



JUSTIN WILLIAMS

# Before '84

19 October, 2019 – 23 November, 2019

COMA

# Before '84

Continuing his study of persons on the fringes of society - the malleable, the impressionable, those ripe for distortion - Justin Williams looks further into both his own and humanity's past in *Before '84*. Dealing with outsiders and those who position themselves away from the norm this presentation of both wall-based paintings and various sculptural objects allows Williams to explore worship, alternative thinking and cult participation.

Williams is attempting to clarify threads that link these people, and their near universal search for some form of utopia, together. In these cases utopian ideals are generally presented or fabricated by an enigmatic leader of some sort and participants have given over to cult like behaviour and thinking patterns. In the painted works the viewer can see clusters of devotees, intimate scenes of worship and sacrifice and solitary structures based on real-life locations.

During the process of preparing artwork for *Before '84* Williams was in the midst of a re-reading of George Orwell's *1984*, paying closer attention to segments that refer to the scrambled notion of the past controlling the future and applying this thinking to analysis of leaders of cult-like organisations. More than just a coincidence the artist was compelled to read the book as the title itself is also William's birth year. This led to a realisation that the majority of historical inspiration for his work occurred prior to 1984 and that this past has not only inspired the artist but also that modern day cult structure is often galvanized by historical structures of veneration and devotion.

In both the painted figures and the more representational sculptural pieces the viewer is able to view their present form but also clear markers that point towards another time, like ghosts and scars of a buried and unspoken era.



Justin Williams  
*Guided by domestic voices*, 2019  
oil on canvas  
170 x 140 cm  
66 15/16 x 55 1/8 inches



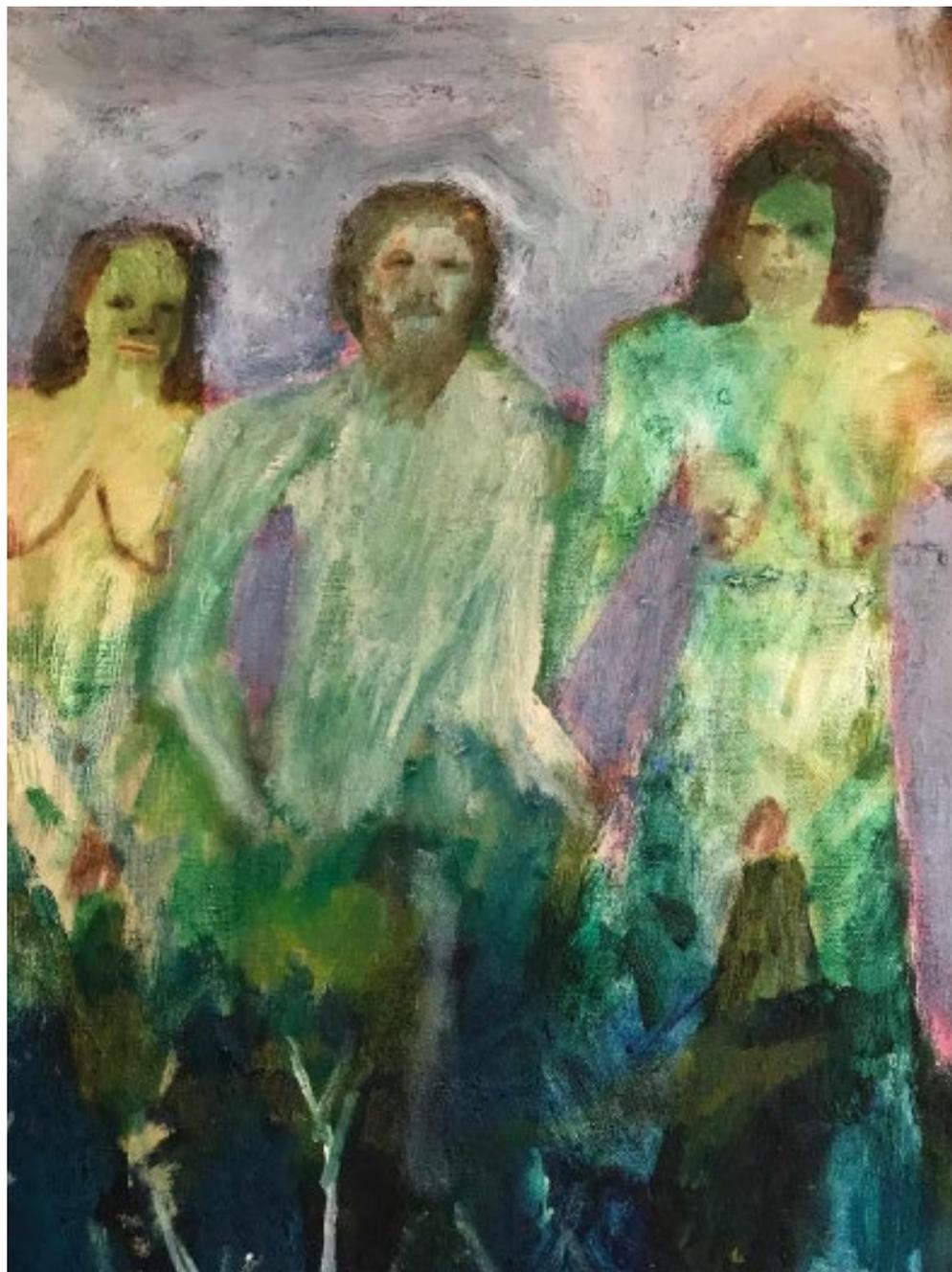
Justin Williams  
*Baba Desi*, 2019  
oil on canvas  
160 x 120 cm  
62 31/32 x 47 1/4 inches



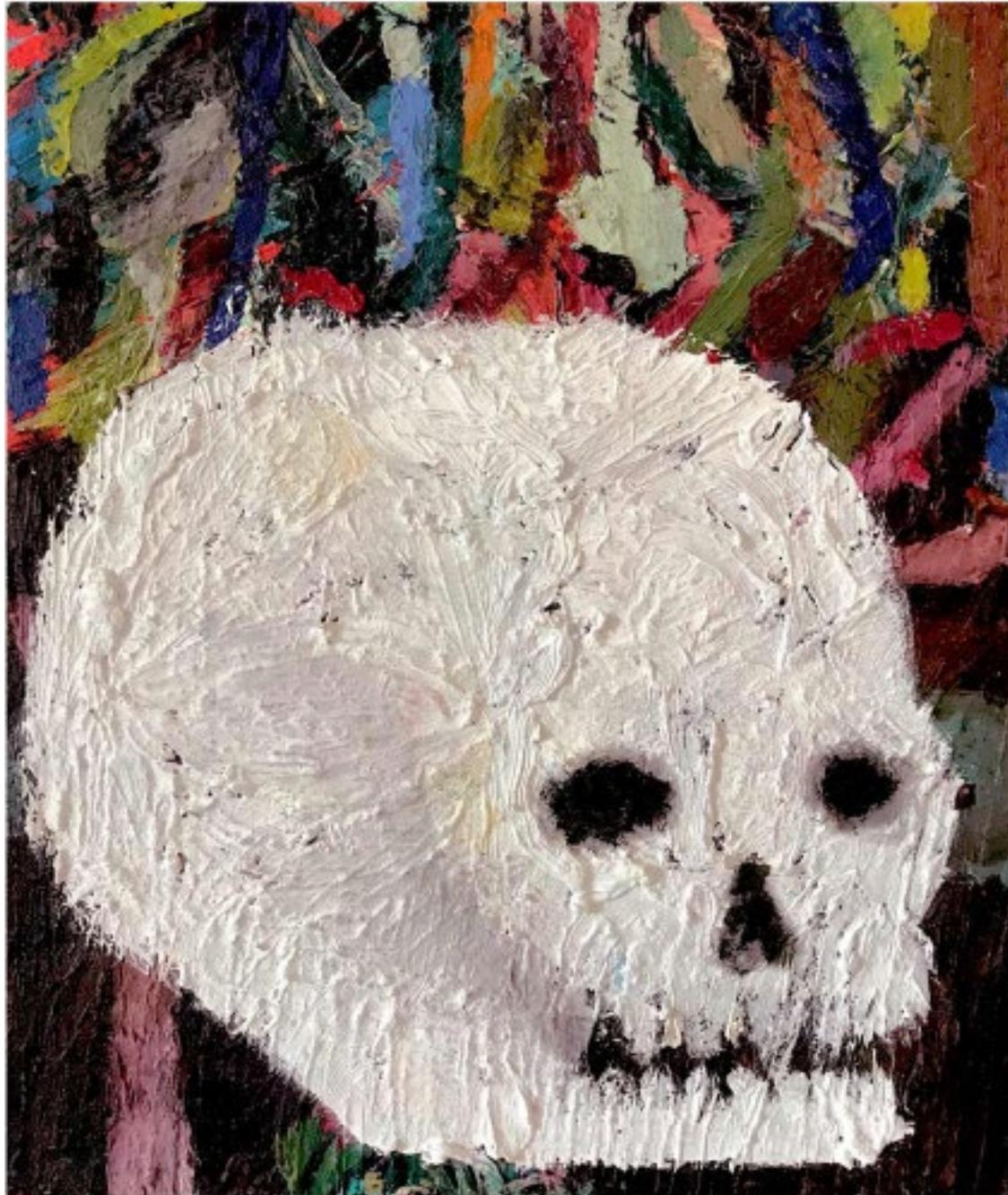
Justin Williams  
*It's not so hard to be on  
the outside looking in, 2019*  
oil on linen  
90 x 60 cm  
35 7/16 x 23 5/8 inches



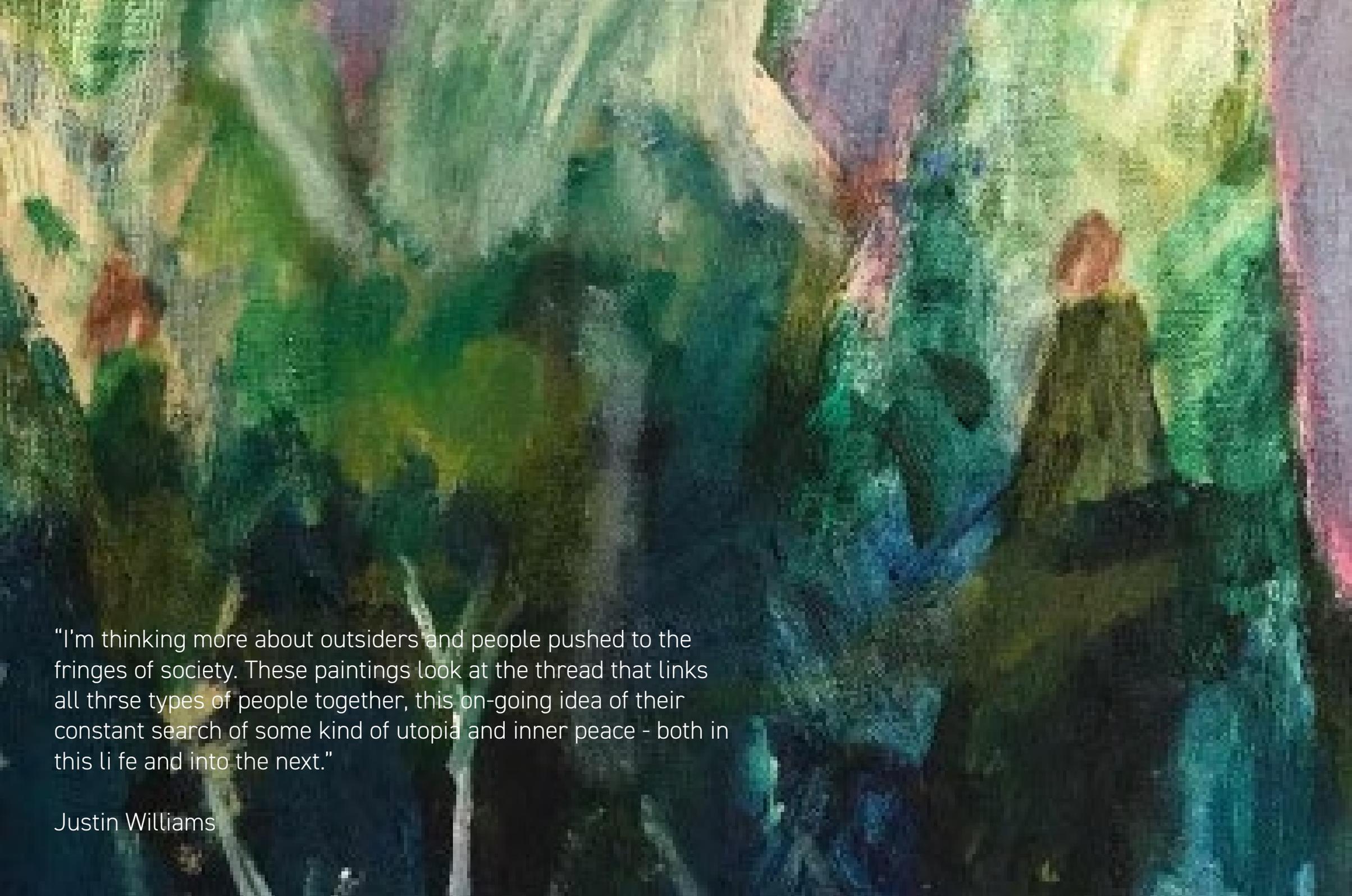
Justin Williams  
*Beneath*, 2019  
oil on canvas  
62 x 54 cm  
24 13/32 x 21 17/64 inches



Justin Williams  
*Begin again*, 2019  
oil on canvas  
40 x 31 cm  
15 3/4 x 12 3/16 inches



Justin Williams  
*Small child / Face warm  
from the sun, 2019*  
oil on timber panel  
36 x 32 cm  
14 5/32 x 12 19/32 inches



"I'm thinking more about outsiders and people pushed to the fringes of society. These paintings look at the thread that links all these types of people together, this on-going idea of their constant search of some kind of utopia and inner peace - both in this life and into the next."

Justin Williams



First Floor, 71-73 Stanley Street  
Darlinghurst, NSW, 2010  
Australia  
[info@comagallery.com](mailto:info@comagallery.com)  
+61 2 8316 3592