



► **Untitled Monkey Painting by Narbi Price**



► **Untitled Gutter Painting by Narbi Price**

ly to have been a powder monkey (one of the boys who carried gunpowder on warships in the days of sail)."

Having found a reference to Fish Sands, he painted that. "I reckon this is where it definitely didn't happen," he smiles, acknowledging that perhaps he departed from his brief.

One of the most recent paintings shows the site of the Kard Bar, in Newcastle, which was burnt down in 2015.

Untitled Flowers Painting (KB for Ettrick) is a homage to the landmark, owner Brian Sandells who died in the blaze and poet Ettrick Scott who spoke movingly at his funeral.

In an annexe two paintings face each other. These are Untitled Gutter Painting and Untitled Path Painting and they are very personal.

Narbi says: "This is where I got beaten up in about 2001. It was an unprovoked attack and basically five guys took penalty kicks with my head.

"I suffered a broken jaw and a broken nose."

Narbi tells the story on film which you can watch in the gallery. It's horrific. There were actually two attacks. Knocked unconscious the first time, he came round to be assailed a second time when some of his attackers returned.

They were never caught and, surprisingly, Narbi says he was sent home after hospital treatment with no scan of his head.

"I think they were just looking for sport," he says.

Narbi was able to locate the site of the attack because he remembered,

on regaining consciousness, seeing a lamp post reflected in a pool of his own blood.

Narbi, who studied fine art at Northumbria and Newcastle universities, lives in Gateshead now. Doing those two paintings was "cathartic", he says.

This Must Be The Place runs until July 1 at VANE gallery which is on the first floor of Commercial Union House on Pilgrim Street, Newcastle, NE1 6QE.

It is open Wednesday to Saturday, 12 noon to 5pm.

On Tuesday, June 20, at 6pm, Narbi Price will be in conversation with Matthew Hearn at VANE gallery. It's free but must be booked - email [events@vane.org.uk](mailto:events@vane.org.uk). Find details of the VANE programme at [www.vane.org.uk](http://www.vane.org.uk)



## PAUL BENNEWORTH COLUMNIST

**M**Y attitude to elections was scarred by my experiences in standing as a school class representative. I'm happy with my own opinions and ideas but, since that disaster, I've never felt the need to try to impose them on others at the ballot box.

I'm a terrible salesman, and I've never been good at closing the deal. I can remember all too well the awful sinking feeling at a conference trying to persuade university managers to want to understand their performance rather than just selling them another league table.

Standing on stage in Vienna was one of my worst professional experiences. The slow ebb then collapse of energy, motivation and self-confidence in the face of sceptical and increasingly hostile faces stayed with me ever since.

I was delighted when the chair banged the hammer to end the day and put me out of my misery, letting me slink off into the background. I was a wreck, emotionally drained, stunned and embarrassed at it getting so out of control.

Watching Theresa May's election campaigning in recent weeks, I get the sense she's going to be delighted when she can finally slink off stage.

She was nicknamed "Submarine" by civil servants in her time at the Home Office for her unerring ability to dive into the depths as trouble approached, only emerging once more once others had taken the blame.

The Tories have so long been used to blowing their racist dog-whistles to get votes scurrying to them that they seem to be collapsing as their ill-thought through plans collapse around them. And her submarine dived once more in the face of hostile reception to her election plans, crying off appearances at leadership debates, while not even deigning to answer interviewers' questions.

She seems in denial about the state of the country today, with her government's cuts leaving the NHS, schools, policing and even elderly home care facing collapse. Cameron's Big Society has millions of hard-working families using foodbanks and trapped in zero-hours contracts as they presided over a 10% slump in real wages since their election.

So when they called for immigration controls, dementia tax and a return to fox hunting, no one doubted that Theresa May was the

new face of the Nasty Party. And, as voters' antipathy to the Invisible PM grew, so they have slowly started warming to the Labour Party's well-costed constructive manifesto.

Listening to the Shadow Chancellor setting out his plans for the North East two months ago, it's hard to understand how we could oppose them. A regional investment bank might make up for the gaping hole left when the Tories senselessly trashed the regional development agency, and I've long supported extending the Metro to Ashington to drive Wansbeck's revival.

The offshore tax dodgers running the gutter press might not want you to hear it, but Labour have a message of hope, for the North East and the whole country. We remain a rich country and, as

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long as we look after each other and not the fat cats, we can afford to offer dignity for all.

A Labour victory might even get a Brexit pause to pull back from economic suicide, and stop Theresa May's government zombie shuffle to a "no deal" Brexit.

And you sense that Corbyn is picking up energy from his audience's reaction to his ideas, not yet enthused but willing to give him a hearing.

As a human being, I feel for Theresa May, and the humiliation and exhaustion her election campaign debacle is heaping on her.

So I urge you to do the decent thing on Thursday, bring the curtain down on these unloved Tory scoundrels, and allow our PM to slink off for much-needed recuperation.

■ North East born Paul Benneworth is a senior researcher at the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies at the University of Twente in the Netherlands.