

FRAGMENTED

FRANCES AVIVA BLANE & CLAUDIA CLARE

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FRANCES AVIVA BLANE

CLAUDIA CLARE

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FRANCES AVIVA BLANE

I've visited Frances' studio twice. Once in January to talk about a planned talk at The Freud Museum and once in quasi Lockdown to do some filming and talk with her about some of her pictures.

Walking into her studio, one is aware of contrasts. The straight lines of the building, its utilitarian, somewhat dreary feel, and then when the door to her space is opened, the vibrancy of work made inside of it.

Colours and shapes enliven canvasses on the floor. Stacked against the wall, pictures, some hung - most not - give us Frances' view of her world, and latterly, her world through this most disruptive societal event. The studio both radiates and contains this energy. When I leave the work stays with me.

It has been a frightening and fragmenting time for many of us. Yes, there has been the discovery of reflection and quietude from those who have been, up until now, busy-busy and that has been interesting. But what an artist can tell us or rather show us, is the disturbance that has permeated us during this time.

Frances' work inevitably speaks to the troubles of today and the troubles we bring personally. The present moment is always inflected with history and as we discover new abilities to cope with adversity resilience turns out to depend on darker thoughts despite what pop psychology may say.

Resilience emerges out of a capacity to acknowledge that we have complex and complicated responses and feelings. They can be messy and bleak. We do not need to be able to articulate them all, even to ourselves (although I believe that helps), but to know the phenomenon: distressing times invoke distressing responses and feelings. Denial mostly doesn't help.

Frances' lockdown work, from the heavy use of paint to the merest of line drawings made with compressed charcoal, returns to the face – work for which she is much admired. Her Lockdown faces express alarm, dismay, confusions, oh no's, ouch and refusal. These works allow us to enter into states of being we know from our own experience of lockdown. We resonate to and with her work. We see our own responses and are touched to be met by hers. It breaks our isolation. It does not mitigate the horror. Not at all, but it communalises experience in a time of extreme social isolation.

Lockdown work is of a piece with the loudness of Frances' work. It demands attention, which is to say, once seen, it is not easy to forget. It pulls one back. She is on to something about the human experience that is uncomfortable and yet compelling. Her work reaches into us. It stays with us. And, although I am not sure she would agree, it consoles us.

Susie Orbach

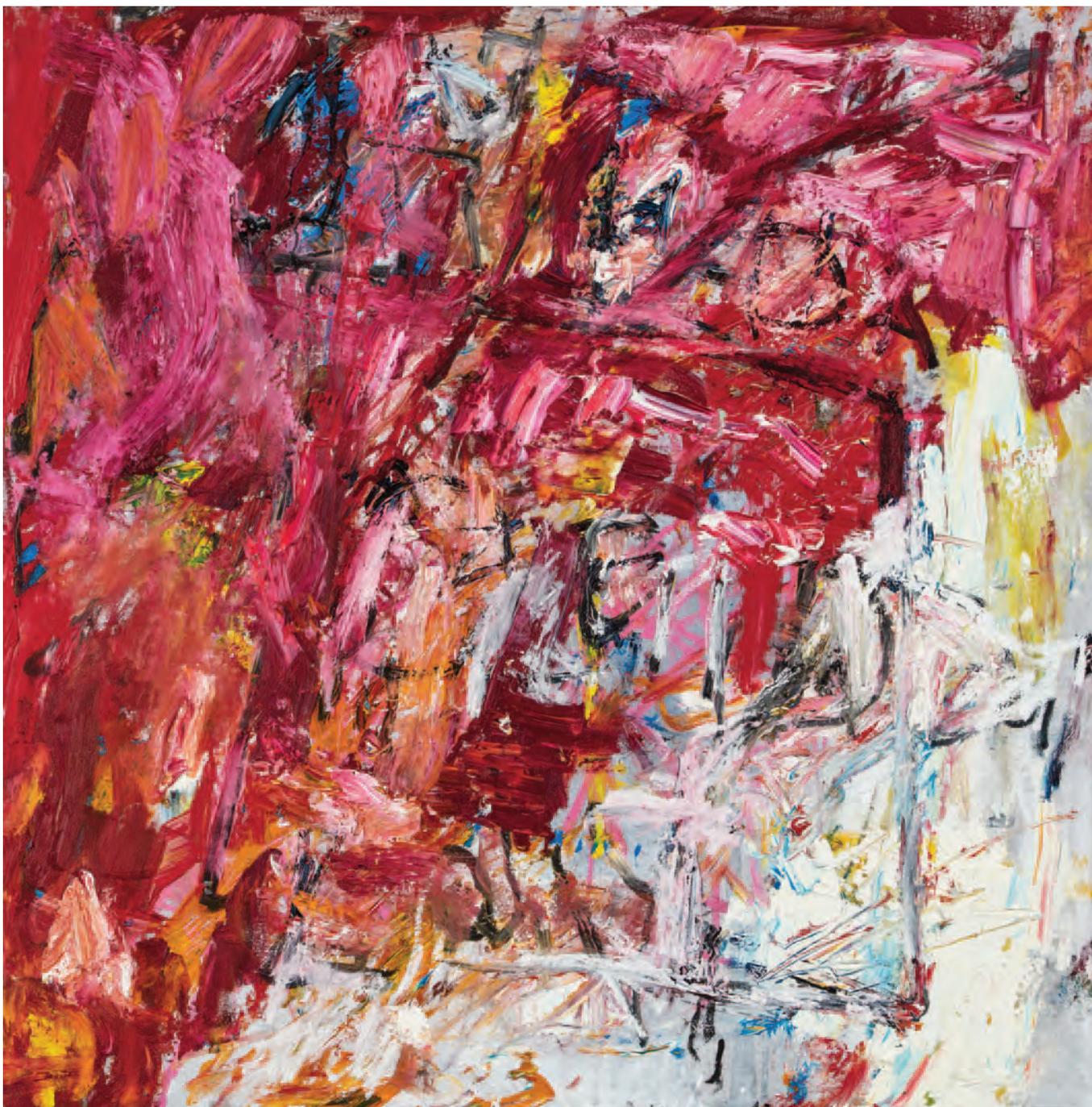




1. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Red Head, 2020
oil on linen, 167 x 167 cm

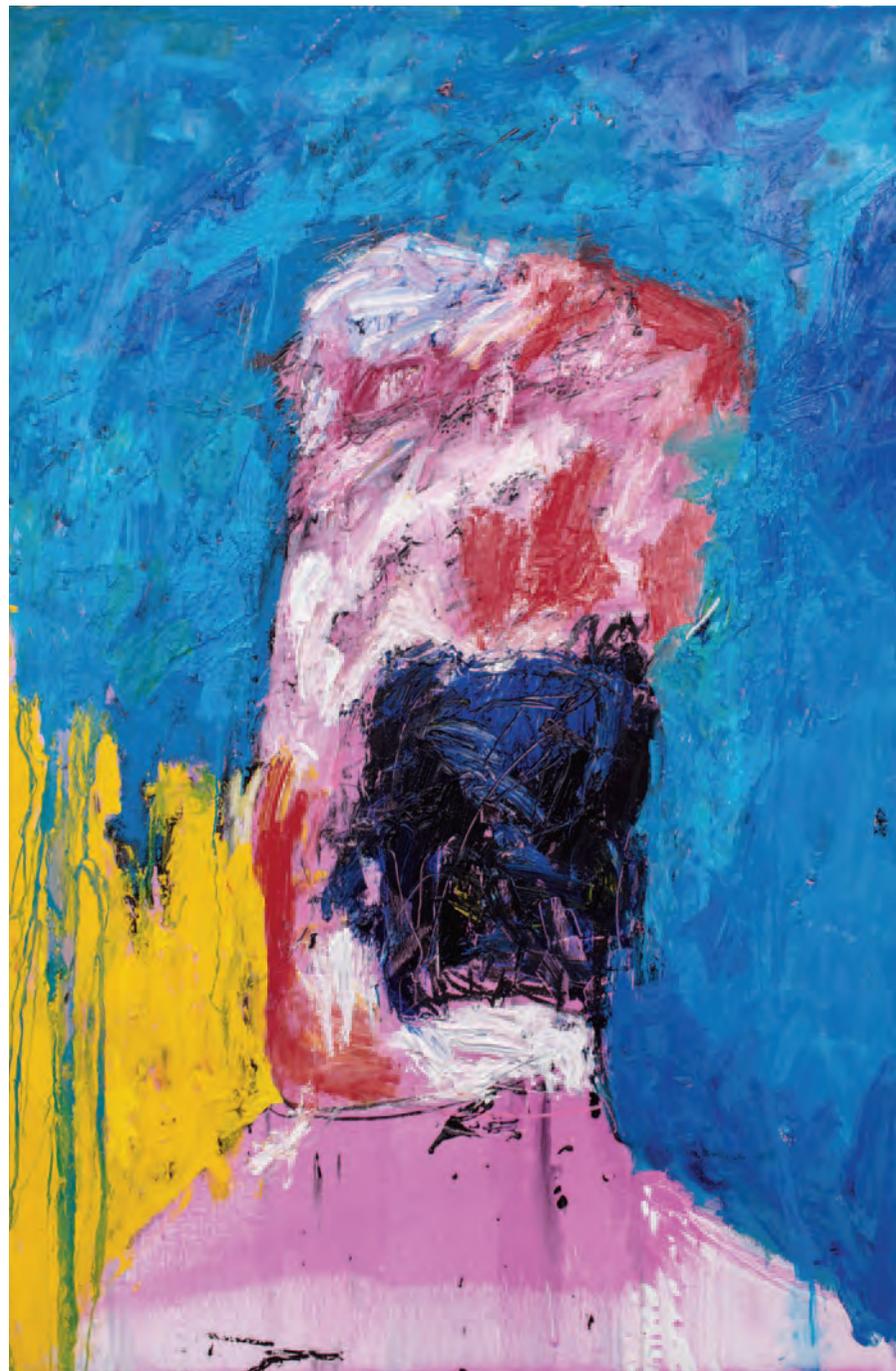


2. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Night, 2020
oil on linen, 180 x 120 cm



3. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Edge, 2020
oil on linen, 120 x 120 cm

4. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Smile, 2020
oil on linen, 180 x 120 cm





5. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Black, 2020
oil on linen, 90 x 90 cm



6. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
White, 2020
oil on linen, 90 x 90 cm



7. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Head 2, 2020
compressed charcoal and acrylic on Fabriano
36 x 28 cm



8. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Fragment 1, 2020
compressed charcoal on Fabriano
38 x 28 cm



9. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Fragment 2, 2020
compressed charcoal on Fabriano
31 x 23 cm



10. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Head, 2020
compressed charcoal on Fabriano
36 x 28 cm



11. Frances Aviva Blane b.1954
Choir, 2020
compressed charcoal on Waterford
28 x 28 cm



12. Frances Aviva Blane b.1954
Tree, 2020
compressed charcoal on Fabriano
27 x 39 cm



13. **Frances Aviva Blane** b.1954
Portrait, 2020
charcoal and acrylic on Waterford
56 x 38 cm

CLAUDIA CLARE

'Fragments' is a loaded word when it comes to pottery. It implies the splintering of a smashed pot, it hints at shards found buried deep in the earth during an architectural dig: it screams of history, of violence, of desperate attempts to piece broken things back together.

The pots in Claudia Clare's exhibition are mainly whole - thankfully - but ideas of fragments course through each work, which goes some way towards explaining the show's title. Produced almost entirely during this extended period of lockdown, the potter's latest painted ceramics are amongst her most personal, largely thanks to the time and space afforded by a world without pressures or deadlines.

"Lockdown - the first part especially - was a time of peace for me. No interruptions. No demands for this and that. No-one's expectations to manage or respond to," she says. "What I found was that I had time to put the love into the pots I was building and painting - time I've so often wanted but rarely found. I could seek out the tenderness and intimacy I wanted to achieve with them."

Tenderness and intimacy are key to the new works. The figure of Hossein, for example, appears in many of the pots. He is her housemate, maybe even her muse, you could say. "My beloved best friend is in Iran with family at the moment. He left in January, got caught in the Covid whirlwind - and will stay there for now until closer to Christmas - but who knows? We talk almost daily," she says wistfully.

Other figures here include friends in faraway places Clare hadn't spoken to for years, but reconnected with over lockdown and an isolated young family, new to London, that Clare struck up a relationship with. Throughout all these scenarios, these stories, you see that life has been split apart, blown to pieces: fragmented. Her new works, therefore, are a record of fragmented lives, of a disrupted world.

But this fragmentation isn't an end in itself: it's not a full stop, but an ongoing process. "Pots break and can be mended in numerous ways. People mostly survive trauma; not always, but mostly we do. Friendships and relationships are under tremendous strain at the moment with Covid, so are society, communities and our shared social lives. Some will break. They may or may not be restored. The word 'fragmented', has the suggestion of rupture but it also suggests future and some hope."

And that's the important thing to take away from Claudia Clare's 'Fragmented' pots. Though things are cracked and broken, there is always - always - the hope that they will be mended. As life has fragmented around us over the past 6 months or so, Clare is asking you to hold on and hold out, because all that is broken can someday, somehow, be fixed.

Eddy Frankel

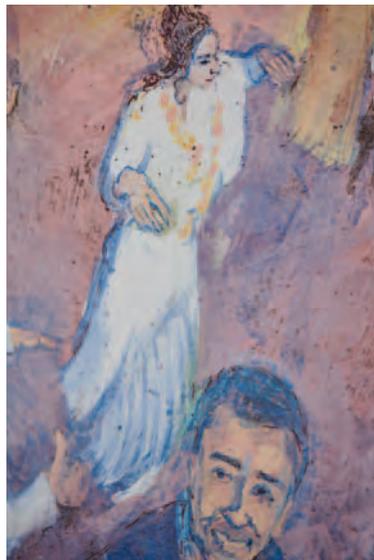






14. **Claudia Clare** b.1962
Verdant Spring - Together and Apart, 2020
h:62 x w:33 cm





15. **Claudia Clare** b.1962
Govand
h:57 x w:33 cm





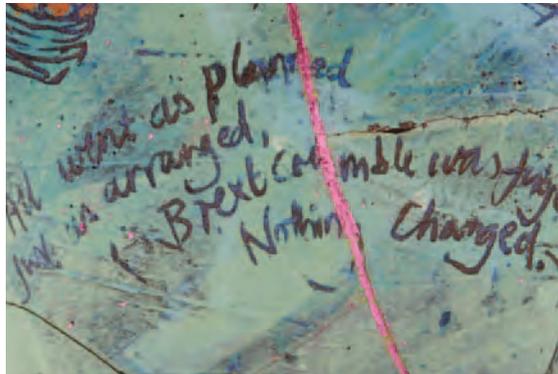


16. **Claudia Clare** b.1962
We Are a Family, 2020
h:68 x w:33 cm

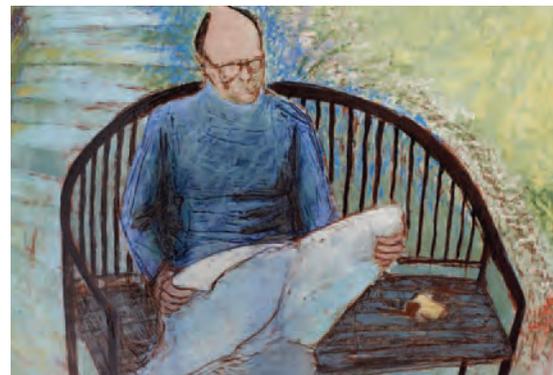




17. **Claudia Clare** b.1962
Wootton: Moonrise, 2018
h:30 cm



18. **Claudia Clare** b.1962
Continental Brexit, 2018
h:35 cm



19. **Claudia Clare** b.1962
Three Generations
h:80 x w:50 cm



20. **Claudia Clare** b.1962
Wootton, Drifting Snow, 2018
h:50 cm x w:30 cm



21. **Claudia Clare** b.1962
Wootton: Frosty at Dawn, 2018
h:48 cm x 28 cm



22. Claudia Clare b.1962
Nisreen and Pebbles, 2020
h:40 x w:40 cm



23. Claudia Clare b.1962
Hossein and Sooty, 2020
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FRANCES AVIVA BLANE

1991 – 1993 Slade School of Fine Art, UCL (University College London)
1988 – 1991 Byam Shaw School of Painting and Drawing, London
1987 Chelsea College of Art, London

Selected solo exhibitions

2018 'dark' De Queeste Kunstkamers, Abele/Watou, Belgium
Blane. Broken Heads, Broken Paint, 12 Star Gallery at Europe House, London
2016 – 2017 *Two Faces. Painting/HEADS*, The German Embassy Belgravia, London
2014 *Deconstruct*, solo show alongside exhibitions of Louise Bourgeois
and Francis Bacon.
De Queeste Kunstkamers, Abele/Watou, Belgium
Big Black Paintings, Bay Hall, Kings College, London

Selected group shows

2020 *Distancing*, Ecartspace.com with Basil Beattie, John McLean and Susan Stockwell
The desire of looking De Queeste Kunstkamers, Abele/Watou, Belgium
2019 *Age is just a number*, Summer Show, Zuleika Gallery, London
Abstract Allies, Zuleika Gallery, London. Curated by Tim Sayer MBE
Ikonoclash #01, De Queeste Kunstkamers, Abele/Watou, Belgium
2018 John Moores Painting Prize 2018, Walker Gallery, Liverpool
No Man is an Island, with Susan Stockwell and David Connearn, Art Dialog, Bonn
2017 *Human*, The German Embassy, London
Creekside Open, selected by Jordan Baseman
Liquid Thought, with Daniel Enkaoua and Chris Stevens,
2016 *De Queeste Kunstkamers*, Abele/Watou Belgium
Impact, with Marthe Zinc, Louise Bourgeois, Mark Anstee
De Queeste Kunstkamers, Abele/Watou Belgium
De Vage Grens, with Frank Auerbach, Reniere & Depla,
2015 *De Queeste Kunstkamers*, Abele/Watou, Belgium
Jerwood Drawing Prize London and tour
2006 – 2008 *Drawing Breath*, Jerwood Anniversary Exhibition, Award Winners, London,
Sydney, Bristol
2007 *Annely Juda, a Celebration*, Annely Juda Fine Art, London
2006 *Prime Time*, German and English Painting, Berlin
2002 London Gallery Swap, sponsored by the British Council and Goethe institut
2001 *Drawing with Basil Beattie*, ecArtspace, London
2000 Painting with John McLean, ecArtspace, London

Awards

1999 Jerwood Award for Drawing,
Cheltenham and Gloucester, Open Drawing Show (award winner)
1998 Mid-America ART Alliance Fellowship for Visual Arts
Residency at Djerassi Artists' Foundation, California
1991 Graham Hamilton Drawing Prize

Publications

2019 *FAB*, Starmount Publications, 2019, essay by Susie Orbach
2018 *Broken Heads Broken Paint*, Star Gallery catalogue essay, Diana Souhami
More, essay by Mark Gisbourne
Embassy, foreword by Tess Jaray RA to the exhibition held at the German
embassy
Broken Heads Broken Paint, 12 Star Gallery at European Commission,
catalogue essay, Diana Souhami
2015 *Nothing*, essay by Diana Souhami

Film

2020 *Two Metres Apart* with Susie Orbach. Directed by Penny Woolcock
Who is Frances Aviva Blane? Directed by Penny Woodcock

Residency

1998 The Djerassi Resident Art Programme, California

Collections

Blind Art, London
Jesus College, Cambridge
The London School of Economics
Moorfields Eye Hospital, London
The Sternberg Centre, London
The Usher Gallery, Lincoln
The Three Faiths Forum, London
The Tim Sayer Collection London
The Doris Jean Lockhart Collection

CLAUDIA CLARE

- 2007 PhD University of Westminster, London. Media, Art & Design
1990-91 Winchcombe Pottery, Gloucestershire. Apprenticeship 1 year (ceramics)
1985 Fine Art B.A. Hons. Camberwell School of Art and Craft. London (painting)

Selected Exhibitions, one and two person shows

- 2020 *Collect 2020*, Somerset House, with Alice Kettle and Candida Stevens Gallery
2019 *Traveling West; Pots by Claudia Clare*, Huguenot Museum, Rochester
Night jars, Gallery 286, London
London Art Fair, Zuleika Gallery, two person display
2018 *The Wootton Pots*, Zuleika Gallery, Oxford, (catalogue)
2017 *Claudia Clare pots, Grayson Perry Prints*, Zuleika Gallery, London (catalogue)
The Summer Pots, Gallery 286, London,
2016 *Bring on the Baroque!* Gallery 286, London
2012 *An Extraordinary Turn of Events*, Francis Kyle Gallery, London, (catalogue)
2011 *Remembering Atefeh*, Commemorative Performance, Hyde Park, London
2007-2010 *Shattered*, London Gallery West, and touring, (catalogue)

Selected group shows

- 2019 *Dear Christine*, Vane Gallery, Newcastle, and touring (catalogue)
2018 *Once Upon a Time*, North Wall, Oxford, (catalogue)
2017 *Never Going Underground*, People's History Museum, Manchester
2016 *Hidden*, Zuleika Gallery, 6 Mason's Yard, London
Hidden Agenda, The Wilson, Cheltenham Museum and Art Gallery
2013 *British Ceramics Biennial*, Award 2013, Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke on Trent
In The Name Of Honour, 1 Mayfair, London, (catalogue)
2011 *I Am Human*, New Schoolhouse Gallery, York
2010 *Fired Up, Ceramics and Meaning*, Gallery Oldham, (catalogue)

Public Commissions

- 2019-2021 *And The Door Opened*, social project with *Women @the Well*, London
2001-3 *Paved Paradise*. Architectural project. West Yorkshire

Public Collections

Transcultural Collection, Bradford Museums and Art Galleries
NewHall Art Collection, Murray Edwards College, Cambridge (catalogue)
Pankhurst Museum, Manchester

Awards and Sponsorship

- 2004 *University of Westminster*. Travel bursary 2 months research in Iran
2001 *Churchill Travel Fellowship*, Hungary, Turkey, Iran, Uzbekistan
1998 *Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust*, residency Kecskemet, Hungary

Publications

- 2016 *Subversive Ceramics*, Bloomsbury, London
2011 *The Pot Book*, co-authored with Edmund de Waal, Phaidon, London

Books

- 2021 Bonnie Kemske, *Kintsugi: The Poetic Mend*, Herbert Press (forthcoming)
2012 Paul Scott, *Ceramics and Print, Third Edition*, A&C Black, UK
2010 Linda Bloomfield, *Advanced Pottery Making*, Robert Hale, UK
2009 Emmanuel Cooper, *Contemporary Ceramics International Perspective*, Thames & Hudson, UK
2004 Gwen Heeney, *Brickworks*, A&C Black, UK

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