



Reprieve

Paintings by Tom Henderson Smith



Shire Hall Gallery, Bodmin

September 15th - 29th 2018



Dark Falls
Approx. 60 x 30 cms.

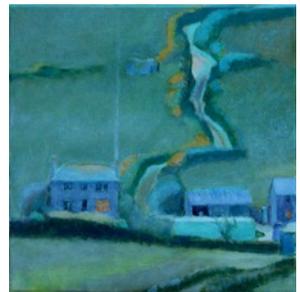
Reprise

This is Tom Henderson Smith's most recent collection of paintings. As with the previous two of his collections to be shown at the Shire Hall, in 2015 and in 2016, there is a strong autobiographical element to it.

In early 2017 Tom was diagnosed with prostate cancer that had spread to surrounding bones. That there was something seriously amiss was clear to me from *Farm down a Lane* (see below) and *Windfall Apple Tree in Winter* from the end of 2016. I felt that both paintings had a certain bleakness about them. Tom later wrote of the apple tree painting that *"It turned out to be ... an unconscious*

portrayal of the symptoms I had been developing." However, even before a treatment plan was established, his indomitable optimism came across in pieces such as *Winter Oak* (page 5) and *Light Through The Pines*. He wrote of the latter: *"A tantalising glimpse of cool, bright colours hints at a spaciousness that promises to relieve the closed-in sensation under this dense foliage."*

During the course of that year treatment involved some initial targeted radiotherapy followed by six cycles of chemotherapy, an experience hinted at in his painting *Dark Falls* of which he wrote: *"my inkling was that to paint it might help me deal with this, rather as war artists have dealt with difficult*



Farm down a lane
Approx. 30 x 30 cms

events by painting them. I can report that it worked to some extent. The remains of a nearby mill race provided my starting point in this case, an opportunity to interpret falling water through uncomplicated vertical forms, enabling me to explore a weirdness of colour not previously attempted by me."

That summer's Lafrowda Festival theme back in St Just-in-Penwith, where Tom and I used to live, was 'Where The Wild Things Are'. The festival happens in mid July, which that year fell between treatments, so we decided to visit St Just for the final twenty four hours and this led to a new Lafrowda painting.

Almost every year since 2002 Tom has made a painting based on some aspect of this brilliant community event and has sold it in a benefit auction to support the festival's future. In 2017 it was this giant puppet in the torchlight procession that caught his imagination and from there he developed this painting that he calls



Confronting the Beast
Approx. 50 x 50 cms.

Confronting the Beast. He will donate proceeds from its sale to the festival as before. Its title, in the context of his current health challenges, hints at further layers of personal meaning that it holds for him.

I'm sure that there is evidence of the success of his treatments, his dietary adjustments and his positivity gained from Buddhist practice in pieces like **Winter Light**, **Mawgan Porth** (see front cover) and **Silvery Cloud** above **Winter Trees**.. There is also a delight in community involvement, as in previous collections, suggested this time in pieces like **Winter Oak Among Houses** (page 4) and



Winter Oak
among Houses
Approx. 40 x 30 cms.

Houses Among Trees (page 5) among other smaller canvases.

Tom has benefitted, over the last eighteen months, from the best that our National Health Service has to offer. This, along with life-style changes and his strong faith has led him to a sense of reprieve, of being spared for now, that he aims to express through this exhibition. How appropriate, he thought, to be displaying this collection in what is in fact an ex-courthouse. This has led him to the decision to

donate a percentage of proceeds from the sale of some of these paintings to the charity of the same name. This organisation, Reprieve, campaigns against death penalties and other human rights abuses all over the world.

There is another aspect to experiencing a life-threatening illness that has become part of Tom's recent art. This is his renewed awareness of mortality as something positive, focusing his mind on what he needs to complete in this lifetime. Most dramatically this takes the form of



Illustration of
The Dome of
Human Kindness
Approx. 270 x 270 x 250 cms

his fresh impetus to rebuild and develop an ambitious 1972 mural, **The Dome of Human Kindness**. The end of 'crowdfunding' for that falls just ten days after the close of this exhibition. A video interview about it remains accessible. Just follow the relevant homepage link on his website, www.hendersonsmith.co.uk. Tom invites us all to support him in completing this project. He plans to donate the dome to Cornwall Faith Forum. Watch out for news of its eventual open-air siting near Truro.

Gabrielle Hawkes

About the artist

His formative years were spent in equatorial Africa followed by school in Yorkshire and a Fine Art Degree at Newcastle-upon Tyne University. Awarded a Bunzl travel scholarship, he then spent two further years travelling and studying art in Europe while based in Florence. Settling back in the United Kingdom led to a



Winter Oak
Approx. 50 x 50 cms.



Houses among trees
Approx. 40 x 40 cms.

twenty-four year career in art teaching, mostly in Cornwall. From 1986 to '93 he ran Visions and Journeys Gallery in St Just-in-Penwith together with his partner Gabrielle Hawkes. He left teaching in 1999 to devote more time to painting and has exhibited widely since then, initially based at The Turn of the Tide Studio in St Just and now at The Lanherne Studio in St Columb Major.

His approach to painting is largely based on fusing his sensuous enjoyment of colour, perhaps stemming from those childhood memories of Africa, with a sense of design confirmed by his student travel experiences. Taking carnival and folk events, industrial heritage, distant moorland, secret wooded valleys and coastal forms as his themes, he brings to them all his delight in translating visual experience into the painterly values that have become a hallmark of his art.

Previous solo exhibitions

Bodmin Shire Hall, September 2016 - At Work - At Home - In Cornwall
Bodmin Shire Hall, April - May 2015 - Heart of Cornwall
The Gallery on the Corner, Battersea, June 2012 - The Turning Year (2)
Morvah Schoolhouse Gallery, Penzance, April 2012 - The Turning Year (1)
The Gallery at Trereife, Penzance, June 2010 - Lived-in Landscapes (2)
Chapel Row Gallery, Bath, April 2010 - Lived-in Landscapes (1)
Falmouth Arts Centre, October 2008 - In the Ocean Light
Bodmin Shire Hall, May 2006 - Shaping a Vision of Cornwall (2)
Mariner's Gallery St Ives, April 2006 - Shaping a Vision of Cornwall (1)
Mariner's Gallery St Ives, October 2003 - Valleys and Horizons
Mariner's Gallery St Ives, July 2001 - A Peninsula Suite
Penzance Arts Centre, 1984
Plymouth Arts Centre, 1977
Bristol Arts Centre, 1975
Bath Arts Centre, 1975
Newcastle University, Sept 1972

Group exhibitions

National Acrylic Painters Association 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2012, 2010, 2009
Castle Heritage Centre and Art Gallery, Bude (June/July 2011)
Broadway Gallery, New York (May 2011)
Durham University Ustinov Intercultural Forum (May 2011)
Camden Art Gallery, London (January 2010)
Galeria Gaudi of Madrid at Kunstart Art Fair, Bolzano, Italy (May 2007)
Botallack Counthouse, Botallack, Cornwall (Crowns & Chasms part 2, July 2002)
Truro Museum, Cornwall (Crowns & Chasms part 1, April 2002)
The Camelford Gallery, Cornwall (October 2001)
Morvah Schoolhouse Gallery, Cornwall (September 1999)
Great Atlantic Mapworks Gallery, St. Just, Cornwall (1998)
Visions and Journey's Gallery, St. Just, Cornwall (from 1986 to 1993)
Newlyn Orion Gallery, Cornwall (1981)
Federation of British Artists (1978)
Royal Academy (1977)
Palazzo Strozzi, Florence (1972)

All the paintings in this exhibition have been made using open acrylic on stretched canvas.

Titles & dimensions	Prices
(1) Windfall apple tree in winter Approx. 76.2 x 101.6 cms.	£450
(2) Winter Oak Approx. 50 x 50 cms.	£280
3) Confronting the beast, Lafrowda 2017 Approx. 50 x 50 cms.	Benefit auction for Lafrowda Festival
(4) Winter light, Mawgan Porth Approx. 80 x 80 cms.	sold
(5) Farm down a lane Approx. 30 x 30 cms.	£190
(6) Silvery cloud above winter trees Approx. 30 x 40 cms.	£200
(7) Light through the pines Approx. 40 x 30 cms.	£240
(8) Dark Falls Approx. 60 x 30 cms.	£300
(9) Cumulus and rooftops Approx. 84 x 59.4 cms.	£280
(10) Vision of moorland through the trees Approx. 59.4 x 84 cms.	£280
(11) Winter oak among houses Approx. 40 x 30 cms.	£250
(12) Houses among trees Approx. 40 x 40 cms	£300
(13) Scheme for the interior, Dome of Human Kindness 2018 Approx. 62 x 59 cms	Not for sale
(14) Full 2 dimensional projection of the exterior of The Dome of Human Kindness mural	£80 (framed)
A 10% discount applies if you are willing to take delivery (free P&P) after the close of the exhibition	



(9) Cumulus and rooftops

Approx. 84 x 59.4 cms. (*see page 7)

Front cover illustration (4) Winter light, Mawgan Porth

Approx. 80 x 80 cms.

All work for sale can be purchased at www.hendersonsmith.co.uk