

JAYNE SIMPSON: LION

A Turning Point Exhibition

A key strand of Grundy Art Gallery's work is a commitment to supporting artists to develop their artistic practice and professional careers. Grundy undertakes this work in a number of different ways, from commissioning artists to make new artworks, exhibiting these artworks in local and national exhibitions, acquiring artworks into the Grundy Art Gallery Collection and linking up with organisations to provide professional development information and opportunities. In addition to this, Grundy Art Gallery has, over the last 8 years also been delivering a series of exhibitions called Turning Point.

Turning Point solo exhibition opportunities are awarded to artists that live and work in Blackpool and the across the Fylde Coast. The artists selected for this programme are recognised as having a strong artistic voice, a commitment to continuing their practice and an ambition to either grow the scale of their work or embark on new areas of exploration. For 2026's Turning Point exhibition, Grundy Art Gallery presents, Jayne Simpson's solo exhibition LION.

In titling her exhibition LION, Simpson wants viewers to consider all of the qualities associated with this word; concepts such as power, pride, and leadership. However, instead of these resting solely in something considered

masculine, Simpson wants us to think of the word LION as an adjective, something that describes a way of being, 'being brave as a lion' or a state of mind 'having a lionheart'.

Developed over 24 months, the works in this exhibition return to source material familiar in Simpson's practice. Looking to her own life story and her identity as woman, mother, daughter and teacher, Simpson often explores powerful themes such as love, loss and grief, birth and the body, parenting, personal transformation and recovery. The works in LION visit all of these subjects, but at an increased scale and with an increased tenderness in terms of the artist's technical approach to their materials. Paint is applied gently to allow marks from the layers beneath to remain seen, the soft edges of barely there figures and the suggestion of landscapes, bodies and buildings all contribute to a dream-like state within the works where things seem to be dissolving before our eyes or coming clearer into view. Radiating with deep emotion, LION shows Simpson turning her own personal history into visual stories that have the power to speak to us all.

JAYNE SIMPSON is a visual artist, mentor, educator and curator in the North West of England. She has taught visual art in further and higher education for the last 30 years. She now mentors individual artists and organisations alongside her studio practice at The Birley Studios and Project Space, Preston. She has recently organised and hosted symposiums and exhibitions of female painters from the North of England. Her work is held in public and private collections across the UK including the Soho House Collection.