

HELEN LAMBERT

CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Details

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Introduction

I am a focussed, self-starting early career fine artist and designer. I learn quickly, and I thrive on new challenges and opportunities to use my initiative. I have excellent analytical and problem-solving skills, which were honed during my experience in post-graduate research. I perform well under pressure and I am practiced at managing my own time effectively. I am full of energy and highly imaginative, with an inquiring and independent mind.

Artist Statement

I first began painting and drawing to please myself as soon as I was old enough to pick up a paintbrush, and haven't stopped since. Paint has always been my medium of choice. These days I work primarily in oils on canvas and have a deep love for the richness and flexibility of the medium. That the paint stays live for several days is invaluable to my technique, as I repeatedly work back into the paint adding new contours and hues. The translucency of oil paint plays a crucial role in my creation of skin tones, which I painstakingly construct using multiple layers. Each of my paintings is a labour of love in which I strive to recreate the detailed image in my head, from the initial process of research, sketches and composition studies to the final execution of the piece.

I also thrive on the unique alchemy of working in collaboration with another artist. This experience is usually improvised and spontaneous, contrasting dramatically with my personal methodology and freeing me to explore new ways of making art. In these experimental collaborations I have worked in oil, acrylic, ink and watercolour on canvas, wood, paper and a variety of other media. Sharing the canvas with another artist, I abandon the need for careful planning and respond intuitively to visual and thematic cues as they appear.

When creating an image my primary motivation is always to produce an object of beauty. My paintings are magic-realist in style, and address the ongoing dialogue which I perceive between nature and supernature. I return time and again to seasonal imagery, exploring the idea of wheel of the year as well as my personal connection to particular landscapes. Mythological narratives provide the backbone of my work, which draws on European folklore, Celtic art forms and my academic background in Classical mythology as well as post-modern understandings of spirituality. The most personally significant of my paintings are figurative icons of pagan and neo-pagan deities, in which I layer symbols and meaning, and explicitly engage with the Christian iconographic tradition. Portraiture presents the greatest illustrative challenge of all: how to tell a meaningful personal story through a single image. I draw on a multitude of symbols in seeking this narrative richness.

Professional Experience

- I have been successfully selling original paintings, drawings and prints since 2006, and have been producing and selling commissioned paintings since 2004. I have also contributed artworks to charities and arts events on a voluntary basis, including offering custom paintings as prizes in fund-raisers, and creating publicity materials, logos and websites.
- I design and produce all my own promotional materials, and have had considerable success selling artworks through online shops such as <http://etsy.com> as well as my personal website.
- I am a freelance graphic and web designer and front-end developer. I have two years' professional experience designing and coding commercial sites in liaison with clients, and in the last year have worked in conjunction with <http://onlinegalleries.com> and <http://digitalcraftsmen.com>. My skills include XHTML and CSS, Adobe Suite and Indesign.
- While self-employed I have supplemented my earnings through work as a model and actress for film and TV. I have professional experience producing and directing independent films.
- "The Happening", a live painting performance with Kristen Clatworthy, July 2007 at the Party by Planet Angel, London. The Party is a club night with a participatory and creative ethos. During this dance floor performance we responded intuitively to the music and energy of the party to create a single painting over two large canvasses. The developing artwork functioned as a fluid, psychedelic piece of club décor, which contributed positively to the vibe of the room and sparked an ongoing interaction between the artwork and its social environment.
- "K~nesis", exhibition with Kristen Clatworthy, August-September 2007 at The Foundry, Shoreditch, London. All paintings, sculpture and other three-dimensional pieces showcased at this event were produced in improvised collaboration with my co-artist. The organic nature of the creative process was reflected in the subject-matter of the paintings, which focussed on themes of growth and movement, revealing a living energy that flows through the natural world, connecting inner and outer space. <http://wax-and-wane.org/kh>
- I have worked as a face and body-painter at a growing number of club and festival events.
- "The Green Futures Field" (Team Leader). I led and organised a team of six artists creating outdoor sculptures and decorations for the sustainable energy campaign arena at Glastonbury Festival, June 2008. I spearheaded the design of the installation and took a leading role in their construction. <http://greenfuturesfestivals.org.uk/>
- I am currently exhibiting a selection of solo and collaborative work at the Pembury Tavern, Hackney, London.

Qualifications

2005-2006	<i>Clare College, University of Cambridge, CB2 1TL</i> MPhil in Classics (Ancient History / Interdisciplinary approaches to the Ancient World)
2002-2005	<i>Downing College, University of Cambridge, CB2 1DQ</i> BA (Hons) in Classics (1 st Class Honours)
1995-2002	<i>Leicester Grammar School, 8 Peacock Lane, Leicester, LE1 5PX</i> Four A levels at grade A (Ancient Greek, Latin, Theology, Philosophy and Ethics, and General Studies) and one AS level at grade A (Fine Art). Eight GCSEs at grade A* (including Maths, English and French) and three at grade A.

Selected Works



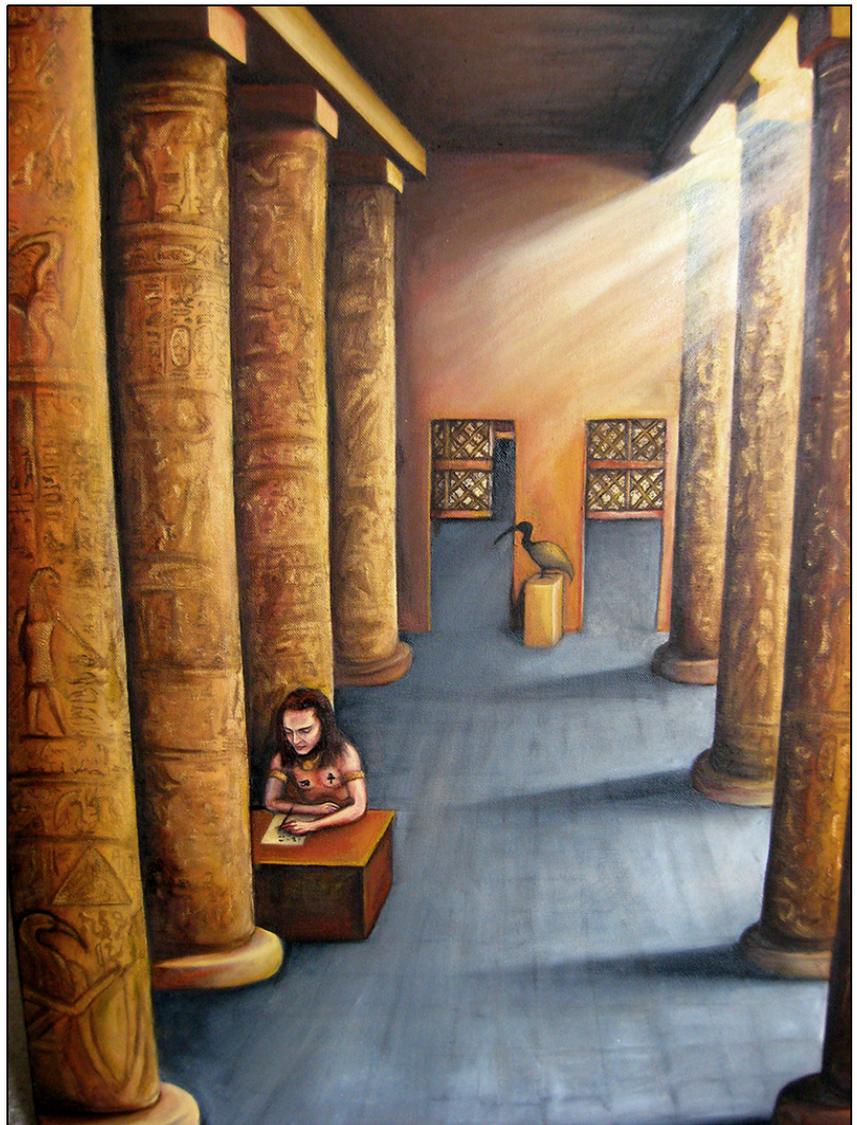
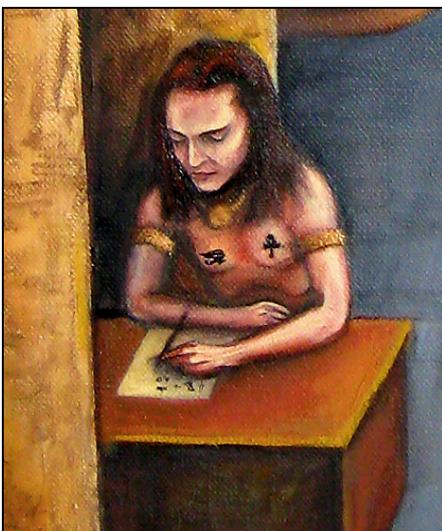
"Here Comes The War"
Oil on Canvas, 20"x16"
August 2004

Portrait of a werewolf character from the unreleased independent TV series "Love Like Blood"

"Thoth"
Oil on canvas, 24" x 36"
October 2007

Commissioned icon of the Egyptian god of scholarship and civilisation, which as a pagan ceremonial object makes divinity physically manifest in the artwork itself, invoked through multiple iterations of the god's name and symbol. At the same time, the composition engages with themes of presence and distance, expressing the characteristic aloofness of the deity.

Detail:





"Fire and Flight"
Oil on Canvas, 16 x 16"
February 2007

Commissioned portrait which incorporates symbols of the four elements, and addresses themes of hearth and wilderness.

"The Horned Goddess"
Acrylic on wood, 20" x 35"
June 2008

In this painting a nude female figure confronts the viewer with a proud stance and direct gaze. The "horns" play on motifs of horned and goat or bull-headed gods, including Cernunnos, and Minoan imagery. This vivid juxtaposition of masculine and feminine symbolism both challenges traditional conceptions of divinity and gender, and also creates a dark visual pun.

