

Noah's art a place to connect with people in depth

RICK MORTON

NOAH Taylor may be a fixture in the Australian psyche for his acting performances over 27 years but his passion has always been closer to canvas than cameras.

Taylor, who scored his breakthrough role in *The Year My Voice Broke* in 1987, has revealed little of himself in interviews over the years but he told *The Weekend Australian* his art was a connection to people.

Like him, the paintings are thin outlines — simple pieces but with a remarkable depth.

"As a child I was always drawing and doing little comic books and bits of illustration here and there," he said. "Painting and drawing have always been for my own amusement, though — I've just given them away to people, friends really, over the years."

His exhibition of 35 black ink and pastel paintings, *New Works*, will open at the Tim Olsen Gallery in Woollahra, in Sydney's east, on Tuesday.

It is a more serious foray into the art world, prompted by a desire to pay the bills. "To be honest, I needed another source of income because acting wasn't paying the bills all the time," he said.

Taylor paints people, usually with a lack of detail that confers on the work a haunting quality, a loneliness. "I am not particularly trained in any field," he said.

"But I have always tried to make my lack of skill my strength because you can be resourceful and work within the parameters of your lack of expertise, and that can be an advantage in terms of your stuff will look or sound different to other people's."

The artist has encountered his share of personal conflict throughout his career — including overcoming an addiction to drugs — and says he's past the point of taking criticisms of his work too close to heart.

Taylor lives in Britain with his wife, Dionne Harris, and near to his five-year-old daughter from a previous relationship and seems happy with this new phase in his career, one that is associated with less of the consternation that followed him on the publicity trail for his films.

"When I was younger, fear of people's reactions stopped me doing things I really loved doing," he said. Not any more.

The exhibition runs until February 17.

REVIEW Liftout today



Noah Taylor at the Tim Olsen Gallery in Sydney with an artwork from his forthcoming show, *New Works*

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