

Artist: MARGARET WOODWARD



*Francisco Lescano Dancing on the
Back of the Dog, 1998,
pastel on paper on canvas
198 x 162 cm*

Information about Margaret Woodward

Sydney artist Margaret Woodward (b.1938) is as a superb draughtsperson, painter and teacher. The subject of her drawings and paintings are varied, including still life, landscape and portraits. The main character of her big bold portrait drawing 'Francisco Lescano Dancing on the back of the Dog' is the court dwarf named Francisco Lescano who featured in a series of portraits by Diego Velázquez while court painter to King Philip IV of Spain (1630's and 1640's). Like many artists, Woodward finds her inspiration in earlier artworks particularly the masterpieces of Diego Velázquez and Rembrandt van Rijn.

Art Studying

The influence of Velázquez can be seen in the closely cropped rectangular composition of 'Francisco Lescano Dancing on the back of the Dog' and the use of *chiaroscuro* technique to create an atmospheric effect of light and dark that dramatises the subject whilst enhancing the three-dimensional effect. Like Rembrandt, Woodward's *chiaroscuro* adds dramatic emphasis and unifies her composition. She highlights the figure with an intense light, as if by a spotlight on stage, and cloaks it in mysterious shadows to enhance the emotional impact of her work.

Search for Velasquez's portrait *Francisco Lezcano, el Niño de Vallecas*, in the Prado Museum Madrid
Comment on how Woodward has reinterpreted this figure of the jester at the court of Philip IV of Spain.
What new ideas or meanings does Woodward bring to this subject?

Art Making

Investigate the use of *chiaroscuro* to dramatises the subject of your artwork.

Find an object to draw under normal day light conditions.

Draw the object a second time, this time darken the room and illuminate the object with a single spotlight.

Compare the drawings.

* Chiaroscuro - strong contrasts between light and dark