottish Academy Student Exhibitions 1996, 1997, 1998.
- "Sited" Edinburgh College of Art Post Graduate Exhibition 1997.
- "Assembly Point" ECA Post Graduate Exhibition 1998.
- "New generation 1998," The Compass Gallery, Glasgow 1998.
- "Angels and Icons," two person show with Siobhan Piercy at Bruton Gallery, Leeds, 1999.
- 20th Century Religious Art, Wakefield Art Gallery, Yorkshire, February 2000.
- The Glasgow Art fair 2000.
- "New Highland Artists" The Kilmorack Gallery, Beaulieu, May 2000.
- "Northern Highlights, The Best of Bruton Gallery" at Gallery 27, Cork Street, London, July 2000.
- The Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London, 2000, selected by Michael Parkinson.
- The Glasgow Art Fair 2001.
- Bruton Gallery at Gallery 27, Cork Street, London, July 2001.
- New work by Michael Forbes, Jane MacNeill, and Alistair Fiddes-Watt, Kilmorack Gallery, Sept 2001.
- The Glasgow Art Fair 2002.
- Jane MacNeill, "Angels and Icons," The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, May 2002.
- New work by Kirsty Cohen, Jane MacNeill and Allen MacDonald, The Kilmorack Gallery 2002.
- The Glasgow Art Fair 2003.



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- The BP Award, The National Portrait Gallery, London and the Aberdeen Art Gallery, 2003.
- "Past and Present," The Strathearn Gallery, Crieff, August 2003.
- "Headstrong," 8B Gallery at 7 Bedford Row, London, 2003.
- The Battersea Affordable Art Fair 2004 with 8B Gallery.
- The Glasgow Art Fair 2004.
- "Faith," Nottingham Castle Museum, 2004.
- "Works on Paper," The Kilmorack Gallery, 2005.
- "Face Value," Chelsea Art Gallery, Palo Alto, California, 2005.
- Allan McGowan, Allan MacDonald and Jane MacNeill, Kilmorack Gallery, March 2008.
- The Royal Scottish Academy Autumn Open Exhibition 2008
- "Art and the Word" Kilmorack Gallery, September 2008.
- Kilmorack Gallery summer exhibition 2009.
- The Royal Scottish Academy Autumn Open Exhibition 2010
- Jane MacNeill, Winter Exhibition at The Grieg Street Studio, Inverness 2010

AWARDS

- The Richard Ford Scholarship for travel to Madrid, 1996, awarded by the Royal Scottish Academy, London.
- The James Cumming Award for Draughtsmanship, 1996, awarded by the Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh.
- A Daler-Rowney Award for painting, 1996, awarded by Edinburgh College of Art.
- A Daler-Rowney Award for painting, 1997, awarded by ECA.
- An Andrew Grant Scholarship, 1998, awarded by ECA.