

10 October 2022

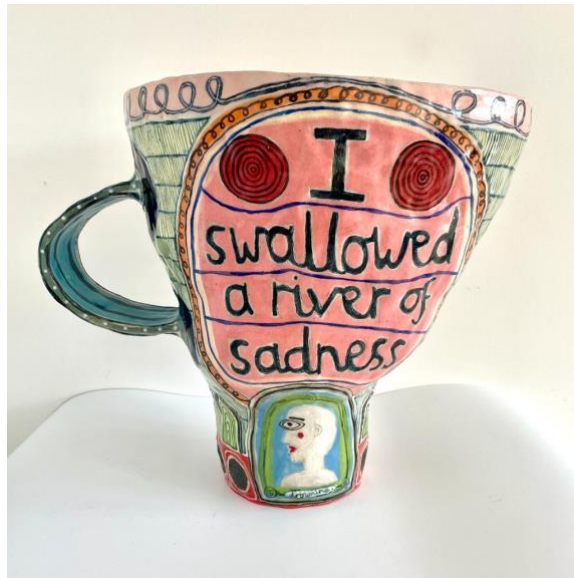
PRESS RELEASE

THE BRAVE TRUTH: Frances Aviva Blane and Marice Cumber

Exhibition at Zuleika Gallery, Woodstock from 10 November – 9 December 2022



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Zuleika Gallery is delighted to announce that it is bringing the work of two female artists, Frances Aviva Blane and Marice Cumber, both based in London, to the Woodstock Gallery this autumn. These artists bring a wealth of experience to their work and their joint exhibition, *The Brave Truth*, will take place from 10 November until 9 December 2022. Although working in different mediums, both artists are not afraid to show their vulnerabilities in their work or to explore the darker depths of existence. Through their work they bring to the surface hidden anxieties that well beneath in all of us, if only we were brave enough to admit it. These artists throw a light onto the essence of being human, and through the simmering pathos, inject their work with verve and humour.

Frances Aviva Blane is known for her expressionist paintings that take as their subject the symbiotic disintegration of paint and personality. She states, "My paintings exist not to be understood but experienced." As well as purely abstract paintings, Blane paints heads as you've never seen before. One such work, included in this exhibition, is of the renowned psychoanalyst Susie Orbach. Orbach has co-written three books with the artist and also appeared with her in the documentary film 'Two Metres Apart' made by award winning Director Penny Woolcock in 2020. Blane's work is potent, uncompromising, and, at times, unsettling. Tess Jaray RA has commented: "This is painting straight from the heart to the canvas. It convinces us because nothing is arbitrary or false".

Following her sell-out show at the London Art Fair earlier this year, ceramicist **Marice Cumber** has produced a new body of work for this exhibition that continues to explore her innermost thoughts and personal mantras. The brightly coloured hand-built vessels at first sight belie the dark thoughts that birthed them. After finding herself in the midst of a breakdown during her mid-forties whilst in a high-powered job, Cumber "spent a year crying, seriously depressed", while also "trying to be normal" for her children. She sought extensive counselling while recording her inner most thoughts in little black notebooks she would

conceal from the outside world. As she returned to health, she set up a charity that provides creative workshops for people who are homeless, and having had a creative background herself, returned to making pots as part of her recovery. "As I describe my work I think about honesty, as I don't need to hide anymore or make an impression on anyone or feel shame or embarrassment about my emotions and reflections on my life and what I feel. I can just tell it how it is, and that honesty has appeal and truth to it and so I have given myself permission at long last to accept myself and to communicate who I really am to others."

ENDS

Illustrated:

1. Frances Aviva Blane (b.1954), *Untitled*, 2022, oil on canvas, 60 x 50 cm £6,000
2. Marice Cumber (b.1961), *The Big Cup of Dealing with Life*, handbuilt, stoneware decorated with slips, oxides and underglaze, transparent glaze, 38 x 47 x 30 cm £2,400

Venue

Zuleika Gallery, 6 Park Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire OX20 1SP

Opening Hours

Monday, Wednesday – Saturday 10–5

Press Contact

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About Frances Aviva Blane

Between 1991 and 1993 Blane attended The Slade School of Fine Art. She won an international scholarship to the Djerassi Artists' Colony in California. Among other awards, Blane won the Graham Hamilton Drawing Prize in 1991 and in 1999 a Jerwood Drawing Award. In 2018 she was included in the John Moores Painting Prize. Since then she has been included in the Ruth Borchard self-portrait exhibition and the Trinity Buoy Wharf Drawing Prize. In 2022 Blane had a joint exhibition with Basil Beattie RA. She is a well-known international artist and has recently shown with Frank Auerbach, Susan Stockwell and Jane McAdam Freud. In addition to having shown in London and Europe, Blane exhibited in Belgium along with Francis Bacon and Louise Bourgeois at De Queeste Art Gallery in 2014. In 2016/2017 Blane had a solo show at the German Embassy London, Belgravia. In 2019 Blane published FAB with Susie Orbach. In 2020 she published *Who is Frances Aviva Blane?* in association with Orbach, Tess Jaray RA, and Penny Woolcock. In 2022 Blane published *ON PAINT* with Sacha Craddock. She is now working on a book called *AUGUST* with Orbach, comprising charcoal drawings of heads. Additionally, she has published *BROKEN HEADS BROKEN PAINT, MORE, EMBASSY* and *NOTHING*. Her work appears in many collections including the LSE, Jesus College Cambridge, Moorfields Eye Hospital London, The Sternberg Centre, The All Faiths Forum, The Tim Sayer Collection London, and The Doris Lockhart Collection. She is represented in London and Woodstock by Zuleika Gallery and in Belgium by De Queeste Art and online by ecArtspace. Film director Penny Woolcock has made various films of Blane's work including – 'Who is Frances Aviva Blane?', 'Two Metres Apart' with Susie Orbach and 'Fragmented'.

About Marice Cumber

Marice returned to making ceramics when she was 57 after a gap of nearly 30 years and after suffering a severe negative mental health situation. During that time she had become a mother, worked to support a family and was denied the time, space and freedom (financially and mentally) to pursue any type of meaningful creative practice. The ceramic work that she started to produce, after not making work for 30 years, and which she is continuing to develop now, is a visual navigation of her life and of her life's experiences. Her ceramics describe and communicate how she is resolving and rationalising her emotions

and inner conflicts and how she deals, reacts and responds to her lived existence. The work, like huge oversized domestic vessels, expresses bold personal and intimate statements, like confessional advertisements, that she is proudly shouting out loud and sharing with an audience of viewers and observers. At its core, her work reverses the hierarchy of shame and hiding from others the complexities, emotional difficulties, pain and challenges of life to become a platform for acknowledging, accepting and celebrating these emotions as part of the richness and depth of life.

About Zuleika Gallery

Zuleika Gallery's focus is on Modern British and emerging contemporary art. The gallery was founded in 2015 and held premises in St James's London before moving to Cromwell Place in 2022. In 2020, the gallery opened premises in Woodstock, Oxfordshire, now the gallery headquarters, with a regular exhibition programme. Zuleika offers bespoke art advisory services for private or corporate collectors, using our extensive experience in the art market. We enjoy placing art in the right context, whether public or private, and helping collectors making considered choices - balancing pure visual joy with stimulating ideas, while also inspiring change through art. The gallery is committed to showing art that inspires, and to making art accessible without compromise to quality, working with both the entry level collector and the connoisseur.