



THE AMERICANS HAVE STOLEN MY TRUE LOVE AWAY I, 2011 - OIL AND WAX ON CANVAS - 121 X 183 CM

GEORGE BLACKLOCK

FLAGS, FLYING SAUCERS & ALTAR PIECES

8 SEPTEMBER – 8 OCTOBER 2011

PRIVATE VIEW SATURDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 4 – 6PM

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This exhibition of new works brings together many of Blacklock's long-standing influences and ideas. These influences derive from a variety of sources including recurring themes of religious iconography, comics and movies fed by childhood nostalgia, music, cultural motifs and narratives.

Composed of layers of rich color, both thick and thin, dripping, and then scraped away, George Blacklock's work is bold in movement and form. These paintings create a narrative through the interaction between the background of the painting, and the shapes that play across and into that space. However, Blacklock doesn't see himself completely as an abstract painter. The curvilinear shapes that dominate his paintings serve as narratives for the complex relationships that exist in life.

An important source of his work has been the iconography of religious painting, particularly such themes as the Annunciation and the Pieta.

Michelangelo's Pietà is something that I can draw and redraw, using different approaches, something that allows me to have formal elements that can carry different levels of pictorial weight in the picture.

Blacklock

These are significant periods of Christian history that form the basis for renaissance works, particularly the Massaccio frescos in the Brancacci chapel, Florence. In Blacklock's Altarpieces further inspiration has come from 14th and 15th c. English origin alabaster reliefs. Shapes are repeated, yet full of movement and tension, creating a visual language within his paintings.

Comics and movies prevalent in Blacklock's youth provide an alternative genesis in the series Flying Saucers. The works are developed from small story-boarded gouaches into larger formats.

The starting point for Flags was an invitation to become involved with a project utilising the Barings Bank's archive. This allowed Blacklock a more referential use of form and structure through its colourful history and more recent 'rogue trader syndrome'. The flag references within the series stem from an early painting of the proto union flag that depicts only the necessary ten stars of the time.

I became most interested in the Louisiana Purchase – where Napoleon sold a vast tract of land to the proto-union government - as when this was being outlined I had a song running through my head sung (in the version I had heard) by Liza Carthy called 'The Americans Have Stolen My True Love Away'. Its origins lie deeper in the past than [Liza Carthy] and a version of this song could have been sung in the US around the time of the Louisiana Purchase.

Blacklock

George Blacklock has exhibited extensively in the UK, Europe and America and has received awards from the Welsh Arts Council, the Greater London Arts Association and was a prize winner at the John Moores contemporary painting competition. He has work in many collections including the Arts Council of Great Britain. He is the Dean at Chelsea College of Art.

For further information and images please contact Ceri Stock on 020 7920 7777 or email ceri@flowersgalleries.com