

*Franko B*

04 November - 23 December 2021



CROSS, 2018

New Art Projects are delighted to present a solo exhibition by Italian artist Franko B. In 2019 Franko B was commissioned to make a major exhibition and installation at Rua Red in Dublin curated by a/political. It is our great pleasure to present two major pieces from the show for a London Audience in 2021 and to include them in this, his first solo show at New Art Projects.

Working in glazed ceramics which he fires in his own kiln, B has made multiple small childlike figures that together form a giant red cross and a giant heart. Fixed onto the walls, they collectively form, document and represent all of the children who like Franko, passed through the hands of the Red Cross and comment on the continuing scandals and abuse of vulnerable children. The resulting installations are monumental in scale placing the viewer in front of a towering walls, that represent the scale and scope of the problem.

Franko B was raised in an Italian orphanage and Boarding School run by the Italian Red Cross, and it's these experiences that he discusses in this exhibition. He has created a particular vision of a childhood surrounded by many other childhoods and alongside images of home, such as it was, and as how it could have been.

Smaller in scale and displayed on plinths, are 'Houses' which Franko B has constructed out of sheets of glazed, fired clay. These houses represent the safe spaces that are constructed by the mind, which stand up as walls of protection, to enclose historical events and memories. As with much of B's work they resonate with love, memory and loss, and become poetic reminders of security, once held dear. Also included is a series of portraits on mirrored glass. These works both represent images to the viewer and reflect the viewing drawing your own image into the work. Along side these pieces are some new objects Franko B has been making in his kiln, Constructed from delicate white glazed ceramic, and embellished with gold and silver leaf, these small sculptures are figurative, abstract and votive. They combine a tactile surface with a fragility that singles them out as both precious and desirable .

Franko B (1960) was born in Milan. His practice spans drawing, installation, performance and sculpture. A pioneer of body art and a leading performance artist and activist, Franko B uses his body as a tool to explore the themes of the personal, political, poetic, resistance, suffering and the reminder of our own mortality and vulnerability. Franko B lives and works in London and is a professor of Sculpture at L'Accademia Albertina Di Belle Arti di Torino, Italy. He is also a visiting lecturer at the Royal College of Art, London. He has performed and exhibited work internationally including at: Tate Modern; ICA (London); South London Gallery; Arnolfini (Bristol); Palais des Beaux-Arts (Brussels); Beaconsfield Contemporary Art (London); Bluecoat Museum (Liverpool); Tate Liverpool; Ruarts Foundation (Moscow); PAC (Milan); Contemporary Art Centre (Copenhagen) and many more. His works are included in many international public and private collections including: Tate, Victoria and Albert Museum, South London Gallery, and the permanent collection of the city of Milan.