

## 1<sup>st</sup> Session: Hepworth sculpture, a poem and a shawl: movement and dynamic line



Background story of Curlew and its creation...

Moved from carving to sheet metal allowing greater freedom, more exaggerated parabolic curves, expanding her expertise. Described as 'conveying a rhythmical quality of movement'

*Curlew, by Barbara Hepworth, copyright tate.org.uk, sheet metal/string, c.45cm (18" height), 1956*

Poem inspired by Curlew and which later inspires a painting:

### BIRD

By Myra Schneider, after sculpture *Curlew* by Barbara Hepworth.

I am wings

Springing from breast, sweeping back, each curve echoing the other. Meaning is space.

As I thrust forward my wingspan unnerves you. As I soar  
Do you yearn to encompass my power?

See how

I enfold head and heart in flight. Map out  
my hungers and dangers, the complex of my parts. Feel my weight

and weightlessness,

bone mesh, skeins of blood, speckle and lie of feathers.

You will never explain the egg  
where I began, dig out the deeply bedded knowledge  
that guides me through dark and light.

Hold me down

and I will rise up above the crests of fierce waters,  
above the sheer of rocks, above the heave and scramble of moors.

And I will be

here, there, within you, everywhere,  
my flung wingtips longing to come together,  
striving to complete a shape as I pierce and pierce the blue rush.

Poem published in *Circling the Core*, Enitharmon Press

**Inspired paintings**



***I am Wings I and II, oil, acrylic and feathers on canvas, 75x75cm (30x30cm) from 'Bird' Circling the Core***





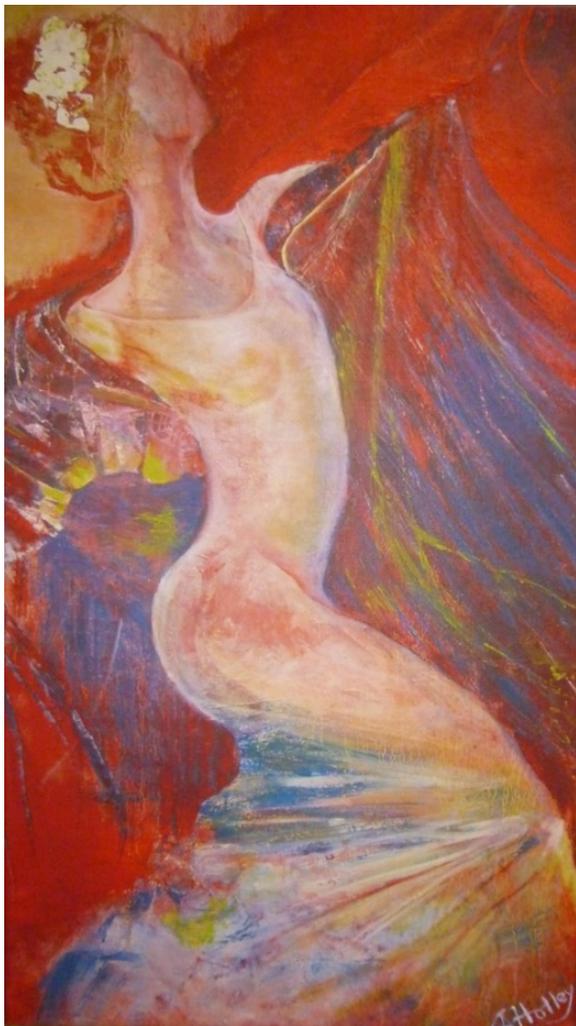
**acrylic on lining paper, 54cm (21" high), width as needed**

**Frieze I, II and III,**

**Inspiring Painting**

**Inspired poem**

**SHE IS** (after Shawl by Chris Holley)



the swirl of skirt, its many layers,  
the beautiful response of the hillocks  
of buttocks to body when she hollows her  
spine.

She is rhythm, its compulsion,  
the darkness of night air pulsing  
with passion and her foxy auburn hair  
announcing

she can't resist the heat of red  
and its play with white as it thrums pathways  
from throat to her thighs, drives that thrust-  
forward knee

in an unstoppable sweep  
towards an uncooped place of flame  
and crimson. Now comes the moment when  
she raises

her manton. Watch and you'll see it  
metamorphose into wings, be spellbound  
by the width of its span, the lie of those  
indigo feathers,

the long whisperings of yellow,  
the weight and weightlessness.

Though you've caught glimpses of her in the

everyday

you know she belongs  
to imagination. Don't struggle to capture her fire,  
open yourself to receive and she will inspire you.

**Shawl, 127x76cm.oil on canvas  
Symphony, October, 2021**

**Poem to be published in Siege and**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> session: Musical inspiration of an Irish folk song and creative interpretation

Song Clip: He Moved Through the Fair by Sinead O'Connor (Spotify)



*She Moved Through the Fair, oil on canvas, 63x71cm, after traditional Irish Folksong*

### Inspired Poem

**Funfair** (after She Moved Through the Fair by Chris Holley)

It's clear at once she doesn't belong to this world:  
her long white dress is transparent  
and, though tinged with the all-consuming magenta  
in the air, the sense of blue in her thin body  
suggests she's the ghost of a silver birch tree.

What's she doing in this daze of noise and light,  
among gaggles out to drown the grey  
of day-to-day and the pain underpinning their lives  
in bunting, booze, silly prizes, the thump of music,  
screams of laughter as they descend the helter-skelter?

She's speaking now and though her voice is small  
her pleas pierce the air but no one is listening.  
Look, that girl grasping her boyfriend's hand  
can't wait to mount a golden horse fixed in prance,  
to taste the glitz as she rides round and round,

uncaring that she hasn't a hope of going anywhere.  
Even that man, heart huge with the face of the wife...  
he's lost, grins as he conjures up her smile  
and her body's warmth. Look at the figure, hand  
clapped to swivelled head, mouth packed with grief –

he's aware of nothing but his own hopelessness.  
Nobody wants to hear words which beg them  
to forget the fair's surface glitter and heal  
the earth they're busy exploiting or listen to fears  
that spring will cease to follow the bitterness of winter.

**unpublished**

## Inspiring Poem

## Inspired Painting

### Like Small Wishes

four orange-tip butterflies are drifting  
across the road and you're surprised to see  
the cars, keen ferriers of noise and fumes,

are slowing down as if they're feeling  
sleepy in the unbritish heat. Then, and this  
is amazing, the metallic bodies all lift from  
the tarmac,

their carapaces soften and shrink, their  
side doors open, elongate, begin to flutter  
and the air fills with tortoiseshell  
specklings, adonis blues,

tapestries of dusk and orange. It hasn't  
rained yet the sapless verges are now a  
vibrant green, concrete frontages have  
become gardens and each, crammed

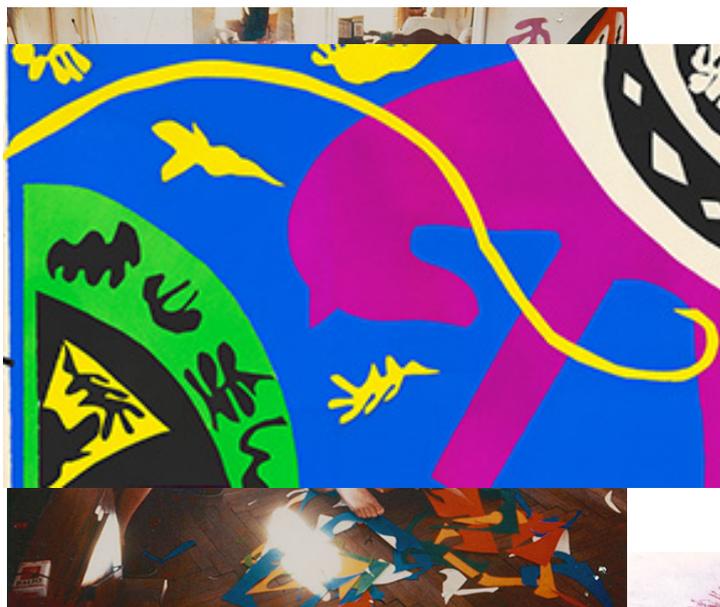
with periwinkles, lavenders, buddleias,  
is a song of praise. Your feet say goodbye  
to the ground, your wings spread, legs unstiffen,

yearfuls of worry fragment, the stricken world slips off  
your shoulders and you float to the sky  
revelling in a newfound weightlessness.

Poem to be published in *Siege and Symphony*, Second Light Publications October 2021



### 3<sup>rd</sup> Session: Matisse and the soaring of the spirit



MOMA, New York

MOMA, New York

Poem inspired by Matisse cut-out and which later inspires a painting

Le Cheval *After Matisse*  
Inspired Painting

I'm in the pink, a pink that revels

in rose, magenta, cerise, that ripples  
with prance and dance. Muzzle down,

ears pricked, I'm chomping to run over  
milky grass, leap fences and streams  
with the air rushing past my flanks.

Swiftness is the be all and end all  
but difficult for him – the old man  
whose scissored child I am.

Mostly he's tethered to chair or bed.  
I am his running. While he dreams me  
he's young again, a frolicking colt.

Look how he proclaims my emergence  
in a Mediterranean of blue, look  
I'm poised to canter over curving green!

The little islands floating around me,  
are they leaves or birds? Who can guess

what this long worming of yellow is?  
Who cares! I'm fizzing so don't snort:  
*dreams are figments*. I'm here in the pink  
You're staring at me open-mouthed!

*(Poem from Lifting the Sky collection)*

**Matisse cut-out cuts loose, acrylic on canvas, 75x75cm (30x30")**  
**(after Le Cheval, from Lifting the Sky)**



Inspiring Painting

## Inspired Painting



*nourish her or she will be extinguished.*

***Poise and Stillness from Shawl series, mixed media on paper, A3 with mount  
Unpublished***

## FLAME

It's the darkest of darks, the pit of the year  
yet from a cavern that must be studded with  
light in the far below that's as black as night,

she rises. You gasp as she opens a shawl  
feathered with flames and swirls, swirls it  
across the sky, wonder if she's slipped out

of a dream as she seems to be weightless.  
Your heart thumps, afraid she'll blow away  
before you sup to the full on her brightness.

But look at her supple body – it's sturdy  
and when she arches her back in dance you  
see knee muscle and ankle beneath her gown.

Now, she's queening the star-laden sky  
and you find she's calming anxieties planted  
within you when you were a child in the long  
ago.

Now, she's soothing the fears circling this  
world, howling disaster. Who is this creature?  
you ask and the reply comes: *your inner fire,*