

Present : Past

New paintings by Dave Tweedy

The Holy Biscuit

11 March - 5 May 2017

Gallery open: Tuesday to Friday 11am - 4pm, Saturday 1pm - 4pm.

Closed Easter Weekend & Saturday 29 April

Preview: Friday 10 March 6 - 8pm

Discussion evening: 18 April 6 - 7.30pm



Present : Past is the first major solo exhibition of new paintings by Newcastle-based artist Dave Tweedy since he graduated from Newcastle University, and a major exhibition in The Holy Biscuit gallery programme.

Tweedy's large-scale oil paintings combine autobiographical references with responses to historic and current events from which he constructs imagery that combines abstraction and realism. At a time when oil painting might be viewed by some as unimportant or superfluous in relation to personal and world events, Tweedy creates works that are contemporary and Political - one was painted as the events it referenced were happening in America.

His paintings are developed using a variety of sources for reference - from media images to 1960s cartoons. They examine regimes of control and manipulation in relation to both historic and current figures and movements and contain elements of religion, spectacle and ritual.

The work is both technically and thematically significant, gaining particular resonance in the light of very recent political events. This exhibition is absolutely up to date with new works responding to the 2016 American Presidential election and the new incumbent.

Tweedy states - *"The work examines memory, disguise, transformation, ritual and revelation and uses imagery from the media and other printed sources including John F Kennedy's assassination, Catholicism, Donald and Melania Trump, 1960's TV cartoons, pop culture and film. In the light of current political events, my theme has become particularly topical and relevant."*

I examine controlling hierarchies and culture of elites, and use historical and contemporary iconic images which are well known within western culture. Images are often abstracted, with base source still evident. These visual clues invite the audience to join the significance and experience together in different ways. This democratises the relationship between viewer and work and refers to political control and the challenging of power."



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Works will include:

Great Again



Referring to Trump and Dumbo and with fascistic fist pumps from angry white men. To the left in black, and just about to move off, a holocaust transport, and above it a distant fire or flames in the sky. To the right are circus, theatre and film references. Gateways and doors create spaces that connect the visual elements.

Gate Fold



The artist grew up in a Catholic family and attended church in his childhood and youth. During services, his mind would stray to subjects such as pop culture. The (now) truncated legs were first observed in a photograph of Roman Catholic priests lying prone in supplication on Good Friday but were then translated into a pop reference to ABBA. Exploring personal nostalgia and the transformative aspect of the Liturgy, it is also a painterly exercise in transforming source material through abstraction and multi-layering.

Circus Maximus



About control and people being herded and manipulated, this was painted the day after the inauguration and on the day that the women's marches took place across America and is an emotive response to Trump and his Presidency.

Circus Maximus was an ancient Roman chariot racing stadium and mass entertainment venue in Rome. In the film Ben Hur, the eponymous figure played by Charlton Heston wins the chariot race and by so doing defeats his enemies, a jibe perhaps at Trump seeing mainly enemies as part of his personal and world view. Hur's chariot race takes place in Jerusalem and this references Trump's current Palestinian/Jewish thinking and the possible relocation of the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

An orange figure seems to be lashing or flaying people (or carcasses?) hanging on a wall or walking in the street. One is wearing a Pink PussyHat which references women's resistance to Trump. The three forms might also be wearing denim, a worker's clothing material more commonly associated with "Red" (Republican) States. The square format of the painting refers to re-edited widescreen films (panned and scanned) such as Ben Hur which when shown on TV became truncated all round and lost material from both sides of the format, thus presenting only a partial view of the original whole.

Source material



Tweedy collects and collates material into pages of visual subject matter. He doesn't create formal sketches, but paints in a dialogue with the source material which is translated from its initial figurative form into abstracted marks, but always leaving a trace of the original starting point. Here he is painting *Saturday Night Sunday Morning*, part of which depicts three male parishioners' feet being washed by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.



Source material in books and as the original object - The Kennedys arriving at Dallas Airport and driving through Dallas before the assassination of J F Kennedy on 22 November 1963, ABBA (an album sleeve of Greatest Hits) and Dick Dastardly and Muttley from Wacky Races. The ABBA image is placed in *Gate Fold* and the Kennedy material in the two paintings below.

Opening Hours



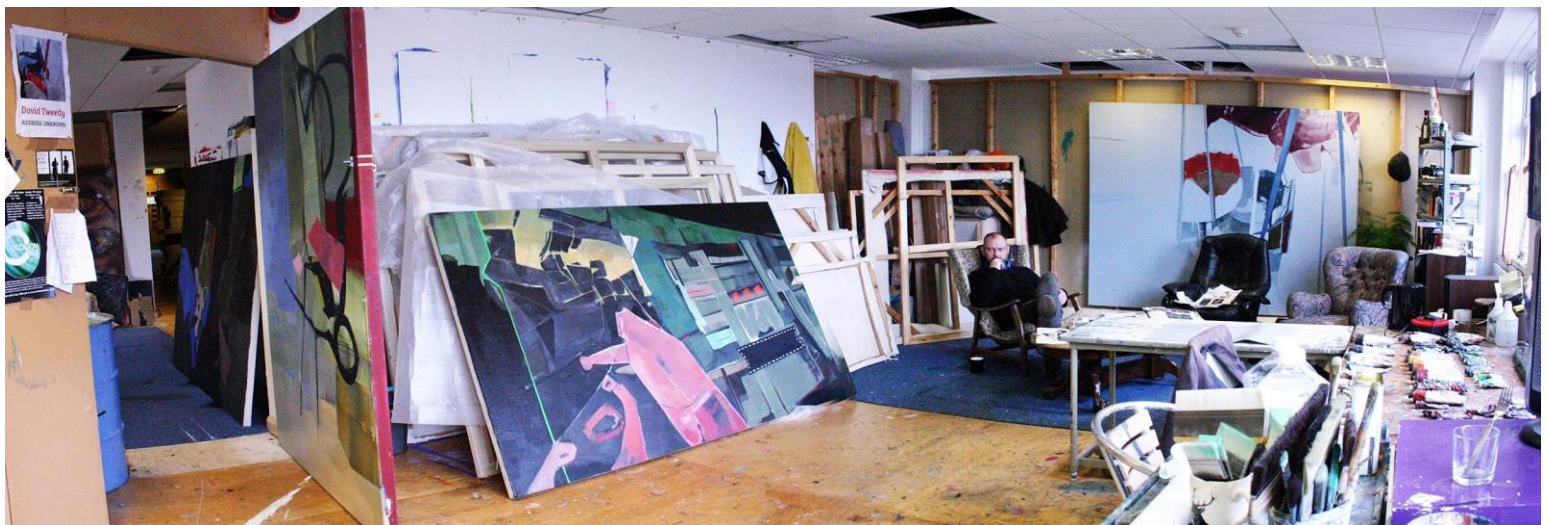
A Shot in the Park



Studio context:



Working on Saturday Night Sunday Morning



Studio

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