



Margaret  
**Hunter**

lines of continuity

ART FIRST CONTEMPORARY ART

# Margaret Hunter

**lines of continuity** ■ paintings ■ drawings ■ sculpture

4 SEPTEMBER – 3 OCTOBER 2002, LONDON

**ART FIRST** CONTEMPORARY ART



*Havel Series XV*, 2002, charcoal and pastel on paper, 60 x 42 cm, Private Collection

## Foreword

We are delighted to present Margaret Hunter's fifth exhibition at Art First. She has been working on a specific group of 'ideas' that emerged, almost in miniature, in the form of tiny gouaches, beautiful free drawings and a group of small, powerful 12 x 12 inch canvases.

Hunter has developed her themes in larger canvases, sometimes introducing a new colourful palette, in which the sensuality of the brushstroke replaces the usual graphic scratching and deeply incised marks of her works on board. There is a warm feeling of companionship and dialogue in the new paintings. *Conversation Piece* depicts a male and female figure sitting comfortably together in an intimate space, their knees up, their toes tangling with tendril plants, while *Some One* shows two friends chatting back to back in a vibrant landscape. There are more plant forms too; in a small canvas *Little Apples Growing Again* the tall standing companions bend down, intrigued, by a flourishing plant that has sprouted up between them.

Hunter's abiding use of gesture and body language imbues her art with an atmosphere of 'luxe, calme et volupte' but departs so clearly from any classical repertoire of figurative arrangement that we are never allowed to forget her passionate engagement with African tribal art and her general love of primitive sculptural form. Hunter's expressionism and her academic training provide her with an invaluable counterpoint that never fails to enliven her composition, charging it with intensity while pulling it through a filter of refinement and sophisticated nuances of meaning.

**Clare Cooper**

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Margaret Hunter was born on the west coast of Scotland, and except for two childhood years in Nigeria, lived there until 1985 when she moved to Berlin for postgraduate study with Baselitz; since then, although she divided her time between Scotland and Germany, her life and work are centred on Berlin. It is a life divided into two worlds, with two balances, lived - but not lost - in translation. ”

**Susan Loppert**

Extract from *Vital Patterns*, exhibition catalogue, Art First 1998





*Conversation Piece*, 2002, oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm, Private Collection

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Throughout the past decade of claim and counterclaim for the latest, most sensational types of art, Margaret Hunter has stayed where she always was, painting and making sculptures about the human condition. As John Berger has observed,

"When one studies an artist's work as a whole, one usually finds that he or she has an underlying, constant theme, a kind of hidden but continuous subject. The continuous subject reflects the bias of the artist's imagination; it reveals that area of experience to which his or her temperament forces him or her to return again and again and from which he or she creates certain standards of interest with which to judge ordinary disparate subjects as they present themselves to him or her."

Margaret Hunter's continuous subject resides in the connection between the internal world of her own experience, of living across geographical and cultural boundaries, and the external conditions presented by the social, historical and political realities of contemporary Europe. ”

**Alexander Moffat**

Head of Painting and Printmaking, Glasgow School of Art  
Extract from *Elemental Traces* exhibition catalogue, Art First, 2000

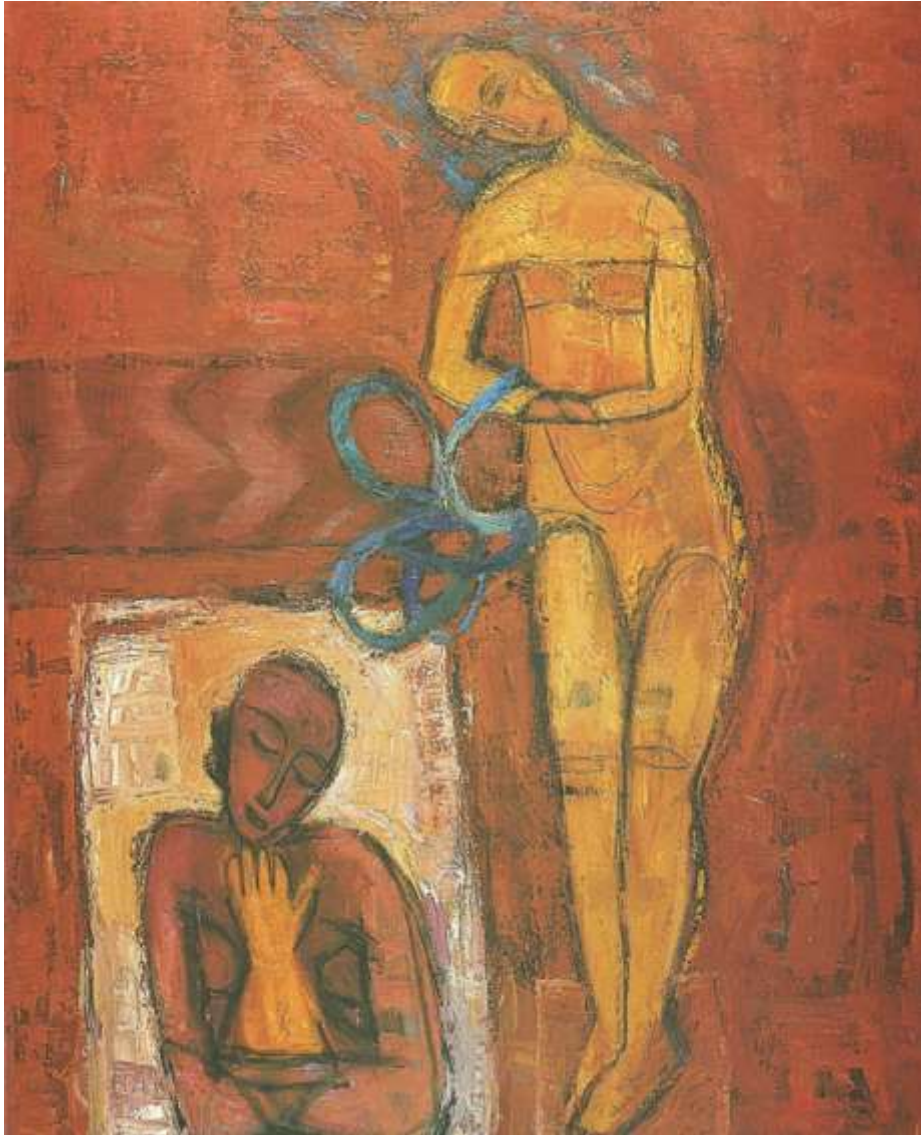


*Red Pearls*, 2002, oil on canvas, 100 x 80 cm





*Havel Series XVI*, 2002, charcoal and pastel on paper, 60 x 42 cm, Private Collection

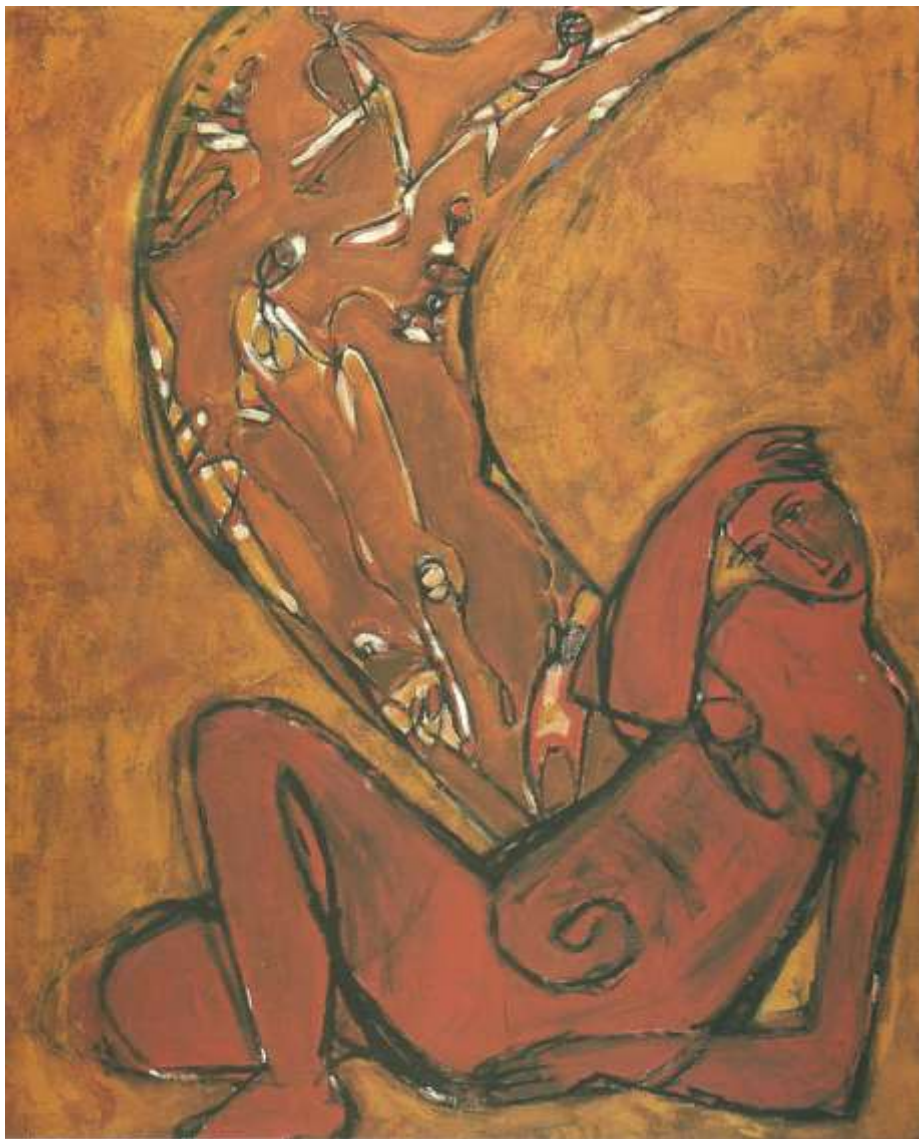


*Ribbons that Tie*, 2002, oil on canvas, 100 x 80 cm

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Hunter's great subject is the female human figure. She presents the figure as collection of parts, signs, and fragments, which in turn constitute an ongoing series of images, conceived as either paintings or sculptures. Ideas originate and accumulate in the form of small drawings which then become the basis for larger drawings, paintings, or sculptures. Her paintings are strongly pigmented, making use of over-painting and layering techniques, with surfaces heavily scratched and scored, in order to expose previous markings and tracings. Her sculptures, carved from wood but often incorporating metal parts, resemble the paintings through the use of highly textured surfaces and incised lines which usually relate to identity (as stamped upon them). This aspect of 'surface' lies at the heart of Hunter's work as does her identification with 'primitive' forms and with African art. ”

**Alexander Moffat**



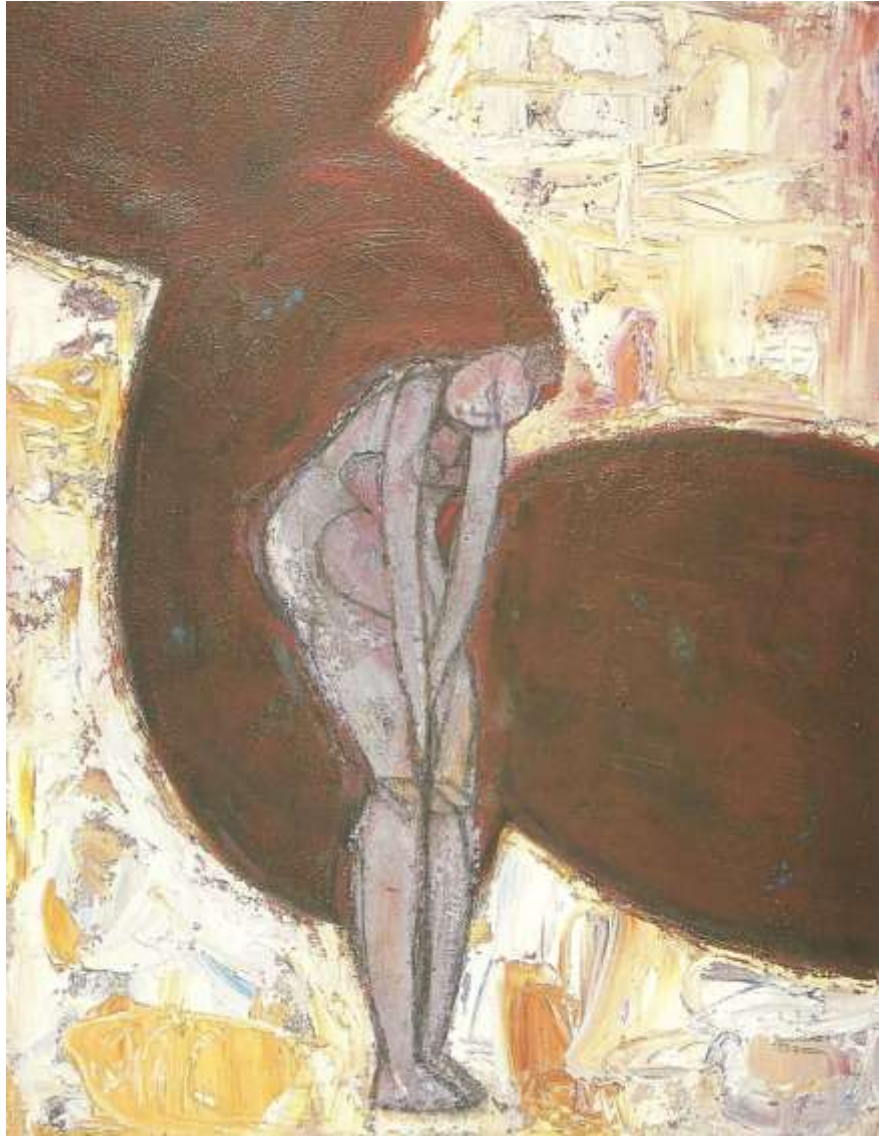
*Dance in the Path*, 2002, oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm, Private Collection

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By making paintings, sculptures and drawings about the clash of desires and needs which have to be accommodated and negotiated within ourselves, in our bodies and in our minds, Hunter proposes that through conflict and diversity there might also arise the possibility for change and progress on both a personal level and on the larger and wider levels of the social and political. All of (her) work ... deals with the relationship between the individual human psyche and external reality and is imbued with the spirit of renewal and hope for the future. ”

**Alexander Moffat**





*So it is*, 2002, oil on canvas, 90 x 70 cm, Private Collection



*Girls with Golden Threads, 2002, oil on canvas, 110 x 150 cm*

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The figure (*Companion*) here is isolated: his small body inhabits a huge, empty environment. Some comfort is afforded by the warm shadow round the figures uniting man and dog and distancing them from the filmy pale colours of the outside world. They stand on an island and the coil in the man's stomach is repeated as a trace or ghost image in the void around them.

This image is an example of an idea, given expression in a painting which was later translated into the sculpture *Dogman*, where Hunter explores further variations on the ideas of belonging and attachment. ”

**Louise Johnstone**



*Companion*, 2000, acrylic on card on board, 200 x 140 cm

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**For definitive information or images, please consult Margaret Hunter through her website:**

[www.margaret-hunter.com](http://www.margaret-hunter.com)