MIKEY CUDDIHY

AIMÉE IN GALASHIELS AND OTHER PAINTINGS

28 APRIL – 28 MAY 1995
FLOWERS EAST, LONDON

1 JULY – 27 AUGUST 1995
CASTLEFIELD GALLERY,
MANCHESTER

Flowers East

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TUESDAY – SUNDAY 10.00AM – 6.00PM

Untitled (Yellow) 1994
Acrylic and gesso on canvas
175 x 117cms

Katherine Veiled 1995
Acrylic and gesso on canvas
173 x 107cms

AIMÉE IN GALASHIELS

Mikey Cuddihy describes these paintings as a response to the earlier *Iron Gates of Life* series of 1990–92. But instead of working on the floor in what she calls a 'myopic pool' and using small doodles to create large, emblematic paintings, she stretched the new works on the wall and did not, initially, refer to any specific external source. Gravity, paint falling, came into play and she was able to work on more than one painting at a time.

'Decoration' remains a preoccupation. But while the new works share a certain likeness of signature with the *Iron Gates of Life* series, the large emblematic forms are reduced and are no longer seen in isolation. There is a kind of immediacy about the painted marks which are arranged (some in evenly-spaced order, some teeming, stream-of-consciousness-like) across Mikey Cuddihy's new canvases.

From *Aimée in Galashiels* (1994) onwards, not only has Mikey Cuddihy once again started to work from doodles made while talking on the telephone, but importantly, definingly, she has acknowledged her interlocutors in the title of each work. Sometimes, as with *Bella* (1995) the name as well as the doodle is painted on the canvas. Other canvases, such as *Katherine Veiled* see something hidden, barely discernible behind an undulating, lace-like tracery.

Cuddihy herself suggests that these new works can be 'loosely described as portraits.' We can accept this proposition, but they are portraits *in absentia*, and lacking any object we find ourselves gazing directly at the subject, at Cuddihy herself. Her reiteration of each doodle does not function as an attempt to represent some absent thing or person, certainly not 'Aimée', 'Katherine' or 'Bella', nor even perhaps is it a repeated acting out of a moment that is lost, but a fetishistic process whereby loss itself is endlessly deferred.

TONY WHITE
March 1995