

Portfolio

Biography

Maria Cohen is an awarded multidisciplinary artist based in the UK, working as a painter, researcher, and curator. Her art practice delves into themes of sexuality and identity, employing a diverse range of media including oil painting, animation, and screen printing.

Maria holds an MA in Fine Art Painting from Camberwell College of Arts (2021), where she earned recognition with the Art Ambassador Awards. Her work has been showcased at exhibitions, including the South London Gallery and the London Grads 2021 at the Saatchi Gallery.

In March 2024, Maria was featured as an emerging UK-based artist in an article about her practice in Made in Bed magazine. She was also shortlisted for the Director's Cut at the Woolwich Art Fair 2024.

In September 2022, Maria collaborated with Urban Outfitters to curate a group show for the Open Houses in Brighton. By February 2023, she had curated the solo show 'Zero Gravity' in Basel, Switzerland, supported by the Voskhod Gallery. Additionally, in 2022, Maria launched 'Rabbits' Choice' a platform encouraging people to express their fears, overcome embarrassment, and break social boundaries to showcase their unique voices. In February 2024, Maria was endorsed for the Global Talent Visa in the UK.

Artist Statement

I am exploring sexuality through my own identity. Feminism informs my identity as a woman; the politics of this empower me to be freely explore sexuality in my practice, which itself the function of legacy.

I challenge and acknowledge aspects of sexuality through various artistic mediums such as paintings, drawings, printmaking, performances, and animations.

I approach my practice as an experience, a physical and almost performative moment: every piece of art, every artistic gesture, or manifest is a way to overcome embarrassment and accept vulnerability, weakness, and fragility.

Repetitions and symbolism in my work help conserve energy and balance my emotional and rational sides. The bunny, serving as my alter-ego, represents the ambiguity of human nature. I deform this image to make it either more comprehensible or confusing, like a sound or invisible vibration.

Within the layers of my artistic exploration, I unravel the intricacies of sexuality, liberating myself from personal struggles through the strategic use of blots, strikes, and erasures. This transformative process manifests in various forms, be it expressive drawings, random collages, vibrant digital animations, striking graffiti, or dedicated pieces paying homage to old masters' paintings.

Within this practice, I unravel my sexual identity, navigating the boundaries and traps imposed by my Russian and Jewish background. Confronting fear, I become aware of the voice buried in anxiety and frustrations, acknowledging the hidden power within. The repetition in my practice releases and controls chaos, structuring ideas and thoughts.

By challenging the viewer to confront and acknowledge their vulnerabilities, I am encouraging a deep and authentic engagement with my work.

My current project is centered around a multi-disciplinary performance and video installation. This project explores the intersection of sound, movement and visual art through dynamic performances, immersive workshops and events for various audiences.

MARIA COHEN CV

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PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

2019 Member of Israeli Artist Association
2016 Present Member of the Union of Russian Artists

EDUCATION

2020-2021
Camberwell College of Arts, London, MA Painting
2019-2020
ICA Moscow MA History and Philosophy of Art
2010-2016
V. Surikov State Academy Art Institute, Moscow, Russia Master of Fine Art
2004- 2009
College of Performing Arts, Moscow, Russia Bachelor of Fine Art (Hons)

SELECTED SOLO

2023
'Zero Gravity'
Voskhod gallery, Basel, Switzerland

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024
Woolwich Contemporary Pint Fair
2023 "Ego Dialogue"
regroup Collective exhibition
Greatorex Street Gallery, London
<https://www.regrouppcollective.com>
2023 "Undercurrents"
Adelaide Crescent, Brighton and Hove
2023 'Zero Gravity'
Voskhod gallery, Basel, Switzerland
2022 'regroup'
regroup Collective exhibition
Espacio Gallery, London
2022 'Still Happening'
Kupfer gallery, London
2022 'Intimacy'
Regroup Collective exhibition
Fitzrovia Gallery
2022 "X-Nowness"
Collective exhibition supported by Voice of Culture
Basel Art Center
2021 "London Grads Now"
Saatchi Gallery, London
2021 "Regrouppcollective"
no format gallery group show London
2021 South London Gallery London
UAL MA Fine Art Graduate Showcase
2021 Copeland Gallery London
"Unmuted"
MAFA Interim Group Show London

2021 South London Gallery London
UAL MA Fine Art Graduate Showcase
2021 Copeland Gallery London
"Unmuted"
MAFA Interim Group Show London
2021 South London Gallery London
UAL MA Fine Art Graduate Showcase
2021 Copeland Gallery London
"Unmuted"
MAFA Interim Group Show London
2020 The 2nd Garage Triennial of Russian Contemporary Art
2020 Baseless, Winzavod, Moscow Centre for Contemporary Art
2020 Online exhibition "#ямогуговорить"
2020 Sokol Residence
Solo exhibition "The Event or a chaos as a form of an order"
2019 MOMMA Moscow
Performance 'What did you listen'
Dismorphophobia, or the war within your mind
2019 WINZAVOD, Moscow Center for Contemporary Art
The exhibition of "Communities and Spaces"

HONORS / AWARDS

2024 Shortlisted Woolwich Contemporary Print Fair
2022 Project Rabbits Choice
A-list Society of American Art
2020 UAL International Postgraduate Scholarship
2016 Honorable Mention Award;
In recognition of the overall achievements in Fine Arts at the V. Surikov State Academy Art Institute the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Arts
2016 Short-list online selection Marchionni Prize; MAGMMA Museum, Villacidro, Italy

RESIDENCIES

2024 Art Residence at the Vera Hotel Tel Aviv
2022-2023 Art Residence at the Empress Place, London
<https://theearlscourtdevelopmentcompany.com/whats-on/empress-studios>
2021 Camberwell college of Art, Summer Residence, London
2019 Chekhov API, scientific creative residence, Moscow region
2018 International Residence Kyrgyzstan

PUBLICATIONS

2024
Made In Bed art magazine Sotheby's Institute of Art in London and New York
<https://www.madeinbed.co.uk/emerging/maria-cohen>
2023
Lokall
<https://lokall.online/2023/12/01/harmony-in-diversity-beauty-war-environmental-crisis-and-fairy-tale-cesitlilikte-uyum-guzellik-savas-cevresel-kriz-ve-peri-masali/>
2023
Syg.ma
<https://syg.ma/@turquoiseethermagazine/the-war-maria-cohens-striking-exploration-of-emotional-conflict>
2022
Zima Magazine
<https://zimamagazine.com/2022/07/8-molodyh-hudozhnikov-iz-ukrainy-i-rossii-raboty-kotoryh-soberet-v-londone-proekt-still-happening/>
2021
Voskhod gallery
<https://voskhod.ch/blog/29-greetings-from-london-interview-with-maria-cohen/>



Dealing With A Broken Heart

Oil on Canvas
Size 140*140
2025

I Always See Stars Above My Head

I Always See Stars Above My Head, is a multi-disciplinary participatory performance project co-created by three female and non-binary artists. The project aims to uncover the emotions and stories behind the album "Forgotten" by using live music, dance, and virtual art installations as an alternative approach to reimagining music. The project will comprise live performances and participatory workshops. As our practice is based on Interdisciplinary fields we intend to record of authentic sounds, instruments, captivating photos, making videos and putting them together into digital installation and performance.

By intertwining these art forms, the project intends to create an intersection where each discipline uplifts and celebrates the others, forming the delicate journey of artistic expression. With a focus on the psychological melodrama and sexuality that resonates across generations and invokes the psychic and social struggle for control over female bodies, the project seeks to express the vulnerabilities and resilience of the experience of living in a female body as well as the connection of human being with the inner world, physical body and environment around. It also aims to explore the healing power of art and delve into the connection between art and mental health.

By engaging audiences in the creative process through a series of public and community workshops the project is committed to reinforce the sustainability of art-making. The aim is to broaden the potential audience and encourage more people to explore the transformative power of art, while building connections with each other through creative activities. All activities aim to be fully accessible to people from all backgrounds and age groups.

“The Poem Of Empty Mountain” Animation

Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/967247354>



Dealing With A Broken Heart

Oil on Canvas
Size 140*140
2025



"I Always See Stars Above My Head"
Installation London Brimington Park
Paintings "Dealing With A Broken Heart"
2025



Frustrations

Ink, Watercolour painting
2024



Frustrations

Ink, Watercolour painting
2024



Frustrations

Ink, Watercolour painting
2024



Speechless Nights

For the residency I crafted a distinctive graphic piece titled “Speechless Nights” drawing inspiration from the profound impact of silence.

The main objective of this work was to accumulate words into a system characterised by multiple repetitive movements devoid of any precise direction. Instead of articulating thoughts into specific words with the intent of expression, or conveying particular meanings to the audience, I sought to explore the unrestricted potential of chaotic movements. These movements guide the image towards unpredictable circumstances, allowing the creative process to transcend human instincts of control and manipulation over the outcome. The structure of recurring strokes fosters a sense of relaxation and meditative introspection, enabling the process to organically dictate the further result.

Project ‘Speechless Nights’ for the Vera Hotel Artist in Residence
Tel Aviv, Israel March 2024

Mixed Media: Watercolour Paper, Ink, Acrylic



Project 'Speechless Nights' for the Vera Hotel Artist in Residence
Tel Aviv, Israel March 2024

Mixed Media: Watercolour Paper, Ink, Acrylic



Project 'Speechless Nights' for the Vera Hotel Artist in Residence
Tel Aviv, Israel March 2024

Mixed Media: Watercolour Paper, Ink, Acrylic



I Am Not A Dog
Screenprint Unique
2021



Project "I Am Not A Dog" at the Brimington Park, London 2025



East London Printmakers 2023



Rabbit's Choice

Screenprint Limited edition
Berlin, Prenzlauer Berg, January 2023



Zero Gravity

The zero gravity project is a collection of paintings that depict the artist's feelings of insecurity, loss, fear, and embarrassment in response to being forcibly cut off from their homeland. The paintings are presented as an autobiographical diary, with expressive brushstrokes, doodles, and barely readable writing. The installation features three paintings hanging on invisible ropes against a deep black background, creating a sense of weightlessness and erasing boundaries between the floor, ceiling, and walls. The layering of paints in the paintings represents the unstable and rapid pace of everyday life, capturing only bits and pieces of the artist's experience in a chaotic yet ordered way.



“Zero Gravity”

Installation view at the Voskhod Gallery, Basel Switzerland 2023
<https://voskhod.ch/exhibitions/16-zero-gravity/>



"Untitled"

Oil on Canvas
Size 140*180
2023



“Untitled”

Project Zero Gravity
Digital print Unique
FibraPrint Warmtone Gloss 300gsm



"Untitled"

Oil on Canvas
Size 150*100
2023



Oil on Canvas
Size 100*80
2024

Angel Narcissist

The project aims to portray an angel devoid of emotions and empathy, concealed beneath the strongly masculine influence of a narrow-minded and money-driven world. The project appears to explore themes of identity, spirituality, and the impact of a materialistic society on individuals. It highlights the struggle of not knowing one's true self or rightful place. The angel is imprisoned within a stone block, its face devoid of any sign of concealed emotions over the years. Adorned in ornate attire, it underscores the divine power, contrasting with portraits of historical figures like kings, queens, and Popes from the Baroque period, El Greco, and Francis Bacon's Popes paintings which are enlightening the real truth of human nature.



Oil on Canvas
Size 110*90
2024



Installation at the Brompton Cemetery 2024

The War

The idea behind the project depicts a blooded background with three repetitive patterns of rabbits painted in black. The bunny's image refers to the ambiguity of life and the controversial understanding of security and defense. Black rabbits emphasise the insecurities of life, the hard and fragile fence of safeness based on trust, beliefs, and grief. The lack of emotional expression shown by the repetitive pattern of rabbits tied closer to each other creates the feeling of tension, stubbornness, and emotional unavailability. Through the blooded red background and the sharpness of the bunny's image, the artist reveals tense between emotions and will. Structured to the repetitive line, rabbits create an illusion of sexual masculine power trapping hidden behind painful traumatic experiences full of scares and grief.



Oil on Canvas
Size 110*90
2022



Performance in Soho, London 2023
Digital print "The War"



Performance in Soho, London 2023
Digital print "The War"



Project "The War" Brick Lane, London 2022
Digital print



Project "The War" Brick Lane, London 2022
Oil on Canvas, screen-print



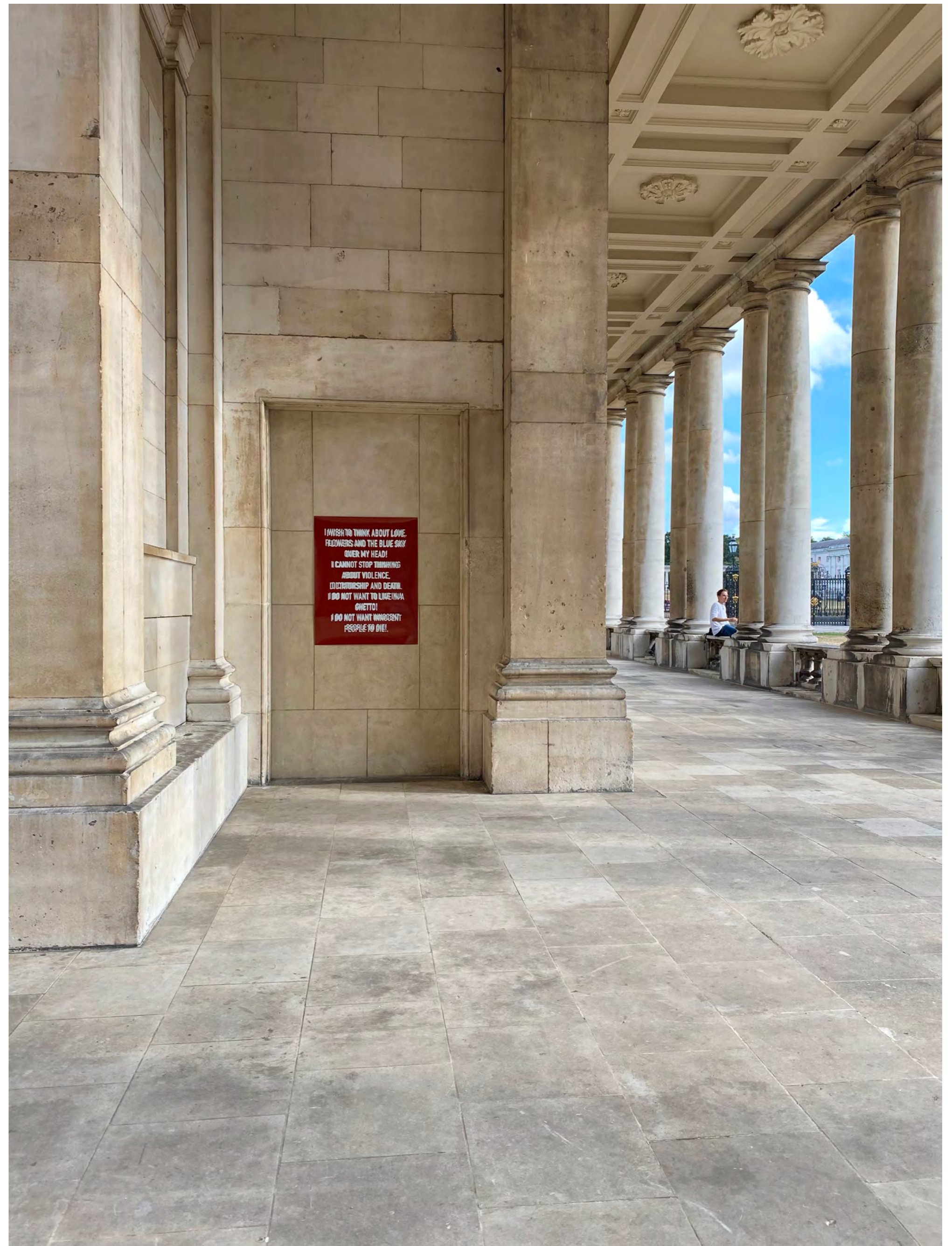
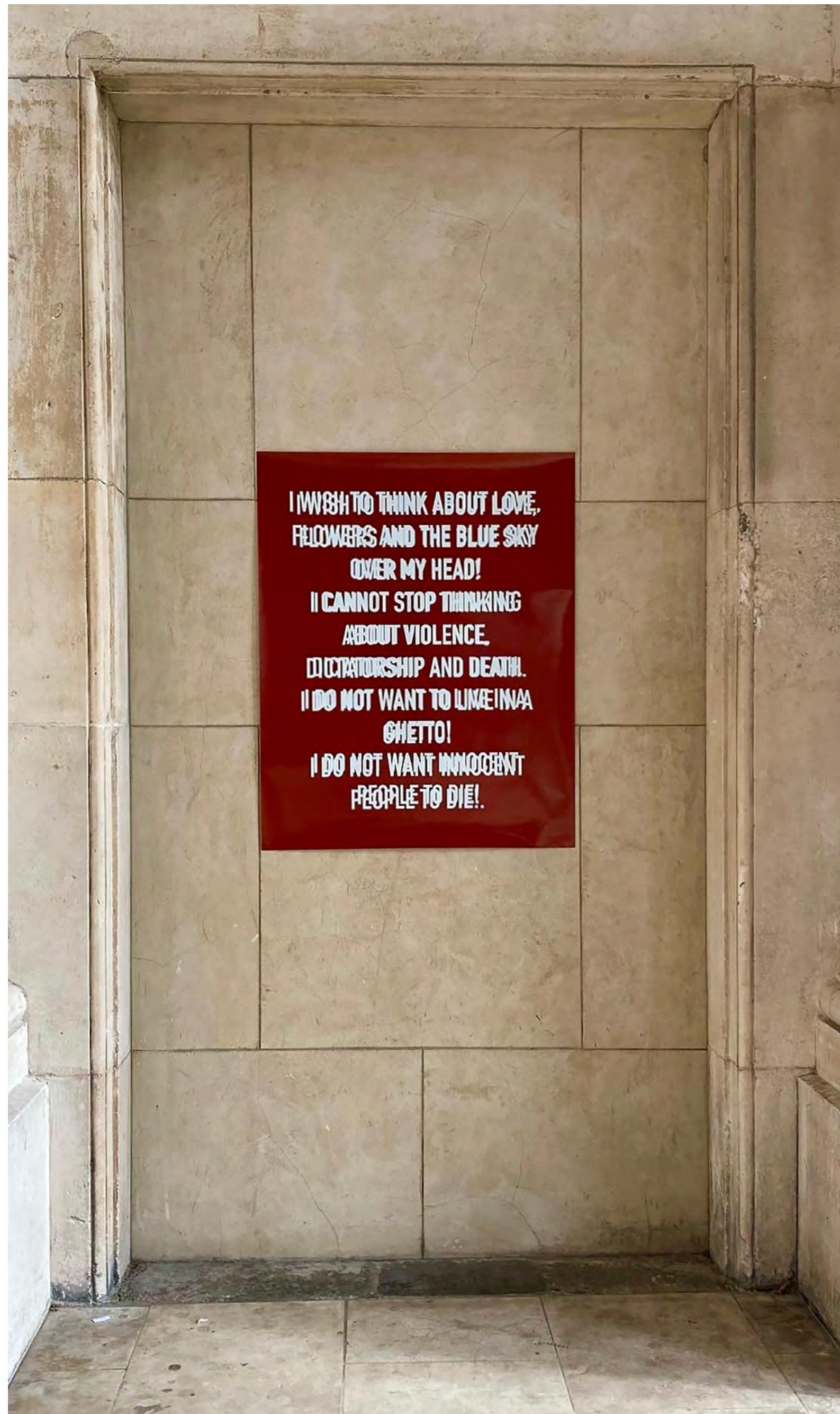
Trinity College London 2022
Oil on Canvas, screen-print



Performance 2022
A strong message with a bored face...
How we are fighting toxic masculinity. Shouting with silence...

Project Pray&Sacrifice

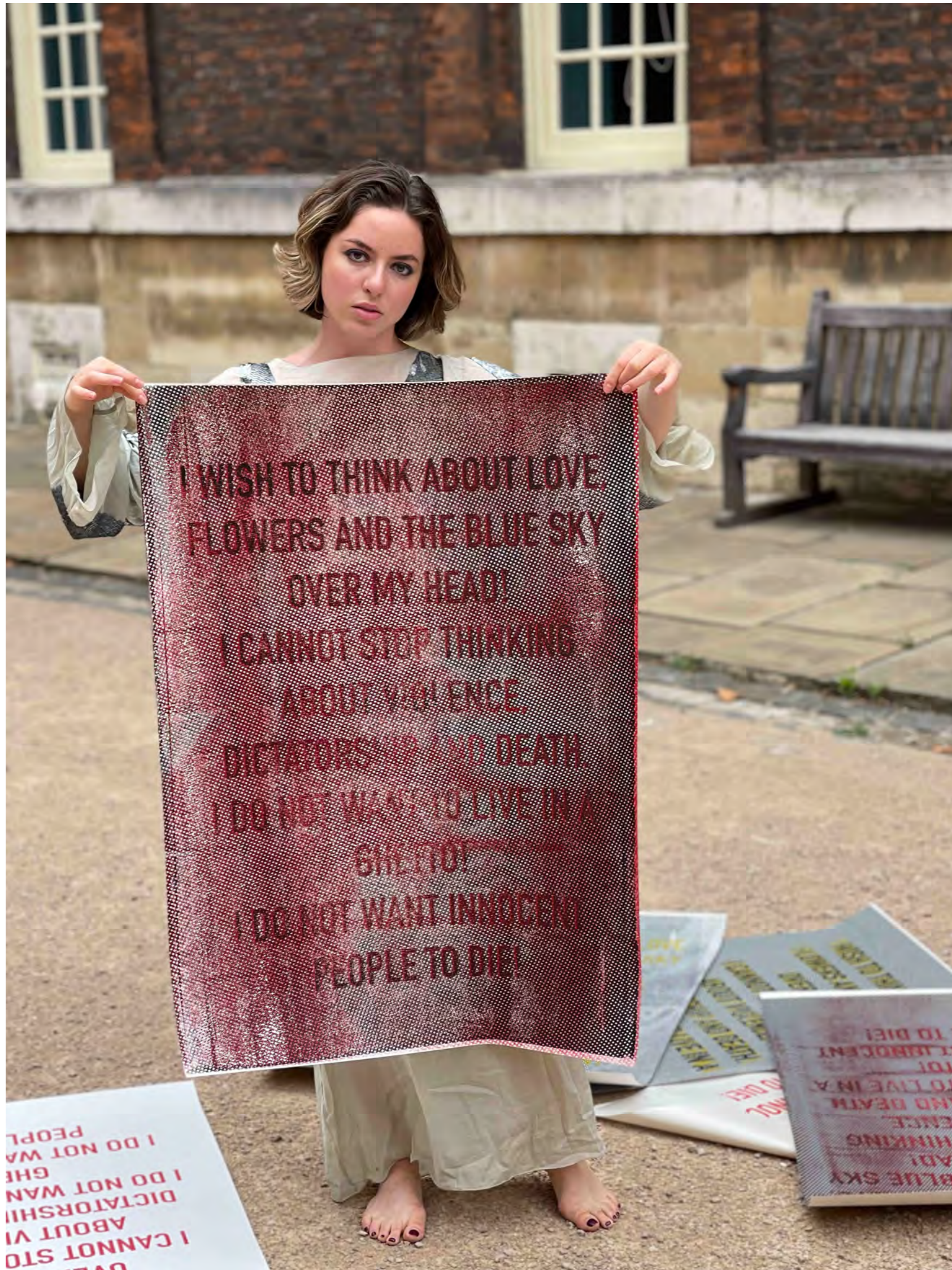
The project is a self-reflection on the military conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The artwork is a scream and denial of belief in the tragedy that happened in Bucha. The artwork consists of multiple printed posters hanging very close to each other. The repetitive pattern and blooded red color creates the illusion of praying in a moment of suffocative fear. The transparency of the material is the metaphorical meaning of the vulnerability of the human skin and the circulation of blood under it.



Digital prints "Pray&Sacrifice"
Performing at the Royal Naval College in London 2023



Installation designed for the Copeland Gallery, London 2022



Performance 2022
A strong message with a bored face...
How we are fighting toxic masculinity. Shouting with silence...



Project Pray&Sacrifice



Project Pray&Sacrifice 2022
Screen-print



Peace or Tears of Blood

The project "Peace or Tears of blood" is a powerful and deeply emotional reflection on the ongoing military conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The use of a plastic transparent figure of a rabbit traveling around the world bleeding with embroidered tears of blood is a striking representation of the pain and suffering experienced by those affected by the conflict. The fine material and velvety texture of the rabbit figure contrast with the harsh reality of the conflict, highlighting the fragile nature of the human soul and the relationships that are affected by war. The transparency of the figure also reflects the vulnerability of the soul, showing how it is impacted by the environment in which it finds itself. The embroidery on the figure, which appears to have punctured the material, reinforces the sense of pain and suffering that is being portrayed. The barely readable text on the right ear, which says "MIP" or "PEACE," adds a hopeful element to the piece, suggesting that despite the violence and conflict, there is still a possibility for peace.

Link on the project: <https://vimeo.com/817620728/be7f517b43>



Storyboards 2022
"Peace or Tears of Blood"

Rabbits' Choice 2021

The work is exploring of sexual identity through an ongoing process of reproductions and repetitions during the time. The project shows the process of empowering identity through changes that occurred with the artist during the long period of relationships with practice. The work consists of paintings, objects, documentaries, and performances. I am layering paintings, drawings, and sketches one on top of another, intending to fire the curiosity of a viewer within hidden parts of the collage. The Bunny symbolises a sexual alter-ego and ambiguity of human nature. I deform it making it more comprehensive or, on the opposite, confusing for reading, like sound or invisible vibration.



Painting Mixed media: Oil on canvas, screen-printing, Ink, Pen 180*140



Installation South London Gallery 2021
Collage is installing on the wall consisting of the painting, drawings, sketches, screen-prints.



Painting
Mixed media:
Oil on canvas, screen-printing, Ink, Pen 180*140



Installation Project space 2021
Alternative way to install the work in the project space



Unfolding Identity

The series of works include a few stages of deconstruction painting in the space. Every piece is a documentation of interaction between the artist and the painting . I hang the piece on a wall. Then I put it on the floor. I found myself covered into the object. I folded it and unfolded it again and again. I had an idea to deconstruct painting itself to destroy the sense of painting as a thing. Then, I moved forward, I engaged with painting imagining it as a sexual act or a dance. I rolled up myself in the painting like a rolled carpet. I felt stuck there, but safe and warm. This feeling reminded me life in comfort and stability which gives warmth and secureness, but the identical voice inside is annoyingly whispered to release. The purpose of deconstruction of painting is showing the process of folding and unfolding identity through the exciting erotic engagement between a human being and the painting. Folds like layers symbolised traps through time which no one can impact. It traps itself, but there is only one way to find my voice to keep going unfold identity through the process every day.

Project "Unfolding Identity" 2022
Deconstruction of painting
Installation at the Copeland Park Gallery



Project "Unfolding Identity" 2022
Oil on Canvas
Size 180*140



Unfolding identity 2022
Studio photoshoot
Painting in progress



Project "Unfolding Identity" 2022
Deconstruction of painting
Installation at the Copeland Park Gallery



Deconstruction of painting
Four Corners exhibition London
Project Unfolding identity.
An unstretched painting is placed on the floor supported
by a solid structure underneath, folded by natural accident.



The Throne

The artwork shows the intimate relationship between the artist and the chair, turning it into a symbolic representation of the various emotions and experiences endured during the pandemic.

The chair as a central figure in the composition not only highlights its physical presence but also symbolises the emotional support and constancy it provided during a period of uncertainty. The chair becomes a witness to a range of activities and emotions, serving as a silent companion through moments of work, leisure, pain, joy, and contemplation.

The emphasis on the chair as a source of growth, strength, and security adds layers of meaning to the artwork. It suggests that even in the midst of challenges and hardships, there are elements in our lives that anchor us and foster personal development. The chair, in this case, becomes a metaphor for resilience and stability in an otherwise unstable and unsafe time. Placing the chair in the centre of the composition not only draws attention to its significance but also conveys a sense of balance and order. This centrality can be interpreted as a reflection of the stability and continuity found in relationships with family, friends, and loved ones—those who contribute to a sense of home and love.

Poisoned World

The artwork encapsulates a poignant moment from my personal experience in October 2021, marking a pivotal turning point amidst the pandemic's unexpected reality. It reflects the profound journey of finding oneself in an unfamiliar environment, far removed from the comfort of home and family. The piece delves into the inundation of bureaucratic challenges, navigating the complexities of communication barriers, grappling with diverse accents, and contending with the anxiety of expressing oneself over phone calls.

The struggle to articulate thoughts and needs is depicted through the laborious process of composing lengthy emails, each word meticulously chosen to convey clarity and satisfaction over small triumphs that, in ordinary circumstances, would be inconsequential. The narrative unfolds as an essential confrontation with the reality of solitude in a foreign country during lockdown, with the vastness of the city serving as a backdrop to a myriad of hopes, beliefs, and opportunities. The artwork captures the subtle warmth found in routine, structuring an artistic reality amidst the chaos of everyday life. The repetitive pattern of a written statement serves as a subconscious mantra, providing a grounding element that supports balance within the composition. It functions as a foundation, allowing for a moment of respite and focus on the present, fostering self-awareness within the tumultuous reality. A prominent aspect of the drawing draws attention to the boldly emphasised sign, "Sukkot Mesmerising World," serving as both an appeal and a dedication. It symbolises a connection to family, traditions, and culture, urging the viewer to nurture these elements with consistent care, attention, and love. This poignant inclusion emphasises the importance of preserving cultural roots as a source of strength and stability amid life's uncertainties.





"Poisoned World" 2020
 Graphic: Watercolour paper, Watercolour, Ink
 Size 26*18



"The Throne" 2019
 Graphic: Watercolour paper, Watercolour, Ink
 Size 26*18



"Zero Gravity"

Graphic: Watercolour paper, Watercolour, Ink
Size 26*18
2020



"Untitled"

Graphic: Watercolour paper, Watercolour, Ink
Size 26*18
2020

Rabbits' Love

Animation "Rabbits love" is about a physical act of love, like the deceptive expectations and addiction from quick emotional attachments and deceptive feelings like treatment from massive pressure and suffocative loneliness. A rabbit image symbolises a man who tries running away from reality to a fictional world of pleasure. Cuddles are new investments that are invaluable. Nature seems the last available entertainment in this poisoned world full of injustices and restrictions. Nature might be the only one that might give a feeling of security and independence. The blackbird is a symbol of freedom and wisdom although, it symbolises death flying over the ground like a wish of destroying prohibitions. The fence reminds a cage as an illusion of impossibility to float like the bird. The hare becomes huge and smaller then it duplicates itself as a bacteria. Also, it might be thoughts relation among animals, plants, human beings, and World Wide Web connections. A disease or a poison is spreading the whole ground, particularly in our mind, like a huge fear. The Queen is a symbol of the strength of culture, belief, and duty. The Queen's image appears and disappears as a Gif there is no chance to erase the image from the head as a reminder about social rules and dogmas. This artwork is a confession and relief. The Animation "Rabbits love" is about a physical act of love, like the deceptive expectations and addiction from quick emotional attachments and deceptive feelings like treatment from massive pressure and suffocative loneliness. A rabbit image symbolises a man who tries running away from reality to a fictional world of pleasure. Cuddles are new investments that are invaluable. Nature seems the last available entertainment in this poisoned world full of injustices and restrictions. Nature might be the only one that might give a feeling of security and independence. The blackbird is a symbol of freedom and wisdom although, it symbolises death flying over the ground like a wish of destroying prohibitions. The fence reminds a cage as an illusion of impossibility to float like the bird. The hare becomes huge and smaller then it duplicates itself as a bacteria. Also, it might be thoughts relation among animals, plants, human beings, and World Wide Web connections. A disease or a poison is spreading the whole ground, particularly in our mind, like a huge fear. The Queen is a symbol of the strength of culture, belief, and duty. The Queen's image appears and disappears as a Gif there is no chance to erase the image from the head as a reminder about social rules and dogmas. This artwork is a confession and relief.



Vimeo Link on the animation Rabbits' Love: <https://vimeo.com/501431896>



Copeland Gallery Digital Installation "Rabbits' Love" 2021



Project plan "Rabbits' Love" Copeland Gallery group exhibition 2021

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