

SLOW LEARNER/FAST RUNNER

I went to school with this kid. Matthew. He was the class clown. He wasn't too bright but was super talented in entertaining. He was so quick witted and had a retort for any situation he was thrown into and would always have the class rolling around in fits of laughter. The teachers were always on guard to avoid his awkward engagements.

I enjoyed Matthews company and we grew to become close friends spending many weekends together. We did all the usual teenage boy stuff. Talked of girls, smashed things, climbed things, drank cheap booze and experimented with drugs. It wasn't anything too crazy. Nothing that harmed anyone other than ourselves.

I remember once going swimming at the local pool together. We were just messing about doing bombies and horseys and then for a laugh Matthew decided he would shit in the pool. He just decided it was something that needed to be done. Never before have I seen such a smirk of delight and satisfaction. He did it. A group of turds floated up to the surface. We jumped out ever so quickly and ran for the changing rooms.

Actually thinking of that just reminded me of that scene in Caddyshack where the child spots the floating 'doodie' in the pool and the pool is evacuated. Carl Spackler (Bill Murray's character) cleans the pool out and finds the turd and smells it then proceeds to eat it, identifying it as a rogue chocolate bar. Classic scene.

Well I didn't get to see what happened to the turds or if they indeed evacuated the pool. We left too quickly to see if any commotion was caused. That was the nice thing I think about such acts. It was just cheeky teenage stuff where the fear of trouble and confrontation was enough to make you run fast but not enough to stop you pushing the boundaries with these random, thoughtless, sometimes premeditated acts. We loved to do stupid things but we were the first to run away to avoid anyone knowing we did them. And Matthew was the fastest runner I knew. It was like seeing one of those fast-forwarded Benny Hill scenes. Matthew would do something and then up and disappear in a comical fast jittery run. I suppose just seeing him scurrying away pointed to the fact he had just been responsible for some awkward action.

However, these paintings I have to own up to. I can't run or hide. I did make them. I continue to make them. I can't make these marks and choices and pretend it was someone else. I have to be able to say that these are records of my life and actions, my interests, my time. I spend a shit-load of hours making paintings and it

doesn't make sense to pretend I don't. I didn't really make a conscious decision to be a painter. I didn't study painting at art school. Some folk will probably read that line and say 'yeah we can tell'.

I don't mind how and where these paintings float in the whole 'history of art' pool or if they indeed live on at all into the distant future. I am sure some of them will survive me and be some living proof that I was here considering my world around me. For now, I am happy shitting myself for all to see and I'm not running anywhere.

David Turley, 2017