

Artist Statement – *Dying from Birth* – Steve Woodbury – at 051025

From the moment we start breathing we start dying...

*we are born alone and die alone, with a few decades in between – what are
you going to do with it*

Although my work is often placed with the abstract expressionists and I enjoy much of the work, I feel a great affinity with the ink drawers and calligraphers of centuries ago. For me, an eye on history ensures a dialogue can continue with the universal truths involved with where we come from and where we go. My overall body of work includes painting and drawing, sculpture, photography, and select video work. All the artwork is designed to slow the mind and encourage internal reflection to tap into the viewer's own unconscious perceptions and associations. Our ability to instinctually respond without necessarily being able to consciously explain is the aspect that intrigues me the most.

Everything goes in. Through a process of osmosis, life is basically a process of gradual or unconscious assimilation of ideas and knowledge. All our experiences are then filtered through our own perceptions, associations and internal belief systems. We make meaning from these filtered perceptions. The 'DYING FROM BIRTH' series utilises these intuitive, unconscious elements, as an integral part of the filtering process. Whispered suggestions from Shadows of the past may be there in the gestural marks – figures, landscape and portraits are there for all to see. However, perhaps the best way to enjoy these works is to experience them without preconceived cognitive judgements – and do as Goethe suggests when he said "A work of art is like a Monarch, you have to stand before it and wait until it speaks to you."

Ultimately, the aim is to encourage viewers to experience – think less, feel more and enjoy their differing perspectives. Disparate research and life experience is conflated from Zen-warrior martial arts; neurological mind-mapping and psychological brain-training methods, which combine with a great interest in conscious and unconscious processing. These become key elements re-presented as a painting methodology that favour the physicality of embodied gesture akin to sports training, where the result is not prescriptive, but suggestive. Like coloured Rorschach tests, these works open the experience of viewing and interpreting for the viewer's own associations. The aim is to involve your unconscious emotive responses without thinking about it consciously. Look, feel and enjoy.