

## **Uncharted Territories:** The Work of Shona Macdonald

*Shona Macdonald's paintings and drawings transform the seemingly objective visual language of maps into a delicate, subjective vocabulary that embraces the uncertainties and imperfections of experience over the specificity and constraints of knowledge. Initially influenced by her intuitive responses to the irregular topographical rhythms of her native Scotland and the surrounding British Isles, her shimmering, layered images evoke equal parts sea and land that are locked in a symbiotic, fluid tug-of-war, revealing the fiction behind most accepted boundaries — natural as well as man-made. She cuts apart and reassembles shorelines into reconstituted horizons, allows rivers to become roads and seeks a continuum between the lines of tree branches and the crest of waves.*

*The resulting images evoke apparitions more than the material world. Her domains are accumulations of mnemonic and perceptual residues not found on any sanitized, official chart. Appearing to expand and contract, Macdonald's network of meandering estuaries, attenuated peninsulas and orphaned islands express the internal effects of an individual's external experiences. Our navigational success in finding our way through terrain devoid of familiar landmarks is the result of Macdonald's understanding that an individual's true connection with place must ultimately skew the known parameters of traditional longitude and latitude.*

**John Brunetti, Chicago, January 2003**