

Isolated OBSERVATIONS



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June 2020

List of Artists;

Sara Berman
Pippa Blake
Fred Coppin
Freya Douglas-Morris
Tinsel Edwards
Stephen Farthing
Nicola Green
Anne Kelly
Alice Kettle
Irene Lees
Rob Lyon
Calum McClure
Grace O'Connor
Anne Rothenstein
Giorgia Siriaco
Anthony Stevens

CANDIDA
STEVENS
GALLERY

Isolated Observations

is an exhibition and sale of artwork produced and hosted by Candida Stevens Gallery in Aid of Winston's Wish.

Winston's Wish is a charity supporting children after the death of a parent or sibling.

We would like to thank the 16 artists who have made the work. All artwork was made for this exhibition as a record of their personal response to the 2020 lockdown.

All work will available to Buy Online via our website from Monday 1st June.
www.candidastevens.com

100% of gallery profits* will be donated to the charity.

*in this context profit means all revenue after artists have been paid and venue hire has been covered

WINSTON'S
WISH **WW**
Giving hope to grieving children

These pieces were made across March and April of the Lockdown period. I moved part of my studio to home allowing me to make work at this strange time. These works are a smaller scale than I am used to and I think this is a reflection of my insular feelings, the intimacy of being confined to my home and sense of being very small in the world. These works will always remind me of both the vulnerability and tenderness of human nature and the particular fragility inherent to that period of time.

Clockwise from top left;

Slumpy

Couple

Panties

The Clap

Oil on ply and linen

35 x 30 cm



SARA BERMAN

Before lockdown I had already made a decision to take time doing research and gathering information for new work so to begin with it felt timely. I had a solo show ready to hang with Candida Stevens Gallery in May, so with work finished and a postponement of the May exhibition the horizon was clear. However life is not that straightforward and going into self-isolation life became about organisation, domesticity and taking care. It took me time to get going - the waves of uncertainty about the world didn't help - worry about family members and friends, communication all takes time. I returned to painting for security albeit with a different medium for practical reasons. I made several landscape studies - about the light - then discovered they were all sunsets - an unconscious melancholia about the dying light at the end of the day - but also great beauty, peace and calm - much needed in these times.

Clockwise from top left;

Millpond : Sunset, 2020

Downs : Sunset

Sea : Sunset

River : Sunset

Acrylic on wood panel
20 x 25 cms



PIPPA BLAKE

During this time I've been fortunate enough to lock myself away and spend most waking moments painting in a funny little cobbled together home studio. A room that ordinarily received little-to-none of my time has somehow now become the isolated epicentre of my world and I have a totally different relationship with that space. Therefore I wanted to honour those four walls while reinforcing that idea of 'confinement' by creating work inspired purely by the few metres I've spend months now standing in. I felt this was very much in-keeping with the fact that most of my work is underpinned by the idea that any given space / subject is quite glorious if you look hard enough!

Clockwise from top left;

Window to the West

Shade

Base

Steps

Oil on canvas on panel

30 x 30 x 5 cm



FRED COPPIN

What could I tell you about my experience of the lockdown....We have shared it with two very small people, our daughter who is 3 and our baby boy who just turned 1. A time of little sleep and the juggles of everyday life; of being in the garden with a toddler who points out things you might have otherwise missed, a snail on the underside of a leaf, a spider under a rock. Time is slower, lilting, maybe it's the sun, the heat, the afternoons feel warm and the tiredness makes everything feel drowsy. We start the day early, due to the small people in the house, and the days are punctuated, moments when they snack, eat, sleep; rhythms of time, a constant beat in the day that never changes. Every day is the same. And yet each day is different of course.

We live in London but the birds chatter seems louder than before, at times it feels like we live elsewhere, somewhere less urban. Today we went into Hackney Marshes, right by our house and heard the drill of a woodpecker. But I like the different sounds, the echoes of the city have softened, like it does when it snows and there is a deadening and unfurling of what is around us. Nature feels closer, even in a large city like this.

The presence of man feels more acute at this time, when you see a rare aero plane in the sky trailing its vapor lines behind, it feels more wondrous than it did before. A sight that so often went unnoticed and yet now, seeing it so much more rarely, it makes me marvel at the concept of flight and travel. Of being far away, outside the walls of our homes that we see so often, travelling further than the letterbox and the shop on the corner.

When I was asked to make a piece of work for this exhibition I decided to make something that took my mind beyond the domesticity and routine that is the everyday at the moment. It was a chance to think about what I miss, what I take for granted, what I look forward to be able to do again. For me being out in nature is what I miss most, of long walks and freedom to roam, going to a destination and making a day of it. In the early weeks of the lockdown I kept thinking about being beside the sea, the taste of the air, the sense of openness, the way your breathing slows down. I wanted to make an image that resembled this and the quality of a woodcut, of slowly carving it at home, printing it by hand without a press, the homemade quality and sense of labor and time spent, felt a fitting reflection on this period of time.

Clockwise from top left;

Lands End 1

Lands End 2

Lands End 4

Lands End 3

Watercolour and Gouache, Hand painted woodcut
34 x 26.5 cm



FREYA DOUGLAS-MORRIS

During this period of isolation I have been making small paintings on pieces of old food packaging. Instead of throwing the cereal boxes, egg boxes and pizza boxes into the recycling I decided to make them into miniature canvases. The surfaces I choose to paint on have always been important to me because they add to the story of the artwork, I like that there is nothing grandiose about an old piece of cereal box, and I like that it is something from my home and I am using the materials that are available to me.

These last few weeks I have found that my sense of time is different, there is no need to rush around from one place to another but instead to experience each day as it comes. For the first time in years I feel rested, and despite the fear and the sorrow and disbelief at the situation, I feel a strange sense of calm. I decided early on in the lockdown that I wanted to use this time to make a series of paintings that I wouldn't usually make, no justification or rationalization but simply to paint things because I want to. I am often driven to make art that has an element of social commentary, it is often political - I still want to make this kind of work, but I'm keen to allow myself to withdraw from it occasionally. My art also tends to be autobiographical and during this period of time I want to follow my intuition and create a genuine and personal response to the experience.

The everyday, the mundane or overlooked details of domestic routine are themes that have begun to appear in my artwork over the last couple of years, and during this period of isolation I have continued to explore this. I am fascinated by everyday moments and the little rituals and routines we take for granted. As I go about my days I make mental notes and take photos on my phone of the things that I want to paint, out on a walk through the local streets or time at home with the kids. Then in the evenings once the kids are in bed I can begin to paint and it's liberating.

Clockwise from top left;

Toilet Roll

Le Merveilleux

There's a Party in my Mind, and I Hope it Never Stops

Daydreaming

Wading

You May Ask Yourself, Well How Did I Get Here?

Oil on cardboard packaging

Various sizes from 6 - 12 cm



TINSEL EDWARDS

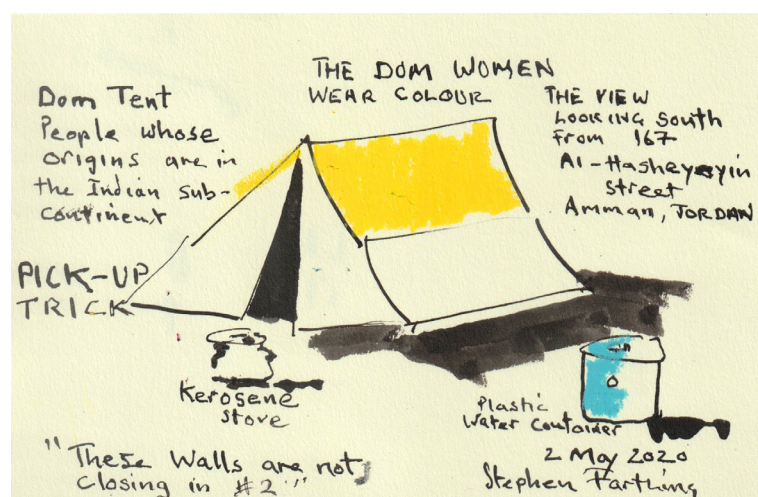
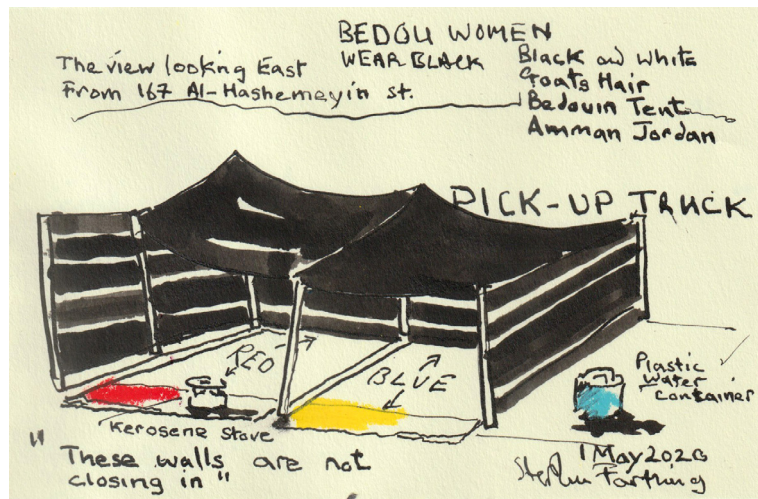
Each image is drawn from a different window in my apartment, each is a reflection of not simply what I see, but what I know about what I am looking at . Two years ago when I arrived in Jordan what I saw from each window was an unfamiliar view - now I understand what I see much better. Only fifteen years ago this part of Jordan was desert where only the Bedouin understood how to live.

My favourite times of day are sunrise and sunset when I cannot so clearly see where my neighbours live, but am confronted instead by a much bigger picture. The one that demonstrates the power of nature and reminds us how little power the corporations, governments and individuals who imagine they are in charge really have.

From top;

These Walls are Not Closing In
Where the Walls Close In
These Walls are Not Closing In #2

Pen and ink on Strathmoore 1/30gm paper
10 x15 cm



STEPHEN FARTHING RA

Nicola Green has been exploring the power and symbolism of non-verbal communication throughout her career. Focusing on noteworthy social-historical events, Green searches for the most essential meaning and form, exposing the gestures and symbols which capture the significance of that moment. Through this process she seeks to distil the complexity of the global narrative and ensure its themes and meaning can be understood for generations to come.

Hands have been a constant focus during the recent pandemic. We wash them, we clap-our-carers with them, we wave them at each other through glass, or signal with them from a distance. Our gestural movements have become an even more vital form of communication.

In *Wave, Putti I-III* 2020 Green has developed a series of works depicting hands, each outstretched, open palmed, a symbol of hope and peace, of unity and global connection. The outspread arms are lightly decked with ivy, an evergreen plant symbolising strength and faith through its binding power.

Hovering behind the hands are a multiplicity of cherubs, angels playing in the clouds in a Dionysian expression of joy. The cherubs, as well as the ivy, reflect the duality in the cycle of life. Cherubs, or putti, are a fixture of western art history, associated with peace, prosperity and mirth, and always depicted as white. Green has portrayed the cherubs as mixed race, in a bid to question our assumptions and expectations about our global and connected identity and legacy.

Wave, Putti I-III 2020 are being exhibited in *Isolated Observations* at Candida Stevens Gallery in aid of Winston's Wish. Nicola has been a life-long supporter of the charity after her sister died when she was a child.

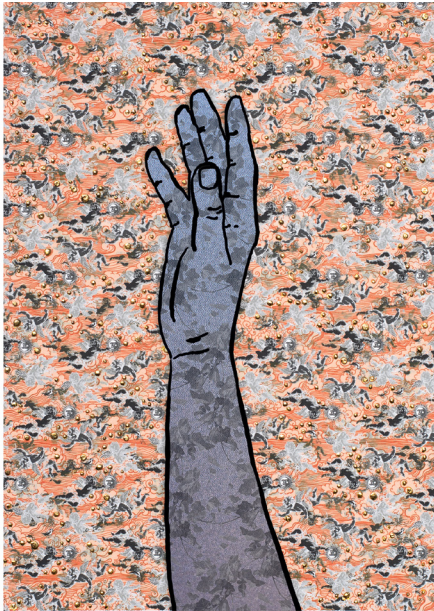
From top;

Wave, Putti I

Wave, Putti II

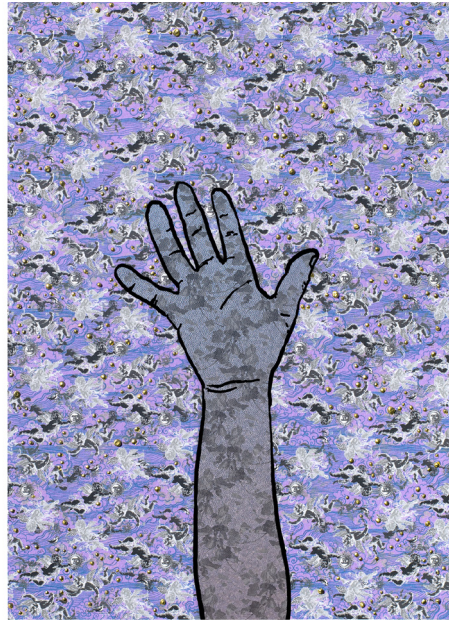
Wave, Putti III

Collage with hand applied 24k gold leaf, 308gsm Hahnemuhle
42 x 30 cms



Wave, Part I 1/3

Nicola Green 2020



Wave, Part II 1/2

Nicola Green 2020



Wave, Part III 1/3

Nicola Green 2020

NICOLA GREEN

'Dream Portraits' series

Anne has made four portraits collaged with background objects taken from family members' stories of dreams and home. The intensity of our shared experiences of being in 'lockdown' are carrying through to our subconscious and dream life. This series of work is painted on fabric with casein tempera, machine and hand stitched on top. The portraits were made on vintage quilt pieces which also relate to the dream theme.

Anne says: 'I love to honour and repurpose old textiles, using hand and machine embroidery, vintage thread and string to add texture and character. My work has been described as 'small worlds' trapping and preserving pieces of embroidery and objects within it. I use a 'netting- like' machine embroidery stitch over the whole surface of the work. I further embellish it with hand stitching.'

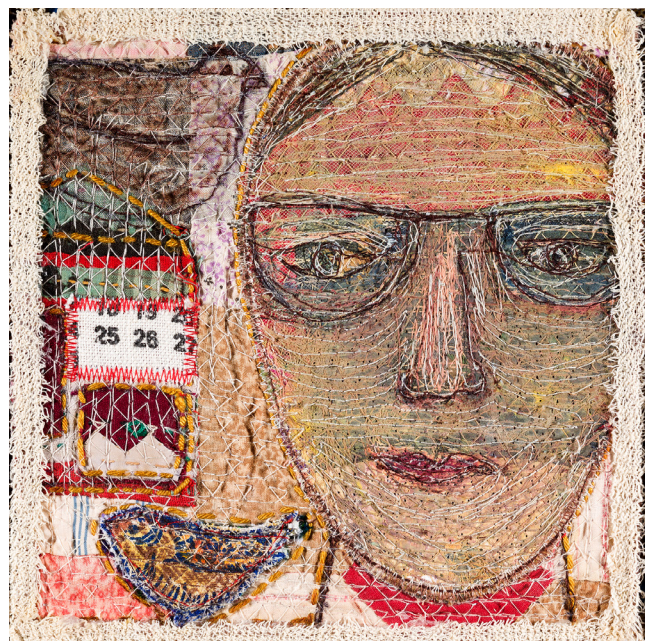
Anne is an award winning textile artist, author and tutor based in the UK, exhibiting and teaching internationally. Her four books for Batsford Press represent her project and collaborative work. Her heavily embroidered fabric collages are reminiscent of tapestry and her signature stitching technique is applied to a variety of surfaces.

Anne's work is represented in private and public collections in the UK and abroad. Her third book 'Textile Folk Art' was published in 2018 and links her continued interests in working with groups, nature conservation and folk art. Her fourth book 'Textile Travels' is due out in October 2020. She is working towards a major solo exhibition at Ruthin Craft Centre in 2021.

Clockwise from top left;

Dog
Gloves
Bird
Horse

Mixed media textile on canvas, hand and machine stitching,
casein tempera paint, 22 x 22 cm framed in wood, unglazed



ANNE KELLY

These works revisit work I did 15 year ago. This period of introspection has allowed me to look within myself and into former subjects. It feels like a retreat, a reflection on what and who I am. These are depictions of us in 'boxes', a comment on the polarity of our 'boxes' being simultaneously safe and restricting.

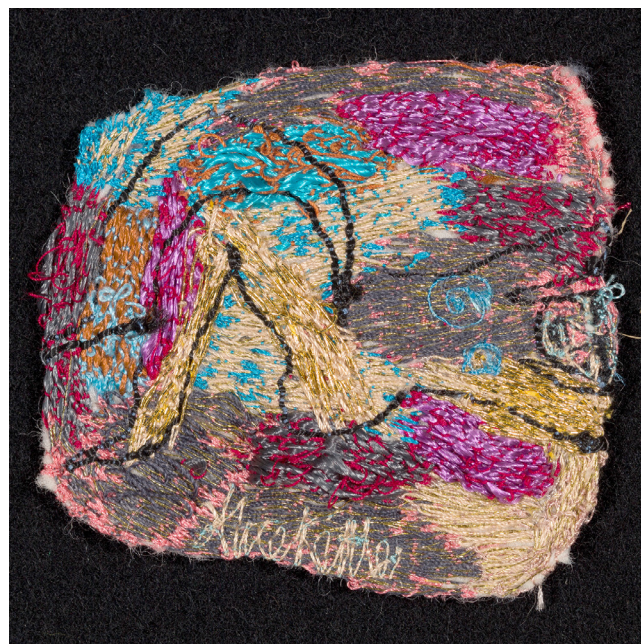
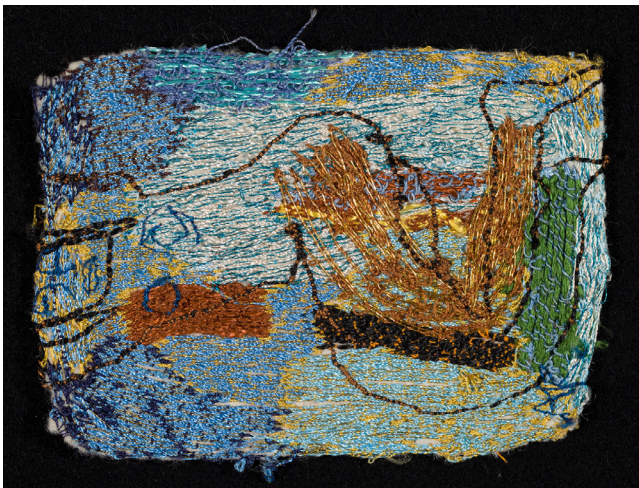
From left;

Boxed Up 1

Boxed Up 2

Machine Embroidery

7 x 8 and 7 x 10 cms



ALICE KETTLE

The motif is the robin - the plucky character that joins (permits, tolerates?) me in the garden from which i've been working in for the last two months. He's become a talisman, embodying a pragmatic stoicism and fierce survivalism that I can observe from my garden studio and aspire to in the face of all the challenges being thrown up right now. Some works contain just one robin, with others containing two (as team, as competitors). But there's also that cold bird's eye, revealing nothing but a vital, primal fear. They are also, then, perhaps aspirational self-portraits. The paint is loose in places, layered in others; thin here, thick there. While there could be a temptation to see them as a series or a collection of works in dialogue with each other, they're not - each painting is, I hope, an act of solitary defiance.

Clockwise from top left;

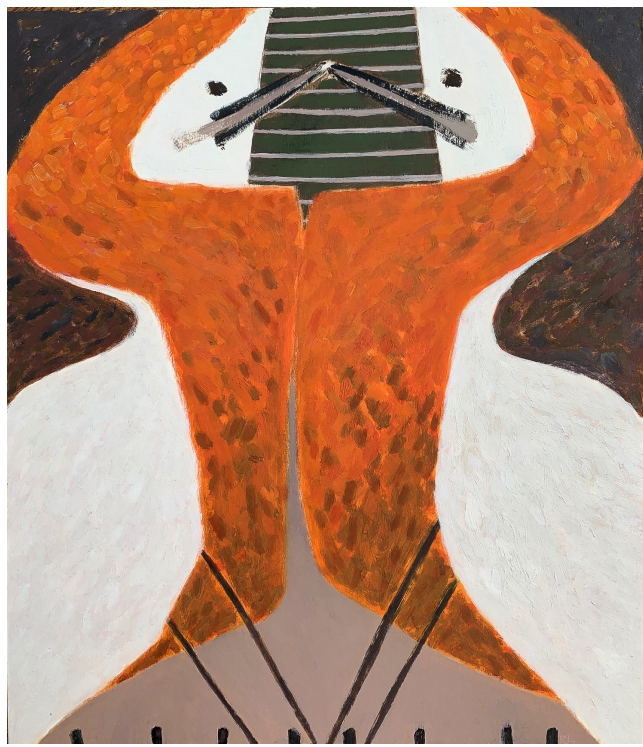
Untitled (The Stoic)

Untitled (Confrontation)

Untitled (Solidarity)

Oil on card

29.7 x 25.5 cm



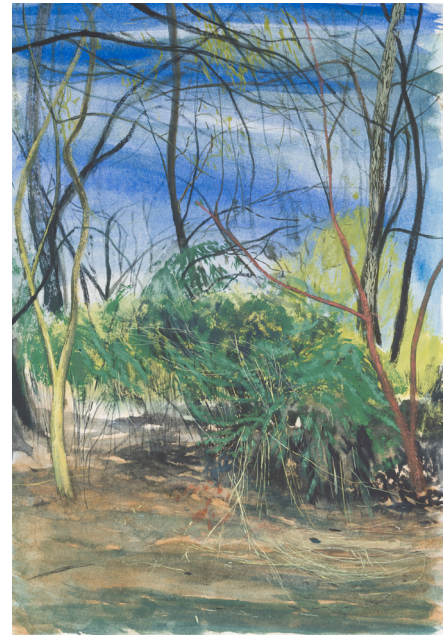
ROB LYON

During the period of lockdown, I began visiting my local parks, taking photographs to work from. I started visiting the quieter parks and more secluded areas within them to find images which convey the current sense of isolation. Solitary trees became particularly poignant, along with areas off the paths, behind hedges and outbuildings. Working at home I began painting some of the images in gouache, a medium I have neglected for years. Nature always provides some sort of comfort in times such as these, it is uplifting. I like to use it as a sound board, on-which to convey my emotions, whilst still communicating the atmosphere of a given place.

Clockwise from top left;

Forgotten Area
Shadows and Chimney
Yellow Tree, Red Tree
Isolated Ash

Gouache on paper
26 x 18 cm



CALUM MCCLURE

I have found that setting up still life's on the table where I work alongside my 9 year old daughter, 16 and 13 year old sons, has had the effect of keeping us all focused on the work which we have to do.

I didn't realise until making these small paintings that the toy figurine depicted is an artist with a little palette on it's head. Moments of feeling like I am at once drowning and walking the plank occur every day, when you veer from happy times to those fraught with tension and worry.

'The Frisky Plank' (a wonderful line from Barrie's 'Peter Pan', life is so precarious, you never know which way it will go.)

'Drowned World' (I loved the JG Ballard book and the title is exactly how everything feels now)

From left;

The Frisky Plank
Drowned World

Oil on canvas
20 x 20 cm



GRACE O'CONNOR

My studio looks out onto a block of flats. Until recently I've taken only a passing interest in the blank or curtained windows; until recently everybody went to work. Now there are glimpses of different lives across the road and they distract me (so much is distracting these days) as do the lack of glimpses. Some curtains remain closed all day which is disturbing. I see people moving behind the glass. Sometimes they're exercising, or dancing.

These are fairly small flats. A narrow balcony serves each one on the topmost floor. A young woman regularly comes out to smoke. A week ago one balcony was filled with flowers. Other than these small signs of life, even on the hottest days, the balconies remain empty. Yet every Thursday night at 8 people miraculously appear.....to clap and make a wonderful din. From the windows on the other side of my house I look out onto a corridor of pretty gardens. These have been empty and silent for the last four weeks; I presume these people have gone to their second homes.

Clockwise from top left;

Waiting 2

Waiting

Watching

By the Light of the Television

Oil on board

Various sizes



ANNE ROTHENSTEIN

The dramatic change to our lives has been a shock, and there have been moments of deep grief for how much we've lost, of anxiety for the future, for our health and that of loved ones. I don't know what will happen, where we'll be in weeks or months ahead. While I know we should always strive to live in the moment, the lack of a familiar routine and the uncertain future is profoundly unsettling. One of the things that has been of enormous comfort, however, is the observation of people's response to the crisis. Our neighbours reaching out to each other, friends sewing masks for their friends and neighbours, neighbours setting up collection points for food banks. Colleagues reaching out to each other with recommendations on home science experiments for their children. The awkward smiling dance between strangers on the street as we all try to respect social distances. The TV footage of people playing instruments on their balconies. The international obsession with baking. And of course the weekly applause for healthcare workers.

I live in an urban environment and found myself expressing this community outreach as a series of connected, supported house-like shapes.

Clockwise from top left;

Community 1

Community 6

Community 8

Community 5

Mixed media on wood panel

50 x 50 cm



GIORGIA SIRIACO

Thinking about the current worldwide Covid 19 lockdown, which is, of course, concentual, in that everyone recognises that it is absolutely essential for us to mount a collective defence against the Virus. However, it is a fact, that even this self-imposed isolation can have, and is having, a very serious effect on our physical and mental health.

With this in mind, I try to imagine, the extent of the never-ending trauma which must have been growing in the heart and mind of Nazanin Zaghari Radcliffe over these past four years. The complete and absolute despair and disbelief that she must feel, because the Iranian Government, in the land of her ancestors, her parents and herself, could be capable of inflicting such an 'uncontestable, arbitrary and unjust punishment', for a crime, which she obviously did not commit and against which there can be no defence.

Her imprisonment, and the consequential isolation from her husband and daughter and her parents must induce a complete and devastating feeling of total hopelessness. Her plight has a very great effect on me, and I comfort myself by looking into the future by drawing my concept of the inevitable joyous re-union in which we can all share.

Clockwise from top left;

Musing Out Loud
Someday, Over the Rainbow
Yesterday
Inshallah, God Willing

Archival ink on handmade watercolour paper
Various sizes from 20 x 23 cm to 20 x 30 cm



IRENE LEES

These pieces are really a visual diary of my emotional landscape during the lockdown period.

From the many conversations I have had over zoom, with friends, ex colleagues and family members, it seems that as personal as it is, it is also equally shared. The overarching themes in these pieces are the use of a very vibrant blue and the symbol of the rainbow.

The blue represents the sky. One of the first things I noticed after lockdown was the lack of air traffic and the difference this made to the colour of the sky. A deep endless blue. I have found this to be immensely comforting and enjoyable. The rainbow for me symbolises a bridge. We have left the world as we knew it and are walking into an unknown and uncertain future. In reality, this is actually true all of the time as we really don't know what awaits us at any given time, but what were our normal habits and routines shielded us from this reality. The rainbow can only be present under special conditions, the right mixture of rain and the sun shining it's light in just the right way. They can be an image of beauty and wonder, a signifier of something special occurring in our environment, but they are always transient and pass with time.

When I am feeling lost or confused about something, I will often look to the natural world for some sort of answer or support. This is a time of great uncertainty for so many people. I often spend time just looking at the sky, both in the day and at night. I think about how far away everything is, how the light from the stars can take thousands and millions of years to get to us, but it does get to us, but we have to put ourselves in the position to see it. I think the positives of this situation will be like the light from the stars, they might take a while to get to us but they will arrive eventually.

Clockwise from top left;

Esho Funi
And God was Everywhere
Threshold
Nowhere Man

Hand embroidery
Various sizes from 19 x 16 cm to 50 x 30 cm



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