

Amidst patriarchal anxieties surrounding the female body and its powers, there are women making spells. Spilling out of their bodies, taking up space, breathing them in, and breathing them out. Charging space with collective energy drawn from history, memory, experience, and hopes for the future.

A visual dance, ritualistic social abstractions where space is disrupted and gentle acts of resistance invert instances of subservient silence using, and traversing beyond the vernacular bestowed upon them. There are no rules, there is no hierarchy, it is radical, yet there is humility in the strength and vulnerability spilled out before us - spelled out before us on the canvases of Clare Price and Jacqueline Utley.

It is through the processes employed by Clare and Jacqueline that we can begin to understand this conjuring of magic. Jacqueline creates spaces for women to be amongst one another that defy space and time. Making sense of now by looking back, and thinking forward. Unearthing undocumented women and the limitless possibilities of collectivity; the female figures in each scene are invited to have a seat at the table. For Clare, the process of sorcery comes directly through the body. Charged physically, emotionally, and spiritually out into an honest, ongoing autobiographical series of paintings that communicate the constellation of self and the marks that make us.

Both Clare and Jacqueline have the extraordinary capability of achieving both lightness and complexity in their work. Perhaps this duality stems from the duality of self, as both woman and mother, as female painters navigating a male dominated art world. Their radicalness is not consumable; instead their operations outside of the system create spaces upon canvases for being and belonging.

Whether through figures or form both artists use of colour and perspective create vast spaces to be navigated. This vastness is neither daunting, nor hollow; instead we are given room to breathe, to manoeuvre and to share. Jacqueline paints large rooms upon small canvases that open out beyond the frame, inviting us to step into the scene. The facelessness of the women she paints is one spell cast upon them. In this world beauty does not indicate status, for Jacqueline does not seek to portray the individual, but the collective energy of women taking up space together. Small in size, Jacqueline's women feel larger than life; rays of colour beam outwards and bounce off one another, narrating the scene. Sweeping strokes of pastel hues flow into one another, their movement is captured as their histories are retraced and re-imagined.

Contrasting in size, yet continuing in duality, Clare's cataclysmic bursts of colour and shape overlap, merge and dance side by side. The tension between freeness and geometric form create bodily spaces of containment. A deepened understanding for the relationship between energy and control creates beauty out of pain. The play with shape and perspective illustrates a spiritual awareness in Clare's work, an ability to see beyond the self, using the body as a vehicle for expression where words falter. Clare's humble approach to baring all comes out in a complex, encoded, visceral response. A constant push and pull between forces.

There is a musicality to both Clare and Jacqueline's work, creating their own multilayered scores, that when brought together have a choral effect. They create essences visualised through the labour of women, and the labour of the artist. These essences are entry points into work that captures diverse journeys on canvas. Communicative and entirely hypnotic the spells spilled by Clare and Jacqueline intuitively channel feeling and flow, drawing us in through our own focal points and tracing ones own experiences. Both artists set up magical arenas for the unrecorded to be revealed. It is this thread that runs through both Clare and Jacqueline's work that connects their two distinct practices.

Collectivity is not through sameness; there is a mutual respect, understanding and admiration for one another, a relationship that both personally and artistically, we can all learn from. As the artists take refuge in their studios, they invite us to take refuge in their work. We are safe, yet we are challenged, as Jacqueline sets the scene, Clare strikes action and both continue to interpret life through paint and space, spilling breath spells.

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