



My mother and her sisters appear in my paintings, specifically my memory of them when I was a child. I saw my mother transform in their presence, to someone separate from me. In bedrooms clothes were exchanged and in kitchens the day-to-day of the domestic world were shared with an ease which made our home seem lighter and unburdened. Their chat sometimes turned to laughing whispers, a language that I couldn't decode. Their bodies intrigued me, they were as familiar as my mothers, but when together an intimacy weaved between their bodies which intimidated me in its voluptuousness and confidence. I now understand the beauty and pleasure I felt was in witnessing them together in this way, separate from any male presence. My childhood memories of womanhood are contrasted with my now adult self and this continues to interest and drive all my work. Much of my personal iconography is formed from these memories, 80s hairstyles, costume jewellery, triangular bushes, and painted fingernails.

In literature and film I seek stories of female friendships- which I find the most compelling and complex of all relationships. I observe women in film, such as Vera Chytilov's boldly coloured, visually distorted anarchic tales and Chantal Akerman's real-time observations of women's inner lives. I have also taken idealised forms from a 1970s Allen Jones calendar that hung in my home as a child, which both disturbed and fascinated me. I draw upon these worlds to create expansive imaginary places, contrasting potent images of my childhood imagination against my adult self, with its conflicting notions of femininity, motherhood and sexual expression. My women are flawed and bright, full of dissatisfactions, depressed but funny, sensual, and single minded . I always want them to be precise, funny and candid.

Animals appear often in my work, mainly pets whose faces appear humanlike. They watch the viewer and me the painter, wanting to play and distract. I paint these in place of children, their bodies act as a vessel to express both the exhaustion and joy of parenthood. They can be both needy and wholly independent. In these paintings I naturally seek dark and saturated colours, a palette I wouldn't so readily use if I were painting children, but with which I subconsciously reach for here to more honestly express the complex and conflicting feelings of both being a child and a parent.