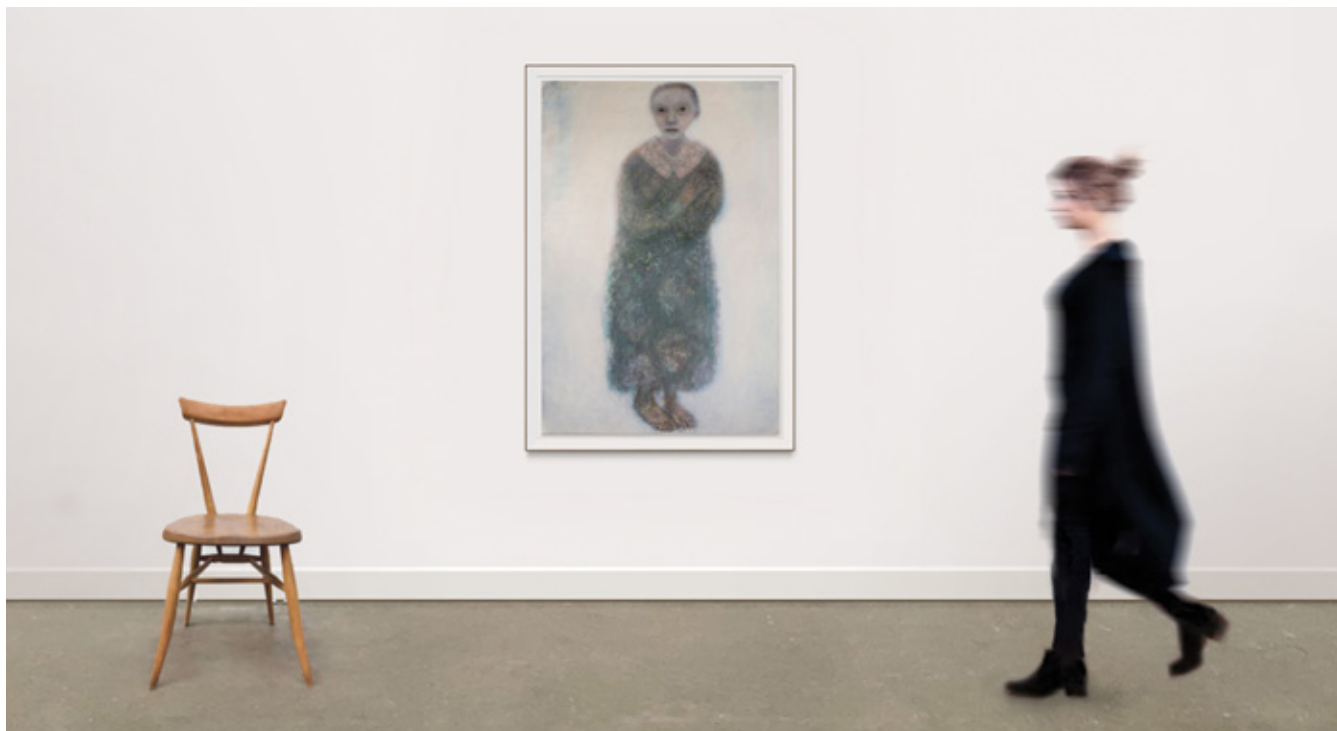


# ANIMA MUNDI



*Ancient Hope*, oil on fine linen canvas, 127 x 85 cm

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## PRESS RELEASE

### *Joy Wolfenden Brown* *Sanctum*

EXHIBITION DATES: 2/9 – 17/10/2022

WHERE: Anima Mundi, Street-an-Pol, St Ives, Cornwall, TR26 2DS

WEBSITE: [www.animamundigallery.com](http://www.animamundigallery.com)

Anima Mundi is delighted to present 'Sanctum', a solo exhibition of new paintings by Joy Wolfenden Brown, made over the past two years following a period where the artist battled stage three cancer. Sanctum is an unguarded and fragile expression of the liminal state of existence, which is all the more relatable and universal during these uncertain times.

This collection of exquisitely intuitive and intimate, small and larger scale oil paintings are imbued with the artists renowned sensitivity to absorb the physical and metaphysical world that surrounds and precedes the present moment. Evocations of fortitude combine with vulnerability resting beneath an ethereally layered and unmannered, yet luminous oily surface. The ritualistic painting process flows continuously from the artists' subconscious, as a visual

*In a field  
I am the absence  
of field*

*(Mark Strand  
'Keeping Things Whole')*

reflection of deep felt experience and emotion, simultaneously confronting whilst offering the viewer comfort through the sharing of a profound and fragile truth. Figures often appear awkward, perhaps guarded, as if attempting to close the breach created through the wide eyed protagonist, offering a unique and singular window in to the soul of the subject, the artist and in turn, ourselves.

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

I have been blessed with a small space in which I am free to paint.

During the course of this body of work it has never been far from my heart that there are places on this earth where even the most sacred and private thoughts and prayers are deemed punishable and have to remain hidden.

When finding words to accompany a body of paintings there is a familiar feeling of resistance as if all the elements or fragments which have eventually settled and found a home within the painting are now required to wake up and re-arrange themselves in order to be translated. The safe but sometimes complex, unconscious journey from heart to painting is now asked to re trace it's steps via a route it has been avoiding!

*"Pictures, even when apparently finished, evoke movement and relationship but cannot be read... No picture can be fully explained in words; if it could there would be no need to make it." (Schaverien 1989).*

*"Taking back from the work on a conscious level what has been projected into it on an unconscious level is perhaps the most fruitful and painful result of creativity." (Ehrenzweig 1967)*

There are times in our lives when the veil between ourselves and the core of our being becomes almost transparent and at other times this is much less the case. There are times of spaciousness and also of being hemmed in and both of these can offer a place for fruitfulness but also fragility and risk.

Whilst the figure in my paintings is often held stationary within the picture frame, the process of reaching that point of stillness (albeit maybe an awkward, fragile, expectant, sometimes restful stillness) can be more kinetic with an amount of placement, displacement and re placement along the way. This almost compulsive repetition seems to echo a sense of mystery at the figure's awkward presence in her worldly or other-worldly surrounds. As she stands vigil by a growing plant, is lost within the hemming of a floral surround, sits in an ancient candlelit room or kneels in private thought or prayer in a small curtained space, it could be seen as a quest to feel safe, at ease, whole, at home. Her hope of a Sanctum.

Joy Wolfenden Brown, 2022

#### JOY WOLFENDEN BROWN BIOGRAPHY

Joy Wolfenden Brown is a British artist born in Stamford, Lincolnshire in 1961. She currently lives in Bude, North Cornwall.

Wolfenden Brown's intimate oil paintings feel hauntingly familiar possessing a raw, emotional, honesty. She captures fleeting fragments of memory, moments in time where the inherent vulnerability of the figures depicted, often in isolation, is palpable. These are lovingly yet spontaneously executed reflections on the human condition, which have an unnervingly, yet simultaneously comforting, unguarded quality.

Joy Wolfenden Brown graduated from Leeds University then completed a post-graduate diploma in Art Therapy at Hertfordshire College of Art & Design. She worked as an art therapist for ten years before moving to Cornwall in 1999. Wolfenden Brown has had a number of sell out solo exhibitions and was the First Prize Winner in The National Open Art Competition, 2012. She was also awarded the Somerville Gallery painting prize in 2003, was first prize winner at the Sherborne Open in 2007 and won the Evolver Prize at the Royal West of England Academy in 2019. Works were acquired by the Anthony Pettullo Outsider Art Collection in Milwaukee with further works held in collections worldwide. Wolfenden Brown has exhibited internationally with six solo exhibitions at Anima Mundi marking a long and fruitful working relationship. Joy Wolfenden Brown is represented by Anima Mundi.

#### ABOUT ANIMA MUNDI

Anima Mundi was founded by Joseph Clarke, who has curated well in excess of 100 exhibitions over a twenty year period, working with international artists in all media. The gallery is based in a former Christian Science reading rooms in St Ives, Cornwall which was converted in to one of the most prominent and idiosyncratic private exhibition spaces outside of the capital. Anima Mundi has established an international reputation for representing the very best in contemporary art, which is shown through an unexpected yet specific contextual lens. The galleries achievements were recently heralded by Jonathan Jones in the Guardian as one of the UK's 'top 10 hidden gems' amongst a short list dominated by public art galleries where Jones stated "From Tate St Ives to Barbara Hepworth's studio, the place is a seaside monument to a lost era of British modernism. But Anima Mundi adds a welcome contemporary twist. Its vibrant programme brings St Ives out of the mid 20th century into the 21st." The late renowned art critic Brian Sewell also credited Clarke's curation and selection as 'thumping anything he had seen in London for years' in a public talk which was then published by The Independent. Since its inception, Anima Mundi has strived to offer its international collectors unique access to museum quality contemporary artworks whilst supporting its artists through an open co-operative approach with museums and art centres around the world. In parallel Anima Mundi is a supporter of philanthropic works via collaborations with charities and organisations including Funding Neuro, Grenfell Tower Community Action Fund, Black Lives Matter, The House of St Barnabas, Spectrum, Shelterbox, ArtCOP21, Cape Farewell and The Green Party among others.

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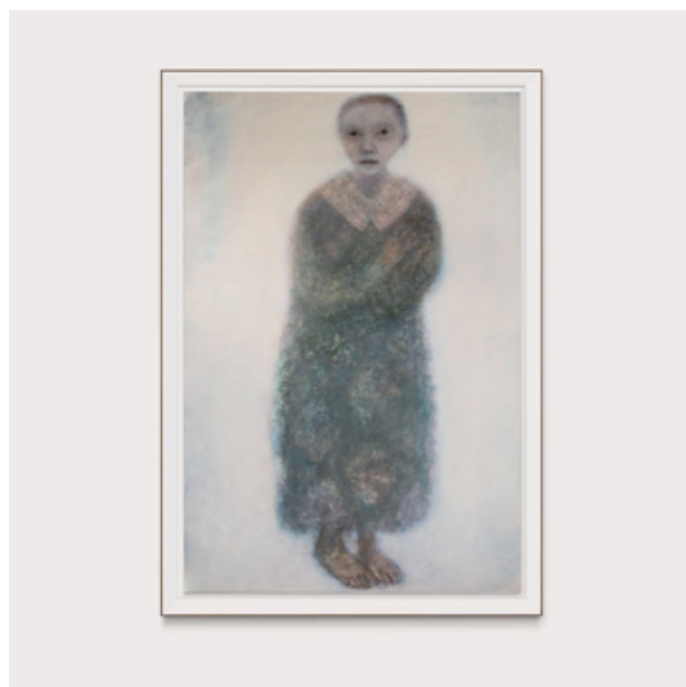
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#animamundigallery #joywolfendenbrown #sanctum

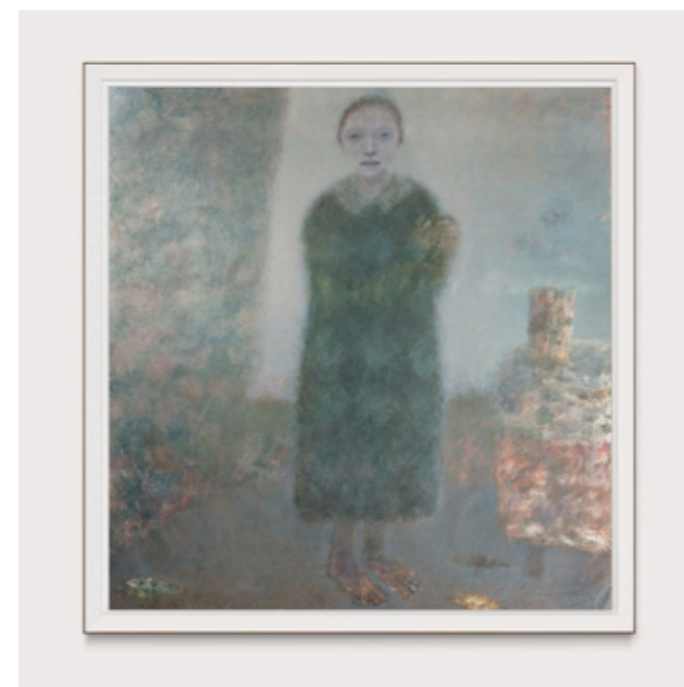
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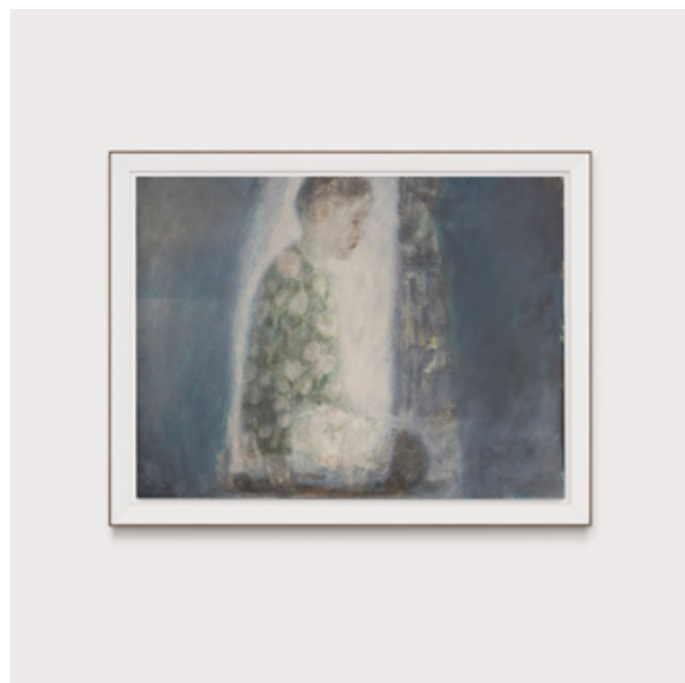
Joy Wolfenden Brown  
studio



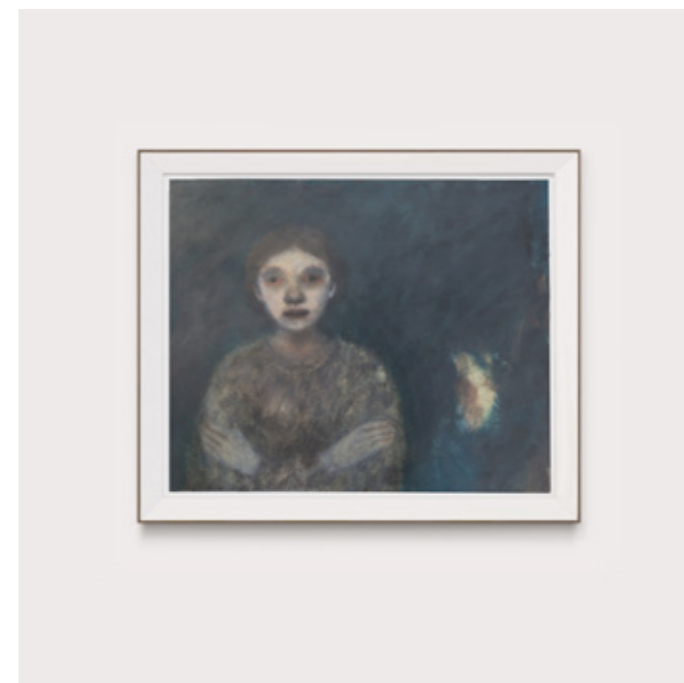
*Ancient Hope*  
oil on fine linen canvas, 127 x 85 cm



*Feeding Birds*  
oil on fine linen canvas, 120 x 118 cm



*Sanctum (1)*  
oil on paper, 63 x 84 cm



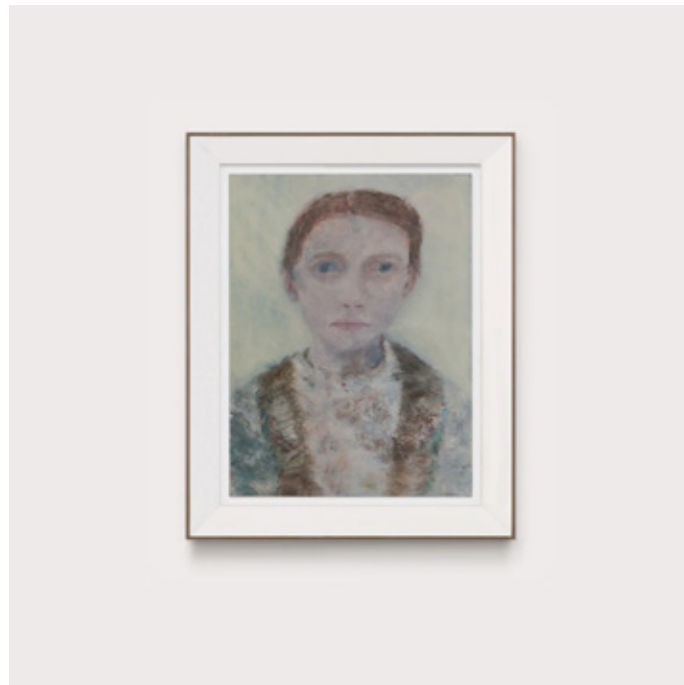
*Evanescent Light*  
oil on paper, 51 x 62 cm



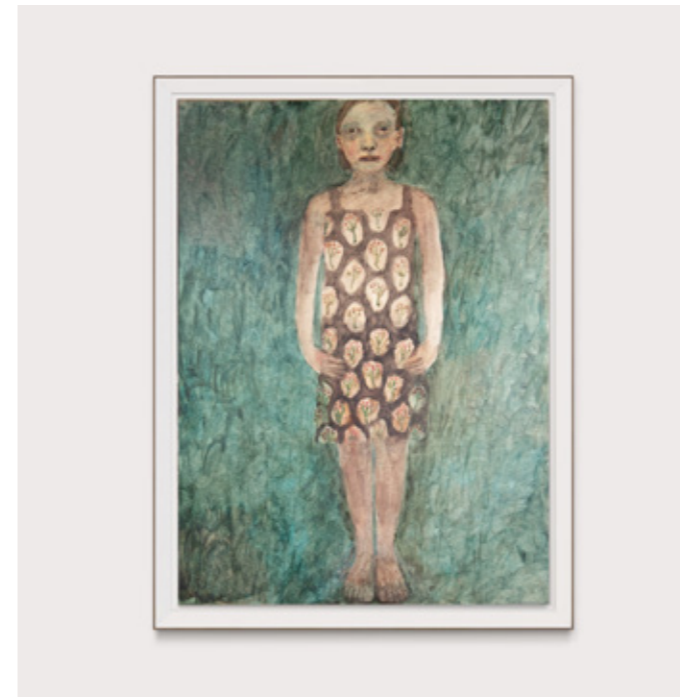
*The Good Earth*  
oil on paper, 136 x 84 cm



*Ochre Light*  
oil on paper, 128 x 38 cm



*The Musician*  
oil on paper, 40 x 30 cm



*Fruit Tree Dress*  
oil on paper, 114 x 84 cm