

Dana Lawrie - Exhibition Preview - STABLE Artspace - November 2021

# THINGS HAVE BEEN BETTER







## Words by Nicola Scott

Things fall apart. Things pulse and wait. Things come together, mingle, collide. These are things that things do.

Can you feel your thing-ness here? You are matter. ~~You matter~~ You = matter. Matter is never created or destroyed. It just changes. Moves around, is replaced, re-formed. No thing (NOTHING) stays the same. *In this way, living is also a type of mourning<sup>1</sup>.*

This can be hard to swallow. If it won't go down easily, it is recommended that you massage your stomach, or tap your sternum. Count slowly to ten. Deep breath in, hold, out again. Name one thing you can see, one you can hear, and so on. If the problem persists, consider running, or yoga. Try moving. Try staying still. We have heard promising things about colouring books, also chamomile. Pictures of foliage may help. Prayer. Ritual. Evidence suggests that a little rocking back and forth can do wonders at any age. As in wartime, it is imperative that you keep calm and carry on.

Shhhhhh. Don't be overwhelmed by this task. Focus on the pretty colours. Baby blue, pale pink, cream, beige, grey. Here and there ("there, there") sunny yellow, soothing green. Nothing to prod or provoke. Look: kind shapes, gentle fabric. If you are still experiencing an elevated heart rate or racing thoughts, repeat these words aloud as needed: "calm", "natural", "decorative", "soft". You may ad lib quietly.

For those still uneasy, we do not recommend a longer glance. Please remain on the surface while we begin the descent. You won't like it down here. Things crack. Things harden, and dissolve. Things splatter, layer, become other things. There are parts, no wholes, and the parts are connected. Familiar scenes are suddenly not as they ~~seem~~-seam. It is horrific, by which I mean beautiful, by which I mean incomprehensible, by which I mean I can only (ACTUALLY) comprehend it in the order and chaos of my flesh, the whites of my eyes, *simmering in the elastic gloom betwixt my flickering organs<sup>2</sup>.*

Pause. Question and answer section. How many times will your feet, your thoughts, land exactly here? How many recollections remain intact? What spirits have been sewn together? Which ideas collage and overflow? Do you find you are experiencing something *not as an event with a beginning, a middle, and an end but in fragments of sensations, images, and emotions<sup>3</sup>*? I'll admit that this can be frightening.

That will do for now. Get it together! Collect yourself. As discussed, things do what things do, including you. You are matter, afterall, a proverbial grain of sand. And *we know that the tide will inevitably come and sweep the sand castle away*<sup>4</sup>. We cannot be held liable for your inevitable disintegration. Do that on your own time, please. For now you are still on the clock, so in this moment do try to forget the tick, the tock. Be present, please. Let's say it together:

*Things have been better*

That is to say, things change. Quickly, incrementally, erratically, cyclically. Things have been, and will be. For clarification, please refer to the Subjective Experience clause in the workbook. If you have misplaced yours, you may wish to revise later with another participant. Not to worry, remember: nothing is ever lost in the universe, only moved to another drawer. These things (MATTERS) will take some time to decipher. Perhaps no longer and no shorter than the time taken for a smile to drop, liquid to dry, the span of a human life. No longer or shorter than the distance between ribs, or stars, between known and unknown. Expect simultaneity. Leave space for misunderstandings.

A note before we conclude. What happens afterwards is not covered in this material. The outcome (so to speak) is evaluated elsewhere. It is neither "here" nor "there", "good" or "bad". It isn't even "after" the "before", necessarily. It is simply none of our business. It can't be measured in objects, or gestures, or even words. So unclench yourself. You cannot hold forth, hold out, hold on. It is a stained rag, the markings of moments, already out of your hands.

Let it go.

<sup>1</sup>Leichter, H. 2020, Temporary, p.114.

<sup>2</sup>Bennet, C-L. 2015, Pond, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Van der Kolk, B. 2014, The Body Keeps the Score, p. 219.

<sup>4</sup>Chödrön, P. 1997, When Things Fall Apart, p. 67.



Gemini, 2021, acrylic on cotton blend and plaster torso plinths, 150cm x 110cm, \$750 (\$850 with plinths)



Build Up, 2021, oil on aluminium with polymer clay and resin, 41cm x 31cm, \$500





Smaller, 2021, oil on board with paper clay and resin frame, 31cm x 23cm, \$400  
-accompanying- Aura 3, acrylic and resin on fabric, 87cm x 79cm (additional \$200)



Smaller, 2021, oil on board with paper clay and resin frame, 31cm x 23cm, \$400



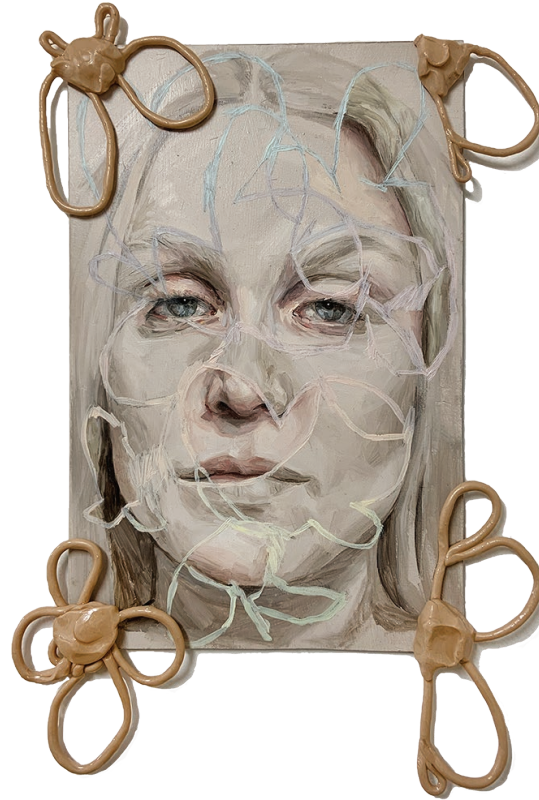
Smallest, 2021, oil on aluminium with woven fabric paint rags, 31cm x 20cm, SOLD



Very Light, 2021, oil on aluminium with paper clay and resin frame, 48cm x 41cm (approx), \$ 700  
-accompanying- Aura 2, acrylic and resin on fabric, 87cm x 79cm (additional \$200)



Very Light, 2021, oil on aluminium with paper clay and resin frame, 48cm x 41cm (approx), \$ 700



Maybe Baby, 2021, oil on aluminium with polymer clay and resin, 29cm x 19cm, \$400



Crush, 2021, oil on aluminium with paper clay and resin frame, 55cm x 43cm (approx), \$ 700  
-accompanying- Aura 1, acrylic and resin on fabric, 87cm x 79cm (additional \$200)



Crush, 2021, oil on aluminium with paper clay and resin frame, 55cm x 43cm (approx), \$ 700





Comforter, 2021, stretched fabric paint rags and resin, 40cm x 40cm, \$350  
-accompanying- Aura 4, acrylic and resin on fabric, 87cm x 79cm (additional \$200)



Comforter, 2021, stretched fabric paint rags and resin, 40cm x 40cm, \$350



Happy/Heavy, 2021, acrylic on paper clay and resin, 23cm x 20cm, NFS

Born Brisbane AU

Artist Education/Training:

2009-12 – Bachelor of Fine Arts, Honours (1st Class), Queensland College of Art

2010 – International Exchange, Edinburgh College of Art, Scotland, UK

Grants, Awards and Residencies:

2018 – Flowstate/Deathfest residency, FLOWSTATE, Southbank QLD

2017 – Metro Arts Residency, Jul-Dec 2017, QLD

2016 – Queensland Arts Showcase Program Grant: Arts Ignite (as part of crosseXions)

2016 – Artist in Residence, SpiroGraceArtRooms Summer Residency, QLD

2011 – Recipient ADFAS Award in Painting, QLD

2010 – Recipient International Experiences Incentive Scheme Grant, Griffith University

Selected Exhibitions:

2021 - Thinks Have Been Better, solo exhibition, Stable Art Space, QLD

2021 - Something More, curated group exhibition, Outerspace ARI, QLD

2020 - A Show Called Daydream, solo exhibition, Wreckers Artspace, Woolloongabba, QLD

2019/20 - New Woman, curated exhibition survey, Museum of Brisbane, QLD

2019 – Cats Do Not Go To Heaven, curated group exhibition, Outerspace ARI, QLD

2018 – Artist In Residence/Exhibition, FLOWSTATE, as part of Deathfest, Southbank, QLD

2018 – UNSTABLE, group exhibition curated by Stable Art Space, The Walls Artspace, Miami, GC

2018 – Grasp the Nettle (solo exhibition), Metro Arts, Brisbane, QLD

2017 – Comfortable Silence, Ivory Street Window, Artisan, Fortitude Valley, QLD

2016 – Redland Art Awards, Redland Art Gallery, QLD

2016 – crosseXions, Alaska Projects/CrossArts Projects, Sydney, NSW

2016 – crosseXions, Metro Arts, Brisbane, QLD

2016 – Dirty Blonde, Spiro Grace Art Rooms, Spring Hill, QLD

2015 – Clayton Utz Art Award, Brisbane, QLD

2015 – The Churchie Emerging Art Award, Griffith University Art Gallery, QLD

2014 – Light Touch, Dispatch Project, Odradekaeaf, Adelaide Experimental Art Foundation, SA

2013 – Christmas Show, Heiser Gallery, Brisbane, QLD

2013 – QARI Project, Sydney Contemporary Art Fair, NSW

2013 – The Churchie Emerging Art Award, Griffith University Art Gallery, QLD

2012 - Art for Eva, Ryan Renshaw Gallery, Fortitude Valley, QLD

2012 - Spread, Honours Graduate Show, Queensland College of Art, QLD

2012 - Sunshine Coast Art Prize, Caloundra Regional Gallery, Caloundra, QLD

2012 - Test Pattern, Ryan Renshaw Gallery, Fortitude Valley, QLD

Publications:

Stack, M., 'Arch Wife', Catalogue essay Metro Arts, [https://www.metroarts.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/DanaLawrie\\_Catalogue\\_ArchwifeA5Online.pdf](https://www.metroarts.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/DanaLawrie_Catalogue_ArchwifeA5Online.pdf) , 2018

Platz, W., 'Posing Zombies: Life Drawing, Performance, and Technology', Studio Research Journal, Issue #3, <http://studioresearch.com.au/wp/>

Lawrence A., 'The Hourglass and the Sun: bodily alchemy in the work of Dana Lawrie', <http://www.dispatchproject.net.au/14-dana-lawrie.html>, 2014