

Originally a painter, I was seduced into photography in the mid 1990's. However, I still think in that way and so my images are quite painterly. Because I want large, almost empty rooms to photograph and we live in a small house, I have to create my own and these have to be in miniature. By being sparsely furnished (if at all) I aim to evoke an atmosphere - sometimes one of silence, peace, or something about to happen... These structures - often just a wall, with windows or a door - are very simple and painted with medium sized brushes and household paint. The idea for this was given to me by the American poets, Debora Greger and William Logan, who found a doll's house in a skip and immediately thought of me. Over the past few years, the light has not been good - either dull or else over bright - and I have returned to painting by making backgrounds - often the sea - and the painted scene and the actual still life objects are juxtaposed in the same frame.

On most mornings, I line up objects on a shelf in my studio and watch the light move in through the open windows, with light and objects sharing an equal part in the composition. Maybe my interest in domestic subjects was forged when, as a working artist and mother of three, I had to multi task and could not go off in search of inspiration, and so found it in the things immediately around me.

As a painter I exhibited in the usual exhibitions - Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, New English Art Club, Royal Watercolour Society and so on and in many solo and mixed shows in Cambridge, London and elsewhere. When a painter, my inherited synesthesia was a factor, but I am not sure whether this is reflected in the photographs - probably not. Working as an art journalist, meant that I was in contact with every kind of visual art and this (I hope) has opened my eyes to all possibilities. Is there such a thing as 'good art', or is it merely subjective and open to any interpretation?

If I have to sum up the one essential point of my work, I would say it is the light and the timing of that light. Light and time and the idea of something happening *now*. Not last week, not tomorrow, but now, today, this minute. Now you see it, now you don't... This applies even to a painted background - something entirely artificial - where the light is still a creator of mood and atmosphere.

Now I am working on a series of *Chekhov in exile* in which, after 1917, Chekhov's characters, having fled Russia, find themselves in another world, in completely different interiors. It is a work in progress, which will form part of an exhibition later in the year.

LINKS - www.camopenstudios.co.uk
www.isobelstemp.co.uk
www.theoldfireenginehouse.co.uk/
www.nordesign.co.uk/
<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/gallery/inspiration/contributors/stemp.html>

For my Green Pebble cards please see link below

<http://www.greenpebble.co.uk/artists/robin-stemp-card-artist>

Photography:

Images acquired by Fitzwilliam Museum

Images used for postcards by Fitzwilliam Museum.

Photographs acquired by the University of Cambridge.

Photographs featured in *This is my Cambridge* a video installation for the Folk Museum, Cambridge.

Images used by University of Cambridge Summer School

Exhibitions include Heffer Gallery, Cambridge, Broughton House mixed exhibition, Cambridge Old Fire Engine House, Ely, Wall Gallery, Ely, Nordesign, Cambridge, Clare Hall, Cambridge

Work in private collections worldwide

Images in Green Pebble cards (finalist in the Henries Awards 2014)

Painting: Work exhibited at

Royal Academy Summer Exhibition.

New English Art Club, London.

Royal Water Colour Society Open Exhibition, London.

Royal Institute of Painters Exhibition, London.

The Singer/Friedlander - Sunday Times Competition.

Anna Mei Chadwick Gallery, London

Clare Hall Gallery, The Heffer Gallery, Broughton House Gallery,

Gallery on the Cam Old Fire Engine House Ely.

Anna Mei Chadwick Gallery mixed exhibition, London

Public and private collections: University of Cambridge and Paintings in Hospitals (voted most popular painting)

Private collections in UK, USA, South Africa, Australia and Europe.

Journalism:

Freelance art journalist since 1983

Prizewinner in the BP Arts Journalism Award

Member of the International Association of Art Critics.