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### Visual Work

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**VISUAL WORK**

## Annunciations and Pedalos

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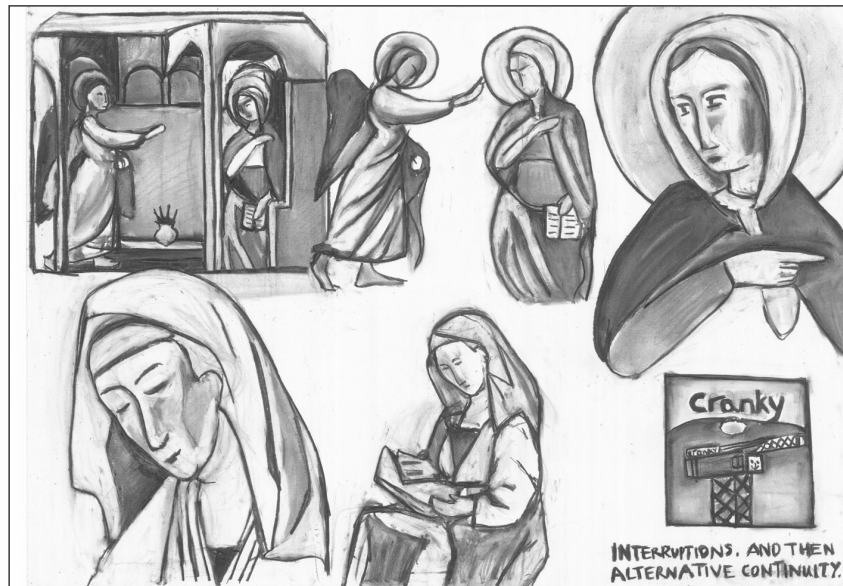
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When I moved into my art studios in Holborn in 2017, I started by making some large charcoal diary drawings. I loved making these works with the mess and control of charcoal, making marks, erasing them, building up form, and carving out sharp edges. In this series of drawings, I intertwined text and image, life and art history, my own experiences and those of my son, Harry, then three years old. The themes of my artwork include annunciations, the Moscow circus and pedalos on The Serpentine.

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My first drawing is based on Duccio's *Annunciation* (1307), which fascinated me when I first saw it in The National Gallery, London. In the painting, the Virgin Mary is happily reading but is then interrupted by the arrival of the Archangel Gabriel, who announces her pregnancy to her. Duccio frames Mary in this protected, quiet and calm space just as her world is about to be transformed. I wanted to focus on this moment of interruption, at a time when I was beginning to carve out a space for myself as an artist again. In my experience, maternal interruption was not just a momentary pause in autonomy, lasting the duration of pregnancy. For me, the interruption lasted about 3 years. I wanted to warn Mary that she might not have that quiet time again and that it might take years until she could read a book of her choice. Perhaps, like me, Mary's only reading materials and reading time during this period might be the Thomas The Tank Engine series.



The second image records a time when Harry and I visited Moscow Circus. We loved the flying acrobats and the hilarious clowns. But I noticed Harry had become very distracted by his untied shoelace, and that he could not concentrate on the show until I had fixed this. With this image, I wanted to capture how he applied the same intensity of focus to both the magical and the banal. Now I look at the image and wonder if Harry's concern with tripping over his shoelaces links with his fear for the acrobats' safety.

The third image is of Harry and I on one of our favourite outings, the pedalos in the Serpentine, Hyde Park. On our first visit, Harry was desperate to be in charge, "Captain Harry!" he exclaimed. But, after the short time Harry spent telling us what





to do—as we very slowly, effortfully, manoeuvred around the lake—it all became a little boring. I love to watch Harry desire something, and then upon receiving it, find it a bit disappointing. It is like he is with a new toy—the excitement passes, and he just moves on very quickly.

We still love the pedalos, but nowadays we focus on feeding the ducks.

### **Competing Interests**

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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