

TWEED REGIONAL GALLERY

A TWEED SHIRE COUNCIL COMMUNITY FACILITY
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PARADOX

Daniel Brinsmead

Thursday 20 April - Sunday 4 June

“paradox” is defined as “a statement or proposition seemingly self-contradictory or absurd, and yet explicable as expressing a truth.”

Daniel Brinsmead explores the *Paradox* of personal politics, social interaction and cultural construct through the process of painting. A situation or event leads him to ask the question ‘why?’. He deconstructs his perceptions, pulls them apart to tease out the elements; then uses his own experience and broader cultural cues to explore the dynamics of the situation at hand. This artistic investigation leads to the construction of his own visual code or language, enabling him to reach a fuller understanding of himself and the world.

Brinsmead’s says, “I discover paradox everywhere, in terms of my art practice the deconstruction of one thing leads to the construction of another. It is the paradox of ideologies and values that interest me, particularly the ideals that are presented as ‘truth’ during childhood and later life.

Daniel explores this theme in a series of work he refers to as *Aeronautical Engineer*. “I learnt from a young age that I was expected to aspire to become somebody ‘special’, someone of ‘consequence’, by working hard to establish a professional career I should aspire to be ‘somebody’. I decided to tell everyone that I was going to be an *Aeronautical Engineer*. This was a big word, sounded impressive and got me a lot of attention and approval”. He also liked to draw boats, trucks, cars, and particularly planes. The paradox or irony is - Daniel did not become an *Aeronautical Engineer*, but in his own way, by pursuing a life that is closer to his heart and passion rather than driven by external expectations, he became a creative *Aeronautical Engineer*. He designs and creates his own flying vehicles on canvas, Daniel is an engineer of reality and an engineer of awareness – a true *Aeronautical Engineer* of ‘flight’.

Daniel seeks through his art to challenge false ideals and beliefs. “I mix ‘unreal’ elements eg: science fiction, with ‘real’ elements to pose the question – what is real? – isn’t it all just thought?” For example, he juxtaposes images and data related to the fictitious craft, the Millennium Falcon and the renowned Spitfire, as if they inhabit the same existence.

Daniel’s work is also about growth and evolution – on a personal scale, of human life in general and evolution in time. He uses both personal and historical symbolism in his paintings ie: planes from World Wars I and 2 (Camel, Spitfire), 16th century ships (Galleon), modern planes and ships and futuristic starships (Viper, X-Wing).

“I enjoy the use of wordplay, symbols and codes throughout my art”, for example he uses the words Spud / Spot to refer to male / female, because the words Spud and Spot have a larger imaginative vocabulary for the viewer and himself. He uses the letters G, M, D, B and syllables like ‘ideo’ and ‘naut’ – again because they have a wider reference than the words they are part of. This creative code prompts the viewer to ask what? and why? – they are forced to try to de-code and reconstruct from their own imagination. Everything in his work can have a literal interpretation and metaphorical meaning, the latter being the most significant.

Warplanes and warships also have many associations, including feelings of aggression, anger, angst and frustration. Daniel uses planes and ships to talk about being a ‘fighter pilot’ through life – guiding yourself, directing yourself, journeying or seeking the ‘truth’ can at times be war-like. Living can be violent, unclear and imperfect. But again, this is a paradox – the imperfection and ugliness are also the perfection of real life. “I want to affect the viewer, confront the viewer, let them feel and experience the ‘war’ of conflicting energies within themselves. Just as with real war, we normally judge this kind of energy as negative and try to fix those feelings. This type of energy is nothing to reject, act out, release or solve, it is just energy that can be utilized constructively.”