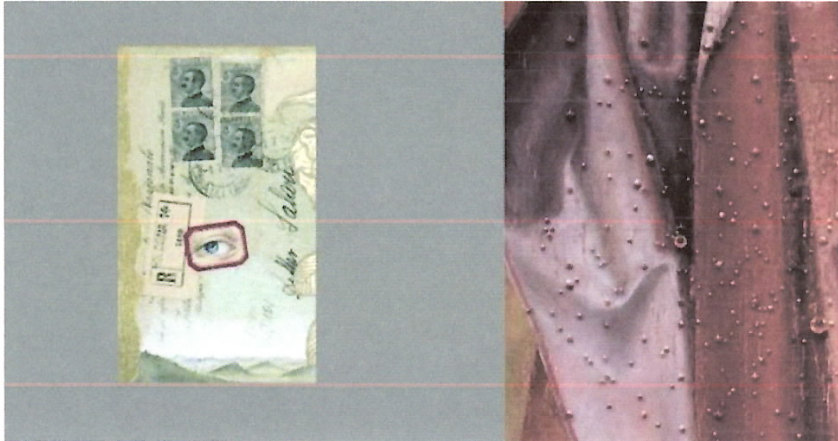


## Art News

*Anne Connell, Medieval , Renaissance ,Imagery*



### Anne Connell: A Rich Vocabulary Reflecting Medieval And Renaissance Imagery

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Tweet



**An exhibition of recent paintings and works on paper by Anne Connell at Stephen Ongpin Fine Art in London, will be the second exhibition of Connell's work to be held in London, following the success of the artist's first exhibition at the gallery in 2009.**

Anne Connell lives and works in Portland, Oregon. Her small and exquisitely detailed paintings are characterised by a painstaking technique of oil, silverpoint and gold leaf on prepared panels, and display a rich vocabulary of motifs and influences that reflect her close study of medieval and Renaissance imagery. Connell has lived and worked for some time in Italy, and her paintings conduct an absorbing conversation with the art of the early Renaissance. Sampling images and patterns from Quattrocento sources, Connell presents them in unfamiliar ways to create an expressive vocabulary with its own meanings and purposes.

Connell's intimately scaled paintings demand, and ultimately reward, the quiet contemplation of the viewer. As the American writer and novelist Elizabeth Gilbert has noted of her work, 'Anne Connell invents worlds. Tiny, immaculate, and fascinating glimpses of worlds, to be precise. (And "precise" is the correct word to use here, because Anne paints with the detailed rigor of a master jeweler.) There is no actual place on earth that quite resembles her contrivances, but they have always evoked in me a deep sense of homesickness, nonetheless: a tangible longing to make myself very small and very quiet, so that I could slip somehow right into that world which does not—but which absolutely should—exist. That sense of enchantment, of magic, shimmers in every corner of this fabulist's work, and it is not easily forgotten.'

Anne Connell was born in 1959. She has had several solo exhibitions in America over the last two decades, and has also participated in several group exhibitions. Grants and awards she has received include a Senior Research Fellowship to Italy in 2002-2003 as a Fulbright Scholar - the first visual artist in many years to be so recognized - and several residencies at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo and the Ucross Foundation.

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patterns and fragmentary images from Italian Renaissance painting for her small, lovingly made panel paintings, Connell creates a quietly luminous symbolist poetry that seems as once antique and post-modern.' (Ken Johnson, *The New York Times*, 18 May 2001.) Connell has worked for several years in Italy, and her paintings may be seen to conduct a conversation with the art of the Renaissance. 'Meticulously and densely composed, Connell's paintings invite us—like a medieval manuscript illumination—to explore and enjoy the details: a glistening pearl here, a gilded quatrefoil there, a glimpse of Tuscan architecture on the left, a geometrical drawing on the right—and so on. Connell's deft handling of appropriated imagery beckons the viewer to negotiate a complex and elusive journey into the realms of the sacred and secular as well as the past and present.' (Marianne Lorenz, *The Masters ReMastered*, Fort Collins Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009.)

Sampling images and patterns from Quattrocento sources, Connell presents them in unfamiliar ways to create an expressive vocabulary with its own meanings and purposes. Her paintings demand, and ultimately reward, the quiet contemplation of the viewer. 'Anne Connell's exquisitely rendered fragments of Italian Renaissance paintings reveal both a knowledge of and a fascination with that period's values, symbols and—most importantly—its conventions of illusion. Only rarely does the modern world seem to intrude into these vivid, jewel-like compositions, rich with gold leaf and Latin inscription. Still, on closer examination, Connell's work reveals itself to be as firmly based in much more recent developments in art as it is in the time-honored tradition of easel painting as a window into another world...Like puzzles or poems, the exegesis of her tiny, exquisite panels requires time and attention.' (Maria Porges, *The New Traditionalists*, University of Oregon Museum of Art, 1996.)

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue, with a text by the novelist Ann Patchett. For further information about the artist or the exhibition, which continues through 7 March.