

SHADOWSIDE

Dark Introductions to the Disowned Self



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Chris Anthony

Chris Anthony's series of photographs titled "Victims and Avengers" catches the eye with his minimalist approach, unnerving scenarios and moody sense of colour. He has created a foreboding arena, filled with dark narratives and a ghostly cast of characters. His composition is well thought out, each figure strategically placed for impact. The wide angle provides a sense of separation between the viewer and the subjects, reminiscent of the theatre. His use of muted colours, coupled with crimson accents and spotty saturation enhances the ghastly mood of his pieces. The figures seem weightless and ethereal.

While rich textured backgrounds set the stage for his sinister narratives to play out in this intriguing and melancholic world, these beautiful, thought-provoking photographs show him to be an extraordinary artist with a flair for macabre imagery. The interiors contain just a few objects: a doorway, an elaborately framed portrait, and the legs of a man, presumably dead. A hint of blood will always appear in Anthony's images, and here, the man's shoes are stained red.

These pictures deal with domestic violence and the scenes depict the final straw. They've taken vengeance into their own hands and murdered their husbands or fathers. In depicting the aftermath of revenge, Anthony has chosen to portray the moment of release, the calm after the storm.



Wednesday, C-type print



Emily, C-type print



Emily 3, C-type print



Very First Time, C-type print

Beth Carter

Carter poeticises the figure by creating eerie composite creatures. Whether cast in bronze or drawn in charcoal, the work breaks down into either the lyrical single figure or the dramatic interaction of two or more figures.

Her single figures, naked men with perfectly integrated animal heads: bull, horse, bear, fox, rabbit, all seem lost in contemplation of the mystery of their own existence.

The dramatic configurations are fabulous and exotic. We are like Alice through the looking glass, propelled into a dreamworld overflowing with marvellous creatures thoroughly absorbed in their own encounters with each other. This world in which we are transported is exciting, magic-fuelled, utterly mysterious yet completely realised.

The bold and beautiful visions of Beth Carter help us dream the mythology of our own existence. a world where animal and human aren't so far removed.



The Messenger, Bronze



Buck Rabbit, Jesmonite

Patrick Haines

Exploring a particular part of the River Avon by canoe near where he lives in Bath has given him some of the inspiration for this body of work. Many of the pieces in this exhibition are suggestive of existing myths and spiritual beliefs but also include references from Patrick's own life.

The themes and materials are deeply personal. More recently, inspiration has been gained from found objects such as a child's chair or a bird cage given by friends. They sit alongside pieces from the natural world, creating an uneasy juxtaposition. Their role is to ask questions, make statements or suggest meanings that provoke thought.

He says;

'I like people to perhaps remember a past experience or reconsider an ingrained belief'.

Patrick explores his themes of metaphorical references to nature and myth, making poetic references to that of hope, escape and freedom, while at the same time a more sinister side to the bird;- a Raven, outstretched, poised on the back of a child's' chair, a Wren pecking at the corner of a Bible - an unsettling glimpse at a fleeting moment in time.



Guardian Angel, Bronze and Found Object



Blackthorn House, Bronze



Spirit Level (Swallow), Bronze and Found Object

Mercedes Helnwein

Mercedes Helnwein was born in Vienna, Austria, daughter to renowned painter and art provocateur Gottfried Heinwein.

Helnweins recent drawings form a series “Whistling Past the Graveyard”. It is an American idiom, and means pretty much just that: whistling while walking past a graveyard. Faking a cheerful front. Trying to smother some fear.

Mercedes Helnwein explains the series;

“For some reason this idiom made sense in relation to my new body of work.

It just seemed to fit. Judging by their expressions I’d say there’s probably something the girls in these drawings would rather not talk about – something they’d prefer to sit on. And they’re keeping it in, but it’s kind of leaking out of their faces.

In any case, I realize there’s a lot of toys going on in this series and with that comes a sense of something innocent, frivolous and child-like. I do think there is something innocent there, but as I said, I still have a hunch that the general train of thoughts in the girls’ heads are going in the opposite direction.”

Heinwein is less interested in narrating and more interested in presenting an image that will crank up other people’s imagination and hopefully send it somewhere really weird.



Alanna & Ami, Pencil on Paper



Caitlin, Pencil on Paper



Jim & Mella, Pencil on Paper

Adela Leibowitz

US-based Adela Leibowitz takes the viewer on a voyeuristic journey somewhere between *The Shining* and *Alice in Wonderland*. The work focuses on the female psyche and draws its imagery from romantic 19th century literature scenery as well as vintage horror movies. The vignettes presented in the paintings depict at times rich and dramatically opulent interiors and at others simple denuded outdoor settings.

Whether in socially enticing and oppressive interiors or free and seemingly more pure outdoor environments, the characters (exclusively women) all seem involved in role-playing. Occasionally blindfolded, masked, or nude, the women reenact childhood games, violent or sexual acts, cultural rituals, or tales of morality.

Influenced by Jung and Freud's theories, Leibowitz plays with women's counteracting primitive and developed, socially conscious instincts. Each painting contains a certain polarity, highlighting paradoxical elements – repulsion and beauty, fear and comfort, children and violence, the domestic and the demonic, etc- delivering complex psychological dramas.



Untitled 2, Oil on Canvas



House of Fire and Water, Oil on Canvas



Masque of the Red Death, Oil on Canvas

Kate MacDowell

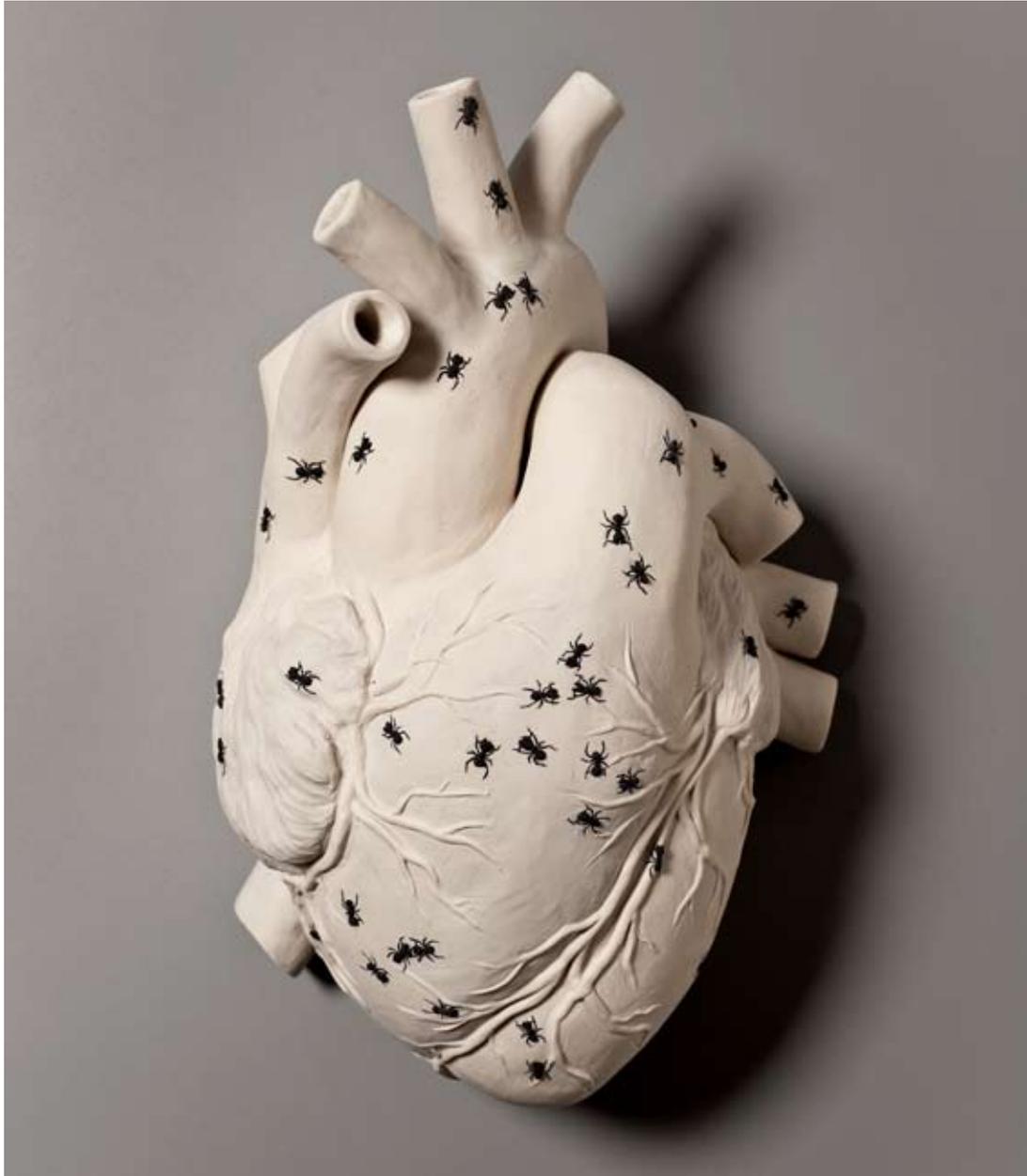
New York-based Kate MacDowell hand sculpts from porcelain, often building a solid form and then hollowing out. Conflicting the natural world with our contemporary impact on the environment, these pieces are in part responses to environmental stressors including climate change, toxic pollution, and gm crops. They also borrow from myth, art history, figures of speech and other cultural touchstones.

In some pieces aspects of the human figure stand-in for ourselves and act out sometimes harrowing, sometimes humorous transformations which illustrate our current relationship with the natural world. In others, animals take on anthropomorphic qualities when they are given safety equipment to attempt to protect them from man-made environmental threats.

In each case the union between man and nature is shown to be one of friction and discomfort with the disturbing implication that we too are vulnerable to being victimized by our destructive process.



Only You Can Prevent, Handbuilt Porcelain



Ants Ate All My Sugar, Handbuilt Porcelain

Neil Moore

Neil Moore's work is about people and for him they are the only subject. Some images relate to people he knows and some to experiences of society (either directly or through the arts and media).

Moore is continually perplexed by people, both individually and collectively and the paintings are an attempt to give some coherence to experiences that concern, intrigue or amuse him. The images are purely intuitive and despite the apparent clarity, not intended to be taken literally – they are visual metaphors.

In the artists own words;

“My experience of life is, in common with almost everyone, unremarkable. In general we share the same concerns and I have to trust that my paintings are an honest reflection of the society in which we all live.”



Uo 1, Oil on Canvas



Uo 2, Oil on Canvas



Longing, Oil on Canvas



Double or Drop, Oil on Canvas

Ione Rucquoi

Ione Rucquoi's visceral portraits capture a world of lost innocence and sexual awakening, exploring the disowned, unconscious aspects of the self and highlighting the primal instincts of the human character and the beast within.

Rucquoi's affinity with Jung's psychological concept of 'The Shadow' allows her to move effortlessly among the symbolic and darker characteristics of the psyche. Driven by the motivation to make emotion visible through the physical, she explores fundamental elements of human existence and experience: birth, death, loss and change, and brings the hidden and taboo to the forefront.

The finished pieces which exhibit a strong legacy of Renaissance portraiture, take the form of photographs. But for Rucquoi the process of composing the image through conceptual and physical layering is as important as the composition itself. She presents a bizarre and elegant melange of costume, colour, and textile, where the human figure is juxtaposed with internal organs and animal forms.

In the tradition of the surrealists, and in a society often governed by reason and inhibition, Rucquoi seeks to liberate uncensored fears, anxieties and obsessions, heightening awareness of the 'Shadow side'.

To meet the candid gaze of one of her models is to share in a quiet, private moment.



Second Skin, Plexi-mounted Ultrachrome



Bride, Plexi-mounted Ultrachrome



Sacrifice II, Plexi-mounted Ultrachrome



Lamb, Plexi-mounted Ultrachrome

Bobbie Russon

Through a sensitive and brooding look at the transition from childhood to adulthood, mapping a path of loss, awkward self-awareness and developing sexuality, London-based Bobbie Russon communicates her excruciating shyness as a child and the loneliness she acutely felt.

“My work comes from a deep, dark, quiet place in me and hopefully speaks to that place in others,” she says. “If I can evoke a memory or emotion in a stranger by my own personal interpretation of a shared, but private experience, without having to use words then I feel I am succeeding.”

Dolls or animals, rather than other humans feature as companions with their almost human-like, but dumb and false understanding. Russons somber yet beautiful paintings expose an inherently ambiguous, complex nature of society’s growing fears about the loss of childhood innocence.



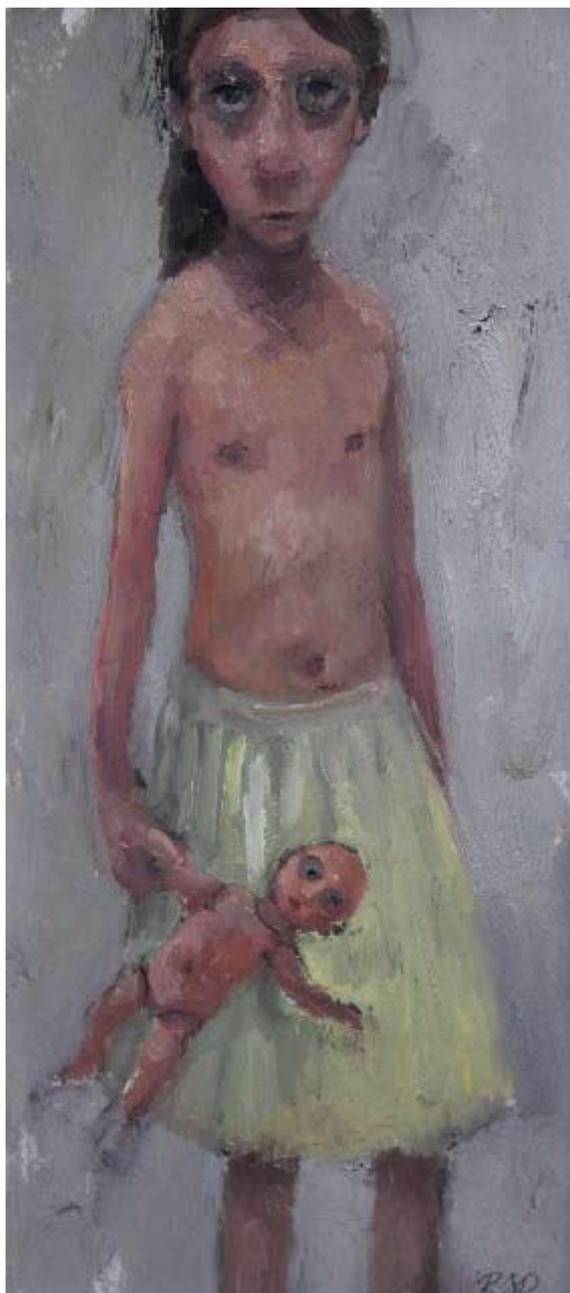
Love Me Tender, Oil on Canvas



Insomnia, Oil on Canvas



Dormitory, Oil on Canvas



The Last Doll, Oil on Paper

Ellen Tovey

Falmouth trained Ellen Tovey is concerned with expressing something of the inner being in her portraits. She paints with a naked honesty in an attempt to produce work with presence, trying to weigh things up, and give voice to her own confusion.

In her own words;

“We live in a screened existence where we forget to see. My attempt is to lift a veil for a time and look again.”

The title of Toveys most recent painting ‘And Yet’ is taken from the novel ‘Steppenwolf’ by author Hermann Hesse. The story reflects a profound crisis in Hesse’s spiritual world in the 1920s while memorably portraying the protagonist’s split between his humanity, and his wolf-like aggression.

“A Spiritual being in a habitual body, The Wolf is outside and within us”.



And Yet, Oil on Canvas

Fran Williams

Fran Williams continues to explore the process of paint, using the human form as a vehicle to create emotion.

Life, death, change and time are predominant themes running through Williams' work, along with her feelings of a seemingly uncontrollable grasp that controls our destiny. Our knowledge and inspiration born from our mistakes and decisions, offers us both pleasure through our expression, and an uncontrollable frustration when our world is not created and shaped in the way we want it to be - helpless in our search for perfection.

Using mark-making as a code for her emotion, a story is unfolded, the beginning and end belonging to and seen through the viewers eyes.



Death Brought Me To Life, Mixed Media on Wood



When, Mixed Media on Wood



Beginning To Understand, Mixed Media on Canvas

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