

Artist Bio

Mark Antony Smith

Mark Antony Smith is a Wellington-based artist whose practice spans painting, sculpture, animation, and model-making. His work explores memory, absurdity, and the ways images and stories shape how we understand the past.

For over a decade Smith has been investigating the nature of memory in his practice—how memories are constructed, distorted, retold, and sometimes entirely invented. His work often draws from photographs, personal experiences, fragments of narrative, and imagined situations that blur the line between lived events and fictional recollections.

Across paintings, sculptural works, animations, and constructed models, Smith frequently places familiar objects and figures into slightly dislocated settings. Industrial structures appear in pastoral landscapes, wandering figures move through uncertain environments, and ordinary moments take on a quiet sense of strangeness. These juxtapositions reflect his long-standing interest in absurdist philosophy and literature, particularly the writings of Albert Camus and Samuel Beckett, where humour and existential uncertainty sit side by side.

In recent years Smith has expanded this exploration of memory through collaborations with emerging technologies. He works in dialogue with a custom AI model known as Virtual Mark Antony, using the exchange between artist and machine to generate images based on artificial prompts, speculative narratives, and invented memories. This process raises questions about authorship, imagination, and whether memories created by machines differ fundamentally from those created by humans.

His exhibition *Memory Balloons* continues this investigation through a new sculptural series of wall-mounted 3D printed balloons painted from personal photographs. These works transform fleeting moments—family snapshots, travel images, and everyday scenes—into permanent objects. The balloons mimic fragile celebratory forms but are solid and fixed, turning temporary experiences into physical containers for memory.

Displayed alongside these works are paintings developed through Smith's AI collaborations. In contrast to the balloons—based on real photographs and lived experience—these paintings emerge from fabricated memories generated through dialogue with Virtual Mark Antony.

Through painting, sculpture, animation, and experimental processes, Smith's practice continues to explore the unstable territory between remembering and imagining.

More information about his work can be found at:

<https://markantony.nz>

