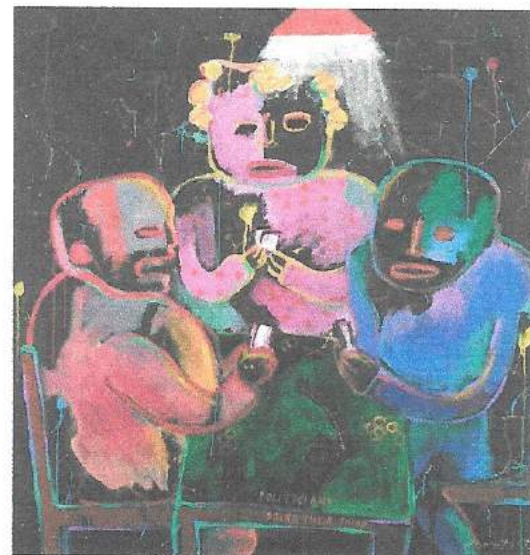


'I painted on black as politicians always seem to claim they are going to be whiter than white. The picture is a view of the trust we put in to our politicians and the way the trust is abused. The game of poker is used to suggest the waste of the power given to our elected government.'

– Gerry Baptist



GERRY BAPTIST

There comes a time in the life of many established artists when they feel the urge to change direction in style and technique. Gerry Baptist, a Surrey-based, contemporary artist took this radical step a few years ago. Having painted landscapes for fifteen years he changed his focus, despite the fact that his rich and colourful paintings had proved extremely popular.

by Tinx Newton

top: 'HAPPY HOLIDAYMAKERS.' 40 x 30 cm. Carborundum. Printed on 280gsm Somerset soft white paper.

right: 'POLITICIANS DOING THEIR THING.' 80 x 80 cm. Acrylic on block canvas.

Just became a bit tired of painting landscapes," Gerry says. "I wanted to provoke people to think more." In Gerry's past and present work, influences of his childhood spent in India are apparent. The surroundings instilled in him a deep imprint of vibrant colour, swirling energy and the scent of earth and spices from the country's many-layered cultures. The intensity of colour in his work contains a simmering energy, a riot of colour that leaps off the page.

Gerry made a swift and confident change to a completely different subject matter, the modern world. He describes his recent work as 'raw and awkward,' which belies the fierce strength of its message and appeal. His concerns are to convey serious points of view, while at the same time revealing the frivolous through satire and humour. A re-occurring theme is the conspicuous and never-ending consumption of today's society.

Gerry reveals, "I have this ongoing image of me sweeping across the landscape, a bit like the Romans or the Huns, almost bulldozing their surroundings and changing the environment. One of my main concerns is the incredible amount of waste produced by man, the never-ending consumption of today's society is simply staggering."

And so Gerry conveys the world through his work cleverly combining some hard-hitting points with black humour. However, he is anxious not to appear too dogmatic.

"My work is born more from observations and concern than anger. People do sometimes express surprise at how direct my art is, but I am part of this world too. Undoubtedly, there is some guilt in my subject matter. I feel I am being critical, but not hypocritical. I want people to think more about their actions."



left: 'DECLINE AND FALL' after Duchamp. 40 x 30 cm. Hard ground etching with aquatint. Printed on 280 gsm Somerset soft white paper.

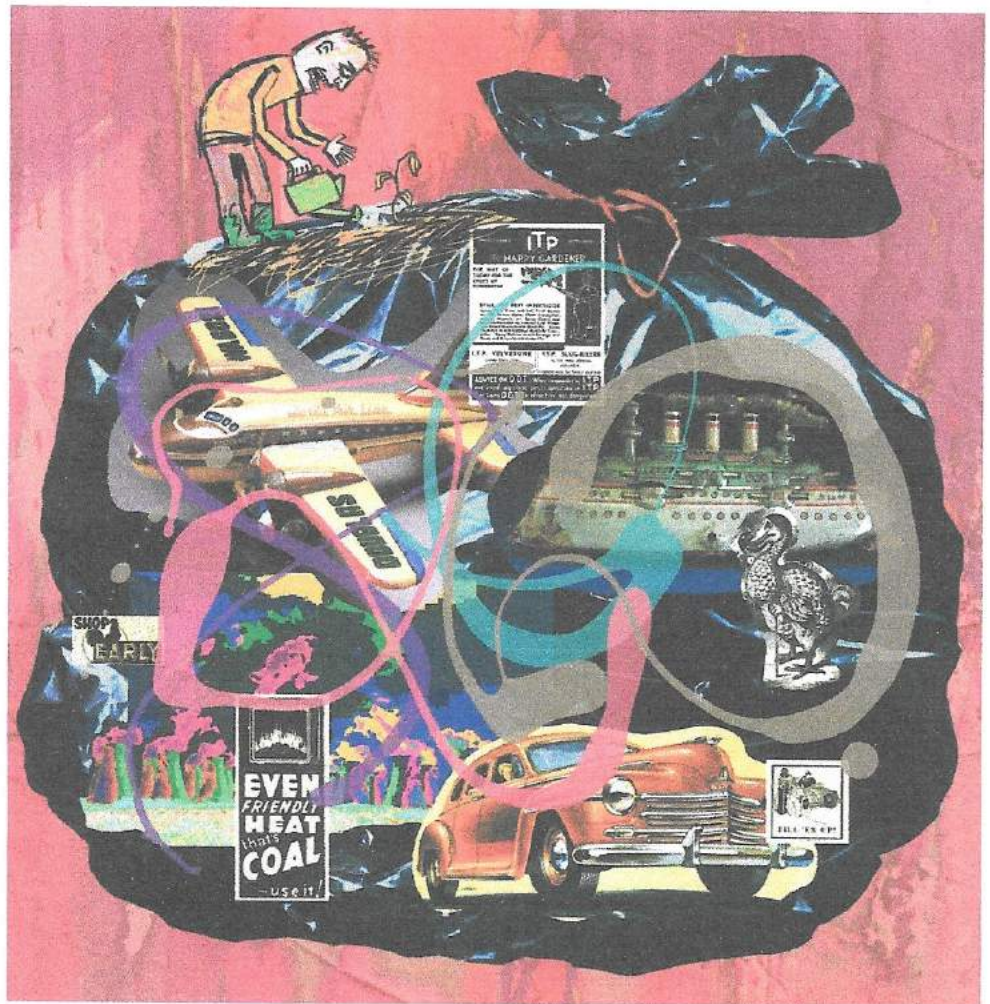
below: 'THE START OF A LIFE-LONG ROMANCE' 80 x 100 cm. Hexachrome digital print with silkscreen. The artist's lighthearted look at the world of cosmetic surgery.

'Duchamp changed the face of art in the last century. So much of what is around today in the art world comes from his thinking. I enjoyed creating my own version of one of his paintings.' - Gerry Baptist



'This is a bleak picture of the world. We have been creating waste for a long time so I've used some pictures here from the early part of the last century. The bin bag is a symbol of what we are doing with our world, creating an environment where it will soon be difficult to grow any plants. The image was created on a Mac using scanned images, photographs and drawings collaged together. It was printed on 300gsm paper using a hexachrome printer which gets a huge range of colours. When the print is completed a silkscreen image is added to the picture.'

– artist's comment.



Despite its serious undertones, much of Gerry's work does trigger a smile - the woman with her mountain of shoes, a group of politicians up to no good, black bin bags full of rubbish - his subject matter is everyday and instantly recognisable.

Gerry studied painting and graphics at Walthamstow School of Art and the London College of Printing in the 50s and was awarded the National Diploma in Design with distinction. He was taught by the painters/printmakers George Chapman, Ruskin Spear and John Ward and the graphic designers George Adam and Harold Bertram. He then worked as an art director in England and Germany and continued to develop his skills as an artist, painting large-scale, expressionistic abstracts and drawing and sketching from life.

Gerry seems to have almost come full circle now, tackling issues that often inspire students, but calling upon 40 years of experience to produce stunning works of art. The ephemera of the media - political and trivial, comic book art, ever-changing fashions and a constant curiosity in popular culture form a large part of his interest. He now devotes all his time to painting and printmaking and his background in graphics is evident in a style that is

unashamedly bold and includes elements of animation. Gerry's confident approach pushes the boundaries, enjoying twists and turns which reveal surprising hidden depths. His work displays a refreshing spontaneity that he clearly embraces, tackling every new piece with enthusiasm and passion.

7 – 23 June 2007

Gerry Baptist, Paintings and Prints

The Pump Gallery, Pump Corner, Dorking, Surrey. For more information telephone 01306 888317 or email info@pumpgallery.com. Visit www.pumpgallery.com.

For more information on the artist visit www.gerrybaptist.co.uk



top: 'WHAT HAVE WE DONE WITH YESTERDAY'S TOMORROW?' 80 x 80 cm. Hexachrome digital print with silkscreen.

above: 'SHE PUT ON HER MARYLIN MONROE POSE WHEN THE PHOTOGRAPHER SHOWED UP' 70 x 90 cm. Acrylic on block canvas.