



David Pearce
Crayons for Breakfast



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14 April – 9 May, 2026

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King Street Gallery
on William

Flowering Cactus, 2026, acrylic on canvas, 120x100cm





Crayons for Breakfast

Elizabeth Francis

When asked about the title, David recalls how at a young age, when his mother would ask what he wanted for breakfast, he would shout 'crayons' and happily sit colouring, drawing and passing the time whilst she prepared breakfast for the guests of their bed and breakfast. But the title also acts as a reminder to keep things uncomplicated, the connotation that crayons are a remedial medium for children referencing the artist's enthusiasm for primitive and instinctive art.

For over 50 years David's dedication to painting has been constant. A yearning to make, to learn and to challenge. Ever seeking to harness the raw energy of the naive or untrained. As a self-taught artist, aligned with the outsider movement and included in some of the world's most important collections of this genre - his work extols the awkward, playful or visually confusing.

With this group of paintings, David forces us to question our notions of the mundane, the everyday. Much of the intrigue and achievement in this work lies in the apparent contradictions in the way the juxtapositions invite the viewer to look again at the ordinary and the familiar in a slightly different context. Adopting ostensibly simple compositions, the familiar is twisted into the ambiguous. Previous incarnations sit veiled but not totally erased beneath the surface of the paintings. David explains these remnants map the history of the work and "...provide the energy,

the awkwardness and slight discomfort that prevents the paintings from becoming stale... these marks wouldn't remain if they weren't integral".

With his still life works, he elevates everyday items into heroes - deliberately animated, bringing humour and energy with the charm and rawness of a child's fridge painting. His discerning use of colour and apparent throwaway application can tease and challenge the expectations of the viewer and produce something sufficiently visceral and immediate to get under the aesthetic radar.

Crayons for Breakfast celebrates a life of creating. Such a cliché; like every artist will proclaim, David has spent his years driven to making art. But this title exerts more about his painting style, inspired by folk art embracing the nervous line, spontaneity and the use of crude materials/medium. With this group of vibrant works, David delivers the proverbial shot of kale juice. You're not sure you'll like it but it will make you feel good!

Elizabeth Francis,
Curator, Cornwall, UK
2026





Artist Statement

David Pearce



At the end of the garden, 2024, mixed medium on panel, 40x40cm

I'd rather have someone else write this for me. Not one for autobiographies, or writing eloquently in fact. They say it helps people understand my work, understanding me. Hopefully you'll not bother reading this - the work will be enough. You like it - you don't. But well, anyway, here goes...

Creating is inherent, primal. I get excited about making things, experimenting, exploring. In Cornwall, I went to a small village primary school in the 60s. There was at least 3 hours of making in a day. Lentils and pasta stuck to sugar paper - the whole creating bug bit there. I'd graduated from crayons and found dried food!

At school I'd struggled with letters and words. Back then dyslexia wasn't recognised so easily. So I built my world around what I was good at and what I loved to do. I taught myself to paint, studying images - I'd spend hours devouring modern art books, experimenting with colour, practising. When possible I'd visit nearby St Ives and see the work of the world renowned St Ives School. Finding work by artists like Roger Hilton, Patrick Heron, Alfred Wallis, Barbara Hepworth, Bernard Leach; and to see at firsthand that great art could be so much more than representational pictures. To a teenager this had a profound effect on my working practice. These paintings had physical presence, an energy - they were not pictures, they were objects in their own right - they were alive.

I had my first exhibition in the 80s in St Ives, Cornwall. It was a small, side gallery shared with two other painters.

In the main gallery, Patrick Heron was exhibiting. It was here after meeting and talking with him, I knew this was what I wanted to do.

To ask me to explain my work is a tough one and something I'm rather adverse to. In some ways to give each painting a narrative, an explanation, robs the viewer of the immediacy of a visceral response. I prefer offbeat titles rather than tedious essays to entice. We are all in the midst of our own narrative, one that moves and changes. For example, a painting that feels unfinished, months later when revisited can feel complete without any further work. The process of making continually forces re-assessment.

In my studio fractured memories unravel, spill out and combine. I'm an avid collector of ceramics and a lover of nature so these things emerge naturally. Someone's yellow sweater may appear in disguise on the canvas. That yellow may present as a vase but it may disappear under a layer of red, shift across the canvas and turn into a tree. Akin to a game of chess, the work can be taken in many directions... I add, remove and work into the canvas, the finished work is a resolution of ideas. Each painting should be visually interesting enough to be taken independently and at face value. Ultimately it is building an aesthetic, a finished piece that is as good as it can be. I work in an abstract sense where every line, colour, empty space and texture relate only to themselves and to the painting as a whole. Pure abstraction doesn't provide the vehicle for the humour I try to convey. I prefer my paintings to be light-hearted, joyful and to provoke a smile.



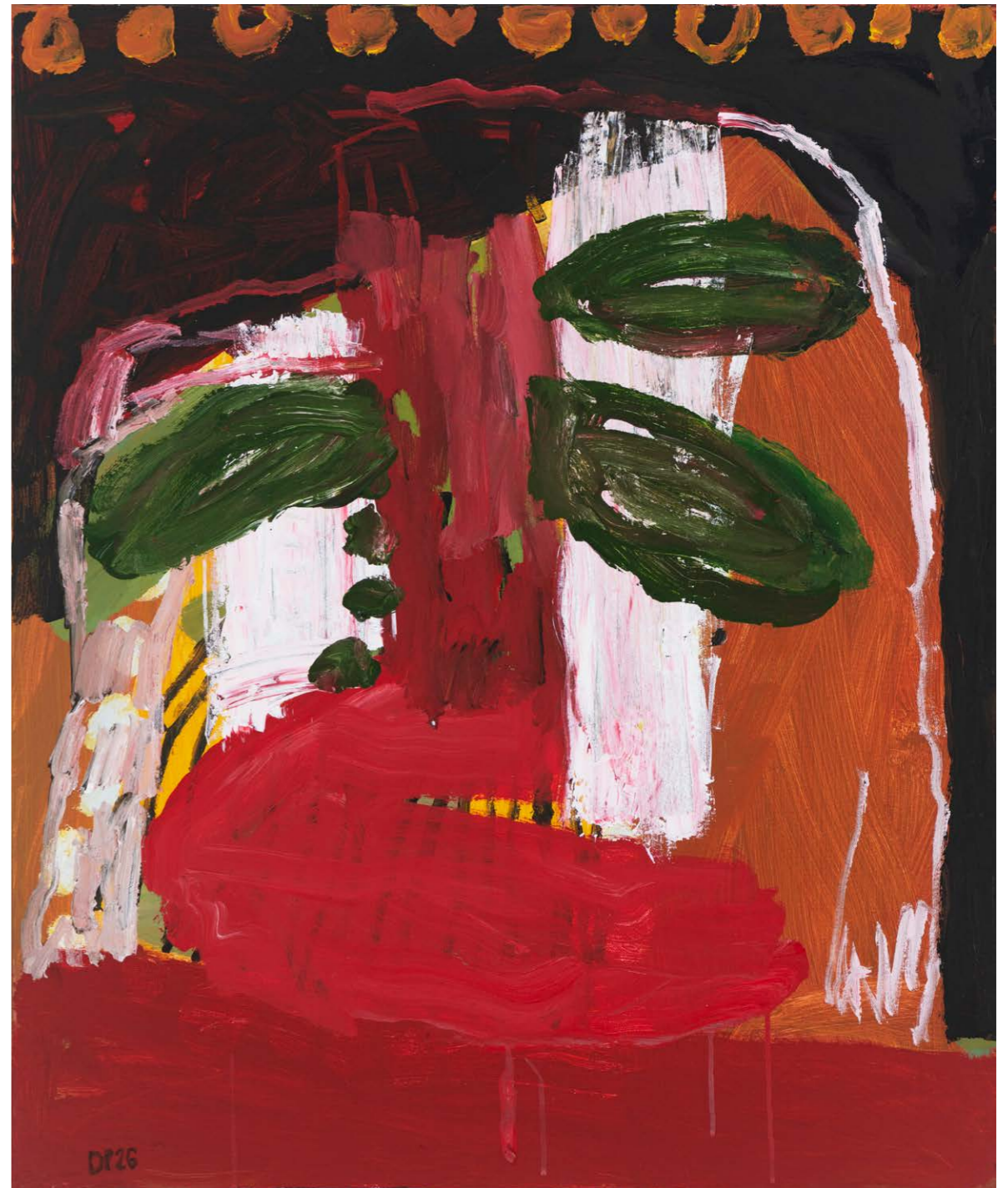




Kangaroo Paws, 2024, acrylic on panel, 45x40cm



Vincent's Vase, 2026, acrylic on canvas, 76x61cm







Spanish Souvenir, 2025, acrylic on panel, 45x35cm



Bloomers, 2026, acrylic on canvas, 76x61cm













Reindeer Moss, 2024, mixed medium on panel, 30x30cm



Cafe au Lait, 2024, encaustic and acrylic on prepared panel, 60x50cm





David Pearce

Selected Biography

Born 1963 Cornwall, England

Studies & Lecturing

2007-14 Curator/Director of the Padstow Fine Art
1981-83 Cornwall College

Solo Exhibitions

2026 *Crayons for Breakfast*, King Street Gallery on William, Sydney
2022 Padstow Gallery, Padstow, Cornwall, UK
2021 The Table Hay, Hay on Wye, Wales, UK
2019 Cricket Fine Art, Chelsea, London, UK
2017 Padstow Fine Art, Padstow, Cornwall, UK
2016 Cadogan Contemporary, Chelsea, London, UK
2014 Padstow Fine Art
2013 Stonewall Gallery, Berwickshire, UK
2011 Cadogan Contemporary
2010 Newcraftsman Gallery, St Ives, Cornwall, UK
2009 Padstow Fine Art
2007 Aldeburgh Gallery, Suffolk, UK
2006 Edgarmodern, Bath, Avon, UK
2004 Padstow Contemporary, Cornwall, UK
2003 Cadogan Contemporary
2001 Alex Gerrard Fine Art, Sussex, UK
1999 Middle Street Gallery, Padstow, Cornwall, UK
1998 Bolton Street Gallery, London, UK
1996 Gallery Pic Vanderdonk, Amsterdam, Holland
1995 Salthouse Gallery, St Ives, Cornwall, UK
1993 Salthouse Gallery
1991 Padstow Contemporary
1989 Padstow Contemporary

Group Exhibitions [Selected from last decade]

2026 London Art Fair, Jenna Burlingham Gallery, Hampshire, UK
2025 John Moores Painting Prize, Liverpool, UK
British Art Fair, Saatchi Gallery, London
London Art Fair, Jenna Burlingham Gallery
2024 London Art Fair, Jenna Burlingham Gallery
2023 Portland Gallery, Mayfair, London
Jenna Burlingham Gallery, Hampshire.
Padstow Gallery
London Art Fair, Jenna Burlingham Gallery
Aliferous: Having Wings, King Street Gallery on William
Padstow Fine Art
2007-23 Portland Gallery, London Art Fair, UK
2022 Newcraftsman Gallery, St Ives
1998-2022 Jenna Burlingham Fine Art, Hampshire, UK
2020 John Martin Gallery, London, UK
2019 The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London, UK
London Cricket Fine Art, London, UK
2018 John Moores Painting Prize, Liverpool, UK

2017 The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition
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London Cadogan Contemporary, London, UK
2015 Lynne Stover Gallery, Cambridge, UK
British Art Fair, London, UK
2015-21 Outsider Art Fair, New York, USA
Padstow Gallery
Whitespace Gallery, Devon, UK
2015-17 The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition
2014-16 Lemon Street Gallery, Cornwall, UK
2011-16 London Art Fair, Islington, UK
London Cadogan Contemporary
Marion Harris Fine Art, Park Avenue, New York, USA
Stonewall Gallery, Berwickshire, UK
2013 Accidental Genius, Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin, USA
2012 Josie Eastwood Fine Art, Stockbridge, UK
2009 The Discerning Eye, UK
2008 Aideburgh Gallery [Foss Fine Art], Aldeburgh, Suffolk, UK
2007 Edgarmodern, Bath, UK
2006 Padstow Contemporary Art Gallery
Hunting Art Prize, Royal College of Art, London, UK
Edgarmodern, Bath, UK
2005 Waterhouse and Dodd, Cork Street, London, UK
Marion Harris Gallery, London, UK
Thompsons Gallery, London, UK
2004 Cadogan Contemporary
The Inruit Show, 846, Chicago, USA
Marion Harris Gallery, New York, USA
Blue Monkey Gallery, Cornwall, UK
2003 Alex Gerrard Fine Art, East Sussex, UK
2001 Paul Edelstein Gallery Memphis, Tennessee, USA
1998 Bolton Street Gallery, London, UK
1996 Gallery Pim Vanderdonk, Amsterdam, Netherlands
1992 Hanover Gallery, Liverpool, UK

Collections

Anthony Pettullo Collection
Idle Rocks
Milwaukee Art Museum, Permanent Collection
Rick Stein Restaurants
Tate Gallery London, "Painted Wine Box" In Collaboration
with Chateau Civrac and Tate Modern
Warbertons



A comprehensive CV for David Pearce is available on the King Street Gallery on William website kingstreetgallery.com.au/artists/david-pearce/



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Cover:
Detail from *Flowering Cactus*, 2026,
acrylic on canvas, 120x100cm, page 3.



King Street Gallery
on William

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