

Artist Statement – Polly Farrell

I am a story teller whose work is focused on people and their lives. An interest in gender and class barriers has developed into themes of ‘not having’ and ‘lack’. As part of my practice, I analyse questions around poverty, language, stability, education and health. The concept of identity and what makes us and shapes us underpins this and my work includes autobiographical elements.

Through mediums such as paints, pastels, fabric, glass paint and collage, I create emotive work that aims to communicate personal aspects of people and their experiences. I am particularly inspired by the use of colour and its non-conventional application in portraiture and figure work. I am interested in the ambiguity that can be suggested in this way and use colour to imply concepts such as nationality, religion and gender.

I work with contrasts of bright colour and stark reality, faux stained glass and real glass, the illusions that mirrors can present and the power of a reflected image. Using dreams, songs, photos, online images and life stories, I create both real and imaginary scenarios that are bold and subtle at the same time. I am exploring symbolism as a part of my image making.

I am also working with poetry to enhance my art. Influenced by working class poets such as Fran Lock, I am writing verses to accompany my paintings. I am an avid reader with a love of words and books and this synergy of art and literature is part of who I am. I am also a musician and the lyrics and music of songs influence me in the same way. Music is in my core.