



First published in 2011 by Campden Gallery Ltd
High Street, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire GL55 6AG

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ISBN: 978-0-9566856-4-3

Cover:
The wayward tune
100 x 100 cm oil on canvas

The Castle

16 July – 7 August 2011

Marie-Claire Hamon


campden
gallery

In this new body of work Marie Claire Hamon sets the stage for a game of victor and victim, hunter and hunted. It is a game that has been played since the dawn of civilization between man and beast, those with power and those without, but it is also a game that will go on *ad infinitum*, manifesting itself in new forms and taking on new rules. This game begins with Hamon's burnished re-appropriation of the aristocratic hunt scene from fifteenth century artist Paolo Uccello's 'Hunt by Night' (1465-1469). In this painting she retains Uccello's patterning of figures but in place of the original's geometric network of trees looms a vast and unguessable hinterland.

There is a process of revealing and concealing in Hamon's practice. Her velveteen layers of colour and the plush, thick carpets and draperies of her painted interiors reveal a density of allusion to the decorative nobility of Renaissance and Baroque art. At the same time there is a suggestion that these layers might also conceal Kafkaesque secrets and power plays that are destined to forever remain enclosed within the impenetrable walls of the castle, ever spurning the intrigue of onlookers.

In her role as 'invisible storyteller', Hamon articulates this intrigue at the helm of this circular narrative of secrets and games. In paint she tells of a game which began with a medieval hunt but has since moved on, dispersing its poetic vestiges and relics across her canvases: a grand piano playing its wayward tune, an iced cherry party cake ready to be devoured, and finally the noble figure of the stag – a victim of the hunt releasing its last wounded bellow. The stag is traditionally figured as a symbol of power and nobility and like 'the castle in a bubble', it holds secrets impenetrable to the language of man. Hamon's stag emerges from behind this impenetrable darkness. The animal stands as if on centre stage, flanked on either side by luminescent yellow bands; like Gustav Klimt's sensual borders, the roses that adorn these bands at once embellish and decorate but also exquisitely wound the surface of the painting. Framed as such, Hamon asks us to focus on the animal's raw physicality, foregrounding the beast as both sacred and accursed object of sacrifice.

Above all, Hamon's new body of work is an exploration of the politics of time, space and place. Her canvases are portals into a kaleidoscopic array of space, distance, interiors and exteriors; the space of man and of beast, private space and the public stage. Familiar, strange and tinged with intrigue, Hamon's paintings are imagined provinces, freed from the 'cuckoo clock' constraints of time and realism, they evoke a certain ancient and primal magic, yet it is an uncanny magic that still resonates in the collective imagination of the present.

Layla Hamon, June 2011



Playing like there is no tomorrow
115 x 140 cm oil on canvas

All is well in the garden
115 x 140 cm oil on canvas





Cuckoo land
60 x 60 cm oil on canvas



Basement
100 x 100 cm oil on canvas

Anima
100 x 100 cm oil on canvas





The village play
60 x 75 cm oil on canvas



The fortune tellers
60 x 75 cm oil on canvas

Obelisk
70 x 90 cm oil on canvas





Secret talks
80 x 60 cm oil on canvas



The great plans of men
75 x 95 cm oil on canvas



Mansion of delight
35 x 45 cm oil on canvas



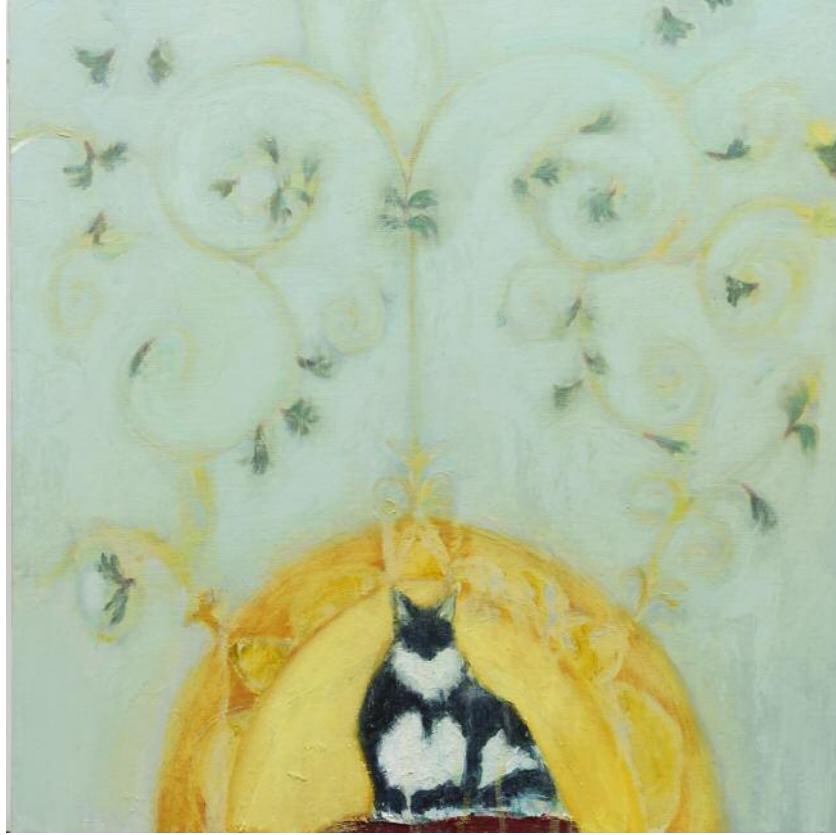
The invisible story teller
70 x 90 cm oil on canvas



Where stories are told
60 x 75 cm oil on canvas



Consideration on a brighter future
70 x 90 cm oil on canvas



The cat who ate the cake
60 x 60 cm oil on canvas



The cake eaters
60 x 60 cm oil on canvas



Castle in a bubble
60 x 60 cm oil on canvas



Stranger
50 x 60 cm oil on canvas

MARIE-CLAIRE HAMON

Educated in Belgium, France and Switzerland

1999 BA Hons Fine Art, Falmouth College of Art
2003 PGCE
2003–06 Visiting Lecturer, Cornwall College, Pool
2007 Visiting Artist, Falmouth College of Art
2008 Elected a member of the Newlyn Society of Artists

Solo Exhibitions

2009/07/06 Campden Gallery
2007 Cadogan Gallery, London
2005/03 Badcocks Gallery, Newlyn
2004 New Street Gallery, Plymouth

Two Person Exhibitions

2008 Slader's Yard, Dorset
2007 Cadogan Gallery, London

Selected Group Exhibitions

2011 'The Print Show', The Exchange, Penzance
Caxton Gallery, Whitstable
St Anne's Gallery, Lewes
2010 St Anne's Gallery, Lewes
MK Open
Reality Check, the Newlyn Gallery
2009 NSA at the RWA, Bristol
The Belgrave Gallery, St Ives
2008 'A Long Haul', The Ramp, The Exchange, Penzance
'The Drawing Show', The Exchange, Penzance
2007 jaggedart, London
2007/08 The Belgrave Gallery, St Ives
Rainy Day Gallery, Penzance
Itree Gallery, Bridport
2005/06/07/08 Campden Gallery
2003/04/05/06 Cadogan Gallery, London
2003 Hunting Art Prize, Royal College of Art
2002 Plymouth Art Gallery
2001/02/03/04/05 Badcocks Gallery, Newlyn
2001 Lemon Street Gallery, Truro
2000 New Millennium Gallery, St Ives



Dirty little secret
40 x 40 cm oil on canvas



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