

RAY

Four British Artists

Grosvenor Gallery

12th - 27th March 1997

Recent works by

Marina Cooper

Ian Cox

Melissa Scott-Miller

John Sendall

Grosvenor Gallery
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INTRODUCTION

The four exhibiting painters left art school over a decade ago. Only one has shown regularly since and all have pursued their private vision against the dictate of fashion and without the support of critical opinion or public patronage. All four sent me snaps of their work during 1996 with a view to seeking a gallery at a time when I knew that Ray Perman was thinking of trying out new painters. I also knew that Ray was not looking for fashionable postgrad superstars but for long term prospects still not fully established but committed over time to the discipline of painting with a back up of work behind them and new work ready to show.

Our first studio visit was to Melissa Scott-Miller who already has a track record of successful exhibiting and a number of devoted followers. In her tiny London studio, crammed with canvases finished and in progress, we faced a large landscape completely blocking the window through which it had been painted and it became clear that her passion is for the surface textures of her London streets and buildings. While every mark is tied to observation, it is not the organisation of large spatial blocks that determines the structure, the images seem rather to grow organically from texture to texture across the surface. In the painting that most interests me, on this brief visit (Panther Alley) the rich brick densities form colour columns that defy a single spatial reading but compel attention. Melissa whose work is new to me seems a true London painter creating images that give the warmth of immediate recognition.

Ray's late chairman, Eric Estorick, was one of the worlds most knowledgeable dealers in Italian futurism and Ray remarked on the Severini brush work and curiously hot flesh colour in Bedroom I, the painting that confronted us on entering the studio on our second visit to John Sendall in Broadstairs. None of this handling registered in the photographs he had sent us where it was the balance in delicacy and grand classical organisation that had made us want to see the work. Unlike the already monumental student nudes I had known from the sixties and early seventies, the new pictures are not painted from direct observation but constructed in the studio from drawings sometimes bringing together quite separate motifs. In bedroom I, the consistent perspective construction throughout the floor and the bed etc., is an invention into which the nude has been introduced from another room entirely. The painting that looks most like a response to a single view point landscape, Ramsgate Docks with its blocks of silvery greys has grown rich in my own visual memory and imagination.

I have known a few others who, like Marina Cooper, seemed natural painters but that instinctive feeling for the beauty of touch, colour and design (in the Reclining Nude and Reflection) is rarely driven by the need and urgency of the rest of us who have to struggle. In Marina's case her pictures are charged by her Greek Orthodox faith and as she has wrestled with illness over the past decade the work has become less corporeal and more mystical. Every time I see the early two sisters it grows stranger and stronger and in the new paintings this sensibility has developed to a level where every mark seems invested with meaning. This is particularly so in the delicate portrait of her mother and in the tree which struggles for survival in the city (Urban Survival). I had not realised until our last studio visit that the technical change from full-bodied pigment to thin transparent veils results from an allergy to the medium but it somehow looks inevitable. I feel convinced that as the spirit fights through even more remarkable pictures are to follow.

Our final visit was to Ian Cox who like Marina lives in Westcliff-on-Sea. I have known Ian for longer than the other three artists and have regularly enjoyed the depth and singularity of his insight into painting and jazz, his other great passion on his weekly visits to my studios. Only rarely have I been allowed to see his own work, though I was much moved by a series of heads and figures of an elderly man drawn with sensitivity and constructed in delicate greys and browns. It was these I had originally taken Ray to see but the studio was dominated by the presence of the new window series. In these new works, built in much harder colour, Ian interweaves rhythm of figures, foliage and architecture. He produces a rich record of daily life in the suburbs - the morning bustle, work to the new front garden, a passer-by in the afternoon - which is otherwise unnoticed and lost in the greys of routine.

It was a pleasure visiting studios with Ray who clearly loves paintings and was most open and generous in his response. I frequently hear how risky it is for the 1990's gallery to show relatively unknown painters in this way but I feel sure that if painters have survived this long to produce pictures looking this personal and this solid then the gamble is worthwhile and he and they will enjoy the success that they deserve to add to my congratulations.

John Wonnacott

MARINA COOPER

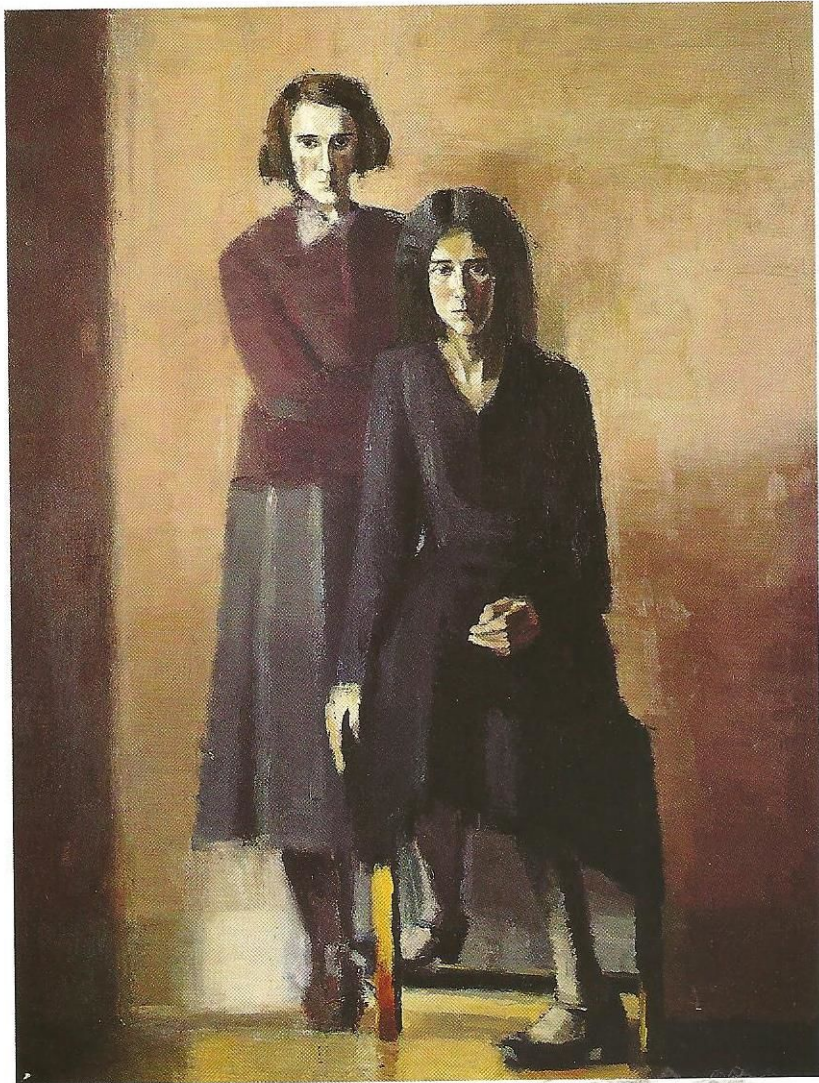
Marina Cooper studied at Southend School of Art, Norwich School of Art, The Slade School of Fine Art and received the Paris Painting Scholarship.

Marina has exhibited both here and in France, most recently at the Isis Gallery in Leigh-on-Sea (1992 and 1993), at the Woolfson College, Oxford (1995) and in "The Discerning Eye" exhibition at the Mall Galleries (1996). She won third prize in "Drawings for All" at Gainsborough House in 1990 and contributed to the Spectator Painting Competition in 1991.

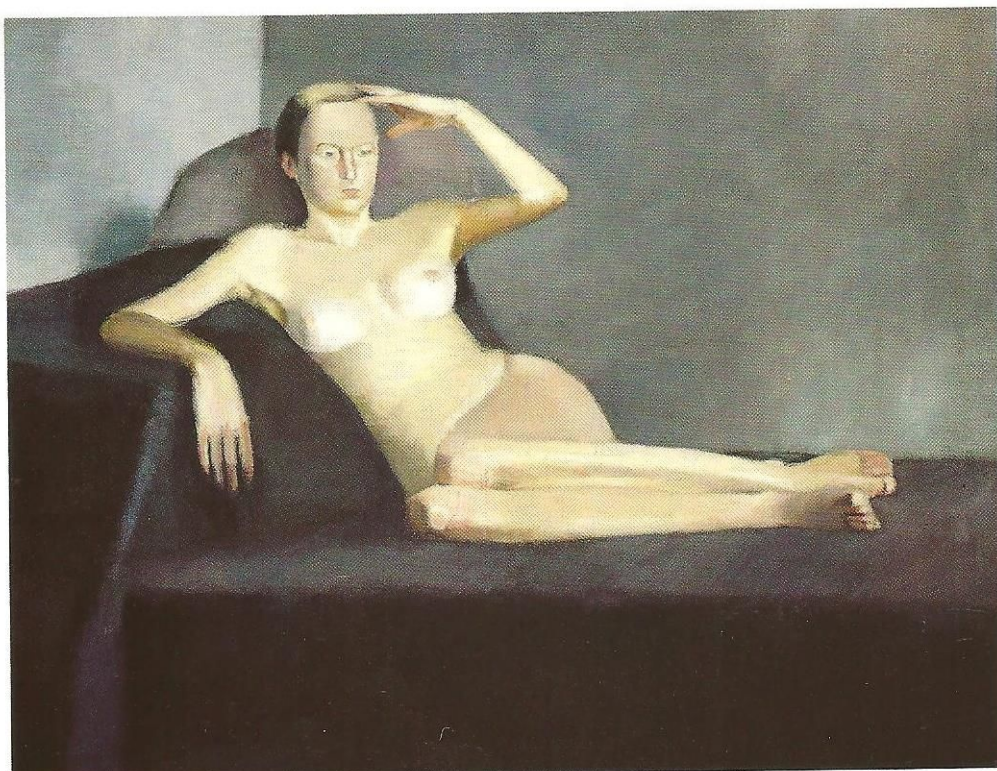
The artist says of her painting "I see painting as a poignant way of underlining and exploring time and existence. As a painter I fervently believe that one has to wrestle with the language of drawing and painting in order to express oneself in a coherent and expressive manner. Drawing is an integral part of painting. Painting is the most complex form of drawing. The study and grasp of form through tonal changes preoccupies me. I believe that it is through increased perception of tonal possibilities that a clear and personal expression is able to evolve.

The human being is for me the most magnetic subject matter due to his rich and complex interior and exterior life."

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|----|----------------------------------|---------|----|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1. | The Artist and her Sister | 1986/87 | 4. | Reflections with Tree | 1988 |
| | oil on canvas | | | oil on canvas | |
| | 122 x 91.5 cm | | | 119.5 x 100 cm | £2500 |
| | <i>see illustration</i> | £3500 | | | |
| 2. | Reclining Nude | 1985 | 5. | Reflections with Chimney | 1987 |
| | oil on canvas | | | oil on canvas | |
| | 86 x 101.5 cm | | | 122 x 91.5 cm | £2500 |
| | <i>see illustration</i> | £3000 | | | |
| 3. | Self-portrait | 1988 | 6. | Urban Survival | 1992 |
| | oil on canvas | | | oil on canvas | |
| | 86.5 x 61.5 cm | £2500 | | 85 x 65 cm | £1800 |



The Artist and her Sister



Reclining Nude

IAN COX

Born in 1951 Ian Cox attended Southend College of Art from 1970-72. He received the Lord Leverhulme scholarship to attend the Byam Shaw School of Drawing and Painting and in 1975 won the David Murray Landscape prize.

For the last two years he has exhibited in the Essex Open Exhibition at the Beecroft Gallery.

He now teaches at Southend College of Art.

7. The Avenue - Autumn

oil on board **1994 - 96**
120 x 120 cm
see illustration £2750

8. Morning on the Avenue

oil on board **1992 - 94**
122 x 91 cm £2750

9. The Green Fence

oil on board **1996**
106.5 x 116 cm
see illustration £2750

10. The Avenue - Rainy Morning

oil on board **1992 - 94**
122 x 92.5 cm £2500

11. The Avenue - A Good Outlook **1994 - 96**

oil on board
122 x 122 cm £2500

ADDITIONAL WORKS:

Ian Cox

The Green Fence II, 1996

oil on board

122 x 99cm

Price: £2,500



The Avenue - Autumn



The Green Fence

MELISSA SCOTT-MILLER

Born in London in 1959, Melissa Scott-Miller studied at the Slade School of Fine Art.

She has had solo exhibitions both here and in New York including exhibitions at the Acquavella Gallery, New York and Royal Overseas League in London. She has exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition many times and has contributed to the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, The Spectator Art Prize Exhibition and the B P Portrait Awards.

This accomplished artist has won the Lord Leighton Prize and the Lucy Morrison Award at the Royal Overseas League as well as second prize in the South Bank Picture Show.

Melissa lives and works in London.

12. **Rooftops - Gray's Inn Road**, 1996
oil on canvas
101.5 x 152 cm £3000

13. **Self-portrait in Kilt**, 1996
oil on canvas
152 x 101.5 cm
see illustration £4000

14. **London Hospital**, 1994
oil on canvas
102 x 122 cm £3000

15. **View from the Studio Window**, 1996
oil on canvas
91 x 91 cm
see illustration £3000

16. **Panther House Alley**, 1993
oil on canvas
137.5 x 91 cm £2500

Additional works:

Melissa Scott-Miller
View from a Balcony (Not on view)
oil on canvas
91 x 101.5cm

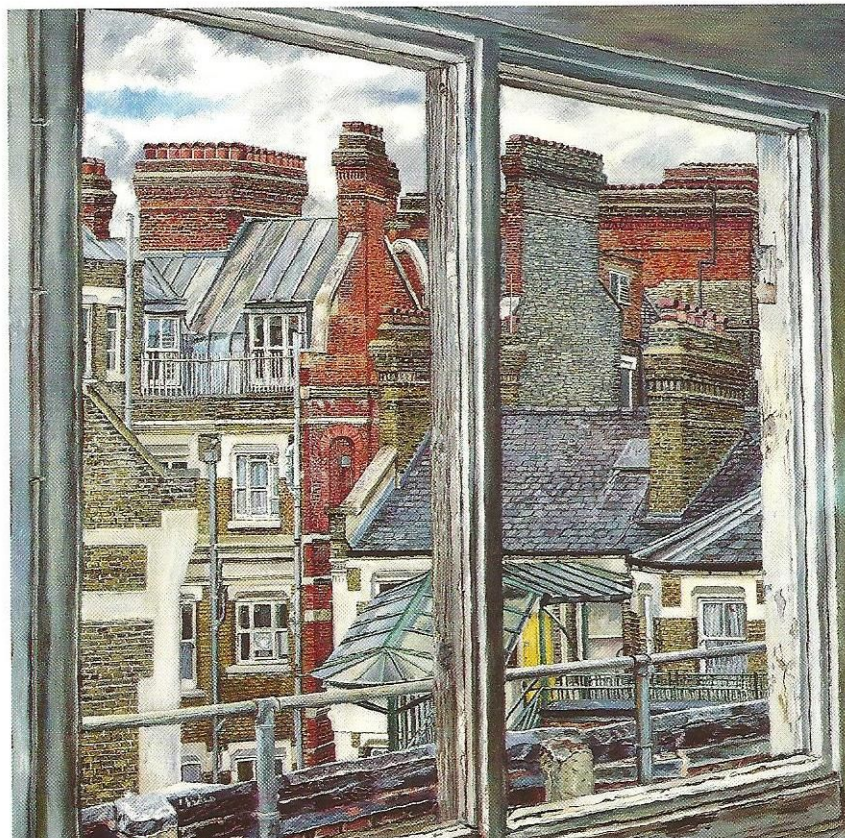
Price: £2,500

Lonsdale Square at Night, 1996 (Not on view)
oil on canvas
61 x 91cm

Price: £1,500



Self-portrait in Kilt



View from the Studio Window

JOHN SENDALL

John Sendall was born in Barnstaple in Devon in 1947 and studied at the University of Reading where he was taught by John Wonnacott. His main interests in painting are landscape and the female nude.

In his landscape paintings he depicts a specific light and space within a structure discovered and imposed as the subject is studied and the painting progresses.

In the paintings of the female nude his aim is to invent and construct, with the aid of studies from life, a figure which is self-contained and easily comprehensible in form, and engaged in a plausible activity.

He generally uses an empirical approach to perspective in the landscapes and a mathematical perspective construction for the interiors.

17. **Ramsgate : Ferry Port , 1995/96**

oil on canvas

100.5 x 153.5 cm

see illustration

£3000

18. **The Bedroom I 1996**

oil on canvas

101.5 x 152.5 cm

see illustration

£3000

19. **The Bedroom II 1996/97**

oil on board

101.5 x 152.5 cm

£3000

20. **Washbrook in Spring , 1986**

oil on canvas

91 x 152 cm

£2500

21. **Washbrook , 1986/87**

oil on canvas

101 x 91 cm

£1800

Additional work:

John Sendall

Ramsgate: Ferry Port II, 1997

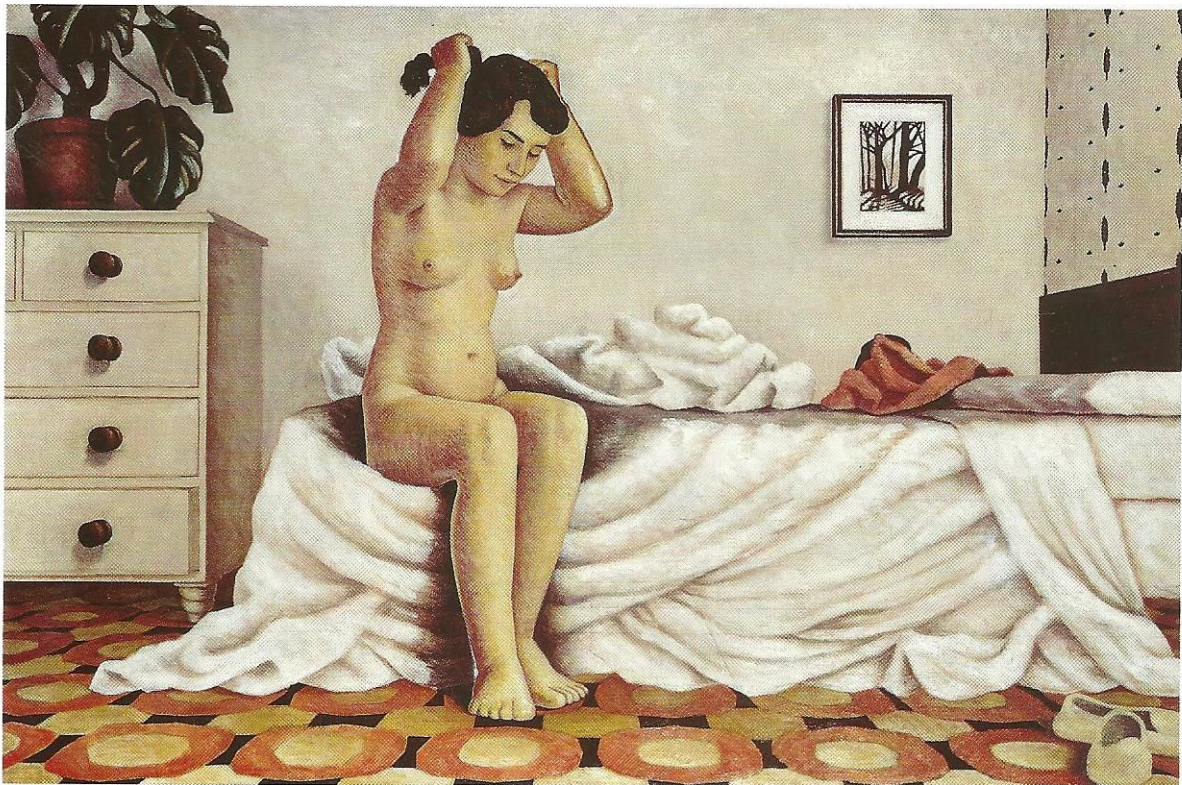
oil on canvas

107.5 x 99cm

Price: £3,000



Ramsgate: Ferry Port



The Bedroom I

GROSVENOR GALLERY

Exhibition Schedule

1997

Mark Shields

9th April - 2nd May

Sebastian Horsley

29th
8th May - 29th May

Kerry Hallam

29th May - 13th June
4th - 20th June

Lissitsky

14th June - 3rd July
25th June - 10th July.