



INSIDE THE GALLERY PODCAST – SERIES 6 EPISODE 2 (Feb 2024)

EMERGING FROM DARKNESS
Baroque at Hamilton Gallery Vic.

LAURIE BENSON – CURATOR NGV

Tim Stackpool:

Laurie, great to have you on Inside the Gallery.

Laurie Benson:

Thanks for having me.

Tim Stackpool:

Now, it seems as though featuring those female artists I mentioned in the introduction of this period is pretty special. How does their work stack up or differ against, say for instance, the Rubens' and the Manfredi's you've got there?

Laurie Benson:

Yeah, that's a really great question 'cause it's one that automatically springs to mind, but the simple answer is they stack up extraordinarily well because it was practically impossible for a woman to be a practicing artist in this period. In fact, Lavinia Fontana is considered the very first professional female artist, because there were just so many social and legal and blockages to stop women from becoming practicing artists. So when you do have a female artist in this period who has forged a career, she's actually got to be better than all the men that she's painting... It's a tough commercial world, Baroque is a period where there are a lot of artists, 1000s of artists, so to actually rise through those ranks and end up being above those ranks, you have to be really, really good, you have to actually be better than the men. It's not even a glass ceiling. It was a concrete ceiling that was impossible to smash through.

Now, someone like Lavinia Fontana in her mid-50s, she was brought to Rome to be almost like the court painter at the Vatican. Now, that's a role that in Rome is the hotbed, it's Paris of this period, or it's a New York in the 60s and Paris in the 19th century, it's the mecca for all European artists. Now, for her to get that role, she would've beaten out maybe five, 600 practicing artists in Rome. So she had to be bloody good. And she is, and she's a fantastic painter.

Tim Stackpool:

So it's quite incredible that women artists in that movement actually existed in the first place.

Laurie Benson:

Well, it is, and with only a couple of exceptions, most of the female painters were the daughters of professional and well-respected artists. So that was sort of how they broke through that barrier. And so when you do get these handful of women artists, they're very well-trained by their fathers. Some of them are like, again, Lavinia Fontana was working in her father's studio as a studio assistant before she forged her own career when her father was towards the end of his career and eventually passed away. She had to again be very, very good at what she did. And there's only a handful, we're not talking a lot of women. But having said that, I think with the research that's going on now, I think a few more female artists will emerge, and they're certainly emerging in the 18th century, more appearing in the 19th

century. So I think as the scholarship focuses on female painters, more and more are going to come to light.

And I think what the fascinating thing at the moment is that there's a lot of paintings being that are considered by unknown artists, now that people are getting a better handle on the style of certain women painters, more of their work is coming to light, and we're getting a much stronger idea on an artist's entire earth. So scholarship is really, internationally is focusing on these women artists. So a lot more is going to be learnt, there'll be a lot more coming out of archives, but I think more excitingly, there'll be more paintings emerging because it was a terrible, terribly misogynist approach in art history up until the last 10 to 15 years. There was this horrendous concept that if there was a really good painting, it couldn't possibly be by a woman. I mean, that's how bad it was. And we're only talking in the last few couple of decades where that attitude is completely reversing.

Tim Stackpool:

Were these women artists, included in the exhibition, were they chosen because you particularly wanted them included? Or was it because theirs was the only works that were available?

Laurie Benson:

Well, you're probably right in both cases. The three paintings by the women in the show, they're the only three in Australia, and two of them are in private collections. The NGV has the only Lavinia Fontana painting. There's a terrific portrait in New Zealand by Lavinia Fontana... She's mainly a portrait painter, and there's a fantastic portrait in New Zealand, but they're very hard to come by, and I guess it's a good thing, but the art market's completely responded and works by really good women artists, particularly Artemisia Gentileschi, and she's always been pricey, but now they're through the roof. So it's actually going to become a lot harder for us, ironically, even though us at the NGV we want to acquire, in fact, we are acquiring works by women artists as an absolute priority to redress the gender imbalance in the collection, the historical gender imbalance. It's getting tougher and tougher for us to buy a really good painting by some of these women artists.

Tim Stackpool:

Yeah. And just by their very nature, of course, they're rare, and again, just more expensive for that reason.

Laurie Benson:

Yep, and look, that's a redress in the market. That's the market responding, because every gallery in the world now wants to redress their own gender imbalances. Now, our director has a fantastic ambition, he wants at least one painting by a woman artist in every single room in the NGV. That's a really bold and really terrific ambition, and we're getting there. We are absolutely getting there. In fact, there's some galleries, especially in the 18th century galleries where we have more works by women than men. These women are not slouches, I mean, these are fantastic works of art, they're great paintings, and they stack up easily against anything else in the room. So there's no real issue there. And I think that's one of the revelations in the show when discussing it with my co-curators, I said, "Well, you're really going to hang a Sofonisba Anguissola portrait next to the self-portrait by Rubens from Canberra?" Now, that's one, not

just a great self-portrait, it's one of the great paintings in the country, that Rubens self-portrait is an absolute knockout.

And I'm going, geez, you're going to stick Sofonisba next to Rubens, that's asking for trouble, because he is one of the great painters in the history of art. But wow, when you sit and look at those two paintings next to one another, Sofonisba almost blows him off the wall. It's an extraordinary moment. Now, I'd never seen the painting, it's in a private collection, I'd only seen photographs, and I'm thinking, oh boy, this is a little bit risky. And this is great, this is why you go to see art exhibitions rather than just look at pictures on screen, because when you see that there's a tension and there is a capturing of personality in that portrait of [inaudible 00:07:10], we don't know who he is, but the way she has captured personality and character, it really bounces off the wall. And as I said, it almost blows the Rubens out of the water. It's a great moment in the show.

Tim Stackpool:

So in that respect, then Laurie, do you see a visual difference between what the ladies were turning out to the men? Or were the ladies trying to concentrate on reproducing what was being produced by the guys at the time? Or can you actually look at these Baroque paintings and say, I think that was a female artist?

Laurie Benson:

That's a tough call. I don't think that can necessarily... I mean, look, that might come to fruition later when all the women painters have sifted out and Lavinia Fontana's goes from 50 to three or 400 works, maybe you might spot something in there. But I think it's probably more, I don't know if it's an attitude or an approach, but certainly a style maybe with Artemisia Gentileschi, because she did a strong focus on female nudes, there may be something there in the female gaze. But I'm a little hesitant to say that at the moment. I mean, maybe in 20 years time, you can, maybe some people are saying that now, but I think it's pretty tough. I think it's hard to say, oh, that's by a man, that's by a woman. I think that's a tough call.

Tim Stackpool:

Oftentimes, I see that women just basically have an innate different perspective to men, and there's obvious reasons why.

Laurie Benson:

Yeah.

Tim Stackpool:

I was just wondering whether there were social pressures back in that time, which were acceptable and fitted the norm fitted the standard, if you like?

Laurie Benson:

Yeah, look, that's probably true. I mean, what is emerging in the study is a lot of the female painters like Lavinia Fontana, she was mainly a portrait painter. Now, I'd say about 80% of her portraits are women, and they're fantastic portraits, they're extraordinary. But what is really... And this is something that comes out in a much later painter who's obviously not in the show, 'cause it's 18th century, but Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun, who's a French court painter, there's something about hers and Lavinia's portraits of women, there is almost a degree of relaxation and trust that you can see in the paintings, particularly in Vigée-Lebrun. You can see there is a different gaze in a portrait of a woman when it's painted by Lavinia, because there's just something...

You can put a portrait of the same person next to one another, a female by Vigée-Lebrun and another like Peter Lely, or someone, not Peter Lely, another artist and there is a little bit more character, or there's an expression, a relaxed expression in the sitter. Now, whether that's because there's greater trust between two women... That is not just me saying that, that is something that a lot of scholars are publishing and saying. Now, I think with Lavinia Fontana as, again, more and more of her works are coming out of the woodwork so to speak, because there'd be lots of paintings by her that are unattributed, she doesn't always sign every painting. And so I think a lot of these will emerge, and I think these ideas can hold water.

Tim Stackpool:

Well keep an eye on those auctions Laurie coming up, but just-

Laurie Benson:

Good luck.

Tim Stackpool:

... putting the women aside for a sec. The Baroque period, it described as the most emotive in art history. Do you think that's right?

Laurie Benson:

I kind of agree with that. I think because what happened in the Baroque period, look at the transition from mannerism to Baroque. Now, mannerism was all about exaggerated forms and elongated bodies, and they were really pushing for elegance over reality. Well, when the Baroque emerged and there was this massive push towards naturalism, and that came just as much from the patrons as the artists, the Catholic Church were demanding greater naturalism so they could... This art is about communication as all art is, it's all about communication. And the church were feeling that the mannerist works were alienating their audience just because of the way the body was presented in such an over-the-top unnatural form, that the punters couldn't really relate to them.

So when you have this switch to naturalism, now, in some ways for artists, I guess it's almost easier, this is a tough thing to say, but it's possibly easier for them to paint a naturalistic form. So that means when they're going to get creative, they've got to go in another direction and they've got to do something possibly more dramatic compared with the previous others. So that's why you get this extraordinary contrast of darkness and light, which is what the show is titled, because the artists, they have to push

their creativity in another direction. And it is more about composition, and it's more about the use of light and the use of colour, which is what's the radical shift in Baroque art and the push towards naturalism, so people can relate to them, but they're very dramatic, they go over the top with the drama, and I think that's what makes it really an exciting period to look at.

Tim Stackpool:

Yeah, they are terribly striking pictures, you see the soul sometimes of the subject of the painting. They really reach out, I think, and touch the person who's visiting the exhibition. And sometimes you get gasps, you go, oh, I'm really feeling this.

Laurie Benson:

Look, I spend 90% of my time in galleries, not looking at pictures, but looking how people react. And all through the way, I spent most of the opening weekend in Hamilton, and boy, I was just watching people. They were gasping and they were running back and forth between pictures, it was just fantastic to watch that kind of level of engagement.

Tim Stackpool:

Back to the actual movement itself, it really did influence art worldwide eventually in its own way.

Laurie Benson:

Oh, absolutely. Yeah, this is actually, I think the first global art movement. It's a period in Europe in particular, of relative peace, and that meant that when there's a war going on or a battle, you can't go from Italy to France or to England or whatever. England are fighting France, you can't go between France and England. So this is a period of relative peace in Europe, and that meant the artist got more mobile. So someone like Orazio Gentileschi, who's Artemisia's father, he travelled all over Europe, he worked in Spain, he worked in France, he ended up working in England. And he took the Baroque naturalism with him, and then he inspired artists wherever he went, 'cause he was in demand as an artist, he was well known. Collecting was exploding at the time.

And one of my favourite anecdotes is Rembrandt, the great Dutch artist who is a quintessential Baroque painter, never left Holland. He didn't go to Italy, he didn't see Caravaggio's... He didn't go to Milano, he didn't go to Rome, or he didn't go to Naples or Malta. And yet he is a quintessential Baroque artist 'cause collectors were buying paintings, but Rembrandt himself was collecting paintings and buying prints and drawings. So he had access to this material, and it's only because of mobility throughout Europe and it became a very... It was a global phenomenon because eventually it did... And that's another fascinating aspect to the show, is there's a section on the spread of Baroque art through Asia. And as people travelled, particularly the Jesuit ministers were going to Asia proselytising, well, they brought art with them. So that sort of inspired and affected the art of those countries. So yeah, I think it's the first true global art movement.

Tim Stackpool:

It's big. It's big. And so is your exhibition, I was just wondering if you could kind of talk us through what we can see?

Laurie Benson:

Yeah, sure. There's about 70 objects in the show, it's a complete mix of all media. So there's decorative arts, there's tapestry, there's a lot of paintings, a lot of drawings, a lot of prints, but mainly paintings, but there's also furniture. So it's a really broad show because we are trying to capture the sort of public nature of Baroque by trying to make it, it impacts furniture design, it impacts architectural design, obviously we can't reproduce a Baroque building, but we've got Baroque plans for Baroque gardens, for instance. So it really is a really broad show, and it's broken up into a number of themes that we just tease out the ideas that were happening in Italy and the rest of Europe at the time.

Tim Stackpool:

Did you get to present everything you'd hoped to?

Laurie Benson:

Oh, look, nothing exceeds like excess, but yeah, I think there were just so many good themes explored in the show. Yeah, and I think we did, and you could have doubled the size of the exhibition, it sounds weird, but I think it's just exactly the right size, it's not too big. Some themes are only illustrated by two or three objects, but that's enough. And some are explored by more, and I'm not going to give it away because I really want visitors to go there, but we absolutely finished with a bang.

Tim Stackpool:

Great. Now, you talked up Fontana's work. Do you have a favourite in the gallery?

Laurie Benson:

Look, it's...

Tim Stackpool:

It's a tough question, I'm sorry, Laurie.

Laurie Benson:

It is. No, no, it's a question I get asked all the time. I've got this really weird glib answer, which is actually true. I mean, my favourite art object is the one that I'm working on at the moment, because that's the one I'm interested in looking in. But in that show, look, probably my favourite is the Ribera Martyrdom of St. Lawrence. That to me is just such a perfect Baroque painting, and it's Ribera's, it could actually be his first real masterpiece, so it's almost like his calling card. He's a Spanish artist who worked his entire career practically in Italy, and it's almost like his calling card. It's his first major commission, it's his first major piece. And he's really wrapping up about four different Baroque styles, all in the one painting.

He's doing the qualities of all the major artists who he's now competing against, he repeats them in the painting, in this one painting.

So there's a bit of Caravaggio, there's a bit of Annibale Carracci, there's a bit of Gerard van Honthorst, and then there's this amazing moment where there's about four or five hands in about a two-foot square piece. Now hands are the hardest thing to paint, that's the kind of traditional idea. Well, here is a real show-off doing about five hands in one spot, and it's very a emotional work, and it's just just a quintessential Baroque painting and by a Spanish artist, so you get that international flavour too, with Baroque.

Tim Stackpool:

Yeah. It's the greatest hits of Baroque on a single canvas.

Laurie Benson:

Yeah, it is. It really is. And it's just one of my favourite paintings. I mean, luckily it's at the NGV, so I get to look at it a lot.

Tim Stackpool:

Terrific.

Laurie Benson:

I'm a very lucky person.

Tim Stackpool:

Yeah. And in a way, it also sums up that influence, as you mentioned earlier, that the church had on art. I mean, it was significant.

Laurie Benson:

Oh, they were the major patrons. The private patronage was emerging, particularly in portraiture, but the Catholic Church in Italy was still the major patron of the arts. And they as patrons had a really big influence on what was painted, certainly subject matter. And sometimes they rejected artists, sometimes they said, "No, go back and do it again." So yeah, they do have a lot of impact.

Tim Stackpool:

And beyond governments as well, they had the wealth.

Laurie Benson:

Yeah, well, they were the wealth and they had enormous wealth and Baroque's, it's a real great period of great building, of construction, of churches particularly. And when you're building big churches, you

build big altars and they need big altar pieces. So that's again, why it's a really exciting moment because there are patronages at its absolute peak. There is this enormous building schemes, not just churches, but palaces are being built all over Europe, and so you've got to decorate your palaces, so it's just such an amazing moment, an explosion of art during the Baroque period. There's always a surprise when you dig into this stuff 'cause there's so much of it.

Tim Stackpool:

Coming back home to Australia and regional Australia, why choose the Hamilton Gallery for this show?

Laurie Benson:

Well, Hamilton chose us. They approached the NGV, and I think even the curators with the idea for the show, and to me that's really important because... And I know the Hamilton area quite well, I think that's the right audience for this kind of show. The Hamilton Gallery probably has the strongest collection of European art in all of regional Victoria. And so their audience has this kind of art, they're used to it, it's on their radar, they understand it. So it is the right audience for us to do what... I don't think we could do this show in any other gallery in Victoria, a focus on just a narrow period, 50 odd years of old master paintings. I don't think we could stage it in any other gallery because the audience understanding of it beforehand, and I think judging from what I've seen when I've been to the gallery, the audience are absolutely excited by having these absolute masterpieces.

And the NGV, we've lent about 40 odd things to the show, and they are our prime pieces. These are not... We haven't scraped stuff out of the basement. These paintings are on our walls permanently, but they're off the walls at the moment because of the triennial that's on at the minute. It's just taken over most of the NGV. So that enabled us to lend what is our absolute, absolute best works. We didn't pull a single punch, we didn't knock back anything. Had it been on stage and the triennial hadn't have been on, we might've lent four or five things tops, but we lent everything. We lent Bernini, we lent Mattia Preti, we lent Ranieri, we lent Ribera. These are things that are never... And we lent Orazio Gentileschi, we lent Lavinia Fontana. These are paintings that have never been off the walls except for on loan, they're never off the walls of the NGV.

Tim Stackpool:

Yeah, very unique exhibition. But given the unique location as well, as you mentioned, it's unlikely that this will tour, I'm guessing.

Laurie Benson:

Oh, no, it won't. No, it can't. As soon as the triennial's over, we want those pictures back. So no, it won't be touring anywhere. No, it just can't.

Tim Stackpool:

You have to get to Hamilton to take a look at it.

Laurie Benson:

Yeah, you do. And look, that I think is great for us as well, because we want to share our best works with the regional galleries. So the whole institution was really over the moon when this proposal hit our desks. We were absolutely over the moon about it.

Tim Stackpool:

Alongside the exhibition, there's always a catalogue.

Laurie Benson:

It's another almost completely home-grown catalogue, all the scholarship... It's not just the curators who worked on the show, but there are a lot of other contributing authors to the catalogue, and it's really more a book than a catalogue. In reality it is a book of the history of Baroque art in a nutshell with the themes that we've got represented in the show. But it's really big, it's a huge catalogue. I don't think any regional galleries produced anything like it, ever. I mean, it is a really handsome catalogue too. It's a beautiful thing to pick up and flick through, the illustrations are spectacular, but the scholarship, again, it's all... With one exception, we got the world's leading authority on Lavinia Fontana to write for the catalogue, Maria Teresa Cantara, who lives in Rome. But apart from that, all the scholarship are Australian scholars.

And again, there is this real interest in Baroque art in Australia, there has been for many decades. And so we were able to draw upon a really strong group of writers and scholars with different voices, we have a conservator writing in the catalogue, but again, it's almost a moment of great pride that we can produce this quality of scholarship, and it's a terrific read. We produce that here, and Hamilton got to really tip your hat to them for investing in such a book.

Tim Stackpool:

There are, of course, a lot of individuals involved in this, and organisations, but four curators, I think I counted, right?

Laurie Benson:

Yeah.

Tim Stackpool:

How do you manage the dynamics of the nuts and bolts and the responsibilities?

Laurie Benson:

Well, we're all mates. I've known David Marshall and Lisa Bevin, the co-curators, I've known them for 30 years. And David in particular is one of the most world-recognised Baroque scholars in the world. I mean, he's now a retired, he's associate professor at Melbourne Uni, but he's one of the great respected scholars, and Lisa is also in that realm as well. Lisa had to stop work on our show because she had to work on another Baroque show that was happening in Italy. So there is a level of trust, and I obviously know David and Lisa for many a long years, so there is a level of trust.

And Ian at the gallery, I've known Ian for many years too, and I know his input on the show of the layout and the design and the wall colours and things like that, and just the logistics and placement of things. Again, I have great trust in the whole Hamilton team, I mean, I've known the gallery for a long, long time. So we, being the NGV, not just me, we have a lot of trust in the Hamilton Gallery that they're going to look after some of our best paintings and sculptures.

Tim Stackpool:

How long were you all working together?

Laurie Benson:

I'd say about 18 months, pretty solidly. 18 months, maybe two years. Yeah, these things don't happen overnight, of course. There's a lot of to and fro-ing, a lot of negotiating, and then a lot of nutting out.

Tim Stackpool:

There is a bit of a diplomatic art, if I can say. When it comes to curation, particularly when it comes to borrowing pieces from private collectors, is that a skill you needed to particularly flex in this instance?

Laurie Benson:

I think it's not so much a level of skill, but again, it's just a level of trust. I can't give away names, but some of these lenders I've known for, again, for 20 years, there's a degree of trust between us and them. And they're not going to lend, no one's going to lend... It doesn't matter how nice your approach is, no one's going to lend these things unless trust has been built up over many years. And, the lender knows the Hamilton Art Gallery. They know, again, that it's a safe environment for their works, but it's also a really good environment where it will get recognition and acknowledgement. And these lenders are extremely generous, they're sharing their treasures with us. I mean, that's how we always look at it. They're sharing things they don't have to. There's no gun held to any collector's head, there's nothing in it for them except their own satisfaction of their own generosity to lend. And that's just built up over years of trust.

Tim Stackpool:

The longevity and reputation certainly counts in spades.

Laurie Benson:

Yeah, and the NGV's reputation is on the line as well. If we'd have lent a show and it wasn't any good, well, we were partnering in a show and it was a dud, A, we wouldn't let that happen, but our reputation's on the line every single time we partner with someone. So we do our absolute best, and in this instance, I think we've really... It's an astonishing show because every single work in the show has come from Australian collections, from Canberra, from the Baillieu Library in Melbourne, the NGV Hamilton itself, and the private collectors, it's all Australian. It's Australian scholarships. It's an Australian idea for the show. It's Australian scholarship. It's all Australian-owned works in the exhibition, and there's nothing packaged up from overseas with this show, it's all homegrown.

Tim Stackpool:

You indicated that you spent a lot of time watching people in galleries. This show has been open since early December.

Laurie Benson:

Yeah.

Tim Stackpool:

It's been received well?

Laurie Benson:

The opening function sold out. We had a symposium, it sold out very quickly, we probably could have doubled the numbers of people. This was really surprising to me, but all the kids programs sold out. They had kids Baroque programs, they all sold out. And if in terms of criticism and publicity is a gauge, then it's an enormous success because every critic who's written on the show has been bowled over by it. The publicity is not just generated by the Hamilton Gallery, it's writers and bloggers and podcasters coming to the gallery and say, "We want to get on board with this one, because it's exciting." And it is.

So if that's the criteria, then the show's a massive hit. I don't know the numbers, because I'm not at Hamilton, and I'm probably going to go there in a couple of weeks time and I'll ask the director how it's going, I don't know. But if you judge it by goodwill, the response from the Hamilton locals, all the programs selling out, then the show just ticked every box. But it is a very handsome show, Ian Brillley in particular has done a wonderful job staging the show, and Josh White, the director at Hamilton, again, his team has done an extraordinary job. It's only a small team, but just interacting them early on in the development stage, you could tell they knew what they were doing. We put absolute trust and faith in them.

Tim Stackpool:

And the thing, of course, that we learned through this podcast is that it's more than just hanging pictures on a wall to make the show.

Laurie Benson:

To me, that's what's exciting. 'Cause when we hang our Baroque paintings, or Baroque works at the NGV just because of the physical nature of the building, and it's a big art gallery telling a massive story, the history of art, we can't tease out all the stories that we've teased out in Hamilton. And that to me is what's really exciting about a show like this as we explore seven themes. Well, I actually can't do that at the NGV, I can't tease out these critical moments or these critical thoughts and ideas in Baroque art just because the physical layer of the building, we've only got two rooms or maybe three rooms with Baroque art in it, so it's not as simple as to do that at the NGV. So it's great to be able to do that in a smaller gallery context in a show with 70 works in it.

Tim Stackpool:

Baroque is a lovely period as we've discussed and so well presented at Hamilton. Before we wrap up though, Laurie, what's keeping you busy right now?

Laurie Benson:

Well, what's got me going at the moment, and this has actually got a little bit of a Hamilton influence, because Triennial is concluding in April, and it's pretty much taken over every space in the NGV, we now have to pretty much rehang the entire collection at NGV International. We've pretty much got rehang the whole thing. So I'm actually trying to tease out some of the ideas that we have in Hamilton, I'm actually trying to tease those out on our walls for the rehang. And so yeah, there's two or three ideas that I'm trying to, without ramming it down people's throats, just trying to tease them out on our walls. And so we're flat out doing that, it's quite a big job to rehang the whole building.

Tim Stackpool:

And getting the things that you want done, Laurie, that's going to take that curatorial diplomacy again.

Laurie Benson:

Oh, look, even though we're a big organisation, we're all on the same page at our work. It sounds really simple, just hang a picture on the wall, but that involves four or five different departments. But we get on really well, we function really well across all areas, and we're all mates, and there's no real dramas doing it, we're all pushing all in the one direction, so we will get there, but it is a lot of work. As I say just hanging one picture on the wall involves about at least four or five different departments in the building. So it's always challenging, but we hope we'll get there.

Tim Stackpool:

Yeah, plenty of exciting stuff coming up at the NGV, of course, as is always the case. But look, congratulations on pulling the Hamilton exhibition together.

Laurie Benson:

Oh, thanks.

Tim Stackpool:

I can only just imagine what it's like, as you say, working with the four curators, you all know each other very well and have respect for each other's reputation and you're great mates too. But I think in terms of the delightful work that is hanging on the wall there, as I said earlier, it's a stunning representation and a great look back, it's not just art history, I mean art reflects history as well, and I think that's great messages that come across too. And Laurie, I thank you so much for your time on the podcast today.

Laurie Benson:

It's an absolute pleasure. It's been great fun, thanks mate.