

PRESS RELEASE

PATRICE MOOR

THE PRESENCE OF ABSENCE

16 February - 8 March 2024
St John's College Exhibition Galleries, Oxford

On 16 February 2024, the artist Patrice Moor, together with the Interdisciplinary Psychoanalytic Thought Network, will launch *The Presence of Absence* in the St John's College Exhibition Galleries in Oxford.

In this very personal exhibition, Moor creates collages with photographs, stitching and drawing to explore a trauma suffered in childhood that brings a psychological dimension into her work. Two weeks before her second birthday, Moor's mother died from a hereditary heart condition. The tragedy was met with silence and repression, intensified by a staunchly Catholic upbringing. In this exhibition, she addresses an early life that she describes as 'a desolate landscape of prosperous neglect.'



The installation pivots on a powerful group of five large works depicting the artist on her second birthday blowing out the candles on her cake. Differing viewpoints challenge the notion of a single perspective and encourage the viewer to analyse their own reactions, thereby echoing the discrepancies that arise in a family narrative. The enlarged images are supplemented by a

collection of smaller collages that appear to contain fragments of the conflicting sentiments contained within the dominant images.

Working from her North London studio, Moor describes her collages as a process of destruction and reconstruction. Living with the presence of death from such a young age, the skull has become a recurring symbol in her work becoming interchangeable between the artist, her mother and other deceased family members. The medium gives her the freedom to explore the source of her grief with a child-like naivety, by cutting and rearranging the pieces in a playful manner. Her use of white and red yarn emphasising a repair like quality in this creative process.

The exhibition offers a highly original expression of a young child's grief. It allows a window into the internal world of 'the child in the adult' and the everlasting engagement with loss. Acknowledging that trauma plays a pivotal role in a child's development, and how 'meaning-making' occurs prior to a child's attainment of language, Moor's work is of great interest to philosophers and psychoanalysts. It also proclaims art as a powerful mode of expression.

Moor has been artist in residence in institutions both in London and at the University of Oxford, most recently at the Department of Pharmacology and at Lincoln and Somerville Colleges. *The Presence of Absence* is Moor's most self-revealing and ambitious exhibition to date.

This exhibition has been commissioned as part of the Interdisciplinary Psychoanalytic Thought Network's [Wollheim Centenary Project](#), which receives support from St John's College, University of Oxford, from the Independent Social Research Foundation and, as a Local Partner, from the Royal Institute of Philosophy. Lasting three weeks, the exhibition will be accompanied by talks on philosophy and psychoanalysis, situated around the work of the philosopher Richard Wollheim (1923-2003). There will also be events examining Moor's work as an artist.

[Patrice Moor](#)

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