

SARAH DOLBY
Terrarium

17 October - 4 November 2017



Sarah's Dolby's show title *Terrarium* talks of each painting being an environment of its own. As in the past, this new body of work reflects a visualisation of Dolby's recent experiences, this time of several trips to the USA. In LA the artist was in a group show in a contemporary pop surrealist and street art gallery. There have always been such elements in her work and she enjoyed being part of the like-minded community. Dolby spent time in Tennessee and New Orleans noting how each state differed from the other and both were rich in culture and social diversity. She was most inspired by New Orleans for its old time European feel. She noticed an ongoing parade of characters and music that could have fuelled many additional works... and no doubt will in the future. No district was free from Hurricane Katrina scars. In swamps washing machines were still trapped in trees and some abandoned homes were blocked by fallen debris. Dolby loved the edginess of New Orleans while feeling a darkness lurking in its shadows; voodoo, ghost tours, vampires, cemeteries. In Tennessee Dolby learned much of how the historic Battle of Franklin defined the locals and town of Franklin.

Dolby was in USA shortly after Trump's presidential election. She struggled with Americans' narrow world views and was challenged by their reluctance to embrace social equality. "In my painting *Treachery* I tried to illustrate this reluctance of letting go of old entitled ideas and listening to the voices of the future - these spoken by the fantails. The introduction of birds into my work is new but something I have wanted to explore for some time. There's is a rich bird life around home and while painting *Treachery* I had the annual fantails visit so it just felt rude not to include them! They're always trying to get inside and hang out when I'm outside. The Louisiana spoonbills are cousins of my favourite New Zealand spoonbills and are just stunning."



Masha (2016) oil on aluminium 600 x 500mm



Casquette Girl (2017) oil on aluminium 600 x 600mm



Treachery [detail on cover] (2017) oil on aluminium 600 x 600mm



Great Expectations (2016) oil on aluminium 400 x 400mm



Lady of Lafayette (2017) oil on aluminium 500 x 500mm



Wrath (2017) oil on aluminium 350 x 500mm



Something Wicked (2017) oil on aluminium 800 x 650mm

In her own words...



Treachery

In Tennessee I visited Franklin where the historic Battle of Franklin took place. Through the telling of history by the locals and their conversations about how their town had changed, I learnt a lot about how they define themselves through these events. In *Treachery* I tried to illustrate this reluctance of letting go of old entitled ideas and listening to the voices of the future - these spoken by the fantails.



Something Wicked

The vines are ripped from the side of the road I walk every morning and they smother the trees when left to their own devices. These vines appear in *Something Wicked* but are not interfering with the subject. Instead she is cared for by the birds and the optimism that they bring.



Masha

A few years ago I received the following email from a Russian model called Masha.

... To introduce myself, I'm Masha Liviesk. I'm freshly turned to 24 and I'm living in Paris. I clearly find myself through you're paintings. But since this message I couldn't forget your arts and I was wondering if you could be that artist I'm looking for to paint me... so here is my request, can you help me to make this? Thousand kisses Masha.

Casquette Girl

Known historically as a Casket or a Pelican Girl, a Cassette Girl was one of the young women brought from France to the French colonies of Louisiana to marry in the 17th Century. Normally women were supplied to the colonists by raking the streets of Paris for undesirables, or by emptying the houses of correction. The Casquette Girls, however, were recruited from church charitable institutions, usually orphanages and convents, and, although poor, were practically guaranteed to be virgins.



Great Expectations

This piece was inspired by the novel of the same name. There is a Southern twist to her that situates her nicely in New Orleans.



Lady of Lafayette

The garden district in New Orleans has a surreal quality to it ... this is heightened by the Lafayette Cemetery that is situated on the city edge. The result is that you feel like you have been transported into a southern Gothic novel. Nature is coiling itself around everything, the homes are incredible and the upheaved pavements pose many threats to ankles.



Wrath

Again a painting inspired by New Orleans. I saw first hand the vulnerability of this area to Hurricanes and climate change. *Wrath* is about the power of nature and our resilience to cope with its devastation. *Wrath* is both the cause and the protector as the hurricane accumulates under her hat.

