

# TERRI BROLL

## Q&A LOCKDOWN 2020



### AEG: How often are you in your studio?

**TERRI:** I am in my studio every day, but this does not mean that I paint and produce work every day. The studio can be a hub of neuroses and anxieties. This is the case because, I believe, any meaningful art needs to be fraught with anxiety. Otherwise it's just macramé. Any artist that tells you that they love making their art and that they swan into the studio every day, looking forward to it, is not making art that speaks. It's the fear and anxiety – the inadequacy and the unknown that makes up the studio life of an artist. So, if you had a cam in my studio, you would see me making attempts at tidying up, peering at old and discarded works or just standing still for long periods of time, sobbing. Nevertheless, I do this every day.

### AEG: Who is your favourite artist?

**TERRI:** I would have to say that my heart belongs to the German Expressionists. Most especially George Grosz and Otto Dix. In all sorts of ways, I am obsessed with the early twentieth century, especially the years between the two World Wars. I see their art as brutal, confronting and even humorous. I love the lines and the irreverence.

### AEG: What are you afraid of?

**TERRI:** Not much really. Maybe humiliation and shame and the loss of the odd loved one. I certainly fear running out of chocolate and shoes. On the whole, however, I think I am fairly fearless. This might be seen in my work and certainly fuels the way I continually destroy my images until I get to one that expresses that fearlessness. My fearlessness is couched in a gallows humor, which is often the case with types like me.

### AEG: What do you love?

**TERRI:** I see that this question is about 'what' and not 'who', so I will address it as such. I absolutely love weather. I love the rapid changes of weather – rain, wind, and mist – sudden squalls. Wide blue skies and I love sea water – being near it and in it. I love being immersed in a good book.

**AEG: What's the most important thing you want people to remember about your artwork?**

**TERRI:** I am not really invested in people remembering me or my artwork, to be frank. I suppose, I want them to remember themselves or remember who they used to be and who they might want to be. To be invested in the journey that the artwork offers them. There is no such thing as an artwork, there is only the artwork and the viewer. That is the unit. Once an artwork has left the studio, the authorship no longer belongs to the artist, I believe.

**AEG: Why do paint?**

**TERRI:** Because I can, is the short answer. And I believe anyone can paint and draw. I am not a great believer in talent. I think it is more about obsession. If an artist is obsessed, he or she will develop exponentially. What makes up this obsession is a more interesting question to me.

**AEG: If you could live anywhere, where would it be?**

**TERRI:** Right where I am, right now. In South Africa, in Kwa-zulu Natal. In Hilton. In my house on top of the world overlooking the spectacular Umgeni Valley.

**AEG: If you could spend a day with a dead artist, who would it be?**

**TERRI:** It would be Willem de Kooning. I would love to see him make his extraordinary strokes and hear him philosophizing about it. Or wait in the studio with Mondrian and see how long it takes him to commit to a mark.

**AEG: Is it possible to stop creating?**

**TERRI:** Of course it is, I think that is the greatest fear for an artist - which this extraordinary activity might fly away. It does. It can and sometimes it returns. The human capacity for creativity is the big antidote to death. And when you have it in your hands, you know its fragility.

**AEG: What are you most grateful for?**

**TERRI:** I have to say, my wonderful personality. Sadly, I was a rather homely child and the hope that I would be a late flowering beauty has not eventuated.