

Artist Statement – Empty Walls

The paintings in the Empty Walls series depict interiors from my childhood home. The house was purchased compulsorily, and has since been sold at auction and moved to allow for the extension of a street. When I started painting at the house, my parents had been moved out for months and the utilities had been disconnected. To visit this house, where I lived for the first 22 years of my life, was to experience a strange mixture of remembrance of my personal history and of observation of an alien place – a shell of my former home.

These paintings began as observations of the empty space. I have always been struck by the peculiar way in which light and shadow sculpt the visual world, and I was drawn to the newly abandoned house as a sort of laboratory to observe these situations. But, as I worked it became exceedingly difficult to address the house objectively. The light and shadow patterns, and the naked simple architecture held a quiet enigma. Increasingly, closely held associations and personal memories flavored my perceptions. The resulting paintings are universal in their depiction of simple domestic spaces, but hold deeply personal reflections on the specific home. I hope that this private element is communicated to each individual viewer and generates a unique personal response. I want the viewer to feel an unnamable familiarity with the depicted situations, and to sense the intimacy of the scenes, and of the artist to the scenes, but to reflect that intimacy onto personal experience.

The emotional response that I want to elicit is not easy to define; it is something like a combination of solitude and isolation with the connotations of both. It is a feeling of being alone that contains senses of clear-headedness and comfort, as well as loneliness and irrelevance. I want to tap into this part of each individual viewer's consciousness, facilitating a moment of introspective reflection.