



Carl Gopal website text document: <http://www.carlgopal.com/Untitled/>

## *Stockholm Syndrome-Unexhibited Works 2001*

Stockholm Syndrome remained untitled for years. It is a collection of paintings I did not exhibit in a gallery. Instead I held an open studio exhibition in Melbourne above a shop selling bad, fun, Italian furniture. Lots of personal story I can only skim over as it belongs to me. Like wading into the ocean and feeling the currents around your legs. All acrylic on canvas paintings. I think this was a very powerful stage of my development.

Stockholm Syndrome is a difficult collection of paintings because they express the turmoil of a difficult relationship. I haven't exhibited them. Some I sold, others I gave away, some I destroyed. It was not the best time in my life and I did not consider the impact on my artistic practice. Looking back, these are very strong paintings and a leap for me in terms of applying the paint, the thematic elements, and raw energy alternating between control and primal scream.

I paint in a more methodical way today, but these years of letting loose in the most self-centred way, they really can't be under-estimated. The title says it all. We can become so used to abuse that we become afraid to let it go. My advice? Let it go! I think one of the reasons I don't engage with way the market wants to position you - either in a critical dialogue or by comparing you to so and so is because I am also a person. Artists are people. We go to work, we love, get sick, make good, do bad, screw up. If I explained these paintings without using emotive terms, tried to rationalise it, it would be a catalogue from Sears.

Going to the edge and back is something painters need to do, but it is a risk. They don't talk about it amongst themselves as much as you might think. And a lot of artists don't visit this place since they embraced the careerist model. Perhaps it's a choice. Would anyone do it if they knew it would involve a sort of unproductive pain? For me - no way. I would have hitched a ride to Vegas and started a career as a croupier years ago. Yes, driving into walls is a choice to a degree, but it's a bad choice. I would have avoided a lot of things had I known the pitfalls.

Perhaps that's why I appreciate my art. For what it gives me that I don't want. What a teacher. 9/11 punctuated the end of this phase.