

nanda\hobbs



**DROWNING IN A SEA
OF UNCERTAINTY**

bambi



Reflections of Bambi

Street artists have always been at the forefront of political and social commentary. These artists use the urban environment as a canvas, creating images to respond to contemporary events that are occurring around us.

Street art is an artform that breaks the gallery space and brings art into the everyday. This reclaiming of space in the public eye allows artists to create site-specific works that can act as an image-based megaphone: conveying a message, telling a story, commenting on a controversy and reflecting the thoughts of the artist. In this way, it is a media that invites communication. It creates conversations between the audience, the artwork and the artist.

Street art includes everything from paste-ups, to stencils and murals. It is an artform that evolved from the graffiti movement and was traditionally used as a way to mark territory.

This history means that street art has long been linked to the street gangs of the USA and reflects a type of hyper-masculinity. Despite this image, female street artists, from Lady Pink in the late 1970s to the contemporary artist Swoon, have always been on the front line of this movement that is all too often dominated by men in the mainstream media.

It is from this complex and powerful trajectory that Bambi emerges.

Bambi's impact in the street art world has landed her into a space where she uses her artform to make complex, confronting and challenging statements that affect the viewer. The imagery she selects for her artworks presents current events with a satirical humour, creating works that transcend the audience's thoughts. A response to what is happening in our contemporary society.

As a female artist like those before her, she is challenging the gender norms. This is evident in her work that is inspired by one of her major influences, Frida Kahlo, a woman who used her bold self-portraits to raise awareness around adversity. As Bambi has previously stated about Frida:

"She is an icon not only for her courage, but as a champion for women's inner strength. She was passionate about Mexico and its colourful culture and didn't shy away from controversy in voicing her political views."

It is this voice that sits in the work – sometimes hidden and sometimes quite explicit – that expects the audience to play a key role. Bambi presents the audience with a statement or a response to a current event, creating a space for the audience to reflect on the imagery and think about the true meaning behind the work.

Umberto Eco (1989) discusses how audiences view an artwork and create their own thoughts and connections through the imagery, resulting in a "continual metamorphosis" of how they





can interpret an artwork. This metamorphosis in Bambi's work does not necessarily mean that the audience needs to accept her opinion. Rather, it asks of the audience to reflect on the ideas she presents and her own position on current events.

The interpretation inspires Bambi – she wants her work to create a level of knowledge and conversation with the audience. A way of discussing current events through an artwork, to invite the viewer into a space away from the everyday.

Beyond the social and political commentary, Bambi must also be recognised as an artist of rare talent. Her work seamlessly moves from the street art space to the gallery. Even in the often-removed space of the gallery, Bambi challenges us with her imagery – some works clearly sending a direct message and some that leave the audience to unpack the information they are being presented.

This body of work looks at the issues that are present in our current world, discussing the ideas around feminism, the impact of climate change and the way that some world leaders are betraying the trust that is at the base of our democracies.

By engaging us in this way, the exhibition creates a sense of empowerment for the audience and demands that we reflect and indeed, form opinions on what is being presented. This is what art does best – both in the urban landscape and in the hallowed gallery space.

Alix Beattie (PhD Candidate, Western Sydney University)
March, 2019





BUTTERFLY SHARK (YELLOW 3)

Spray on canvas
65 x 65cm framed



BUTTERFLY SHARK (YELLOW 2)

Spray on canvas
65 x 65cm framed



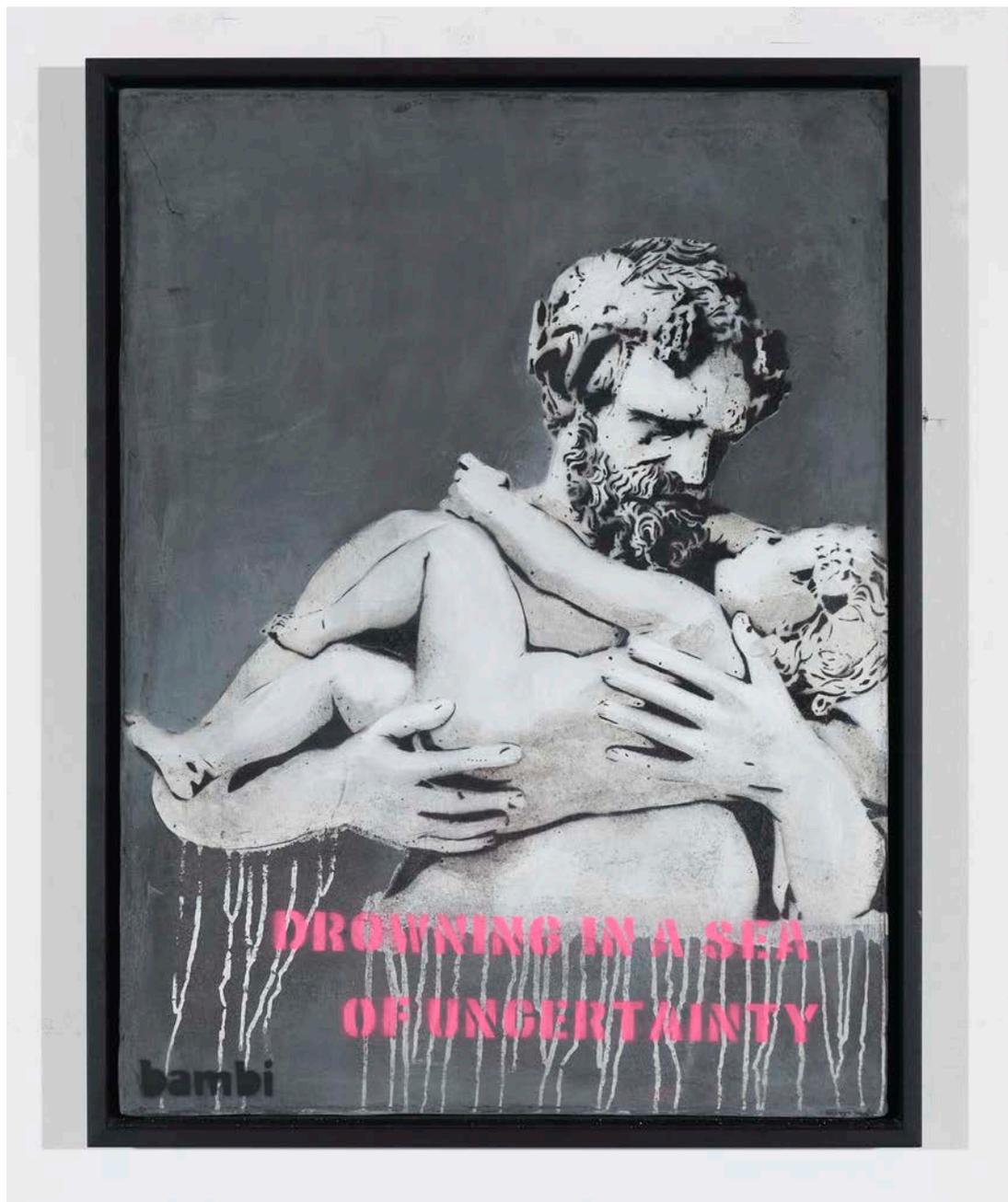
BUTTERFLY SHARK (PINK AND BLUE)

2018
Spray on canvas
60.5 x 60.5cm



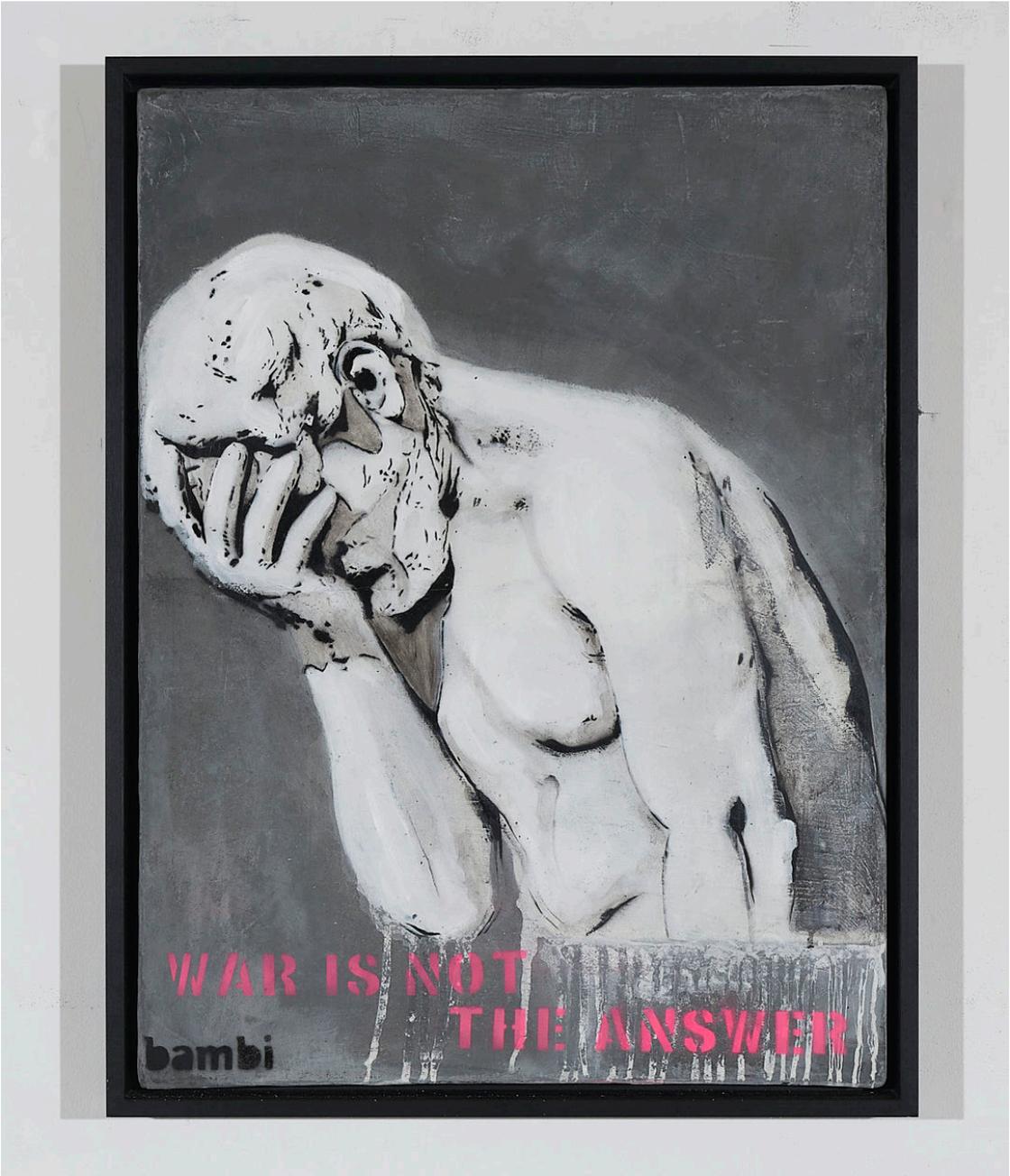
SOS—DROWNING IN A SEA OF UNCERTAINTY

2015
Spray on canvas
97.5 x 77cm framed



DROWNING IN A SEA OF UNCERTAINTY (PINK)

2015
Spray on canvas
85 x 65cm framed



WAR WAS NOT THE ANSWER

2015
Spray on canvas
85 x 65cm framed



LIE LIE LAND

2017
Spray on canvas
50 x 40cm





MORE ICE

Spray on canvas
72 x 72cm



GO WITH THE FLO

2020
8 Colour Silkscreen print on Somerset 410gsm paper
Limited Edition of 30
42 x 28.5cm
Hand Signed, numbered and embossed by the artist



Bambi



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**YOUNG
HENRYS**

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