

# off the wall gallery

paintings · sculpture · original prints



## MACKENZIE THORPE - *Painting, Sculpture, Multimedia*

### BIOGRAPHY

Mackenzie Thorpe is one of the biggest selling British artists of the last 30 years. His work is rooted in authenticity, embodied in emotional expression and always carries a message of hope. Mackenzie's journey has taken him from the shipyards of Middlesbrough to an internationally acclaimed artist, and his working-class roots in the north of England inspire his atmospheric and poignant pictures. Love and hope are key symbols in Mackenzie's art, whether they are depicted in the nostalgic pride of his industrial heritage or dreamlike skylines and landscapes. Mackenzie has achieved global success in galleries throughout the UK, America, Japan, and Australia while celebrity collectors include JK Rowling, HM Queen Elizabeth II, and Tom Hardy.

Celebrating 30 years as a professional artist in 2019, Mackenzie continues to blaze a trail for the artists who have followed in his footsteps. He will mark the year with a major retrospective, world tour and a book that celebrates the community of collectors and their personal connection to his work. Growing up as a dyslexic child, Mackenzie uses his art to support local and national charities regularly. All of his charitable work relates back to important issues depicted in his art such as disadvantaged children, loneliness and hope.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

#### WORKING CLASS BACKGROUND

*"Middlesbrough is my home town and my early life there has shaped who I am today. The town and the area are still very close to my heart."*

*"The Transporter Bridge has defined the landscape of the town for the past 100 years and will continue to do so. I love it when I am in Australia or America or Japan, and there it is, on one of my pictures; it gives me an opportunity to talk about my home town and how proud I am of it."*

*"I draw Middlesbrough through my memories, through the eyes of me as a child and a young man, when men seemed bigger and stronger than giants."*

#### LOVE AND HOPE

*"People ask me why I draw these kids with big heads; well it's simple. Children are born with big heads not one of them has a prejudice or a fear. But then you get older, and life and other people's opinions wear down on your head and your mind and it gets smaller and smaller."*

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*"A child carrying or pulling a big heart is a theme I have explored many times before. This search for love, our need for it and the power of it, is apparent in lots of my work, not just the more symbolically obvious images."*

*"I see life as a journey, and we all know the beginning, but none of us know the end. Life is full of its ups and downs. However, we have a job to do, and that's to get love from one generation to the next."*

*"In the shadows, a child sits dreaming. The journey begins, and in the darkness, the child sees the light and from that light comes hope."*

### ART

*"We had moved from London and found ourselves surrounded by some of the most beautiful landscapes you could ever imagine, giant skies, fast running rivers, waterfalls, castles, and sheep. I was totally overwhelmed and inspired to draw and capture all that was around me."*

*"The sheep done in my way became known as 'square sheep' because of the way I drew them. They represent my wife, son, and daughter in the Yorkshire landscape."*

*"I try to express through my work the thoughts, feelings, and responses to what I experience and see and feel; always attempting to create with freshness and spontaneity. No matter how many times I create something, I try to bring something new to it, to develop an idea and meet the challenge."*

*"I think I now realize that what I draw are universal emotions, we all laugh, we all cry, we all hope and we all fear, and above all, we all strive for love."*

### 30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

*"For me, this year is a celebration; I can't quite believe it's 30 years since I took a huge leap of faith and moved, from London with my family to a small market town in the UK and started trying to sell my work. At that moment I would never have thought that within a few years, I would have exhibitions in the USA; as a child, it seemed an unreachable dream that I would ever get to visit this amazing country. Along the way I have been privileged to meet so many wonderful and lovely people; whenever I visit I can't help but notice there is an almost immediate connection with my work, I think it's because I draw from the heart, with honesty. America is where my career really took off as an international artist, so I will be forever grateful, I'm really excited about being able to celebrate 30 years with the galleries and people who have supported me and who I now count as friends."*

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### EDUCATION

Middlesbrough College of Art – Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire, UK

Byam Shaw School of Art – London, UK

Honorary Degree of Fine Art – Teesside University, Middlesbrough, UK

Honorary Doctor of Art – Teesside University, Middlesbrough, UK

### PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS & INSTALLATIONS

Middlesbrough Train Station 'Station Posters' – Middlesbrough, UK 2015

Teesside University 'Middlesbrough Murals' – Middlesbrough, UK 2011

Captain Cook Birthplace Museum – Middlesbrough, UK 2010

Heart Institute at Cincinnati Children's Memorial Hospital – Cincinnati, OH 2014, 2011

Garoon Science Center at JCC of Chicago – Lake Zurich, IL 2009

Saga Prefectural Museum – Saga, Japan 2009

Fukuoka Prefectural Museum – Fukuoka, Japan 2008

Kumamoto Prefectural Museum – Kumamoto City, Japan 2008

Kagoshima Prefectural Museum – Kagoshima, Japan 2008

Christchurch Arts Centre – Monumental Sculpture Installation – Christchurch, New Zealand 2007

Mill Creek Park – Monumental Sculpture Installation – Kansas City, MO 2006

Leedy-Voukos Art Center – Kansas City, MO 2006

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery – Birmingham, UK 200

### SELECT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

ArtExpo, New York, NY – 2006, 2005, 2002 - 1997

ArtExpo, Los Angeles, CA – 1996

Art Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia – 2007, 2006, 2005

Art Miami, Miami, FL – 2007, 2006

Art Sydney, Sydney, Australia – 2007, 2006, 2005

Chicago Contemporary Classic, Chicago, IL – 2005

Fine Art Forum, New York, NY – 2004, 2003

Tokyo Art Collection, Tokyo, Japan – 2005

Tressors Art Fair, Singapore – 1997

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### SPECIAL COMMISSIONS

Tour de Yorkshire Official Artist – UK 2019

Official Artist of the 2019 Welcome to Yorkshire Garden At RHS Chelsea Flower Show – UK 2019

HRH Queen Elizabeth II - Presented with Original Pastel for Diamond Jubilee – UK 2012

Oklahoma Children's Hospital - Permanent sculpture commission – OK , USA 2011

Artist of Telethon 7 – Perth, WA 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2004

Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, Selected Artist, Grand Slam for Children's Fundraiser – 2002

Rt Hon William Hague Commission – Holiday Card Design, UK 1998 - 2009

Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne, Commission – Save the Children Fund, UK 1997

British Dyslexia Foundation Commission – Holiday Card Design, UK 1997

Elton John AIDS Foundation Commission – Holiday Card Design, 1996

### SELECT PUBLICATIONS

*Out of the Shadows* – 2014, Mackenzie Thorpe Ltd (160 page hardcover)

*A Long Walking* – 2008, Perth and Sydney Exhibition Catalogue

*A Crossroads* – 2007, Chase Contemporary, Chicago, IL (242-page hardcover monograph)

*A Crossroads Exhibition Catalogue* – 2006, Chase Contemporary, Chicago, IL  
(48-page soft-cover exhibition catalogue)

*A Hill* – 2004, Weinstein Gallery, San Francisco, CA (32-page soft-cover exhibition catalogue)

*Mackenzie Thorpe, Australia / New Zealand* – 2004, Trevor Victory Harvey, Sydney, Australia  
(44-page soft-cover exhibition catalogue)

*The Game of Life* - 2003, Halcyon Gallery, London, England (96-page soft-cover auction catalog)

*From the Heart* - 2000, Rizzoli International / Universe Publishing (144-page hardcover monograph)