

**Jane McAdam Freud**

**In the Mould of the Fathers – Objects of Sculpture, Subjects of Legacy**

with a text by Luca Trabucco

**Abstract**

In this text Jane McAdam Freud interrogates the forms and processes used in portrait sculpture with the objective of exploring her conscious and unconscious drives. Contextualizing these self-portraits, she shows the works that led up to her returning to the self as a focus for sculpture driven by feelings of the responsibility of heritage. Furthermore, the paper focus on some points related to the work of sublimation and memory, from the perspective of a creative work that is put in place by the dream/artistic work.

**Keywords**

Lucian Freud; Sigmund Freud; Psychoanalysis; Sculpture; Portrait; Self-portrait

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## **Jane McAdam Freud**

### **In the Mould of the Fathers – Objects of Sculpture, Subjects of Legacy\***

The aim of my presentation is to interrogate the forms and processes used in my sculpture and to express how the sublimation of my psychodynamic processes may manifest in my works. My objective is to explore my conscious and unconscious drives as a contribution to art and psychoanalysis.

I track the development of my works from infantile inspiration to recent self-portraits, driven by feelings of the re-

sponsibility of heritage. Looking back at the trajectory of works, many of which were inspired by the faces and works of Lucian and Sigmund Freud I focus on some points for reflection. These points will centre on the formal, visual and sculptural devices I have selected for expression, such as the circle, the condensed relief form and the omissions such as backgrounds.

I ask if my fascination with the relief form is driven by the

content (the images/persons depicted) in that their presences were seen through the media lens for periods of my life, rather than experienced directly. Seen from another angle one might ask: does the loaded content provoke the two-sided, condensed form? Is it all too much to be processed in the round? Has my interest in the relief format (approaching 3 dimensional) led to an interest in portraiture (a completion of the picture of the person) and hence family. Conversely my need to touch base with feelings of 'home' and 'family' may have driven my interest in the relief form, with this condensed form lending itself to handling displaced emotions via these compressed objects. My sublimation device might be exactly that of simplifying and condensing the sculptures, as in dreams, to take on the compressed form thereby making lots of images read as one.

However one defining early experience consciously drove

my interest in sculpture, in that I have never forgotten it. It is my powerful sensorial memory of the feel of sand in water while playing in the sandpit at nursery school. I consider this my first sculptural experience. This significant moment effectively awakened me. I have since felt driven to repeat that first thrilling sensation though working with tactile materials, through making sculpture.

With reference to this memory I made a conceptual work (*fig. 1*) for a show called Taking Care, curated by Nicola Angerame in 2012 at the Palazzo Tagliaferro, Andora (by the coast) in Italy. The installation is called *76 Degrees, one sunny day*. Sand is sieved to make its own incline of 76 degrees called the 'angle of repose' (the highest natural angle that a particular material can achieve when poured onto a flat surface). The installation references both the sandpit and perhaps its predecessor experience on the breast. Titled *76 Degrees, one sunny day* the latter part,



Fig. 1 – Jane McAdam Freud, *76 Degrees, one sunny day*, sand installation, 2012. Exhibition: *Taking Care*, Palazzo Tagliaferro, Andora, 2013

*one sunny day* resonates with resting/bathing (in milk? the sun?). I was also thinking about the breast being the first picture: not pictured via the retina but an indistinct picture in the mind i.e. the first internal object as Muse. As in Meltzer's aesthetic conflict the breast as 'the world' is this internal picture of love/hate - ambiguity/the mother but for the purposes of this installation it is also a real object – an object of flesh and milk, in the mouth and in the hands, a physical sensation. This aesthetic experience of processing a 2D image of something is quite different to the tactile experience of that something. There is what remains for the artist/sculptor, a driving conflict between seeing the 2D image, alluding to its entirety as in a photograph and the 3D reality of an object experienced in a physical sense.

The title of this text is: *In the Mould of the Fathers - Objects of sculpture, subjects of legacy*. As a sculptor the

word 'mould' has been such common parlance for me for so long that I took its sculptural definition for granted. The definition Luca Trabucco, my discussant cited, inspired me. It read: 'a furry growth of minute fungal hyphae occurring typically in moist warm conditions especially in food or other organic matter' (Oxford dictionary). I saw this definition of mould as being connected to life that grows from death as happens with bacteria on fresh organic material such as meat that has gone off. The bacteria itself is of course living and eventually houses maggots which turn into flies which then take off.

This definition struck a familial chord in two ways. The first is because it objectifies so well what we are (offspring) in a clinical biological way and secondly because it evokes a memory of something my father said to me about Francis Bacon. I asked if he admired Bacon's work. He said 'not now as he has gone off!' He explained that as an extrovert Bacon couldn't keep it all going as he aged. This, he said,

wouldn't apply to himself as an introvert. After Bacon's death, I could not help noticing that in the media Lucian Freud then replaced Francis Bacon as 'Britain's greatest living artist'. Before breaking ties, I think my father saw the older and more established leading figure of British Art as an inspirational authority figure. In 1991 he told me Bacon encouraged him to see the whole picture, beyond the details, to stand up away from the work using longer brushes and 'to make each brush stroke count'.

One series of my own works have gone some way to meditating on my father's words about his own 'father figure'. *After Bacon (fig. 2)* is one in a series of my 3D interpretations of some of the gestural emotive forms found in Bacon's paintings.

My portraiture has generally favoured family and figureheads – e.g. fathers of psychoanalysis (Sigmund) and portrait pain-



Fig. 2 - Jane McAdam Freud *After Bacon*, bronze, 1993. Exhibition Title: *Family Matters*, Gazelli Art House, London 2012.

ting (Lucian) and of ugly beauty/biomorphism as with Picasso (*fig. 3*). Picasso has always intrigued me as the father of the biomorphic form, a form of human image abstracted to

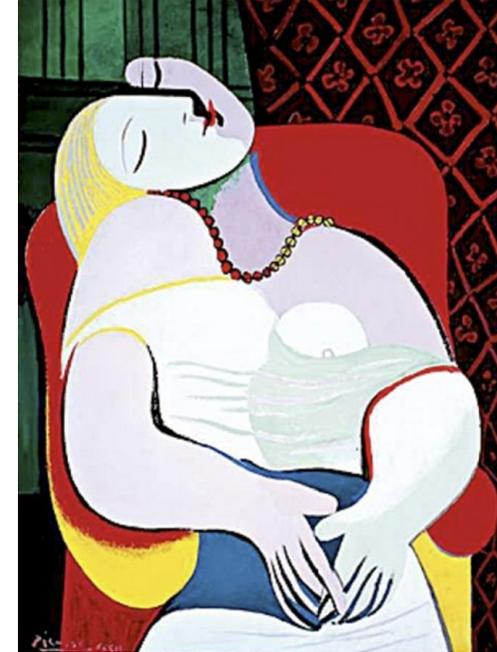


Fig. 3 – Pablo Picasso, *Le Rêve*, coll. priv. New York, 1932

represent suffering, sex and death.

My first portrait sculpture made when I was twenty-two years old was in the form of a commemorative medal for the centenary of Picasso's birth. The image I used for the

reverse of the medal is *Le Rêve* (The Dream), Picasso's 1930's painting inspired by his lover Marie Therese Walters. Picasso's biomorphic images had a profound influence on many artists from Francis Bacon to Henry Moore. I noted the extraordinary Freudian link to the libido in the image with her left eye morphing into a penis, seen more clearly in Picasso's painting (*fig. 3*) than in my medal.



Fig. 4 - Jane McAdam Freud, *Picasso medal*, bronze, 1980.

I made the Picasso Medal (*fig. 4*) in 1980 while a student at Central School of Art, in preparation for the centenary of his birth in 1981. My interest was in the sensory, intimate relationship with the material and the medal's two-sided format. It was about working closely from the hand to make two images fit together. My approach was to make something primarily concerned with 'a seamless fit', (in hindsight perhaps corresponding to my image of a suckling baby with the mouth and the breast fitting seamlessly as one life force). The dual sided dialogue obtainable through the relief format and the condensed form continues to be relevant to my practice as a sculptor through the 2D versus 3D visual/tactile correlation. It seems to embrace both disciplines, satisfying my need to both draw and to sculpt.

I thought of my Picasso Medal as a *P.U.P.*, an acronym for *Pick up Pieces*, and also a short form of the word 'puppy',

as in 'the small dog of sculpture'. It seemed quite ironic to me that the work won an award in the Royal Society of Arts competition in 1980 with a special commendation for the use of a non-round form. It was the in fact the very circle that I had avoided which had the most significance for me (*fig. 5*)



Fig. 5 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Self portrait medal*, wax, 2013

Medals are traditionally made in circular forms with an obverse, reverse and rim. The circle and its edge are the aspects of the medal form that *do* hold a symbolic interest for me as the circle represents to me the years of yearning to fit into a 'non existent' inclusive family circle with a nucleus. My family of origin is a disparate one with many factions, more like a warring clan than a happy family with a nucleus!

Interestingly I have never fully subscribed to the medal in terms of a two-sided circle, as my *Pick up Pieces* are not generally round. They are thick in section and have a hidden area of metal – metal that is there but not seen. I like the definition of a roundel in its reference to the poetic form where the 3<sup>rd</sup> part (three lines and three stanzas) is quite clearly there. I like to see the medal as a 3D poem with its three parts: obverse, reverse and edge (with the edge bearing the periphery of the body of the absent mate-

rial). It reminds me of the biblical trinity with the Holy Ghost as an absent presence.

At the beginning of the process for making a bronze work and prior to making the mould is the original, which can be modeled or carved. I modeled this self-portrait in wax: (fig. 5) the wax modeling which fits into the circle is called the positive, as the modeling stands above the surface plane. A plaster cast is then taken and carved to obtain more detail followed by a back and forth process of taking positives from negatives. These words: 'back and forth process of taking positives from negatives' could also easily apply to my life choices. From a complicated beginning, I channeled the mystery of the absent presence into the filling of the mould as is necessary for the process of casting sculpture. Mould-making is at the heart of traditional sculpture and particularly pertinent to the process of making relief forms.

Among my most recent works following the relief format is a small bronze *Pick up Piece* called *Day and Night* (fig. 6-7) presenting a burden transforming into the stuff of dreams. (The rock on one side becomes the pillow on the other side.) We must have dreams if they are to come true.



Fig. 6 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Day and Night*, bronze, 2013. Exhibition: *The Medal*, Sladmore Gallery, Mayfair London, 2014.



Fig. 7 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Day and Night*, bronze, 2013. Exhibition: *The Medal*, Sladmore Gallery, Mayfair London, 2014

Three-dimensional work is the conventional choice for sculpture and although it is the relief form that fascinates me I have also made 3D works including portraits. I made this three-dimensional self-portrait (*fig. 8*) after my moth-

er's death on July 4, 1998. I think it was then that I began to find a way of making sculpture that allowed me to be objective about my life and to explore my family through making sculpture. My mother, while being subtly suffocating believed in being independent and I have a residing



Fig. 8 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Self Portrait*, clay for bronze, front and back views, 1999, Gazelli Art House, Baku, Azerbaijan, 2013

memory of her often-repeated words to me – “Paddle your own canoe Jane”. A year to the day of my mother’s death, on Independence Day 1999, I met my husband Peter and my two sons to be. From a dualistic viewpoint, it transpires that from a family of predominantly females – my mother, my aunt and numerous sisters – I am now in a family with a predominance of males.

More recently my self-portraiture (*fig. 9*) makes use of terracotta and sand, echoing back to the sandpit. Historically, all clay sculptures make use of sand or grit, from the Xi’an Chinese Warriors to contemporary outdoor sculpture. For these 2013 self-portraits I used this ‘grog’ mix as I particularly enjoy the feel of the sand in the clay.

In exploring different sculptural methods of looking in the mirror I found it was not necessary to make the whole in order to obtain a likeness (*figg. 10-11*) The brain seems to fill it in. The other side of pairing is halving. Another vehi-



Fig. 9 – Jane McAdam Freud, J. McAdam Freud, *Self portrait (condensed)*, terracotta, 2013, mostra *Discerning Eye*, The Mall Galleries, Londra, 2013

cle driving the making of these portrait heads is my predilection for pairing opposites: left and right, half and whole, 2D and 3D and the reflection and the self.

Making the work involves intense looking and concentration over many months. I am staring into the mirror at a



Fig. 10 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Self Portrait (half)*, fired clay, 2013. Exhibition: *Discerning Eye*, The Mall Galleries, London, 2013



Fig. 11 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Self Portrait 2013*, fired clay, 2013. Exhibition: *Discerning Eye*, The Mall Galleries, London, 2013

reflection, beyond what I might wish to see. As Leonardo da Vinci once said, 'All the answers are in the mirror'. Objectivity occurs. My reflection is not I but an image, an object observed for the purposes of the sculpture. Having said that, I am very interested in psychological concepts and the analytic process, which I compare to the art process. Consciously I might apply the concept of pairing to the traditional sculpted bust. i.e. halving, condensing, etc. but my psychology also gets included by the by and is normally only evident in hindsight. The unknown instincts that drive me prove to be exacting in the development of my themes. This may or not be picked up by the viewer. The viewer will see what is inside her or him. In many respects, I feel that this is none of my business. The work should be alive to many interpretations.

Lately with the use of chicken wire there seems to be a

lighter effect physically and aesthetically in reference to my ever-continuing series of self-portrait works. I use wire to draw in the features combining drawing with sculpture



Fig. 12 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Self Portrait (standing pair, condensed)*, wire, 2014. Exhibition: *On Identity*, Martini&Ronchetti Galleries, Genoa, 2014

(fig. 12). These recent light, transparent works (fig. 13) remind me of wire scribbles and also reflect the sense of transparency that I have experienced in writing this paper.



Fig. 13 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Self Portrait large wall relief*, wire, 2014. Exhibition: *On Identity*, Martini&Ronchetti Galleries, Genoa, 2014.

The process of looking at myself (and the other) comes from ‘my familial fathers’ that have featured so heavily in their precarious presences and absences: my father Lucian in terms of ‘the portrait’, my grandfather Ernst in terms of his interest in space (empty/full) through architecture and my great grandfather Sigmund in terms of his interest in looking to his sculpture collection for inspiration. Sigmund, of course, also looked at people on the couch but interestingly his looking was a ‘listening’ sort of looking.

This work *OH HO* (fig. 14) is inspired by my first remembered disillusionment regarding ‘the Fathers’: ‘there is no Father Christmas’ the children at school told me. That discovery felt like a betrayal and came to stand for other betrayals that come through the stories: from the betrayal of children by the parents to the betrayal of woman through the bible.



Fig. 14 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Oh Ho*, clay, 2014. Exhibition: *Painted Earth*, Harrow Arts Centre, Harrow, London, 2014

The words *OH HO* are also a sort of pairing in that they form a palindrome. ‘Ho Ho’ is of course Santa’s chant and Santa was representative of God the Father to me as a child. I lost Santa at aged 8 when we moved away from my

Father so of course the loss of Santa was also symbolic. However in a Bionic sense, of the godlike human, I think Sigmund and Lucian merged to take Santa’s place as the cultural heroes for me.

Having processed all these symbols on some lateral level, they appear in my works as manifestations of internal objects in drawings and sculpture. With *Eye Out* I was thinking about our continuing concern and fascination for things Freudian, i.e. keeping an eye out for Freud.

*Eye Mind* (fig. 15) is a conceptual work referring to Freud being concerned with the mind: having his eye on the mind. Linguistically, eye and I (ego) also operate as homophones. It was then that it dawned on me that I MIND: I CARE who my relatives are and what they did and my responsibilities to their legacy.

I drew these two images of Sigmund while artist in residence at the Freud Museum in London during 2005 -06.

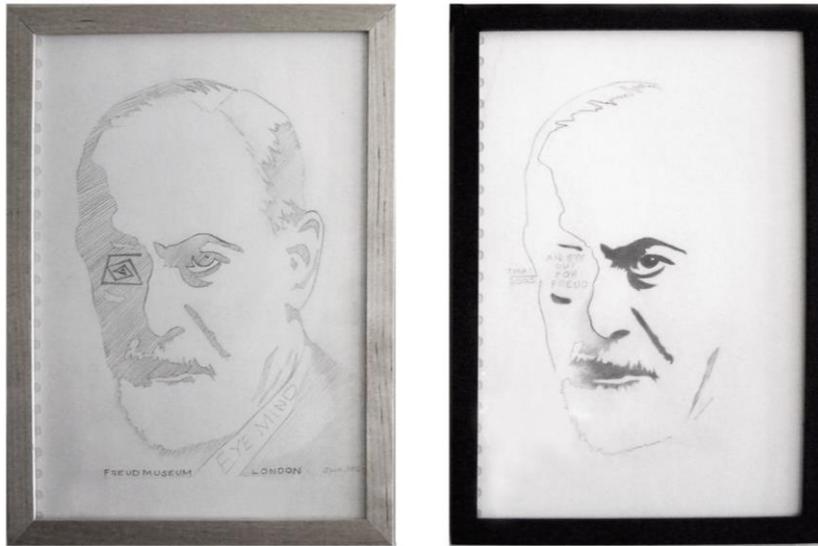


Fig. 15 – Jane McAdam Freud *Eye Mind and Eye Out*, pencil on paper, 2006. Exhibition: *Relative Relations*, Freud Museum, London, 2006.

During this period I began to interrogate my relationship with ‘the fathers’ increasingly absent during my life and the cause of so much wonder, yearning and loss. *Eye Mind* encompasses the childhood losses of Father figures from

my father Lucian, my uncle whom my aunt left in Denmark, my maternal grandfather whom my grandmother left in New York and my paternal grandfather Ernst who died. Furthermore, there is my disappointment with the ‘Fatherland’ - the land my father was born in - after learning of the death of my great aunts (Sigmund’s sisters). All of the above has led to me exploring through sculpture my relationship to the first father of the grand narrative: God the Father. Through sculpture I attempted to look at impressions of these religious contradictions in my own life. My paternal grandmother Lucie was not Jewish while my grandfather Ernst had a Jewish mother but was not practicing. My mother was Catholic and my father converted to Catholicism to marry his first wife Kitty, but was not practicing.

*mm & mm* (fig. 16) pairs Moses with Mary (my Catholic mother’s heritage with my ancestral Jewish heritage).



Fig. 16 – Jane McAdam Freud, *mm & mm*, stoneware and acrylic, 2009. Exhibition: *Random Plus*, Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York, 2011

On a universal level it metaphorically brings together opposing forces harmoniously onto one piece. Like in dreams, it contains 'This and This' as either/or or both at the same time. It is both physically and symbolically

'compressed' in its relief form. Interestingly 'Mm' is perhaps our first sound while suckling and it remains with us and continues its life as a sound indicating affirmation. Also the pairing of the letter 'm' also makes me think of Sigmund Freud and the titles to some of his essays, *Moses and Monotheism*, *Mourning and Melancholia*, *The Moses of Michael Angelo* and *Masturbatory Sexual Manifestations*.

Freud 'the scientist' survived on two levels, physically escaping the Nazis and also culturally through his works, in spite of or as a result of his theories evoking such extreme reactions. It is as though we cannot quite put him down and one explanation might be that he was so far ahead of his time that we haven't got there yet. He got into our consciousness through evoking mythologies thereby circumventing persuasive methods in favour of the stories, the myths.



Figg. 17-18 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Love and Myth*, bronze, 2014. Exhibition: *The Medal*, Sladmore Gallery, Mayfair London, 2014

A recent work I made reflecting on Sigmund's way of communicating his theories through the stories was *Lov(e) and Myth* (figg. 17-18). Inspired by the riddle of the Sphinx, arms and legs form an animal/human negative and positive space, which includes the letters LOV on the reverse.

The older work *Eye Mind* (fig. 19), the abstract drawing of Sigmund's face became a T-shirt design for the Freud Museum shop, which I always thought was very apt as Sigmund is close to the heart of so many. I first felt connected to him through my paternal grandparents, Ernst and Lucie who I was so close to during my childhood. A t-shirt is of course worn over the vicinity of the heart.

*Preserved Matter* (fig. 20) shows a letter with a photo from my grandparents Ernst and Lucie, for my 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. They always sent thoughtful cards and gifts on my birthdays but I think I saved this one because I liked the

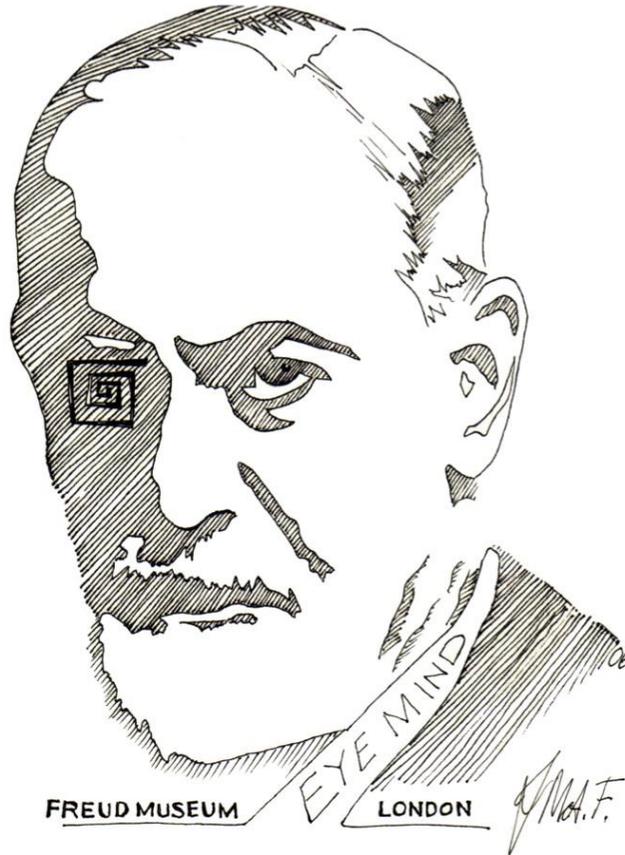


Fig. 19 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Eye Mind* (T-shirt print), drawing for Freud Museum T-shirt, 2006

picture of them and also because I liked the number 11 which is a pairing of two ones. I could associate my interest in dualities and pairings back to this handmade birthday card.

Although he inspired a following, ironically, in death, Sigmund is more widely known than he was in life, which of course is the case with many artists of the past who were not fully understood in their lifetimes. Strangely, also my father, Lucian had his way of inspiring great loyalty and exciting a following. Perhaps one might explain this by evoking one of Sigmund's theories - 'archaic inheritance' - being in the blood, as Nietzsche said. On the other hand it could equally be our cultural need for 'the genius' and 'the mystic'.

*Preserved Matter-Wax Works* (fig. 21) is made from wax that my father asked me to buy for us to work with togeth-



Fig. 20 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Preserved Matter* (letter & photo from my grandparents, Ernst and Lucie Freud), 1969. Exhibition: *The Medal*, Sladmore Gallery, Mayfair London, 2012

er. He wanted me to show him how to model with it. I kept the works I made from it in a refrigerator to keep them from melting until they were cast in bronze and I left them there for years. In fact they are still there. They symbolized that great period when we were working together and a part of me thought he might continue with the lessons at any time so I kept them there just in case and then forgot about them.

I could have made moulds from these waxes and probably will one day but in the meantime I have exhibited the fridge.

The forms the waxes take are nudes in poses that are relevant to being naked (*figg. 22-23*). In hindsight I think it was an allusion to my fathers nudes, which I couldn't then see as relevant conceptually in terms of contemporary art. It was not something I voiced but it was quite clearly something that manifested itself through these fridge works, which were about the premise that the natural state



Fig. 21 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Preserved Matter –Wax Works*, installation 1991-to date. Exhibition: *Family Matters*, Gazelli Art House, Mayfair London, 2012



Fig. 22-23 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Preserved Matter –Wax Works*, installation 1991-to date. Exhibition: *Family Matters*, Gazelli Art House, Mayfair London, 2012

of the human figure is 'clothed'. The figures seem to be in dialogue with my father's nudes, a conversation (that I would have been too afraid to have with my father) about the relevance of life drawing in contemporary art.

In regard to Sigmund Freud I consider his creativity is expressed not only in his way of conceptualizing, formulating and writing about his theories but also through his collection of antiquities, which encompass ancient sculptures. Freud collected sculpture and I make sculpture. As well as this connection there is also my felt connection to my ancient colleagues, the artists who made these works.

The drawing of one of Freud's marble sculptures next to the drawing of my father (*fig. 24*) makes a pair, which were exhibited together by the curator Nicola Angerame at Whitelabs in Milan uniting Sigmund and Lucian through



Fig. 24 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Sigmund Marbles and Dad Drawing*, pairing of two drawings, pencil on paper, 2012. Exhibition: *Three Generations*, Whitelabs Gallery, Milan, 2012

my interest in art/sculpture. In that respect it is a sort of triptych with the third object as an absent presence: my hand/authorship of the art, my art as a sort of usurper of both, a sort of Duchampian appropriation.

In Sigmund's beloved ancient Egypt (from where the majority of Sigmund's collected antiquities date) there was a goddess called Meretseger, who guarded the tombs of the pharaohs. Perhaps this could be interpreted as me guarding the 'sacred space' of the lost.

*Other* (fig. 25) shows a portrait of my father on the obverse. This figure has no background in terms of what might constitute stylistic reality. Instead the pillow forms a symbolic snakeskin texture on which the head rests. I found it poignant that the shedding of life itself is evoked by the associative imagery.

Backgrounds are something not generally so relevant for my works as the background for sculpture is not part of



Fig. 25 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Other*, bronze, 2012. Exhibition Title: *Family Matters*, Gazelli Art House, Baku, Azerbaijan 2013

the work. Sculpture is on a plinth, installed in a space, free floating, free standing. It is something that exists in its surrounding space. In the case of *Other* and all my *Pick Up Pieces*, it is the hand on which the work is viewed and turned, that becomes the background. On the reverse, in the centre of the word *OTHER* is the word *THE*. *THE* could refer to my father as 'the father of contemporary

portrait painting' which has interesting echoes of Sigmund who became known as 'the father of psychoanalysis'. *THE* could equally imply the idea of the greater presence.

In childhood, during the period of absence from my father, he became something otherworldly for me. I grew up with the idea of his absent presence being rather like the presence of a higher being that was there and not there, rather like my idea of Santa Claus and other Godlike figures. However, as my father's image was increasingly present in the media he became alive in a dead sort of way rather like a modeled waxwork.

As previously stated, a work in the round is a more conventional use of dimensions for sculpture. This 3D portrait of my father makes use of terracotta clay fired at high temperatures to keep the raw look. It also makes use of a very loose modeling style, which has echoes of my father's later style of impasto painting (*figg. 26-27*).



Fig. 26 – Lucian Freud, *Ria naked portrait*, oil on canvas, 2006-07, Exhibition *Family Matters*, Gazelli Art House, London, 2012



Fig. 27 – Jane Mc Adam Freud, *Portrait of my father*, Exhibition *Family Matters*, Gazelli Art House, Londra, 2012

Two and a half dimensions (2.5D) with its compression of forms presents a flattening effect with two distinct sides meeting at an introductory edge/divisional boundary, unlike a 3D object which the eye traverses round and round in a continuum.



Fig. 28 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Earthstone Triptych*, Earthenware, 2011-12. Exhibition: *Family Matters*, Gazelli Art House, London, 2012

I often display the compressed *EarthStone Triptych* (fig. 28) alongside *Shadow*. With *Shadow* I keep in mind that the darker the shadow the brighter the light. This giant relief installation sits in an experimental zone between relief and in the round. The work is as much about process as it is about content. I have titled it *EarthStone Triptych* to describe both the material and process (earthenware clay fired at stoneware temperature). *Shadow* is a floor-based work cut into many parts. The cutting into parts started as a necessary part of the process. I needed to prepare the work for firing by hollowing each part separately. However I unconsciously cut the piece into 15 parts, which is a symbolic number in relation to my family. We are fourteen siblings and I always add one more, just in case. Due to the puzzle-like nature of the multi-part work I decided to maintain this resonant quality in the finished sculpture.

This portrait (fig 29) was started when my father was younger and we sat for each other but was finished in 2011



Fig. 29 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Lucian Freud*, pencil on paper, 2011. Exhibition *3 Generations*, Whitelabs Gallery, Milan, 2013



Fig. 30 – Jane McAdam Freud, *Drawing 3 with Veiled Relief*, 2012. Exhibition: *Family Matters*, Gazelli Art House, London, 2012

at the end of his life. Interestingly it has no background as such and instead uses vigorous, emotive strokes.

Drawing and making works from my father's image (fig. 30) somehow released me from his powerful, absent/present power. My work and approaches seem to have become more fluid, more fun? Things I want to make

seem more easily achievable. I felt more relaxed and everything felt more accessible - once I got through the mourning stage.

I reverse the direction of this drawing (*fig. 31*) sometimes to change its composition. The first represents me looking down on my father in his sickbed. The other version shows him looking down on me from the great expanse, which I suppose must signify that I have not become a 'Godless Jew' like Sigmund. Not completely anyway.

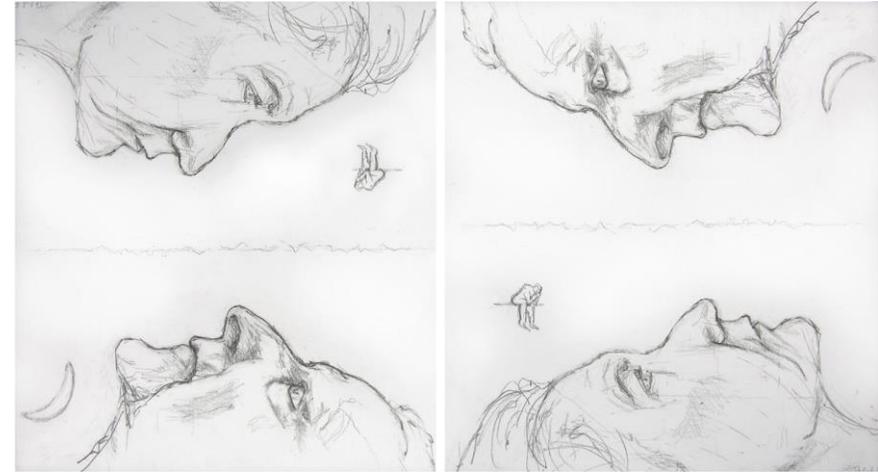


Fig. 31 – *Drawing 4*, pencil on paper, 2012. Exhibition: *Lucian Freud, My Father*, Freud Museum, London, 2012

\* *This paper was presented at the 6th International Symposium on Psychoanalysis and Art. Art/Object: The Artist, the Object, the Patron and the Audience (Biblioteca degli Uffizi, Salone Magliabechiano-Chiostro del Maglio) Florence, May 15-17, 2014.*

**JANE MCADAM FREUD** – British sculptor and this years winner of the European Trebbia Award for artistic achievement. Jane McAdam Freud was educated at Central School of Art and at the Royal College of Art in London under the supervision of the sculptor Eduardo Paolozzi and conceptual artist John Stezaker.

Jane won a scholarship to study sculpture in Rome where she studied under the Gino Marotta. She won the Italian State Mint Prize for her medal Moments and Memories, while there and was awarded Freedom of the City of London in 1991 on her return.

Recognition of Jane's work began early with her first solo show at aged eighteen followed by the acquisition by the British Museum of one of her prize winning works which have since been collected by National and International Museums including the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museums, Berlin State Museums and National Gallery of Greece. Jane has produced thirty-seven solo shows since 1996 and teaches annual courses at Central St. Martins (University of the Arts, London) and Morley College, London.

Jane McAdam Freud is represented by Gazelli Art House in Mayfair, London, UK and by Whitelabs Gallery in Milan, Italy.

## Luca Trabucco

### Discussion

*In the Mould of the Fathers. Objects of Sculpture, Subjects of Legacy* by Jane McAdam Freud

Jane's work is so rich of ideas and evocative powers that it seems difficult to me to be thorough. I will direct my reflections to some of its points, not with the aim of exhausting the topic.

J. McAdam Freud points out that functionalities peculiar to dreams, like simplification and condensation, that are peculiar of the work of the dream, as instruments allowing sublimation. The concept of sublimation, which is a deviation of the drive destination, was profoundly revised

with the development of the psychoanalytical thought. Now, I will particularly refer to M. Spira.<sup>1</sup> According to her, the process which is carried out sublimating has qualities that remind W. Bion's conception of dream. In Spira's opinion, "sublimation is the result of the integration of sense and affective fragments. They amalgamate through an elaboration that makes them take the form of active desire (give birth to...). Such amalgamation lets one make progress and defeat that sense of despair (death in-

stinct) given by a sensory thoughtless.

Memory, the tradition that comes from our fathers, can represent this group of endless and contradictory stimulations which need the action of an artistic dream, in order to be able to get organised into a representation that "gives birth to...".

In a creative process as well as in a dream, the route of the subjective experience, including memories, doesn't go from the unconscious to the conscious but actually "makes the conscious unconscious. (It makes the past conscious experiences available to richer process of thought peculiar to the unconscious psychological work.)".<sup>2</sup>

The process of construction of one's identity goes inevitably through a continuous revision of one's memories. We know how the work of memory never finishes, since the *Nachträglichkeit* is always and necessarily at work.

The *mould* of our primary relationships, the heritage that such relationships leave in our inner world is fundamental structure of our mental growth. Such mould substantiates our identity. Growing on the basis of the tradition, it reminds Winnicott.

In Jane's case, the tradition is distinguished by the presence of two of her ancestors of considerable "weight": Sigmund, her great grandfather, and Lucian, her father.

I think that in this case it is particularly emphasised a tension between "influence and originality", so as defined by Loewald<sup>3</sup> and Ogden.<sup>4</sup> "As much as parents were transformed by the process of internalisation, so they contributed to the creation of a son who can be and become different from them".<sup>5</sup> As a function of this process of internalisation and transformation, the mould becomes a supportive relational structure.

*Mo[u]ld* (from Webster's new world dictionary): 1) A pattern, hollow form, or matrix for giving a certain shape or form to something in a plastic or molten state; 2) a downy or furry growth on the surface of organic matter, fused by fungi, especially in the presence of dampness or decay; 3) loose, soft, easily worked soil ... good for growing plants.

The three meanings of this word, mould, or mold in American English, seems to contain a story: several destinies can be developed within the matrix of our memory, of our primary relationships which shape and support us. This is connected to our ability we can develop in interacting with that.

If we only stay inside this mould, not facing it creatively, then our identity will *moulder*, and the mould too. Conversely, in case of a creative dialogue with the mould, it itself will become a rich and fertile soil of growth for our identity "plant". Incidentally, this might be particularly true for us psychoanalysts, if we are too subjugated by a

school, too faithful to our fathers. This feeling chokes off and destroys our personal creativity, rather than sustain a thought development.

Maybe some iconoclastic display in the history of the psychoanalytical movement can find here their reasons, like a reactive formation towards an excessive submission to our fathers. Otherwise, the mould is the evidence of a presence-absence. The shape of the absent. As Jane says: "I channelled the mystery of the absent presence into the filling of the mould as is necessary for the process of casting sculpture".

The absence of an object is what promotes a thought and symbolisation development, and of creative processes as well. In Jane's art, the care for memories, the basic relationships the self is based on, is fundamental. The work of memory Jane Freud puts into effect has the distinguishing feature of being profoundly permeated by the sense of time. The roots she goes build in the continuous links be-

tween now and then never tend to a denial of time or, more radically, to an annihilation of it.<sup>6</sup> Instead, those roots tend to a constant transcription and development of her memories, which are themselves reposed as contents to elaborate again ( $\beta$  elements) and which can several possibilities of expression, development and new comprehensions. This going toward that dimension that is represented by the reconciliation with what was removed, as Freud writes in 1914,<sup>7</sup> towards forgiveness.<sup>8</sup> Memory, in its accomplished form, is not a fetish – expression not of a work, but as repetition compulsion – which shelters from an anguished and destructuring separation, but contains the awareness of the suffered lost and it's symbolic resolution within the inner world.

A memory which can't find a meaningful elaboration on its own takes no part in the sense of time. Instead, if accepted, it could lead to an experience of the past that might be characterised by a sense of "not being anymore"

or of "having been"<sup>9</sup> in function of several possible elaborative drifts.

Reconciliation can't go through remotion. As already observed by Freud, reconciliation needs a process of comparison, even of "wars". In any case it is a tiring path which can permit not to wipe out the experience but to get back what can be integrated in the space of the self.

Such transcription, a transit always renewed in the mental and oneiric space of memories, is achieved in a story which, to be possible, has to give up more or less vast parts of them.

To be possible, the story has then to select memories, save some and sacrifice others, more or less definitively.

Recollection is obtained with the necessary deprivation of a substantial amount of data: removing elements to make possible a story, it adds to the whole a fundamental element: the meaning.

The space left from the oblivion also provides that extra

space which can recombine memories of always new meaning groups (kaleidoscopic effect of memory).<sup>10</sup>

The creativity that comes from this constant work is something that in the case of a work of art, as clearly stated by G. Magherini, involves not only the artists but also the viewer.

Jane comments: "the viewer will see what is inside her, or him". This is definitely true. But it is also true that the creative process can be shared since the work of the artist goes elicit some basal human emotions, declined through different experience contents, but concerning what R. Money Kyrle defined "the three fundamentals facts of life", that are the three mysteries from which rises and around which rotates our thought: the mystery of birth, the mystery of parent's creativity, the mystery of death. These are facts we can reasonably think as moulds. Our thought operates on its emptiness in an inexhausted and inexhaustible quest for meaning construction.

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NOTES

<sup>1</sup> M. Spira, *Creativité et liberté psychique*, Cesura, Lyon 1985 [It. trans. *Creatività e libertà psichica*, Borla, Roma 1986].

<sup>2</sup> T.H. Ogden, *Rediscovery Psychoanalysis*, Routledge, London 2008 [it. trans. *Riscoprire la psicoanalisi*, CIS, Milano 2009, p. 9].

<sup>3</sup> H. Loewald, *The waning of the Oedipus complex*, in: *Papers on Psychoanalysis*, New Haven, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1979.

<sup>4</sup> T. H. Ogden, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Ivi [It. trans. cit., p. 195].

<sup>6</sup> A. Green, *Le temps éclaté*, Minuit, Paris 2000 [It. trans. A. Green, *Il tempo in frantumi*, Borla, Roma 2000].

<sup>7</sup> S. Freud, *Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through* (1914), *SE XIV*, pp. 145-156 [It. trans. *Ricordare, ripetere, rielaborare*, *OSF VII*, pp. 353-361].

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<sup>8</sup> P. Ricoeur, *Das Rätsel der Vergangenheit. Erinnern – Vergessen – Verzeihen*, Wallstein, Göttingen 1998 [It. trans. *Ricordare, dimenticare, perdonare*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2004].

<sup>9</sup> See P. Ricoeur, *op. cit.*, and M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*. Niemeyer, Tübingen, 1927 [It. trans. *Essere e tempo*, Longanesi, Milano 1976].

<sup>10</sup> See P. Ricoeur, *op. cit.*