

Mia Chaplin is a South African painter working in oil on canvas and paper. Her paintings are characterized by their haptical surfaces through rich impasto and visible brushstrokes. Reminding the viewer of Impressionist art works, the paintings are highly intuitive and yet referring to the familiar at the same time. The loose, erratic style of painting emphasizes the emotionality, and subjectivity of the works, while the content draws on the everyday. Thereby, the works communicate a vivid tension between recognition and estrangement.

Showcasing portraits, still lifes, and interiors, Chaplin's work is essentially autobiographical. Themes addressed are flesh and femininity, a feeling of warmth and safety, but also warnings of danger, betrayal and a need for protection. While the immediacy and strength of the matters is generated by the prominent brush strokes, the colour palette evokes nostalgia and vulnerability.

The specific motifs, concerning the artist, emerge from an initial feeling which is then worked through by the painting. Working from life and photo-collages, with motifs ranging from the Italian Renaissance to the internet platform 'Pornhub', the artist performs an analysis of the human body and its interaction with other human bodies. Lately, she has extended her practice into printmaking and sculptures from gesso.

"Some of the paintings invite you to enter into them while others are closed doors. I want to set up tensions between the works to reveal an uncomfortable position between what is known and what is concealed."

– Mia Chaplin

Mia Chaplin was born in South Africa in 1990. She completed a BFA at the Michaelis School of Fine Art in Cape Town in 2011. Since then, she has held artist residencies at Cité Internationale Des Artes, Paris, FR (2018); Nirox Arts Foundation, Johannesburg, ZA (2016); and OBRAS Foundation, Alentejo, PT (2015). Mia Chaplin has exhibited in both solo and group exhibitions in South Africa and Europe. She lives and works in Cape Town, ZA