

HOLLY HUNT ART

ABOUT

Helen Booth

The dot itself can be many things, a puncture wound, a beginning, an end, an existence or a loss. It can be the end of a sentence or a punctuation in a landscape. It can symbolize life and it can represent death – a full stop. My recent paintings concentrate on the limitless variations of the single dot and how the individual marks when placed side by side create a dialogue. Often the dots follow disjointed lines, or they crowd together in amorphous blocks. Sometimes they are destroyed by gravity with dripped paints. The works explore both an impulsive and repetitive way of mark making that is both gestural and meditative. Straight and dynamic lines often appear alongside the more gossamer transient dots in the paintings. After each layer, I pour and drag the paint across the surface – this juxtaposition of imposed structure and the loosely applied layers is an emotional response to the process of painting. My restrained palette creates work that focuses on the mark without the distraction of color. When I paint, I try to balance action and inaction. Oil allows me to do this; each layer forcing a pause in the works construction. This way of working, the duality of the interactions by myself as an artist, the hands-off exchanges of the paint on a surface, the force of gravity and the element of chance are fundamental to my ideas. The internal alchemy, the human condition, of being and not being, of life and death are what I am striving to capture within my work. Agnes Martin stated succinctly in her Beauty is a Mystery of Life lecture in 1989 that “it is commonly thought that everything that is, can be put into words. But there is a wide range of emotional response that we make that cannot be put into words. We are so used to making these emotional responses that we are not consciously aware of them till they are represented in artwork”. Memory is also fundamental to my ideas, both personal memory and how it changes and morphs over a lifetime and also the memory of Nature. How the magnitude of space and its incomprehensible meaning can also be found in the most micro of organism. A recent trip to Iceland, seeing land newly formed and baring witness to primary succession, reinforced my personal belief that Nature is the most powerful force and that trying to capture the essence of nature in its purist form is what is important to me as an artist. The cycle of birth and rebirth, in life and in nature is key.

-HELEN BOOTH

Booth studied at Wimbledon School of Art, graduation in Fine Art Painting in 1989. In 2019 she received a Pollock Krasner Award from New York for her painting and also 1 of the 12 International Abstract Painting Awards from the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation in USA. Helen Booth is exhibited at various galleries throughout the UK and her work is held in a number of private collections around the world. In 2018 Booth won the Glynn Vivian Prize for Painting at BEEP International Painting Prize.