

*Song of the masses as they pass on by*, oil & bitumen on canvas, 80x100x4cm, 2020



You might recognise a nod to Gin Alley, Goya's flying figures, the star trek enterprise, colourful skyscrapers and surreal buildings with 'eye' graffiti (from a photo of a real place). This is a busy, gaudy palette of colour used to communicate the joy and distress of humanity – with dreams of escape.

Paintings create rich tapestries of dark and colourful stories that aim to promote equality, Selfhood and visibility. The pandemic has been a time to re-evaluate our attitudes towards what we care for. Paintings don't always consciously use historical references yet visual language can often squeeze through the gaps in consciousness to create meaning we didn't know was there.

I was thinking about overcrowding and the housing crisis, and thought of this painting as 'space as the final frontier'. Housing is a huge issue and often the tipping point for poverty and psychological damage for many families – and that's if they are lucky enough to have a home. I've been made homeless a couple of times in Cornwall over the last 20 years - there is no social housing to speak of and renting is often really difficult because of the pressure from holiday letting. I've always managed to cobble together a home and have been lucky – there are many who are not. Strange to finally complete the painting during the Pandemic. Most of us have the luxury of some space. But if we do not? It's a health issue and health risk. What are the psychological pressures for those who don't have enough living space, outside space, and who cannot get away from others?