I have been collecting art for almost 40 years, mainly ceramics, but I never thought I would be interested in such figurative work. So what is so different about Kerry Jameson? Most of the time artists working with clay, making figures, seem most interested in how to show their expertise in recreating the human or animal form exactly. For me this immediately limits their expression to what you see on the surface and is mainly concerned with showing skill. At its best most of this work does not live beyond its physical dimensions.

Kerry is an instinctive modeller who gives life to all the images she produces, whether human, animal, or other objects they are never inanimate works. They have a history, a patination of life, and provide continual thought as to what it was that stimulated their creation. She overloads herself with ideas but never the work, which has a clarity that makes it more real than reality.

From an early age, as with most children but particularly in her case, she created and lived in her own world. Now you could say these are her adult toys, which contain the intensity of a child’s dream. They are created with an abstracted sense of detail, as though she had taken flat images from paintings and given them just enough three-dimensional form, but left it to the viewer to imagine them moving through a landscape that is suggested by their history. This joint dialogue between artist and viewer makes a very moving experience. It is this abundance of narrative that I find so exhilarating.

I find writing about this exhibition difficult. I have seen the cast of characters lined up on shelves in Kerry’s studio and she has described how the stage is to be set, but knowing her it will probably change by the time it reaches Marsden Woo.

When I first heard she was working on a ‘body’ and saw a sketch of a Medieval knight in armour laid out with his feet resting on a dog I thought this was her way of dealing with the confined space of the back room – a lying in state. She had chosen to be out of the way, similar to a child creating a world beneath a table. She likes confined, half hidden spaces. This was a starting point but as usual Kerry has moved on, prompted by a visit to the Wellcome Trust Collection. The original idea of how we deal with death has expanded to what makes us, and how we mend ourselves.

The ‘body’, made in sections to fit the kiln, acts as both a container for and a way of showing some of its organs. Each section is wrapped in sacking – mumified - but the ends are covered in vivid red cloth suggesting freshly severed limbs. As part of this fascination with the body she talks of the power of amulets, clay body parts immersed in water to help mend the relevant broken or troubled limb. Mind over matter. I believe she is able to give such powers to her sculptures.

Her cast of miniature characters will sprawl over the ‘body’, somewhat in the manner of a Heironymus Bosch painting, teeming with figures and activity, less about Hell, rather more a Frankenstein fabrication. Manipulating full sized surgical tools, one scooping an eye from a socket (or perhaps putting it in), many with threads or reins in their hands, lifelines perhaps criss-crossing this body landscape, constricting it or allowing a flow of energy. The intense richness of the Medieval is important. Finding a black velvet that has no shine, whose depth is unfathomable, gold and silver threads that do not glitter too much, the sign of another age.

The very physical nature of Kerry’s sculptures using increasing amounts of mixed media to dress them could, in someone else’s hands, reduce them to caricatures or cartoons, but I believe that because they are so vivid and vital to her this will not happen. I look forward to more of her reality, with its distinctive edginess leavened with humour.

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The Anthony Shaw Collection is to be on long-term loan to the York Museum Trust, and will be shown in the York Art Gallery from 2015.