



# A SPECIAL BREED

**PAINTINGS BY JENIFER CORKER  
SCULPTURES BY HOLY SMOKE**

**EXHIBITION FROM DECEMBER 5, 2015 TO JANUARY 9, 2016**

From: To Flush, My Dog by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

*Leap! thy broad tail waves a light,  
Leap! thy slender feet are bright,  
Canopied in fringes;  
Leap! those tasseled ears of thine  
Flicker strangely, fair and fine  
Down their golden inches*

This exhibition presents original artwork by Jenifer Corker and Holy Smoke. It displays a collection of fabric sculptures and paintings with embroideries that delicately and thoughtfully take the dog as their subject. Deftly crafting woven textile and thread, these artists capture the beauty of form, shape, surface and variety of these canines whilst simultaneously exploring their inner nature.

Rather than investing these animals with human attributes or endowing them with the task of conveying any symbolic or hidden meaning, both artists sensitively engage with fiber art to communicate the intellect, intuition and instinct that are intrinsic to the dogs themselves.

**Jenifer Corker** presents embroidered renderings on calico that capture her dogs through gestural line and vibrant washes of color. She traces out a continuous and energetic trail of thread in a manner that adeptly outlines the animals that she portrays. By injecting swathes of colorful ink into her fabric drawings, Corker makes reference to the rich and ancient history of fiber art and engages with the ability of certain hand woven textiles to house memory, emotion and a connection with nature. Vibrant ceremonial red, splashes of warm gold and the blue and green of the landscape are all exaggerated on the earth tones of her calico. The artworks convey the time honored domestic relationship between human and animal while also giving a sense of the canine connection with the wider natural world, something increasingly longed for in every day human experience. Corker's finish is determined by the materials that she uses; ink soaks into the weave of the fabric, lines of thread run from point to point, blocks of color are held within boundaries of embroidery. The artist looks deep under the skin of her subjects to reveal their animal wit and intuitiveness rather than offering a fixed representation or a metaphor for some human agenda or allegory. Their soft supple skin is convincing and alive, with a worked and furrowed surface that seems at one with the textile plain.

**Holy Smoke's** emotive sculptures of dogs are formed from layer upon layer of linen. She hand dyes, stitches, cuts, frays, heaps and coils her fabric on top of a sculpted wire frame. When fiber and textiles are exposed to this kind of tension, they retract, stretch and move in rhythms determined by their maker and by the environmental conditions that they are exposed to. While the character of each of Holy Smoke's dogs is suggested in its poise and composition, the depth of emotion present in each of their expressions emerges as a result of the artist's tactile connection with the fabric she uses. Just as the quiet human and canine relationship grows and develops intuitively over time, these sculptures gain sentiment through the repetitive artistic process of sculpting, altering and touching. The color palette of these dogs is limited to a field of neutral tones that cohere with the sculptor's commitment to maintaining a closeness to life and simplicity of form, while also implying a beauty in modest or humble beginnings. It is through the conspicuous imperfections, fluctuations in hue, slipshod fringes and threadbare surfaces that the soul of each creature emerges. Holy Smoke's dogs convey recognizable human emotions, but in a somewhat purified or distilled manner. At times they seem overcome by a deep melancholia and at others they are vessels of absolute joy and humor. Just as the tone of their linen surface alters according to the light or shadow that falls upon them, their inner lives appear as changeable, animated, intelligent and sincere.

This exhibition marks the first occasion that these artists' works will be displayed together and in a special collaborative venture for the project, Jenifer Corker will create a miniature collar for one of Holy Smoke's linen sculptures. She will also hand craft unique artisanal collars that are adorned with sterling silver charms and can be worn by either dog or human.

## BIOGRAPHY OF JENIFER CORKER

Jenifer Corker is a British born multidisciplinary Artist Designer working in England; with a BA Hons in Fashion & Textiles and an MA in Jewellery & Metalwork from the RCA.

She was brought up in a household full of dogs, birds of prey and a crow named Lucifer (Lucy for short).

For her final Show at the RCA she celebrated her love of dogs by creating elegant collars made from Sterling Silver, Brass and Leather and Jewellery for both the dog and owner. Went on to sell her pieces in Harrods and Paul Smith.

In 2014 Nick Knight, the photographer and owner of SHOWstudio.com, invited her to do her unique sketches (using a sewing machine & Indian inks) to illustrate the catwalk shows of the season. The illustrations then went on to sell on SHOWstudios's online shop, the V&A Museum Shop, and the gallery Kasher Potamkin in NYC.

## ART

- 2015 *Contemporary Fashion Illustration*  
SHOWstudio Gallery, London  
*Illustrating McQueen*  
SHOWstudio Gallery, London  
*Urban Fete*  
O2 Arena Gardens, London
- 2014 *In-House Artist*  
SHOWstudio, London
- 2012 *East Sussex Open*  
Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne  
*Christmas Show*  
Gallery 286, London
- 2011 *Practice To Deceive:*  
*Smoke & Mirrors in Fashion, Fine Art & Film*  
SHOWstudio Gallery, London  
*Eastbourne Artists Open House*  
East Sussex
- 2010 *The Gyllian Foster Prize for Drawing*  
Heatherley Art School of Fine Art, London
- 2009 *Let Sleeping Dogs Lay*  
Prick Your Finger, London
- 2008 *Open Show*  
The Great Atlantic Church Street Gallery,  
Monmouth, Wales

## JEWELLERY & DOG COLLARS

- 2015 *25th Anniversary Charms for Agete*  
Special jewellery piece commissioned  
by Agete, Japan
- 1984-2010 Designed and created jewellery  
collections & dog collars for clients:  
Paul Smith, London, UK  
Agete, Japan  
Liberty, London, UK  
Harvey Nichols, London, UK  
Harrods, London, UK  
Jess James, London, UK  
EC One, London, UK  
Barneys, NYC, USA  
The British Museum, London, UK  
Leeds Castle Dog Collar Museum, Kent, UK.

## BIOGRAPHY OF HOLY SMOKE

Helen Thompson alias Holy Smoke, is born in Wales, where she lives and works. At the age of seven, her father taught her to sew.

She studied sculpture, completing a BA Hons Fine Art at Newcastle in the North of England and an MA Fine Art at The Royal College of Art, London. Nature as a source of inspiration has prevailed and remained constant throughout her work, her BA degree she exhibited scribbled, stained drawings of hare's alongside tiny delicate watercolor paintings of a hare's skeleton.

In the nineties Helen returned to textiles as a main material, creating and manipulating garments, turning the inside out and stitching them closed rendering them unwearable and incapacitated.

This work is presented to The Times London's Young Artists, the Royal College of Art in London, the Seventeen, in Manhattan, and at 0-9 in Stuttgart.

Late 2000, Helen returned to the theme of nature, producing delicate three dimensional 'drawings' of flora and bird's nests made from wire which were then burnt and left outside to rust and age.

Inspired by a photograph of an Egyptian embalmed dog in the National Geographic magazine in 2011, she established Holy Smoke, a collection of textile animal sculptures.

## EXHIBITIONS

- |      |  |      |   |
|------|--|------|---|
| 2015 | <p><i>The Dog Show</i><br/>Muir and Osborne, Brighton Art Fair. UK.<br/>Bowie Gallery, Hay Festival,<br/>Hay-on-Wye, UK.<br/>The Contemporary Craft Fair,<br/>Bovey Tracey, Devon, UK.</p> | 2012 | <p><i>Creatures Great and Small</i><br/>Saltbox Gallery, Hemsley, UK.<br/>The Old Forge Open House,<br/>Brighton Art Festival, UK.<br/>Victoria Price Art and Design,<br/>Sante Fe, USA.<br/>Selvedge Winter Fair, Selvedge Magazine,<br/>London, UK.</p> |
| 2014 | <p>Anagama Galerie, Versailles, France<br/>The Contemporary Craft Fair,<br/>Bovey Tracey, Devon, UK.<br/>Lingwood Samuel Gallery,<br/>Goldalming, UK.</p>                                  | 2011 | <p>Selvedge Spring Fair, Selvedge Magazine,<br/>London, UK.<br/>The Old Forge Open House, Brighton Art<br/>Festival, UK.<br/>Selvedge Winter Fair, Selvedge Magazine,<br/>London, UK.</p>   |
| 2013 | <p><i>MADE London</i><br/>The Design and Craft Fair, London, UK.<br/><i>DOGARTA</i><br/>Galerie Bestregart, Frankfurt, Germany.</p>  |      |   |

JENIFER CORKER: VISUALS FREE OF RIGHTS FOR THE PRESS

*My Bed*, 2015  
Painting by Jenifer Corker  
Calico, thread & Indian Ink  
29 x 20 cm  
© Jenifer Corker

*To Play or Not To Play*, 2015  
Painting by Jenifer Corker  
Calico, thread & Indian Ink  
29 x 20 cm  
© Jenifer Corker

*Too Blue Whippets*, 2015  
Painting by Jenifer Corker  
Calico, thread & Indian Ink  
29 x 20 cm  
© Jenifer Corker



© Jenifer Corker



© Jenifer Corker



© Jenifer Corker

HOLY SMOKE: VISUALS FREE OF RIGHTS FOR THE PRESS

*Untitled*, 2015  
Sculpture by Holy Smoke  
Textile and mixed media  
H : 45 cm  
© Wyn Griffiths



© Holy Smoke

*Small sitting dog*, 2015  
Sculpture by Holy Smoke  
Textile and mixed media  
H : 22 cm  
© Wyn Griffiths



© Holy Smoke

*Sleeping dog*, 2015  
Sculpture by Holy Smoke  
Textile and mixed media  
50 x 25 cm  
© Wyn Griffiths



© Holy Smoke





## THE GALLERY

FLAIR Galerie is one of those cross-disciplinary venues that offer exhibitions of artists, collections of contemporary art objects specially created for the gallery, books and reviews. This eclecticism ensures that the art is exhibited in a playful montage, echoing the tastes and the personality of Isabelle Wisniak, who created the gallery.

FLAIR Galerie is also exceptional because it is dedicated to animals. Wild and domesticated animals, sublimated animals, legendary animals, endangered animals, beloved animals, necessary animals, buried animals. FLAIR Galerie unveils a unique imaginary bestiary: a world of sensitivity, humor, creativity, and, naturally, art.

An authentic contemporary «cabinet of curiosities», situated in the historic heart of the city of Arles, FLAIR Galerie opened its doors on April 3, 2015.

FLAIR Galerie is a member of the Arles Contemporain network. 

After studying piano at Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, Isabelle Wisniak began her career at the magazine Egoïste. She went on to be photographer's agent, press attaché for Fnac Galeries Photo, for temporary exhibitions at the Conciergerie, several art galleries, and lately, communication director of Festival a-part, the International Contemporary Art Festival in the Alpilles

Opening hours: from Wednesday to Saturday from 11AM to 1PM and 3PM to 6PM,  
and by appointment.

11 rue de la Calade ■ 13200 Arles ■ 33 (0)9 80 59 01 06 ■ 33 (0)6 20 75 13 58 ■ [contact@flairgalerie.com](mailto:contact@flairgalerie.com) [www.flairgalerie.com](http://www.flairgalerie.com)

**THE GALLERY WILL BE CLOSED from January 11 to March 25, 2016**

## NEXT EXHIBITION

### *Impatience*

Photographs by Jean-François Spricigo

**from March 26 to May 14, 2016**



© Jean-François Spricigo