

## a review

In this exhibition, Jean Parker presents us with a body of work that is remarkable for several reasons. First and foremost, it was made as a reflection upon a period of illness and medical treatments and Jean's desire to work within a range of feelings and emotions that she experienced during this time. She does this in ways that are not overtly literal or mawkish. The choices she has made in creating this work underline her integrity as a sculptor and the importance of this in her life.

There is a collection of terracotta heads that have an intimate, hand-worked quality. They effectively record a sense of fluctuating emotions during a time of reduced physical strength. This work has an accessibility that Jean hopes can be developed and used in the future as an aid to people in similar circumstances. The major part of the exhibition is made up of an impressive group of large alabaster heads and a dormant figure developed from the imagery of the small terracotta's.

Jean's careful selection of pink and white alabaster to work with is highly successful. The reds and pinks are all too reminiscent of flesh and wounds whilst the beautiful translucence of the white has an almost spiritual uplifting quality.

## contact us

The boldness of strength, with which these larger pieces have been carved, relates back to some of the earlier work of Jacob Epstein. The blank, white face has similarities to the work of the contemporary British sculptor Stephen Cox who was greatly inspired by Indian sculpture.

Jean Parker's work has a meditative, focussed quality which is rare at a time when many figurative artists have chosen to deal with the vulnerability of the human body in a more violent and abject manner.

Mandy Havers

Request for the free loan of these sculptures and arrangements for workshops based on them can be made through:

Westhill Endowment  
The Lodge Westhill, South Drive,  
Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6WE

Tel. 0121-472 7980/8000  
Fax. 0121-415 8453

Email: [j.walmsley@btconnect.com](mailto:j.walmsley@btconnect.com)  
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[www.westhilltrust.org](http://www.westhilltrust.org)

Charity No. 1104735; Reg. Co. No. 5127764

# Good Grief

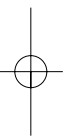
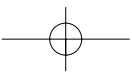
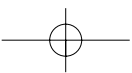
a collection of eight  
alabaster sculptures  
illustrating the feelings  
of grief and loss

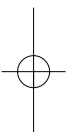
# BALD STATEMENTS

the exhibition

From Sculptor  
Jean Parker M.A.

In association with Westhill Endowment  
A grant-giving charity





## the exhibition

The exhibition was born as a reflection of Jean Parker's own experience of cancer. The eight small terracotta heads emerged during the course of a seven-day silent Retreat and present a powerful and unique visual exploration of the grief process. The photographic and 3D images in clay and alabaster relate not only to loss of health but to significant loss of any kind.

To complement the exhibition, packs of photographs and background material are available as a valuable resource for use by individuals or by groups in schools, churches, hospitals, hospices, in training and therapeutic situations.

The hope is that the exhibition and photographic images will help stimulate discussion and the understanding of powerful emotions, which can feel overwhelming. To see these images as transitional stages and part of a natural process experienced by many may prove helpful and reassuring, offering glimpses of hope when all seems lost.

## the process

### 1. DENIAL

I'm all right...shocked - stunned protective mask?

### 2. DISBELIEF

no! pain, protest, indignation

### 3. QUESTIONING

why? search for meaning, need to make sense of...

### 4. ANGER

rage, anguish realisation of grim reality

### 5. DEPRESSION

deep sadness, despair, desolation

### 6. ACCEPTANCE

awareness facing the reality of loss

### 7. HEALING

moving on to a peaceful place

### 8. PEACE

life no longer defined by the loss

## the artist

Jean Parker studied art as a mature student for four years in Coventry and later completed an M.A. With a background of teaching and a family of four children, it was not until midlife that the opportunity arose for her artistic creative energies to be given full expression. Her affinity for sculpture and gift as a modeler and carver soon became evident.

She works in stone, clay and bronze. Her themes are universal. Religion, psychology and personal relationships provide an endless source of inspiration expressed in both figurative and abstract form.

She exhibits widely and works largely to commission, lecturing, teaching and conducting workshops.

#### Acknowledgements

Thanks to Richard Sadler, my photographer, Mandy Havers, (Senior Lecturer in Fine Art, Coventry University)

And to my family and friends for their interest, encouragement and support.

Jean Parker, Sculptor

