

JILL GEORGE GALLERY

CHRIS ORR, RA
'THE KISS AND IT'S CONSEQUENCES'
PAINTINGS AND PRINTS

A celebration of new work by Chris Orr to celebrate his 80th Birthday.

16 - 28 OCTOBER 2023

AT 30 TOTTENHAM STREET, OFF CHARLOTTE STREET, LONDON W1T 4RJ

One damn thing leads to another and in my painting 'The Kiss and its consequences' there are interlocking events out of which nobody comes off well. Maybe the kiss was enough. Most of my work trails through a sequence of incidents which might happen, or which will happen, or which can never happen. On this journey I want the spectator to be challenged and amused. The purpose of my pictures is to relate to the complicated lives we all live. 'The Kiss' is a neat summation of what is going on in the other works in the show.

In my series 'Burns and McGonagall' I create an unlikely duo - my Two Musketeers who get into all sorts of scrapes. They are loosely based on Robert Burns, the Scottish National Poet and William Topaz McGonagall reckoned to be one of the world's worst poets. Living in different times they never could have met, let alone become chums. McGonagall unfailingly puts his foot in it. Burns is the serious one, although even he has his fling. Each painting is an independent work but the whole series is a kind of visual French Farce exploring ideas from Babysitting to working for Scrooge.

My Icarus paintings are again individual works, although in a series which deals as much with Icarus attempts to get off the ground as getting too near the sun. The interest in Icarus came out of looking closely at the work of Joseph Wright of Derby, whose light filled landscapes seemed to invite Icarus to make an attempt at the sun. I have painted a version of his iconic 'Experiment with an air pump' that accord with my passion for pictures that trade in consequences.

My new painting, 'Cargo', a successor to the earlier 'Ship' painting, deals with the many sided idea of what we carry and send around the world. On the quayside cages of wild animals, mountains of fruit, dancing couples, a collection of cricket bats, bicycles, grandfather clocks and robots prepare to be shipped. Entering the harbour is the 'Black Freighter' a ghost ship. De-forestation is going on in the top right side of the painting. This is about the consequences of exploitation.

Another new painting is called 'The Human Pyramid'. Icarus arrives at Talent Night and sees many weird and wonderful goings-on including the eponymous Human Pyramid. We are all dependent on each other, but at the same time alone. There are many ways to get to the sun.

Every year I make work about places that I have visited and this show will include my 'Red roofs of Shimoda' from my trip to Japan in 2022, where I painted a group of new houses with bright red roofs in the small town of Shimoda a couple of hours away from Tokyo. Also there will be my drawing 'Uttar Pradesh landscape' and my painting 'Beirut 2022'. In these apparently straightforward works there is still an agenda of narrative consequences. Chris Orr, July 2023

Chris will be giving two talks during the exhibition on his recent work. Dates to be confirmed.

Chris Orr has been exhibiting with the Jill George Gallery since 1978 and this, his 18th solo exhibition, celebrates his 80th birthday earlier this year.

Chris Orr was Professor of Printmaking at the Royal College of Art from 1998 - 2008 and Treasurer at Royal Academy of Art from 2014 - 2018. His work has been exhibited throughout UK, Europe and internationally and is widely collected.

Dates: 16 - 28 October 2023
Venue: 30 Tottenham Street, off Charlotte Street, London W1T 4RJ
Open: Monday – Saturday 10.30 - 19.00
Sunday 22 October 11.00 - 18.00
Nearest Underground: Goodge Street or Tottenham Court Road

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