



TICKNER BELL YOUNG & LEBENSON

GALLERY 46

CHARLOTTE
HOPKINS
HALL

Forever Entangled in a
Causal Loop

"FOLLY INHABITS THE QUEST FOR PEACE, AND ORDER FAILS TO TAME CHAOS."

PRIVATE VIEW

THURSDAY 7TH MARCH 2024 6 - 9 PM

8TH - 30TH MARCH 2024 TUESDAY - SATURDAY 12 - 6 PM

Enquiries GALLERY46 TICKNER BELL YOUNG & LEBENSON

MARTIN J TICKNER +44(0)7909 947 912

ENQUIRIES@GALLERY46.CO.UK

Featuring 15 works on paper and 17 paintings, including diptychs and triptychs, this exhibition, 'Forever Entangled in a Causal Loop', has been in the making for more than two years.

Drawing on the idea of a causal loop, the gallery allows for a circular course from one space to the other. The simple existence of one exhibition room exerts influence on the others and vice versa. According to Hopkins Hall, whatever our perception of the world is, folly inhabits the quest for peace and order fails to tame chaos. This is the eternal complexity of the human experience; a theme that has dominated Hopkins Hall's work for the past 20 years.

Presented in her trademark aesthetic of finely painted, realistic and visually strict imagery, the paintings bring a sharp scrutiny of the paradigms that have become entrenched in recent political and social mores. 'The Council of Nonsense Peering at Wasted Souls', 'The Absconding Peacemakers' diptych, 'Nonsense, Impostors and Rhetorical Bullshit' triptych and 'Queuing For a Swift Exit' decry today's inexistant leadership, deficient political acumen and the effect of poor decision making.

In an era that is indisputably saturated by the image of the face, Hopkins Hall repeatedly paints the image of her back, making this motif central to her work to conceptualise social commentary. More than simply commenting on popular culture's self-obsession, the use of this motif is threefold referencing anonymity, civic responsibility and absurdity. Whilst the paintings are not self-portraits in the tradition of painting, Hopkins Hall feels strongly that responsibility starts with self and the importance of bearing the weight of her concept. The repetitiveness of this motif is, on the one hand, an aesthetic choice and, on the other, one that does not detract from the fact that the figures are used as a template to develop the idea.

The repeated black and white lines evoke old fashioned prison uniforms, holocaust uniforms, and their use in the paintings points to the continuous erosion of our freedoms in the Western world, whether legal, physical or psychological. In conjunction with repetitive imagery, the titles are meant as mini manifestos to introduce this absurd world, directed by Hopkins Hall, in which the figures play out their roles. A comedy that is not so divine, held in terrestrial purgatory, where upholding simplistic discourses is an imperfect way of looking at the world and at humanity. In these modern times perceptions are distorted and reality has been turned on its head.

The exhibition culminates in a "light room", where brightness is masquerading as a sense of hope and in near invisibility, where individual stories are lost, a series of predominantly white canvases, the 'Caravan' paintings, address the transience and plight of mass migration in the early 21st century. What interests Hopkins Hall in the concept of the causal loop is the impact of Western capitalism, the constant political meddling and corporate vandalism has had in creating the insecurity that has forced an exodus towards the Northern hemisphere, be it for reasons of war, economy or climate. This, in turn being used as a pretext by these governments to lean further to the political right; hence, forever being entangled in a causal loop.

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'Caravan I', 2024
Acrylic on canvas
35 x 100 cm



'Caravan II', 2024
Acrylic on canvas
35 x 100 cm



'Caravan III', 2024
Acrylic on canvas
35 x 100 cm



'Nonsense, Impostors and Rhetorical Bullshit', triptych, 2020
Acrylic on canvas
150 x 300 cm



“IN THESE MODERN TIMES, PERCEPTIONS ARE DISTORTED AND REALITY HAS BEEN TURNED ON ITS HEAD.”

What Happened to our Freedom?

In this hyper politicised and polarised world, the question of free will is at stake. The emergence of social media and the widespread use of mobile phones over the last two decades has engineered an unprecedented level of information sharing. The immediacy of access and overuse of these platforms has preyed on, encouraged and exacerbated people's need to assert themselves by association, enforced by a growing deep-seated fear of “not belonging”, resulting in the marginalisation of the other. Ideas and ideologies are taken on as mantras and relayed as exclusionary dogmas if not adhered to, something that was widely exemplified during both the 2016 Brexit vote and Trump election, tearing families and societies apart. The perception of belonging to a group inherently reinforces a sense of power in the individual; a means by which to establish oneself from a place of insecurity to a position of strength through exclusion, the basic rules of a bully culture.

The notion of freedom has been and continues to be defended in various ways, but it can be argued that the phenomenon we are seeing in this globalised version of the world is a loss of free will by self-affirming ideals masquerading as self-determination. These so-called truths being circulated were fabricated and developed over decades by a wide-reaching programme of applied capitalism, delivered through advertising, television,

and a promised ideal that has, in the end, never seen the light of day; a dream of freedom. Instead, we have witnessed the erosion of fact and the dissemination of falsehoods that have administered another blow to an already impoverished notion of reality. Never before has free will needed to be shielded at all costs from media conglomerates and social media moguls seeking monopoly and power. Fact checking, scrutiny and cross analysis of information is paramount but routinely neglected.

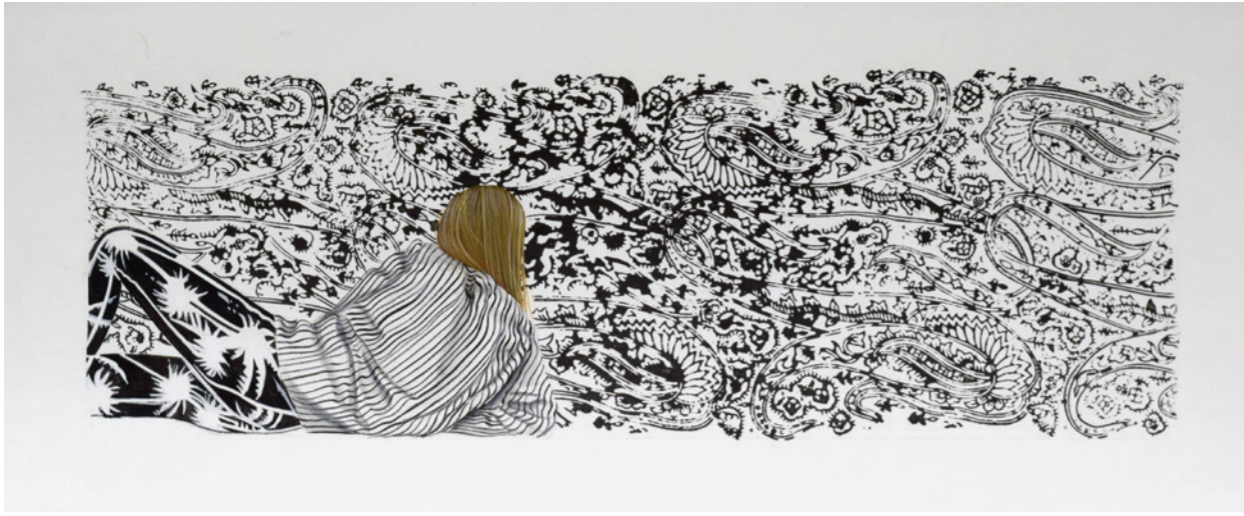
The loss of freedom comes in various forms, one of which is the trauma of perpetual warfare inflicted on our psyches; a constant vision of some country pulverising another, accompanied by the sub-captioned threat of reciprocal terrorism, whether home grown or external. Our government is guilty of abdicating from its duty of care towards its population, failing in political acumen, by maintaining a state fear and insecurity that has made us look inwards and away from the stress inflicted on us all internationally. A way of shutting the violence out is by preoccupying oneself with superficial minutia prevalent on social media platforms such as looks, make-up, billionaire escapism and materialism.

The backlash of constant insecurity synergised with technology has created a hyper narcissistic, polarised and vitriolic ecosystem. The violence with which people feel the need to express their day-to-day thoughts is shocking. The permissiveness that punters have adopted has

replaced traditional behavioural codes and basic human decency that were once largely intrinsic. A bizarre cocktail of post-modernist individualism coupled with social media's hyper narcissism and entitlement seems to have impacted social decorum. Microsoft's formerly “Twitter” parrot bot, Tay, is a perfect example. Starting off as a charming and delightful fictional woman, it took Tay less than 24hrs to become a slurring, racist, revolting mess, mimicking how vile humanity can be hiding behind its screens.

Free will is a difficult notion to establish and can be perceived as the product of causation. However, whilst we can debate the core understanding of free will, a general carelessness has taken hold as we relinquish our rights to fast-culture. In these times of darkness there seems to be widespread confusion and a paradoxical chaos is reflected back at us as a dream of peace and freedom scrolled through on various feeds. This freedom is only masquerading as such, only few will attain the picture perfect so many aspire to, longingly, on various sized screens. The only chance we have of preserving a semblance of free will is to continuously question, analyse, consciously make decisions, avoid confirmation bias and, importantly, challenge collective narratives that are based on compromised foundations.

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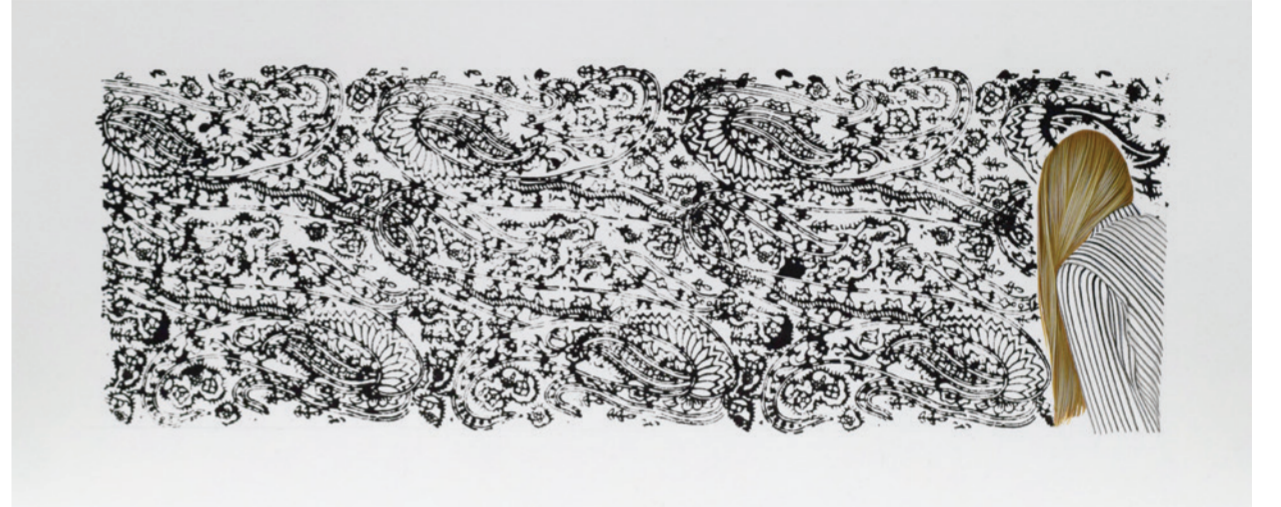
'Barriers and Quagmires VI', 2023
Acrylic and wood block print on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



'Barriers and Quagmires XI', 2024
Acrylic and wood block print on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



'Barriers and Quagmires III', 2023
Acrylic and wood block print on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



'Barriers and Quagmires XII', 2024
Acrylic and wood block print on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



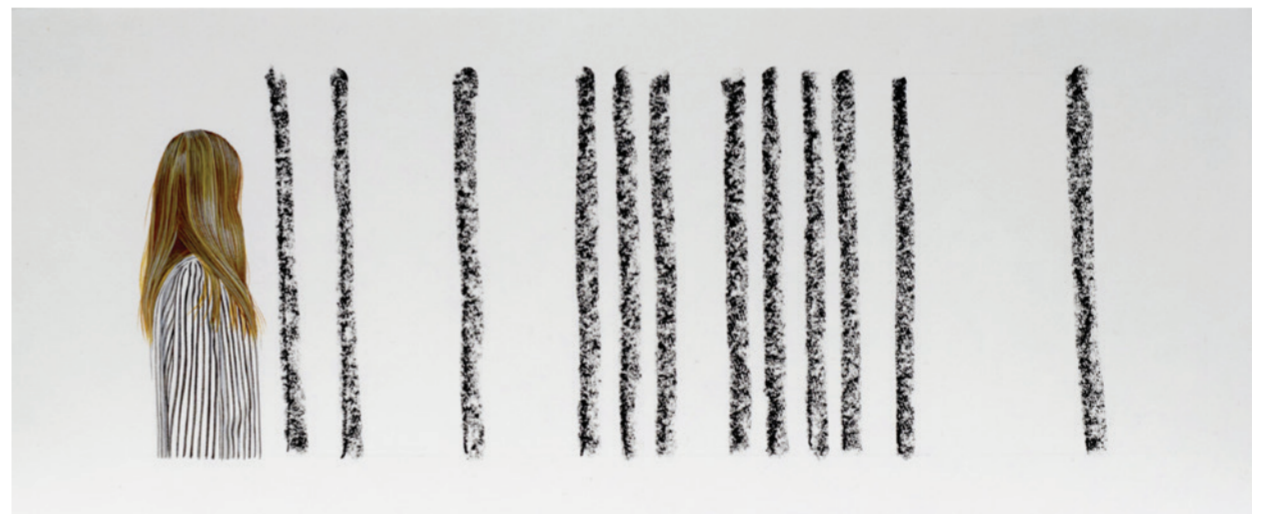
'Barriers and Quagmires X', 2024
Acrylic and wood block print on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



'Barriers and Quagmires XIII', 2024
Acrylic and oil pastel on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



'Barriers and Quagmires V', 2023
Acrylic and wood block print on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



'Barriers and Quagmires XIV', 2024
Acrylic and oil pastel on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



'Barriers and Quagmires VI', 2023
Acrylic and wood block print on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount



'Barriers and Quagmires XV', 2024
Acrylic and oil pastel on Japanese paper
21.5 x 52 cm
Framed; shallow box, floating mount