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Affordable Art Fair Hampstead Heath

27 - 30 October

Portal Painters are on Stand I 8

(at South End Green by Hampstead Railway Station. A regular shuttle bus will run from Hampstead Tube Station - Northern Line)

If you have not received tickets and would like to come along please email jess@portalpainters.co.uk



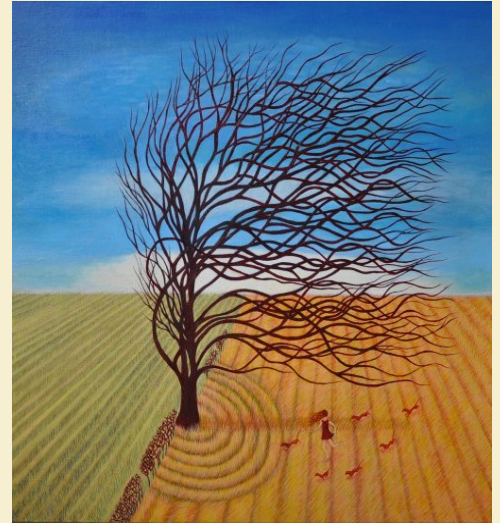
Artist of the Month - Lizzie Riches

by Andrew Ready (collector & surgeon)

Last August I had serious writer's block. Not, I should add, that I was a serious writer. Far from it. I was trying to get on to a creative writing course and had to produce a piece of fiction to accompany my application. As the deadline approached, I became increasingly despondent with my inspirational void, so I reasoned that I needed a break from forced creativity and took up the invitation to an evening with the Portal Painters at their exhibition at the Dover Street Arts Club. This was just what was needed, and proved to be a most enjoyable combination of viewing paintings and entertaining conversation. In particular, I had the good fortune of talking to the artist Lizzie Riches.

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<http://bit.ly/portalpainters>

Portal Events & News :



'Wild Child' by Louise Higgins

Next Exhibition:

Portal Painters
Christmas Show

28 November - 22 December

11, New Cavendish Street,
Marylebone High Street,
London W1G 9UD

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I had admired Lizzie's work for some time and had bought one of her pieces, *Dressing Up*, a few months earlier. It is a beautifully crafted painting of a girl dressed in a style that defies time and place. I think there is a hint of mystery in her appearance and to heighten the drama, she looks out with an enigmatic expression; confident but also guarded. I can never look at it without wondering who she is and what secrets she holds. To me, *Dressing Up* (*illustrated below*) with its wonderful combination of skill and implied mystery, epitomises Lizzie's work. Her paintings always generate a narrative. Not through the depiction of a complete story but through the presentation of many clues, often quite paradoxical, that push the observer to develop a back-story to explain the image. I have not yet seen any of her works that do not fascinate and also that I would not want to own!



On that evening I talked to Lizzie and heard some of her own story of becoming an artist. She talked with modesty and understatement about her enviable skills and the way she approaches the creative process.

As I walked away from the Arts Club, I also realised that I had gotten even more out of the evening. I now had a mass of material for my writing. I was unblocked! By the time I arrived home, I had planned out a story about an artist, her mysterious model and the rather unusual gallery that represented her. It was finished over the following weekend, and was submitted ahead of the deadline. I am pleased to say that my application was successful and I have now completed my first year. Thank you, Lizzie!



Since then, if I am short of inspiration, I look to the Portal Painters website where the 'idiosyncratic' paintings weave narratives that are always thought provoking, often tinged with wit and sometimes delightfully weird. For me, even amongst such great talent, Lizzie's work still stands out. If I had one thousandth of her talent I suspect that I would have applied to do an art course instead!

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