

# Framing Collaboration

## **Framing collaboration: aesthetic marriage between frame and painting, some thoughts on collaboration with Nigel Bispham**

Having painted on anything, scraps of board, driftwood, and cloth, the luxury of a canvas was a rare thing, and nothing could be further from my thoughts than framing. Paintings simply extended over the edges, and sides as if to deny the finality of an edge or end.

There have been many experiments that I engaged in – like the dripped bitumen on paper series 'Through' – which I never imagined would amount to anything – that Nigel has transformed by framing.

Collaboration begins always with dialogue about the concept of a work, following with proportions, colour, texture..... Starting with traditional basics, Nigel very quickly started challenging my own perceptions of what a frame can do. No longer 'invisible', we began not just looking at art in galleries – but the frames, discovering a journey together into possibility.



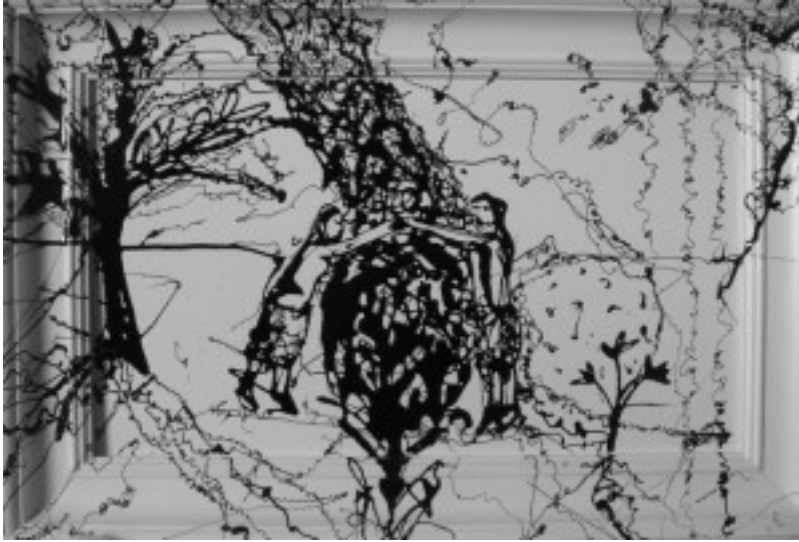
Historically paintings were framed in order to protect, (guarapolvos, a dust guard), to create 'sacra conversazione' (for altar pieces ), to aggrandize (aedicular frames like greek and roman architecture; pillars, plinths, entablature), to illuminate them (gold leaf employed to reflect the daylight, carvings angled and faceted to catch light and throw it on to the picture surface), and frame as form in somehow denying the 'illusion of recession space.'



*Cassetta, architrave, fillet, canted moulding, rocaille, rondel, bolection, mitred, abutted, lunette, scotia, volutes, fluting, girandoles...*Merely at the beginning of our play with vision, space, and dialogue, we are not yet implementing many of these devices, yet we are playing with light capturing, animating features, creating optical gateways. The frame is like the context – all the surrounding inferences from space and time that change the meaning and possible understandings of a work of art – and the context for us is one of dialogue and an enjoyment of re-creating this dialogue in the work itself.



*Bavadaage* (clay tablets with text, antique doors, mounted on board with hinges)



*I – is another – somebody else*, bitumen painted dripped onto canvas and frame



*MUSIC-US*, bitumen paint, and gesso layered onto canvas. Nigel often surprises me with integrated playful layered and sanded framing experiments. A work is never entirely finished – I often work back on to the painting as part of the process.



*Memoire*, bitumen and acrylic on canvas, made with antique frame stock.

Today I am merely remarking on a beginning of an enduring dialogue of play. Tomorrow I envision more conversations....

