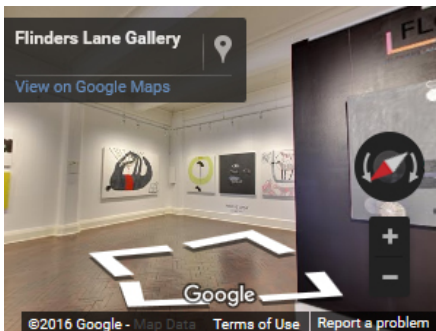


EXHIBITIONS Marise Maas *Small Talk* 19th April 2016 - 7th May 2016



For 25 years painting has dominated the world of Marise Maas, as she continues in her chase to capture beauty within the ordinary. The act of painting for Maas has become her daily medication helping to douse feelings of worry or concern, as she filters and processes the many things that capture and hold her attention in the everyday.

The appeal of Maas' work lies in their admission that life, for the most part, happens within the rather uneventful ordinariness of daily routines and interactions; the bath is run, the phone is answered, the light bulb is changed. It is while surrounded by these small things that the greater highs and lows of life unfold. As an artist Maas demonstrates the freedom that can come from being light with heavy thoughts.

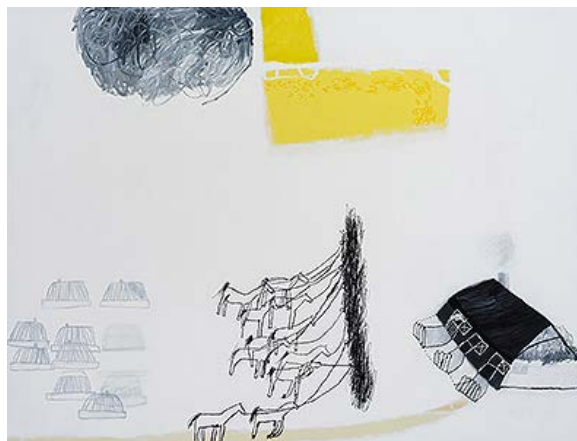
Maas's works are in numerous major collections nationally and internationally, including the National Gallery of Australia, BHP Billiton, Swinburne University of Technology and National Australia Bank Collections.

"I like glorifying the common," says Marise Maas of *Small Talk*. "I often find something that seems 'unimportant' can become more important once you look at it a bit closer". Throughout her practice Maas has enacted a sort of archaeology of the ordinary, peering into the unexplored and ignored corners of our day to day. Her latest exhibition turns this gaze - as the title suggests - onto small talk; the seemingly banal hum of conversation that soundtracks our lives. "Small talk can be seen as useless and a chore for many," she says. "I like the banality of it, but also the way it can lead to bigger subjects."

Importance, Maas seems to suggest, is mostly a matter of attention. In an age in which our attention is constantly being torn in seemingly endless directions, Maas' practice of active observation and the elevation of the ordinary takes on a meditative quality. In celebrating the moments in between, the stories we tell ourselves and each other to pass the time, she carves out a quiet space amidst the chatter. Entering into this state of expressive freedom is an organic process. "The



Marise Maas
Dangled 2016
oil on canvas
150cm x 200cm



Marise Maas
On The Job 2016
oil on canvas
150cm x 200cm

act of painting is amazing and meditative, as close to a state of freedom that I get," she says. "Nothing is planned much before I start." Rather, subjects come to her much like overheard snatches of conversation, apprehended through a practice of intuitive mark-making. "The beginning of a painting is the meditative part and gives a foundation to work from," she says. "Standing back later on I can often see all sort of possibilities and that's when I'll start working a bit more figuratively, to try and depict something that has caught my attention and fascinated me."

Her fascination with small talk, Maas suggests, could arise from the solitary nature of her work. "I like to work totally alone without people popping in," she says. "I'm very good and then quickly very bad at small talk. I reveal too much too soon. Maybe I overcompensate for the fact that I'm often working in solitude, which I love. [It] makes me a bit overexcited when I'm in a social situation." This excitement and ebullience seem to spill over onto Maas' canvases, which are lively and gestural. They seem to take on a language all of their own; the language of chatter, always there yet seldom the focus of our attention.

In *Small Talk* a series of motifs recur like refrains: horses, ropes and ties, rings and circles. Small talk, she seems to suggest, is that which binds us, that which encircles us. "Horses have reoccurred in the paintings for years," Maas says. "I loved them always and all my early drawings were of horses, [they were] probably the first thing I ever drew." This early fascination has led to a life-long love. "I'll use the horses as stand-ins for people. Horses are easier to draw and better looking I think. Plus people seem to read way too much into it when I'm using human figures."

Indeed, there is a simplicity of both aesthetic and expression in Maas' work that refuses over-thinking. Rather, she seems to invite that her work be experienced much as one would its subject matter. "[The title] *Small Talk* also refers to the fact that I'm not aiming to be too profound in my work. I'm not trying to depict deep and weighty issues." This idea seems at the core of *Small Talk*: that it is not in those deep conversations that we really come to know ourselves, but in the everyday, in the asides, the rumours, the anecdotes and the ceaseless flow of information we exchange and the stories we tell each other.

- Kate Britton

[MARISE MAAS PROFILE](#)
[DOWNLOAD BIO / CV \(PDF\)](#)

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Marise Maas
Easy Going 2016
 oil on canvas
 100cm x 100cm



Marise Maas
Best Dressed 2016
 oil on canvas
 130cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
Roomy 2016
 oil on canvas
 130cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
Too Tight 2016
 oil on canvas
 130cm x 130cm



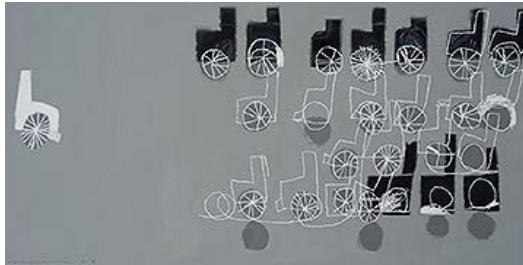
Marise Maas
Leaving at Night 2016
 oil on canvas
 130cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
Small Talk 2016
 oil on canvas
 130cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
Brothers 2016
oil on canvas
65cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
On Wheels 2016
oil on canvas
65cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
Green Light 2016
oil on canvas
65cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
Breezblock Bungalow 2016
oil on canvas
65cm x 130cm

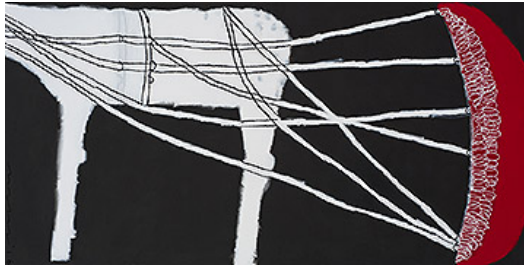


Marise Maas

Car Tent 2016
oil on canvas
65cm x 130cm



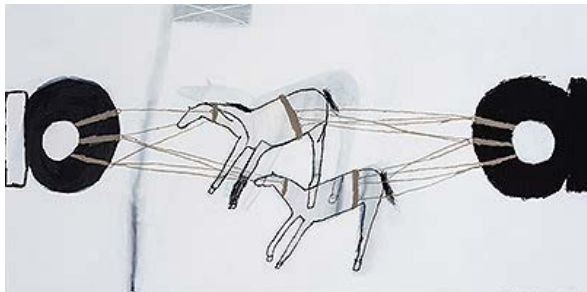
Marise Maas
Last One Standing 2016
oil on canvas
65cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
Slowing Down 2016
oil on canvas
65cm x 130cm



Marise Maas
He Had It Coming To Him 2016
oil on canvas
75cm x 150cm



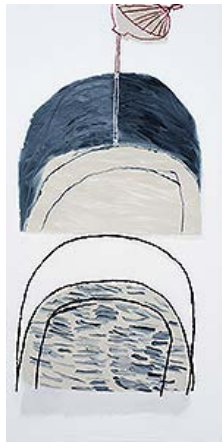
Marise Maas
Should We Say Something 2016
oil on canvas
75cm x 150cm



Marise Maas
Out of Nowhere 2016
oil on canvas
130cm x 65cm



Marise Maas
More Light Needed 2016
oil on canvas
130cm x 65cm



Marise Maas
Deluxe Portable Satellite Kit 2016
oil on canvas
130cm x 65cm



Marise Maas
Centerbak 2016
oil on canvas
130cm x 130cm