

Dr Jane Lomax-Smith on the artist



I hate complacency. In my public and professional life, I have been fortunate to meet many extraordinary individuals who have had the power to shock me. Sometimes they are clearly different by virtue of their physical presence. Occasionally they are outsiders who have developed unilaterally and stubbornly to compensate for other weaknesses. Sometimes they have acquired an acceptance of their impact on others and almost to avoid disappointment have developed a reciprocal stage presence. Occasional Statesmen, religious leaders and even sporting stars can have a disarming charisma.

But the world famous scientists, Presidents and princes are rarely as stubbornly fascinating as those individuals who worry themselves into narrow fields, or are driven past enthusiasm to obsession. I love to meet the obsessive if only to reaffirm my faith in human enthusiasm for something beyond television. You don't get an exhibition, or a book published unless you are driven. No doubt the same often-antisocial drive can generate wealth but in the personal realms of art, intellectual endeavour and many personal hobbies you only scale the peaks by subjugating financial, domestic and social interests.

Simone Kennedy appears at first to embody domestic order. But she is a truly remarkable woman on a journey of exploration not only to delineate her skills but also to understand their products. She has a profound technical talent from which emerge both challenging and tantalising pieces. Her earlier works reminded me of my childhood expeditions around London as they lurked in the Underground. Her current pieces are more like subterranean desires almost beyond her own comprehension. I am immediately drawn to her by the familiarity of her past and the charm of her presence, but know that she cannot be what she seems, who is? She is a woman capable of anything. I wonder if she fully realises that yet.