





Can I Have My Ball
Back? by Peter Smith
Giclée edition 295
Image 13" x 12"
m £176 f £250

The beauty of naive paintings is that they require an instant response. Simple imagery captured by artists in a bold, imaginative style has never been so popular and the childlike innocence of these pictures captivate with their immediacy. Although highly individual, the work is always fresh and spontaneous with common themes of colour, humour and strong visual imagery

Instant reaction

Naive art has always been difficult to define, as the genre can include everything from the untrained instinctive drawings of the Aborigine tribesmen, to work that sells in Bond Street for hundreds of thousands of pounds. Today the proliferation of artists whose work is defined as 'naive' is continually growing, and proving evermore popular to a widening audience.

Although it's impossible to pinpoint exactly, naive art has some general themes such as bold bright colours and a simplicity of style and imagery that appeals because of its spontaneity. Jonathan Kearns, sales & marketing director at Washington Green thinks there is much more to this genre than childlike simplicity. "The ideas and philosophy behind these pictures are often very deep and meaningful. Much of

it is representative of the world around us, and the global issues that we are all dealing with."

One of the first and most successful artists in this genre is Mackenzie Thorpe. His bold images may on one level appear simplistic, but the ideas behind his work are both emotional and intellectual. He uses many metaphors in his work and his passionate army of fans connect with his storytelling and characters on an instinctive basis. In a similar vein Govinder [E]

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 **Waiting by Mackenzie Thorpe**
Limited edition 850
Image 16" x 12½"
 £177  £250





uses bold vibrant imagery to make an emotional response from the viewer. His textural paintings and pieces of sculpture appeal to the inner child in all of us. We are instinctively drawn in emotionally and whether we feel happy or sad these great pieces of art require our involvement, and

at some level maybe take us back to the simple things in life - love, happiness and innocence.

John D Wilson is a fairly recent addition to Washington Green but his work has proved phenomenally successful. The realisation that children tend to perceive and interpret things in their own style has led to John's current collection of pictures which combines innocent sticklike figures with formal carefully planned paintings of an adult artist. John feels humour is important in his paintings, and concludes that a painting is successful if it puts a smile on someone's face.

Humour is also important to Peter Smith, a new addition to Washington Green's expanding portfolio. Quirky animals, strong colours and strange concepts are all part of everyday life, according to the artist who likes to provide strong visual statements. A connection between viewer and artist is also extremely important to him.

"My compositions come from interaction. Imagine yourself looking from the

 **The Monet Room**
 by John D Wilson
 Giclée edition 395
 Image 10" x 27"
 £188  £285



 **The Entertainer**
 by Govinder Nazran
 Giclée edition 195
 Image 22 1/4" x 14"
 £259  £375

 **Fat Cat**
 by Bruce McKay
 Silkscreen edition 295
 Image 26" x 20"
 £270  £395

viewpoint of one of the characters, and then you will begin to understand what I really felt when I painted the piece."

Another artist who has produced a body of work based on stylised animals is Bruce McKay. His collection of big cat-heads may have an element of humour to them, but his simple lines and strong vibrant colours create an overall image that is inviting to the viewer. "I don't buy into the thought that art has to be serious. My work is simple, big and makes me and my collectors happy." That's a fine definition of naive art if ever there was one. ■

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