

Penelope Metcalf





Critical Study:

Penelope Metcalf explores everyday scenery in her work yet focuses on the overlooked, dramatic elements that can easily go unnoticed. Rather than painting grand gestures she focused on the things we would see by simply passing through the area. Penelope also has numerous moods to her various works. Some artworks make you feel cheerful with the pastel colors she uses and the playful way she creates her line work. Other works can give the audience a more sorrowful feeling again by her color choices and the way she uses her brush strokes, similar to impressionism.

Structural Frame:

Describe what you see in this image.

What is the subject of this piece?

How does your eye move through this?

How does the color choice affect your mood?

How does her linework affect your mood?

Do the brushstrokes in this image remind you of any other artwork you have seen?

How would the overall feeling of this painting change if she used different materials?

As Penelope sees it, the very character of any given suburb is made up of elements that are at once unique yet often oddly familiar. The dark red brick apartments in Rose Bay could equally be in Belfast or Manchester; the mansions around Centennial Park could conceivably be in Westchester County or rural Massachusetts. -Amber Creswell Bell

<https://theplanthunter.com.au/artdesign/soft-city-exhibition-penelope-metcalf/>

Cultural Frame:

Does the architecture in these images give any indication as to where she is painting?
Would you say that the architecture she paints represents a certain time period?
Do you think Penelope Metcalf's work is influenced by a certain time period or movement?
Is there a social class represented in her artwork?
What about gender? Is there a certain gender coming out in the art techniques she uses?

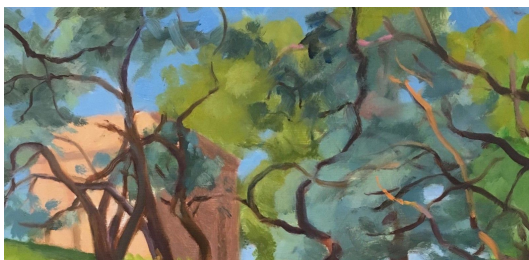


Subjective Frame:

Do you have any associations with the architecture she paints?
Looking at her interior room paintings, can you relate to any of these from past experiences?
Do any of her still life paintings remind you of anything in your everyday life?
How does her choices in color communicate her idea or theme?
Would you say that the style she chooses to paint in is more dream like or realistic?
Penelope Metcalf paints from both observation and photograph, can you tell in any of her work which is which?

"I love how buildings nestle into their surroundings," she says. "I love how trees and shrubs can almost be the jewellery for a building." - Metcalf

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Postmodern:

Would you say that any of these images been appropriated? Or used from another source?

What sense of originality are you getting from her paintings?

How is Penelope Metcalf's work different from other Australian artists?

Does the fact that she paints from observation often, change or add to her work?

What is a major difference between her work and other modern artists?

Native or exotic I'm not picky – I just love the theatre that buildings and plants create together." - Metcalf

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Historical context and questions related:

Look at the artwork of another Australian artist, Nancy Borlase. Borlase was a Sydney based painter originally from New Zealand.

In what way do the two artists use color and brush work the same?

How are they different from each other?

How do these two artists similarly place their objects, and/or the focal points?

How is the sense of light different between the two artists work?

Look at the artwork of a third Australian artist, Howard Arkley. How do the color choices between Arkley and Metcalf evoke different emotions? The artwork subjects are very similar between these two artists, what art techniques do the artists use to give the audience a different sense of space and identity?



Art Making/Research:

- In an urban area, paint a window or door frame and crop the image so the composition is zoomed in.
- Paint a still life using a very limited color palette
- Paint a piece of nature with loose, fluid brush strokes
- Open a cabinet door and paint what is inside, paying extra attention of the direction of light and where shadows are being cast
- Create a series of 3 compositions from an interior section of your home. First a drawing, 2nd a simple, loose painting, and 3rd a completed painting using loose brush strokes and a limited color palette

Vocab:

Impressionism: An art movement developed in Paris in the 1860s. The key artists in this movement loosened their brush strokes, lightened their palettes, and abandoned traditional art techniques

Architecture: The art of designing and building with skills associated with construction

Composition: a work of art

Fluid: Flow easily

Resources:

<https://theplanthunter.com.au/artdesign/soft-city-exhibition-penelope-metcalf/>

<https://saintcloche.com/galleries/penelope-metcalf/>

<https://www.facebook.com/penelope.metcalf>

<https://www.portrait.gov.au/people/nancy-borlase-1914>

<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/arkley/education/essays02.html>

<https://www.theartstory.org/movement-impressionism.htm>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/architecture>