

Skegg's Response

"In Them There Bones" Polymer Clay, 2021

This is my abstract response to the Skegg's essay section that I was allocated. I started initially with a more 'academic' response but it was my internal emotional response that I kept coming back to. Perhaps because all my art is made through an automatic and instinctive process. I wanted to use my hands. It was incredibly important to me to have a somatic and kinaesthetic approach to something I found very impactful due to lived experience.

I started with the placement of the sculptures, these were made up from the huge collection that I have, and then the photographing. There was a lot of careful choosing of all the pieces and playing around to get it right. During this phase I kept connecting to my internal space which worked through the emotion of it all.

The bone like structure represents how class is passed down from generation to generation, and inscribed in our DNA.

The larger three pieces represent those from wealthier backgrounds, who have the control of our cultural spaces. They see themselves as more complex, more culturally attuned in comparison to those from a 'lower class.' Also, those with affluence can accrue different forms of capital of which the value increases exponentially. Including the opportunities children can accrue through extra curricular activities their parents can afford, therefore already creating broader inequality from birth.

Often artists with low incomes have had to sell their work for very little or not been bought at all until deceased, while those with money have richly profited in the collecting of their work. The larger pieces are made up of two or three smaller sculptures each placed on top of each other representing the accumulation, amassing and self preservation. Also, the pressing down on the shoulders of others with impunity to acquire.

The smaller pieces, those from 'lower class' backgrounds are kept in 'their ghettoised spaces' by the controlling few. However, there are two perspectives. We are all touching one another, we are connected and supportive, a sense of equality prevails. Although unable to accumulate physical capital, in my eyes we accumulate a lot of depth and empathy and don't need wealth to be cultured. There's a gentleness and a pure simplicity.

Which direction are we going in? Are we coming for the larger ones? Are we wanting the same? Or perhaps our backs are turned completely and we are moving towards a newly formed horizon?

This phenomena plays out globally, with unequal power structures and wealth accumulation.