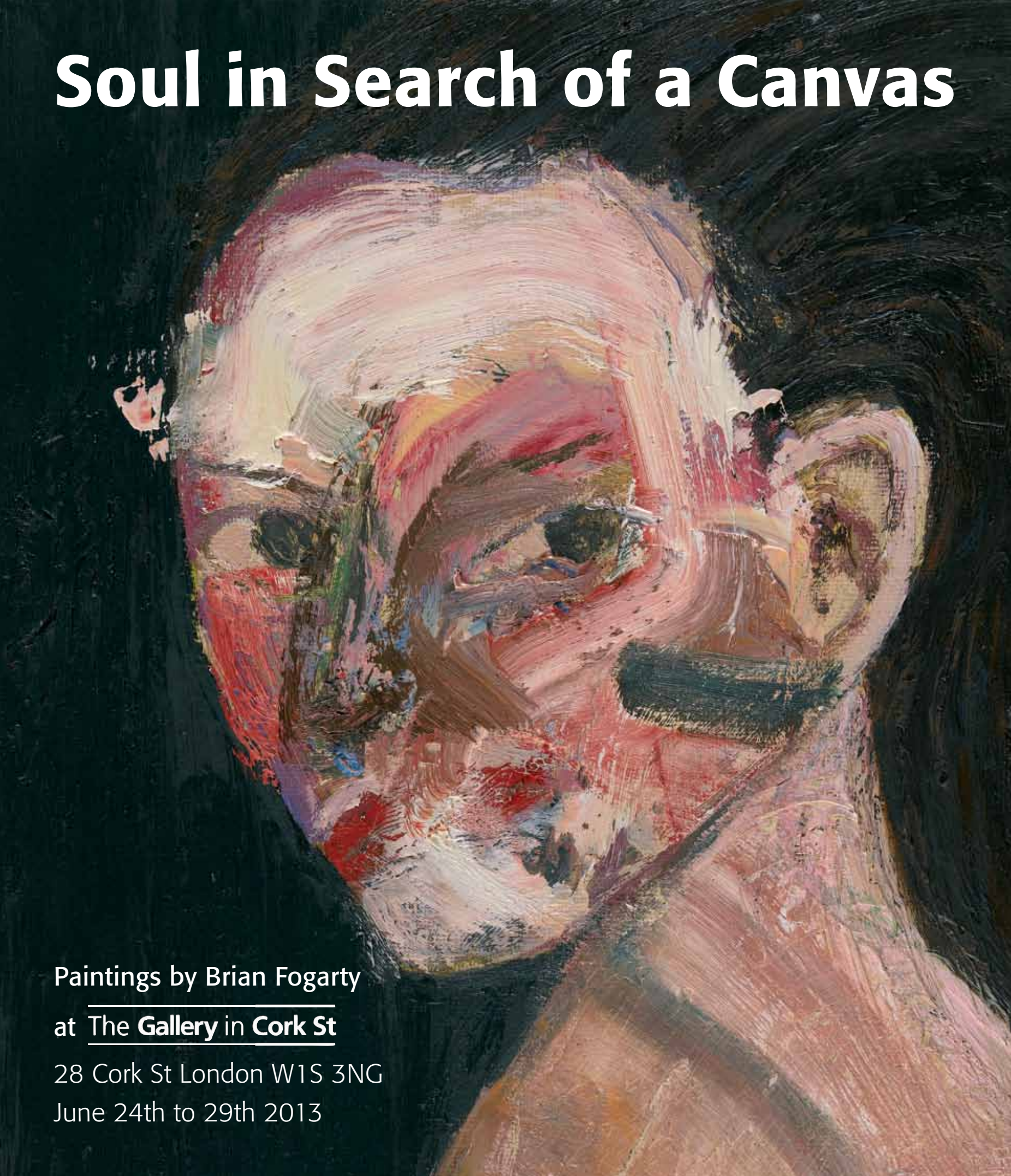


# Soul in Search of a Canvas



Paintings by Brian Fogarty

at The Gallery in Cork St

28 Cork St London W1S 3NG

June 24th to 29th 2013

**FRONT COVER PORTRAIT OF KATE MOSS**

(oil and acrylic on canvas, 10"x12")

"I painted this portrait of Kate Moss from a lightning ballpoint sketch on an envelope I made inspired by a conventional, full-length black and white fashion poster of Kate on the London Underground, seconds before my train roared in to obliterate her image. Maybe that's why the resulting work is a bit of a 'train crash' of a painting;)"

*(Brian Fogarty)*





HEAD OF KELLEY  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")

"A painting can suggest, with storms of brushstrokes, that it's more desirable to be touched violently than never to be touched at all."

*(David Lawton in Brian Fogarty's novel "Red over Blue")*

"Brian Fogarty is, above all, a powerful and original image maker. Weird and hallucinogenic, like tripping on drugs, yet on its own terms so solid and real, much of his work is so intense, mesmerising, convoluted, it becomes a prison for the eye."

*(David Mclean, on facebook)*

"Rational observation alone cannot take me to the deeper, visionary truth I seek which whilst *of* the material, lies beyond it."

*(Brian Fogarty in an interview with the performance artist and filmmaker Lucy Chang, whilst discussing his approach to painting his portrait of the actress Scarlett Johansson)*

"I love him whose soul is deeper than the wound"

*(Friedrich Nietzsche)*



# BRIAN FOGARTY

Soul in Search  
of a  
Canvas

Exhibition of Paintings

From 2001 to 2013

*Oyster Press*  
0



Brian Fogarty  
SOUL IN SEARCH OF A CANVAS

The Gallery in Cork Street  
Mayfair, London W1S 3NG

June 24 – June 29, 2013

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# CONTENTS

A letter from Freddy Kokoza	9
Introduction by Anne de Souza	15
The Paintings and Drawings	35
Overpainted Photography	159
Poems	167
The Interview	187
Published Books by Brian Fogarty	193

..... *for my beloved Jean*



PORTRAIT OF CATE  
(acrylic on canvas 24"x36")

A letter from art and literary critic  
Freddy Kokoza declining  
Anne de Souza's invitation  
to write the introduction to  
this exhibition catalogue



Dear Ms de Souza  
(Anne de Souza)  
Re: BRIAN FOGARTY: SOUL IN SEARCH OF A CANVAS

Thank you for your letter inviting me to write the introduction for the catalogue of Brian Fogarty's Cork Street exhibition. Unfortunately this presents me with something of a conundrum, for just as perhaps many followers of his art work may not be familiar with his literary works, I have seen only a few of his paintings in the flesh, so to speak, although in the light of your letter I have been taking the opportunity to look at more on his website and facebook, and to read up on some of his biog and background relating to what inspired him to create some of his key paintings. However, before I venture any opinion of his art, I feel compelled to say that even before I'd looked at his paintings, I had strong reservations about whether they should exist at all. This is because I simply could not believe that a writer who in my view, has produced one of the most vivid and powerful novels ever written ("Red over Blue"), being so committed to his literary work could spare the time to paint pictures that would be anywhere near as moving and enlightening. For me there is no greater pleasure in life than discovering a novel that reflects back a world I can recognise, and in the long, amazing, aesthetic, moral, and physical distance the demanding journey that the novel takes me on as it opens up to me a far deeper experience of that world. It is therefore with mixed feelings that I can confirm that my expectations of his art works have not been disappointed, and therefore I have to decline your invitation as I don't feel I'm the right person to write an introduction that could do the exhibition justice and not come across as merely patronising and grudging. Of course it might well be the case that, contrary to the popular saying that 'a picture paints a thousand words' a painting, or even a series of paintings can never match the accumulative power of the experience of reading a great novel, which, unlike someone viewing a painting, the reader has to invest so much more of his time and attention in – to live with it, and let it seep into his heart and bones for much longer. A great novel, far more than any painting (with the exception of a handful of masterworks like "Guernica", and "Weeping Woman" with their marvellous, original yet universal forms Picasso found for his volcanic outpouring of anguish and anger) not only has the power, like a symphony by Mahler to lift our spirits or break our hearts, but to effect fundamental psychological shifts, healing and enriching the heart, the intellect and the soul in the most extraordinary ways. The truth is, I can't help but feel that had Mr Fogarty not got sidetracked by his urge to paint as well as to write, I might well have had the immense pleasure of reading another novel written by him that - who knows? - might have been the equal of his magnum opus "Red over Blue", thus securing his literary legacy and cannon, and confirming my belief in him unequivocally as a truly great novelist, and dispelling any churlish theories by others that he was some kind of one-hit wonder. (Anyone who thinks that "Red over Blue" was a fluke should try writing a novel of that sustained intensity on that epic scale themselves).

That said I admit I could recognise some of the hallmarks of genuine authenticity that I have found so striking in his novels, short stories, and poems, in his pictorial work, for

example, working nearly always it seems at the limits of his technical abilities which makes everything he does so unsettling and edgy, the huge risks he takes in terms of how far he is willing to take his obsession with gigantic, often wayward emotional human states; the robust and powerful, sometimes achingly beautiful way he renders human flesh – whether tortured or ecstatic (sometimes both at the same time!) – for he is obviously one of those breed of artists (much rarer these days when nearly everyone puts comfort and safety above all else) who, having a thin skin and himself experiencing severely 'the human condition' is, it seems, driven wild by the sheer reality of being alive both by the almost intolerable pressures that seem at all times at work from within him, and the overwhelming and disturbing array of environments he has, I believe, unavoidably at times, but also in the interests of fully realising his humanity and getting his material to create his art, bravely embraced and immersed himself in e.g. forbidden passions amid the civil war and famine in equatorial Sudan ("Red over Blue"); the trippy and bizarre underworld of a Brighton which Graham Greene, Patrick Hamilton and other writers, compared to Brian Fogarty (his novel "the Feeders") hardly scratched the surface of. He is obviously a visionary painter, just as he is a visionary writer, as opposed to a merely illustrative or socio-psychological one. This implies that he has the courage and drive to journey to some physically and psychologically extremely dark and dangerous places, and has the stamina and strength to return to the relative calm of our everyday world to organise and shape his raw material into literature or art. This takes some doing, and there's always the possibility that he might not be able to return, and be stranded mentally, physically, or both in some bleak far-off wilderness like the arctic explorers Scott and Shackleton, or an astronaut whose ship has crashed on the moon or run out of fuel.

I was also impressed by Mr Fogarty's technical abilities – the obvious fact that he can draw like Egon Schiele (but not quite as good in my view, although his best paintings are superior) hasn't seemed to inhibit his painting as it has David Hockney for all of his career, who always seemed to fall back on his virtuoso draughtsmanship whenever the work on canvas presented him with difficult painting challenges, as a result of which he produced some rather pleasant coloured drawings which, however, were not good paintings; and I might add albeit to a much lesser extent Francis Bacon too who despite his insistence to the contrary, was clearly a fine draughtsman who, unlike de Kooning, confined his volcanic eruptions in jets of paint to tightly enclosed areas of the canvas which he'd marked out carefully like unbreachable walls with very fine, exquisite lines reminiscent of Japanese prints in advance of committing himself to paint. More so than these artists, paint seems Fogarty's natural medium as far as his pictorial work is concerned; he is not held back by restrictive drawing from letting his paint marks make the form, instead of just filling it in as if painting by numbers as say Gauguin might have done.

My experience of Brian Fogarty's painting as a body of work is that it seems he started off being nourished by late Rembrandt and late Titian and most strikingly influenced by the ubiquitous Lucian Freud, then Francis Bacon, Matthew Smith, Soutine, and later

De Kooning, Munch and, in his latest works (perhaps in some belated, but in my view unsuccessful attempt to synthesise his two passions of writing and painting) street art and Basquiat. It's to his credit however that like Picasso it appears he's always been willing to forget how he painted his most successful works in order to keep taking risks, keep growing and trying something new even if it meant falling flat on his face. Bacon and Freud initially had this pioneering spirit too but for the last forty years of their careers they painted as though condemned to repeat their own successes, and more cautious (and even condescending) now kept giving us more of the same, as did Rothko and Pollock (both abstract painters of modest talents) which ultimately drove them to despair and self-destruction.

During one of the major stages of his evolution, Fogarty produced two stunning life-sized portraits, with a fresh, passionate, and original look that owed more to his own soul than to the influence of either Bacon or Freud, one of the film actress Scarlett Johansson – an uncanny incarnation of her looking much older and more complex, and even more alluring than she looks on screen since the attitude of her body is challenging and inviting, whilst the expression on her lovely face seems sultry, slightly affronted, intense in its sheer reality - the other of a deeply neurotic and beautiful young woman who, happening upon his website and being turned on by the intensity of his portraits and naked portraits, started sending him emails containing frank and intimate details of her hopes and dreams, sexual exploits and fantasies, trials and tribulations – long, passionate messages over a period of six months, during which time, without actually meeting her but with reference to her emails and photographs she attached of herself, and with her enthusiastic consent, Fogarty painted “A Girl Called Fox”, a stunning portrait of the girl in a green hat and décolleté flimsy blood red dress.

Fogarty also painted a triptych of small heads of the same girl – again without yet having met her (“Three Studies of Foxy”) – which he exhibited in Brighton where they were ignored, regardless of their stunning and very moving visionary quality, because of the viewers’ pedantic insistence that nothing should ever be painted unless it is literally plonked under your nose to slavishly copy just as if it were a face or object being photographed. Fogarty’s answer to them was to shrug and comment ‘If I want a photograph I use a camera, not a paintbrush’.(He had no interest it seems in creating illustrative works along the lines of the BP winners’ portraits, or like a royal portraitist, or even as a technical exercise in the manner of say, Gerhard Richter with his hyperrealist/photorealism portraits which, even when you stick your nose right up to them you can see no evidence that they’ve been touched by a brush held in a human hand, and they look exactly like pictures in a high street photographer’s window, and not paintings at all). According to Fogarty’s account which I read from selected extracts from his journal online, eventually he and Foxy met up in his local pub “the Lion and Lobster” where they drunk a number of JDs and three hours later went to his studio where he showed her the portraits. On seeing the three small heads which had been beautifully and expensively framed in one unit under museum glass, the young woman was deeply moved and told the painter that he’d captured not only her physical likeness but her own inner feelings in three different moods. Then she gazed in silence for a long time at the life-size portrait of herself

in the green hat and red dress, before studying it as she would her own face and body in a mirror from many angles, including looking up to the image from lying on the floor.

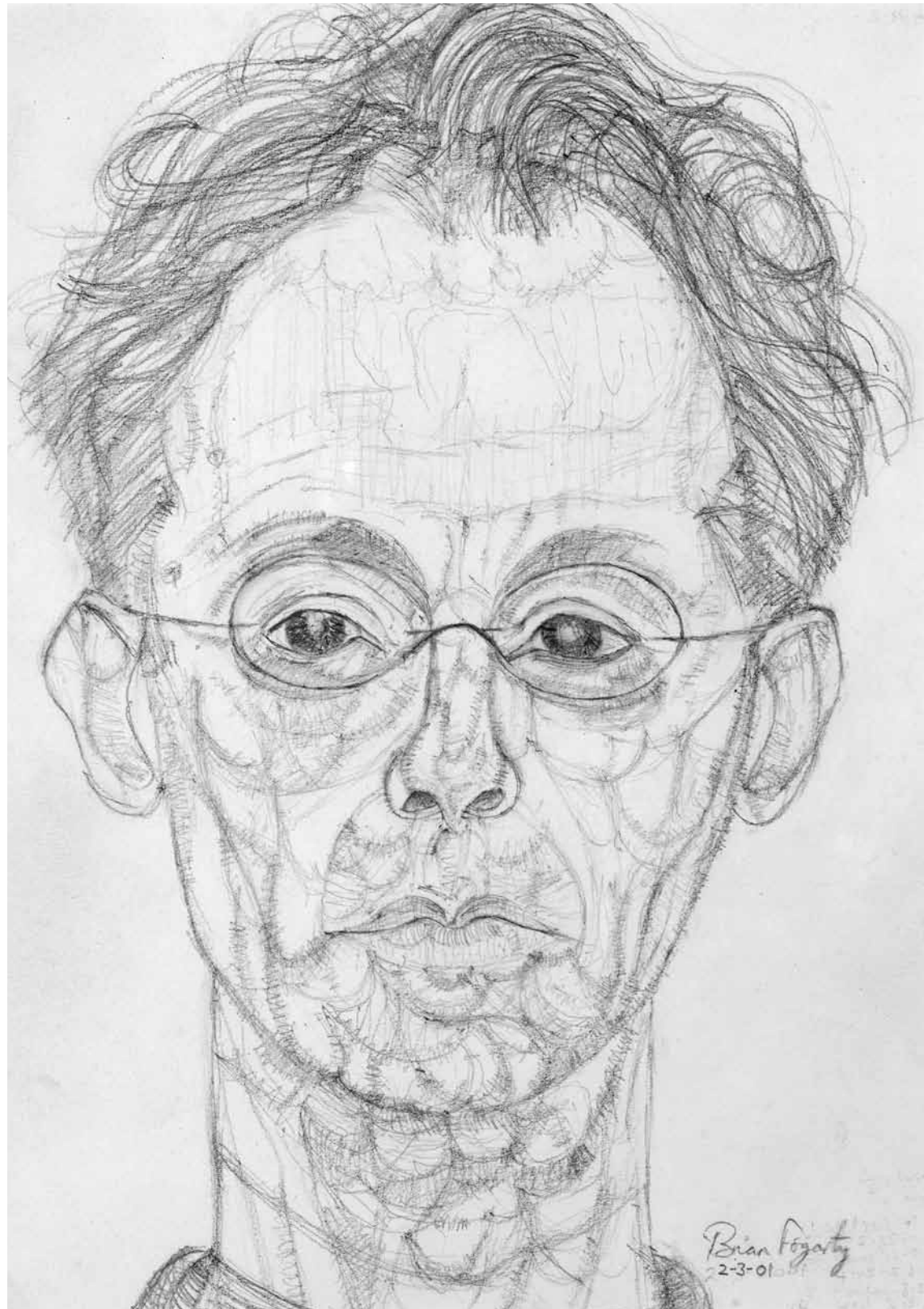
After a while, Foxy said that if a mirror existed that could reflect back to her an image that whilst being something that she, as an inveterate narcissist recognised as her physical likeness even more accurate than any photograph, at the same time she felt that unlike any of the hundreds of photographs she’d had taken of herself, then this portrait was a mirror that also revealed to her her own soul, and that in looking at the painting she saw not a mere reverse mirror image, not a reflection of herself, but her actual self. The term ‘soul’ has been overused in the context of painting (“oh my golly, you’ve captured her soul!”). But then Foxy added ‘It’s as if over the six months I was writing to you and telling you all about myself, you came to know me more deeply than any one else has ever before; I entered you and you entered me: so strong was your empathy with me that it’s as if you knew exactly what I felt and who I am: it’s as if you became me in order to paint these portraits of me.’ I can’t help but reflect that Foxy must have sent some very eloquent and inspiring emails indeed if she believed Brian Fogarty captured her essence to such an intense degree as she claimed he had.

The above brief analysis is, I’m afraid, under the circumstances just about all I can contribute myself and I’m sure you’ll find someone else who’ll be both able and willing to write the detailed and informative essay which I’m sure the exhibition deserves. Ultimately my personal opinion of Mr Fogarty’s pictorial work matters not at all, since no doubt the exhibition will excite, disturb, move and delight many of the visitors to the gallery. All the same I stand by my passionate belief that “Red over Blue” and perhaps too his other great novel “The Feeders” provide me with a deeper and more wide-ranging human and artistic experience than his paintings. Others who can spare the time to think about it more subtly than me may be of the opinion that in some way the development of his paintings have depended on the previous development of his writing, and that a symbiosis exists between these two different creative forms, that, but for the novels, his paintings might not have existed at all. If so I think it’d be more of a one way street than a true symbiosis: surely if the paintings hadn’t existed then there’d have been more great novels? Obviously Brian Fogarty is (to coin a phrase) in a race against time for he was born with an extremely rare and incurable brain tumour, and although it might well have provided the grain of sand which made the pearls as suggested in his poem “Moon in the Man”, it has also meant that, as it gets nearer and nearer to his brain stem and, being made of solid bone shoves softer tissues and arteries brutally aside on its journey as it grows, causing excruciating migraines by pressing on his basilar artery and cutting off the oxygen and blood supply to his brain, he can’t work every day, and even then, rarely for the ten to 36 hour marathon sessions that he used to. It’s my passionate hope that there is still time for him to give us one more great novel.

Sincerely

Freddy Kokosa  
(February 2013)





**Who is Brian Fogarty?**

**An Introduction  
by the novelist  
Anne de Souza**



Since more than it appears with most artists of today, Brian Fogarty's work is organic, growing from and driven by his personal experience from his own extraordinary life, I feel it is appropriate to give here a short account of that life as I've either witnessed it myself, or discovered it over the last thirty-nine years since our friendship began. Damien Hirst said in a recent radio interview that sneers at any cherished 'romantic' traditional notions of the artist as a lonely hero, that there's no such thing today as an artist of any (potential) significance struggling in poverty and isolation – that worthwhile creativity of any kind can now only be achieved by a corporate business, and that the solitary talented painter (in the unlikely event that he even exists) working alone to create images simply for his passionate love and joy of creating them is wasting his time if he ever has ambitions of other people appreciating his work. Hirst was of course especially chosen as a very young man in the 1990s to be promoted as a 'star' no matter how trite his work became and on those terms is probably the most successful artist in history. However I believe Brian Fogarty's exhibition 'Soul in Search of a Canvas', which is eclectic and wide-ranging with its synthesis of 'in-yer-face' raw street power and tragic classical grandeur capturing a twilight world of longing and remembering, dreaming and unrequited love, provides people who genuinely love art for its own sake with a timely antidote to Hirst's cynical complacency, and that the journey from the bombsites of the East End of London in the 1940s to The Gallery in Cork Street in 2013 is an awesome feat of courage, tenacity, intelligence, and survival.

THE FIRST TIME I encountered Brian Fogarty was when, soon after my sixteenth birthday, I decided to take a look at Nunnington Farm, the grand old Georgian farmhouse near the sea in West Wittering, Chichester, that was locally far more notorious than Redlands, the house a few miles up the road around the bend which Rolling Stone Keith Richards still owns today and where he, Mick Jagger, and Marianne Faithfull were busted for drugs a couple of years before Brian Fogarty joined his fellow 'freaks' living at Nunnington Farm in 1974. Parents had warned their kids 'keep away from Nunnington Farm'. Other girls in the Chichester area, and the Witterings in particular where juicy gossip and rumour circulated and fed the largely apochrypal stories about the goings on and comings off inside the farmhouse, and girls in my class at school simply giggled excitedly and dared me to go to Nunnington Farm and knock on the front door, but warned me not to accept a 'joint' or any kind of cigarette or even a cup of tea from the hippies who lived there. So, one fine day in May 1974 I turned off the main road by the Old House at Home pub



and, with butterflies in my tummy, as though I were nearing an enchanted castle in a Grimms fairy story, the haunted house that you dared each other to go to when you were little and where there were mysterious curtains and candles in the windows and no-one knew what was inside, walked slowly along the winding track across the farmland to the house. A monkey puzzle stood up over the roof from the garden behind. Suddenly the front door flew open and a wild haired, intense-looking young man with the most amazing huge, deep blue, piercing eyes rushed out towards me balancing on his palms in front of him a board with a small fire raging on it. With a shout of 'get back girl!,' he flung the board fire up on the ground about ten feet in front of me and we watched intently from opposite sides until the pile of plastic bottles, paper, cardboard, polystyrene, old film negatives and other combustibles burned themselves out on the hardboard sheet in a bubbling smoking heap. He picked up a stick and spread it around a bit, explaining to me that he was preparing the board with a bit of relief and texture to paint on. Leaving the fire still smouldering he invited me into his studio which opened through french windows on a conservatory with a grapevine and, beyond it, a wild garden full of hollyhocks, snapdragons, sunflowers, and other nursery book flowers. There was also a little allotment with tomatoes and perpetual spinach flourishing there, for Brian single-handedly grew vegetables for the commune which he ran here at Nunnington Farm. We sat at a wonky table under the monkey puzzle and I did, in fact, accept a cup of fruit tea which he brought me in a china cup with oyster plants on it and a saucer to match. I offered him one of my own Rothmans cigarettes which, to my surprise, he declined.

'What? Don't you smoke then?' I asked him, astonished, for in 1974 (although 'grown-ups' hadn't a clue) it was uncool for practically anyone over the age of five not to!

'Sometimes. Usually after making love,' he said, and although at the impressionable age I was then I thought it a pretty cool answer, I had the impression that he'd used this flip chat-up line before, was bored with it, had no desire to impress me as much as I wanted to impress him and regretted saying it now.

He immediately changed the subject, asked me what my favourite subject was at school, seemed pleased that it was English literature and that I wrote poems; asked if I had any with me. I had not, but I did have two penguin collections of poems I'd found in a second hand book shop by the Russian poet Yevtushenko, and the Italian Eugenio Montale whom he told me delightedly was his favourite poet, and he took the latter book from me, turned immediately to 'A House by the Sea,' and began to read in a beautiful warm sonorous yet intimate voice, first in Italian, and then the English translation, only occasionally needing to look down at the book, for he'd obviously read the poem so many times he knew it almost by heart:

'Our journeying ends here:  
in miserable cares that break up  
the soul that can no longer utter a cry.  
Now the minutes are alike and fixed  
as the turns of the cranking pump.  
One turn: water that gushes loud.  
Another, more water, a creaking at times.

Our voyaging ends upon this beach  
that the slow untiring surges press.  
The sea bares nothing but lazy smoke  
- upon it light breezes as they pass  
score hollows: and rare it is that here,  
in the silent calm,  
between wandering islands of the air  
humped Corsica or Capraia will appear.

You ask if everything goes like this  
in a little haze of memories;  
if in the hour that dazes or in the sigh  
of breakers each destiny is fulfilled.  
I would like to say no, that for you the hour  
approaches to take you clean beyond time;  
perhaps only he who wants to, grows infinite,  
and this you may do, who knows, not I.  
I think that most are not to be saved,  
but someone overturns every plan,  
wins through the gap, finds the self he wanted.  
I should like, before yielding, to mark for you  
that way of escape  
unsure as foam or wrinkle  
on the shaken fields of the sea.

I give you too, my miser hope.  
This new time, tired, I bring it no increase:  
I offer it in ransom to your fate, to set you free.

Our journey is ending upon this shore  
gnawed by the tide with double motion.  
Your heart close by, not hearing me, perhaps  
steers for the eternal this moment.'

I was surprised, for if anything, I'd have expected Shelley, Rimbeau, or Baudelaire; Kerouac or Ginsberg, or maybe Brian Patton, one of the Liverpool poets, not someone as esoteric and unhip as Montale was then, although he was to win the Nobel Prize for literature only two years later. When he'd finished reading he looked at his watch and said he had to cycle in to Chichester now to his job at Gibbings and Harrison warehouse where he loaded and unloaded lorries of books, but that I'd be welcome to visit him again. He proudly showed me the racing bike he'd customised built himself and confided with a shy smile that he still harboured his teenagehood dream to win the Tour de France. He took me through the farmhouse along the narrow (and very clean) flagstoned passage out to the lovely old kitchen with its flagstoned floor and oak beams. Most of the members of the rock band 'Just before Dawn' lived at the farm and they were rehearsing the Santana hit 'Black Magic Woman' in an outhouse near the back door that led from the kitchen. Brian introduced me to two of the band members – the drummer Andy O' Neil, and base guitarist Steve Cherry – who came out as I was leaving to make a cup of tea. I recall the singer from the well-known band Camel was also with them, for he was going out with Andy's sister.

The second time I saw Brian was when I dropped by Nunnington Farm on the off chance of seeing him, hoping too that he might ask me to pose for my portrait, and found him perhaps in a more sybaritic mode for he was in the garden stretched out under a great big beaming sunflower completely naked. I was shocked by his androgynous beauty. It was breathtaking. When I see him today, older and frailer now, but still noble-looking, toned and slender like a deer, I always think of how he looked then, the loveliest creature I'd ever seen, a mythical figure with fine, beautiful bones like David Bowie and smooth translucent skin.

As our relationship developed, and after he'd drawn me naked dozens of times, given his reputation – he was obviously an enormous attraction to women of all ages from three to a hundred and three! – I once asked him why he'd never made any attempt to seduce me, for I was beginning to think he just didn't fancy me.

'Me seduce you? I don't think I've ever attempted to seduce anyone – I wouldn't know how!' he said with a chuckle. 'By the way I do find you very beautiful which is why I love drawing you. As for making love, no, I don't think I'd be able to take you anywhere where you'd want to be, and where you are destined to go on your journey.' It was as if, in his anachronistic but high-minded way he'd seen something so special in me which he didn't

want to disrupt simply by having a fling with me. I suspect though that he enjoyed being somewhat oracular and mysterious, and got pleasure from subverting his reputation as a great womaniser. Maybe he thought I was regularly 'debriefed' by my friends after my visits to the farm, and wanted to baffle and tease them. I'm sure he liked it that I was fascinated by him, and, above all, he could have practically any beautiful girl he wanted and there were plenty of them who came wandering into Nunnington farm, not just local girls, but from all over the world and, whoever else they'd come to visit at the farm, according to others I spoke to who lived there, they nearly all ended up being drawn to Brian's studio, like moths to a flame!

All the same, I believe he's still the only man I've met, a very rare free spirit who possessed a genuinely noble and courageous nature, acted most of the time with 'grace under pressure' (to quote Hemingway), who kept faith with himself and remained true to his word on the few occasions he gave it to others. Being with Brian was an intense and spiritually nourishing experience for he acted as though he had a strong sense that his whole life was an enormous gift or blessing, an ambitious and demanding project or mission he was under an obligation to fulfill; he was determined to see it through, no matter what hardships or discouragement he encountered along the way, and there's been plenty of those for him to overcome, mainly severe illness, loneliness, hostility, danger, and poverty.

As for us making love, no one else had or has since looked at me so often and for so long, beyond what any lover I may have had ever would; I loved having so many lovely hours of his undivided gaze and attention, so maybe drawing and painting me was, for Brian, his way of making love. It certainly seemed like an act of love to me. And he told me once that he'd never have sex with anyone unless he felt love was mutually at least possible, no matter what their age, for a woman of forty could be just as fragile and vulnerable as a girl of fourteen. Even when later on he was living in Africa teaching English whilst he researched his great novel "Red over Blue" and he occasionally visited prostitutes, according to some of the volumes of his diary which he let me read, and, indeed, the semi-autobiographical warts 'n' all "Red over Blue" itself, his attitude towards these poor refugee women was romantic as well as passionate, for that has always been his nature.

However, looking back to those enchanted days now when I used to go to Nunnington Farm, it seems to me that Brian was in fact 'grooming' me – not in any crude sexual sense,



obviously – but in order that I might make the best of myself in seeing the possibilities of what life had to offer and to develop and realise my own potential. And it wasn't just about drawing and painting me, and posing like a pre-Raphaelite girl. Sometimes for example we'd work in the garden together, among the flowers and vegetables; I loved picking the juiciest grapes from the vine, making huge green tossed salads in the beautiful old Victorian washbowl on the great table in the kitchen for the whole of the commune. Yes, of course there were plenty of bacchanalian nights and days – and much more gorgeous than any of the local gossip and rumour-mongers could ever have imagined;) - but although Brian drank, and allowed certain "illegal substances", perhaps being already on a natural 'high' which needed no further 'enhancing' apart from his work, he rarely smoked marijuana himself, and as the natural leader of the commune he forbade any commercial dealing on the premises, and could be ruthlessly tough with anyone who broke that rule, or who tried to introduce hard drugs, for apart from the fact that he didn't want his work disturbed by any police busts himself, some of the girls living at the farmhouse had children, and, since he regarded them as being under his personal protection, he wouldn't allow them to be traumatised. Also, he wasn't always well, and could be moody and irritable, especially when he was feeling severe pain from his stomach ulcers, or excruciating migraines which, thirty three years later, after an MRI scan, he discovered were due to a rare brain tumour which he was born with. I'm grateful to Brian for I believe in Camus' words he 'rescued me from the dreamless sleep of mediocrity'. But for him I doubt very much whether I'd have had my heart and mind touched and opened at my most crucial and formative time, and certainly not the courage, confidence, and tenacity to become a writer at all let alone an 'international best-selling novelist' (even if, compared to Brian, I'm not a very good novelist!). Now, nearly forty years after I first saw him with fire in his eyes and in his hands, it's an honour and a great pleasure for me to be involved in some small way in my dear friend and mentor's retrospective exhibition at The Gallery in Cork Street, for perhaps I've always been myself a 'soul in search of a canvas'!

However, Brian told me once that the danger of living in a commune with other people who'd 'dropped out' from society was that, despite themselves, they'd all bring with them one or two of the worse traits of the society they'd dropped out from. This was one of the rare occasions when Brian seemed cynical or disillusioned, and, although he didn't explain what he meant, I found out for myself later on when I shared various houses with friends. I remember him telling me "I am not part of your journey, and you are not part of mine,"

holding my hand and gazing into my face searchingly as if he meant the opposite of what he was saying, "one day you'll find someone who truly loves you...try to save yourself for them."

Brian Fogarty's story began thirty two years before I saw him with fire in his hands, and then dazzlingly naked in that enchanted garden under the sunflower when he had probably already lived two or three lifetimes which is perhaps why he was able to conduct himself with the grace, maturity, and wisdom which he did.

He was born in Hackney in the East End of London during a German air raid. According to his mother whom I met on two occasions when Brian took me up to London to meet his parents who were still living then, at the end of that raid only three houses in the street were left standing, including the two-up-and-two-down back-to-back occupied by the Fogarty family. By the age of three, Brian was out raking the streets all day with his 'gang', exploring bombed out houses, looking for bomb shrapnel to use as ammo for his catapult and to tip his arrows, and for dog-ends from the gutter to open, Rizla-up and smoke. His short story, "The Greenhouse" published in 1984 to much controversy and critical acclaim in the now defunct literary magazine Panurge and collected and published in 2006 as the title story with more of his stories, poems, extracts from "Red over Blue", and an interview by the poet, film maker and performance artist Lucy Chang about his approach to how he painted his magnificent life-sized portrait of Scarlett Johansson, is surely a valuable social and historical document of what it was like to be a child from a poor working-class family in wartime London, as well as being a beautiful and mesmerising read.

Brian moved to Ealing, West London, where his streetwiseness, and street fighting skills he'd gained as a child in the East End during and after the war still served him well.

At the age of eighteen he joined the rock band The City Lights as lead singer, appearing at coffee bars, dance halls, and pubs, until he met the singer/blues guitarist Eddie Counsel who taught Brian clawhammer picking and bottle neck guitar and they listened to a lot of Big Bill Broonzy, Lightning Hopkins, Sugar Pie Desanto, Memphis Slim, Sony Boy Williamson, Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Wes Montgomery, Hank Garland, Scotty Moore, James Burton, and wrote a number of blues, ballads, and rock songs together and did gigs, mainly at colleges and universities.

On a hot 12th day of June, 1962, Brian met the girl who started him on his fifty year old journey as first a writer, and then a painter. He was walking up Castlebar Road, Ealing with

his Jamaican friend the musician Earle Lewis whom he'd met whilst they were working in the stockroom at Rank Film Library, Perivale, when they saw a beautiful slender young girl sitting on a wall outside a house strumming a chord on her guitar. The girl was fifteen years old, her name was Wossy, so called because her sister Jenny had been unable to pronounce her name properly (Jocelyn) when they were both little; she had long gold hair, shining sky blue eyes and the house was called Almora. The two boys stopped and chatted to Wossy. She'd come to London from Buenos Aires with Jenny and her father. She'd already been in London for six months and was due to stay for another six, until the autumn when all three would return to Buenos Aires. She'd only just started learning the guitar so Brian offered to teach her a few chords. He also played and sang her a song he'd written and he accompanied Earle, while he sung as well. Before the two young men went on their way Brian and Wossy agreed to meet the following afternoon on Haven Green, across the road from Ealing Broadway underground station. They left her sitting on the wall and as she got up to go indoors she called after Brian "If you don't turn up tomorrow I'll never ever again speak to another English boy!" After that they met nearly everyday. The musical soundtrack to their relationship was Neil Sedka, Ricky Nelson, Elvis, the Beatles, Brian's own songs which he sang to Wossy and some of which she translated into Spanish so that he could sing to her in her own language, and the Rolling Stones who, during that summer of 1962 played nearly every Saturday night along with their mentor, Alexis Korner and his band Blues Incorporated, at the Ealing Club, located in a tiny cellar right by Haven Green. It was quite usual for the Rolling Stones to chat with audience members while they were taking a break at the bar, and once, whilst Keith Richards was telling Brian how the Stones kept starvation at bay by lying in bed for some days each week all day without moving a muscle thus saving energy to rehearse until their girlfriends came by after work in the evening and took them out to the Wimpy Bar, Brian Jones remarked, smiling at Wossy 'Hey we've got the same colour hair!'

When Wossy returned to Argentina, even though he'd known she'd be going back Brian was still heartbroken. Wossy wrote to Brian intermittently for a year and inspired him to write a number of songs until eventually, in 1967, under the unlikely inspiration from his reading of the plays of August Strindberg, Edward Albee, and the films of Ingmar Bergman he started writing a cinenovel called "The Cage" in order to do something with the powerful feelings he still had for Wossy. The hundred and eighty page manuscript was completed in 1968 and seen by Sydney Cole, the producer of the television series "Danger Man" starring

Patrick McGoohan (most famous for his cult series "The Prisoner" which also inspired Brian due to the Kafkaesque situation of the hero number 6) after Brian had met Cole and his wife at a party, and they subsequently invited him to dinner at their house on a number of occasions. Cole never got around to reading "the Cage" himself, but his wife did and said she found it so compelling that she was up all night reading it. Cole introduced Brian to a number of other producers, writers, and artists, including the London Weekend television producer Richard Bates who invited Brian to send him something shorter for television. Brian also met a young television playwright called John Foster who gave him some useful and detailed written feedback on his writing. Over the next fifty years Brian started work on a number of novels and long poems inspired by Wossy, which he entitled "Personae separatae" after another poem by Montale, whose work, as I've already mentioned, moved Brian profoundly, along with the music of Mahler, Richard Strauss, Pucini, Stravinsky, Miles Davis; the novels of Dostoyevsky (especially "The Idiot"), Melville, William Faulkner, Jean Cocteau, Balzac, Chekov's plays and stories, Malcolm Lowery ("Under the Volcano") Baudelaire, Rimbeau, Lawrence Durrell, and Proust. He also began to visit the London art galleries where he saw work by Rodin, Bonnard, and Edvard Munch who, with his lyrical and melancholy paintings affected him deeply. It was not until 1974 that he saw his first Lucian Freud exhibition at the Hayward Gallery (along with Munch), and Francis Bacon a few years later.

In the summer of 1970 Brian moved into an enormous flat in a big, solitary mansion on Ealing Common called Hotspur Lodge. He shared it with his friend the painter and illustrator Richard Lomek who at that time lived entirely from his paintings which he used to display on his pitch on Bayswater Road. They were joined by other friends and it became a kind of chaotic commune, not unlike Nunnington farm where Brian lived later. At this time, as he had since leaving school at sixteen with four 'O' levels with a distinction in English Language, Brian supported himself by working at many different jobs, starting initially as a meteorologist, and then mainly as a building or garden labourer, warehouseman, house clearance worker and antique dealer, and eventually an accounts manager. He joined the famous Questors Theatre and, encouraged by the advice he'd received from Sydney Cole earlier, trained as an actor under its founder the late Alfred Emmett OBE, and his Jamaican friend Wylie Longmore, introduced to him by Earle Lewis. The theatre taught the Stanislavsky 'Method Acting' the most famous exponents being Marlon Brando, James Dean, Montgomery Cliff, and later Al Pacino, and Robert de Niro. The method encouraged



the actors to ask themselves the question not so much “what would the character I’m portraying feel/do in a given situation, but what would I feel/do?” Brian believes that the training he received at Questors developed his imagination, enhanced his natural empathy and nourished his passionate, direct, and fearless way of writing, and later, painting., which has made his work so immediate, and real, even though he rarely presents an illustration of what is normally assumed is reality.

At Questors his edgy, at times smouldering, presence, his powerful and sometimes dangerous-looking (both physically and psychologically) improvisations made him something of a legend amongst the other students who, if they were passionate about their acting as well all wanted to work with him, especially the female students. At twenty-eight, Brian was in fact the oldest student in his year.

Since Questors was only a twenty minute walk from Hotspur Lodge, and the first floor flat had a huge parquet floored landing, Brian used to bring other students from the theatre home to create and rehearse the improvisations they had to prepare, rehearse and perform every Saturday for Alfred. It was not long before Brian was using these sessions to explore his ideas for stories which he’d later write, and so the girls who worked with him were mostly content to learn the little scripts Brian wrote for them, rather than having to go to the trouble of doing any improvisations themselves. So startling and interesting was the work that on this basis Brian and his female partners presented to Alfred Emmett and the class, that although they twigged what was happening, neither Alfred nor the other members of the class raised the objections they should have, so eager were they to see what Brian had written!

In the summer of 1971, having played the title role in Albert Camus’ ‘Caligula’ with its mournful message ‘Men suffer and men die’, and that ‘we can’t have the moon’, Brian felt he’d outgrown Questors and, inspired by the ‘total theatre’ plays he’d seen adapted from Kafka and directed by and ‘starring’ Steven Berkoff, he left to form his own theatre company – The Intimate Theatre, the members of which he assembled by advertising on the Theatreboard in ‘Time Out in London’. For six months the half dozen actors and wannabes Brian recruited met three times a week, either at Hotspur lodge or the YMCA gym which Brian hired because it had mats and enabled his team to include some pretty spectacular Martha Graham type modern ballet dance, judo throws and rolls in order to

loosen up, as well as the more conventional Laban dance and movement routines he’d learnt during his year at Questors and was now able to pass on. Voice production was also on the agenda. Brian wrote a play called ‘Journey Into Autumn’ especially for his Intimate Theatre group which he developed partly through their improvisations and through long solitary hours of writing, mainly working at the kitchen table through the night till dawn at Hotspur Lodge, and, just like he had a few years earlier when he wrote “The Cage” keeping himself going in the only way he knew then - chain smoking and knocking back shots of whiskey, even though he had to be at the accounts office which he ran at GKN, by nine o’clock every weekday morning. Not surprisingly in retrospect, he suffered badly from the painful stomach ulcers that had first troubled him in his late teens at this time, decades before there was any medication that could be prescribed to treat them effectively.

Everybody wanted to help make ‘Journey Into Autumn’ a success, for Brian was young, charismatic, and other creative people who were looking for something special to be involved in were drawn to him at a time when people were more concerned with making something happen that should happen than merely becoming rich and famous. In those days there was no such thing as grants and much tenacity and passion was needed to see things through on a fraying shoe string without any hand-outs from the state. Like “The Cage” “Journey into Autumn” was about reality, dreams, and dying. It was a chamber play, influenced by Strindberg’s “The Great Highway”, but Brian had modern ballet, and shades of Chekhov in the play which probably didn’t mix very well. As well as choreographing the dream dancing scenes with the help of Richard Lomek who also appeared in the play and designed the sets and costumes, Brian wrote music for guitar and used slides projected by a caroused projector on a screen also. The play ran for two nights at the Oval House Theatre, (a fringe theatre where he’d first see Berkoff perform) with only one rehearsal which went on even while the audience were queuing outside the theatre to get in for the first performance!. He used ultra violet and strobe lighting in some of the action scenes, which disturbed some members of the audience prone to epileptic fits who ran out in a panic. Unfortunately Brian wasn’t aware of the dangers of strobe lighting at this time. On the first night some of the scenery came crashing down, narrowly missing crushing Brian who, typically, just carried on as if nothing had happened. All the same, although a weird and wonderful play which the ‘freaks’ in the audience loved and found very moving, it was pretty much a disaster, and within a week Brian, exhausted and suffering severely from his stomach ulcer left Hotspur Lodge to live by the sea in Selsey, Chichester. He remained in

the Chichester area for eight years until he trained for a year to become a TEFL teacher at Chichester College of Technology (now Chichester University), and went to live in Africa.

During this period Brian lived mostly on his charm and wits, or worked as a washer upper in the Crypt café, a warehouseman, hod carrier, farm labourer, and postman (during which time he made a number of friends amongst the girls and their families on his round, and antagonised others and some of his fellow postmen because he refused to wear a uniform or accept tips at Christmas for he thought it was demeaning) and, after he taught himself to draw and paint he supported himself entirely by selling his work on his pitch at Green Park, London which Richard Lomek helped secure for him. Sometimes, if Brian failed to sell anything, he left his work with Richard, and too proud to tell his friend that he was broke, walked from London in all weathers the sixty miles all the way through the night back to Bracklesham Bay where he lived at this time in a tiny bedsit in a house by the sea until he moved to Nunningon Farm.

Brian became concerned about the French government testing their nuclear bombs in the atmosphere at Murora atoll in the south pacific, and kept up with what was happening by subscribing to Peace News through which he learnt about Greenpeace which, in the early 1970s was regarded as something quaint just for hippies and not a movement many people took seriously but through his one-man street demos in Chichester where he gave out information young people and the local press became interested and his local labour candidate Anthony Smith who seized the opportunity for himself to make political gain. Brian was urged by the main political parties to join them, including the Communist, but he maintained that what he was trying to achieve was not to do with politics but just doing his duty as a human being. When he moved to Nunnington farm, he arranged a gig in Chichester town hall featuring “Just Before Dawn” and another local band called “White Rabbit” which raised over a hundred pounds (quite a useful sum of money in those days) which they sent to Greenpeace in New Zealand to help maintain their ships “Rainbow Warrior” and “The spirit of Peace” which were sailed into the testing area in order to disrupt the French from testing their bombs in the atmosphere and damaging the people of Tahiti from the nuclear fallout. With the help of other Greenpeace groups world wide, eventually the tests in the atmosphere were banned under international law although underground testing carried on into the 1980s until due to international outrage at the French government ordering “Rainbow Warrior” to be blown up whilst it was at harbour in New Zealand, thus

killing two members of the crew, the French agreed to stop testing their bombs altogether.

After completing his TEFL course Brian was offered a job at Chichester School of English where he worked until after he’d responded to an advert in the Guardian he went to Sudan in November 1980 to teach English at Hantoub School – a very prestigious boys’ boarding school where secondary school students up to the age of twenty came from all over this vast country, and where President Nimeiri himself had been educated. (Thirty two years after leaving Sudan, Brian still get girls he knew there as well as his ex-pupils googling him, and writing to him to thank him for inspiring them by the way he taught them. In March of this year Brian was tracked down by one of his students who has become a successful surgeon, and who, like so many people he met decades ago, have never forgotten him). After spending a month with other English recruits in the capital Khartoum, Brian was posted to Hantoub school in central Sudan, near the second biggest town, Wad Medani where he lived in a big delapidated bungalow surrounded by torn mosquito netting, on the edge of the Sahara about fifty yards from the Blue Nile. An intriguing sign hung over the front door which read in English and Arabic ‘Heartbreak Hotel’.

Brian became very ill with malaria soon after arriving in Hantoub, but once recovered he lived at Heartbreak Hotel for the next two years.

One day, soon after arriving to take up his teaching post at Hantoub, having attended to some official business he had in the city, Wad Medani, Brian returned home to Heartbreak Hotel on the Nile ferry. Whilst crossing the Nile a beautiful girl in her traditional school uniform smiled at him. This girl was to become his main inspiration for the character of “Sadiah” the heroine of Brian’s novel “Red over Blue”, which he was driven to work on, creating draft after draft, right up until it was published more than quarter of a century later in 2007.

It was some months after falling under the spell of her smile on the Nile ferry before Brian met “Sadiah” again by chance in a village shop and they were able to converse, since by this time he’d spent a several hours everyday with his neighbours and had quickly learnt to speak and understand a lot of Arabic, which was a necessity if he wanted to get to know them and communicate with them since they spoke no English as they were too poor to attend school, accepting their hospitality and thus immersing himself as he was able into



his environment as well as putting to good use some of the language learning techniques he'd learnt on his TEFL course in Chichester.

"Sadia" insisted that Brian come home with her to meet her family, even though it was unprecedented and therefore an extremely dangerous thing to challenge Sudanese Muslim traditions in this way – a Muslim woman was not allowed to walk alone with a man who was not her husband or some other member of her family, which Brian, being an khawadja (a white foreigner), clearly was not. During the twenty minute walk across the desert to the tiny village where "Sadia" lived with her parents and siblings, some of the people they passed on their way shook their fists or walking sticks threateningly at the couple, hurled angry comments, told Brian to leave the girl and be on his way. But "Sadia" insisted that Brian continued walking with her, and once they got to her village, people came out from their backyards onto the little streets to greet Brian, smile, shake his hand. Brian was made very welcome by "Sadia's" family, and became a regular visitor to their home.

Brian's friendship with "Sadia" was to prove the most significant meeting with a girl since Wossy, the girl from Argentina, 18 years earlier, since she enriched his life, deepened his hinterland, nourished and inspired his imagination and creativity and inspired him to have the tenacity in the face of great poverty and illness to write his great novel "Red over Blue".

Before he left Sudan, Brian travelled all over what was then Africa's largest country (before the south seceded in 2010), to the Red Sea coast, in the East, the Nuba Mountains and Dafur in the west, and Juba, capital city of the south, with his knowledge of Arabic getting to know many diverse people who opened their hearts and minds to him. He returned to his base in the north by steamer, on an extraordinary week long journey during which the boat came under fire from southern rebels (for the dormant civil war was just starting up again, which twenty-eight years later was to result in the secession of the south from the north) and is described in great detail in "Red over Blue".

Brian returned to the UK in February of 1983 and, always stimulated by living somewhere new where he knew not a soul, he arrived in Cambridge, and found a small cheap bedsit at 26 Bateman Street near the Botanical garden. He lived meagrely in his bedsit for the next seven years whilst he wrote five drafts of "Red over Blue", teaching English privately and at the local Language schools when he was well enough to do so for he was ill for long

periods with painful ulcers which bled badly necessitating that he be rushed to hospital for rest and blood transfusions. He was also diagnosed with bladder cancer. During this time, following a one night stand he learnt that he had a daughter, Kathryn-Jayne. However, the mother, on realising how poor he was and how ill he'd become understandably under the circumstances, kept the child from him. Years later, when he'd recovered and moved to Brighton where in 2002 he took up painting again in a very serious way, he painted a portrait of Kathryn Jayne, in 2004, of how he imagined she might look at the age she'd be then of eighteen. It's ironic that Kathryn Jayne, although not intentionally conceived, appears to be, unlike two previous children with young women he knew in London and Chichester who were planned but under pressure from the mothers' family and against his own wishes aborted, the only child of his to survive. Brian, never having met her as always felt it'd be wrong of him to look for her, especially as he's continued to be fully committed to his writing and painting, which has kept him poor, frequently ill, and always struggling to survive.

He'd arrived in Cambridge unable to afford to buy a typewriter to work on, but fortunately he had a neighbour, David Cann, himself a serious and dedicated poet who went on to win a second prize in a Radio 3 national poetry competition with his short poem "Easter Apples", and David bought Brian an ancient Olivetti with an 18" carriage which Brian worked on in his bedsit over the next seven years on "Red over Blue", poems, and a number of short stories, including "The Greenhouse" which was published to much controversy and critical acclaim in the literary magazine "Panurge". He also published his poetry in the prestigious "London Magazine" at that time edited by the eminent poet, the late Alan Ross.

During 1990, Brian became so ill, that on visiting him from Brighton where I now lived after not seeing him for a decade and only communicating with him through post cards and letters in which Brian had made no mention of his deteriorating health, only that he was struggling to make what he called his 'great literary bid' following his return from Africa with "Red over Blue", writing in the full blaze of events as it were of the civil war and famine now raging in southern Sudan which "Sadia" was caught up in, and to whom through lack of a visa he was unable to return, I was so concerned to find that, due to bleeding ulcers he'd been unable to keep any food down for the past six months except Complan and Weetabix, and in contrast to that wonderful image of him, sixteen years before in the Nunnington Farm garden he was now little more than skin and bone, I stayed with him in his tiny room

for a week, afraid to leave him, since he was vomiting blood, and urinating blood (shortly after this he was also diagnosed with bladder cancer) while he worked every moment that he was not lying in severe pain curled up like a little kitten on the bed, seated at his table pounding out the fifth draft of “Red over Blue” on the huge old trusty typewriter. Only then, when he’d completed the work did I manage to persuade him to let me pack all his books and manuscripts and precious drawings he’d saved made decades earlier of his factory and warehouse colleagues, of myself, his long lost sweethearts Phyllis and Amanda (mothers of his two aborted children) into my car and come back with me to live in Brighton. I believed I was bringing Brian back to the sea, which he loved, to die, and indeed, once in Brighton, Brian was almost immediately rushed to hospital with a severely bleeding ulcer for rest and blood transfusions. However, on his discharge a week later, he was prescribed a new wonder drug called “Omaprazole” which cured him of the disease which had plagued him for decades within two months once and for all. His recovery seemed a miracle for I saw an X-ray of his ulcer which looked like something the size and shape of the red planet Mars! He was also regularly seen at Brighton General Hospital for his recurring bladder cancers, which, over the next ten years, were successfully removed during cystoscopies whenever they were found.

Refusing to accept any financial support from me other than occasional treats like a day out in London to visit an art gallery, a visit to the cinema, a decent meal, or a night out in The Lion & Lobster which was for twenty years his local pub and which he was rarely able to afford to visit, Brian continued to live in poverty while he got on with writing “Red over Blue” which after turning down a number of publication deals from mainstream publishers who wanted to turn the book into a racy thriller, was eventually published by Oyster Press in 2007.

Brian took up painting again and, apart from long breaks due to severe illness from the rare and incurable brain tumour, which was unsuccessfully treated with two ill-advised and bungled major surgical operations at Hurstwood Park Hospital and three months equally ill-advised Proton radiotherapy in Jacksonville, Florida (which, like the two failed surgical procedures has caused him a lot of unnecessary ‘collateral’ damage’ – “ever since the craniotomy my head has felt like a football being booted about; ever since the radiotherapy it’s felt like a nuclear bomb being booted about”) he was persuaded to have by the oncologist’s and neuro-surgeons’ specious arguments for they saw Brian not as a human

being but a mere commodity to exploit for their own purposes of enhancing their CVs and obtaining £250,000 of much needed funding for the Proton Therapy Centre, and no matter how much damage they did him, so long as they didn’t actually kill him they could claim it’d all been “a great success” (which, if we are to regard the NHS simply as a business entitled to exploit unsuspecting patients to raise money to fund their prestige projects to serve the so-called ‘greater good’ at the expense of an individual patient’s health then indeed it was) has continued to paint whilst also writing two major collections of poetry and three novels, one of which, his notorious bizarre and trippy Remote Viewing thriller “The Feeders”, is set in Brighton.

Brian, ‘the cat with nine lives’, regularly reads his poems at the open mic sessions on the last Monday of every month upstairs at the Victory Pub, Duke Street, the Lanes, Brighton, and at the Pighog poetry evenings at the famous Red Roaster Coffee House also in Brighton. He is also a member of the Sussex County Arts Club and he attends their life drawing sessions. The club awarded him the David Rose prize for his semi-nude “That Blue Dress” which they considered the most outstanding entry at the Brighton Arts Festival in May, 2005.

If you’ve taken the trouble to read this short biography of Brian you may have some idea what made him the great creative force that he has become and what he is talking about when he says “when I paint someone I want them to feel they have come alive in someone else’s mind, heart, spirit, blood, and veins...I want my work to provide nourishment for the whole person, for their profane elements as well as their sacred, the spiritual as well as the sensual, the dirty as well as the divine, the violent as well as the tender: my aim is not to transcend, but to embrace, to disturb the comfortable and to comfort the disturbed.” In conclusion I’m going to have the audacity to now say – albeit in a very small quiet voice –

I believe Brian Fogarty is probably the most powerful and exciting portrait painter in the world. (But why not see for yourself?)

Anne de Souza

(Anne de Souza is an internationally acclaimed novelist who writes under a *nomme de plume*)





## The Paintings and Drawings 2001 - 2013



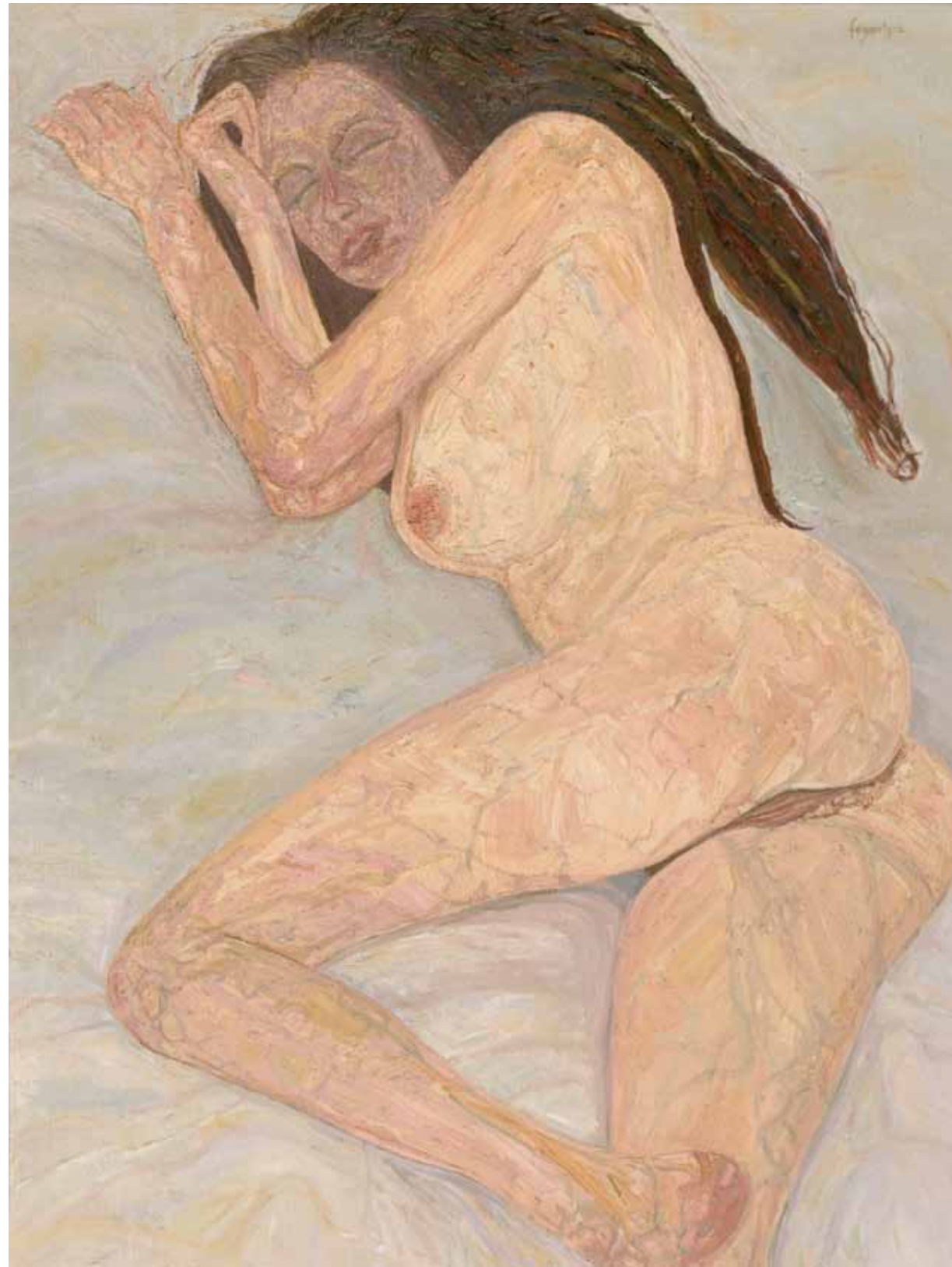


PORTRAIT OF RHAİN  
 (oil on canvas 10"x12")

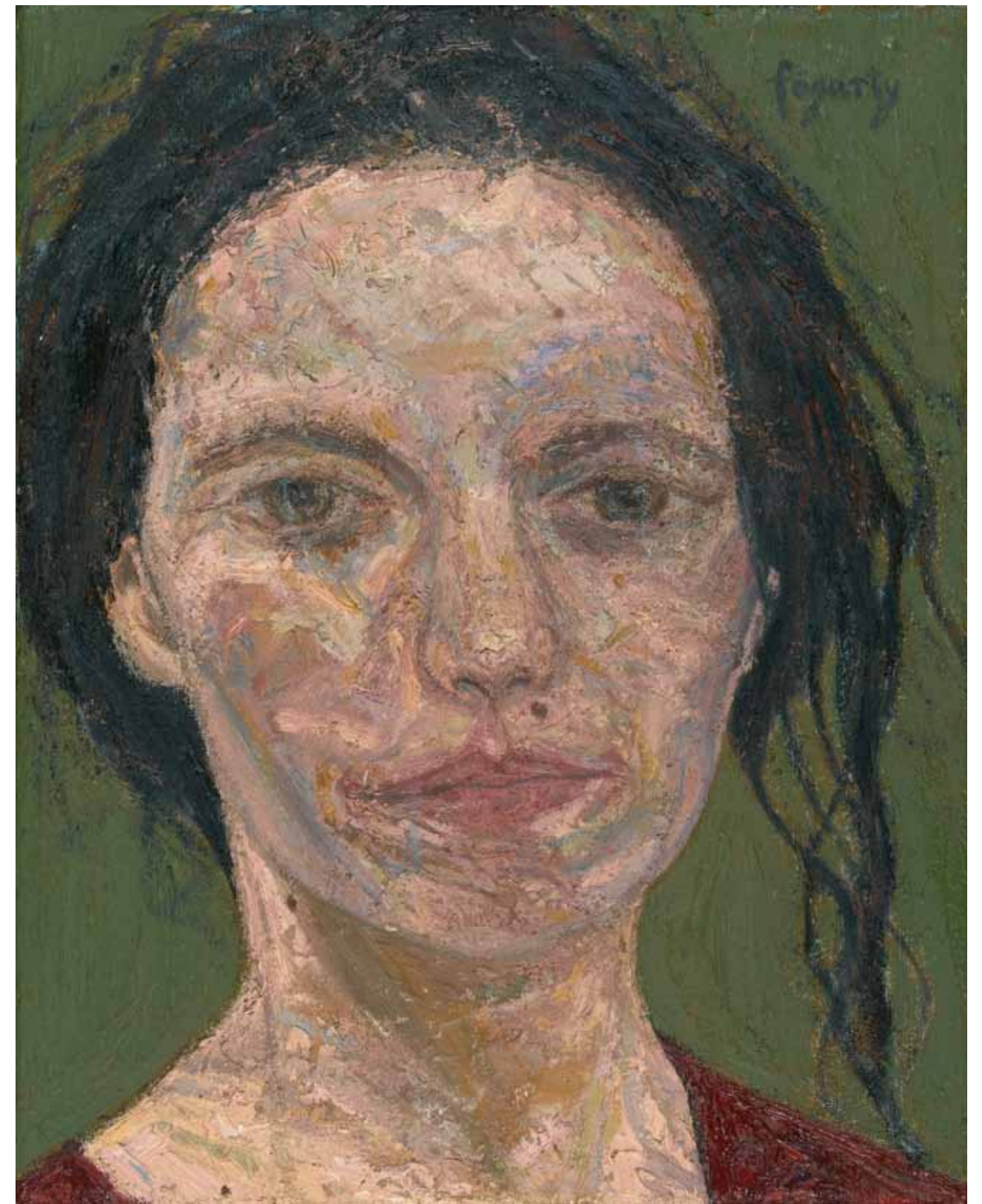


NAKED PORTRAIT OF RHAİN 1  
 (oil on canvas 30"x40")





NAKED PORTRAIT OF RHIAN 2  
(oil on canvas 30"x40")



PORTRAIT OF EVA  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")





THAT BLUE DRESS  
(oil on canvas 18"x14")



LITTLE BLUE DRESS  
(oil on canvas 30"x40")



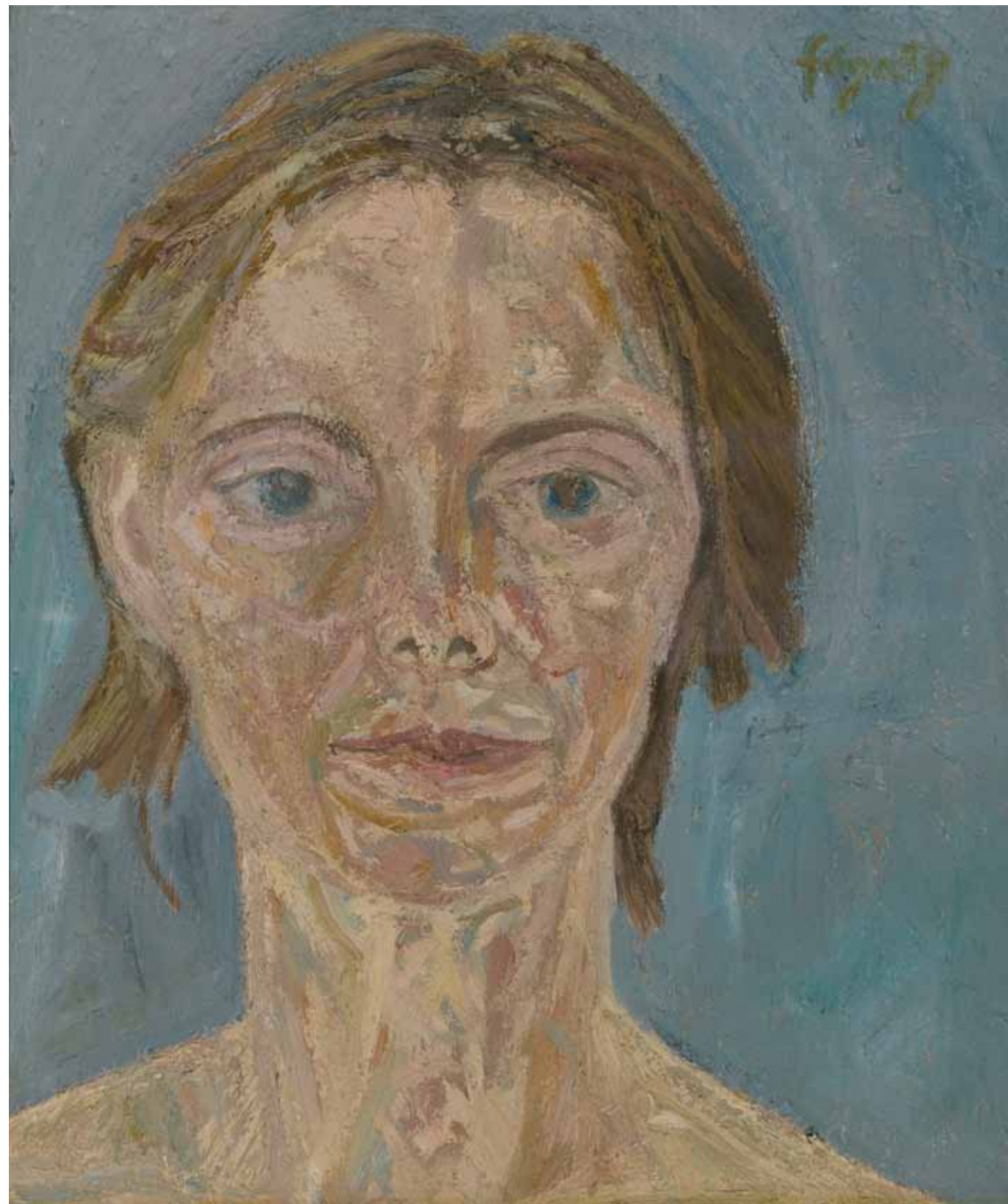


HEAD OF LIZ  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")

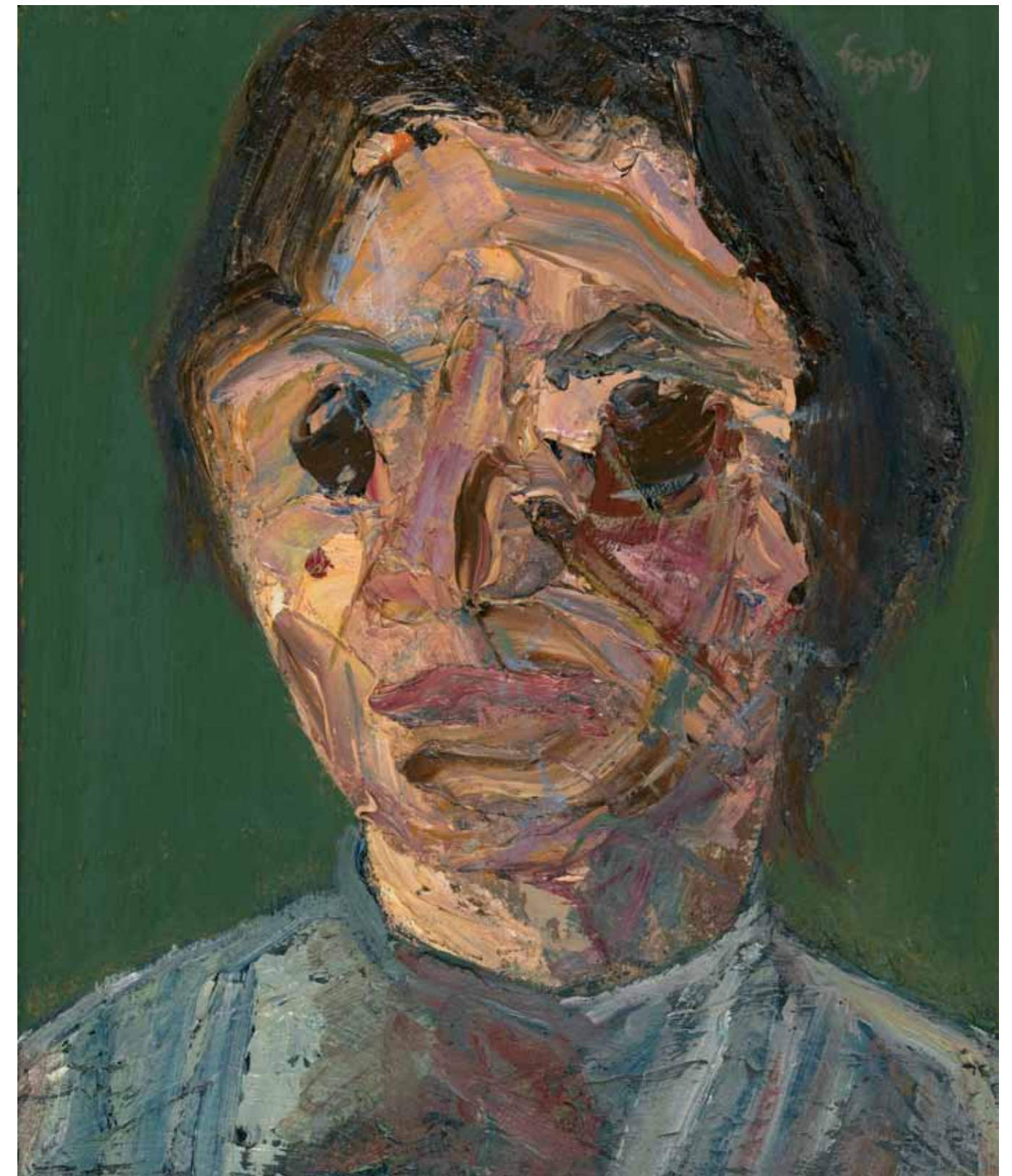


PORTRAIT OF JEAN 1  
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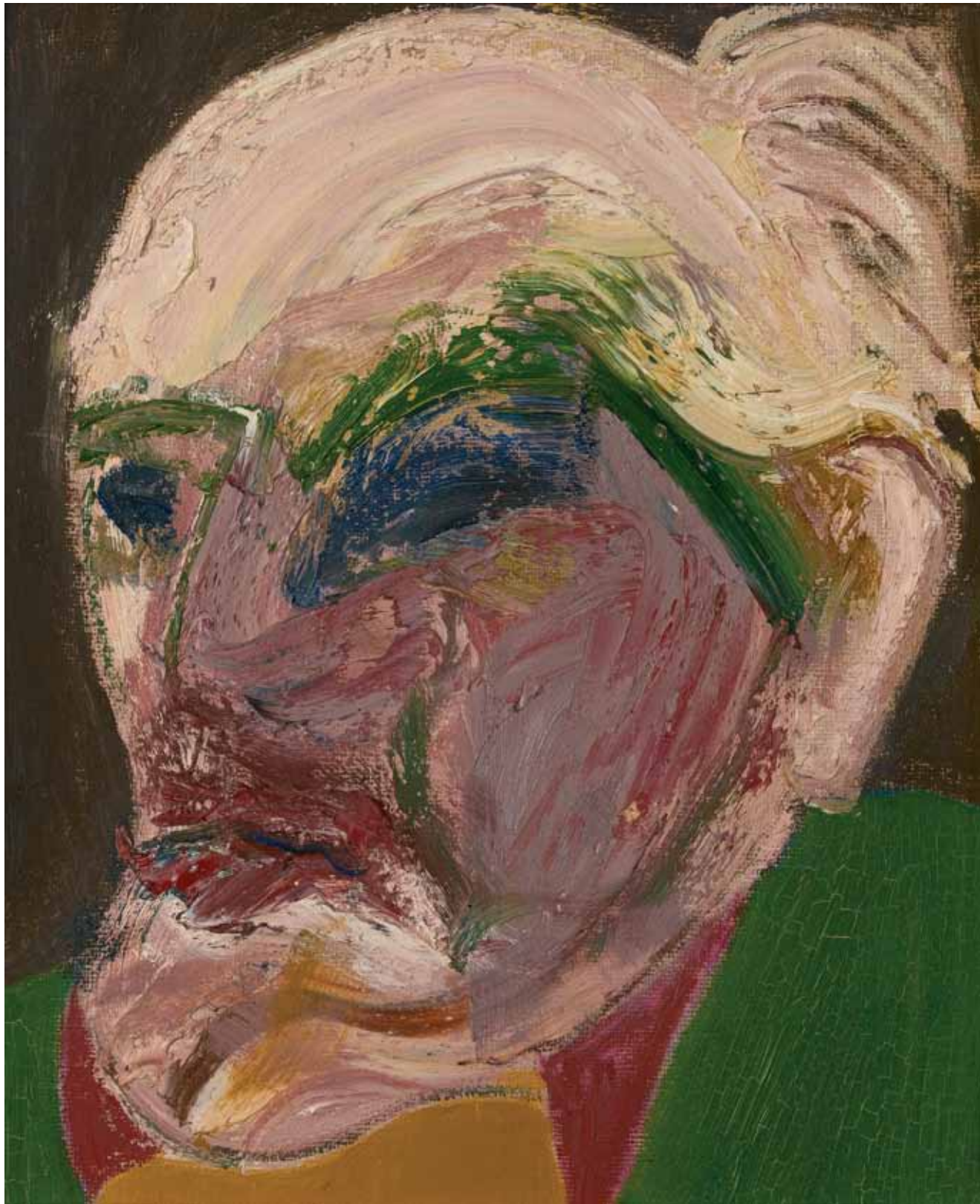


HEAD OF JEAN 2  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")

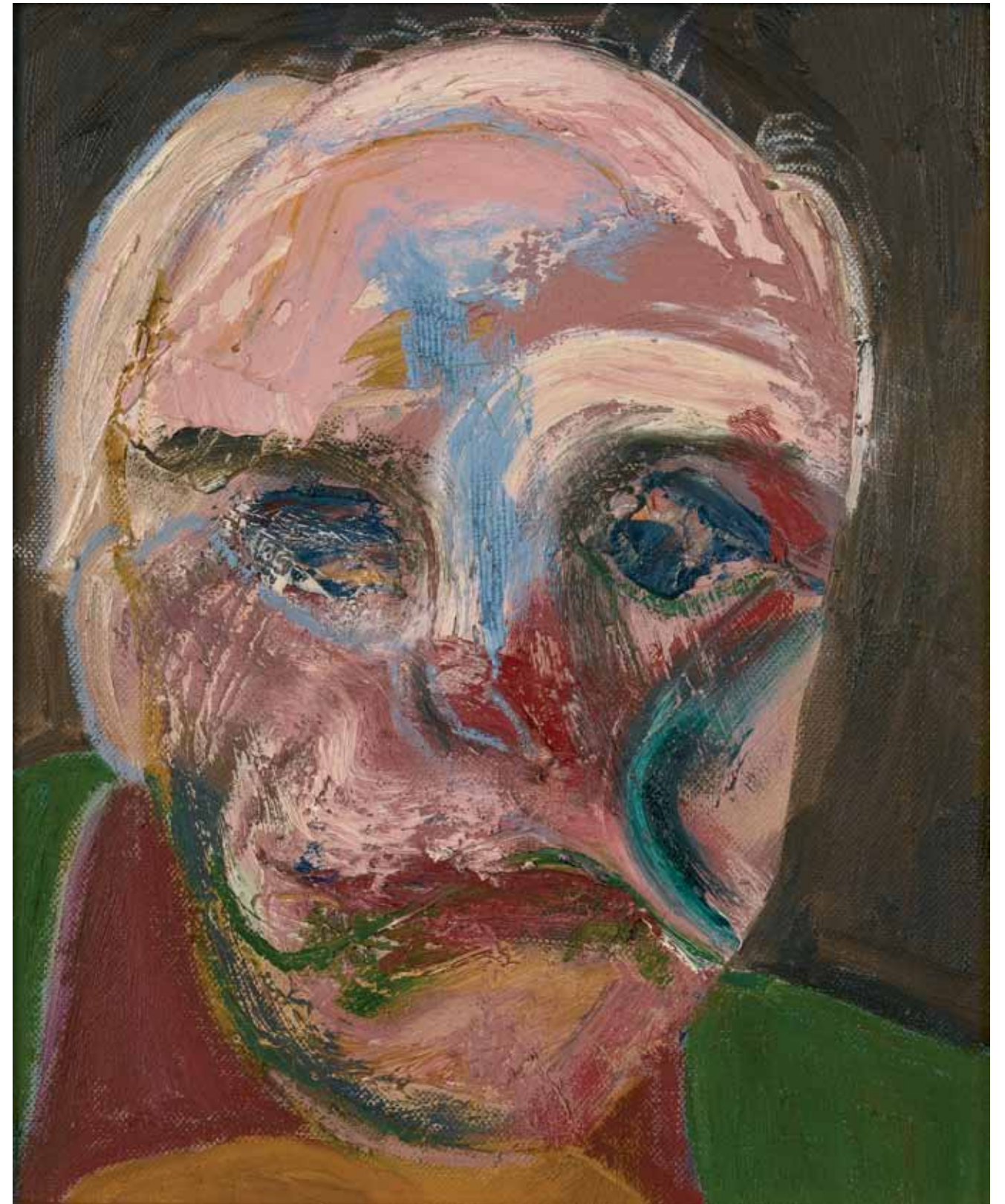


HEAD OF JEAN  
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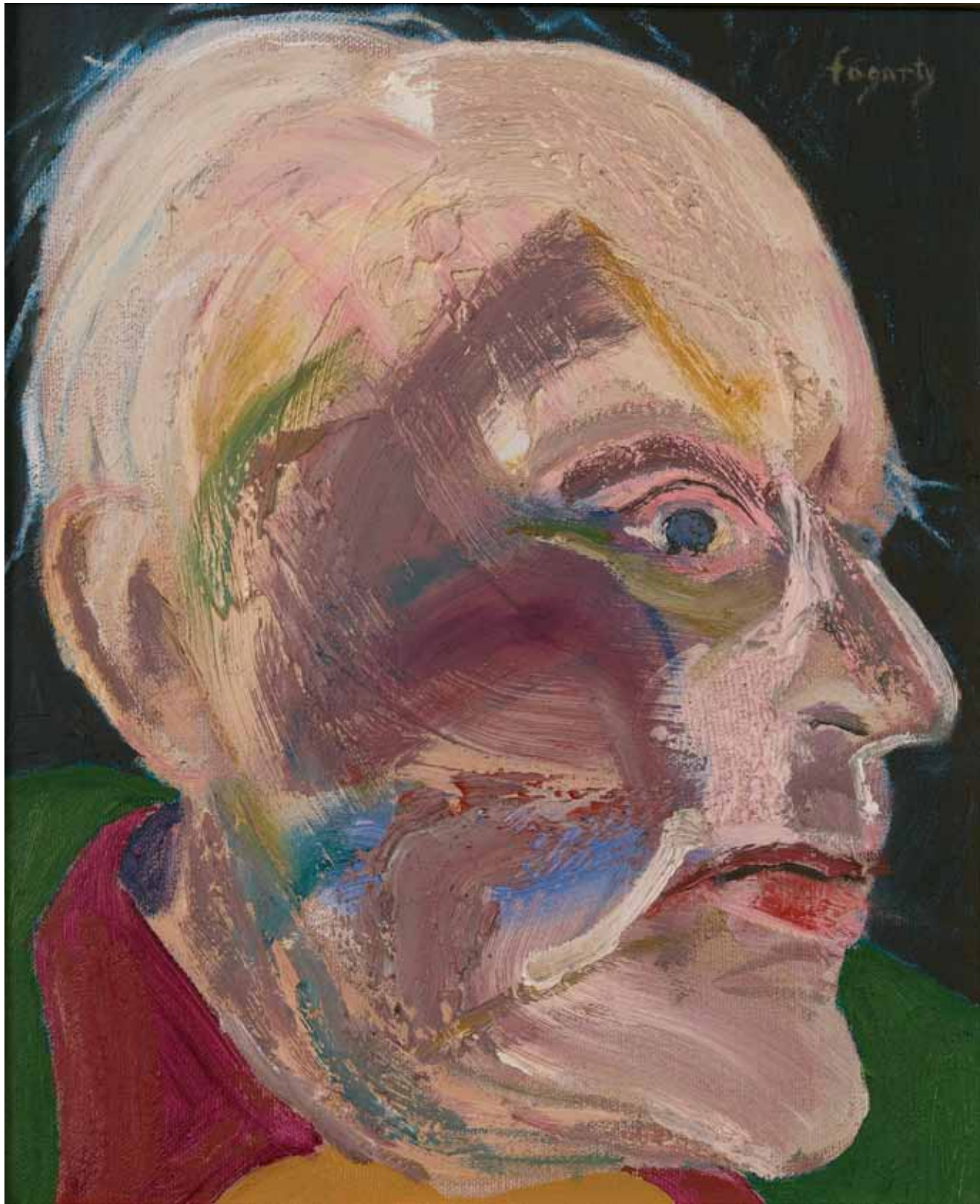


3 STUDIES OF JOHN TUNGAY - panel 1  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")



3 STUDIES OF JOHN TUNGAY - panel 2  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")





3 STUDIES OF JOHN TUNGAY - panel 3  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")

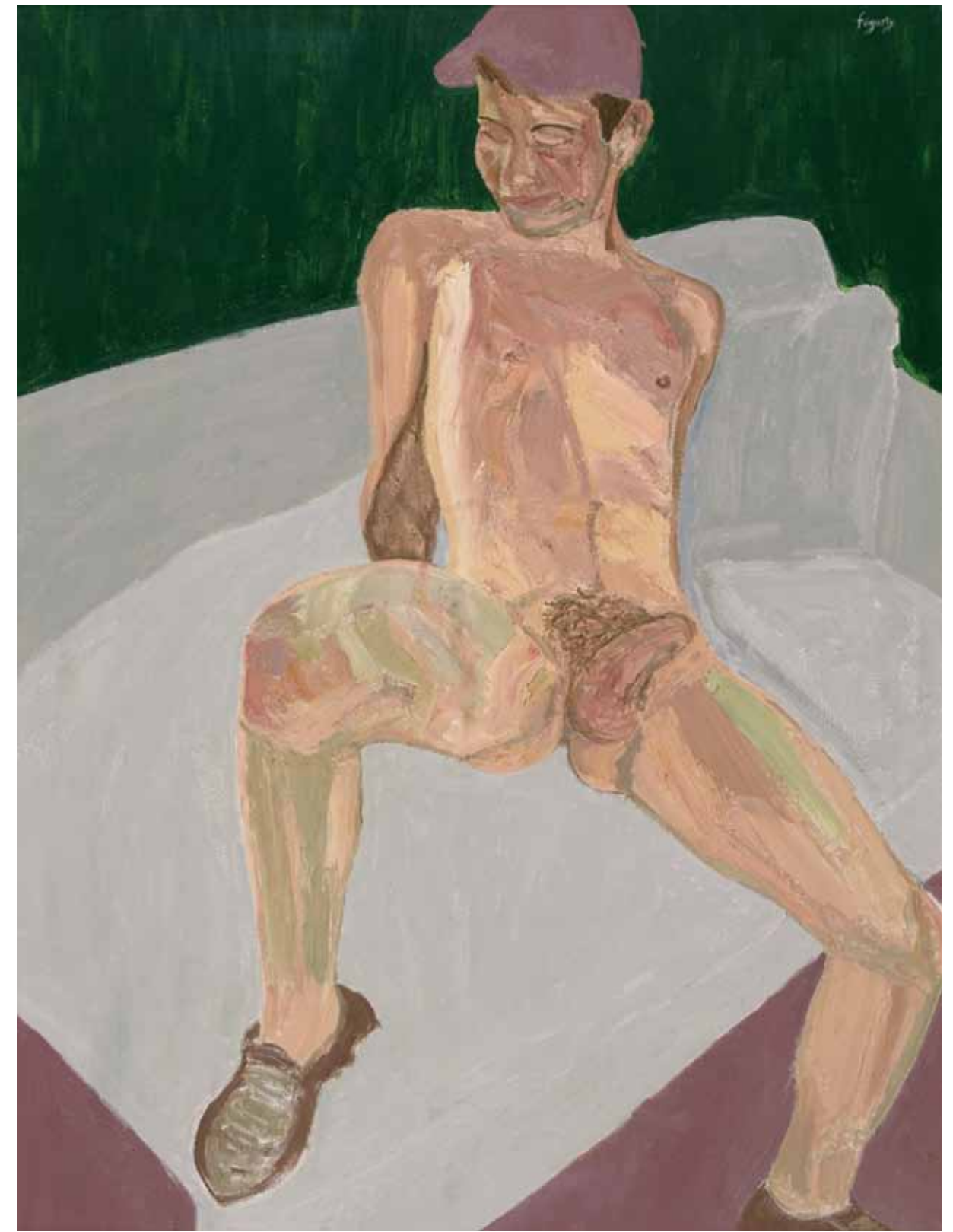


3 STUDIES OF JOHN TUNGAY - triptych



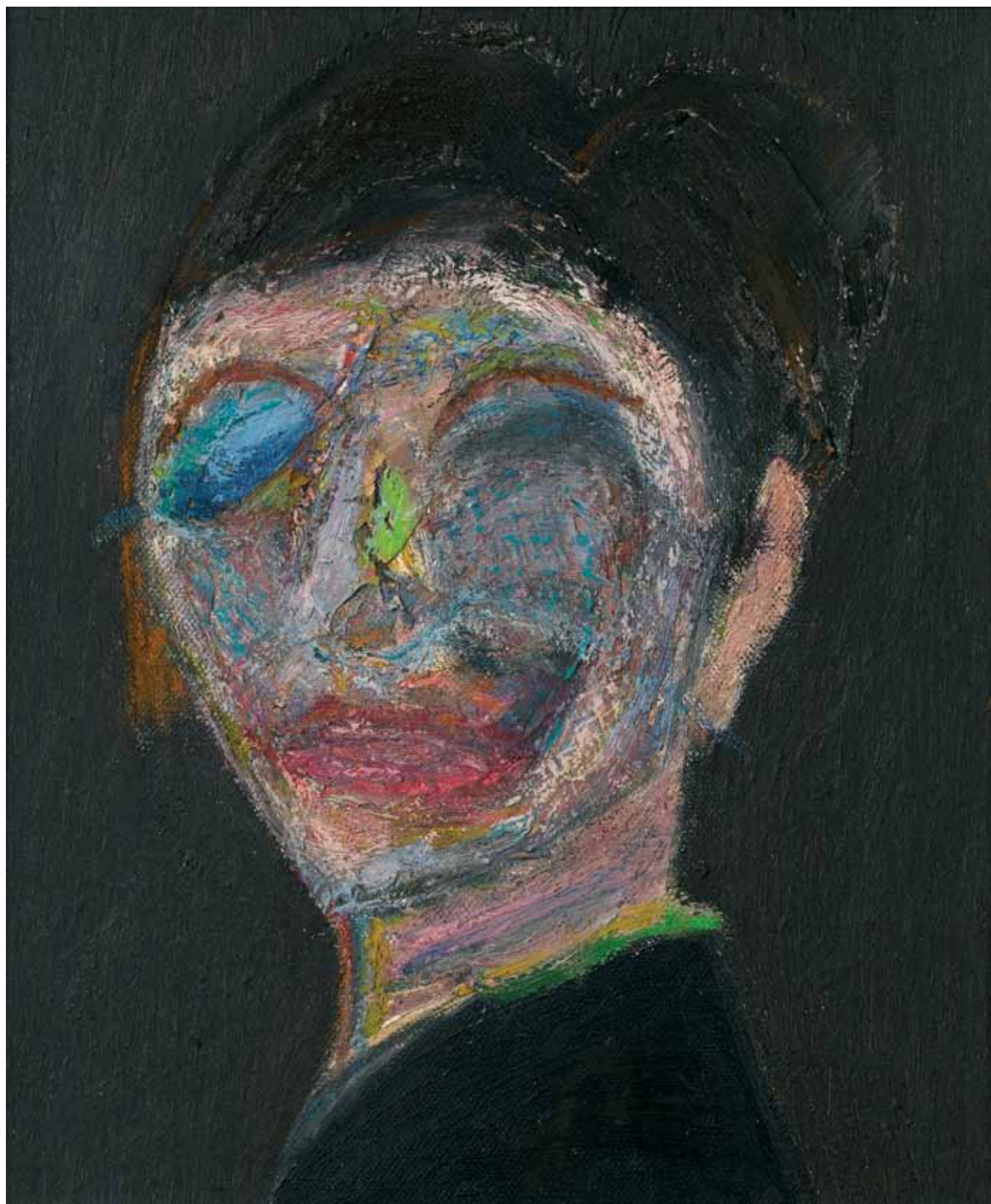


A GIRL CALLED FOX  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 30"x40")

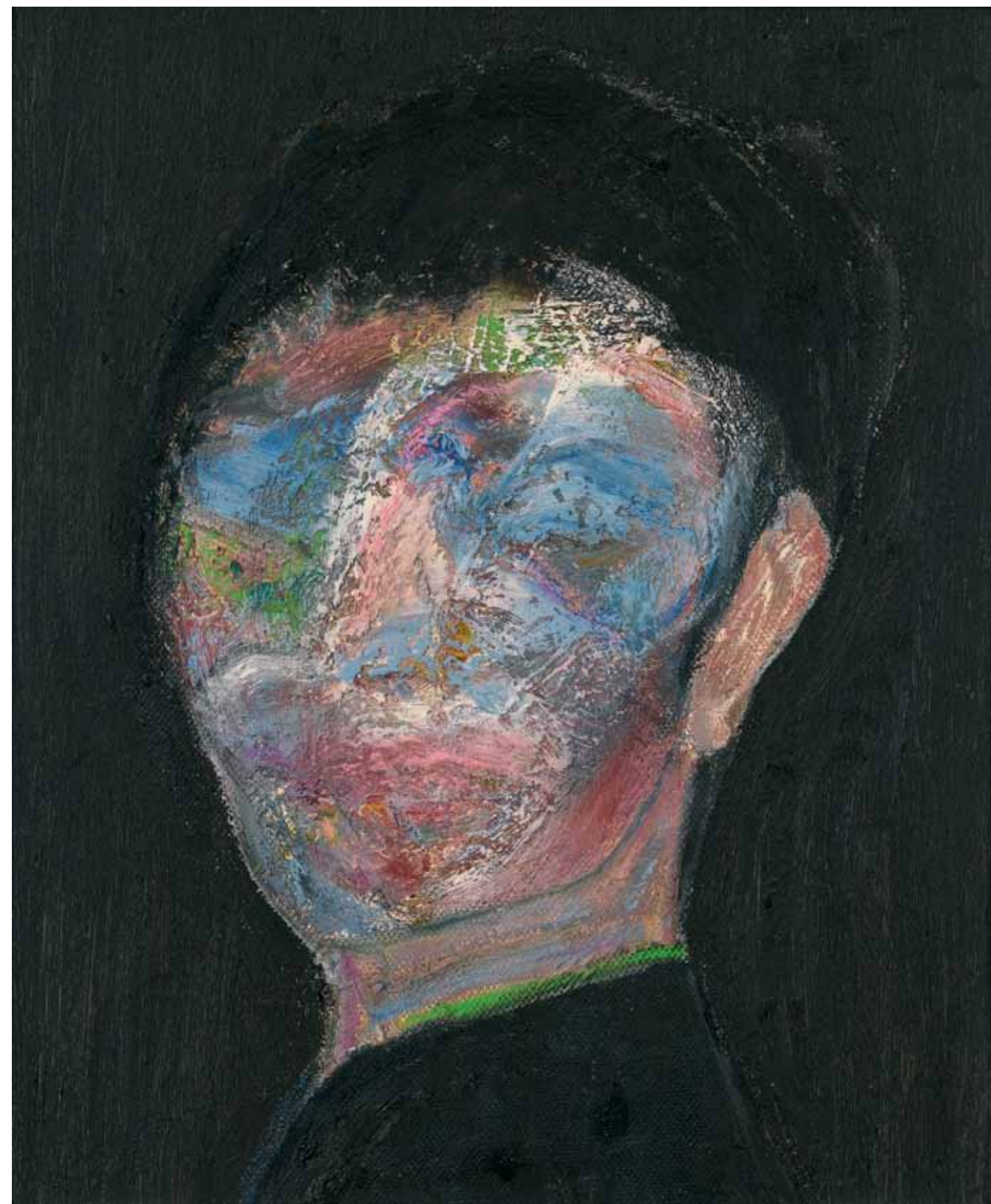


NAKED PORTRAIT OF GEORGIE - private collection  
(oil on canvas 30"x40")



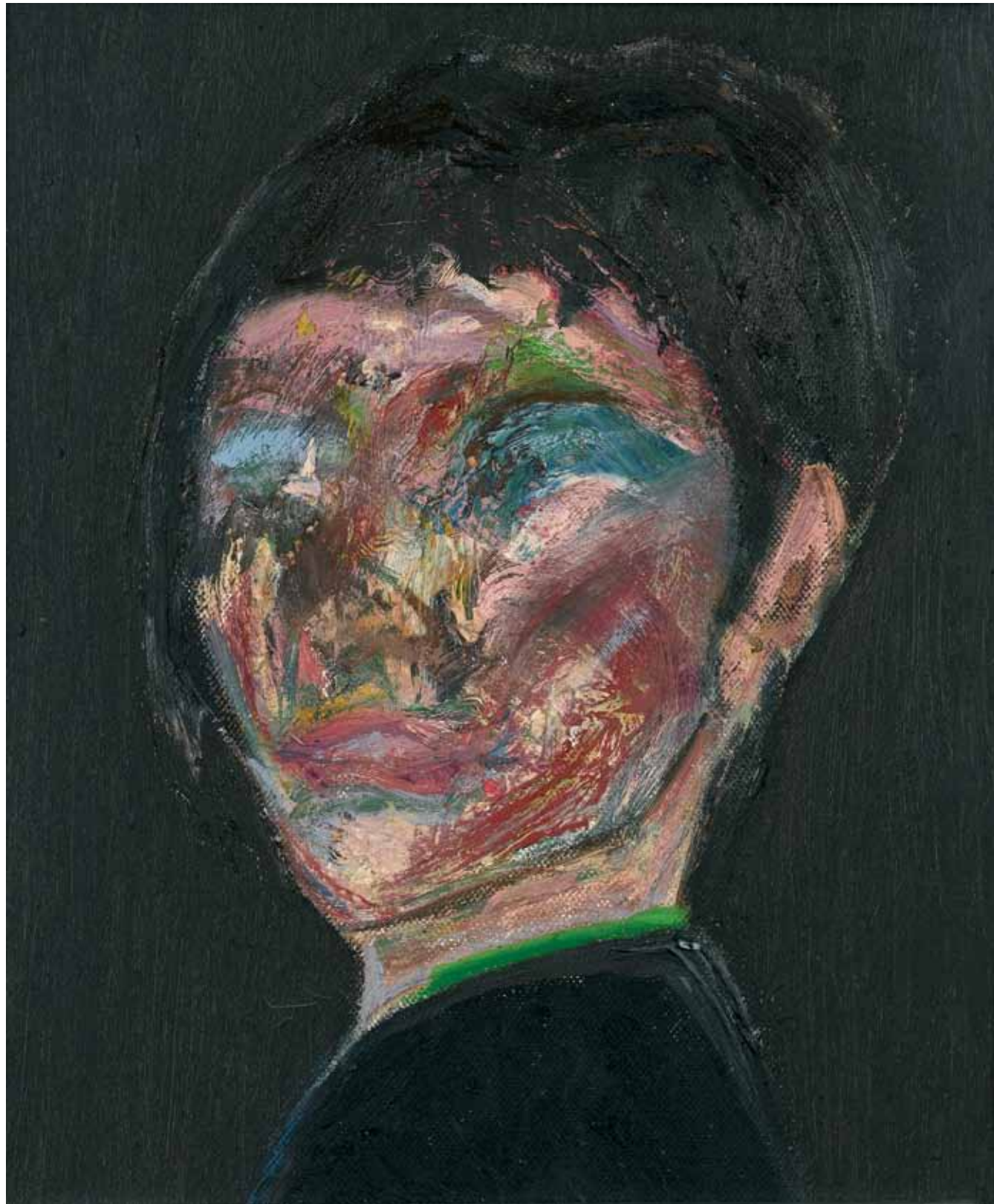


3 STUDIES OF FOXY - panel 1  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")



3 STUDIES OF FOXY - panel 2  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")





3 STUDIES OF FOXY - panel 3  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")



3 STUDIES OF FOXY - triptych

Each panel is independent and self-contained, displaying an individual characteristic of the subject with an intensity 'not encountered in life' unless the onlooker or witness's insight is so powerful he can, as it were, X-ray the subject's actual emotions.





NAKED PORTRAIT OF JACKIE SIMPSON  
(oil on canvas 30"x40")

This portrait started out as a study from life of a Danish singer who used to drop by my studio in Bedford Square, Brighton during the summer of 2005. However I began to feel uninspired by her so stopped painting her but continued to sort of mess around on the canvas for the next year or so without her being there. One day it struck me that the face emerging from the mess of pigments which I kept scraping down was an image not of the Danish singer but my 18 year old daughter whom I'd never seen (not even a photo) and whose whereabouts were unknown driven purely by emotion and instinct and my memories of her mother whom I knew briefly in 1987 during the seven years I was living in a Cambridge bedsit after returning from Sudan struggling to write "Red over Blue", with no money and often very sick from cancer and bleeding ulcers which, 21 years later when it was diagnosed by a scan I discovered were probably caused by a rare brain tumour I was born with and which has obviously helped make my whole life interesting and challenging ;) Working on my novel "Red over Blue" saved my life and my soul.

However it was another 20 years before the final draft of the book was completed and published. I often wonder about Kathryn-Jayne and whether she is anything like this imagined portrait which, but for that Danish singer might never have happened. Life is full of weird and wonderful chance connections! :)



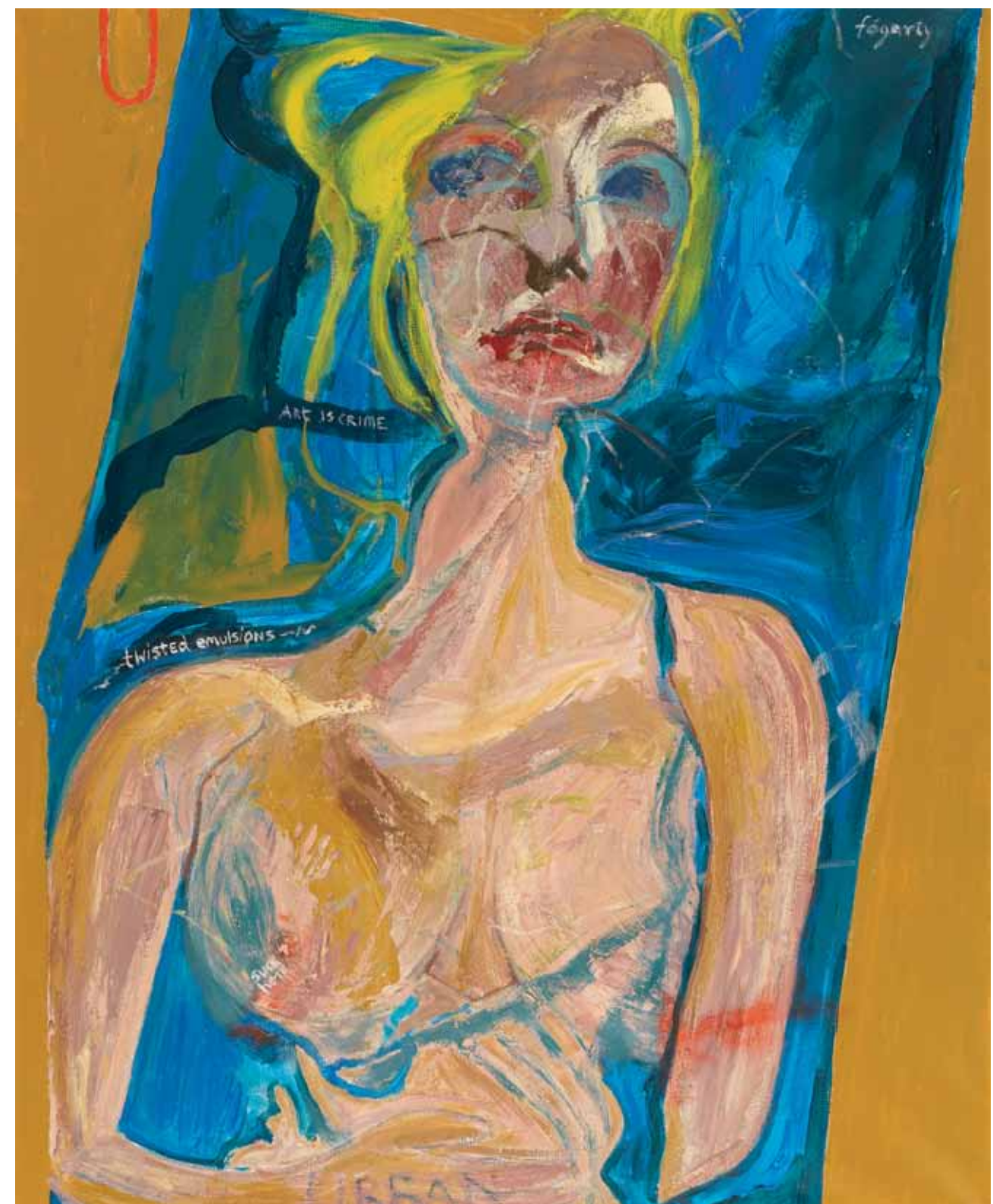
PORTRAIT OF MY DAUGHTER KATHRYN-JAYNE  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")





PORTRAIT OF MARGARITA  
 (oil on canvas 10"x12")

Margarita is a New York singer born in Russia. We met some years ago on myspace. Her music and photos inspired me to paint the portrait.



BLUE SCARLETT  
 (oil and acrylic on canvas 30"x40")





PORTRAIT OF SCARLETT  
 (oil on canvas 30"x40")

**Elbereth Gilthoniel Finch-Walton** ah, here it is. This painting has left such an impression on me, I find myself thinking about it once again. It's that element of desirability. But I ask myself, is it the painting, or the woman in the painting, that I find so desirable.....

**Brian Fogarty** Maybe you'd need to spend a night with each of them to find out;)



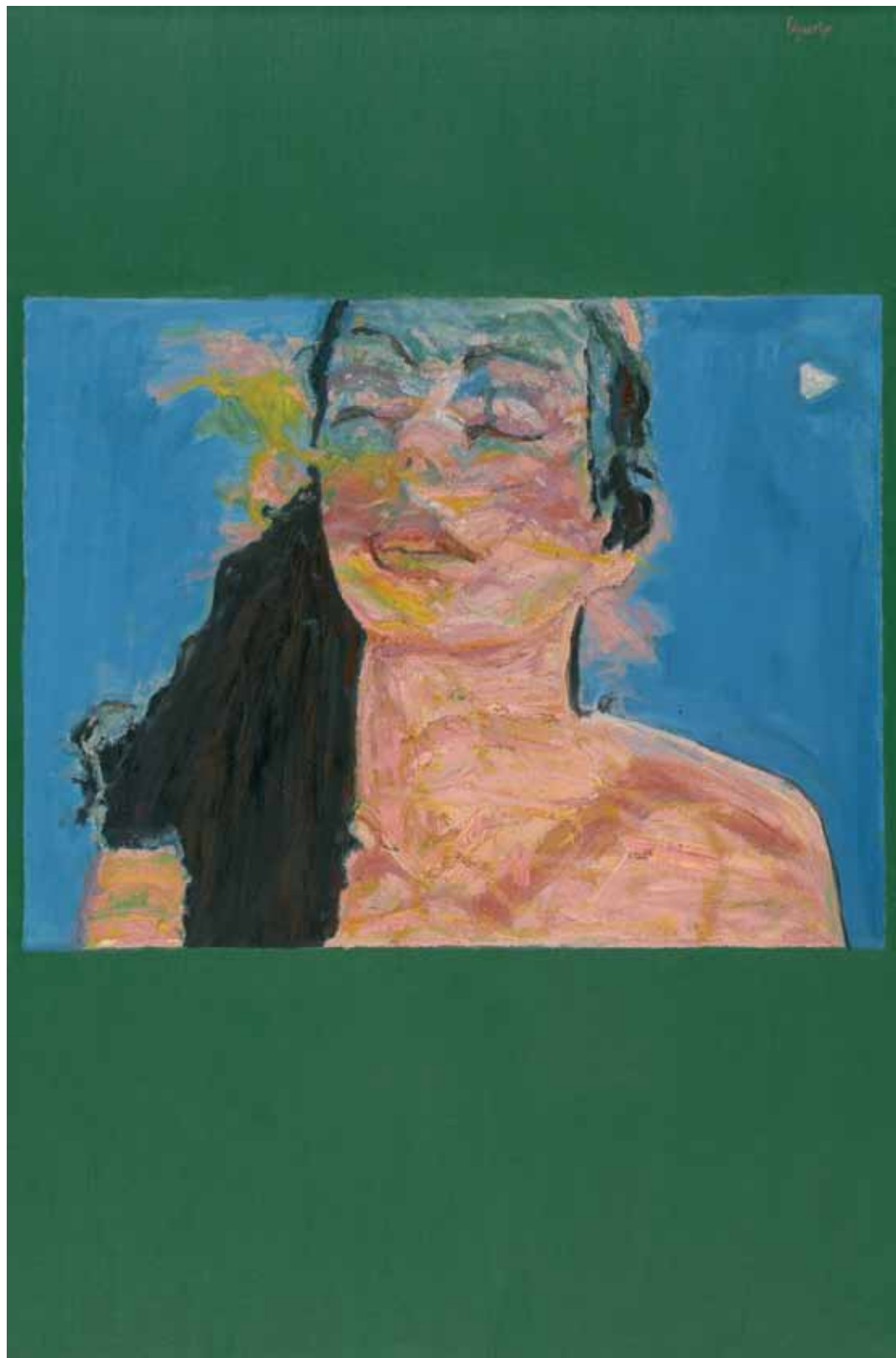


RED SCARLETT  
(acrylic on canvas 30"x40")

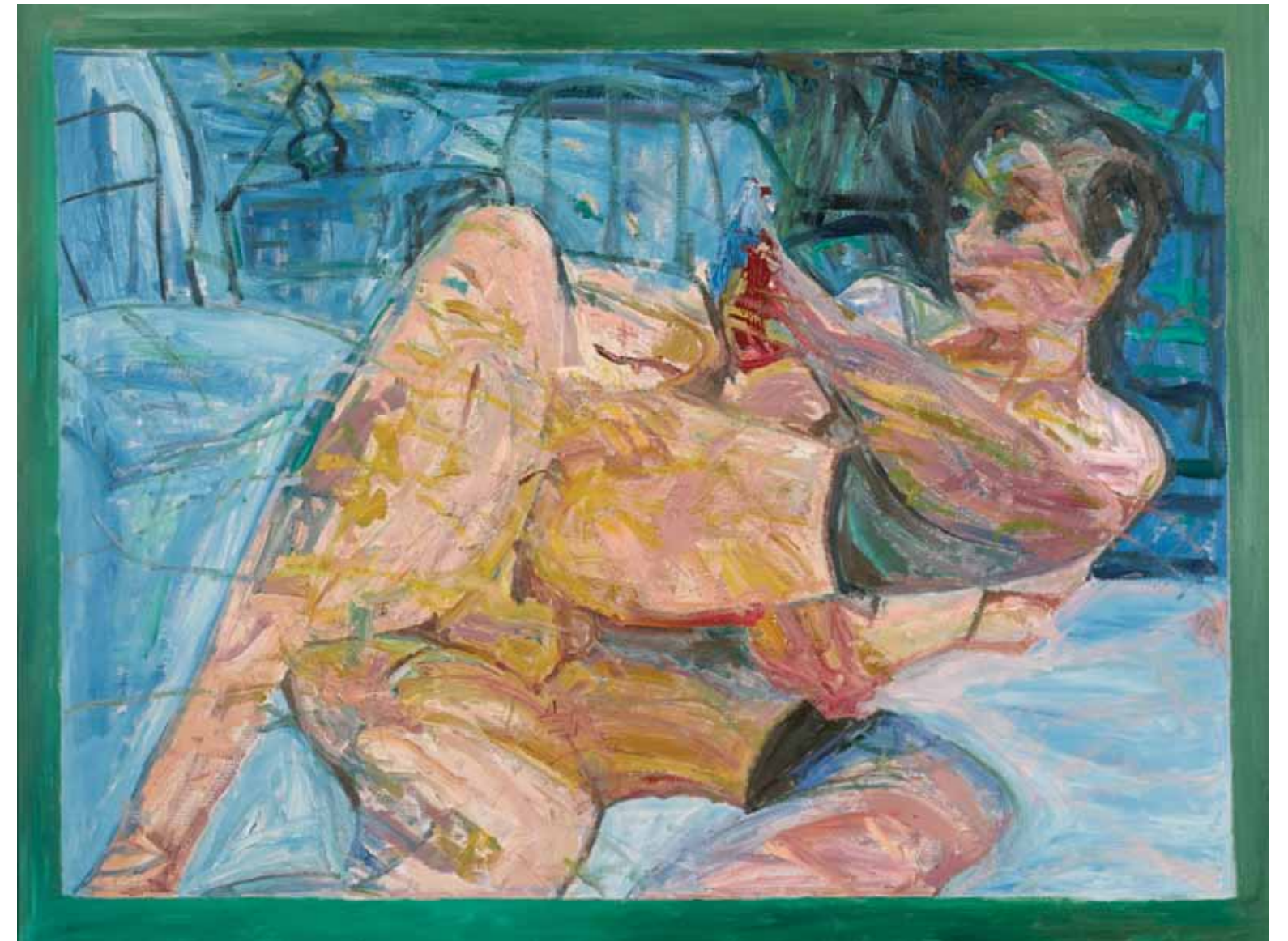


REFLECTION: SELF PORTRAIT IN A MIRROR 1  
(oil on canvas 20"x30")



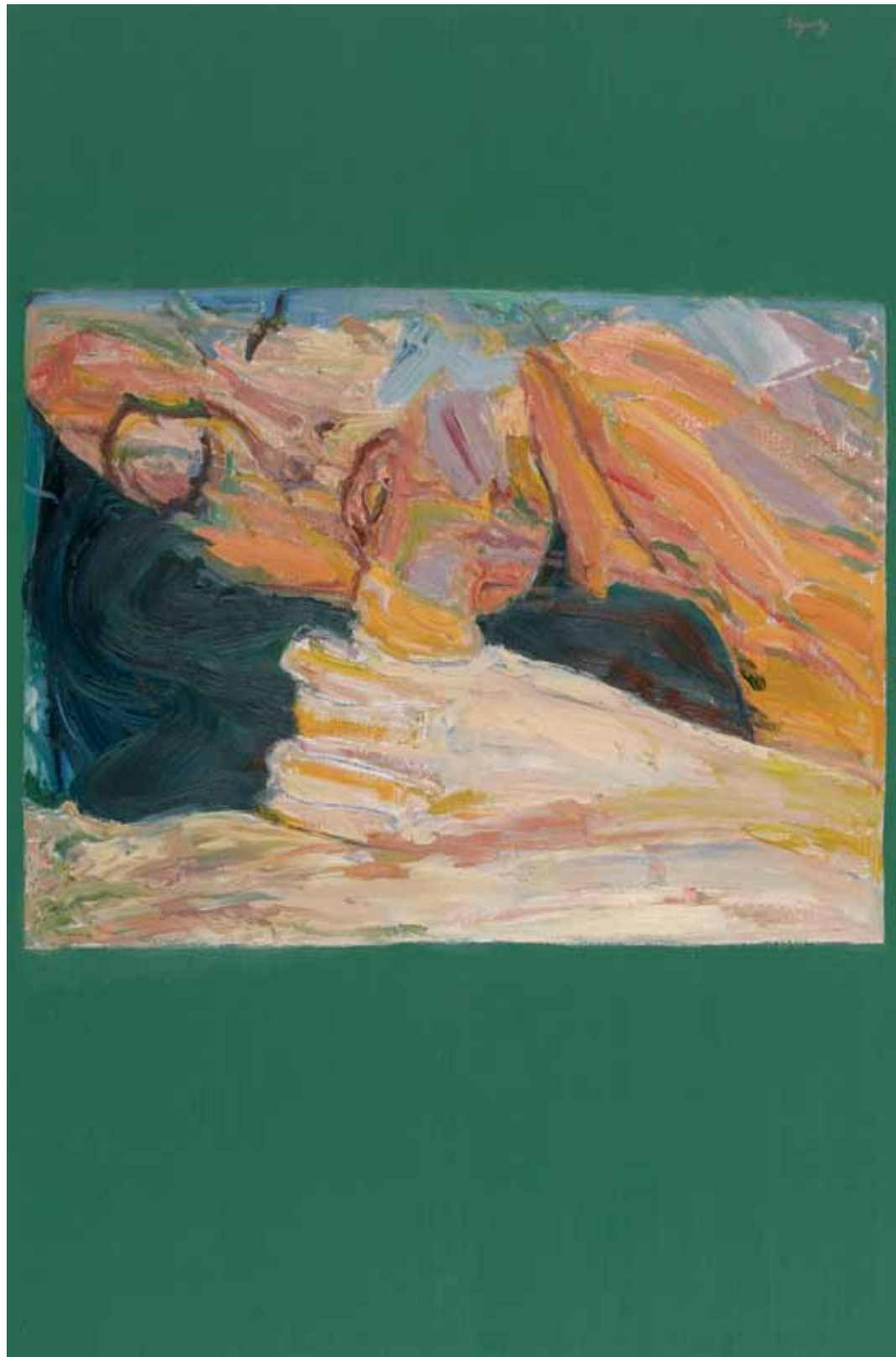


3 STUDIES OF ANNETTE HAVEN - panel 1 ANNETTE ON TOP  
(oil on canvas 24"x36")



3 STUDIES OF ANNETTE HAVEN - panel 2 ANNETTE'S AFTERNOON TREAT  
(oil on canvas 36"x48")





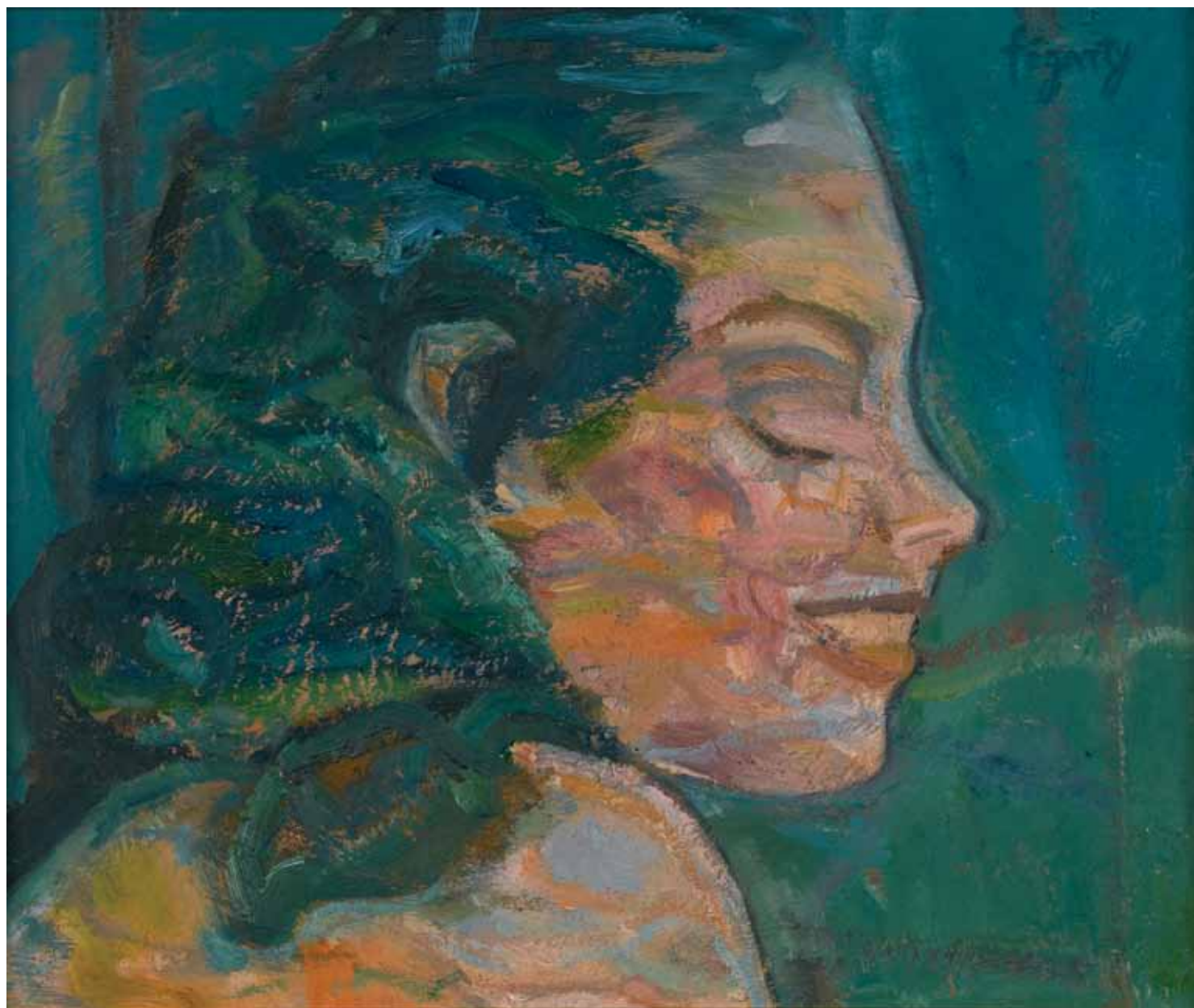
3 STUDIES OF ANNETTE HAVEN - panel 3 "HEAD"  
(oil on canvas 24"x36")



3 STUDIES OF ANNETTE HAVEN - triptych

I painted The Annette Haven Trilogy from memory 20 years after seeing her in an 'adult movie' on a much copied and bootlegged video tape. I was enchanted by her grace, humour, elegance and the extraordinary luminosity of her beauty which is haunting and legendary.





ANNETTE HAVEN  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")



"HEAD" (ANNETTE HAVEN)  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")





THE CRUCIFIXION OF NICOLE - panel 1 PORTRAIT OF NICOLE  
(oil on canvas 24"x36")

Oil portrait inspired by MONICA BELLUCCI in the films "Marlena" and "Irreversible" and used as first panel in my "CRUCIFIXION OF NICOLE TRIPTYCH", which was based on a scene of sumptuous beauty and violence from my Sudan novel, "Red over Blue".

## THE CRUCIFIXION OF NICOLE

(original version, oil on canvas 36"x48": centre panel of triptych). All the background figures in the final version were painted out because when I put all three panels up together, I felt that this middle panel, being so richly populated, drew the eye straight into it thus hindering the flow as it were from panel to panel and disrupting the idea of it being a triptych. The triptych was inspired by a scene of sumptuous beauty and violence from my Sudan novel 'Red over Blue', and also inspired by the performances of Monica Belucci in the films 'Irreversible' and 'Marlena'. The brutal beating of the woman is being witnessed by a strange monkey-like creature (half-animal, half human) who has bought himself an ice cream cone and drawn up a chair so he can enjoy this vivid spectacle in comfort, just as though he were in a cinema watching a movie. The figures of the other watching passers-by, the shocked-looking woman on the extreme left and the boy nervously smoking on the extreme right of the panel, seem more disturbed. The triptych is framed under museum glass perhaps not to protect the painting from the viewer, but in order to protect the viewer from the victim's body wastes and fluids.



THE CRUCIFIXION OF NICOLE - panel 2 "COS EVEN YOUR SHIT IS BEAUTIFUL"  
(oil on canvas 36"x48")





THE CRUCIFIXION OF NICOLE - panel 3 "HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?"  
(oil on canvas 24"x36")



THE CRUCIFIXION OF NICOLE - triptych





PORTRAIT OF EMMA - AUSTRALIAN BIRD OF PARADISE  
 (oil and acrylic on canvas 10"x12")

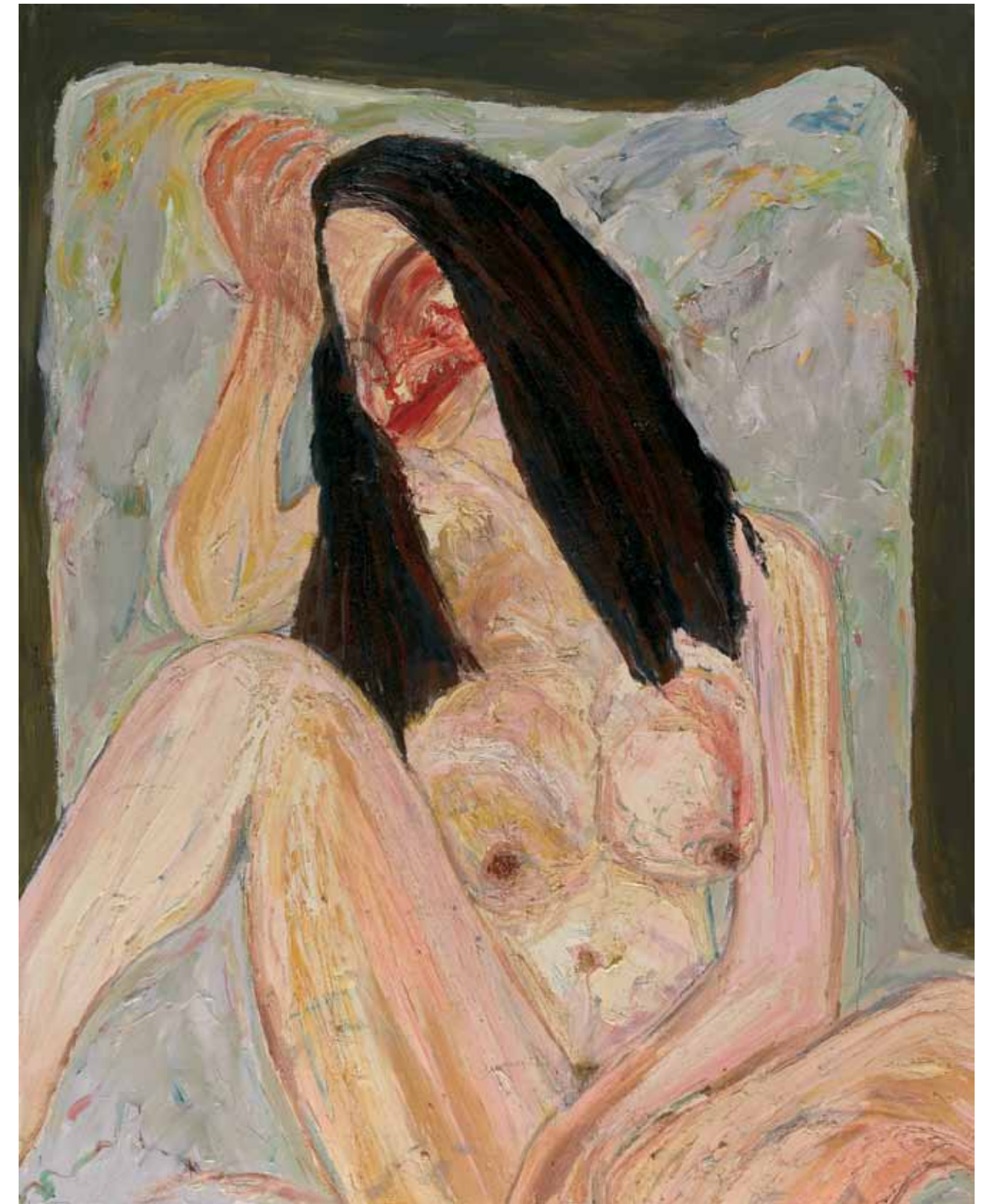
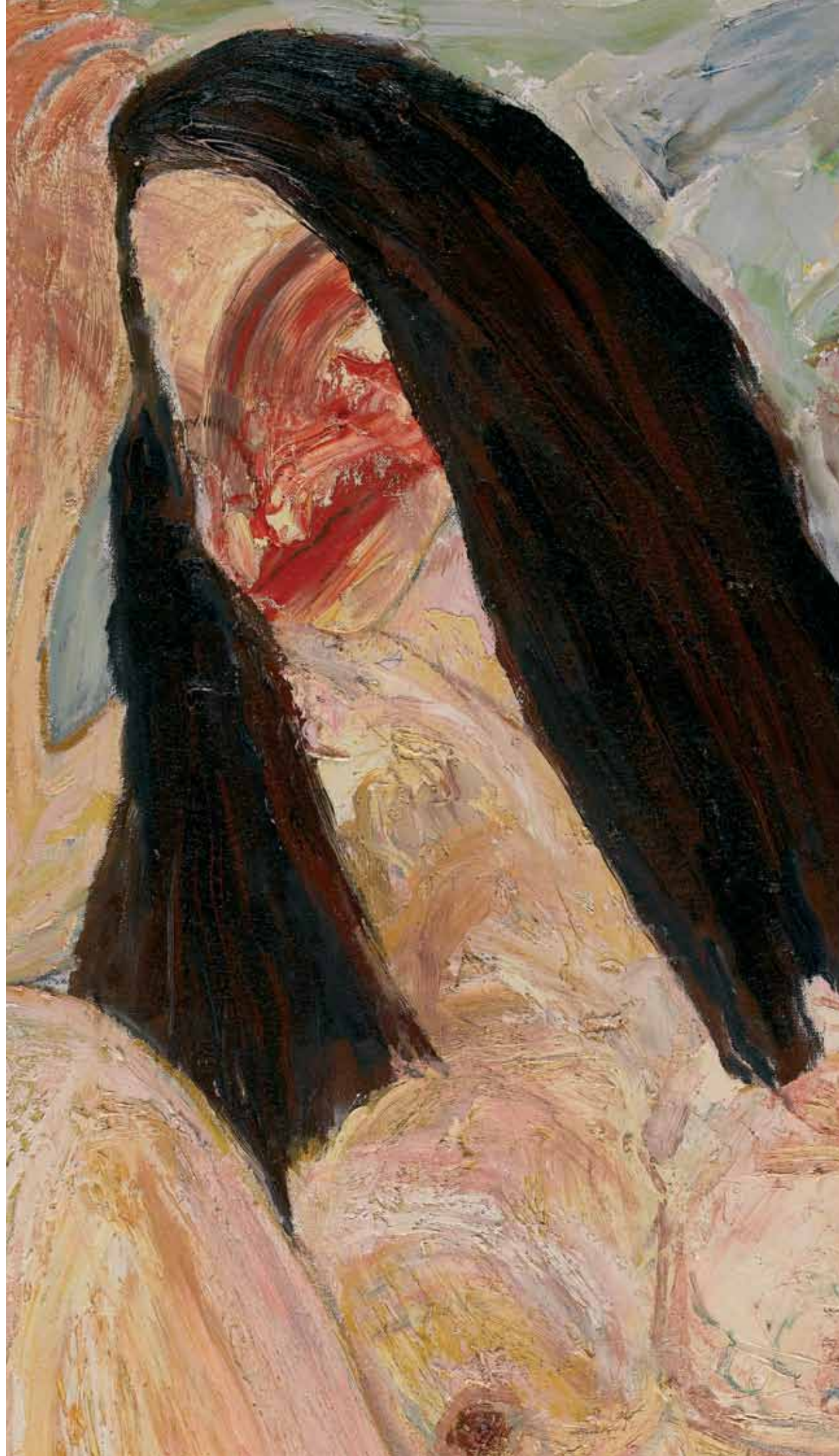


POND LIFE  
 (acrylic on canvas 30"x40")



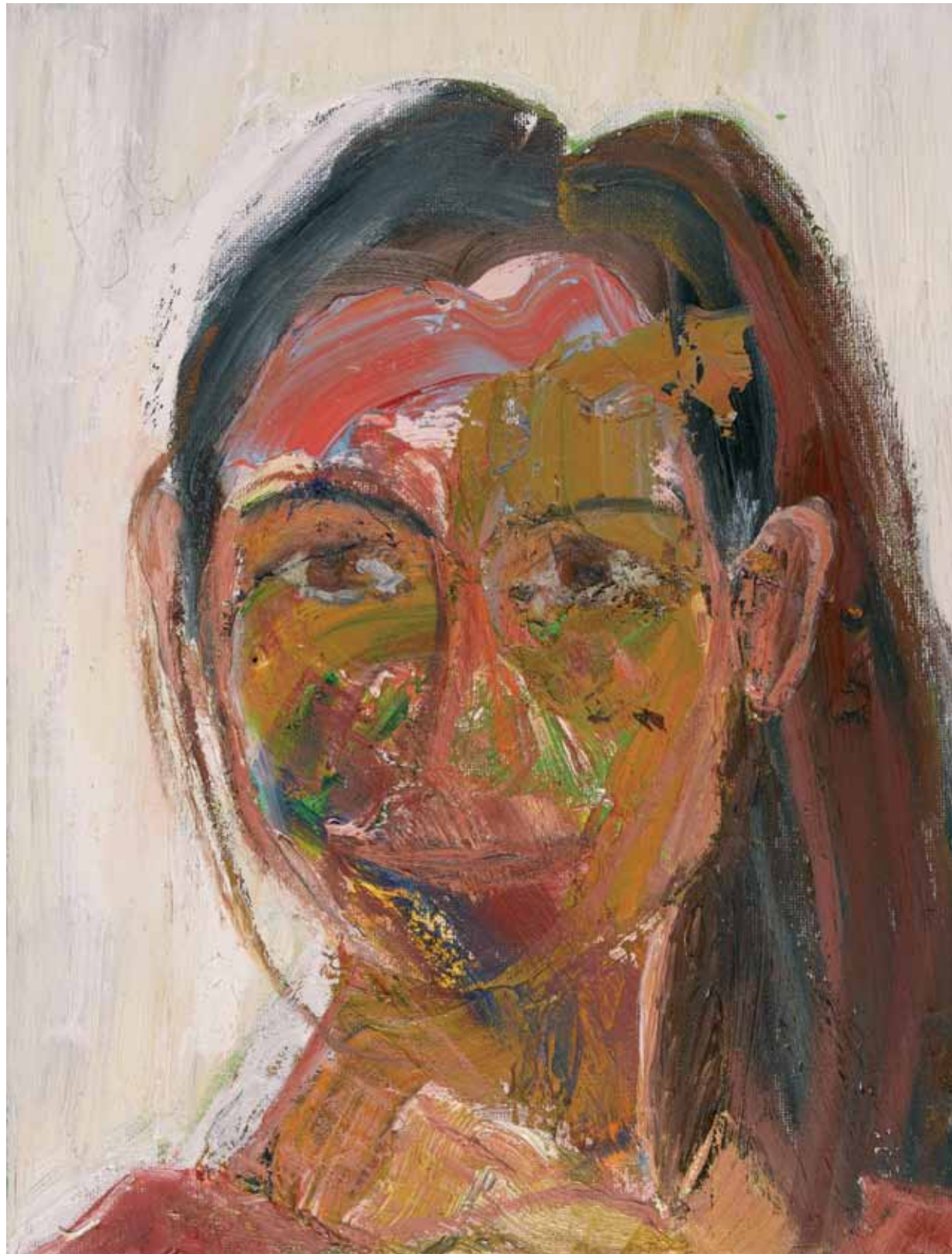
Such places whenever we recall them resound with beauty however anguished we were surviving in them. Veined and wrinkled skies, membranous suns filled with love inspire certain feelings which perhaps can only be resolved - still illicitly - in paint.

Held in each other's arms I want us to explore the miracle of her being as though her womb were a vast cave tenderized with sea fruits and the soothing slime of wonderful creatures whose parts graze our bruises with honeyed kisses that suck us all the way in. As I fall asleep she is the fluid-lucent well my smile slips in to settle in your arms, in her depths.

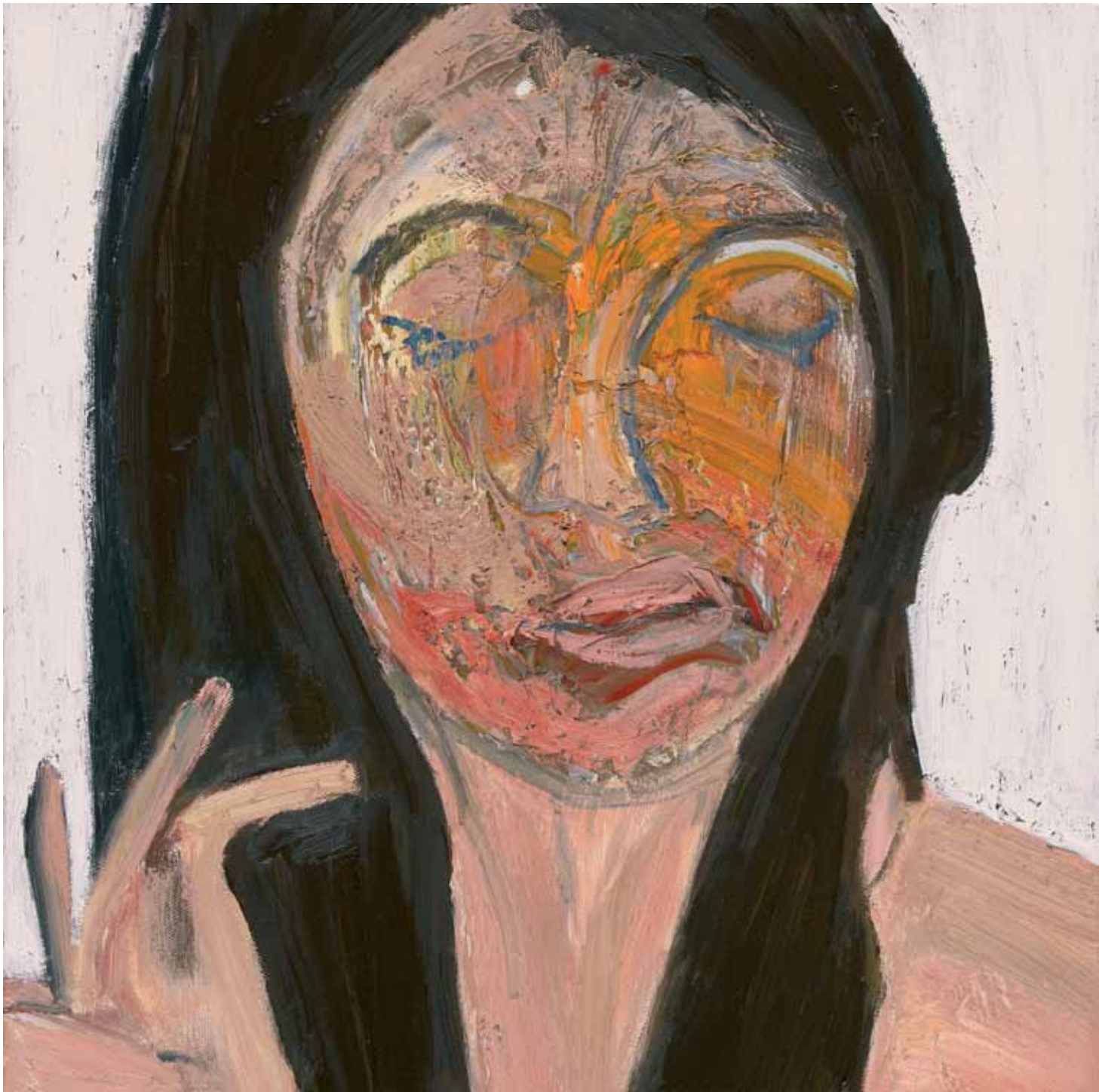


NAKED PORTRAIT OF EMMA  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 30"x40")



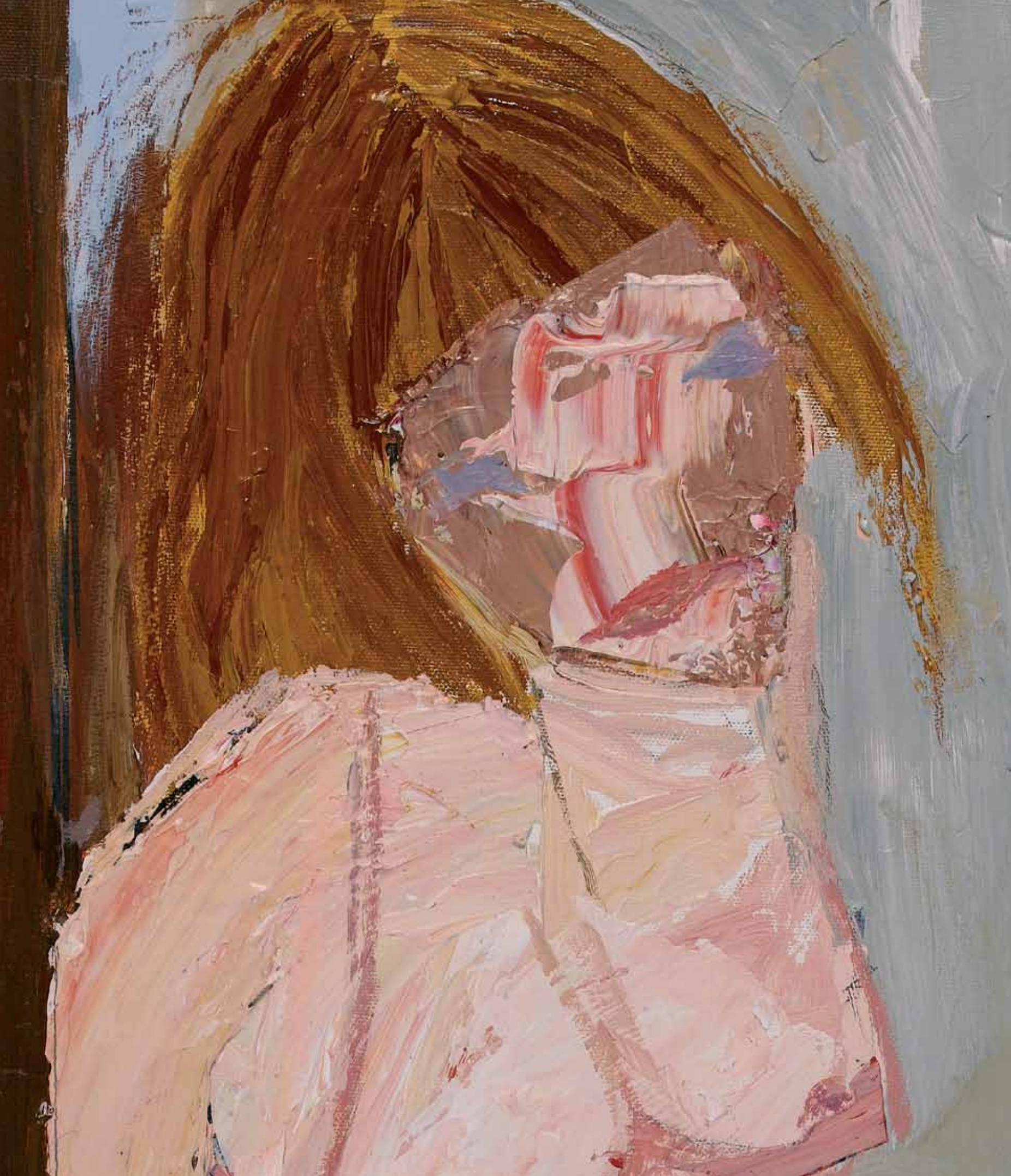


PORTRAIT OF BEX CZIK  
 (oil on canvas 10"x12")



PORTRAIT OF ALEX BEA  
 (oil, acrylic and house paint on canvas 14"x14")





PORTRAIT OF CATE  
(acrylic on canvas 24"x36")





PINK ON SCARLETT  
(acrylic on canvas 10"x12")



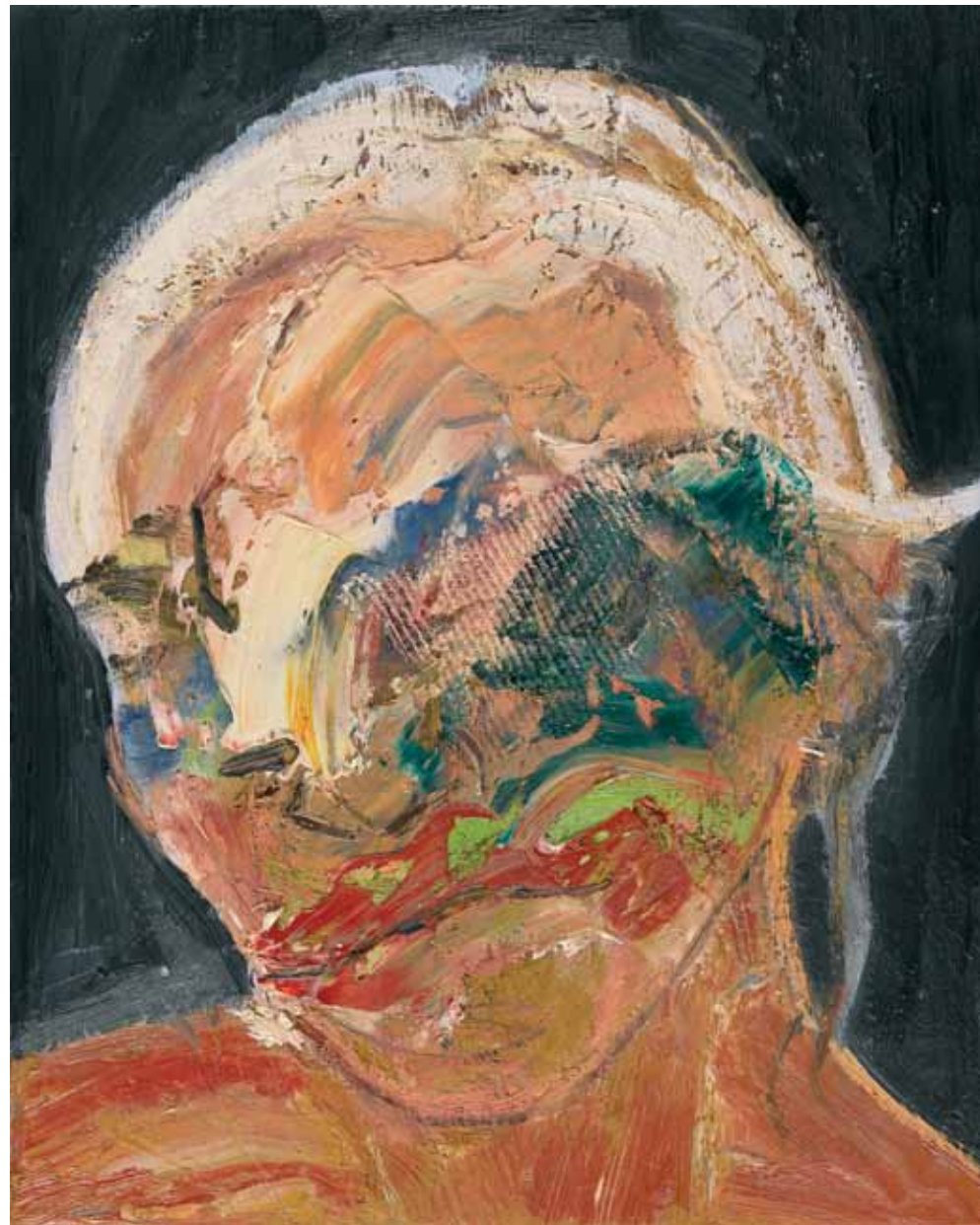
CATHY  
(acrylic on canvas 30"x40")





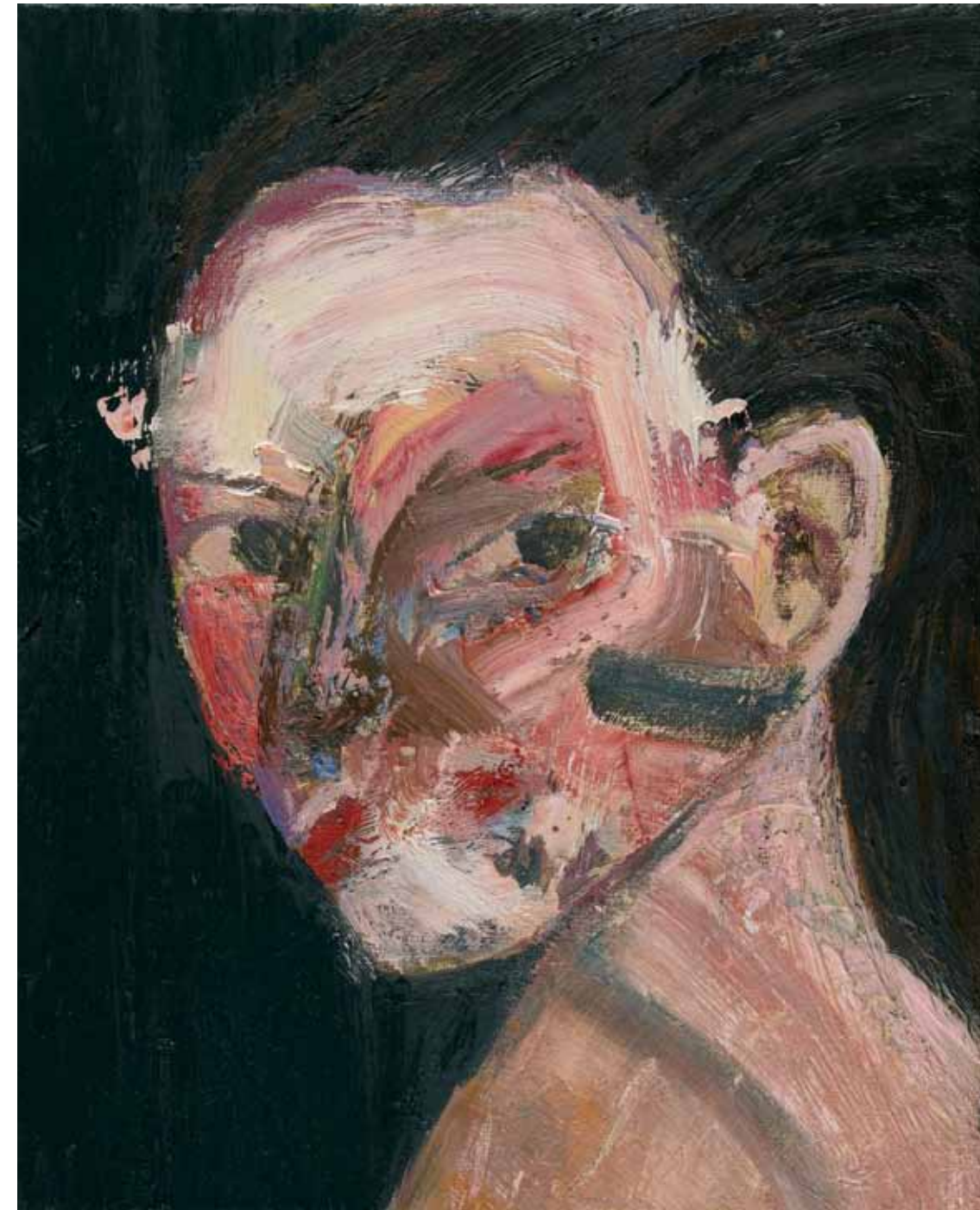
CELIA  
(oil on canvas 30"x40")





HEAD OF KELLEY  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")

I met Kelley on the Atlantic paradise of Neptune Beach, Florida, when she attended a poetry gig at which I was reading some of my work. Subsequently we met a number of times during the nightmarish and challenging three months I was there in 2010 being hoodwinked into having extremely damaging proton beam radiotherapy as a pawn in an international clival cordoma big money 'research' programme for my brain cancer. She inspired several poems, and three portraits which I did from memory when I returned to England.



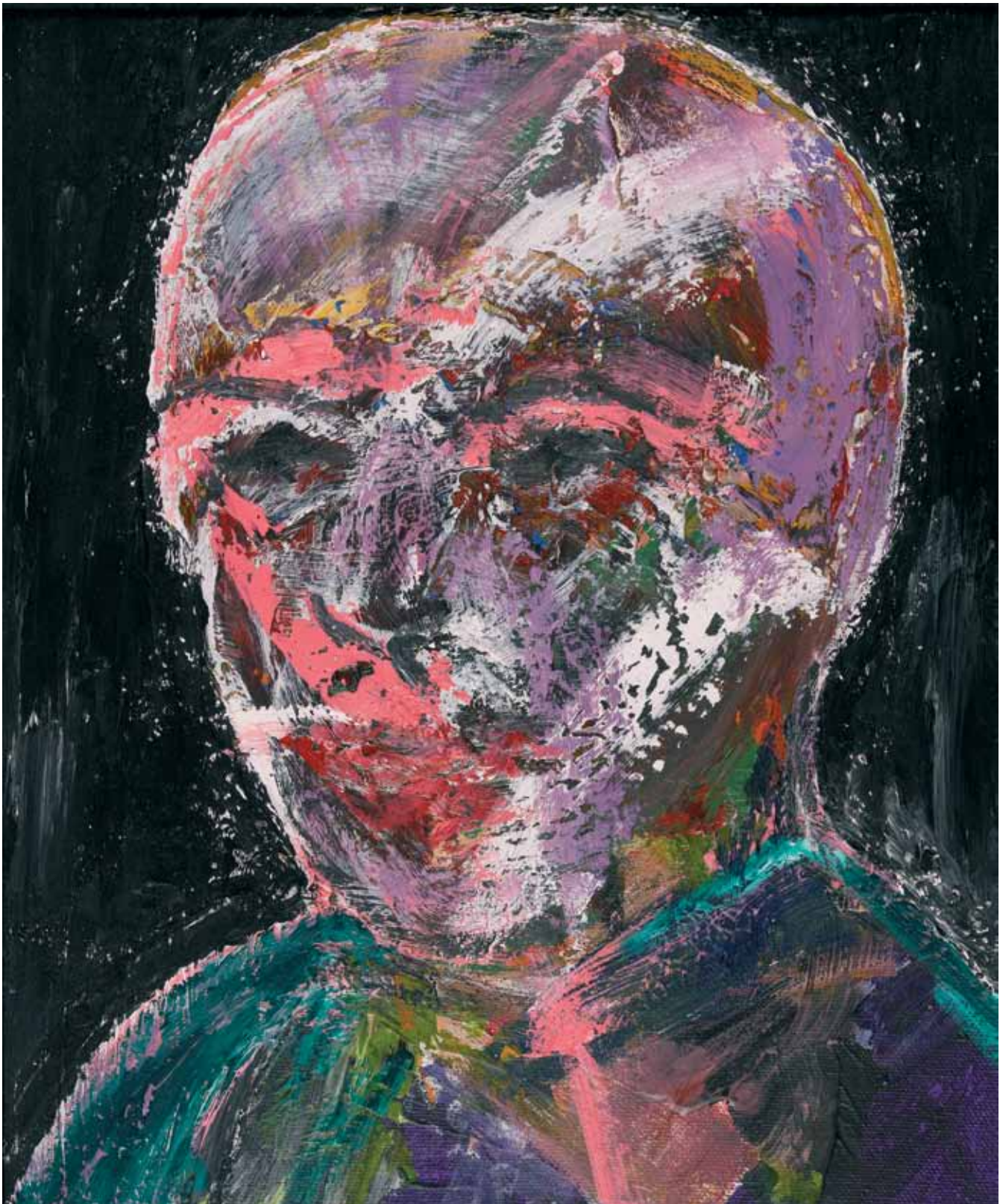
STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF KATE MOSS  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 10"x12")

I painted this portrait from a lightning ballpoint sketch on an envelope I made inspired by a normal, full-length black and white fashion poster of Kate on the London Underground seconds before my train roared in to obliterate her image. Maybe that's why the resulting work is a bit of a 'train crash' of a painting ;)



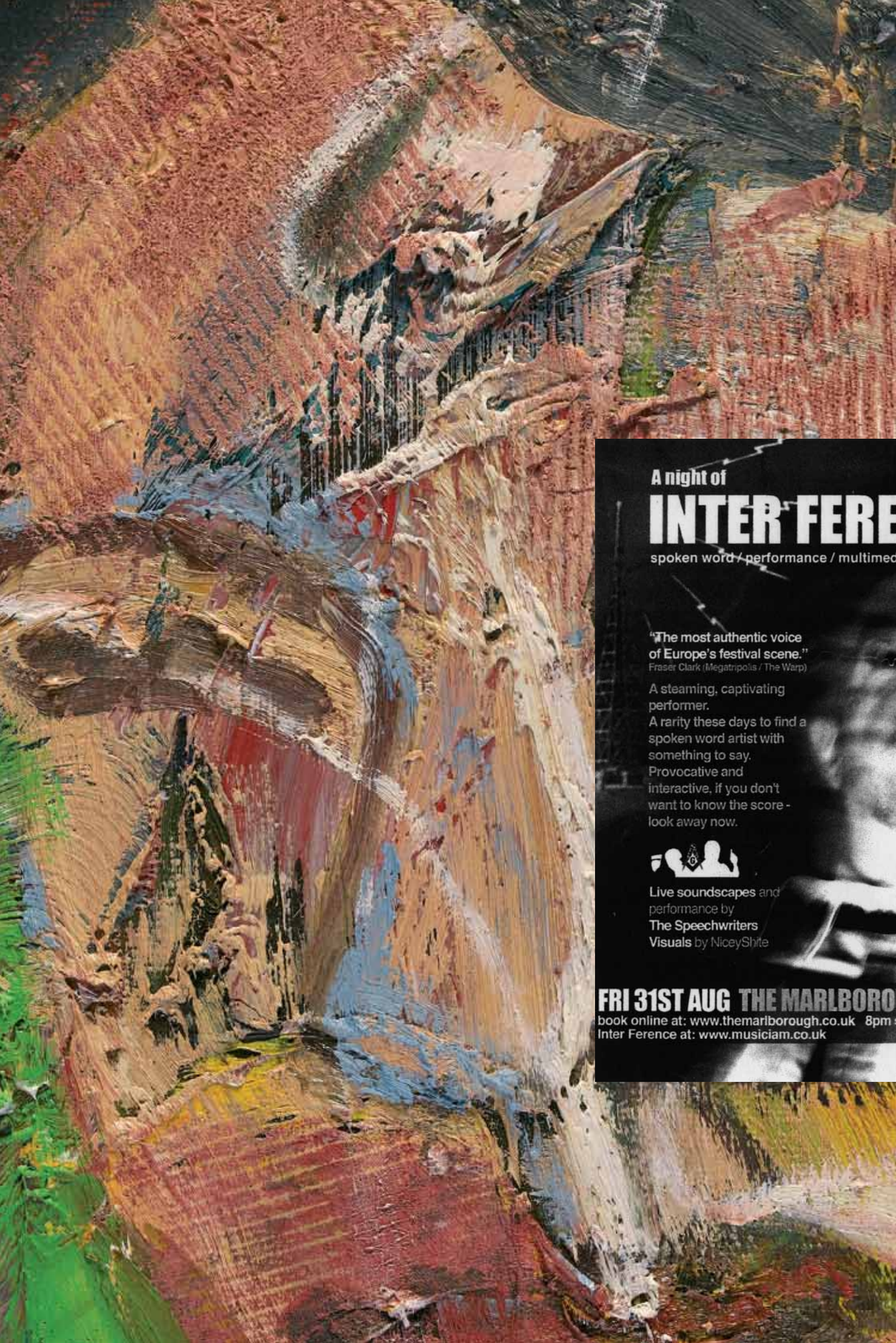


PORTRAIT OF IRVINE WELSH  
 (acrylic on canvas 10"x12")



FERENC  
 (acrylic on canvas 10"x12")






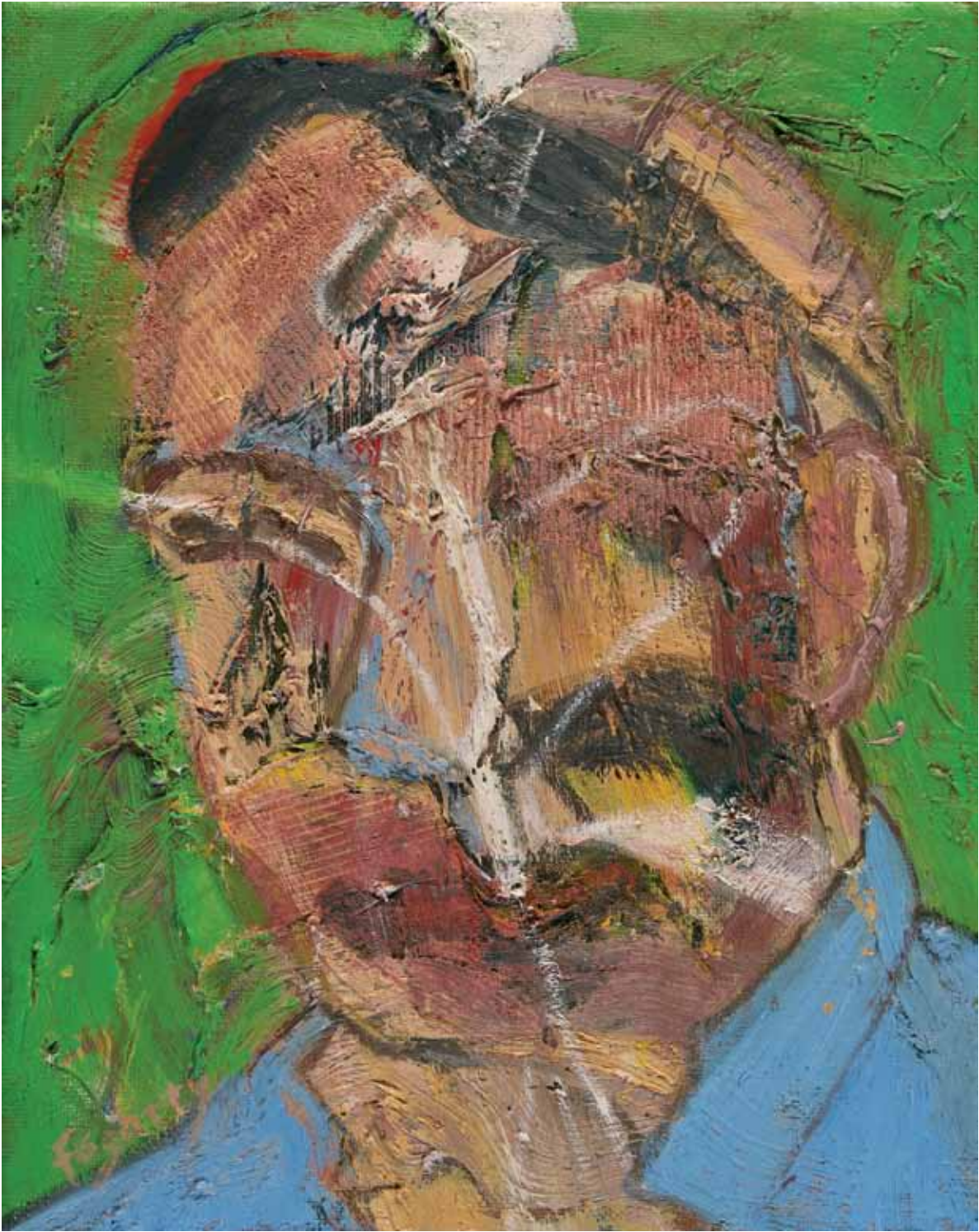
A night of  
**INTER FERENCE**  
spoken word / performance / multimedia

"The most authentic voice  
of Europe's festival scene."  
Fraser Clark (Megatripolis / The Warp)

A steaming, captivating  
performer.  
A rarity these days to find a  
spoken word artist with  
something to say.  
Provocative and  
interactive, if you don't  
want to know the score -  
look away now.

  
Live soundscapes and  
performance by  
**The Speechwriters**  
Visuals by NiceyShite

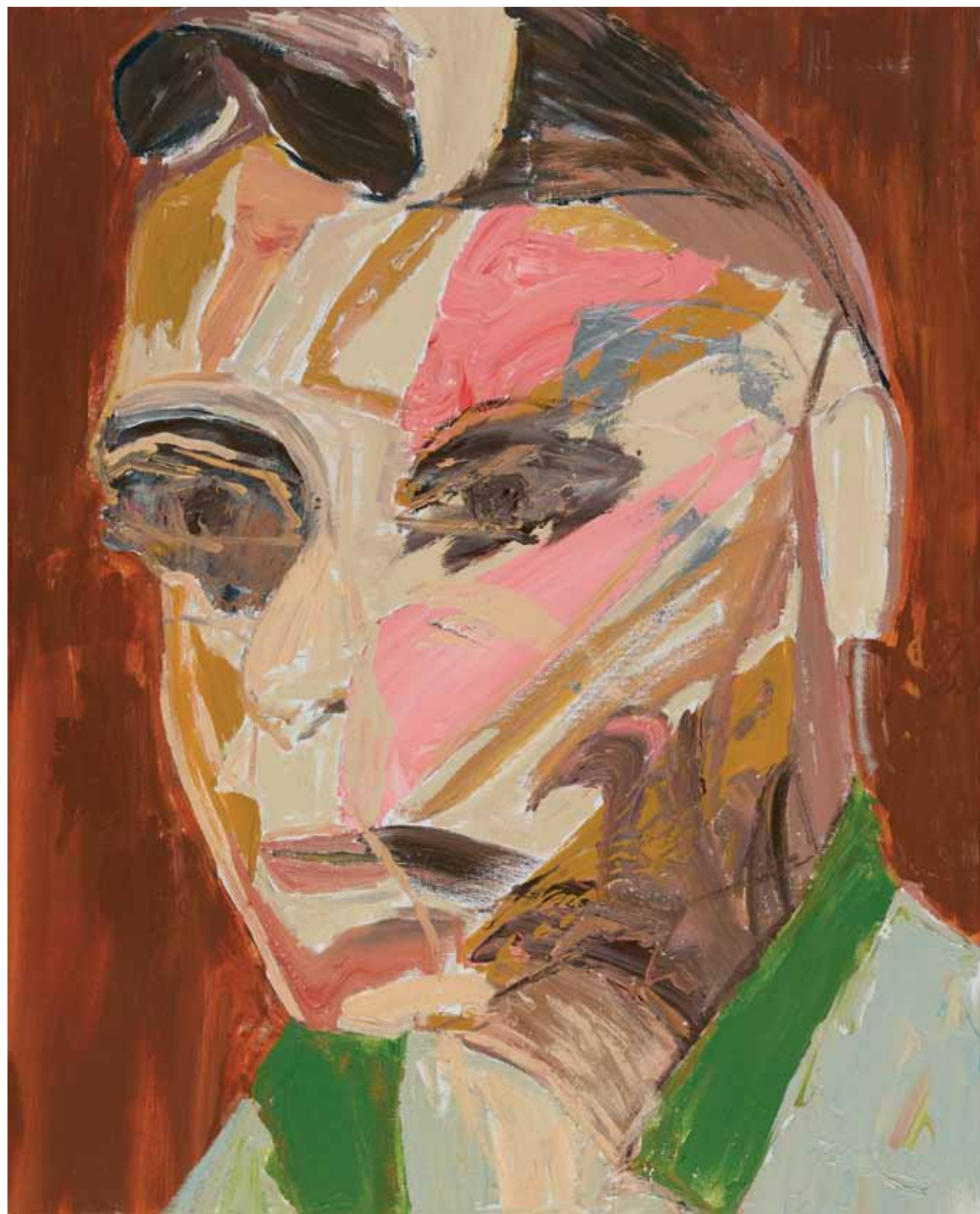
**FRI 31ST AUG THE MARLBOROUGH THEATRE**  
book online at: [www.themarlborough.co.uk](http://www.themarlborough.co.uk) 8pm start £6/5 concessions  
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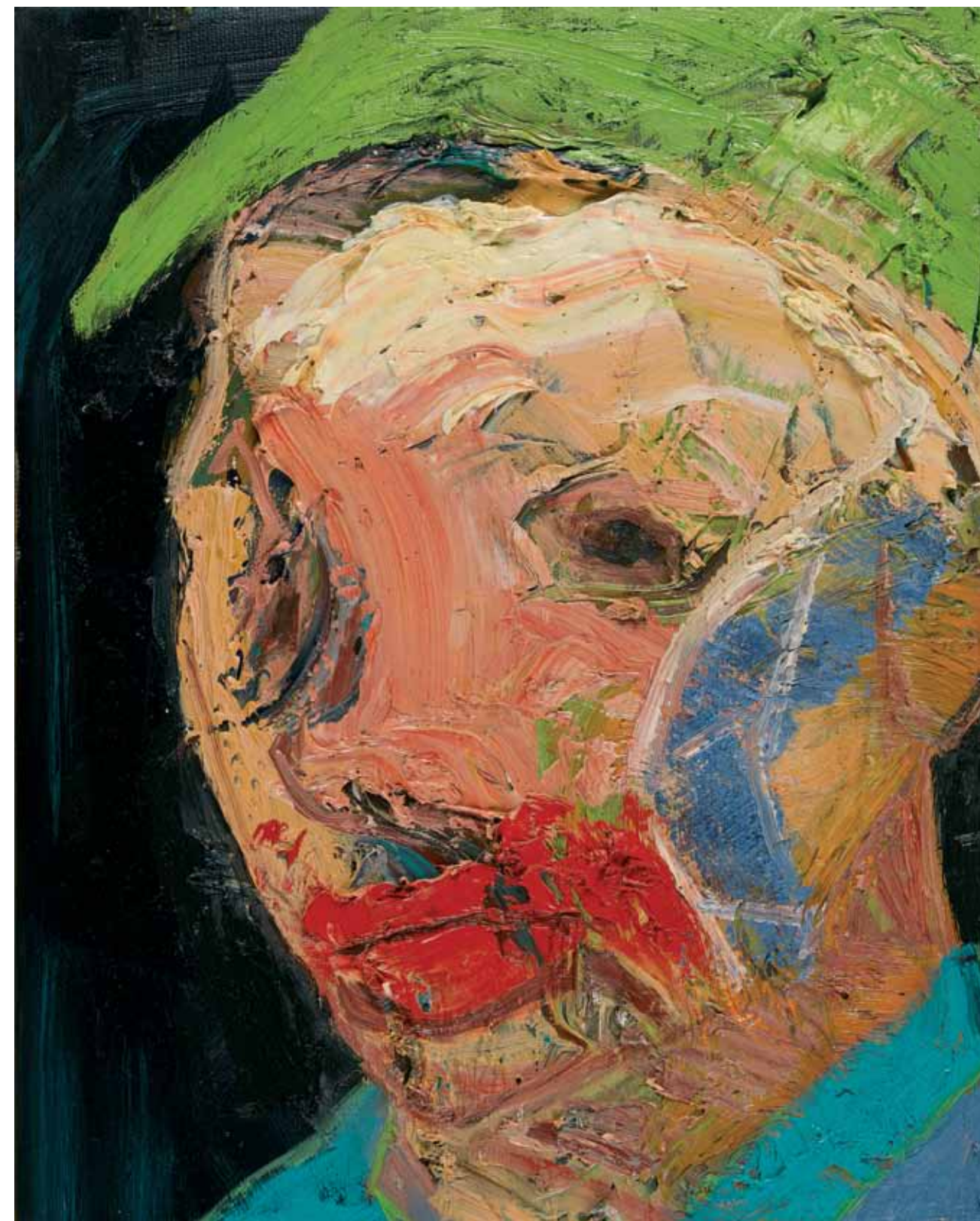
FERENC  
(acrylic on canvas 10"x12")

"InterFerenc" is a powerful writer, an electrifying performance artist and my former friend. I believe this portrait might have captured something of his complex and tortured soul.



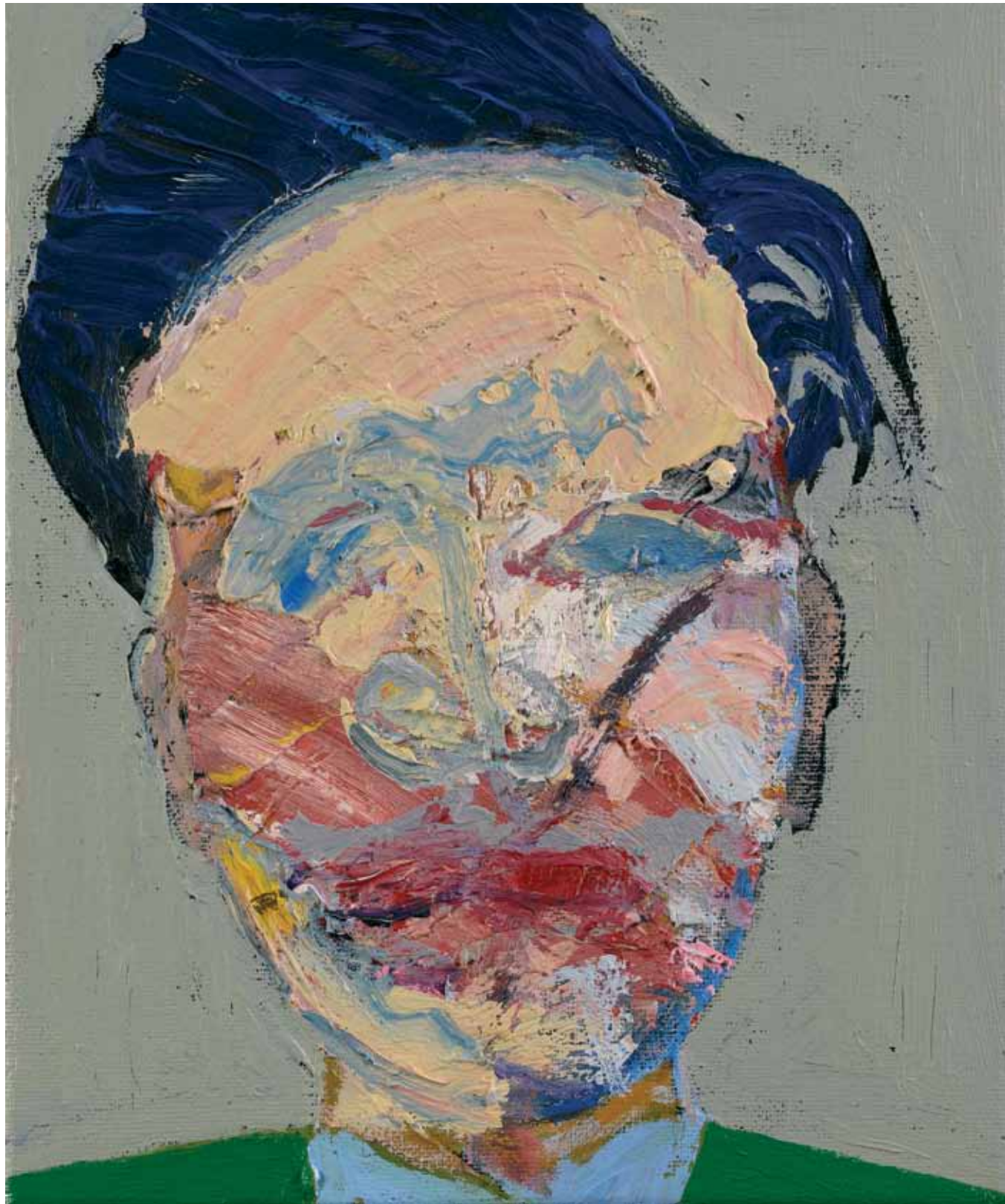


PORTRAIT OF FERENC  
 (oil and acrylic on canvas 24"x30")



STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF FERENC  
 (oil and acrylic on canvas 10"x12")





STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF DAVID LYNCH  
(acrylic on canvas 10"x12")

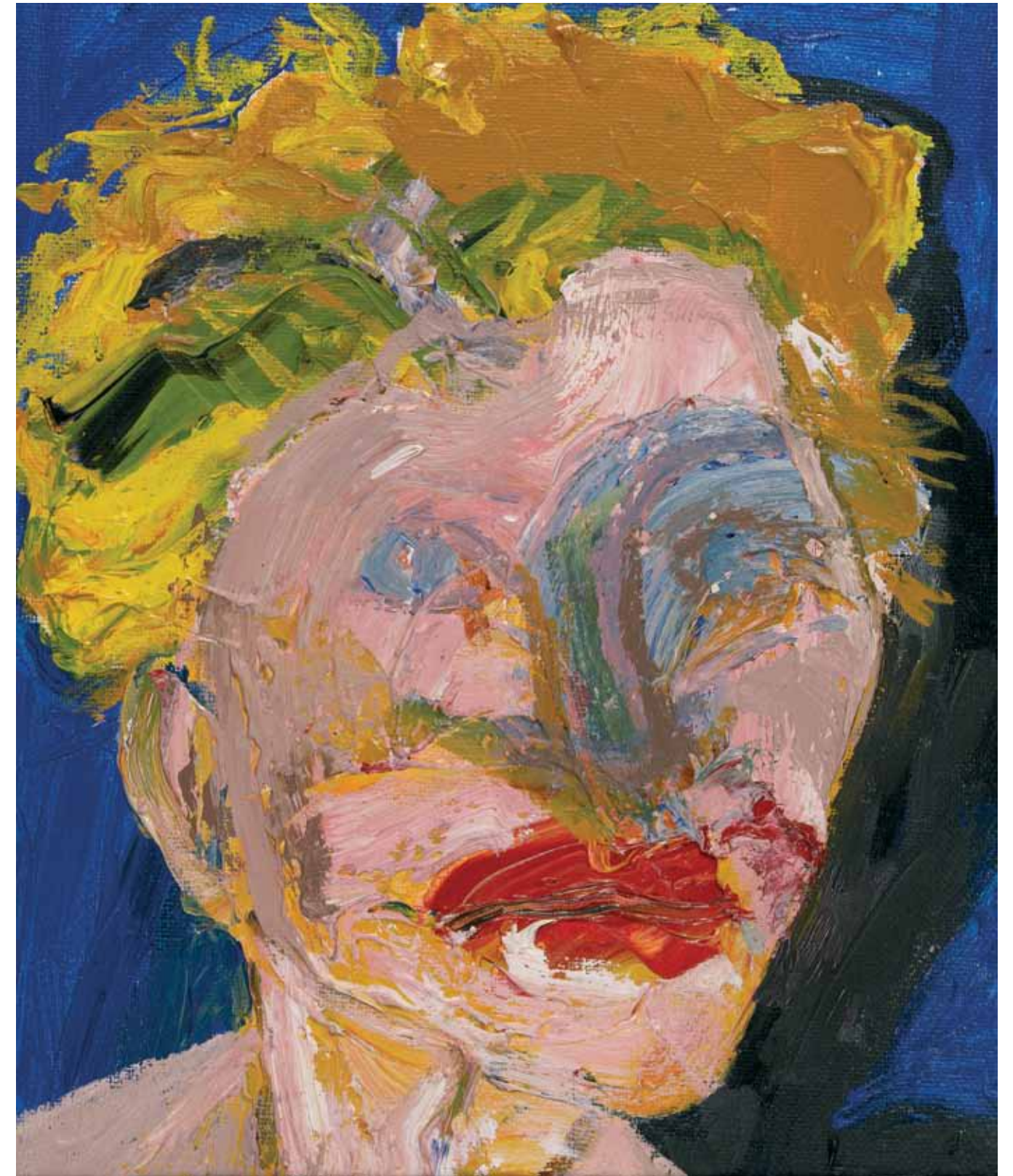


PORTRAIT OF SARA  
(oil on canvas 12"x14")



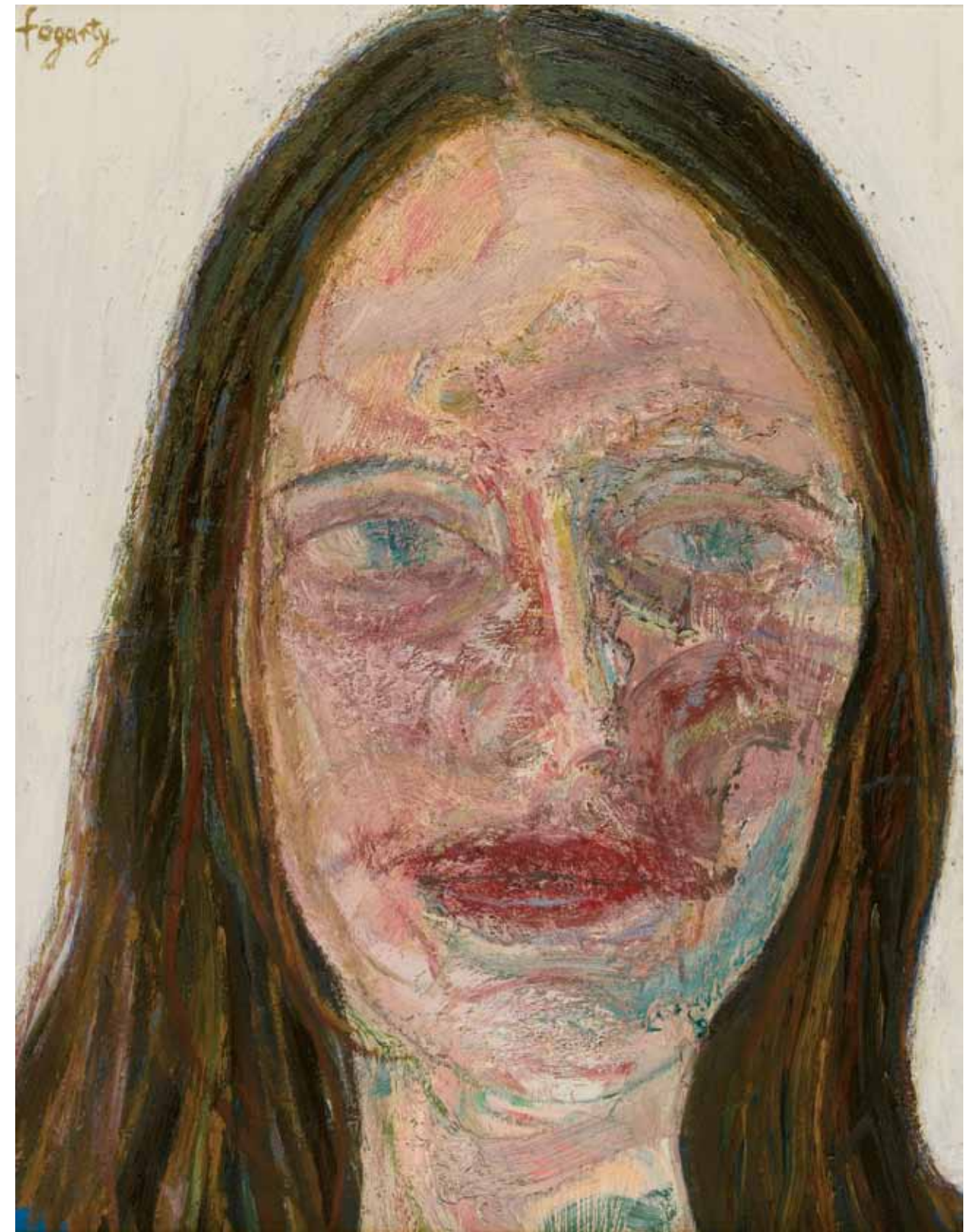


This portrait was inspired by a photograph on the front page of the Brighton Argus of a pretty young girl, Sharise, who suffered from depression and eventually hanged herself. I was deeply moved and saddened by her story and kept the newspaper article until, eight years later, while I was fighting for my own life after the two disastrous surgical operations on my brain tumour, I made up my mind to paint her portrait even if it was the last thing I ever did



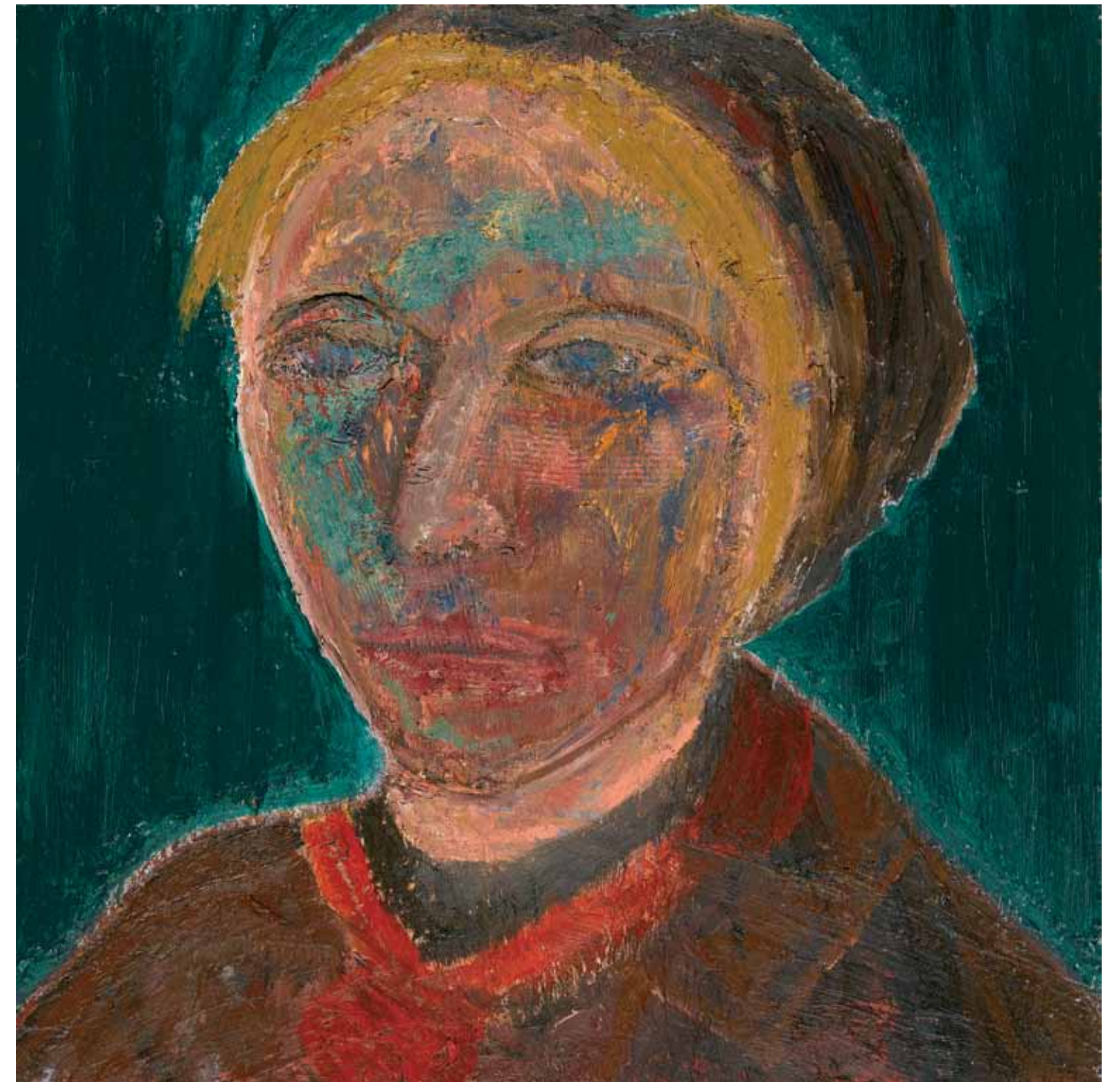
POSTHUMOUS PORTRAIT OF SHARISE GACHELL  
(acrylic on canvas 10"x12")





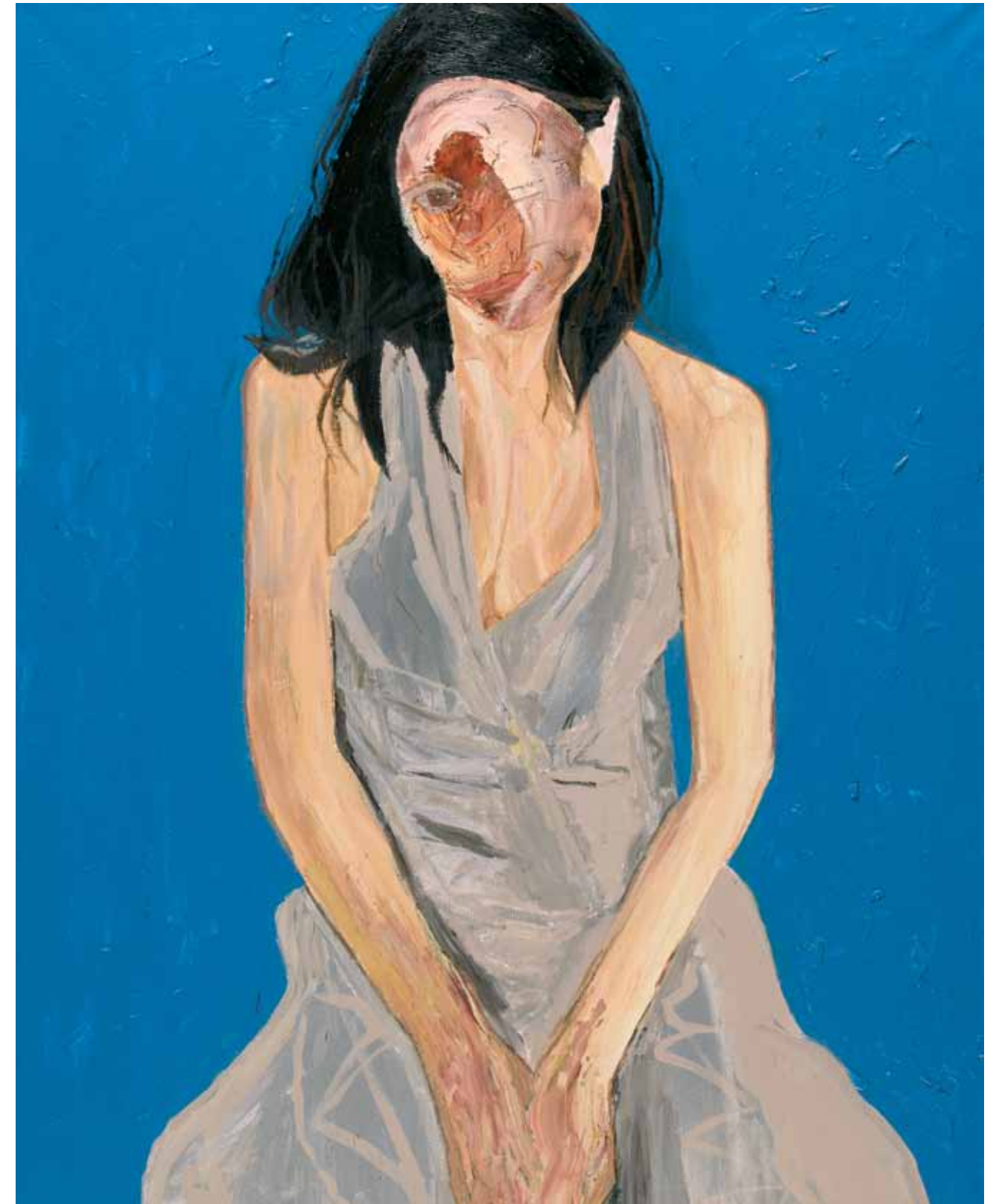
PORTRAIT OF KATE  
(oil on canvas 12"x14")





PORTRAIT OF JEAN IN BROWN BERET  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 15"x15")





PORTRAIT OF NELI  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 30"x40")



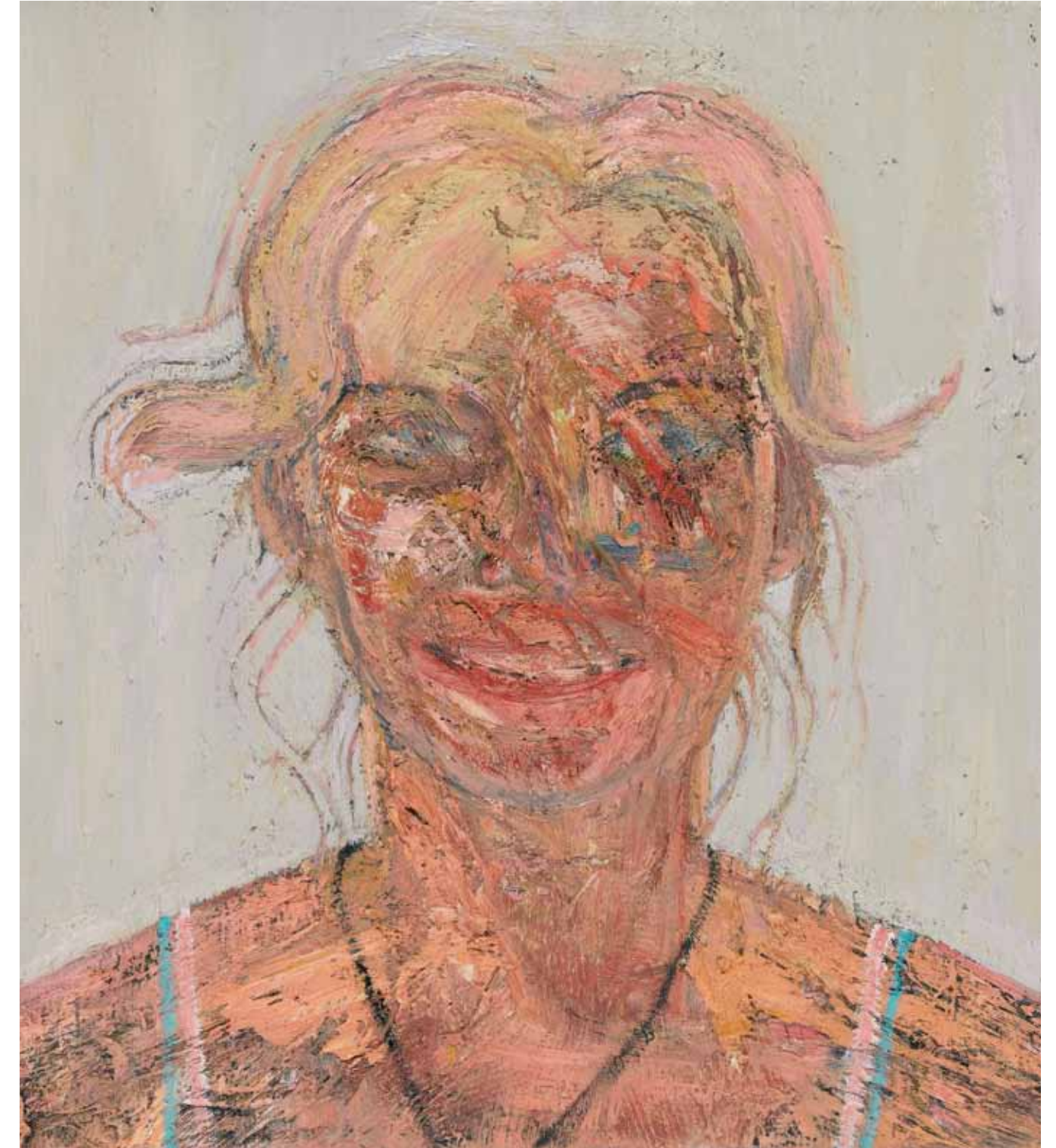


PORTRAIT OF CORA  
 (oil on canvas 30"x40")



UNFINISHED PORTRAIT OF MEGAN HAYNES  
 (oil on canvas)





MY YANKEE BEACH GIRL  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")



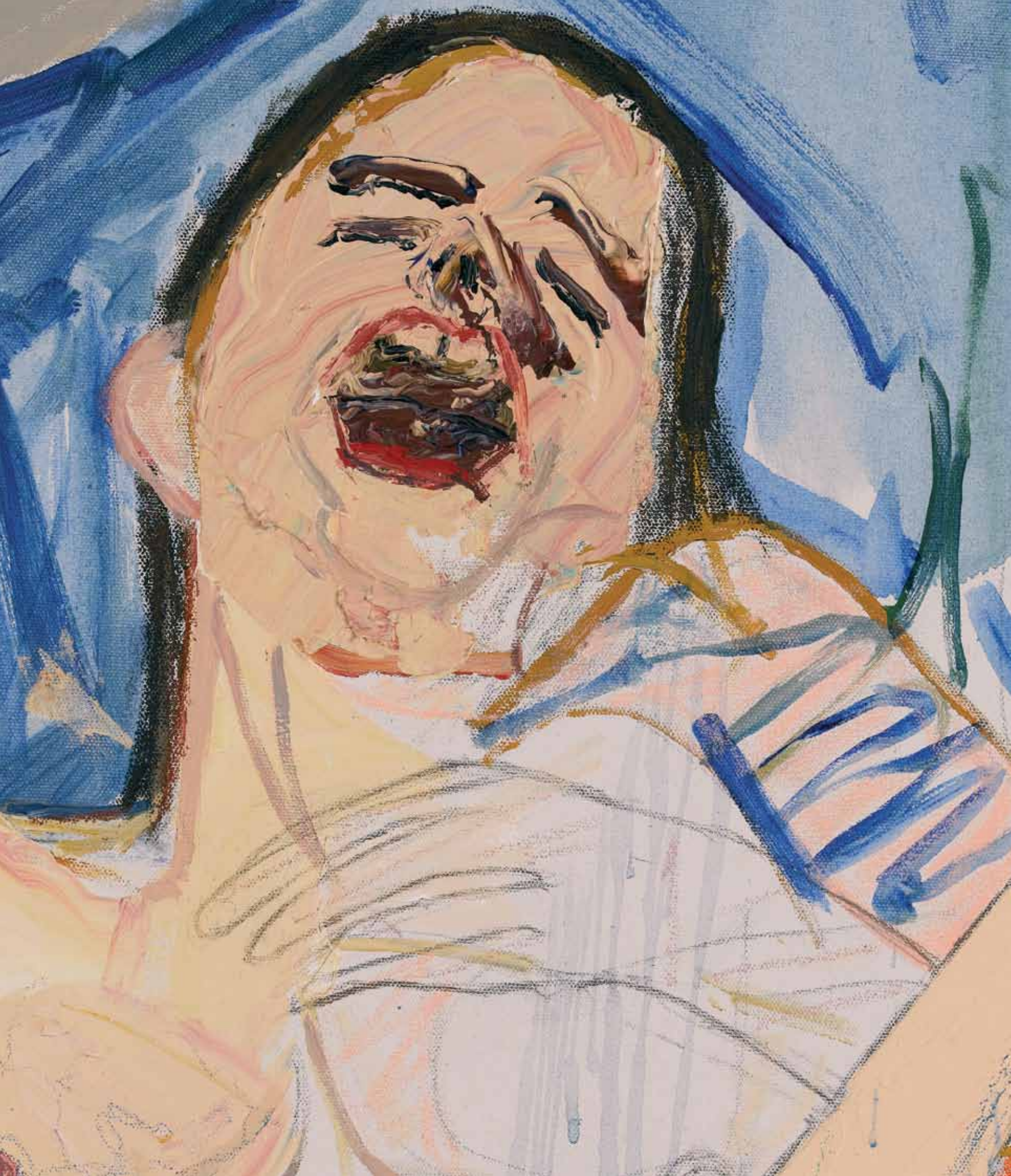


NAOMI  
(oil, acrylic and oil stick on canvas 24"x36")



GRAPH OF MY HEART  
(oil, acrylic and housepaint on canvas 24"x36")



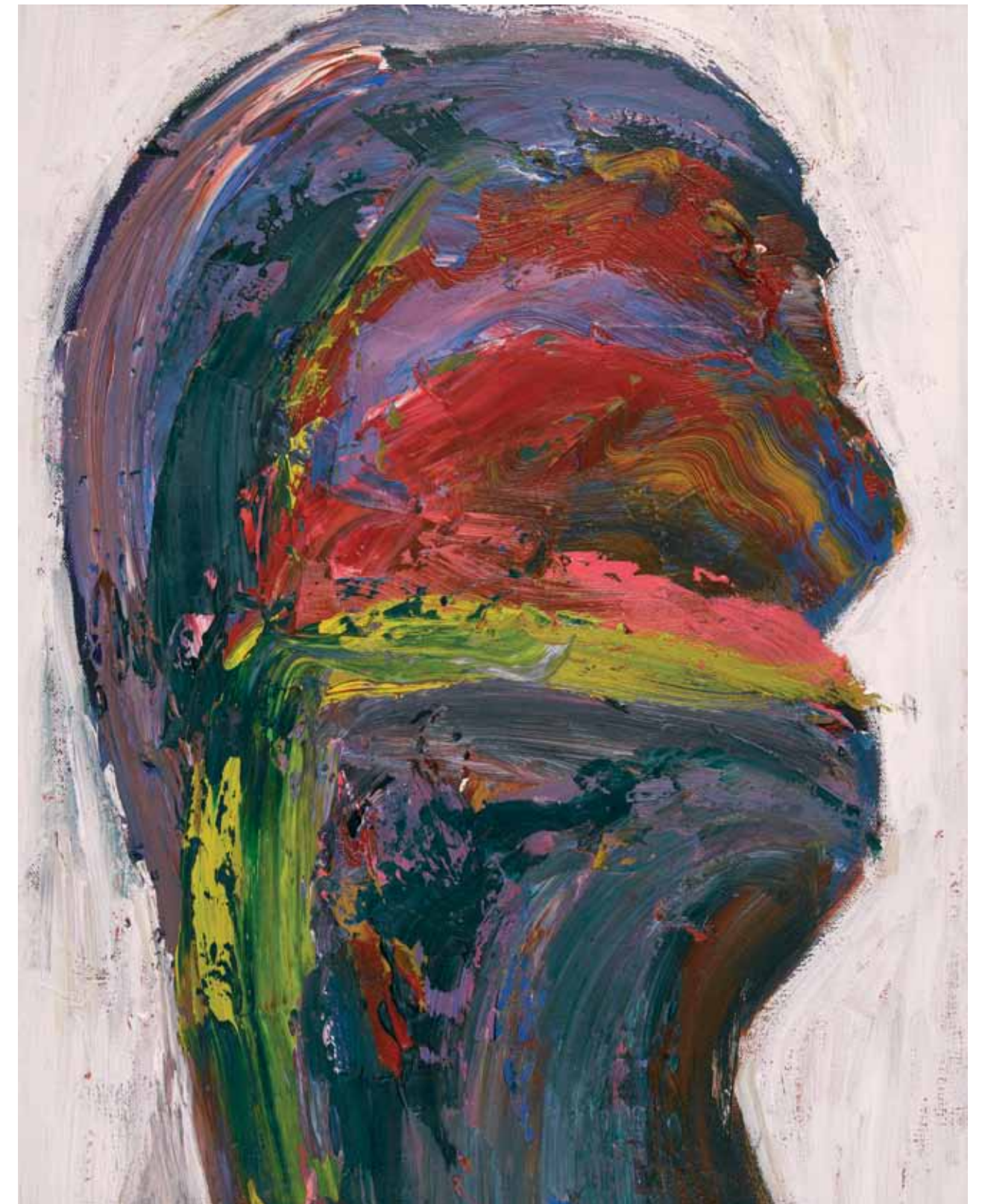


FLOWER IN THE RAIN  
(acrylic, oil stick and masking tape on canvas 120cm x 100cm)





PROFILE OF A GIRL WITH GREEN LIPSTICK  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 10"x12")

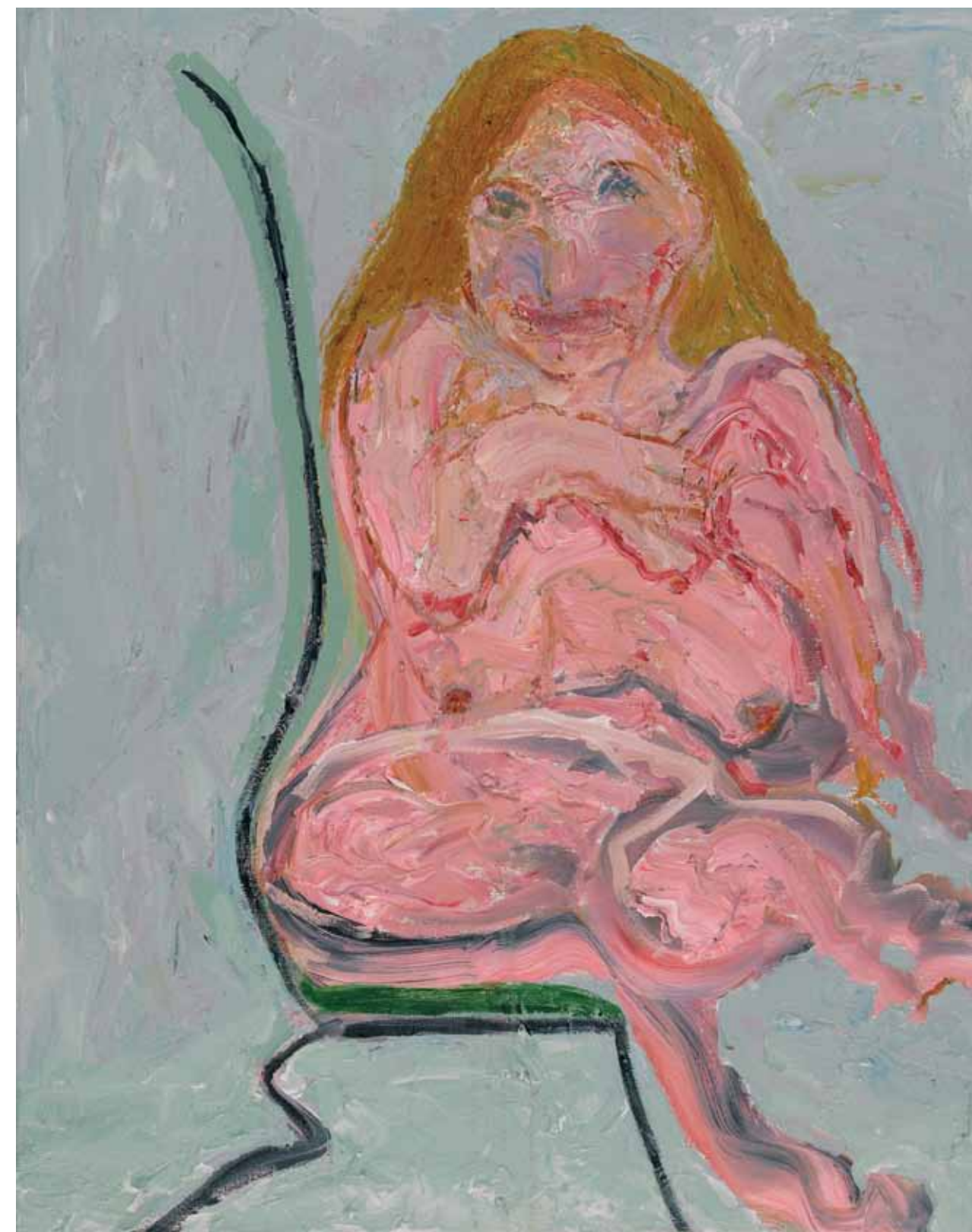


HEAD 1, MOON IN THE MAN, SELF - PORTRAIT WITH BRAIN TUMOUR POST CRANIOTOMY  
(acrylic on canvas 12"x16")



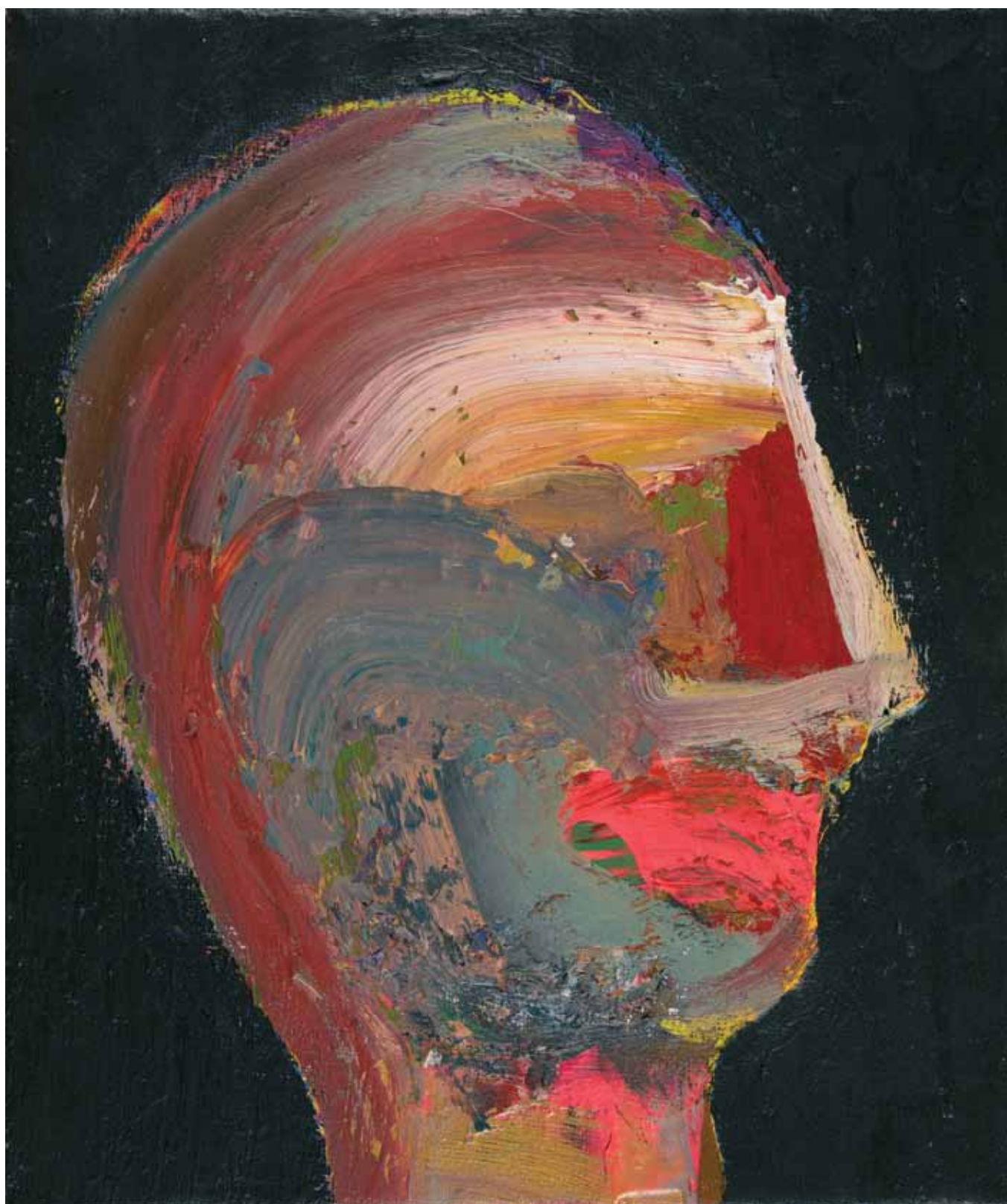


NAKED PORTRAIT OF SARA  
(oil on canvas 30"x40")



PINK SEATED NUDE  
(acrylic on canvas 24"x30")



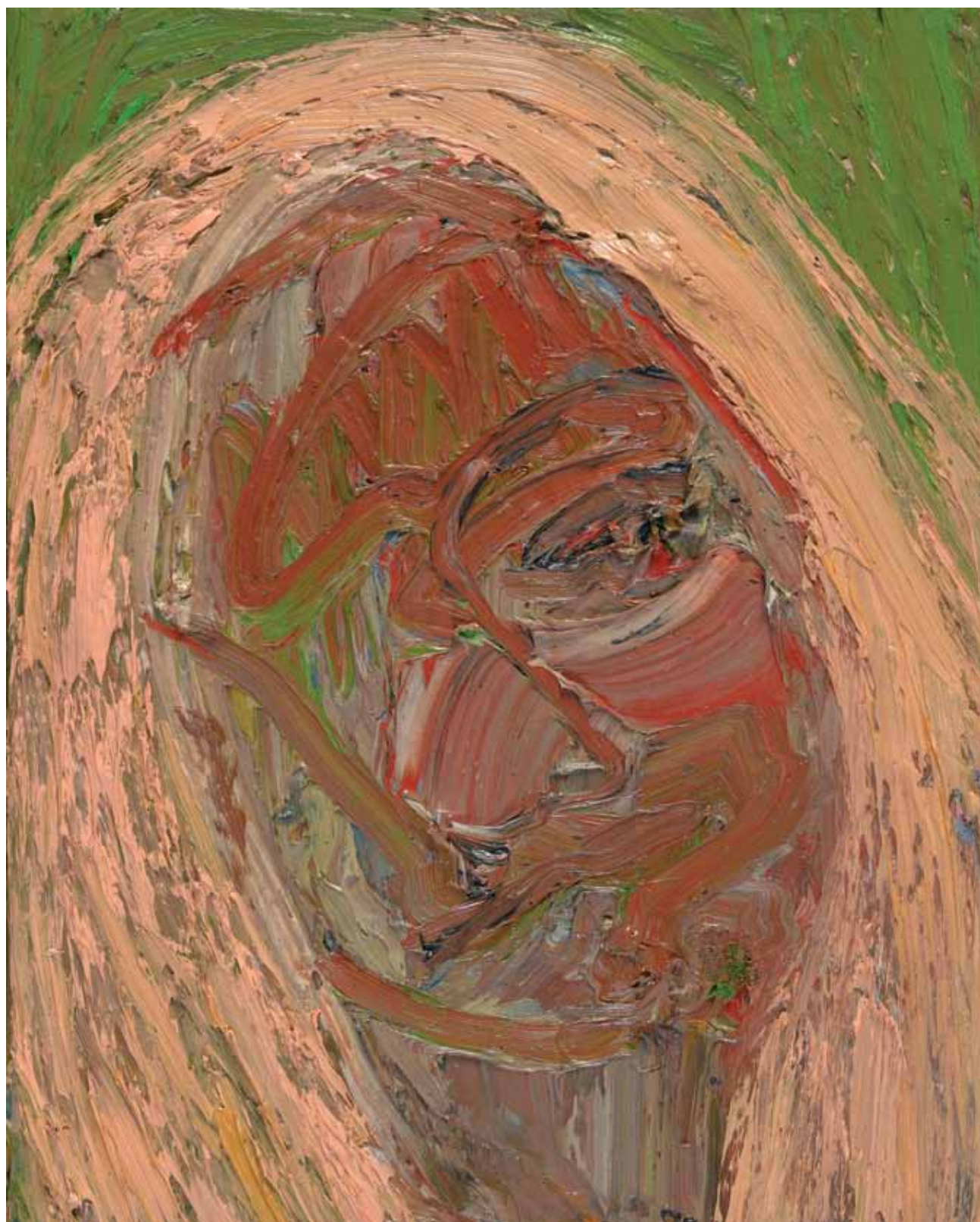


HEAD 2, SELF - PORTRAIT WITH CLIVAL CORDOMA BRAIN TUMOUR  
(acrylic on canvas 10"x12")



STORMY NIGHTS  
(acrylic on canvas 30"x40")





SUNFLOWER  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")



STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF EMMA  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")



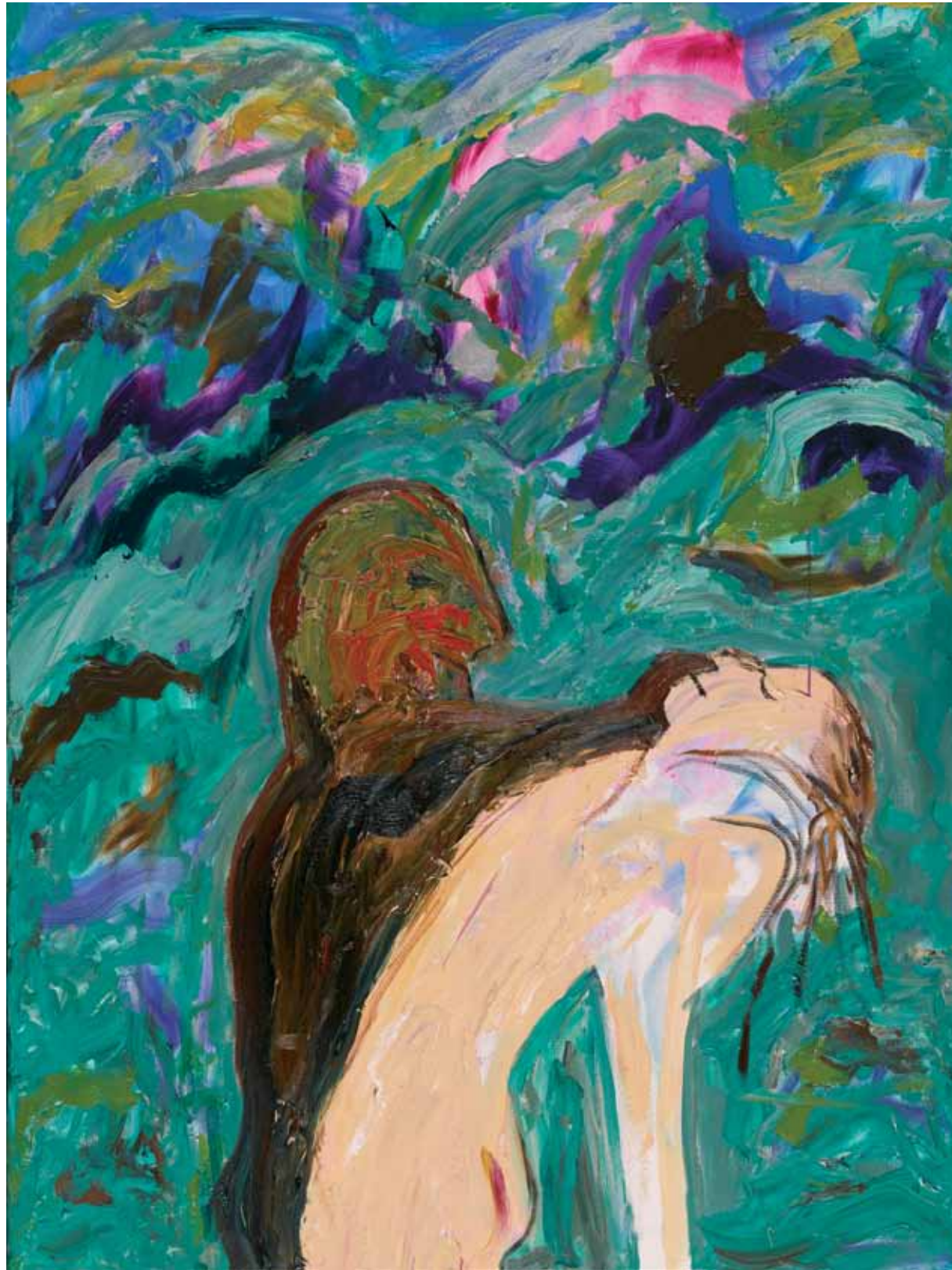


The girl from my own published short story, "The Greenhouse", finding the ruined, abandoned greenhouse, discards her clothes to let the intense rays of the sun caress her body, just as if they were the hands of the lover of her fantasy personified. Eros is everywhere, ripe-cheeked, mischievous, obscene, beautiful, in the figure of the girl, the child's drawing of a sunflower that beams down on her, the graffiti scrawled on the walls of the greenhouse, the cobwebs, the cigarette butts, sweet wraps, chewing gum, and other debris scattered on the floor, and the implication that she is disporting herself for anyone chancing by – including the viewers in the art gallery – to see her through the grimy windows of the greenhouse and become part of the sweet, sinister world within; the fears, desires, erratic passions of puberty. Perhaps the girl longs to be found, to have the potential joy of losing herself in the wild momentum of the gang, (a member of which might have immortalised her in the filthy insinuations scrawled on the floor and walls) who might turn up at any moment, find her there, and 'torture' her – she wouldn't want to dress and go home without being 'tortured', her lusty little body aching for something brutal to happen, some dazzling bonding ritual which would signify her total acceptance by the gang, and that her life has reality and value for then she'd truly belong, and feel fully alive.



THE GREENHOUSE  
(acrylic, oil stick, pencil, masking tape and collage on canvas 150cm x120cm)



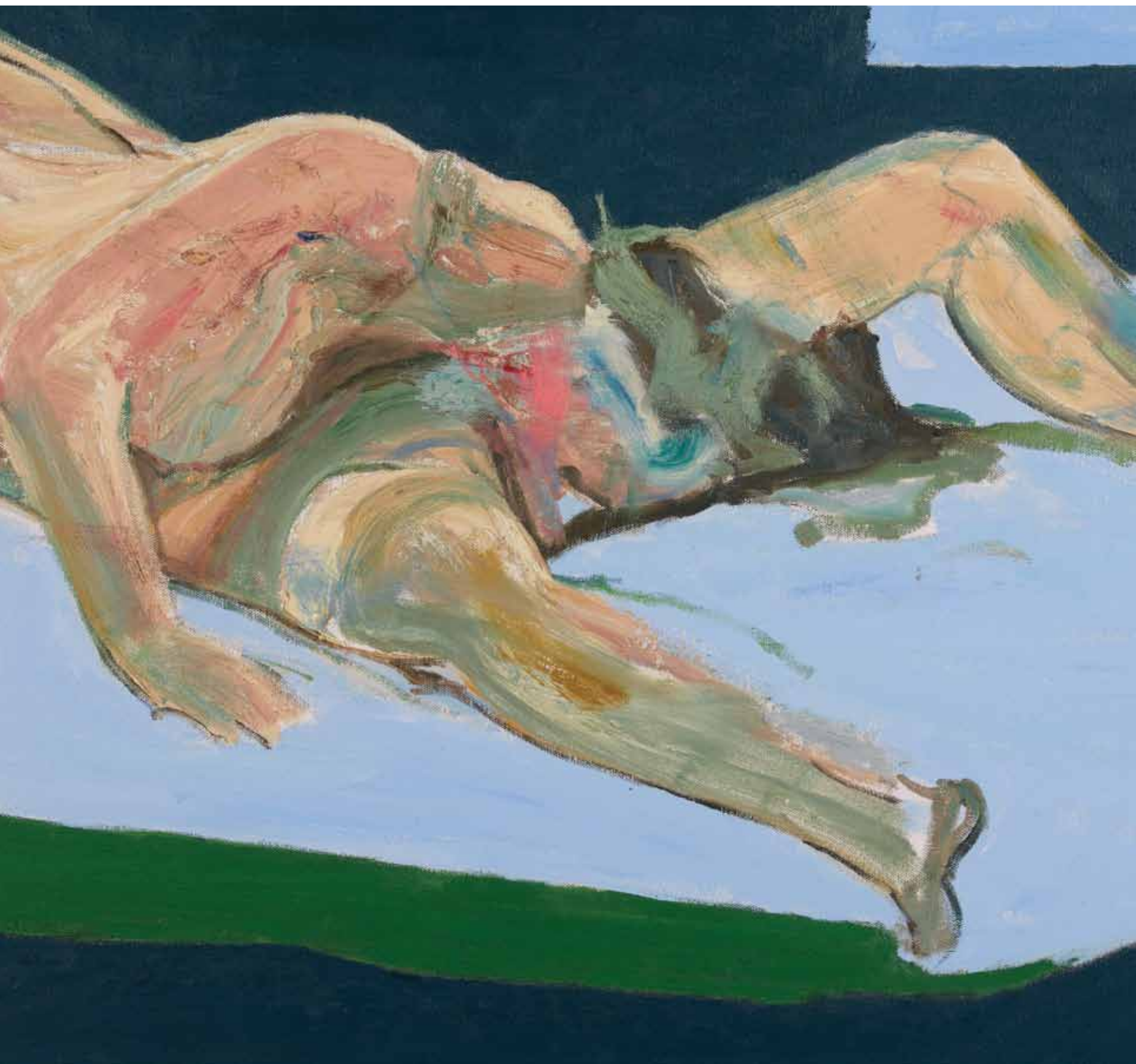


THE ENCHANTER  
(acrylic on canvas 30"x40")



WELCOME TO AUSTRALIA  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 30"x40")



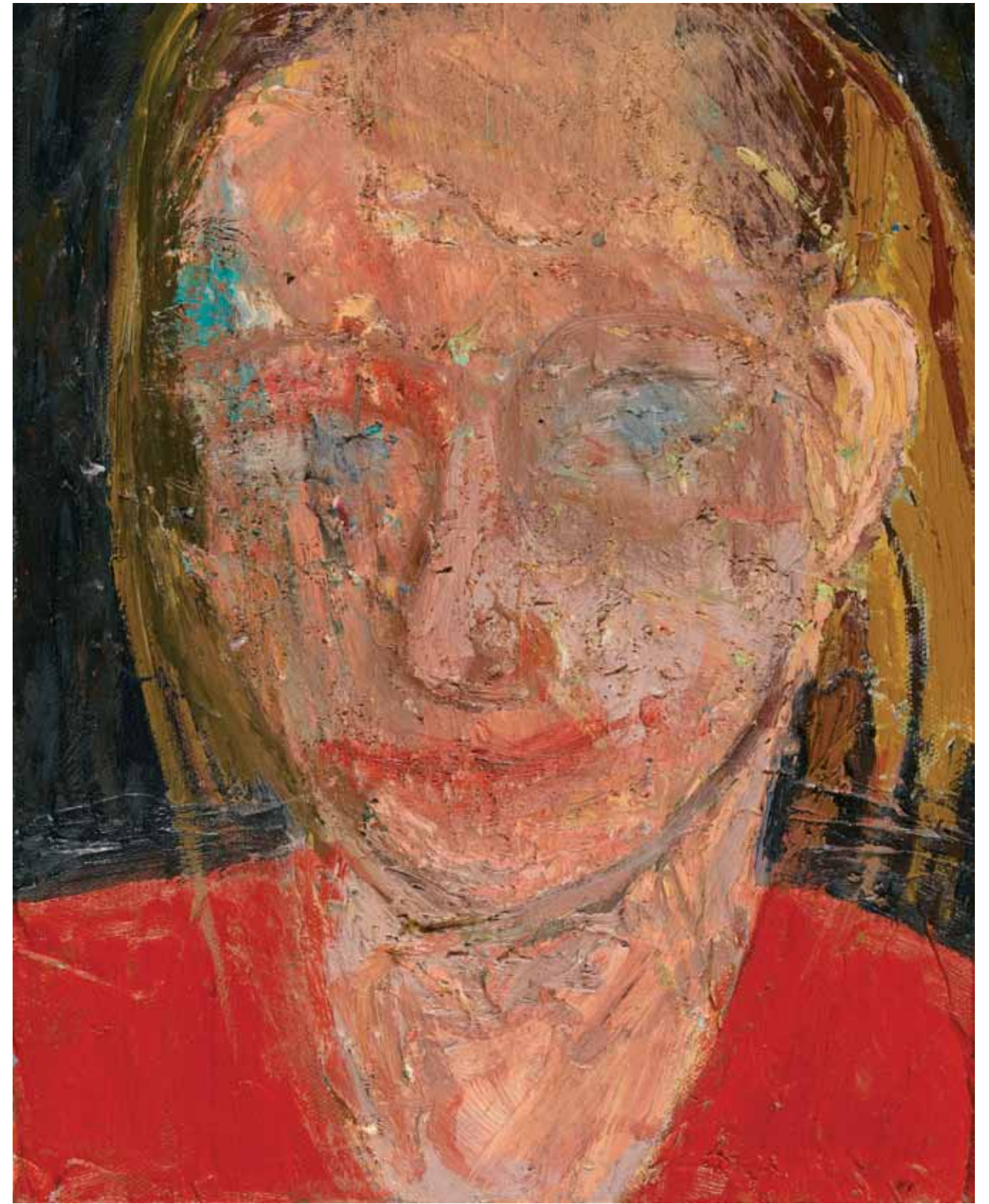


TWO WOMEN, BUNNY AND MILLIE  
(oil on canvas 36"x48")



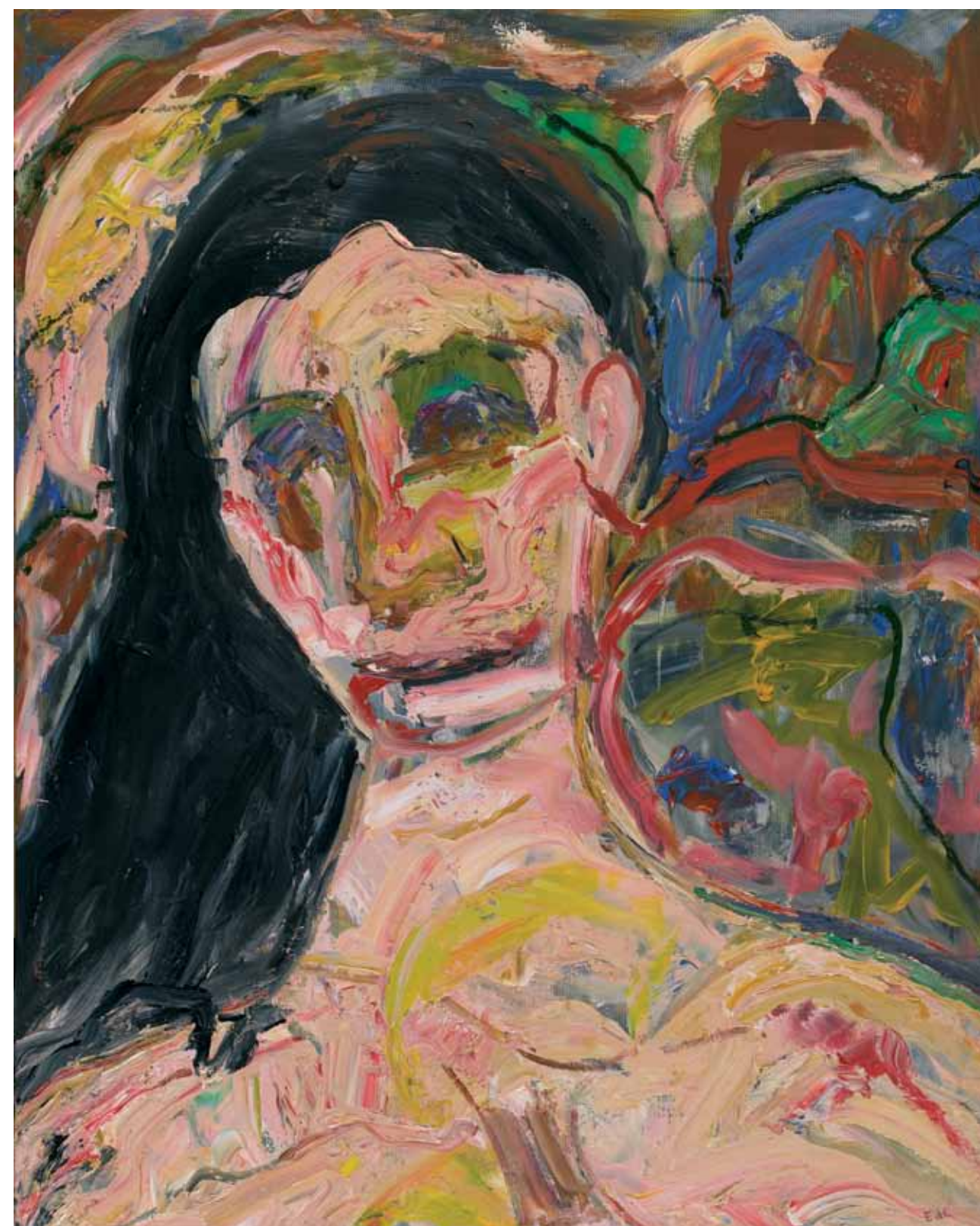


TRACES  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 36"x24")



THE RAIN CAN'T WRAP THE MOON  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 10"x12")





WOMAN INSIDE A LANDSCAPE  
(oil and acrylic on canvas 30"x40")





YOUR FACE WILL BE HERE - UNFINISHED PORTRAIT OF ACTRESS AND FILM DIRECTOR MARINA DE VAN  
(oil on canvas 10"x12")

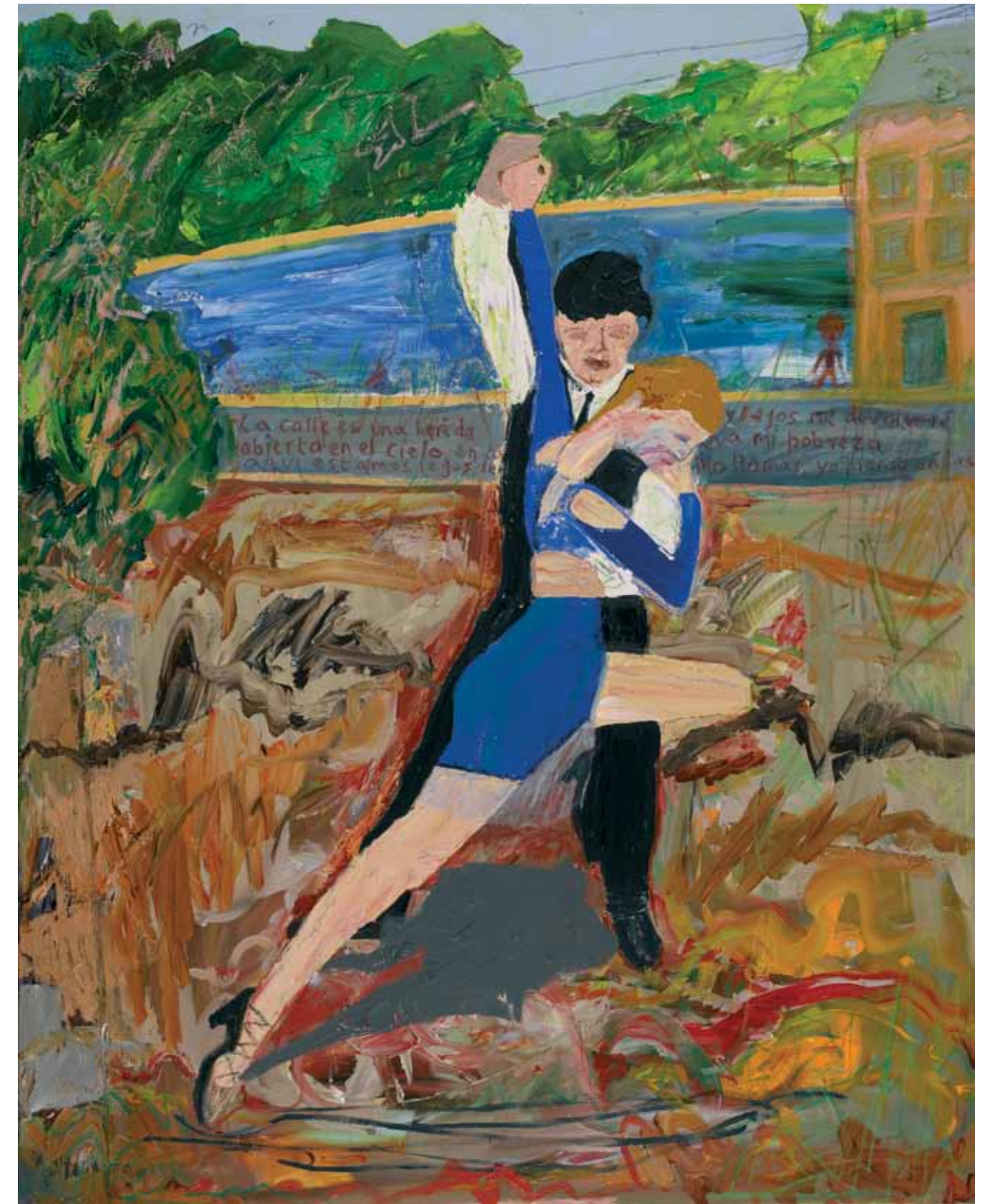


"WOSSY" CONMIGO EN "ALMORA", EALING, LONDRES 1962 - PANEL 1 "PERSONAE SEPARATAE" TRIPTYCH  
(acrylic and oil stick on canvas 120cm x 150cm)





"This second panel in Brian Fogarty's 'Personae separatae' triptych, with the insignificant figure of the painter/poet as always reduced to being a witness or mere voyeur of his muse Wossy's life (whether real or imagined by him) from a distance, is, like the other two panels imbued with pathos and a powerful nostalgia for a world twenty-five years earlier, in London, he has only imagined, but never knows; so now he yearns for what he has probably never had, a world which lies nowhere in a never-never-land, and which, but for this painting, and his handful of poems, would, like a last will and testament, perish with the imminent death of its mortally sick creator; and yet, in the tango, which is both the dance of life and of death, there is a melancholy duende, or passion, and one can't help but wonder, is the girl Wossy who seemed so carefree twenty-five years earlier on the swing in the garden of Almora in the first panel, even while she dances with another partner, perhaps her husband, day dreaming of the poet?



"WOSSY" CONMIGO EN BUENOS AIRES, 1987 - PANEL 2 "PERSONAE SEPARATAE" TRIPTYCH  
(acrylic and oil stick on canvas 120cm x 150cm)





### *Personae separatae*

Like the scale of gold that breaks away from sombre distance and meltingly runs on the corridor of the Judas-trees by now charred skeletons, are we the same, personages divided by the gaze of another?



"WOSSY" CONMIGO EN BUENOS AIRES, 2012 - PANEL 3 "PERSONAE SEPARATAE" TRIPTYCH (acrylic and oil stick, pencil, newspapercollage and masking tape on canvas 120cm x 150cm)





"PERSONAE SEPARATAE" - triptych

"The "Almora" ("Personae separatae") triptych, painted in a light, limpid and hauntingly tender style, evokes a mysterious and elusive world which is either lost or cannot quite fully be grasped or experienced, unlike say the Crucifixion triptych which is all too painfully and violently experienced."



"WHY MUST I BE A TEENAGER IN LOVE?"  
(acrylic on canvas 30"x40")





TRUST ME I'M A BRAIN SURGEON  
(oil, acrylic, oil stick, pencil, masking tape and collage on canvas 120cm x 100cm)





IN THEE DR GOD WE TRUST BECAUSE \$400,000 OF  
BRITISH TAXPAYERS' MONEY IS A SHITLOADA DOUGH





THE GREENHOUSE  
(collage)



THE NIGHTDRESS  
(collage)





LONELINESS AND SORROW  
(oil, acrylic and masking tape on canvas 30"x40")





EMILIA  
(pencil on paper 21cm x 30cm)

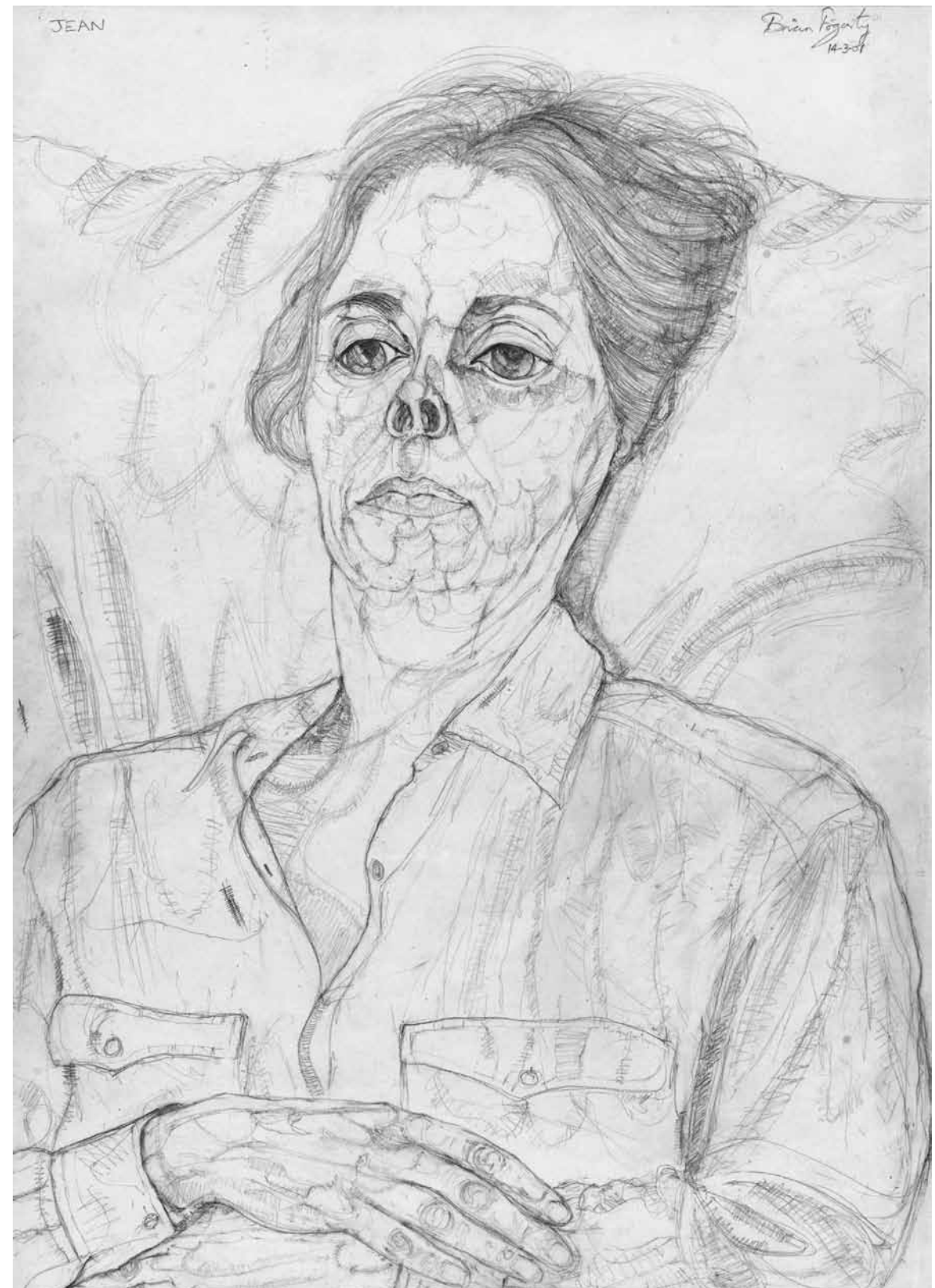


NAKED STUDY OF THE LATE MICHAEL FLETCHER  
(pencil on paper 30cm x 42cm)





PHYLLIS  
(pencil on paper)

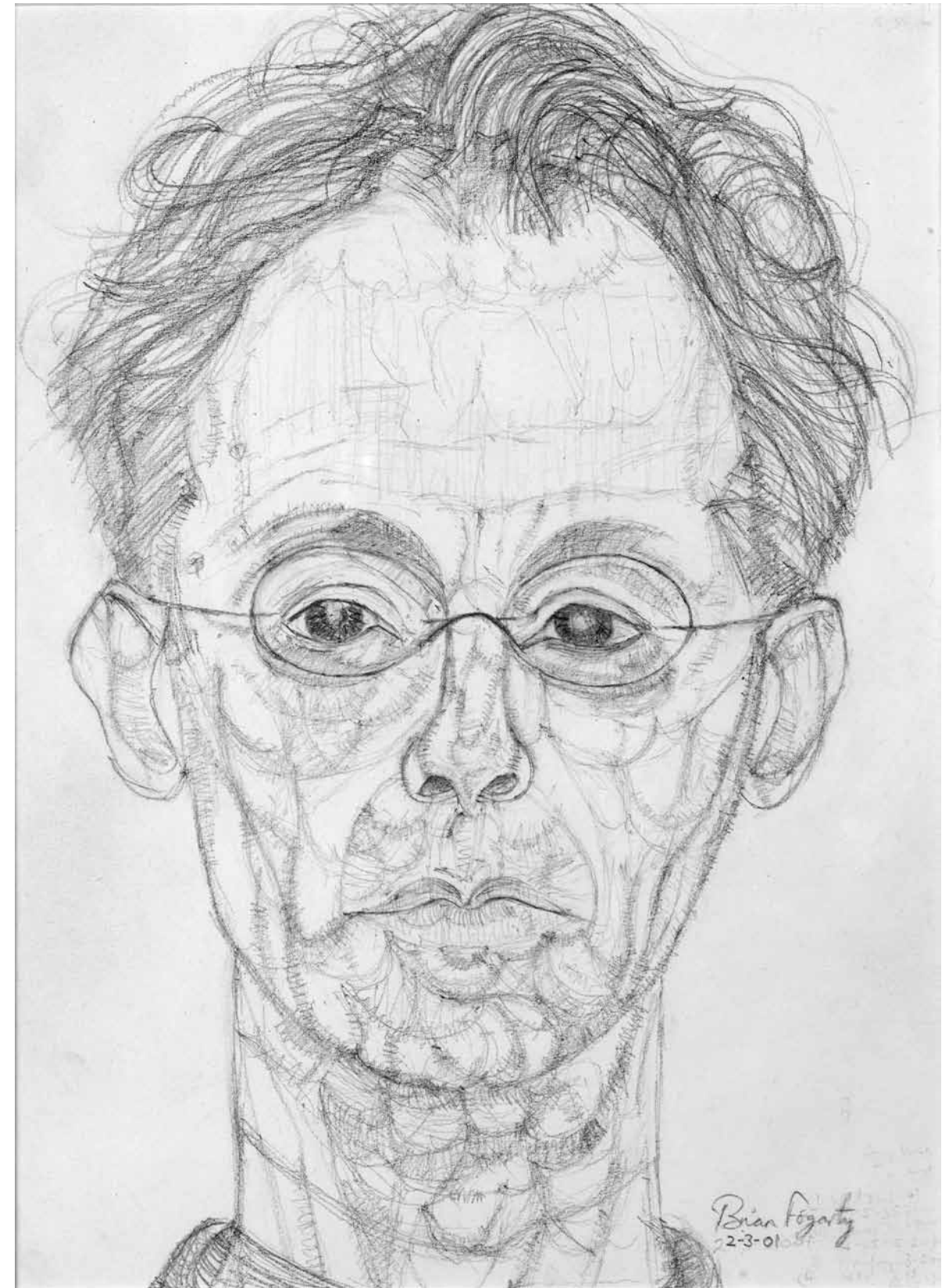


PORTRAIT OF JEAN  
(pencil on paper 14"x18")





REFLECTION - SELF-PORTRAIT IN A MIRROR 2  
(pencil on paper)



REFLECTION - SELF-PORTRAIT IN A MIRROR 3  
(pencil on paper)



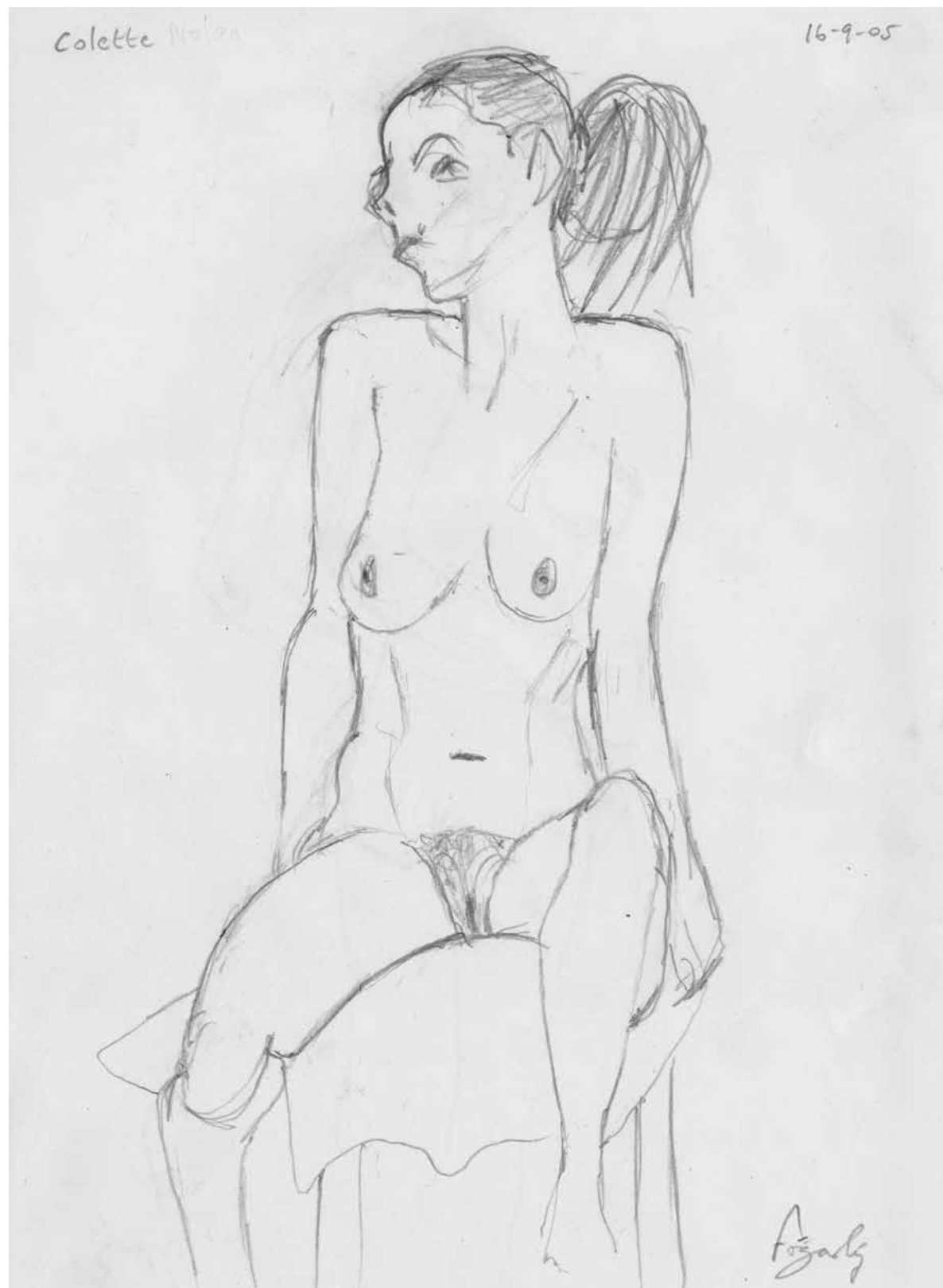


REFLECTION - SELF-PORTRAIT IN A MIRROR 4  
(pencil on paper)

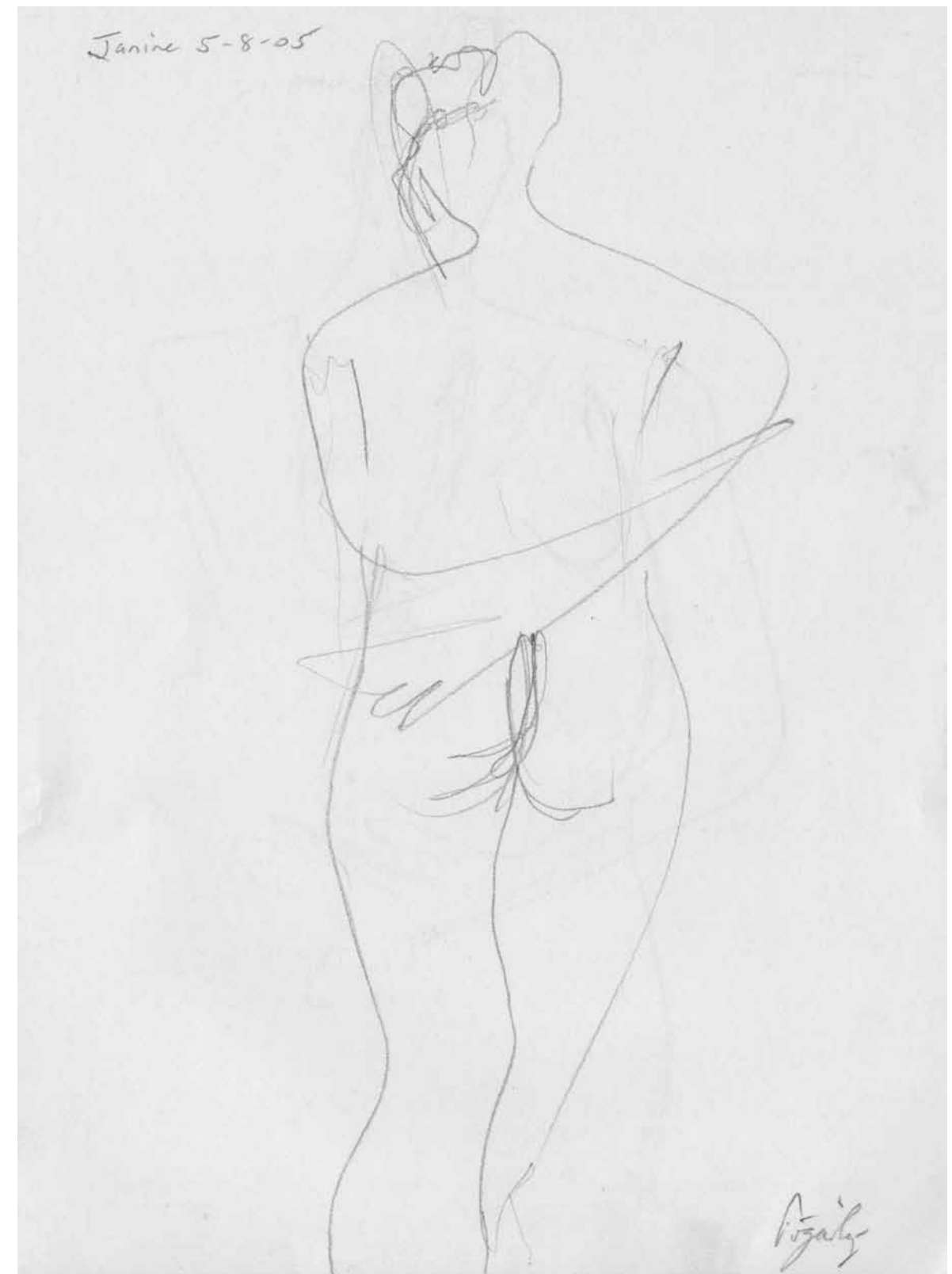


SYLVIE  
(pencil on paper 21cm x 30cm)



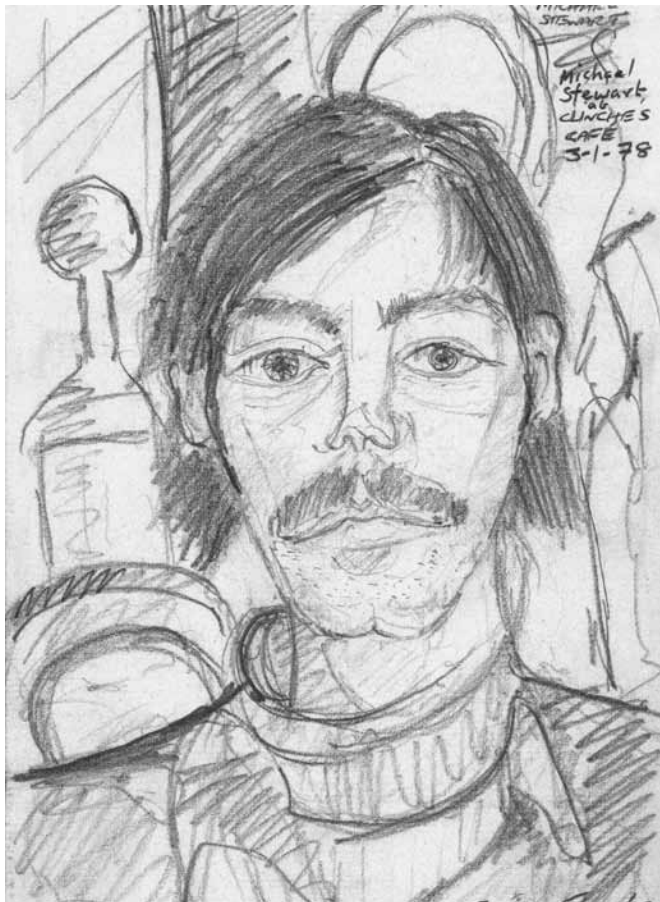


COLETTE  
(pencil on paper)



JANINE  
(pencil on paper)







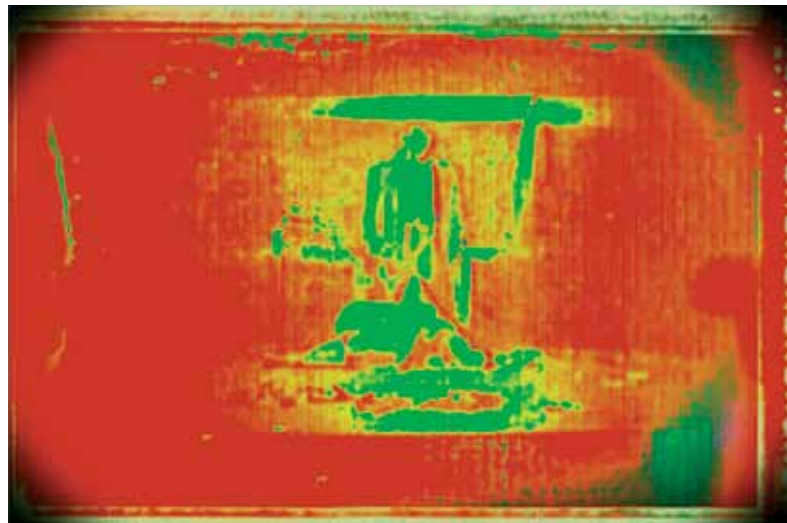
## Overpainted Photography





STRANGE FLOWER  
(mixed media)

'....the deep wishing well of her...in the dim fire-glow of the mud, this dark, splintered star seemed beautiful and strange...it was the centre of a bruised flower in bloom, large as an abused, gaping mouth....'  
(from David Lawton's journal in my novel "Red over Blue").



GREEN CRUCIFIXION  
(mixed media)

This work is based on the centre panel of my oil on canvas triptych, "The Crucifixion of Nicole"

Inspired by, and created for, Elbereth Gilthoniel Finch-Walton (Elbe)



"YELLOW SCARLETT" - CRACK THE SUN AND PAINT YOUR FACE WITH ITS YOKE  
(mixed media)

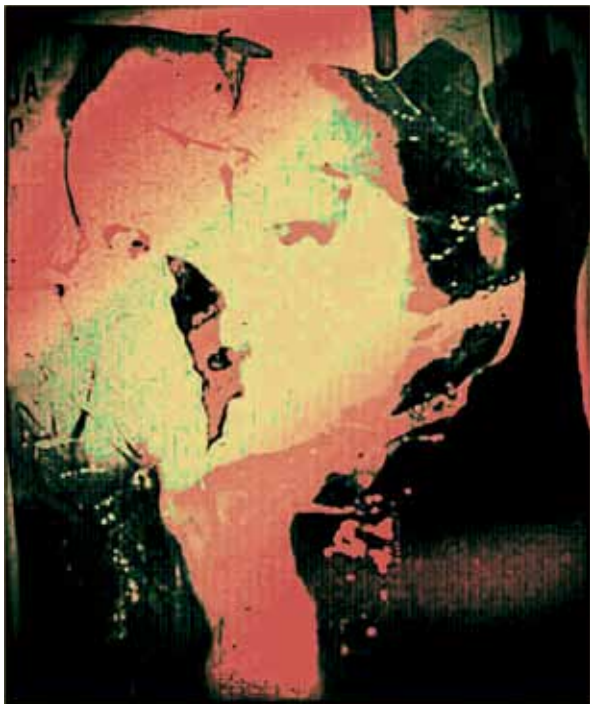


THE GREENHOUSE  
(mixed media)





THE SELF - MADE HAT  
(acrylic and oil paintstick on photo collage)



MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME IN SOME OTHER PLACE  
(acrylic and oil paintstick on photo collage)



A CHEERY BEDSIDE VISIT FROM PINKY MY NEUROBUTCHER  
(mixed media)



MIXED FEELINGS  
(acrylic and oil paintstick on photo collage)



Shop window Mannequin. "TAKE NOT THY TINGLING LIMBS  
FROM ME: make my pain their crazy meal" (E.E.Cummings)



LOST IN EACH OTHER AMID THE CHAOS?



"JUMP"

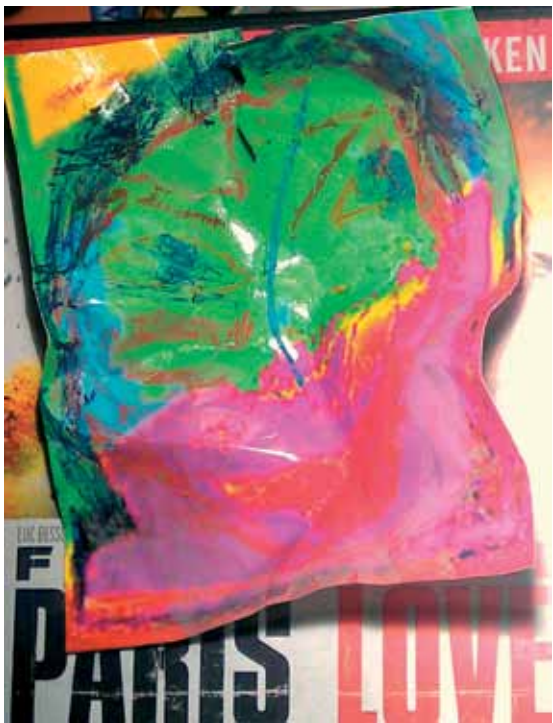


"PRIVATE PROPERTY"

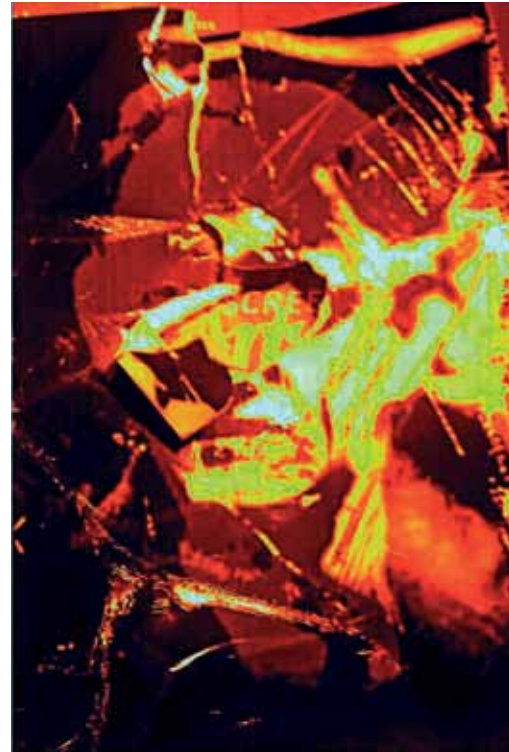




SCARLETT MYSTERY  
(acrylic & oil paintstick on photo collage)



FROM PARIS WITH LOVE

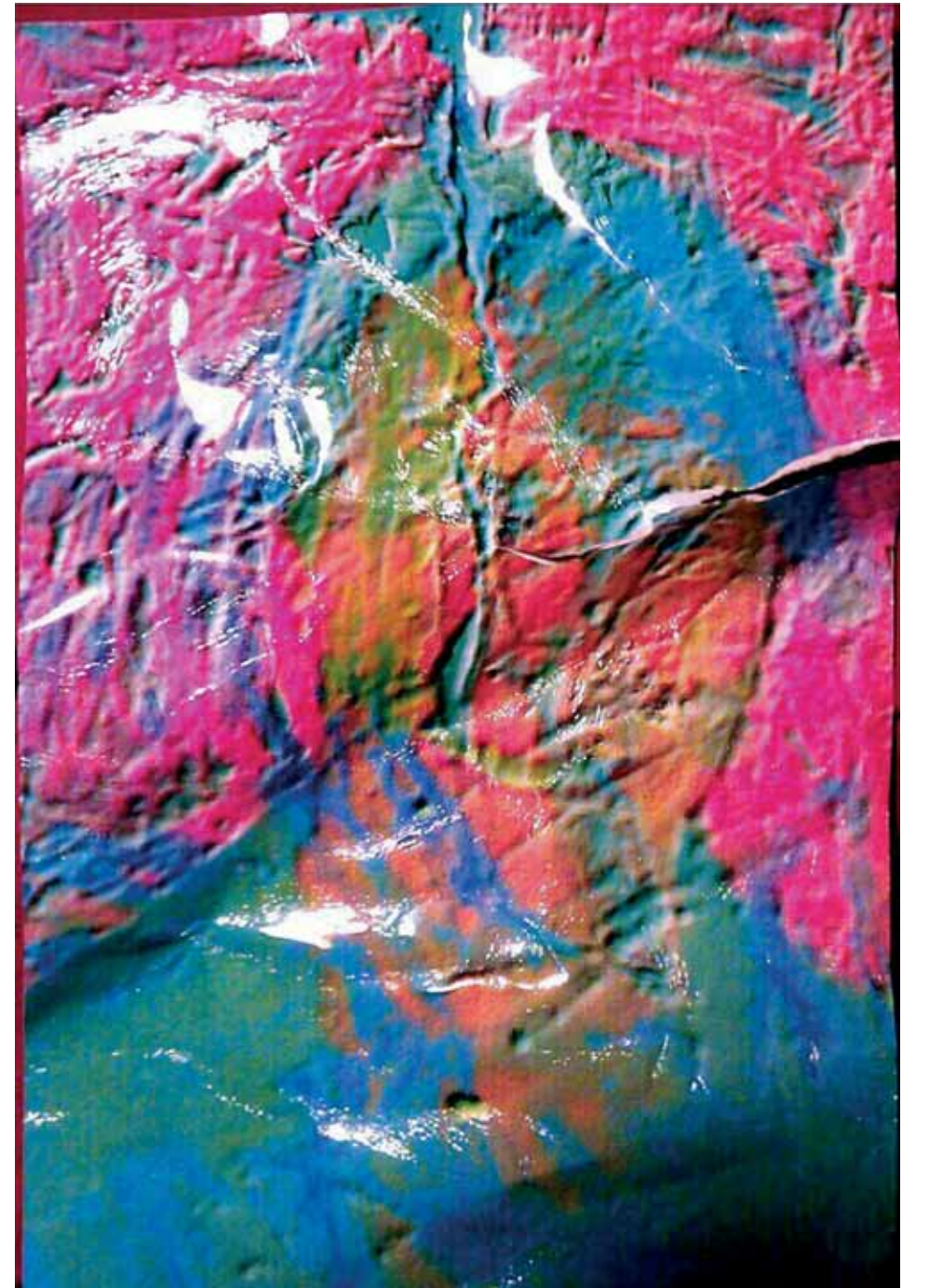


TRUST ME I'M A BRAIN SURGEON  
(acrylic & oil paintstick on photo collage)



BLUE STUDY OF RANDY  
(acrylic & oil paintstick on photo collage)

I met Randy when I spent three months in Jacksonville, Florida, receiving Proton Beam radiotherapy for a brain tumour after an unsuccessful craniotomy in England. Randy was a fellow cancer patient, and we became good buddies.



STUDY FOR PORTRAIT OF RANDY  
(acrylic and oil paintstick on photo collage)



# POEMS

The poems relate to the “Personae Separatae” triptych of paintings inspired by Brian Fogarty’s summer of 1962 meeting with “Wossy” at a house called “Almora”, which eventually resulted in the triptych fifty years later in 2012.



## ALMORA

### (Personae Separatae)

#### for Wossy

*‘It is life, more than death, that has no limits.’*

(Gabriel Garcia Marquez, ‘Love in the Time of Cholera’)

*‘Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then but that’s no matter – tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms further...And one fine morning...*

*So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back*

*ceaselessly into the past.’* (F. Scott Fitzgerald, ‘The Great Gatsby’)

In those days you couldn’t just hop on a plane and follow your dream especially if you were only twenty and worked in a meat pie factory although some of the time you did daydream the impossible like can I just sort of wish myself to be seven thousand miles away in BuenosAires where she is and in the end that was how you ‘resolved’ your loss by using up your feelings which otherwise would be a completely useless burden to write a novel out of your imagination that transported you there to recover the disappeared one you’d lost.

But, of course, all the writing came later, not when you were only twenty and still with her, nor after she’d left, leastways not for years.

While she was here in London you knew right off this lovely girl of fifteen was your first love the love of your life and your last.

Looking back fifty years later you know as a concept she still is,

But what if you’d never met her, would you be where you are now

(without her obviously, as she was only here with you for one summer)?

Would you though have become who you’ve become – a writer who travelled through other continents, met all those people, did all those things, paintedthe pictures, wrote the novels, stories, and poems?

Others you’ve met since along the way have counted for something too, but yes, I think it’s true but for her none of these would have existed, leastways, not in your life, not for you.

So, where would all these people she never met be if I hadn’t met her?

Has she changed their lives in some small or significant ways through me?

I make discoveries while I am writing this poem, not so much like falling asleep into a dream but like little miracles that flash up like tiny fish jumping from a pool. For example most of the subsequent others do meet something of her through me for parts of her are become visible through me, as an essence, a wraith, an aura,

ectoplasm from my soul; something extraordinary appearing in a puff of smoke. Her path crosses theirs through me.

I resurrect her (not that she is dead, I don’t know, I hope not so);

I conjure her body in my body. She is in my body and sometimes I can feel her coming out and then the burden of being me falls away and I become her, walk like her, smile like her, chuckle like her even though I’m an old man now with creaky joints and a terminal brain tumour. Does this kind of reincarnation keep me young?

Well not as young as she was then obviously, but is she, wherever she is, if she still is and not just was, as young as me now?

I don’t dream of her anywhere near as often as I’d like, and when she does visit me in my dreams at night, or even nodding off as frail old men tend to do during the day, still I can’t go all the way, which is a pity as dreams nourish me with a parallel life that seems so real I always write these momentous meetings with her up and my words scrawled inkily across the page become looking back on them over the years like tangible relics I’ve brought back from a deep sea dive to the Titanic that I can touch of her: how lovely it would be if I’d filched a few strands of her hair while she was here, or kept one or two of the wild flowers she’d held to her nose or tucked in her breast cleft to press between the pages of my diary now; perhaps a buttercup I’d held under her chin to make her smile; even her hanky or something intimate she’d worn that smelt of her – yes my dreams of her are as poignant as if she were here still fifteen and when I awake I can smell her presence in her absence, her hair her skin her body so why in my dreams can’t I go all the way with her even now?

It was my discovery of romantic poetry through my Jamaican friend that made me recognise I loved her and crippled any full expression of that love, especially gentle Keats who for me made it a far more complicated thing than it was for her who had no interest in poetry or Keats. Everything had to be so perfectly splendid and romantic like nothing like this had ever happened to anyone else before and until it was I just couldn’t take the plunge and do what other boys might have done. Of course in my fantasies then and now I do it all and d’you know what? It’s not really all that splendid or romantic at all, just red-bloodied, hot and wet and dirty just like I’ve had since with so many trusty lusty one-night stands. I discovered that’s the kind I like best but I had no idea of that then. Maybe I got the wrong idea from Keats or read him wrong but reading him made me so decent and high-minded I thought I had to wait, until a few days before she flew back home she met a slightly older boy who’d never read any poetry either, unless it was Allen Ginsberg, andcouldn’t wait. Neither could she. Just as though I were a girlfriend she told me all about it with a delicious relish when we met for a coffee at the Rendez-vous cafe in Ealing



Broadway the day before she left.  
I haven't lived in Ealing for forty years but on the fiftieth anniversary of our first meeting I went back to Almora. The walk from the Broadway and the bench under the willow where we had our trysts were still there; Castlebar Road wound up to number fifty-one and when I got there I sat where she had sat on the wall outside strumming her stringed instrument the unsuspected angel of the roads. I gazed at the boarded-up ruin of Almora. Her bedroom window was broken but the opening intact and suddenly I imagined she might be imprisoned inside, one of the disappeared from the 1970s; a woman in her thirties being beaten and tortured in this ghost house that was once the paradise of Almora where on one hot summer night in 1962 I saw the moonlight fill the sheen of her nightgown she slipped out of like water, the beams that played among the furniture sketch her lovely shape as she locked the door and, for the first and last time naked, entered my arms. Now, confronted by the ruin of Almora my lovely memories became an anguish like I was starving in a room of plastic fruit.

I resisted the urge to go into the back garden with the nursery book flowers, the trees and swing, the little pond with its lilies, waterboatmen, newts, and frogs. Walking away from Almora I suddenly saw myself at twenty through her eyes – skinny, pale, intense, thick curly hair, glasses – which gave me a remnant of the past reminding me perhaps of why I wanted to reach through half a century and get in touch with her – it was to get in touch with myself, my youth, when body and soul were as one, for fifty years more of life, however enriching cannot compensate for the loss of what I had then, with her, that hot night in June, so long ago at Almora.

In my heart I know that I'm a far more spiritually nourished, better, stronger person now than I was then – a callow youth, but at twenty I was surely vivid and defined, valued because I was pretty and had potential; and it's how you are perceived by others not how you are inside that gives you access to the delightful world of textures, heady tastes and smell; hugs and kisses, smiles and laughter. A failed old poet cannot get close to a lovely young girl and experience those wondrous sensations that bring him alive and make him feel real – not without degrading himself (financially) in one way or another first.

A stream winds through my mind carrying wonderful vivid creatures that leap and shine, splash and play, and there is debris, detritus, odds and ends all tangled, clotted with blood, the roots, sinews, veins of leaves and trees.

Ever hungry for those times now but memory no doubt makes it all seem more piquant than it actually was then when I had, or could have had all those in-my-face smiles, touches, tastes, smells, if only I'd done this or that different; thus memory becomes pain, pain becomes a poem like grit creating a pearl in an oyster;

but still I feel like a starving man locked in a room with a bowl of plastic fruit. Yet even that image has value for its colour, especially the green which has a smooth cool soothing texture as I lay it against my feverish brow.

The boy who replaced me just before she flew home must have got to know her more deeply, more intimately in those few days than I had in the previous six months. It was he who heard her murmur passionate and soft, make special little noises, yes, sighs, cries, and whispers; even gasp or cry out loud – things I'd never heard. He'd seen her lovely angel face distort with ecstasy and lust, and all his other senses had been brought into play too and I hope you more than me know what wild delights all that implies.

When she'd gone back to Buenos Aires there was only my loneliness, memories, regrets (especially when she sent me a picture postcard of Courbet's painting 'The Origins of the World' with the message she'd written on the back:

'Why didn't you?'), and the boy, who I shall call Ned. I began to follow Ned, to stalk him because I wanted to be where she had been, to get as close as I could to him in the belief that such propinquity might bring me close to her. I wanted to talk to him to find out what it'd been like to be him experiencing her; and even, by some process of androgynous alchemy or, empathy, go over the bound into a sensual and forbidden garden of eden where I, identifying with her, might begin to know what it was like being her experiencing him, which would mean that for a few precious moments I'd be her.

Since Ned had been the person who'd got the closest to her most and last, it seemed possible I could recover her, discover her, get close to her by getting close to him. What was it like to be him, to be her? Would I be able to reach her through him, even more powerfully than I had when she was actually here with me? It was as if, now that she'd gone far away, something tangible, some essence of her lingered on Ned, still clung to him just as if he hadn't washed away her kisses and caresses, all her girly tangs: her intimate body dewes and love secretions.

If she'd married me, we could this year have been celebrating our golden wedding, and my feelings for her might be different now,



less passionate perhaps, and far more tender and compassionate.  
So for my love for her to mature it behoves me to begin to visualise her  
not at aged fifteen any more (which, incidentally in today's moral climate  
would, technically, make me a paedophile), but as she'd be now,  
at sixty-five, if she still exists other than in other people's memories,  
hearts and minds, including mine, but I have no memory of her after  
the age of fifteen, nor am I entitled to although perhaps that would be  
the solution.  
So, how can I recreate her whole life in my mind, fill in those fifty absent years?

Ned looked powerful, masculine, and beautiful and,  
following him as close as I dare about the town I began to feel  
the thrill of a powerful osmosis possess me, my absent sweetheart's  
spirit of desire, as it were, gradually leaking out of my memories into  
my very blood until every time I caught a glimpse of Ned,  
heard his voice, noted his facial expressions, his walk,  
his gestures, his movements, I felt a shiver of vicarious desire,  
until one day, standing side-by-side with him at the Rendez-vous  
pissing in the gents, saw he had a popped pimple on his nose,  
dropped my gaze, copped a glimpse of his dick, and knew  
for sure that, projecting myself into her shoes, if he'd let me  
I'd have blown him on the spot – speaking of which  
no matter whose the shoes I'd have popped his zits.

But shortly after that he began to notice me, to give me fierce looks,  
until one day as he passed me in the street he muttered to his companion  
'look, it's that creepy poet she told me about,' which, to be fair  
was only half true as I wasn't a poet at all at that time  
(if ever I was or am) – I'd only quoted Keats at her,  
nothing of my own.

So, what to do with all these feelings that have been brewing in me –  
festering if you like – like some exquisite poison for half a century?  
She inspired a novel – 'The Cage'- which I had some success with  
forty years ago, ironically enough about a man with a terminal brain tumour  
who meets a young girl in Cornwall from South America,  
and, until recently I thought the act of writing that and having it  
published, bought, and appreciated exorcised my feelings sufficiently  
to enable me to stabilise my despair and move on.  
Last night though I dreamt of her once more and this visit  
from her while I lay all defences down in sleep after – I note from my diary  
entry for June 1992 – neglecting me for twenty years was so powerful  
I now believe that I am too overwhelmed to take care of it by writing another novel.

I know what I must do before I die.  
I must now, at the age of seventy, do what I couldn't do at twenty –  
follow my dream to Buenos Aires, not to find her, but like an artist  
who has to paint a portrait in the absence of his muse, to go there  
to saturate myself, my mind, my diminishing senses, by breathing in  
the air of her city, tread its sidewalks and grasses,  
smell the smells of Buenos Aires that she smelt and might still smell,  
feel the pulse of her city, all its sights and sounds, in order to distill it all  
into one final poem.

I'll go there and saturate myself in the things that made her her,  
in order to find her by becoming her:  
but if I had feelings for her fifty years ago,  
what feelings could I have for her as she is now,  
if indeed she still is.

I am all packed ready to go. I have my air ticket.  
I leave for my journey into the unknown tomorrow.  
What will I find?  
One thing is certain, whatever happens to me there  
and (to quote Montale) 'I do not know what sort of tomorrow  
will fall to me, shadowed or blithe,  
whether my path will lead to untrod clearings  
where the waters ever murmur, of youth;  
or if it will be a going down into the bottommost pit,  
into the gloom,' – one thing is certain:  
none of my adventures would have happened, and for better or for worse,  
I wouldn't be the person I am now, if fifty years ago a young girl  
from Buenos Aires hadn't smiled at me as she sat playing her guitar  
on the front garden wall of a house in London called Almora.



## THE JOURNEY



## ALMORA

The bubbles streamed through the child's wand while I was living in Buenos Aires to remind myself of her. One or two of them reflected the entire city and these were the hardest to catch. I imagined that in the half century since I last saw her she'd have stopped wearing falling down socks, grown up and gone through a phase of fudgy lipstick. Would she be wearing it in the breezeway now? Probably even if she stood up in my soup I'd never recognise her skewed mouth today that would still look right to those who knew her more recently. Life seeps on, while memories lead back to a taped place. Restraints didn't necessarily mean restraint, and the whammy of that faraway Ealing summer was that interpenetration meant entrance to worlds of unforeseen sensibility and beauty.

## ALMORA: THE MOVIE

A bill crumpled into a ball and left in the entrance hall can remind you of some purchase to be made or a chore to be done that has no relevance to this aid memoir. Out and about in the Belgrano R district of the city am I more likely to run into the woman I long to see in the crowds strolling the boulevards or in some little known garden way off the beaten track? More likely she'd be in the crowds but how to spot her among so many?, whereas in some little frequented garden where no one ever goes, if by chance she *did* happen along I'd be sure to spot her but it'd be almost a miracle if she should be there at the same time as me if at all. These days I mentally shrink from encounters with the earlier me and emphasise for the last time that the crumpled bill doesn't have to stand for what it stands for and I'll soon get the hang of the mnemonics, even when people are still puzzling over words I left long behind me, sort of hanging in the air, like a frozen tantrum.



## ALMORA: THE MUMMY

Afterwards he checked into a four star hotel next door to a plastic surgery facility in Buenos Aires. Half the guests had their faces bandaged. He bandaged his own face and lived high on his winnings. There was a woman working there, old, but still beautiful. Her hair hung loose and disordered on her shoulders, her unbandaged face looked sleepy and dark in the half-light. Sometimes in the lift there was the cool damp smell of the bathroom and of almond soap about her and, if more people crowded in, their bodies touched. Other times he'd sit in the lobby and watch for her coming and going through the slits in his bandage.

He'd survived thus far on technique alone and the risks he'd taken had seldom exposed him to the dangers of emotional compulsion. But there was tango music in the hotel and he began to feel a stone in his heart begin to dissolve. Focusing on memories of other rooms carpeted with geometric designs and bars of sunshine, the distant hushed roar of traffic and a vase of Delphiniums supercoded up for other purposes unknown, he waited for the cistern to fill up before he unwrapped. Once he became visible she'd be unlikely to associate him with himself. Liberties were there for the taking, but could he believe she was the girl from half a century ago, the mistress of whatever-may-happen?

## WOMAN WITH NO NAME

Aroused by the aroma of boiled rice she drifted in sure she'd find something astonishing and delirious. Some instinct urged her to look carefully around the room which she did with eye circuits alone as her neck had suddenly gone stiff. She didn't like the faces of the guys reflected in the mirrors - they looked leering as if taking it for granted she were available. Someone had painted the floor, it was only half done, not swept up first and they'd painted over cigarette butts, whatever there was. She liked the orange colour and said as much to the bartender who, after he'd served her, nodded once or twice across to her while she sat in a corner sipping her coke and rum. After that the men in the mirrors turned gravely away and left her alone. When her rice and peas arrived she found her hand had gone all numb and she couldn't pick up her fork. But she could still get off on the smell of the rice, its steamy aroma wafting up from her plate, so decided there was no need to panic. All the same when one of the men smiled at her in the mirror and mouthed was there anything wrong she mouthed back he knew very well what was wrong. One of the others smiled at her too, not in the mirror this time but by twisting around on his stool, said "there's a glorious sugar-pink kitchen upstairs that soars high into the eaves, and a large elegant bedroom - you can go up in the stair lift." She sniffed the rice and mused on this. Finally she said "what's your concept?" Without hesitation a third guy replied in the mirror "the concept? Lightness of touch, applying subtle but vivid harmonies of colour."



## CHANCE ENCOUNTER

One of the many consequences of love  
is that its story can be spelled out simply,  
feverishly, without much nuance or honour.  
The need was to filter the memory through  
Beethoven, Chekhov, Rembrandt -  
that sort of thing: substitute lakes  
that would nourish and give courage.  
Could he start again with her down some fresh breezeway?  
That was another story he might tell  
once he'd cherry-picked all the winning cards  
from the table.



RADIUM DREAMS



## MOON IN THE MAN

I have a moon growing deep inside the centre  
of my head, just under the brain.  
I was bom with it. It's a remnant of some long ago  
extinct species and very rare.  
I've lived all my life with it growing in the dark cave  
of my skull. It's now the size of a golf ball.  
It can't be removed or stopped,  
but it grows slow as a stalagmite, and most like won't kill me .... just yet.

But it exerts an awful lot of pressure  
on my brain and pushes softer bits of me  
aside which would best be left where they were.  
Some reckon the existence of this rock  
has affected me all my life, long before a head scan  
revealed it was there: "it's like the grit of sand in the shell  
of an oyster that torments the creature into making a pearl".

Jean reckons my novels, paintings, and poems  
are my pearls. Funny the name of my publisher  
is Oyster Press. Coincidence or what?

Maybe there's enough time yet for my moon  
to nudge some extra lyricism out of me,  
but is it cool to have to cripple myself into beauty?  
I might have preferred some other way –  
drink or drugs (of which I've had a few) - to be creatively  
fucked up. Maybe I should just quit, move into the woods,  
live on ants, caterpillars and grubs, and in my next life  
they could live on me.

## “ALMORA” FLORIDA

He began to visit her most afternoons  
at Riverside to act out whatever it was  
he did or wished he'd done with his first love  
fifty years ago.

The uniform was red.  
Red was the colour of the single rose  
he used to bring her coloured with the blood  
from his heart.  
But red was not the colour of her hair.

The Riverside girl enquired once as to what happened  
to the distant lover whom she was meant to impersonate.  
He told her that the girl he'd loved most,  
who was most important to him was not gone,  
she'd just never been.  
Never been where?, the red-haired Riverside girl  
persisted, cutting him a slice of the iced cake  
she'd baked him as per.  
He retraced his steps

for a moment, stood at the window to watch the St Johns river  
flow by. Let's go out he said, the visit queered, I think the true  
blue moment is over or yet to come.

He realised that if she never grew old she couldn't be  
real, unless she was growing old and growing real  
somewhere else, far away south on this continent.  
In any case he didn't want the Riverside girl  
to impersonate her,  
he wanted her to incarnate her.  
He wanted her to *be* her.



## “ALMORA” JACKSONVILLE

Outside Valerios opposite Third & Main  
street lamps like twin ice cream cones come on.  
I reel at the richness of a remembered life  
I never lived. A greyhound streaks south.  
How far to Buenos Aires?

Lost love unknown sprayed onto a cheap canvas.  
Butterflies look lost flying past you at night  
and if a play was ever staged as a monument,  
most of it'd be kept in the wings.

Maybe it could be done as a love story  
in two movies running at the same time  
and the viewer switches from screen to screen  
to juxtapose the real with the imagined.

What if she isn't around anymore?  
For all I know she might've been extinguished  
fifty years ago, not long after she left.  
Maybe she never lived long enough  
to have an adulthood at all,  
except in my fevered brow where thoughts  
roll over-and-over like rocks battered by the ocean.

## “ALMORA” SPRINGFIELD

I dreamt I googled you and found that the life  
you'd made for yourself has a harmonious resonance.  
I liked the picture of you sleeping,  
your face freed from all its waking strictures,  
while I am still trapped in the disordered dreaming  
of about twenty pounds of letters  
written over fifty years but never sent.  
What if I scanned them in and emailed them  
all to you now?

I could settle in some brooding old mansion  
on leafy Pearl Street, call it Almora  
and pretend that here was the setting  
where it all began.



# THE INTERVIEW

**Brian Fogarty interviewed by Lucy Chang.**

The interview took place on a rainy December afternoon in 2005 inside Fogarty's incredibly cluttered and chaotic studio by the sea near the ruins of the West Pier in Brighton.



**LC** Tell me about Scarlett Johansson. How did you come to paint her?

**BF** Why talk about her? There's no room for paintings in this little book! Aren't you supposed to ask me about my writing?

**LC** Her portrait's on the cover.

**BF** Is that her? So it is!

**LC** Did Scarlett do sittings for you? I mean, like, did you actually meet her?

**BF** The answer to the first part of your question is 'no', to the second part 'yes' - in the sense that I met her by conjuring up her presence by the act of painting.

**LC** You mean by painting her you were able to incarnate her here in your studio?

**BF** Yes. The painting as you can see is life size. After I work for a while in the absence of the model, I begin to feel euphoric, when a strong presence of the model is coming. This is so exciting for me that I need a whisky or two to calm my nerves and carry on!

**LC** It's a pretty intense portrait of a well fit girl. It gives a powerful sense of the reality of Scarlett, even though it's nothing like a photograph, and the photo on the cover of 'The Greenhouse' doesn't do it justice. Yeah, that's some vicious painting alright, and it's hard to believe you managed to work it without her even doing a single sitting for you. How'd you do it and how long'd it take?

**BF** I watched all her films in the cinema or on video, drew and photographed her straight off the tv screen, studied photos of her in magazines, immersed myself in her. I realised that Scarlett's appearance changes all the time. No two photographs of her are alike, and in all her films she looks different in almost every frame. It's hard to capture a single image of Scarlett and say that's her. She's amazing really, the

heart of her is so elusive. You just can't pin her down.

**LC** Which of her films did you like best?

**BF** I liked her in 'The Horse Whisperer.' And in 'Ghostworld' - she was really peachy in that.

**LC** You know something....the way Scarlett's looking in the portrait, it's as if she *knew* you were painting her, as if there was some kind of *exchange* between you. I mean it's like you *shared* something together. Yeah, it's as if she gave you something. Spooky....understand what I'm saying?

**BF** Yes, but you know art is only an illusion that uncovers the truth within the lie.

**LC** So, how long did it take?

**BF** Once I started painting Scarlett I didn't do anything else until her portrait was finished. I worked every day, seven days a week for nine weeks. Some sessions were four hours long, some ten or fifteen. Usually I did six. The final session was a marathon of thirty six hours with no food or sleep, although I did go out for a couple of hours to the Sanctuary to read some of the poems from 'Red over Blue'. By the time I got back here I was drunk. I felt exhausted but just couldn't rest until the work was done and Scarlett was here! So I stood and worked all through the night. I staggered about a bit like a prize fighter slugging it out, slinging paint on and moving it around. To keep myself going I listened to Pink Floyd's 'Dark Side of the Moon' and I talked to her.

**LC** You mean, like, you *talked to Scarlett?!*

**BF** Yes, I did, but you see it's not unusual for me to talk to the person I'm painting, even though they're not really there.

**LC** How weird! What did you say to Scarlett?



**BF** I told her how gorgeous she is, what a good actress she is, which scenes in her films I liked best, I talked about myself a bit....some of the time I just talked dirty to her.

**LC** You talked dirty to Scarlett Johansson?!

**BF** I did indeed.

**LC** God, that's really sick! And did she answer you?

**BF** She most certainly did!

**LC** What did she say?

**BF** Fuck off!

**LC** Cool - uh, so she *did* give you something! But really, has Scarlett seen the portrait?

**BF** I don't think so. I don't know if she's even aware it exists. I'm planning to show it at the Brighton Festival Exhibition in the spring, at the Sussex County Arts Club.

**LC** Awesome! I'm sure she'd think it's totally rude. Maybe it'd be cool to email her an invitation to the private view with a photo of it. But why d'you like painting people you've never even met?

**BF** Well certain film actresses fascinate me because they give so much. They're so expressive and open. You see, no person I'm ever likely to come into contact with in so called real life would be capable or willing to reveal so much to me - certainly a professional model wouldn't. By seeing my subject in the cinema or on video expressing deep human emotions such as anger, tenderness, passion, sadness, joy, astonishment, anguish and so on, I feel close to them. I feel they are giving me something! I feel I know them. You see in order to paint someone I have to be moved by them - that's the key. And Scarlett moved me very much. That's why I was driven to paint her. But I didn't really get to know her intimately until

I'd been painting her for several weeks. Yes, each brushstroke brought her closer, even the ones that were outrageously abusive or went wrong - yes, maybe especially those! ..... It got to be a pretty desperate and brutal business at times. It's just as well your actual Scarlett wasn't here!

**LC** Your approach to painting seems just as violent and wayward as your writing. Just suppose you were going to paint *my* portrait. How would you go about it?

**BF** Well, I see you've appeared in two of the films you've made.

**LC** Yes, but I wasn't really doing anything. I was just making wallpaper.

**BF** Look, I think the best thing would be for us to go out, have dinner together somewhere nice, have a few drinks, loosen up and enjoy ourselves, have a bit of a laugh. I might do a couple of little drawings of you or take photographs of you while we were out.

**LC** You wouldn't want me to pose for you here then?

**BF** No, not at all, that wouldn't be necessary unless it was for a naked portrait.

**LC** Am I right in thinking that you'd need to share some sort of emotional experience with me in order to feel inspired to paint me?

**BF** Well, you're probably thinking along the right lines, although I wouldn't necessarily need to be part of your experience but to observe it, largely unconsciously and then to paint you from memory. Observation alone can't create the deeper truth I want, especially not any kind of slavish copying of whatever is placed in front of me. I'm not interested in mere illustration, which unfortunately is what most portraits tend to be. I like to take risks while I'm painting, set up accidents, let in chance. If I give the paint its head, let the paint itself have its say, then there's the possibility that a recognisable image that's never existed of someone who *does* exist might emerge from all the chaos, and I'd have made something new!



**LC**    Wicked! You’d create an alternative Lucy that  
no one’s ever seen before! But it’s as if for you  
painting a portrait’s as much about your relationship  
with your materials as it is with your subject. Isn’t that the case?

**BF**    I hadn’t thought of that, but yes, I think you’re  
absolutely right! It’s the paint you see. Yes, the paint *is*  
the subject, for while I’m working the paint by some  
wonderful alchemy becomes the victim’s flesh - if I  
may think of the subject as my victim!

**LC**    I don’t mind!

**BF**    I know - maybe a good way to get to know you would be to take you  
for some rides on the pier!

**LC**    Oh you ..... I love those rides! It’s the next  
best thing to getting naked!

**BF**    Then let’s do it!

**LC**    You’re on, but only if you’ll promise to talk  
dirty to me on the big dipper!

**BF**    Oh, behave!

*Lucy Chang is a 19 year old performance artist, poet and film maker.  
Brian Fogarty’s portrait of her is now well under way.*

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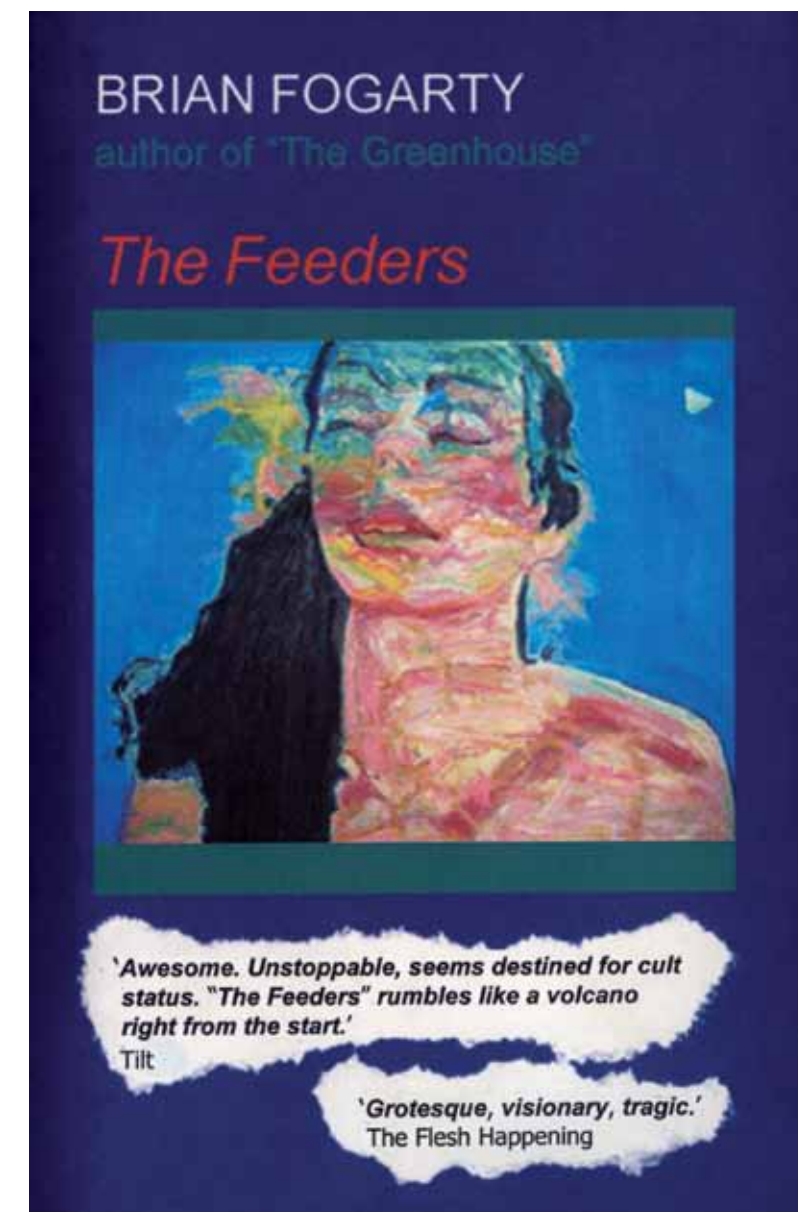
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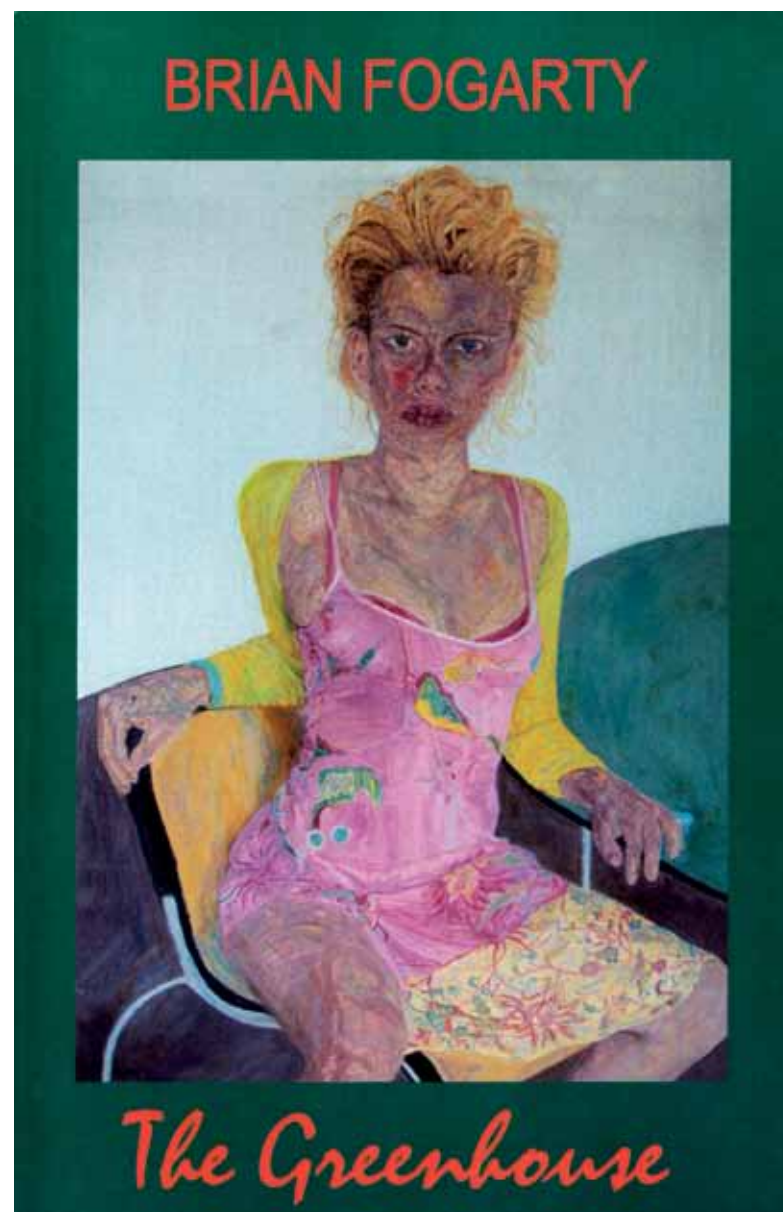
*'Breathtaking magnificence. Like the river Nile itself, where most of the story is set, "Red over Blue" awes and spellbinds us with its vast scope, its twists and turns, the sense, every inch the journey gives, of its gradually accumulating, massive power. "Red over Blue" is, moreover, a hugely entertaining and intensely moving human experience. A towering achievement: here at last is the long-awaited, "Great British Novel!"'*

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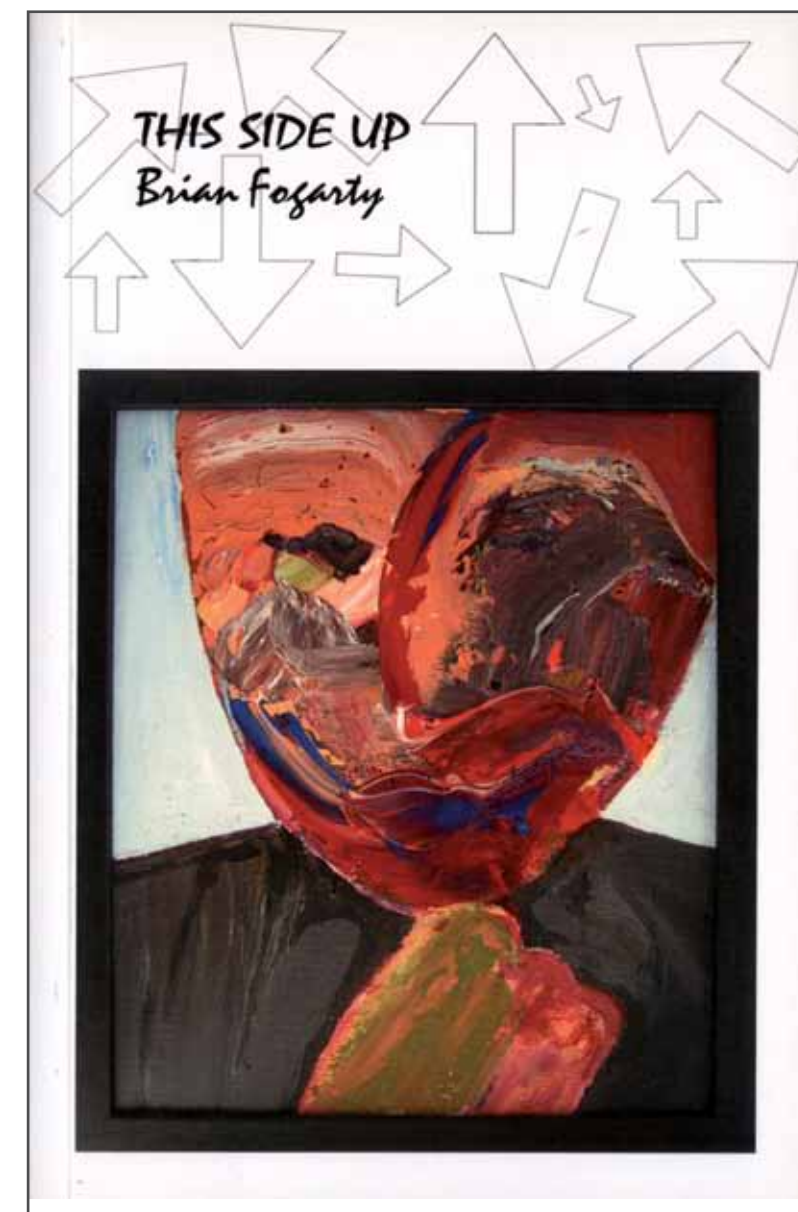
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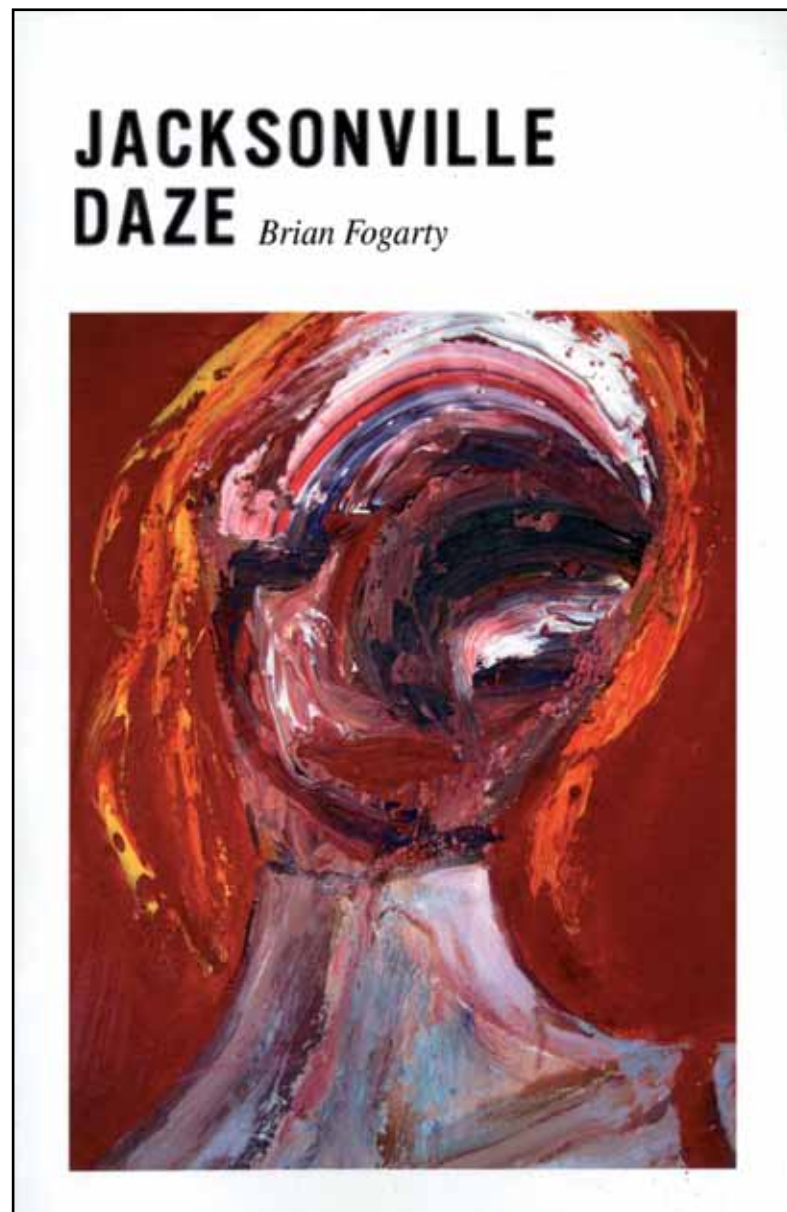
**Lucy Chang**



*'In all Brian Fogarty's work, whether his novels, short stories, paintings or poems - including "This Side Up", his dazzling and provocative new collection of poems, - art is not an arena for the illustration, mere imitation, or logging of apparent reality, but an autonomous, artificial act driven by his innermost, instinctive and unique need to give shape to a profound elemental force of expression.'*

**John Bradley**





*'This is Brian Fogarty writing for his life; once again lumbered with a chronic, life-threatening illness he refuses to turn his face to the wall but instead turns his pain and anguish into truly great art with these mesmerizing poems in an all out final bid to outrun his fate before the tumour (the "moon" in his head) paralyses and destroys him.'*

**Charles Morgan**





## SOUL IN SEARCH OF A CANVAS

Who we are cannot be apprehended by the eye alone, whether human, a camera, or a mirror. Sometimes the hand of the artist can show us someone who, with a shock, we recognise as ourselves, but which has not been revealed so rawly, nakedly, beautifully before. We all have a dozen faces, not all of them entirely human, which seem to shift into one another as the moments go by, even though we may not be consciously changing our expression. We all experience joy and suffering, and many of us occupy visionary, psychologically, or socially, extreme and lonely ground for much or most of our waking and dreaming lives.

We can't talk about this to anyone, (especially not to so-called 'experts' such as counselors, psychiatrists or psychologists who would destroy us in their efforts to 'cure' us of our 'illness' of being fully aware and alive), but we can read and write novels, poetry, dance and sing, act, paint pictures.

The kind of portrait I want to paint if I could would usurp the canvas, wreck it as if a ruined building had fallen on it, or I had messed around with the narrator of "Hunger", one of "The Brothers Karamazov" or Prince Mishkin's nemesis Rogozhin in "The Idiot", somehow trying to wrestle some plausible image of them onto the support.

If ever I can walk around the rim of a volcano that has apparently lain extinct or dormant for thousands of years with the expectation that this is the very day scientists predict it to erupt again I'll do so in the hope that some of the lava would scorch my canvas, burn holes in it. This journey only allows me the kind of calm in my life normally found in the eye of a storm. And calm there must at times be, for no artist, even one whose passion makes him a force of nature, can cut off an ear every day.

How about you? What would you do? If you were lying in the gutter dying, one loaded brush or can of spray paint in your hand, watching your own blood spill out onto the road; if you had one last chance to paint the piece that let the world know who you are and just what you think of this little life, what would you paint, what marks would you make: more of the same, or something new – the kind of art that can save your soul?

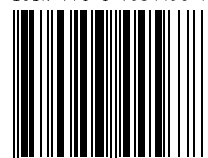
Front cover portrait of Kate Moss

Back cover: 'Wossy' Conmigo en Buenos Aires 2012  
(detail from third panel in triptych  
Personae separatae: acrylic, oil paintstick,  
Pencil, newspaper, & masking tape on canvas 150cm x120cm)

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