

King Charles' Portrait *and other things*



by Miles Mathis

First published May 16, 2024

I hadn't intended to comment on this, since there isn't much left to say regarding the vulgarity of Modernism and the Phoenicians. [I have said it all before many times.](#) However, my younger or newer readers may not have heard it, so for their sake I am here once again.

First things first: Some outlets led by calling this a self-portrait, which means people just don't know anything about art or the dictionary anymore. For it to be a self-portrait, Charles would have had to paint it himself. It is just a portrait. Charles is an amateur painter, but he doesn't paint portraits.

Jonathan Yeo is claiming it took him three years to paint this. If so, he must have spent about 3 seconds on it each day. Although it is large, I could have painted this in about a week, not that I would have. The face is the only thing that would take any time, but even so that is just a few days' work. The rest could be slapped on in a matter of hours. Because the style of the face doesn't match the rest of it, my guess is Yeo hired out the face and maybe painted the rest of it himself. That is now common at the upper end of Modernism, see for example Damien Hirst, who is known to hire out any real painting to specialists. The modern artist is only an idea-man.

Others have said the head is better than the rest of it, but even it isn't good. It is the standard Modern uglification, *a la* Lucian Freud. Charles is an ugly old guy, yes, but he isn't that splotchy. So why make him look even worse than he looks in the early morning light just after crawling out of bed from a bender? Because that is the Modern way. Looking your best is old-school. This is more “authentic”, according to the scurrying critics. Plus, if you paint things bad and ugly on purpose, you can claim to be making some deep statement about politics or history or the human condition, blahblah. Painting

beautiful paintings that people might actually want to look at has been passe for over a century, since around the time John Singer Sargent retired. We are supposed to believe art has risen above such shallowness, now being more “relevant” and “realized”. We have never been told why ugliness is more relevant than beauty, but there it is. That is what you are supposed to believe to get your union card in the art markets.

You might also consider this: if you are painting bad on purpose, you can write off any mistakes as part of that. Accidentally bad and purposely bad look the same, don't they, so you can't tell the difference. It is a great way to hide ineptitude. They want you to think painting beautifully is easy and that painting ugly is hard, since it takes a lot of honesty and grit to paint ugly. Upside down to the truth as usual. You can pass off just about any failure of technique as gritty and Modern, but beauty is rarer now than it has ever been, since nobody knows any real technique. Even in contemporary realism, almost everyone is tracing from slides and boosting all their colors in photoshop, which doesn't lead to beauty. It leads to garish monstrosities like the one above, even in the best of circumstances.

What about the butterfly? The mainstream outlets are lying to your stupid face, claiming it has something to do with Charles' environmentalism. You have to laugh. Others go just a baby step deeper, saying it has something to do with him being the “monarch”. Monarch butterfly. A step in the right direction, but still only one floor down in a rabbit hole with fifty floors. Is that what Project Monarch was about? Part of MKUltra? It was about environmentalism? It was something to do with the Monarchy? No, it is a Phoenician symbol, like the bees, the Phoenix, and so on. Part of all that, which Gerry and I have covered elsewhere.



Pic: Murray Sanders



People are shocked by this latest portrait, but it is only because they haven't been paying attention. This is what the royals and all the other rich and famous have been doing for a century. So it is not shocking at all. It would be shocking if they went back to making and buying beautiful and interesting

art. That portrait of the Queen is by Lucian Freud, perhaps the most famous and feted painter since WWII. He is recently deceased, but his record at auction is already \$86 million. For stuff like this:



I bet you can't guess who that is. Kate Moss. Yes, really. Was she really that bloated, stripey, stoned, wall-eyed and pin-headed that day? No, but this is what the rich and famous apparently want from their art. That is actually very tame compared to most of the stuff they have exhibited in their homes. It is somewhat *less* repulsive than most of Freud's other paintings.

Just pick up some back issues of *Architectural Digest* and check out the homes of these people, concentrating on the art. Other than maybe Andrew Lloyd Webber, I haven't seen any of them who have actual art up.



For instance, that is a room in George Clooney's Lake Como mansion. What pointless art, right? A kaleidoscope? But wait, what is in the center? Our butterfly again.

And how ugly is that coffee table? The rest of it looks like an upscale hotel lobby.

But back to the matter at hand. Jonathan Yeo has no real talent, so why is he so famous? Must be a rich kid from the families, right? Yep, his father Tim was a conservative member of Parliament for 32 years for South Suffolk. He was John Major's Minister of the Environment and served in the Shadow Cabinet after that. He was deselected in disgrace in 2015 for conflicts of interest as an MP. Jonathan's mother is Diane Pickard.

Speaking of conflicts of interest, the artist Yeo got his first major break at age 30 when

Yeo was commissioned by the House of Commons as the official Election Artist for the 2001 general election, and he painted the leaders of the three largest parties. His triptych of Tony Blair, William Hague, and Charles Kennedy, entitled, 'Proportional Representation', was made up of canvases sized according to the subjects' popularity.

But wait, his father was a member of the House of Commons at the time. Aren't there rules against such official nepotism? It would be like Nancy Pelosi's son being chosen as the official Congressional photographer or something, with no contest coming in. A sort of no-bid, no-merit contract. And yet you never hear a peep about it.

So who are these Yeos? Are they peerage? Yep. They come out of Devon in about 1800, where they are related to the Balls and Satterlys. George Washington was a Ball, remember. Through the Pinsents they link us to the Todds of New York, which may link us to Abraham Lincoln. In 1886 these Yeos hit the big time when one of them married the Baronet Cunynghame. Guess who the baronet's niece was? Only Pamela Stanley, daughter of the 5th Baron Sheffield and Margaret Gordon. You knew that was coming, didn't you? This also links us more recently to the Duponts and Watts, and therefore to the royal family. The King is a cousin of the Watts and Gordons. So now you know why Yeo was chosen.



Before this, Yeo was best known for his celebrity portraits and cosmetic surgery series. Yes, that does at least look like Nicole Kidman, but it is still amateur portraiture. I note he has squared off the canvas on all his paintings, indicating he can't draw well freehand. That indicates that at least computers aren't creating this. Maybe he is painting these heads himself. Other than that I have nothing nice to say. I note that he never finishes anything, just having these floating heads with either no background or a slapped-in mess. Why? Is it to be cool? Is it to make a statement? No, it is because working a figure into a background and making it look right is beastly difficult. Very few people can do it and almost none even try anymore.

I have to think this is what gave him the idea for the cosmetic surgery series. One of his buddies probably made a joke about all his work looking cut or cut-out, so he figured why not make a conceit out of it, saying his people were undergoing cosmetic surgery.

Surgery to have backgrounds, hair, clothes, and all beauty removed, I guess.

continued



That's his portrait of Kristin Scott Thomas. Can you believe how bad that is? And yet

His paintings are included within the permanent collections of the [National Portrait Gallery, London](#), the [Laing Art Gallery](#), Newcastle, The Museum of National History at [Frederiksborg Castle](#) in Denmark, and The [Royal Collection](#).

Just for fun, let's compare one of his best portraits to one of mine:



That is about as ambitious as he gets. What's wrong with it, other than the obvious? Well, he doesn't even know how to light a face for a portrait, to start with. He apparently just uses photography lighting, evenly lit from both sides. So there are no shadows, no darks, and no real highlights. That is the worst way to bring out depth in a face, supposing you wanted to. It washes everything out, making the face look pasty. He also doesn't know anything about color, since there is either no color variation, as here, or a big garish mess, as in the King Charles portrait and many others. Although my girls are outside in full sun, they still have a lot more color in their skin than Kidman does. Yeo seems to have forgotten the alizarin crimson on his palette, since Nicole doesn't even have red in her lips. He has painted the whole head with about three colors: black, white, and burnt sienna. Maybe a small amount of terra rosa in her lips.

He skips the hair, as usual, but here is a close-up of my hair:



I would never skip the hair, since it is one of my favorite things to draw and paint. Very few painters paint hair like this, most painting it much tighter or much looser. Either they take it just beyond a block-in, like Sargent, or they paint it photographically. I don't do either one of those things, do I, though few have noticed. The style is loose, but it is never just a block-in.

But let us return to the lighting.



That's just a small sketch, but I use it here as an extreme example of portrait lighting. I learned that from Joachin Sorolla and Torrents Llado, who were masters of it. You would be taught to avoid shadows like that in any portrait photography class, but you can't get that mood without them.

Oil paintings can take you beyond photography, but only if you let them. They have their own inner rules that photographers and Moderns don't know about. As just the most obvious thing, it is clear to me that Yeo doesn't even know what paints to buy. His paint looks like garbage, ignoring everything else. He isn't using traditional materials or if he is he doesn't know how to use them. [Like John Currin but much worse](#). Currin is at least an interesting illustrator, where Yeo isn't even that.

You will say, "So what, so you are better than Yeo. Get over yourself." The so what is that while Yeo is rich and famous, painting kings and queens and movie stars, most of my best work has never even been seen in a gallery. That big painting of the two girls has never been out of my house, and it isn't because I am hogging it for myself. It is because the market for good work has been completely destroyed. Nobody can tell the difference. It is now just a bunch of rich people's kids jacking themselves off, as we saw here with Yeo. It is a huge circle-jerk of untalented assholes buying all promotion for themselves and burying people like me on purpose, so they don't have to compete with us.

I have been waiting for someone to take up my defense for thirty years now, and I can see it isn't going to happen. There are no critics, connoisseurs, or experts worthy of the name left in the world. As in science and history, the field is stone-dead, so if someone is going to speak out it is up to me as usual. If I don't tell you who I am, nobody is.

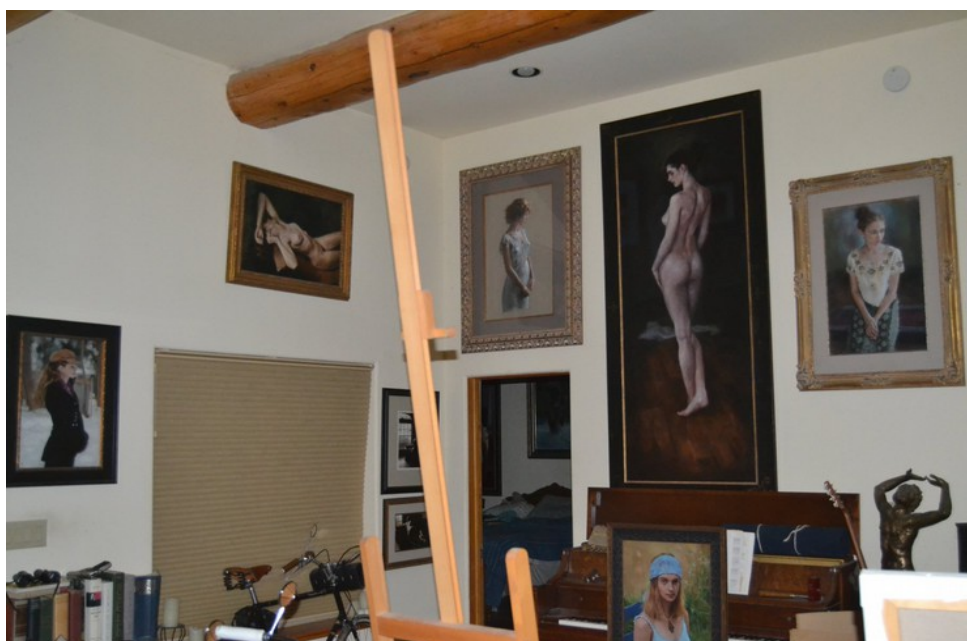
You will say that I don't *want* to paint kings and movie stars, so what am I complaining about? No, but I don't want to be buried in obscurity, either. Some have said I don't make an effort, but that isn't true. Before I understood who these people are, I sent a portfolio to Buckingham Palace addressed to Prince Charles. I had read he was a supporter of artists, so I thought he might be interested. It was after I painted my [Shelley Altarpiece](#), and I included slides and a full description of that as well as my other major works. I thought it would be fun to have a prominent show in London, where that work should be seen. No response. Crickets. Same response I have always gotten everywhere, and that was *before* I started writing. They weren't ignoring me back then because I was attacking them, they were ignoring me because I wasn't a close cousin and a Modern. I wasn't peerage or social register, so I was a pre-defined nobody. I wasn't being judged by my works, I was being judged by my bloodlines. All promotion is reserved for their own children.

It was the same thing when I lived in Taos for fourteen years. I had had decent representation there from 1993-2000, being at the prominent Quast Galleries, so when I moved there from Europe in 2007, I expected to fit in somehow. The Quasts had moved to horse racing, but the town was still full of galleries. But by then it was being taken over by the Moderns and these social register people (and their CIA cohorts). They had infiltrated the old Harwood Museum downtown and would soon be pushing Meow Wolf and the local Paseo. I ran a prominent ad in the local paper to let them know I was back, but didn't get one call. I sent portfolios to the Harwood, the Fechin, Parsons Gallery, A Muse, and other galleries, and got nothing but ice. The traditional galleries were all busy dying and everyone else was clamoring to go Modern. The Harwood brought in Dennis Hopper and his fake artist buddies for a celebrity slurpfest in 2009, and they and their hired critics spent weeks in the local papers and in seminars and interviews slandering the traditional artists that had made Taos what it was. I responded, tearing them all to little shreds as is my specialty, and sealed my fate in Taos. Word came down from the top that I was to be blacklisted.

Over the next decade, Modernism failed to gain any real foothold in Taos, since the locals had no interest in it. Neither did the patrons of realism, who now abandoned Taos. They quit coming and dozens of traditional galleries went under. So they had successfully killed Southwest realism or any other sort of realism in Taos, but it hadn't been replaced by anything. Only two Modern galleries opened and they did no business, having zero foot traffic. This of course affected the rest of Taos tourism, which also took a steep dive. Taos no longer had its famous gallery scene, so its only calling card was the ski valley. That was also taken over by some billionaire crook, and I am sure he will find a way to drive it into the ground. And so it goes. The New World Order.

But did I curl up and die? No, I thought if they want a fight, I will give it to them. But I didn't attack the locals (or not much). I went for bigger fish. Dennis Hopper was dead within the year after my [attack on him](#), and though I don't claim credit for it, I do point out the timing. I simply point out that although they tried to crush me, the crushing appears to have gone in the other direction, for whatever reasons. Same for the critic Dave Hickey, who went into a physical and career tailspin soon after my [truth-telling on him](#). I cut him down to size and he appears to have felt it, far beyond anything I was feeling from their blacklisting.

So let's do another side-by-side:



Seeing the paintings on the walls may help. That first one is from his website, and you can see how piddly the works are. Even the frames are cheap crap. Although I have almost no income, I find a way to frame my work right. That biggest painting on my wall is over 7 feet tall with the frame. Imagine what those works would look like in a proper gallery, with the right lighting and all that.

Now let's move in:



His self portrait and mine. Even while looking at himself for three years in the mirror, I guess he didn't notice his glasses were cattywumpus. And again, his palette appears to be about four colors, and he needed only two for the skin tones. It really couldn't be worse, except—as with the King Charles thing—maybe it *does* capture his spirit.

I dressed in that collar as an homage to Van Dyck, one of my heroes. And yes, I did have that handlebar mustache at the time. And yes, I did paint those flourishes on the frame as well.

We will zoom in so you can see the brushwork and color better:



That brushwork is called *bravura*. Because it's fast and you just let it stand. You can see the brush moving, and it is minimally blended on purpose. It is lifesize but it only took a few hours, being a big sketch, dashed in while looking in the mirror. One of very few self-portraits I have ever done, because—contrary to popular opinion—I am not much interested in my own face. I see enough of it while brushing my teeth, etc, and don't really need to paint it as well. You can see that Yeo is shooting for some sort of *bravura* looseness himself, he just isn't up to it. He has just created an ugly mess with no real virtuosity of brush or anything else.

Sorry, but he set himself up for this. All these people deserve much worse than anything I could post on them.

One thing that makes mine far more pleasant, other than the obvious, is that I am using a full range of color on the palette and a full tonal spread. The blue-green in my eyes is supported by blue and green in the background. We have yellows, reds, blues, violets, and greens. But they are in the painting *subtly*, not garishly, right out of the tube. They have been grayed out to just the right shade, so that they all go together. And we have all shades of light and dark from bright white to black. Yeo doesn't have any of that going on, as you see.

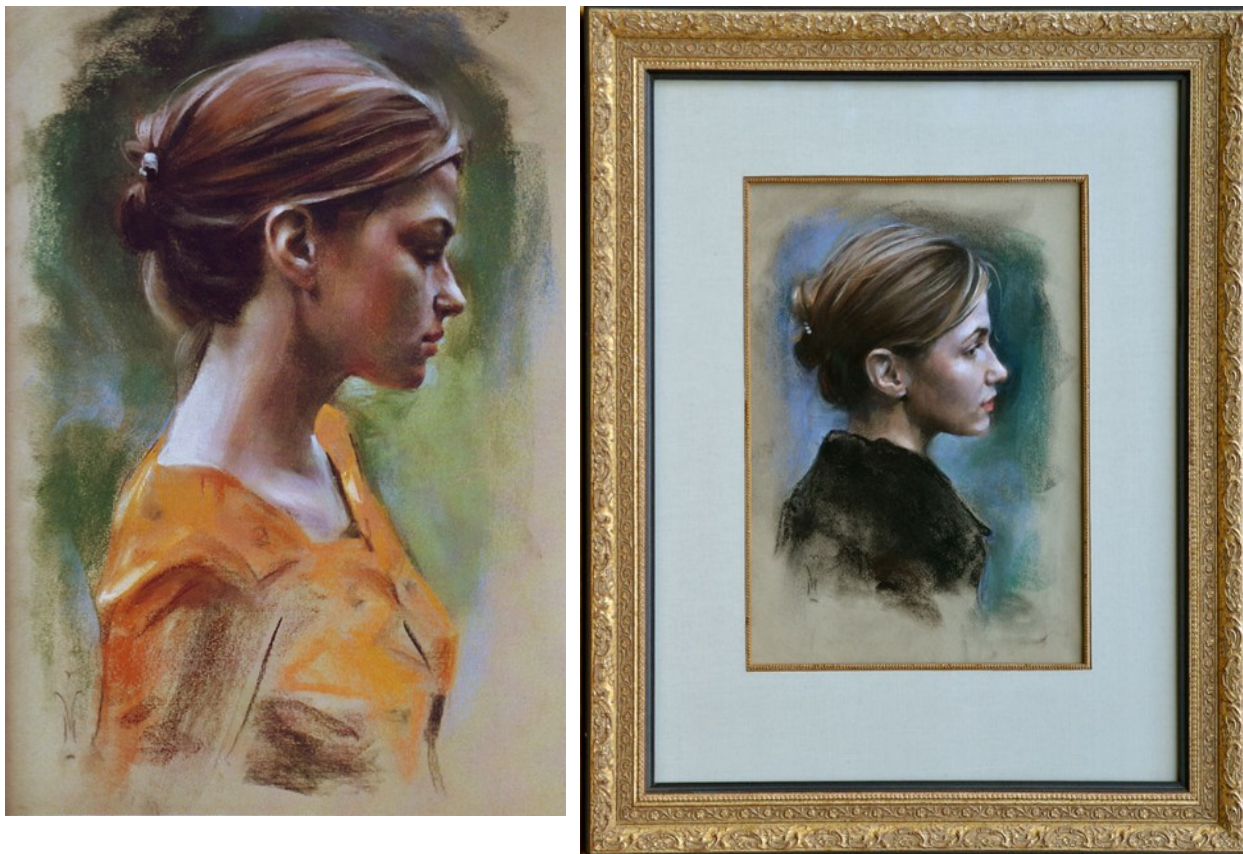
And although this is just a sketch, I have been able to softly work myself into that background. I don't just paint up to the edge of my face and stop, do I? That is because I am highly aware of all edges, meaning I don't blend everything the same. I blend some lines more than others, because all edges are different. In more finished portraits of mine you will see that even more.



That first one is Yeo's fellow artist and Turner Prize winner* Grayson Perry. Which opens a whole other can of worms I don't feel like getting into. You can look him up if you need to, but not after eating. Many wonder how far away we are from his Jimmy Savile moment. But here I am posting it

for the technique. It's just really bad painting, isn't it? It is all shades of pink and sienna (which don't go together to start), with no tonal or color range, and everything but the face and arms just blocked in clumsily. It's all a huge washout, literally, and you can really tell that when it is right above my portrait of Mia. That isn't a great photo of my painting**, but even so you can see what I was talking about with tonal and color range. Unlike Yeo's painting, mine has lots of luscious darks in it, to help give it depth. It has those rich reds and greens that play off each other, since the two colors are complements. And the skintone *fits* the rest of the color scheme. All of the colors fit together because they were chosen to do so. Nothing here is an accident. I actually know how to use my palette and my brushes.

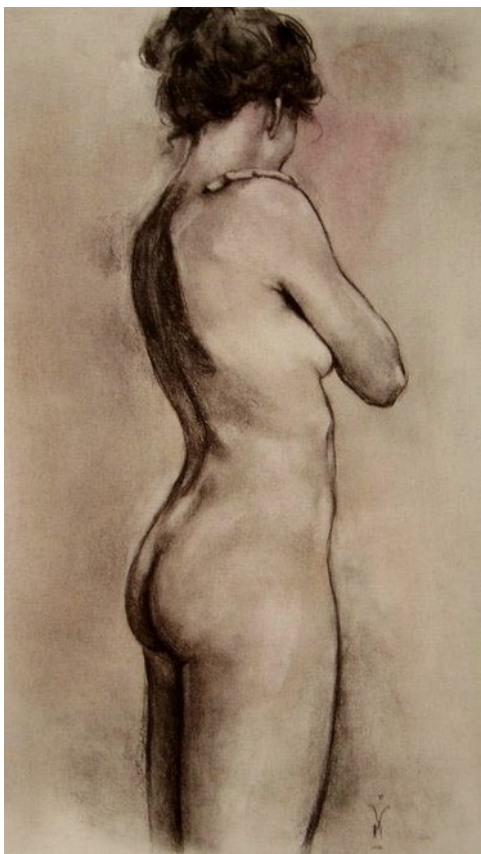
You will say I sometimes vignette my smaller works, as here:



Yes, I do, especially with pastels. Those are both pastels. Colored chalks. Vignetting means I fade them out rather than draw all the way to the edge. It seems to me the Yeo would like to be able to do that, since it is considered appealingly loose and expressive. But it has to be done gracefully, not lazily and clumsily. I don't just slap those areas in willy-nilly, you know. I am very particular about my backgrounds, even at times like this. Even the messiness has to be a beautiful mess, otherwise it is not art. Everything is exactly where I want it to be, and it goes there because I am smudging all those areas with my fingers, using my hands as a paintbrush. Every smudge and blend is purposeful. Every smudge has a direction and a pressure and a curve. Just look at all the colors in the background of the first one, for instance. At least four different greens and three blues, and a couple of purple-grays. And you can see vertical strokes, horizontal strokes, diagonals, and zigzags, all mixed together. Those strokes aren't just strokes of the pastel, they are strokes of my fingers. It is just a sketch, yes, but it is actually very complex.

Look closely and you will see the skin has both reds and blues in it. Those highlights in the skin are actually done with light blue chalk. Yeo has apparently never considered the possibility skin has blue or green or violet in it. He is never working cools against warms, much less balancing the entire work like this.

All this is made possible by drawing:



I know the difference between a beautiful line and an ugly line and Yeo doesn't. He doesn't have any conception of these things I am talking about. He is just fitting his lines to his grids, trying to accurately copy his photos. Any beauty would be death to his career as a Modern, so why would he concern himself with it? If he stumbled across a beautiful line he would probably avoid it as a nuisance, blotting it out immediately. Same thing for any color balancing, composition, or any other subtlety. Subtlety doesn't pay, you know, since all those who could see it are extinct or voiceless. What pays is already being peerage or social register. If you are that, nothing else matters.

continued



What's that? That's not one of mine, is it? No, it's not. That was recommended to me by the search engine while I was searching on Yeo, along with a lot of other stuff. I keyed on that and maybe you can see why. It's just a little watercolor, but I think the artist hit a home-run with it. [It was up at Etsy](#) for \$45, with no attribution. Free shipping! I don't know who the artist is. But I bought it anyway. I think I can afford \$45 to support a fellow artist. The seller tells us it is signed, so I will know the artist when I get it, I guess. And yes, it is supposed to be an original on paper, not a print. I find it far more interesting than anything the great Jonathan Yeo has ever done. Why? Because it *successfully* creates that psychological charge, that Modern angst, he tries and fails to capture. The roughness of the technique actually adds to the emotion, as the Moderns always claim but almost never deliver. You can feel what that girl is feeling. If the technique were more refined (prettier), you would feel it less, since what she is feeling is rough.

But let's wind this down. Many readers probably hoped I would comment on the Satanism claim. As you see now, the portrait of Charles is an abomination without that. Just so you know, I don't think Baphomet is in the background, as they are claiming at Infowars and other places. And I don't think the red is meant to symbolize blood. That would be a bit obvious, even for the Phoenicians. Yeo has used that color scheme in many previous works, and none of them look Satanic to me. It is just a color he likes. It makes him seem bold while drowning out all his mistakes. It is like adding a loud soundtrack to a terrible movie.

Of course that doesn't mean these people aren't very bad news. They definitely are, and I have proved that like no one else has. They have been pillaging the world for at least 4000 years and show no signs of stopping. So whether or not they have an evil god behind them, you should be resisting them with everything you have, every fiber of your being. If you get blacklisted, just use the extra free time to double and treble your attacks.

*For a vase with scary children on it.

**I have written before about why my paintings are impossible to photograph. People tend to dismiss that as rationalizing. . . until they see them.