

JOANA GALEGO Flawed Telepathies 04.12 | 22.01.2026

A single room filled with faces, practically nothing else. A room filled with stillness, nothingness, misunderstandings and whispers. Slow paintings in which I didn't avoid the natural urge to use the smallest brush, the minuscule tools - in order, to, as primordially wished, spend more time looking closely at eyes, nostrils, lips.

Painted faces belonging to no one: strangers who resemble parts of different someones I met. I thought that perhaps being in close proximity to them would grant me some time inside this thing which one can call head.

As the brush dwells in strings of hair the mind occupies itself with inner disagreements and misunderstandings, good intentions that come close to nothing when tentatively put into practice, conversations that only ever happen between one's own two ears, ruminating thoughts sustained by sighing shoulders: flawed telepathies miscommunicated to the world.

I think these paintings are about unsettledness, doubt, confusion and some hope, amidst a certain quantity of self-reflection and regret. A smile that could be well intentioned stares down at the skin of a snake, hinting at change, mischief, temptation and risk, while two cautious hands hold the symbolic wings of a... is it a dove? I think it is a dove, unknowing of any further meaning, held by two cautious hands, under the stars of a night on fire.

Holding a snail, praying for uneventfulness, quietude, nothing, nothing at all. Slowness most of all. Time. Holding a snail, whispering. Holding a snail next to the ducks we used to feed when we were merely kids, in the park around the corner, a short car journey, and we're there, the grandparents too, holding a snail in secret. Then holding a candle.

Holding money and holding shoulders. Holding shoulders. Holding cash notes in a foreign country. I know these from the place I was born in.

Does any of this ever come through? The relentless questioning of meaning and purpose, even within myself, as I paint. The results are flawed telepathies, messages half said, half known, emitted to the world, perhaps sensed, questioned together. Doubts which stem from the attempt of communicating and understanding. Small paintings which tried to spend time, slowly, with the fast-paced anxieties of not always, if not never, getting things perfectly right. (Joana Galego, 2025)

Joana Galego (1994, Portugal), lives and works in London. She received her postgraduate diploma from the Royal Drawing School in 2017 and her BA in Painting from the University of Lisbon in 2016. Her work has been included in the solo shows: *Seashells in my mother's garden and the giant boulder rolling down*, Isabel Sullivan Gallery, New York 2025; *Jardins*, Galeria Belard, Lisbon 2024; *Mole lunar sinal*, Soho Revue, London 2023; *Spring and all*, Royal Drawing School, London 2019; *O lugar indeciso*, Museu das Artes de Sintra, Lisbon, 2016; and several group exhibitions including *Monotypes*, Messums, London, 2025; *Whose Muse?*, Palo Gallery, New York, 2024; *Liminality*, EY Projects, Beijing, 2024; *What I See I Will Never Tell*, Wilder Gallery, London, 2021. Her work is held in public and private collections including The Royal Collection (UK).

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