

Naples, Florida — Winter Art Getaway

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February 2005

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Top Emerging
Artists**

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EMERGING ARTIST

Jill Hooper puts a contemporary spin on representational painting.



BIRTHPLACE

Canandaigua, New York

CURRENT HOME

Charleston, South Carolina

PRICE RANGE

\$1,000–\$25,000

REPRESENTATION

Ann Long Fine Art, Charleston, South Carolina. (843) 577-0447. www.annlongfineart.com.

Description of Work

Channeling the Renaissance masters and the classical tradition, Jill Hooper's artistic style follows the distinguished genre of Realism. "I concentrate on representational art, painting from life and the natural world," she says. "Most of my art centers around still life and figures, but I'm occasionally moved to do a landscape in a striking setting." Still-life paintings depict simple subjects, such as fish and fruit, but through detail and color, Hooper (at left, with "Solitude's Doorway," a work in progress) conveys strong undertones of emotion, drawing the viewer into the scene and posing the question as to what the surrounding context may have been. She couples basic elements with elegant flourishes of sterling and silk, creating beauty from otherwise ordinary objects.

Method of Work

Hooper, who notes that "clarity about the end product is key," brings her ideas to life initially in small studies, which segue into larger sketches. After arranging a vignette or styling a model, she sketches her compositions in charcoal and Conté drawings before painting in oil. Though she employs a full palette, she often enjoys the challenge of producing a range of color from a limited source. Live models are studio regulars, and decorative objects—from feathers and fabrics to bottles and copper pots—scatter the 19th-century

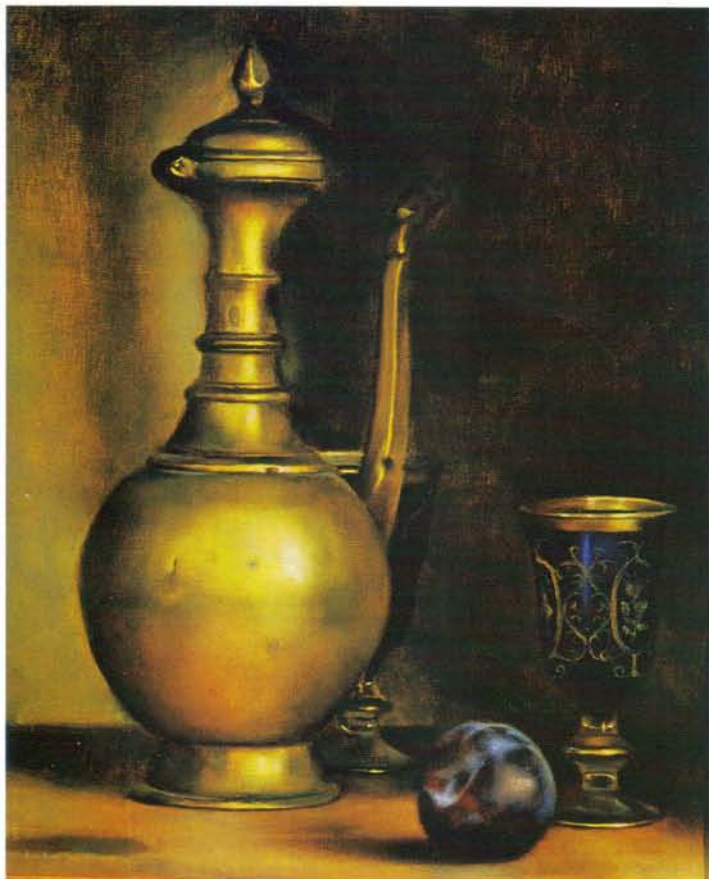


"Blackbird (Self Portrait)," oil on linen, 16" x 9"

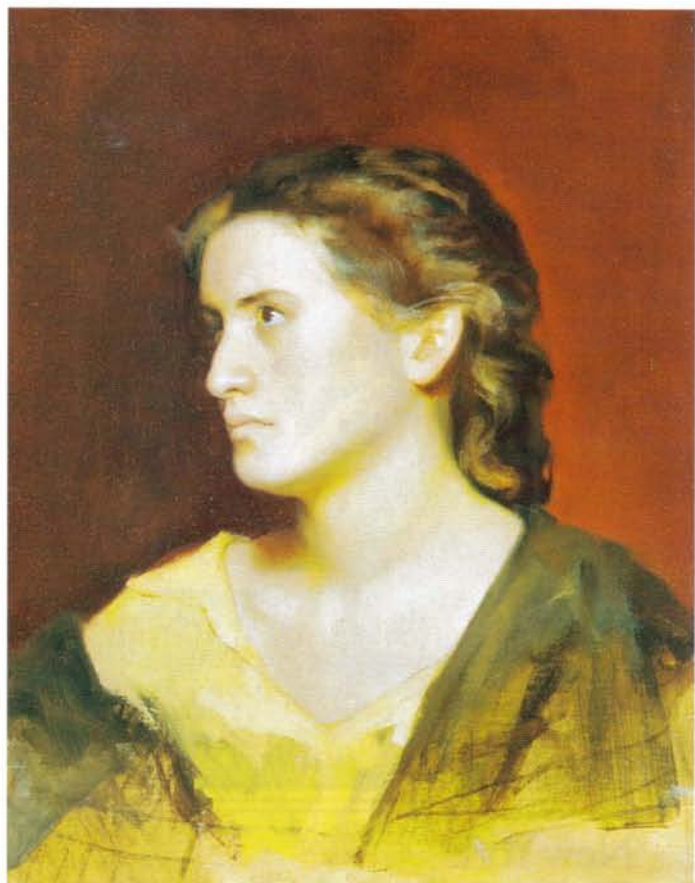
"Marina," oil on linen, 28" x 24"



EMERGING ARTIST



"La Prugna," oil on linen, 11" x 15"



"Jessica" (above, right), oil on linen, 28" x 24"

"Poissons," oil on linen, 10" x 24"



room where she catches the preferred northern light. "Chasing the rapidly changing colors of a fish aging and the wilting leaves of a lemon branch is a challenge," she says, "but gives the natural patina that can never be captured otherwise."

Favorite Subject Matter

Above and beyond, people rank as Hooper's preferred subject matter. "I find the human face fascinating; a

distinctive nose, a furrowed brow ... I enjoy the challenge of depicting emotion and interest in a person's portrait so that the viewer might get a glimpse of who they are."

Artistic Philosophy

"My philosophy is to create something lasting and not to be bothered by passing trends," she says. "I feel there is a reverence for and a return to the Old Masters, because they captured a timeless humanity that existed as much then as it does today."

First Artistic Inspiration

Hooper recalls many subtle influences from a young age, but it was her first visit to Florence as a student



"Pale Visage," oil on linen, 22" x 20"

that produced the epiphany that ignited her passion to dedicate her life to art. "Seeing the works of great masters in person—often in their original settings—really made my art history studies come alive," she explains. "It was then that I realized art is born through the human mind and comes from the human hand."

Biggest Break

Noted art and antiques expert Thomas Savage, a director of Sotheby's, took note of Hooper's work during his tenure with the Historic Charleston Foundation in the late 1990s. "Tom helped expose my works to a great clientele in the city and beyond," says Hooper. "It was after his interest that serious collectors began to take notice."

Most Influential People

D. Jeffrey Mims, Hooper's teacher and mentor as a teenager in Southern Pines, North Carolina, played an integral role in the artist's young life and developing skills. The critiques and lectures of Charles Cecil during her studies in Florence, Italy, also encouraged her. She also cites Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin as a great inspiration and Leonardo da Vinci and other Renaissance masters for their relentless

attention to detail in depicting the human form.

Accomplishments

Hooper is the youngest living artist to have a work in the permanent

collection of the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston. Her work can be found in significant private collections throughout the United States and Europe.

By Anne T. Pope
Portrait by Paula Illingworth

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