

Nappy Painting 2006- **Gill Gatfield**



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1060 x 1060mm

Plastic, cotton, paper, chemicals, crystals ink, staples, white-out, glass, frame

Gill Gatfield uses an unusual, mundane material - disposable nappies - to create an abstract painting. The objects, which in their everyday use are wrapped up and often out of sight, are here stretched and exposed. The nappies are woven to form a pattern with only the small marine images interrupting the white tones of the painting.

White rectangles of the inside part of the nappies appear as a multitude of small canvasses, framed and protected under glass. Combined, these units also represent the weft and weave of the canvas enlarged. In this way, something generally used as a support for painting, becomes the subject. By turning what is usually only a basis for other activity into content, Gatfield contests the notion of painting.

Nappies are a durable medium for a painting – disposable nappies can take an estimated 500 years to break down in landfills. Depending on the amount of light exposure, over time the centers of the white nappies should slowly cream and then yellow. This creates more contrast in the work, forming subtly new abstract patterns.

Instead of requiring the usual museological practices used for works on paper, where the works need to be kept in the dark for extended periods in order to preserve their original quality, Gatfield has framed this process, making it an integral part of the *Nappy Painting*. The work remains in flux. As it takes on the aspect of a performance, the *Nappy Painting* ‘resists’ being defined solely as a white abstract painting. The work not only challenges the traditional definition of painting, but also crosses disciplinary boundaries.