

In truth, we exist only to the extent of our subjective memory

Bearing our emotions is what makes us human and it is my persistent concerns on the theme of absence in childhood which propels me to put forward work that is symbolized by an emotional sensibility.



Characterised by a child in prayer and informed from a post card given to me as a child by my mother the paintings in this exhibition were originally based around a simple idea...to introduce and convey a mix of human emotions, compassion, fear, empathy, love and so on.

The central character (a small boy) was formed around three elements:

First animal = (primary emotion) Human = (secondary emotion) Second animal = (tertiary emotion).

- The first animal (primary emotion) to be enrobed on the human head, all symbols to amplify the primary emotion.
- The human to replicate the primary emotion in addition to supporting and presenting the secondary and tertiary emotions.
The human to work independently acting as a 'channel' for the primary and tertiary emotions.
- The second animal (tertiary emotion) to be enrobed on the human body, all symbols (encompassing the body) to amplify the tertiary emotion.
- Lastly the scale of elements to strengthen and extend the concept further.
Some plans were kept, re-worked and changed to become something quite different from the initial planning stages.

The Paintings:

The First Orphan

(Provisional Title)

I am not Jesus

The 'monkey' is the juxtaposition to this work, highlighting the limitations and vulnerability we all feel at some point or other. The monkey plays with the viewer, outwardly compliant he is praying, mimicking, looking via his 'Google' eye back and forth, as if to anticipate a response.

The Second Orphan

(Provisional title)

Political Angel

Formed from a memory of East London, surviving racial tension between various groups.

The Third Orphan

(Provisional title)

Why Mothers are Accountable

An important work in the series, the Aboriginal child is conceivably in prayer for herself and her people. The placenta draped over her shoulder contains the Dingo, a ready witness to her life. The spider entangled in the child's hair references the sculptor Louise Bourgeois and the complex relationship with her mother.

The Fourth Orphan

(Provisional title)

Joy

The solitary figure is soft yet set in a harsh dark landscape. The sky is blue, the child believes in goodness and extends that to his twin, a giant fly also in prayer. It is trauma that carries us off to a different place, with our view on life interminably manifest, Joy is the small fawn jumping across the water, as the scene is intended to emanate a sense of love and peace.

The Fifth Orphan

(Provisional title)

Precious Pig

Initially this work was intended to convey lust as a primary emotion. As the painting commenced it became something other, with the body lost, identity pulled at and power replaced in the form of a bird. It appears to be a one way street but this is a work that can operate either way. The figure has the burden of a pig on his back, a precious pig... a gift perhaps? The play of power can be observed in a secret way on the mask.

The Sixth Orphan

(Provisional title)

Broken Horse

Maurice Blanchot wrote *Thomas the Obscure* in 1932 an essay on absence. Thomas, who is quite literally immersed in the sea describes how he is absent to himself. The last paragraph in the first chapter reads as follows:

Peering out, he discovered a man who was swimming far off, nearly lost below the horizon. At such a distance, the swimmer was always escaping him. He would see him, then lose sight of him, though he had the feeling that he was following his every move: not only perceiving him clearly all the time, but being brought near him in a completely intimate way, such, that no other sort of contact could have brought him closer. He stayed a long time, watching and waiting. There was in this contemplation something painful which resembled the manifestation of an excessive freedom, a freedom obtained by breaking every bond. His face clouded over and took on an unusual expression.

The Seventh Orphan

(Provisional title)

Forty Years On

This scene was produced by the English Illustrator Margaret Tarrant (1888 – 1959) Essentially a key work it brings context to the exhibition. A satisfying exercise in painting, although not in any way true to the original. As the title suggests...I held the card in my possession for forty years.

The Eighth Orphan

(Provisional title)

Freedom

Intended to be empty but not bleak, the landscape is the sulphur springs in Taiwan with a mix of the original landscape by Tarrant. The shades of grey indicate change and the bright white elements offer a sense of renewal.