The starting point for these works by Kerry Jameson was the caves at Lascaux. The images painted on the walls there along with the handprints of those early people hold their mystery still. We will never know exactly why they chose to depict the animals and the scenes as they did. The pictures suggest narratives of hunts, revered beasts and through the handprints some artists have left us a sense of their personal, physical presences. The images are scratched and painted with hands and sticks using charcoal and ochre. They ‘fit’ into the spaces and some seem to have been deliberately made in nooks that are difficult to approach. Caves were and are places of relative comfort. The temperatures are even; there is shelter from weather and wild beasts, fresh water is plentiful and those early people may have shared our own wonder at the natural beauty the caves offer.

Kerry’s drawings wean us quickly away from the cave art into the brews she concocts in her imagination. She transforms her impressions of Lascaux into beastly things. These are creatures that include parts of mammals, birds, reptiles, humans, insects and molluscs even. They emerge out of her cauldron and cast spells on us. She employs clay, textiles found objects, paint and gesso in their making until they are ‘born’ to her satisfaction. The results are compelling. We may seek to hide from her creatures but inevitably they evoke emotions in us and upon us. These beasts are more reflections of us all than they are of the splendid creatures on Lascaux’s walls. She is an alchemist and her methodology from her first drawings via the complex mix of firing, breaking, reforming, selecting additions, texturing and colouring until a singular creature emerges, are uneasy gestations. She lives the necessary dreams and nightmares on the way.

Thus confronting us in this exhibition is a range of beasts. They do not set out to intimidate, to scare us, but they may shock. Shock because within them are mirrors held up to us and to the world in which we play our various parts. Kerry Jameson does not hold back. She recognises that with us there are demons, daemons and familiars but their nature drives many of us to deny them. We may wish we were sleek, cool characters poised in fashionable, minimal interiors but in fact we are all blood and bone. We consume, digest and defecate. We want and we waste. We are the stuff of spells and fears. All these things are the compelling ingredients of Kerry Jameson’s work.

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