



UNTITLED

[landscape]

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Landscape with Donkey's Feet (Henry's Dawn) by Micky Donnelly
DoF Collection



Venues 2018/19

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER

The Bridewell Centre, Magherafelt

NOVEMBER – JANUARY

Rathfarnham Castle, Dublin

FEBRUARY – MARCH

Luan Gallery, Athlone

APRIL – MAY

Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre, Limavady

[5]



KEVIN 'BOXER' MORAN

Minister of State
OPW and Flood Relief



SUE GRAY

Permanent Secretary
Department of Finance

Foreword

Welcome to *Untitled [landscape]*, the latest in a series of joint art exhibitions organised by the Department of Finance (DoF) and the Office of Public Works (OPW). Both Departments have been working in partnership organising art exhibitions since the late 1990s. These exhibitions, which have toured to many venues across the island, bring both collections to wider public audiences.

This year the exhibition focuses on the theme of landscape, and the thirty artworks chosen reflect the variety of this genre in each collection. Artists were invited to provide information about their selected artwork for the catalogue.

The exhibition will tour four venues. It will begin in September 2018 in The Bridewell Centre, Magherafelt. It will then travel to Rathfarnham Castle, Dublin in November 2018. The third venue in February 2019 is the Luan Gallery, Athlone, and the final venue is Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre, Limavady, in April to May 2019.

We would like to acknowledge the excellent co-operation we have received from the venues. We also wish to thank all the included artists, for without their work this exhibition would not be possible.

It is with great pleasure that we bring you this exhibition.

Landscape painting in Ireland

[1600 – Present]

The history of landscape painting in Ireland is inextricably linked to ownership of land, the rise of patronage and the art market, the mobility of artists and the foundation of artists' societies, schools and galleries.

[6] Its humble origins began with 16th century vignettes in the Elizabethan plantation maps of Ulster; 17th century topographical views by engravers, map-makers and visitors, and early 18th century naïve views of demesnes. However, by the 1720s this rapidly developed into accomplished works by both Irish and foreign artists living in Ireland. Wealthy landowners began to commission aerial perspectives of their houses and lands, some accurate, others more *capriccio* in style. To further adorn their homes, they also purchased paintings of popular local beauty spots, historical ruins and hunting scenes, all with landscape backgrounds. In addition, they commissioned family portraits in landscape settings. At Irish auctions they bought mostly Dutch and Flemish works and occasionally French, English and Spanish works. Grand tourists returned with similar collections from their European travels. Not surprisingly, Irish landscape painters who studied these art collections were enormously influenced, particularly by the Dutch and Flemish landscape style. Other artists were consequently prompted to venture abroad, many to London and Rome, where they were further influenced by the English, Italian and French style, returning to Ireland to paint in these styles.

The 18th century was also a period of considerable change in the arts in Ireland with the opening of schools and societies. In 1731 the Dublin Society was founded around the ideas of the European Enlightenment and its first drawing and painting school opened in 1746, with numerous others following. Also in 1757 the Irish philosopher, Edmund Burke, published his famous treatise on aesthetics *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and the Beautiful* which had an enormous impact on European landscape painting.

However, during the 19th century the patronage of landscape painting in Ireland significantly stalled due to the impact of both international and national events such as the Act of Union in 1801, the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 and the devastating mid-nineteenth century famine years. Many artists were forced to travel abroad, particularly to London, while others ventured further afield, to Canada and Australia. In Ireland small-scale landscapes that included figures started to make an appearance as well as history and antiquarian scenes using landscapes as a backdrop. An increased interest

in portraying Irish society encouraged the production of scenes of everyday life often produced in a picturesque style, some by female artists. The Romantic style inspired by poets such as William Wordsworth and apparent in Claudian and Arcadian landscapes can also be detected and watercolour painting began to increase in popularity.

The second half of the 19th century saw two very distinct groups of landscape artists emerge. The first were academic painters who travelled abroad to study mainly in London, Antwerp and Paris. They painted a diverse array of landscapes and in varying styles, with techniques from tight to broad brushstrokes, and styles ranging from German Romanticism to French Impressionism. The second group remained in Ireland and although they continued to mirror the artistic changes of continental Europe they began to search for a distinctly Irish style of art, producing landscapes of anecdotal, sentimental scenes, mixed with nationalistic undertones.

The foundation of the New Irish State in 1922 fermented the idea of a new Irish identity that could be expressed in landscape painting. Artists looked to the Irish countryside especially the west of Ireland to provide inspiration for their works. Idealised views competed with realism and almost all depicted with iconic simplicity.

By the 1940's this Irish home-grown style of landscape painting gave way once again to works reflecting the artistic concerns of the continent. Responding to the Modern movement, Irish artists depicted landscapes in a myriad of styles from cubism to expressionism and from surrealism to abstractionism.

The closing decades of the 20th century saw the re-defining of landscape painting once more. Artists north and south placed less emphasis on capturing the natural beauty of the Irish landscape and used it more as a means to a political end.

Today landscape painters working in Ireland continue to assert a sense of distinct identity in their works regardless of style or medium. Indeed it is the rich history of our island and its outstanding beauty that allows them to do this.

[7] Dr. Louise Kelly,
Curator

Untitled [landscape]

[8] What's in a name? In the hope of being nonprescriptive and in recognition of the multifarious nature of the genre, we have called this exhibition *Untitled [landscape]*. 'Untitled' has been No.1 on the fine art appellation hit parade since the early 20th century—not bad for a sort of anti-title. Before this—although dealers, keepers and collectors often gave artworks descriptive names to demarcate them—it was uncommon for artists to specifically title artworks, as it was expected that artistic subjects would be recognised by their learned, high-society viewers. With the opening of collections to the public and as smaller, portable works became more common, audiences grew and the need to title works with it. These days, *Untitled* might seem like a fudge, but it is a more generous act than it at first seems, inviting open interpretations. The word actively recognises the potential to caption, but politely declines to elaborate, leaving the artwork to speak for itself.

In the 18th century, art hiked on from its erstwhile beauty spots, to find other views that might more suit the concerns of the modern psyche. It recognised the unsettling chaos of the wilderness, a visual anarchy that scraped its fingers across the blackboard upon which centuries of pictorial rules are written in our collective memories. This idea of the 'sublime' in nature has been talked about since the late 17th century—including, as Dr Kelly notes in her text, by the Irish philosopher Edmund Burke—and is still here relevant today. Antithetical to the pure joy of aesthetic beauty, and distant from the rustic ideals of the picturesque landscape—both largely outmoded in contemporary artistic practice—the sublime presents scenes which induce a frightening awe, caused by the power and unpredictability of nature and our tenuous place in the world. While such fear is a terrifying and negative experience in real life, at the remove of artistic representations, this awe can be compelling. To appreciate the influence of the sublime, one only has to look at the visual language of car advertisements to know that the contemporary western mind comes with doom preloaded on a timeline of continual imminence. Since the postwar period, the sublime has evolved and proliferated through culture into the cracks that modern fear expands, mostly traceable back to a disquiet in political and social realities.

As I sit writing this, gardeners are landscaping the green area across from my window—taming unchecked growth and adding species according to best-laid, yet

fanciful plans. Nature is simple, but our expectations of it are not. We shape it to reflect both our fancy and our idea of the axis between beauty and order, which brings us to the important distinction between land and landscape: the former being objective, the latter subjective. The once codified arena of emblem and allegory in art has lost much of its certainty, with symbolism in the contemporary landscape becoming more intimate to the individual artist, yet disparate in its subjects. The artworks gathered here feature thirty idiosyncratic views of nature; each scape contoured somewhat to the code of a personal iconography. We see vistas charged with politics, humour, memory, gender, and often by an introverted look at the workings of picture construction, whether analogue or digital. With modern scientific understanding, artists play with the mechanics of light and deconstruct the process of the printed image. They utilise texts, from whispered to emblazoned, in challenging ways. And through it all, visually articulate the internal topography of their imaginations.

[9] Davey Moor,
Curator

Richard Mosse

[You Are Wherever Your Thoughts Are, North Kivu, Eastern Congo]

c-print 81.2×101.6 cm 2012 OPW Collection

The landscape shows the front line between M23 rebels and the Congolese army (FARDC) at Kibumba in North Kivu. This area was the site of intense fighting and a stand off by Tutsi M23 rebels who occupied an enclave along the Congo-Rwanda border and nine months later took the city of Goma. The photograph was taken at dawn in February 2012. The title was borrowed from a song by Steve Reich.

10



Rachel Mc Ging

[Landscape (I)]

acrylic on canvas 61×61 cm 2017 OPW Collection

My paintings seek out the relationship between the landscape and the individual. The work meshes together imagery from many sources; from scenes of the west coast of Ireland, natural and imaginary landscapes, memory, stories and digital realms. Things change, fade and become new. In my work elements are distorted, colours are heightened and spaces are reimagined. The studio setting and the physical process of painting are central to making the work – much of the imagery of the paintings originates from sculptures and installations that I have made. The materiality of various plastics, wax, silk and acrylic, emulsion and oil paint are used to evoke a visceral response. My piece in this exhibition, *Landscape (I)*, retells an Irish landscape in CMYK colours and thick, plastic impasto. It responds to an environment under constant transformation and our lived experience within it.

[12]



Karis Hopkinson

[Triple Time]

mixed media on board 91.5×122 cm 2017 OPW Collection

My interests lie mainly within the sphere of landscape and its various forms, and the potential contradictory harmony that can occur between two spaces, i.e. the urban versus the natural. I am interested in exploring the outcome of merging these two spaces predominantly through painting, juxtaposing urban elements of text, structure and colour with natural landscapes to create a single space. The text is important in that it lends both a familiarity and an ambiguity to the created space. I am currently preoccupied with the word as object, as well as the authority of the text as part of an image. In *Triple Time*, these interests come together; the urgency of the urban comes through in the colour and visualisation of the text, as it cuts across the pastoral scene. The outcome is almost a graphic postcard from an imagined space, a utopian duality.

14



Eamonn Robbins

[Evening (Slade Valley)]

oil on canvas 40×50 cm 2015 OPW Collection

The Slade Valley is an area near my home in Dublin. It lies between the 'end' of the city and the 'beginning' of the countryside. It has been my 'outdoor studio' for many years. All the Slade Valley paintings are completed, on site, in one sitting. My preferred time to paint outdoors is either early morning or late evening - the period around the arrival or departure of light interests me most. I go with hope and innocence to this favourite place every time. Sometimes, the hills give up their secrets, and I learn, other times, a battle ensues! The 'essence of place' is of greater value to me than description. Nature, my 'collaborator', never makes these encounters anything less than meaningful. Indeed, though I'm forever looking, sometimes, with nature's help, I manage to see.

[18]



Wendy Ferguson

[Fire Exchange]

oil on canvas 98×158 cm 2017 DoF Collection

My painting practice explores the changing rural landscape of County Fermanagh where I grew up and in which I feel deeply rooted, documenting an expression of my emotional and intuitive response to the land. My work does not deal with realism, rather I aim to explore abstracted mark making, juxtaposed with representational rendering of recollected images of the agricultural landscape, which depict a record of a particular light and atmosphere. There is a human presence made manifest through sub-conscious mark making, translating the elemental through thin washes and thicker textural passages of paint, and thus conjuring memories of fleeting changes in the land, the weather and the seasons. The aggressive application and process of paint delivers striking juxtapositions of colour, texture and shape, which imparts tactile qualities that intensifies the work's presence. This fragmented landscape could suggest a reflection of an unsettled environment within the past and into the future of a land, I know and see every day.

[20]



Ángel Luis González Fernández

[Early Train]

giclée print 29.5×42 cm 2017 OPW Collection

As part of my work, I travel extensively, nationally and internationally, and it was on one of these trips that I took this photograph. It was on an empty morning train heading to Belfast, on route to participate in events at a gallery. This work is part of a broader collection of images, shaping a body of work that speaks about moments of solitude and sublime reflection, working in arts administration, the less visible side of the arts.

[22]



Dominika Glowinkowska

[Cuilcagh Way]

giclée print 55.5×85 cm 2017 OPW Collection

In the new age of technological advancement, I catch myself living in two spaces at the same time. Among spending time in my everyday life and simultaneously escaping into my virtual scope, I find myself stuck in between the two entities. The internet is a platform that allows us the freedom of expansion but at the same time, it is containing us in its own matter. I like the idea of fragments and layering as it represents the collision of these two worlds, joining them together and at the same time contrasting differences. I would like the audience to open their mind to a new perspective on technology and visualize how our everyday view of life is skewed thanks to the use of social media platforms.

[24]



Teresa Kilker

[Matter]

giclée print 40×51 cm 2015 OPW Collection

This work features an altered view of a classic tourist location, the Matterhorn mountain in the Alps which sits between Switzerland and Italy. When looking at old photographs from my trip to Switzerland, I felt a disconnect to the image I had taken. The photograph looked uniform to a google image search, with few personal elements or significant memories attached. My image was no different to the picturesque photographs taken by the tourist before or after my visit. This led me to alter, manipulate and restructure the image. Attaching memory, and creating a photograph that represented my own experience.

[26]



Micky Donnelly

[Landscape with Donkey's Feet (Henry's Dawn)]

oil on canvas 165×165 cm 1987 DoF Collection

Landscape with Donkey's Feet (Henry's Dawn) is a partial image of a neglected donkey with long unpared hooves superimposed over a copy of Paul Henry's well-known painting *Dawn, Killary Harbour*, from the collection of the Ulster Museum. This particular painting by Henry is regarded as one of his most seminal works and encapsulates the mythologised and romantic view of the West of Ireland that dominated Irish landscape painting for a long period of time.

My painting, by grounding the image in a more 'realistic' view of conditions in the West, is a deliberate subversion of Henry's original intentions. As much as I admire his work of that time, I was attempting, through a process of appropriation and 're-framing', to update his sense of landscape into a more contemporary and possibly more critical context.

In some ways, *Landscape with Donkey's Feet (Henry's Dawn)* is also a seminal work for me, in that a lot of my work since then has used various means to challenge and re-contextualise the assumptions of romantic landscape painting into a more contemporary mode.



Mark Shields

[The Night Will Never Stay]

poster paint on paper 48.5×55 cm 1986 DoF Collection

This painting was made and first exhibited in 1986. Its lyrical title, *The Night Will Never Stay*, refers to a poem by the children's writer Eleanor Farjeon. I find many parallels between poetry and painting, and often the mood and imagery evoked by a fragment of poetry is enough, as in this case, to inspire a painting. At this time, I had an interest in folk tales and art, particularly from eastern Europe, and the line from a child's poem seemed appropriate for the childlike, folk-influenced style of the work. Night-time is associated with the world of dream and imagination, a time when the unseen realm is more likely to break in upon the 'real'. This impinging world is intimated in the wave of drifting flowers and luminous birds. Which of the figures is visionary, and which is 'real' is left for the viewer to decide. It should evoke a mystery. The certainty is that, like night-time, this moment of enchantment will pass.

[50]



Simon Cookie

[Out of the Toy Box]

watercolour on card 41.5×56.5 cm 2002 DoF Collection

I love the music of Debussy. A small collection of his pieces is entitled *Children's Corner*. These are short impressionistic pieces composed for children, drawing inspiration from their world of toys, for example his amazing piano piece *Golliwogg's Cakewalk*. Leo Delibe's ballet *Coppelia* invents his narrative around a theme of a living girl who imitates her rival that of a handcrafted, life-size doll who has won over the heart of her village sweetheart Franz. A book which has influenced my imagination is Alain Fournier's *Le Grand Meaulnes*, here scenes alternate between wakefulness and dream world. All three above illustrations present a window into a child's world where inanimate objects and toys take on a life of their own, mostly at rare times when others aren't present. It's with these moods and climates that I painted *Out of the Toy Box*.

One may ask the question, what is the visual dialogue between an elongated patterned box, a Napoleonic doll and a toy sailing boat? Similarly, a communiqué is set up between a female doll, a large pencil, a ladder, a firework and a paper aeroplane in my picture. Objects have their own personas too, some thin or heavily textured, some spikey and sharp, others soft or others out of their normal scale size. The objects will relate to one another with their own different allusions (not illusions) i.e. qualities/personas we associate with that of spikeyness, feathery, powdery, dryness, etc., etc.

I'm essentially a naturalistic painter and enjoy narration. I often combine my love of music, animals, antique objects, fires, trees, boats etc. As someone said of Charlie Chaplin: "all he needs is a park, a policeman and a pretty girl, and he can invent anything to make us laugh."



Stasele Jakunskaitė

[*See You Again]

inkjet print 42×29.5 cm 2017 OPW Collection

This is a poster illustration about reincarnation, based on the history of Baltic pagans. The word “reincarnation” derives from Latin, literally meaning, “entering the flesh again”. The belief that the life of a human soul does not end with death is very old and common for many different cultures. In every culture or religion the viewpoint about death is represented through burying rituals. The adherents of this Baltic religion prospered relatively unhindered until the 9th century when they began to come under pressure from outside Christian forces. Baltic pagans had many different ceremonies for burial, from burning the bodies or burying them in small hills, to even burying them in the trees. This illustration is based on one of those rituals where they were burying people by bending them, as they believed that the earth is like a womb, where we are reborn and live again in a different physical body as something else.

[54]



Garry Loughlin

[untitled, (Kentucky)]

giclée print 27×41 cm 2014 OPW Collection

“It is by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them.” Ernest Hemingway

This image is taken from the photographic series *Between Spaces*, which I produced during a six-month cycle across North America. Whilst there is a long photography tradition of documenting the American road trip, I felt that travelling by bike would expose me to opportunities and encounters that could be overlooked if travelled by car or bus. Taking a slower pace and being on my own speed allowed me, as an observer passing through small American towns, to see the beauty in the banality of everyday life. I also feel the decision to travel across a country by bicycle not only gave me a stronger connection to the landscape but also to the people I met along the way.

[56]



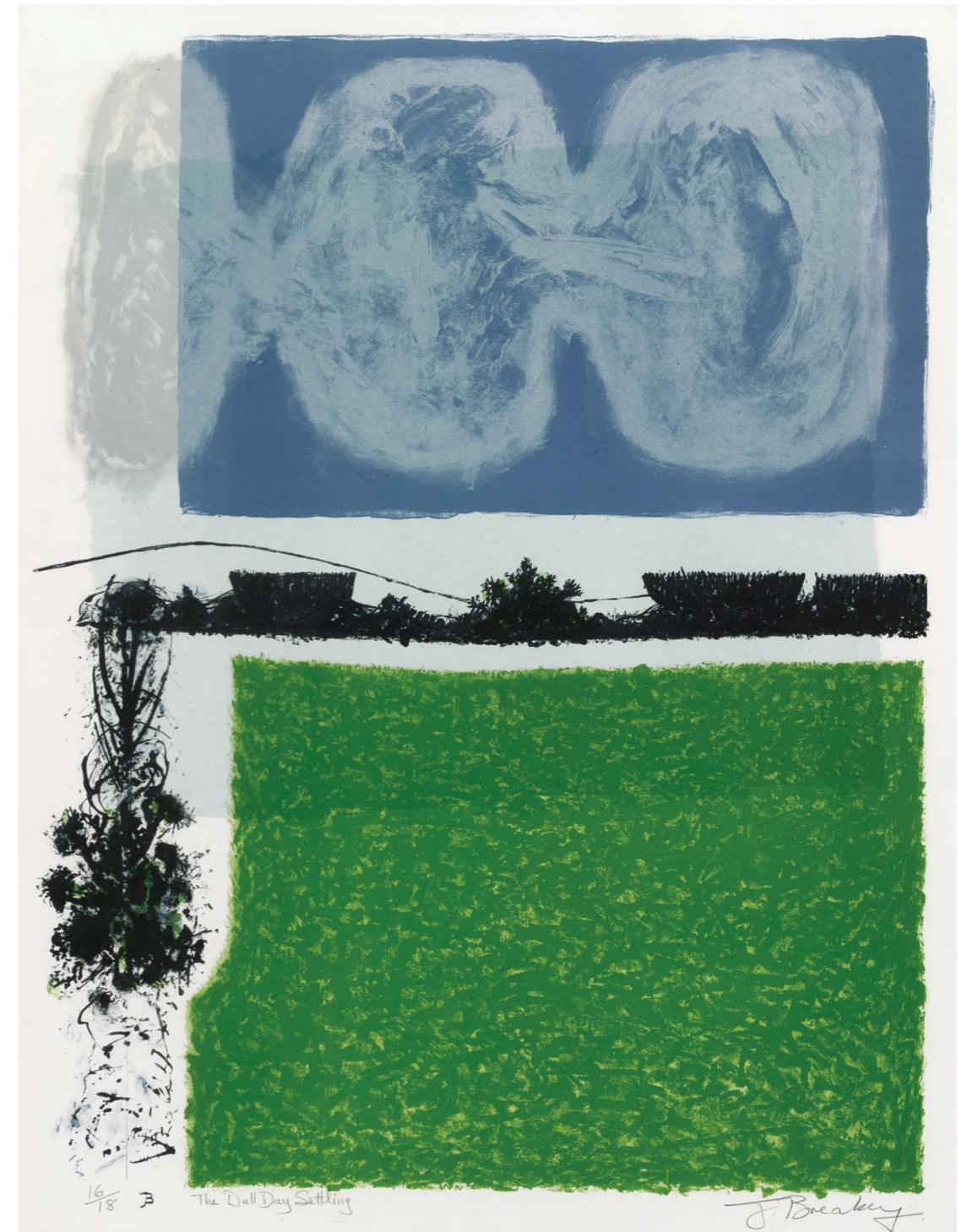
John Breakey

[The Dull Day Settling]

lithograph 66×50 cm Purchased in 1991 DoF Collection

John Breakey is a master craftsman in the printmaking medium of lithography, which was originally invented in the 18th century as an inexpensive way of producing artworks. It is a simple process using either a stone or a metal plate. The artist draws directly onto the surface with a special crayon that contains grease, which absorbs into the top layer. A chemical solution is then applied which penetrates into the pores of the stone or plate, surrounding the original image with a hydrophilic layer that will not accept the printing ink. The surface is cleaned and then moistened with water so that when the oil-based ink is applied only the greasy image areas receive the ink and print.

Breakey mostly creates colourful prints of seascapes, flowers and landscapes such as this one. His subject matter often draws from his local surroundings, the Mourne Mountains, which he lovingly recreates with an intimate understanding of the Northern Irish landscape. The evocative titles he places on his works give the viewer a more personal insight into his thought processes during the creation of his works. Interestingly, Breakey was also a pupil of another artist in this exhibition, Tom Carr.



Ruaidhri Kelly

[Uncharted Nouns]

oil on linen 65.5×56 cm 2017 OPW Collection

uncharted

/ʌnˈtʃɑːtɪd/

adjective

(of an area of land or sea) not mapped or surveyed.

“the plane landed on a previously uncharted islet”

noun

/nɑːn/

noun

a word (other than a pronoun) used to identify any of a class of people, *places*, or things (common noun), or to name a particular one of these (proper noun).

Heavily informed by landscape, our immediate environment and an unyielding fascination with the natural world, the paintings I create are formed loosely through a narrative of illusory constructs and a reality yielded. Fiction and literature also play an important role in shaping the work, creating a stage for unlimited potential, meanings, and associations, where full yet subtle impressions of ideal objects and imaginary vistas can exist, both literal and delinquent, simultaneously convoked and dissolved.



Tom Carr OBE

[Winter Thicket]

lithograph 49×74 cm 1975 DoF Collection

Tom Carr was one of Ulster's leading artists of the 20th century. He worked in watercolour and oils to produce portraits and depict his local landscape of Antrim. In a 1996 BBC Documentary, *Sunshine in a Room*, he described how he liked to use the colder months to influence his colour palette, saying how he found, "a lot more colour, at least the colours that I like to paint, in the autumn and the winter and the early spring". Carr's work, *Winter Thicket*, the first of two works by him in this exhibition is a snow scene, which reflects this statement. This wonderfully delicate work displays Carr's skill, acting, as Carr described it during his 1993 retrospective (Ulster Museum, Belfast and the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin) "like the page of an old book, without any reading, except for reading the lines."

[42]



Tom Carr OBE

[Cornfields Tullywest]

pen & watercolour on paper 52.5×71.5 cm 1977 DoF Collection

Cornfields Tullywest, is the second work by Tom Carr in this exhibition, and again highlights his love for the Antrim landscape, using watercolour. In Eamonn Mallie's 1989 publication, *Tom Carr: An Appreciation*, the artist described in detail his passion for the medium saying, "Water-colour is a direct medium. There is a calligraphic quality with it, which you don't get with oils. It's the direct brush stroke with the water-colour. It's the fixing instantly of a thought, which, with oil, you might have to achieve in several stages. In water-colour I was doing something that could not be done in oil or tempera or hadn't been attempted in water-colour, or so it seemed to me. It was a combination of a feeling for a particular subject, a feeling for the Irish countryside and it was a medium that allowed you to express that feeling in a contemporary way with an emphasis on pattern and design with a feeling of sentiment for the subject. A sentimental painting for me is not necessarily a term of abuse. I thought in water-colour, 'a little bit', something I haven't done in my oils. Another reason why I always found happier with the water-colour was that I could express a subject directly without having to square it up or map it out."

[44]

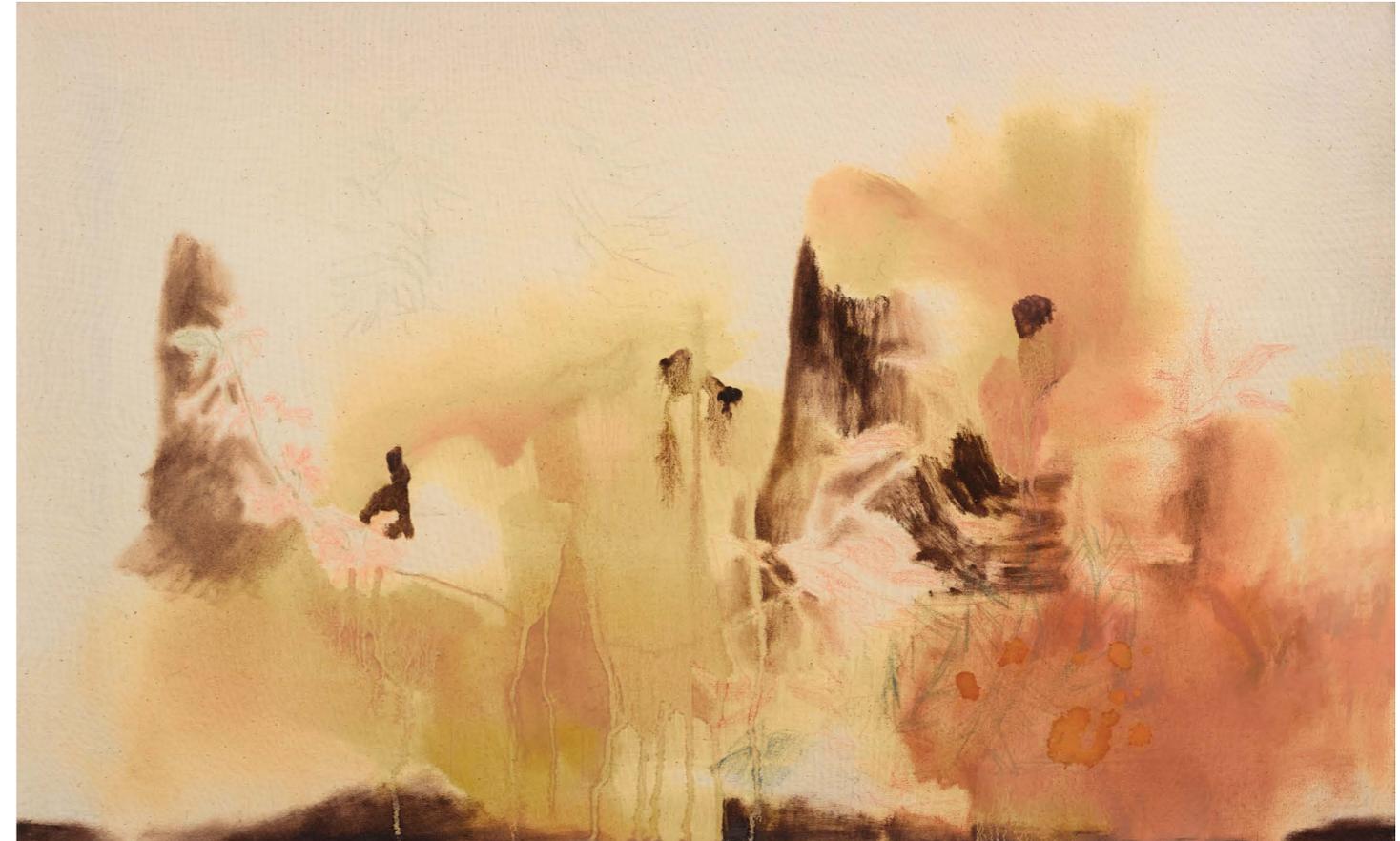


Julia Dubsky

[Untitled (blossoms & chillies on calico)]

oil & coloured pencil on calico 44×72 cm 2016 OPW Collection

In this painting, I was hip-wiggling with oils in a flat rectangle, like the person at a party that's dancing from their chair. *Why don't they get up!?! [laughs] I don't know but it's happening.* When this painting was purchased by the OPW, I had been wondering 'When does the painting begin?' and 'When is there a stain? Is it there yet?'. The painting began at the choice of stretcher size and shape – a long rectangle – and calico rather than canvas or linen. It continued with rabbit skin glue instead of primer to seal the fabric but keep it visible; a fine sanding-paper made the surface glisten. The surface is smoothed to attentively, tantrically, notice the moment it stains. You see, I've repeatedly been told that one of my favourite shirts is stained. There are minuscule marks on the breast pocket. It's funny – isn't it – that that is already a *stain* and in the context of a shirt, it is consequential enough to suggest taking the shirt out of use. I'm still curious about what the viewer can see and at what point, could it already be seen. To be as explicit as a flirt.



Sharon Gantley

[Sky-Born and Royal]

acrylic on canvas 20.5×25.5 cm 2017 OPW Collection

This imagined landscape tells a story of upheaval and colonialism. I drew inspiration from the powerful imagery of two poems by Seamus Heaney titled *Antaeus* (1966) and *Hercules and Antaeus* (1975), where the intelligence of Hercules is symbolized as a 'spur of light'. As the ancient myth goes, the half giant Antaeus, drew his strength from the earth as long as he remained in contact with it. Hercules, who removed him from his power by holding him upright off the ground, crushing his body in a bear hug, slew him. For Heaney, Antaeus represents the Irish people living off the land; Hercules represents the British taking over, the poet reflecting on the violence that happened in the North during this period.

[48]



Alison McCormick

[Full Moon]

etching 25×50 cm 2005 DoF Collection

I have worked in various media over the years, but since being introduced to printmaking a few years ago, I have really come to enjoy the different techniques and disciplines involved. Most of my inspiration is drawn from the natural world, especially trees, which figure prominently in my work. My work is naturalistic, but I like to create an air of mystery in my prints.

[50]



Catarina Leone

[Chrysalis]

giclée print 76×102 cm 2017 OPW Collection

Chrysalis explores the complexity of the human psyche in order to investigate the multiple intersecting factors that constitute female identity. The forest is a terrain where the familiar and the foreign meet; the construction of these materials in the landscape are metaphorical of the diverse psychological states, which, like identities, are never fixed and are constantly in flux. The landscape speaks to the potential loss of self in terms of female identity within the domestic space and their struggle and demand for recognition. Patriarchy teaches us that domestic work is feminine, natural, unavoidable and even convinces us that it is fulfilling in order for those to accept it as unpaid work – without rights, entitlement or recognition – excluded from the social contract; not only has it been rooted into the daily activities of women, but it has in fact been embedded into women's natural attributes – their physique, personality, sexuality, emotional wellbeing – their purpose of existence.

[52]



Anya Waterworth

[Night Flight]

acrylic on paper 65×75 cm 2016 DoF Collection

I find it quite difficult to explain my paintings as they come from within. A mixture of memory and emotion combined. Maybe a colour, or place evokes a memory, and an idea will build from something quite unexpected. It's only when the finished piece materializes that I realise it's something personal to me. A painting can only work if an idea has developed in the mind in advance. A lot of my work has evolved from travelling back and forth to my mother's homeland of Australia. The aerial views, from my many flights, have been subconsciously put down on canvas alongside the Australian landscape, which I have an affinity with. Over the years, I have had many influences, Cy Twombly, Luc Tuymans, Tapies etc. My father, Basil Blackshaw, was a great inspiration in every way possible. A great mentor with great patience. He used to say, "keep making the marks". Hopefully I'm given the opportunities to do exactly that.

[54]



Dearbhla McCormack

[Outlook]

oil on canvas 91×61.5 cm 2017 OPW Collection

While completing *Outlook* I was interested in the different architectural spaces of the urban landscape, with a focus developed particularly in the window openings of the city. I was researching the role the window plays in these built up areas, in relation to the 21st century and the growth of technology in recent years. With the easy access of phones and laptops, the window is no longer the only screen used to gather information in today's world, and I was interested to see what else the window and the information it displays has to offer. While exploring and expanding these different ideas I used the medium of paint to respond to the alternative and abstracted shapes in the glassy reflections of the windowpanes. The distorted information that merged from both sides was a big factor that fuelled the outcome of this painting. I explored the layering of information through the different applications of paint and patterns, as well as forming a balance between the light and dark information transferred within the pane of glass I was working with.

[56]



Frances Ryan

[Through the Cabbage Fields 2]

oil & collage on panel 50×50 cm 2007 DoF Collection

I am fascinated by the curative aspect of visual art and how sharing the experience of being immersed in the natural world may, in some instances, provide a healing effect to the viewer.

My practice combines painting, drawing and photographic collage. Juxtaposing images from various sources combine to form a reimagined landscape which has its own particular atmosphere.

I am drawn to the physical act of painting and how the precarious method of pouring, spreading, dripping and scraping forces abandonment of the notion of control, a form of surrendering to the process. When experimenting with various paint mediums on surfaces such as wood, aluminium, canvas and paper, I am interested in how I respond to these materials and how their characteristics inform the direction of the work. *Through the Cabbage Fields 2* is a response to the landscape of Comber, Co. Down, which I discovered when I relocated to Northern Ireland in 2005.



Vanessa Donoso López

[The Forest of Cedar...]

clay ink, watercolour, watercolour pencil, acrylic ink, hand marbled paper
& ink on paper 35.5×25 cm 2018 OPW Collection

My work is interested in the inherent power of ambiguity of the culturally distant. It explores the impact of contemporary nomadism and displacement on individuals throughout the world, analysed from transitional spaces where objects, materials and experiences interact, experiment and dialogue. The main material used for *The Forest of Cedar...* is clay. I was drawn to clay as much for its immediacy, direct expression and tactile responsiveness, as to its commonplace status, metaphorical associations, and broader cultural implications. I was powerfully seduced to its possibilities of connecting our time to our human ancestry and our collective human memory.

Clay has deep literary history and relationship to narrative. And on clay slabs was written the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which is considered to be the oldest piece of literature ever found, written in 2100BC by the Sumerians. *The Forest of Cedar...* was painted with a mix of clays sourced in different locations in Spain and represents one of the locations of this old epic.



Roisin White

[(Mother) Daughter]

giclée print 50×55 cm 2017 OPW Collection

(Mother) Daughter is a mixed media piece, using photography and ink to consider the ever-changing roles within a mother-daughter relationship. The piece explores absence, while also reflecting upon a spiritual presence within the landscape. *(Mother) Daughter* examines the duality of being both a mother and a daughter at once, and the delicate balance that role requires.

[62]



Paul James Kearney

[San Diego I]

giclée print 55.5×44 cm 2016 OPW Collection

I created this analogue drawing on fine art paper freehand using a drawing app on a touch-screen. The work reflects my ongoing preoccupation with current pictorial practices enabled by smartphones and other portable devices. As an artist, I believe it is important to explore the possibilities of emergent mediums, while negotiating this with existing and traditional art practices with an awareness of current research in the area. As an Irish artist living in an international context, I particularly appreciate Prieto-Blanco's work with transnational families living in Ireland. Her work provides valuable insights into contemporary digital photographic practices. Using an image from such context, I drew an augmented version of what is present in addition to adding marks, dots and line to frame certain segments to depict a finished work with a strong focus on colour and composition. The luminosity of the initial on-screen display is markedly subdued after the printing process and yields a digital drawing that is more visually legible with a matt finish in contrast to the glaring one on-screen. In fact, in this particular piece, the incidental digital rippling in the dark teal pool area on the finished work on paper reflects not only the physical properties of water, but it also evidences the ongoing fruitful interplay of non-digital normality.



Niall Naessens

[A Cretaceous Garden]

etching with aquatint & gouache 41x59.5 cm 2016 OPW Collection

This image is a multi-plate etching produced using a sugar lift aquatint (black), an aquatinted stylus drawing on hard ground (blue) and a pink roll up on a third plate. The printed image is punctuated with some hand painting in gouache (light blue). The image is constructed of layers of images drawn in different idioms and scales creating the illusion of parallax and a peculiar perspective. The rainy garden and the windblown debris are motifs I have used before, the event of gust driven leaves part obscuring the garden drawing. A further interference of blue dots, maybe representing drops on glass, sits in front.

The title frivolously refers to the fact that this garden has existed for millions of years and as there is, hard to believe, a Tyrannosaurus rex at large there.



Fergus Smith

[Soft Day]

oil on canvas 50×70 cm 2017 OPW Collection

With a practice firmly situated in the genre of landscape, the ever-changing Irish weather provides a continuous spectacle of contrasting light, shade, shape and colour. Irish history, poetry, folklore and current affairs are instrumental in the researching, and execution of my work, along with images gathered over years. The images are scenes of time paused, of old and new horizons. And give rise to memories of journeys, situations and places.

TIME-MEMORY-LOSS

Soft Day is part of a series of paintings relating to memories of a lived life, but memories become faded, part forgotten or contaminated with each recall. This painting recalls Sunday outings with my parents, my father heating water in a teapot over a primus stove; sometimes with an old-style army cape protecting against the misty drizzle, and the salutation, “soft day”, to a passer-by. The recollection of the surrounding landscapes magically warped through the rain on the windscreen.



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Further reading

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Note

Comments on each artwork are artists' statements with the exception of John Breakey and Tom Carr which were researched and written by Niamh Schmidtke and Dr Louise Kelly.

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Other images provided by the artists, and galleries.

Image page 11 © Richard Mosse. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

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Dedicated to Bernard Taylor (1958-2018).

