

Chapters Now Through Four Tracy Root

April 5, 2024 - June 2, 2024

Opening Reception: Friday, April 5, 2024 | 7:00 pm

Assistant Curator: Michaela Lucio

Acting Assistant Curator: Tavis Lea

Program Coordinator: Irene MacCreadie

Design: Donna Nolan

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List of works

Wolves, 1993, watercolour on canvas, 36" x 30"

Cat Lady of New York, oil on canvas, 24" x 18"

Welcome to my World, 1994, oil on canvas, 48" x 36"

The Bus Stop, 1994, oil on canvas, 30" x 40"

Red Dress, 1994, oil on canvas, 48" x 36"

Street, 1994, oil on canvas, 30" x 40"

Untitled Landscape, 2004, oil on canvas, 40" x 30"

Broken Tree, 2015, oil on canvas, 24" x 36"

Driftwood, 2016, oil on canvas, 40" x 30"

The Artist Bears Witness, 2016, oil on canvas, 36" x 24"

Assimilation, 2016, oil on canvas, 20" x 20"

Lighthouse at Tobermory, 2016, oil on canvas, 24" x 36"

In Before Evening, 2016, oil on canvas, 24" x 36"

We Are All... All Are We, (Recipient of Overall Jurors Choice Award, London Pride Exhibition, 2016), 2016, oil on canvas, 48" x 36"

Felled, 2017, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"

English Garden, 2017, oil on canvas, 48" x 48"

Frank, 2022, oil on canvas, 18" x 24"

Through the Gateway, 2023, oil on canvas, 24" x 18"

Uncharted, 2023, oil on canvas, 20" x 16"

Eagle, 2023, oil on canvas, 24" x 36"

Winter's Final Crow, 2024, oil on canvas, 24" x 30"

The Ones That Are Here... and the Ones That Went Before (Self Portrait), 2024, oil on canvas, 48" x 36"

Frank, 2024, oil and horsehair on model, 20" x 20" x 6"

Cover image: Winter's Final Crow, 2024



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THE ONES THAT ARE HERE AND THE ONES THAT WENT BEFORE

Tracy Root's "The Ones That Are Here and the Ones That Went Before" is a self-portrait painted in anticipation of her retrospective at the Thames Art Gallery. This painting exemplifies the characteristic stylization and symbolic presence she first developed in the early nineties and has built upon ever since, spanning the years of work selected for this exhibition.

Moving from England to Canada as a young child, Tracy's roots in painting were grounded in traditional artistic principles as a realist painter before branching towards more expressive forms. Leonard Jubenville, the Thames Art Gallery's curator at the time, took an interest in the new direction of Tracy's work and offered her a two person show with an artist from London, marking the break into her professional career as a contemporary artist. Leonard's presence is reflected in this painting not only because his image appears in the upper corner seeming to look over her shoulder, but the canvas itself once belonged to him, and his timeless musing on the concept of "now" found its way into the exhibition's title.

Also included among "the ones that went before", painted spatially behind and compositionally above her figure, are Tracy's dog, Chloe, and her horse, Frank. Animals, and particularly horses, are a recurring subject in Tracy's paintings. Frank, who served as a therapy animal, is given significance as the subject of several works, including a model horse painted in Tracy's distinct style and embellished with Frank's actual hair.

Her self-portrait, in contrast to the angst in her work from the nineties, reflects the spiritual themes present in her recent paintings. Arranged like stained glass windows or tarot card designs, her paintings give symbolic significance to the natural world, with elements of the landscape incorporated into her figurative works as well. Having moved to Chatham just before the pandemic, Tracy used the period of isolation to turn to the region's natural surroundings as subject matter for her recent works, many featuring Chatham's prominent population of crows.

Among "the ones that are here" is her dog Lana, who sits on her lap, and her son Lucas in the foreground reverently pointing up towards her. Tracy depicts her own image as someone open and at peace with themselves, gratefully surrounded with support and embracing the present. Now living with stage four cancer, "Chapters Now Through Four" reflects the resilience and dedication that went before to bring this retrospective of a painter whose artistic trajectory lands firmly in the here and now.



The Ones That Are Here... and the Ones That Went Before (Self Portrait), 2024