

CANTOS-OPEN HORIZONS

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2024

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INTRODUCTION

Cantos-Open Horizons Part I was written in 2024, while *Cantos-Thinking Vessels* Part II was written in 2023. *Cantos-Open Horizons* is a text-based work using visual art notebooks collected between 2014 and 2024 as found text, reframed and rewritten in the style of *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* as an epic, non-rhyming, stream-of-consciousness prose poem. Here, inner thoughts are collected and exposed as a kind of creative self-portrait or thinking diary. They explore issues that came about through the creative process and research and include ideas about aesthetics, art, painting, expression, being, politics and representation through times of inspiration, self-doubt, grief and trauma. The *Cantos* trace ideas through the development of the *Horizons* and *Vessels* painting projects, which were started as a dialogue with poet Derek Mahon to share the process of the developing work and continued after he died in 2020. It was conceived as a visual, written document, layout and font choices form an integral part of the concept, and the work is comprised of short paragraphs, sentences, lists and quotes.

The idea for this work came about after reading *Uncreative Writing Managing Language in the Digital Age*, Columbia University Press, 2011, by Kenneth Goldsmith, who introduced me to *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*. Derek's copy of Joseph Joubert has kept me company, and Lydia Davis's *Essays* have constantly inspired me throughout the process.

Cantos-Open Horizons is 22,280 words long (126 pages), with images at the end of the text.

The development of this work was partly funded through an Arts Council Agility Award in 2022.

CANTOS-OPEN HORIZONS

I – LXVI

I

In February Derek appears in my life, by the end of March, he's gone. Back again at the end of May, this is the big one 'Love', something that changes you, fear is gone, and he is gone again by the end of August, well we shall see. To reach, touch, and affect another in confidence and love....

Unintelligibility – make un/intelligible - intelligible

*War and Peace*¹ by Tolstoy is about:

Appetites – chapter 1

Speculative Materialism – chapter 2

Lost at Sea – most of it

Loss – the rest

The Meeting:

How to form an expression that is equal to the experience?

Always the question.

Equivalent to the process of abstraction?

We are a little bit unrequited.

Those three trees on the hill:

not yet - the myrtle

Note to self:

I have to see this up and down harden your heart, too easily devastated and yet better than the numbing nothingness.

How do you overcome the fear of nothingness?

Arret Ton Cinema!!

You might get tired of me....

When the whole of the tree sways like a huge umbrella in the
garden....

Genuinely Insecure

Solipsism Reigns

The garden tentacle-like under a deep-sea rustling....

I am Keats lying on the grass

¹ Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, (1869), Translated and Introduced by Rosemary Edmonds, Penguin Classics, 1978

II

Idea:

The Berkeley² effect, portraits of a many-headed person - influencers from different sources.

1. The many-headed Philosopher painted in eighteen-century style portraiture.
2. Multiple heads of the same head on a single figure.

² George Berkeley, *The Principals of Human Knowledge with Other Writings*, (1710), Edited and Introduced by G.J. Warnock, Fontana Press, 1989

III

Note to self:

Parody – is a comic or satirical imitation of works.

Ideas:

1. Abstracts – concerned with a satirical interpretation of nationalism.
2. Abstracts that parody my early work through military colours referencing nature.
3. Colour as national identity
4. A parody of Irish art:

Comment on the corporatisation/economic touristification of
Irish culture

Parody of famous Irish artworks done in a
Touristic/naïve/kitsch style focusing on landscape and
weather

Questions of local and national identity through art....

The Trompe L'Oeil
fallacy

IV

The narrator of a book is always dissembling.....

*Doctor Zhivago*³ was maybe Pasternak's alter ego.

The book is about failure and death defused with a
luminous early evening summer light.

Searching for a lover's face on the street, in paintings and sculptures in galleries, as if
he is already lost....

His lips and the slope of his forehead

Horizons grew from Derek's interest in my early abstract paintings from the 1990s, which consisted of vertical strips of translucent dark colour painted in layers on large canvases, these works represented walls hiding and revealing Spaces and the Blue of evening light at certain times of the year. Derek wrote in his essay *Horizons* "She worked in the vertical for several years: dark upright panels – blues, greens – aspiring to black ... She has also worked in the horizontal: often a deep dark sea and a cloudy sky, laterally trisected, a hint of light at the horizon itself, but not really representational, 'not pictures of horizons but experiments with paint.'"⁴ I knew I couldn't turn back time and start painting in the same style I had then, I needed to bring the knowledge I had gained through my experiments with installation and multimedia works to this painting project, including ideas about representation, the illusion of perception and exploring the ephemeral experience of seeing and understanding... "the perniciousness of language ... [which] produce[s] ... fictions."⁵

³ Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago*, (1958), A New Translation by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, Pantheon Books, 2010

⁴ Derek Mahon, *Olympia and the Internet*, 'Horizons', The Gallery Press, 2017

⁵ David Berman, *Berkeley: Experimental Philosophy*, The Great Philosophers, 1997

V

Derek, I am in Cill Rialaig 'The Church of the Regulars' an ancient monastic settlement on a hill by the edge of the sea above Ballinskelligs (artists residency) to think about horizons. I went to Cahersiveen this morning to stock up on supplies for about five days, I also got some turf for the stove. There are no ashtrays here though no 'No Smoking' signs either I am creating a little fog.

The traditional idea of the horizon is one of sea and sky, an illusive illusory nonexistence of something which refers to an unknowable future....

"Illusion is an integral part of reality. It is an essential presence, in the same way an effect is essential to a cause."⁶

'Broaden your Horizons' in the educational sense or 'beyond the Blue Horizon' in the (kitsch hopeful) future tense.... online searches deliver images of roads running off into the distance and references to sunsets and sunrises. In art and literature, it is a problematic Subject referred to but rarely the main subject *Lost Horizon*⁷ by James Hilton is an exception, Elizabeth Bowen refers to the horizon in passing a few times in *The Death of the Heart*⁸ and not at all in *The Heat of the Day*⁹.

"The horizon is the line at which the earth and the sky appear to meet – (sensible horizon), the (apparent or visible horizon)."¹⁰

City/Urban Horizon....

Horizons include the large circle in which the rational horizon meets the heavens (sensible horizon - cosmic scale); the plane through the earth's centre parallel to the sensible horizon (rational horizon); a level of strata characterised by a source of particular fossils – with different physical properties of soil (soil horizon - terrestrial scale); architectural artefacts from a specific culture or period (cultural horizon - time

scale) and the limit of a persons knowledge, interests or experience (personal horizon - psychological scale).

“horizon | həˈraɪz(ə)n | *the sun rose above the horizon* • a great circle of the celestial sphere, the plane of which passes through the centre of the earth • *she wanted to leave home and broaden her horizons* • *the upper horizon of the site showed an arrangement of two rows of features* • Latin *horizon*, from Greek *horizōn (kuklos)* limiting (circle).”¹¹

I know you will like the science bit.

“Soil Horizons can be thought of as the way soil organises itself. Layers within the soil profile vary in thickness but are generally parallel to the soil surface. Each layer has different properties and characteristics that differentiate it from the one above and below. Soil horizons are mostly determined by a change in colour, texture, structure, or chemistry....

Soil horizon depths are measured starting with 0 cm at the top of the mineral soil surface and continuing down the soil profile from 0 to 25 cm, 25 to 75 cm and so on....

There are six main soil horizons, referred to as master horizons, these are symbolized by the capital letters: O for organic material, P for humus and peat, A for topsoil, E for eluvium, B for subsoil, C for parent material and R for bedrock.”¹²

Makes me think of caves - Bellow the Soil Horizon!

“The horizon is the apparent curve that separates the surface of a celestial body from its sky when viewed from the perspective of an observer on or near the surface of a relevant body (true horizon).”¹³

Event Horizon – the edge of a Black hole

Note to self:

Throwing all the cards in the air and seeing how they fall, painting soon I promise.

Issues around the idea of the horizon seem very scientific in nature 'Distance to the Horizon' is pure maths and geometry relating to the fact that the earth is round.

I have *erased* the maths bit so as not to bore you....

Sea Horizon

Earth Horizon

Structure Horizon

Left Horizon & Right Horizon

Missed Horizon

Francis Ponge in *Selected Poems*¹⁴ (the copy you gave me) does not have a poem about the horizon, I did find these about 'The Earth' and 'Of Water'

The Earth

"(Let us simply pick up a clod of earth)

This moving mixture of the past of the three kingdoms, all trampled, all permeated, all crisscrossed as well by their seeds and roots, their living presences: that's the earth.

This mincemeat, this paté comprising the flesh of three reigns....."¹⁵

Of Water

"Lower, always lower than I am - such is water. I always look at it with lowered eyes. Like the ground, like a part of the ground, like a modification of the ground.

It's white and shiny, shapeless and cool, passive and obstinately committed to its sole vice, gravity - and is endowed with exceptional means for satisfying this vice: by-passing, piercing, eroding, percolating...."¹⁶

So, here is the process: I collect ideas, find facts, take pictures, research images and literature, read (a lot) look at paintings and contemporary and art history of all kinds I think about all these things in a state of Crisis and Panic. A process of anxiety through fragmented knowledge brought together, mixed-up and disassembled repeatedly.

I'm looking at the idea of the horizon of the artwork itself, the support, the edge of the page or canvas as having four edges, four horizons - four 'Actual Horizons' horizons

of the artwork and a fifth horizon being the page itself, the flat surface, two-dimensions becoming one-dimension and vice versa, where is the 'True Horizon' of the artwork?

I collect information and erase it as a playful process.

In the painting 'Composition 3 with Colour Planes' (1917)¹⁷ by Piet Mondrian (1872-1944) there is no adherence to the edges, the colour planes seem to float in space and reach out beyond the edges of the picture frame suggesting a world beyond. The picture frame is not a fixed enclosing space but a horizon that reaches beyond its Limits.

Note to self:

Use blue to acknowledge traditional Sea and Sky horizon representations, but what about pink? It's also great....

Soft horizons, layered horizons, out-of-focus horizons and blurred horizons by the rain on a car windscreen, flattened and indeterminate....

In photographs of rain on a windscreen, the horizon appears out of focus in the background, the image is naturally layered because of the nearness of the glass.

The great thing about photography is that it is only a fragment of what it photographs and therefore always alludes to what is beyond its frame. The rain on the windscreen and the out-of-focus background create a natural abstraction and layering.

Next, drawings of photographs and images of Mondrian's abstracts layered and flattened to create a network of semiabstract chance encounters between the different drawn images, like abstract shapes created by the intersecting lines of a Scribble.

Note to self:

Perspective: to represent three-dimensional objects in two Dimensions creating an illusion.

In her book *Geometry of an Art*¹⁸, Kirsti Anderson describes the evolution of perspective drawing and science up to 1800, noting that vanishing points need not be on the horizon. In a chapter titled 'Horizon' John Stillwell recounts how projective geometry has led to 'incidence Geometry' the modern abstract study of line intersection.

The sunken Church on Omev Island off the coast of Connemara offers an opportunity for a complicated relationship of a building to its horizon because it was hidden below ground for so long – *Under the Horizon, Hidden Horizon, Lost Horizon, Revealed Horizon, Historical Horizon*.

The Maritime painter George Mounsey Wheatly Atkinson (1806-84) lived in Cobh, Co Cork, where he painted the ships coming and going from Cork Harbour which he could see from his studio window on Harbour View. He was known for his ability to paint weather conditions to dramatic effect. I have removed the ships (the subjects) from his paintings digitally in the *Solipsism Series*¹⁹ bringing the background and weather elements forward and revealing the horizons.

'Hull-up' is where an observer can tell how far away a ship is by the position of its hull to the horizon, if the ship is far away the hull is hidden behind the horizon caused by the curvature of the earth.

The Lost Horizons of World War I

"350,000 Irishmen served in the British forces during World War 1, 35,000 died....

176 U-boats were surrendered to the Allies at the end of the War....

Admiral Lewis Bayly – The Admiralty House, Cobh, built in 1886....

By July 1917 there were 34 American Destroyers stationed in Cork Harbour....

U-boats had sunk 5,708 ships, 11,018,865 tons....

13,333 people were lost at sea....

Cork Harbour played a central role in the winning of the War at Sea against the German U-boats...."²⁰

"As an exhibition, *The Event Horizon* started with the concept of narratives: how do artists construct them? As the emphasis on narrative was developed through the planning stages of the exhibition, two other themes emerged: landscape and personal identity. The artists invited to participate have all dealt, in one form or another, with the issues of landscape, narrative and cultural identity. Their approaches are, of course, very different. In fact, these differences are another way of 'unfixing' the questions under discussion. As an exhibition, *The Event Horizon* poses these questions, suggests a few responses and leaves the resolutions open to interpretation."²¹

⁶ Joseph Joubert, (1754-1824), *The Notebooks of Joseph Joubert*, Translated and Introduction, Paul Auster, (1983), New York Review of Books, 2005

⁷ James Hilton, *Lost Horizon*, (1933), Vintage Books, 2015

⁸ Elizabeth Bowen, *The Death of the Heart*, (1938) Introduced by Patricia Craig, Vintage Classics, 1998

⁹ Elizabeth Bowen, *The Heat of the Day*, (1948), Introduced by Roy Foster, Vintage Classics, 1998

¹⁰ web search, *Collins Dictionary*, 'Horizon',

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/horizon>

¹¹ Mairi Robinson, Editor in Chief, George Davidson, Editor, *21st Century Dictionary*, Chambers, 1999

¹² Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soil_horizon

¹³ Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horizon>

¹⁴ Francis Ponge, *Selected Poems*, (1942), Edited by Margaret Guiton, Faber and Faber, 1998

¹⁵ Francis Ponge, *Selected Poems*, (1942) Edited by Margaret Guiton, 'The Earth' Translated by John Montague, Faber and Faber, 1998

¹⁶ Francis Ponge, *Selected Poems*, (1942) Edited by Margaret Guiton, 'On Water' Translated by C.K. Williams, Faber and Faber, 1998

¹⁷ Serge Lemoine, *Mondrian and De Stijl*, translated by Charles Lynn Clark, Art Data, 1987

¹⁸ Kirsti Anderson, *The Geometry of an Art: The History of the Mathematical Theory of Perspective from Alberti to Monge (Sources and Studies in the History of Mathematics and Physical Sciences)*, Springer, 2006

¹⁹ My Website: <https://www.sarahiremonger.com/artwork/solipsism-series-2013>

²⁰ Liam Nolan and John E. Nolan, *Forgotten Colonial History: World War 1 (Secret Victory – Ireland and the War at Sea)*, Mercier Press, 2005

²¹ *The Event Horizon*, exhibition including artists: Anna Eva Bergman; Mitja Tusek; Nusret Pasic; Ann Veronica Janssens; Sigalit Landau; Michelangelo Pistoletto & Tim Robinson at IMMA Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, 1996 <https://imma.ie/about/press-centre/the-event-horizon-participating-artists-part-i>

VI

Another residency and the start of actual work, projecting, drawing, painting, projecting, drawing, painting....

So far, that was the thought process, now for the means:

To make the paintings I superimpose Mondrian's painting 'Composition 3 with Coloured Planes'²² on top of a drawing of Cork Harbour (from a photograph taken from East Beach, Cobh) by printing them onto transparency films and projecting them with an overhead Projector onto paper on the wall.

When the two images are superimposed on top of one another, the framework of Mondrian's painting fragments the image of Cork Harbour into a series of smaller images. These then are what I paint, leaving the framework around the fragments unpainted.

This is based on ideas about frames. The source material as a frame, the picture as a frame and framed, a series of frames within a frame, framing the content.

Yesterday I drew three ink drawings and today worked one up as a painting for *Pink Horizon*! Pink will out! More to come, we'll see what happens.

The *process* has taken over and is evolving of its own accord.

Let nature or in this case, art take its course. Tomorrow I will continue the paintings and make a new drawing for further experiments.

I'm in the Zone, a place of focused open-minded observation.

Watercolour Colours used for *Pink Horizon*:

Purple Lake

Violet Ultramarine

Permanent Magenta (only a little)

Cobalt Blue (lovely)

Pathalo Blue (an old favourite)

Manganese Blue Hue

Ultramarine Blue

Transparent Turquoise

Permanent Green

Viridian Tint

Indigo (what a re-found find!!)

Burnt Umber

Raw Siena

Sepia

Vandyke Brown Hue

I completed the painting finally, after Scratching away at it for two days and a crisis earlier. It has resulted in what you could call a 'tile' effect.

In the next painting, instead of looking through Mondrian's painting like a series of windows, 'Colour Composition A' (1917) will cover the image of Cork Harbour entirely as if you were looking through a curtain.

²² Serge Lemoine, *Mondrian and De Stijl*, Translated by Charles Lynn Clark, Art Data, 1987

VII

Got your card today, made my heart *swoon*, miss and love you xx

I have a handle on this painting malarkey today and am now painting a *Yellow Horizon*. I imagine myself painting by numbers, like when I was a child and painted an execrable work, meticulously.

You sent me the card I gave, you Cheeky Thing!

These works take two days to paint, so I'll be doing well to complete Three!

VIII

The last line in *Red Sails* “a face in the stone, impatiently awaiting its rediscovery”²³ made me think of all the past lives of this ancient place and I found a face in the stone wall today.

I will complete *Yellow Horizon* and start *Red Horizon*

Yellow Horizon has not turned out as well as *Pink Horizon* I think the sea needs to be darker. I might do it again.

Panic!

Have slowed down! I rushed ahead with the second picture of *Yellow Horizon* because the first one, *Pink Horizon* worked so well, but I need to be more careful. The Balance between the white page and the painted areas needs to be at least half and half, therefore Mondrian’s work has to be enlarged, but not Too much. I’ve done a drawing that has given me a clue as to what to do next.

Red Horizon will be based on Mondrian’s ‘Composition 2’ (1917) and like looking through a Stained-glass window.

Red Horizon will have to wait.

²³ Derek Mahon, *Red Sails Prose*, ‘Red Sails in the Sunset’, The Gallery Press, 2014

IX

It's touch and go here, I keep thinking I've made a hash of it and then I persevere....

Smoking too much

A new drawing of Cork Harbour from further back, a wider horizon....

After working on *Yellow Horizon 2* all day I have decided *Yellow Horizon 1* wasn't so bad after all, and with a bit of reworking is satisfactory. Sometimes you have to go around in circles to find out where you are!

Red Horizon is turning out to be *Blue Horizon* sorry, no *Red Horizon* yet....

X

Painting, painting, painting, Painting....

Finished *Blue Horizon*

It has worked, though it is probably too busy with *too* much going on 'variations on a theme' I know what I'm going to do next....

Very Excited

Back to Cork

Back in Cobh, sorting out photos for you....

Idea: Painting Cork Harbour in different monotone colours.

XI

“Let the picture imitate nothing and let it present nakedly its ‘raison d’etre’.”²⁴

“What I should like to write is a book about nothing, a book dependent on nothing external, which would be held together by the strength of its style.”²⁵

“The truly modern artist *consciously* perceives the abstractness of the emotion of beauty: *he consciously* recognizes aesthetic emotion as cosmic, universal.”²⁶

“To translate the customs, the ideas, the appearance of my time, according to my own estimation; to be not only a painter but a man as well; in short, to create living art – this is my goal.”²⁷

“Outside in the world; it’s there. Pop art looks out into the world.”²⁸

The argument between self-referential abstraction vs representation; the reproduction of realism and the negation of subject matter objectifying the artwork as standing outside or separate from the world....

Abstraction vs Reality

The horizon is a representational quandary, a fallacy of the idea of universal harmony or beauty. Horizons intrude into Mondrian’s abstracts continually suggesting digital tropes of screensavers.

The horizon is beyond representation.

Artists explored on the National Gallery of Ireland’s website:

James A. O’Connor (1792-1841)

William Howis Snr. (1804-82)

William Howis Jnr. (1827-57)

Nathaniel Hone (1718-84)

Thomas Roberts (1748-79)

William Ashford (1746-1824)

George Barret (1730-84)

Colour as nostalgia for 'other' places and realms of the mind:

Lack of Place and Time

Losing Grip on Reality

Wandering Heart, Searching for the Ideal

The Paradise of Nothingness

A Vision of Lost Paradise

Openness – Roaming

Placeless/ness

Visual Silence

Description:

Using different media this collaborative project includes writing, painting, drawing and digital media, and a shared experience of living, reading and conversation, leading to work, more work and working....

Note to self:

A reflective interior of the mind exploring the existence and non-existence of reality.

Ideas:

1. Sight and Colour: weather, sky and sea through different eyes and minds, including the non-human, digital manipulations of G. M. W. Atkinson's observations of colour and weather in his maritime paintings.
2. Photographs of the mouth of Cork Harbour as a symbolic point of departure, a jumping-off point.

3. Reading as internalised exploration.
4. Filmed montage of horizon views: filmed from nearly but not quite the same viewpoint, so that the horizon and landscape are constantly in motion and slippage:

Film/ video – *The Mouth of Cork Harbour*

5. Digitally manipulated nineteenth-century artworks, focusing on the background:

Ships etc. removed from maritime paintings (empty horizon)

6. Neon horizons:

Found neon tubing (a mass of horizons)

Mace blue neon tubing traversing an entire gallery halfway up the wall
(beyond the blue horizon)

Neon radio wave neon (like a curving snake)

7. Lost/distant horizons:

Tourist media photographs of holiday destinations painted in the style
of William Blake (1757-1827) as mystical images

²⁴ Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger, *Du "Cubisme"*, Eugène Figuière Éditeurs, 1912

²⁵ Brian Nelson, *The Cambridge Introduction to French Literature*, 'Flaubert: the narrator vanishes', Gustave Flaubert, letter to Louise Colet (1852), Cambridge University Press, 2015

²⁶ Piet Mondrian, *Perpetual Ripplets: Mondrian 1917*, Yuko Otomo, Arteidolia, 2017
<https://www.arteidolia.com/perpetual-ripplets-mondrian-1917-yuko-otomo>

²⁷ Gustave Courbet, *Gustave Courbet: the working class becomes the subject of art*, (1855), Jenny Farrell, Culture Matters, May 2019

<https://www.culturematters.org.uk/index.php/component/content/article/12-arts-hub/visual-arts/417-gustave-courbet-the-working-class-becomes-the-subject-of-art>

²⁸ Roy Lichtenstein, *In This 1963 Interview, Roy Lichtenstein "Doubts" Pop Art Will Have a Lasting Influence*, Artspace Editors, 2017

https://www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/book_report/roy-lichtenstein-what-is-pop-art-55006

XII

Saul A. Kripke, *Reference and Existence – Naming and Necessity*²⁹

Umberto Eco, *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*³⁰

Residency at The Doon, Kinsale.

Ideas: Missing Horizons (holes in photos of Horizons)

Out-of-focus horizons (blurred photos of Horizons)

Completed four drawings at The Doon

Note to self:

I left the Sirius Arts Centre (Cobh) after founding, working and volunteering there for over 30 years.

²⁹ Saul A. Kripke, *Reference and Existence – Naming and Necessity*, Wiley-Blackwell, 1981

³⁰ Umberto Eco, *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*, Harvard University Press, 1994

XIII

The world as an illusion mediated through art:

Sublime

Contradiction

Decadence

Contrarian

Surface

Contra

Symbol

Climate

Symmetrical

Chemical

Seismic

Chimney

Slippery

Climb

XIV

Ideas:

1. Merge abstraction and representation in the same image -

Photographs of Cork Harbour horizons crossed with Mondrian abstract

Compositions:

Painted in the Style of:

Mary Swanzy (1882-1978)

Studio Ghibli (1958) (animation studio)

Animation images and anime

Gabriel Metsu (1629-67)

Printed fabric designs of nature (very stylised)

2. Far Away/mythological/imaginary places and islands:

Advertising travel images from newspapers -

Painted in the style of:

William Blake - Mythical Surrealism

Studio Ghibli animation images and Anime - landscapes

Gabriel Metsu or Pieter de Hooch (1629-84)

3. Fragmentation of the Above images as:

Digital tiles

Digital tiles within digital tiles (like screensavers)

overlapping tiles like floating photo screensavers

4. Focus Attention on the background of history paintings - Pieter de Hooch's

Courtyard of a House in Delft (1658)

(tiling detail on the ground painted in great detail) - *Courtyards in Delft*³¹

5. Topographical prints of faraway places - faraway places are always Near someone!

6. Gravity/science:

Holds the world together/in place so that we can experience the horizon,

Gravity creates the horizon.

The horizon is constantly 'moving' an unfixed eternally shifting non-phenomenon, created by the tides through the movement of the earth and the pull of the Moon (tideline).

³¹ Derek Mahon, *Collected Poems*, The Gallery Press, 1999

XV

The Bridges – (working title) a collaborative illustrated project with Derek Mahon who wrote the story for his son Rory thirty-five years ago. I have produced eighteen drawings for this story, published as *The Rain Bridge*³² by The Gallery Press.

³² Derek Mahon, *The Rain Bridge*, Illustrated by Sarah Iremonger, The Gallery Press, 2017

XVI

Boalin exhibition at Gluksman Gallery in Cork – is an example of mathematics and art striped of humour....

Art has become an excuse for a decorative aesthetic experience;

The exhibition is about ‘creating’ the code of ‘value’ of art rather than breaking or exposing the system of values;

Actions: Humour, Wiggle Room, De-
Contextualizing Action, Cheekiness, Naughtiness
and Meddling

Thoughts:

Indeterminacy/Uncertainty (nature of deconstruction)

Quantifiability/ Able/ Ability Vs

Unquantifiability/Unable/Inability

“Why is there something rather than nothing?”³³

Existence is related to location not to a specific subject.

Singularities – something must exist – the cause of Phenomena (atoms) – not Phenomena itself!

Approximations – Belief/Delusion:

No: Thing-in-itself

No: Absolute Knowledge

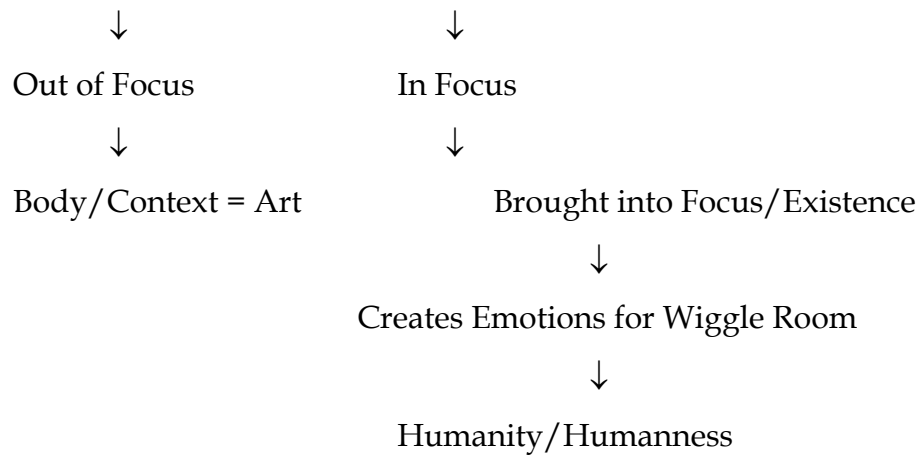
No: Immediate Knowledge

“Science is still the dupe of linguistic habits”³⁴

“Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions”³⁵

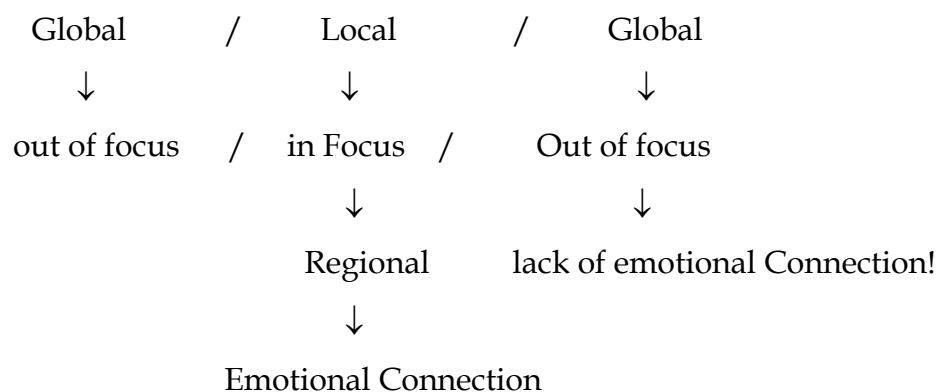
Indeterminacy

Thingness



What next? Background vs Foreground; Private vs Public; Global vs Local;
 Connection vs Disconnection; Personal vs Impersonal; Distance vs Closeness etc.

Corporate/Global/Capitalist/Political - *the arms trade creates refugees!*



All of us (not them out there/*the others*)
 Existential Otherness (them over there/other)
 Like soup/uncontained split/mixed all together/loss of autonomy
 Fear/in danger of being Split/by them out there/we are *all* in this together
 Fear of the loss of the Body Politic of Subjectivity =
 Fascism/Racism

Indeterminacy as equal/not equal
 Everyone is the same but different (togetherness)

Distraction!

“Indeterminacy of definition”³⁶

“The state of not being measured, counted, or clearly known”³⁷

The indeterminacy of Memes and their self-replicating nature is part of the explanation for the indeterminacies in language and thought, people copy each other and breed indeterminacy through adaptation constantly.

Human conceptual imitation/memes

Indeterminacy and Materialism:

The meanings embedded in materials through their context (use) create indeterminate meanings if presented in unfamiliar forms. (Making recognizable objects out of unrecognizable materials, taking objects designed for a certain purpose and using them for a different purpose (out of context)).

For example: make car Seats out of wedding dresses -
material, material
using a hammer to paint a wall

Ideas:

Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968)

Take art objects or reproductions of art objects (ready-made art objects) and use them to make something else...to transform the original intention of the object, expose and disrupt the original meaning through a disjointed context (out of context).

Disrupted Contexts:

Expose the locked-in nature of context and the effect exerted on meaning by context. Loss of context? Exploration of value systems through context.

Ready-made/re-ready-made/ready ready-mades

return the disruptive 'ready-made' to the art world, making the ready-made the context for the artwork (context within context without context?)

Divided Contexts: paint/print recognisable artworks on ready-made objects (bins, computer screens, cupboards, pots etc.....) (create a set of art reproductions as art)

&

Confuse the art Context: find reproductions of artworks on existing ready-mades, found vases with landscapes painted/printed on them (love these) and exhibit them in a gallery (reproduction/kitsch art brought into an art context) (confuse the art context, what is the art?)

Time-sensitive Context: Style transposed into style, for example, Marcel Duchamp's urinal painted with a Surrealist painting (mixed up contexts)

&

Ready Ready-made: a series of objects referring to different periods of art history displaced from their context and exhibited on the street (out of context) (a pile of art rubbish).

Mixed Contexts: using ready-made art history reproductions of paintings, paint a copied art history reproduction inside and on top of the original reproduction (painted collage) (a kaleidoscopic context) (copy within a copy)

Distraction!

Note to self:

Priapic instinct – creative urge as cut and thrust instinct

Loss of the priapic instinct – the fear of losing the ability to create!

³³ Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, (1646-1716), *Monadology*, 1714

³⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche - *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 1887

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Foucault (1926-84)

³⁷ Web Search, *Cambridge Dictionary*, 'Indeterminacy'

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/indeterminacy>

XVII

I am working on the *Horizons* project and trying to paint the drawings done at The Doon in March and April.

I have decided to reduce and restrict the colours and combinations I use in the paintings to the four colours used in Digital inkjet printers in recognition of the role played by digital technologies in the development of the image:

Magenta

Cian

Yellow

and Black (indigo)

Note to self:

Painting is the organization of ideas into images and visuals! (Don't forget this!)

XVIII

In the first *Horizons* paintings (pink, yellow & blue) I let the Abstract structure of Mondrian's works dictate the position of the colours, organized into separate 'windows' across the paintings.

In these *Horizons* the image of Cork Harbour is in the background, behind Mondrian's abstracts, the frames of the panels of his paintings are superimposed on top of the image of Cork Harbour, letting the colours flow across the whole picture from one panel to the other.

Note to self:

This work represents the culmination of all the ideas up to this point in the project.

Reverse the Poles

Abandon all Moorings

Invert and Up-end

I am painting about horizons not representations *of* horizons.

The horizons of painting include the boundaries between abstraction and representation, between sculpture and painting, digital media and painting, or between what you see and what you think you see (imagination and perception).

XIX

Using stock images of horizons found online and layering them with screensavers grabbed from a computer screen to fragment and make them indeterminate. Drawings to follow....

Notes to self:

1. *Deepwater Horizon*³⁸
2. Ephemeral/Invisible – “We are not deceived by the scenery”³⁹
3. Elusive Horizons – “The steam rising wherever the edge maybe?”⁴⁰

Imaginary Islands found online:

I am looking for images of ‘Imaginary Islands’ that can be turned into drawings and superimposed onto drawings of screensaver grids and tiles. I am attracted to high contrasts with strong bright colours and wide dramatic panoramas.

“...to lift our horizons...to imagine our futures”⁴¹

“A broadening of our intellectual horizons, a deepening and enriching of our experience...our education”⁴²

“Being and becoming?”⁴³

Horizon as a verb from the Greek language means to divide or separate, the division between the earth or sea and the sky separating/that separate them.

³⁸ BP oil spill, 2010

³⁹ Derek Mahon, *The Hunt by Night*, ‘Brecht in Svendborg’, Oxford Poets, 1995

⁴⁰ Derek Mahon, *The Hunt by Night*, ‘Tractatus’, Oxford Poets, 1995

⁴¹ Malcolm Miles, *Limits to Culture, Urban Regeneration Vs. Dissident Art*, ‘The Social Construction of a Cultural Disaster’ J. McGuigan citing Blair, T. ‘Why the Dome Is Good For Britain’ speech, Royal Festival hall, (24 Feb 1998), Pluto Press, 2015

⁴² Malcolm Miles, *Limits to Culture, Urban Regeneration Vs. Dissident Art*, ‘The Reticent Object: The New Museology’, Peter Vergo, Pluto Press, 2015

⁴³ Derek Mahon said

XX

Idea: Drawings of Skellig Michael layered with Screensavers - I will try to paint one of them to see what happens, but I'm not convinced it will work and trying the same idea with a James Arthur O'Connor (1792-1841) landscape and woodland camouflage. Paintings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are complete worlds in their own right, separate and symbolic of 'imaginary islands' representing an Idyllic world created for a pleased class to ensure their status of superiority.

The idea of Skellig Michael being 'out-of-focus' a softened fragmentation symbolises its inaccessibility and past as a place of monastic retreat. To aid this, I propose a series of colour camouflage designs for Skellig Michael to hide from the world, particularly from the capitalist corporate world of Hollywood film tourism.

Ideas:

Colour Separation Camouflages for Skellig Michael

Found blurred photographs, out-of-focus - Hallucinations - disappearing

Neon outline/silhouette of Skellig Michael *Lost Island* (mace blue - Flashing)

Neon outline/silhouette of the mouth of Cork Harbour

Including the headlands on either side (mace blue, not flashing)

Drawings of Skellig Michael overlayed by Mondrian
abstract compositions

A set of Computerised images of Skellig Michael
and drawings based on these images

Colour separations with screensavers

Fragmented colour separations and screensavers

Multiple screensavers with colour separations

Tiled screensavers of Skellig Michael

Drawings of Skellig Michael from simplified posterized computerised cutout versions made in Photoshop remind me of camouflage designs – I'll push this association.

Note to self: Research Camouflages

XXI

“Sheldrake gives the name ‘Morphic fields’ to the forces that tug swifts and cuckoos in migratory tides, finger cells thus far and no further and makes atoms lie obediently in a customary lattice. The strength of a field, Is partly a function of likeness. Theoretically... everything in the universe is bound together by some sort of field.”⁴⁴
“Morphic Fields”⁴⁵

Key of watercolours Used to create *Woodland, Pink, Desert and Sea* camouflage for Skellig Michael:

1. Green - *Woodland*:

Sky – (very light) Olive Green Yellow & May Green

1. – Hookers Green Light
2. – Hookers Green Dark
3. – Olive Green

2. Pink - *Pink*:

Sky – (very light) Magenta

1. – Magenta
2. – Permanent Magenta
3. – Permanent magenta and indigo

3. Yellow - *Desert*:

Sky – (very light) Cadmium Yellow Light

1. – Cadmium Yellow Light
2. – Cadmium Yellow Dark
3. – Vandyke Brown / Gelbgrun Green Yellow

4. Blue - *Sky*:

Sky – (very light) Manganese Blue Hue (almost Invisible)

1. – Coeruleum Blue Hue
2. – Coeruleum Blue
3. – Cerulean Blue Hue

"A white van dashes past. 'Cleaning Solutions', it reads, 'in pursuit of global excellence.' Biscuits are made with 'joy'. Excellence and joy are now trade terms; 'horizon' too. What with training schemes and management speak, horizons, always figuratively useful – new horizons, broader horizons, time horizons – have a busier metaphorical life than ever. They're especially good for adding a touch of mystery to the banal (what lies beyond the horizon?) but are often themselves banal, and in art can verge on kitsch: it's a risky proposition. Beyond the horizon lie other horizons, each as ephemeral as the last; but the ephemeral is fascinating in itself. Waves slide and dance continuously out there, while what we see from the shore is only a straight line, often choppy, dividing the sea from the sky. A rough stretch of water presents itself as plane geometry; and a strange residue of Ptolemaic, flat-earth thinking, somewhere in the genes, sees horizons as a form of enclosure. We note surface activity – surfers, white sails, container ships – and imagine water temperatures and the Gulf Stream which, driven by prevailing winds, can move at a hundred miles a day and still be warm when it reaches us. Boundary, margin, limit, edge, says Roget; perimeter, skyline, rim. Horizons are all these things and more. They're where we live; they're there wherever we go, be they land, sea or city roof horizons. Symbolic land horizons include sand deserts, that enigmatic, ocean-like phenomenon. Paul Bowles, in his strange, slow-moving Algerian novel *The Sheltering Sky* (1949), gets close to it: (Kit) 'touched the window-pane; it was ice-cold. The bus bumped and swayed as it continued upward across the plateau.... Here in the desert, even more than at sea, she had the impression that she was on top of a great table, that the horizon was the brink of space.' She experiences the Sahara as an existential extremity."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Charles Foster, *Being a Beast*, Profile Books, 2016

⁴⁵ Rupert Sheldrake, *The Presence of the Past: Morphic Resonance and the Habits of Nature*, London Icon, 2011

⁴⁶ Derek Mahon, *Olympia and The Internet*, 'Horizons', The Gallery Press, 2017

XXII

The postmodern *loosening* of reality along with inequality has led to the 'Trump' phenomenon, a rising tide of angry narcissism bent on power at the cost of self-destruction.

Postmodern painting has concerned Itself with ideas about realities, taking on board the Proliferation and exponential exposure to images in every form, particularly through the media and digital media.

Postmodern painting is concerned with a consciousness about painting itself. The legacy of post-postmodernism – I am painting fragmented and out-of-focus works about painting.

What about painting in a Post-Truth world?

The Simulation of the Simulation....

The fake of the fake.... a world fractured and fragmented receding into an out-of-focus non-being and non-Becoming.

"Images have had a great influence on realities."⁴⁷

Postmodern as:

Experience	vs	Theory
Text	vs	Reality

A loss of reality is like a loss of knowledge, falling over the edge of something where everything is falling at the same speed and time, mixed up, too much to take in, disorientating and out-of-focus.

Note to self:

How do you paint and reveal painting at the same time?

Idea: Create a Guide to Painting/ Art in the Age of Post-truths – neo-conceptualism.

Representation is dead! Long Live representation!

Post-representation – we are already there?

Issues of abstraction vs representation are now out of date, it doesn't matter anymore in a 'Post-truth' world.

Realities gleaned from found photographs and personal memorabilia

Suggestable Sublime – an unknowableness

Gratuitous, self-indulgent meaninglessness in a knowing conscious way

for no good reason.

I am revealing the process of painting itself (welcome to my head)

Alternative found views of Skellig Michael – from the air – birds-eye-view

Look at contemporary painting in:

Vitamin P New Perspectives in Painting

Vitamin P2 “

Vitamin 3-D New Perspectives in Sculpture and Installation⁴⁸

Reading:

*Art for Dummies*⁴⁹ (Symbolist realism is missing)

Idea: Write a *Conceptualism for Dummies* book

*The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*⁵⁰

*Limits to Culture, Urban Regeneration Vs. Dissident Art*⁵¹

Ideas:

1. Camouflages for Skellig Michael painted as colour separations
2. Blurred: Surface-blur, Lens-blur, Motion-blur and Box-blur camouflage for Skellig Michael
3. Lens-blurred woodland, PINK, desert and sea camouflage for Skellig Michael
4. Lens-blurred colour separations with screensavers
5. Lost-edge Drip blurred watercolour painting series (let the Watercolour flow!)

“Wherever the edge maybe?”⁵²

⁴⁷ Joseph Joubert, (1754-1824), *The Notebooks of Joseph Joubert*, Translated and Introduction, Paul Auster, (1983), New York Review of Books, 2005

⁴⁸ Phaidon, *New Perspectives in Painting*, 2002 & 2014, *New Perspectives in Sculpture and Installation* (2009), 2014

⁴⁹ Thomas Hoving, *Art for Dummies*, For Dummies, 1999

⁵⁰ Stuart Sim, *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, Third Edition, 2011

⁵¹ Malcolm Miles, *Limits To Culture, Urban Regeneration Vs. Dissident Art*, Pluto Press, 2015

⁵² Derek Mahon, *The Hunt by Night*, ‘Tractatus’, Oxford Poets, 1995

XXIII

Enter Star Wars.....

Idea: Star Wars camouflage created by multiplying and reversing stock images of a Storm Trooper helmet infinitely and superimposing it onto Skellig Michael – questioning and highlighting the corporate sellout of heritage and the MILITARISATION of leisure and tourist activities.

Ancient Sights of Spirituality

vs

Capitalist Corporate Machine and Militarized Touristification

Ideas:

1. This is no longer an exhibition of paintings, but a Book? (was I always writing a book?) Have the paintings become illustrations? *Art as a Book!* as a de-materialization of the art object?
2. Blurred inept interpretations of other artworks from art history, for example, J.A. O'Connor landscapes, fusing foreground and background
3. Paintings of photographs from my collection – Blurred – almost absent
Present/absent paintings of my history
4. Paintings of found media and collected found images
5. Paintings of photographs of other artists' work lost in a world of endless mirrored unreality – focus on images of video Projections, Mirrors and fragmentation
6. *Art on a Plate!* hand-painted plates of artworks from a museum – for example, Crawford Art Gallery, created by the public and exhibited in the gallery alongside the originals – questions of originality, authorship, folk art vs fine art.

“To dismantle and reinvent institutions or systems we have to start at the roots, with the culture that supports them. Culture is the material substratum of politics, the muddy foundations upon which it is built, but these foundations can’t be changed in the same way that you can undo a law – they are transformed by infiltrating them at the molecular level, through the fault lines, pores and gaps, burrowing away like an old mole opening up millions of potential north-west passages. Luckily for you, that’s where you are already.”⁵³

- Horizon-ness/Less
- Tree-ness/Less
- Landscape-ness/Less
- Painting-ness/Less

Painting-ness – let the painting have consciousness, the paint and the painting tell me what to do – the I and you of (a) painting/landscape/horizon/etc.... Painting as though the painting has self-awareness, and subjectivity, is conscious and questions what it is to be a painting – making demands of me – pushing the boundaries of materials beyond an imposed representational idea of meaning – deciding its aesthetic autonomy.

Art Poem:

Self-referential

Critical

Reclaim space

Utopian/Modernist

Engage

Comment

Self-aggrandizement

Commercial

Arty enough

Audience

Aesthetics

Career – Past/Present/Future/CV

Pictures/Photographs/Sculpture

Traditional

Images

Sell

Funding Applications

Exploration

Publicize

Discourse

Boundary/ies

Objectives

Context/Meaning

Connection

Point of View

How you understand

Disabilities

Edges of Understanding

Nonsense

Words

Artist

Practice

Realities

Expression

Something/Nothing

Personal

Public/Private

Identity

Time/Distance

Place/No-place

⁵³ Malcolm Miles, *Limits To Culture, Urban Regeneration Vs. Dissident Art*, 'A Users Guide to Demanding the Impossible' Grindon and Jordon, Pluto Press, 2015

XXIV

Note to self:

The expression of the *inexpressible*, knowledge of the connectedness of humanity, each to each other, coupled with the *inability* to express or act upon it.

An unspoken emotion which drives us apart, when the possibility of connectedness is thwarted through constant proof (war) and even so exists, unspoken.

XXV

Being part of the World – to create is an act of Separation, of looking on....

About being instead of being about....

Upon reading Wallace Stevens⁵⁴ (1879-1955) his poetry expresses the
Modernist idea of (our) separation from nature.

“To be an artist is to fail, as no other dare fail, that failure is his world and the
shrink from it desertion, art and craft, good housekeeping, living.”⁵⁵

The impossibility of the human condition as constantly attempting to ‘Be’, being
about ‘Being’.... and failing to be about ‘being’.... is unresolvable....

Postmodernism is about nothing; it is a constant distraction a distraction to
distract from...distraction as separation....

Money Hijacked Postmodernism!

I once believed postmodernism could open the door to a greater understanding of the
bigger picture and the connectedness of things through anti-hierarchical versions of
reality has failed, it has become a strategy for Capitalist Corporate interests about
money and control furthering the agenda for domination over minds and hearts.

Be - A - Sexual
 A - Political
 A - Religious
 A - Everything (etc.)

⁴⁶ Wallace Stevens, *Selected Poems*, Faber, 1970

⁴⁷ George Duthuit, *Samuel Beckett Proust & 3 Dialogues*, Calder and Boyars London, 1970

XXVI

In this work, I am interested in the adaptive mental processes we engage in to understand our visual World. Drawing from a pre-visual memory of objects in early childhood and how once we 'know' what an object is, it becomes fixed in our mind as part of the recognisable world. The mental processes involved depend on memory, knowledge and our emotional state. The fragmentation or abstraction of recognisable visual images calls upon these faculties to recreate and rebuild vestiges of an understandable world.

Note to self:

This work explores step by step, the disintegration of visual images through a layering process which fragments and abstracts the originals.

Ideas:

Colour separation films placed over history paintings – 'filtering history'

Painting to emulate tapestry

Painting by numbers in colour separation colours

Use camouflage vectors to make drawings

Cutouts of history paintings as miniature theatres

Layer drawings of camouflage vectors and history painting cutouts, create complex abstract 'mesh' landscapes.

XXVII

I came across Timothy Morton (1968-) this month, his books *Hyperobjects* and *Ecology Without Nature*⁵⁶ and the idea of a 'mesh' of things. I will push the J. A. O'Conner landscape drawings as far as I can to see what happens – when does a 'mesh' stop being a 'mesh' and become a 'mess' visual noise?

Working on the 'mesh' landscape drawings, including plastic bottles and Atom bomb vectors.

The idea of 'Nature' distances and separates us.

Without Nature

Without Landscape

Without Future

⁵⁶ Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects – Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*, University of Minnesota Press, 2013 & Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature – Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*, Harvard University Press, 2007

XXVIII

“That on the basis of which”⁵⁷

The background is everywhere, we are always already in and of the background. It is the world, and we are Never outside the world – the background.

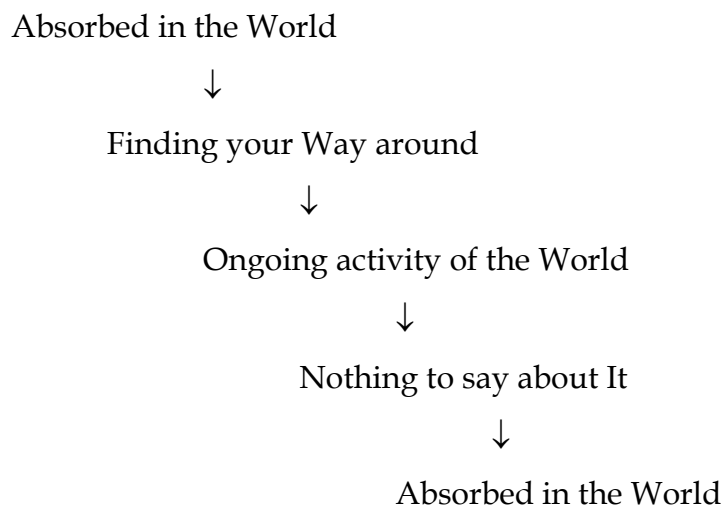
The foreground is constantly ‘seen’ against the background, there is no distinction between us and the world, my brush and the paper I paint on are as much me as my hand. Is it the same with a computer or does its hidden automatic workings separate us? Where does autonomy start and stop?

And is this the same for aesthetics? Am I infected by the intentions of the artist through the aesthetics of the artwork they create? Is aesthetics like a virus? How am I complicit? And does the viewer complete the artwork by looking at it?

Note to self:

Is not a hammer or a computer as dependent on genetic transference, its ancestry, as we are, to exist today?

“Ready to hand”⁵⁸ – substance – part of the exploration of being/operating coping with/in the world.



The feeling that you're missing something....

Being in the world is operating with understanding in this mode of being.

I act. Therefore I am.....

We only see the foreground



The background against which we see our actions

There is no separation between the world and being in the world – ‘too much mind!’

No difference between us and the world.

Note to self:

Society is the world, but that does not mean you have to conform to society.

on, for, a (dwelling) in ‘a’
dwelling ‘on’, ‘for’ dwelling ‘in’, ‘a’ dwelling,
home, nest, cabin, cave, tent, etc....

The World Worlding.....

⁵⁷ Hubert Dreyfus, *Heidegger Being and Time*, Lecture 1 (1/3), 2007
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqRybX2pSDU>

⁵⁸ Jeff Collins and Howard Selina, *Introducing Heidegger*, Icon Books, UK. Totem Books, USA. 2006

XXIX

Greens:

1. Cadmium Green Pale / Holbein
 2. Permanent Green No.2 / Holbein
 3. Hookers Green Light / Daler Rowney
- ↓↑
4. Sap Green / Daler Rowney
 5. Permanent Green / Holbein (Hookers Green)
 6. Terre Verte / Holbein
 7. Olive Green / Schmincke

Blues:

1. Manganese Blue / Winsor & Newton
 2. Cerulean Blue Hue / Schmincke
 3. Cobalt Blue / Holbein
 4. French Ultramarine / Daler Rowney
- or ↑↓
- Ultramarine Light / Holbein
5. Phthalo Blue / Daler Rowney
 6. Prussian Blue / Schmincke

XXX

Note to self:

A subtle, coordinated amplification of colour.

When I was first painting, I was aware of the weight of meaning associated with the context of painting, the weight of history, and the history of painting every time I put the brush on canvas.

The conceptualisation of my work in the late 1990s was an attempt to corral and control that meaning, harness and use it to express, explore and expose meaning, as well as a search for meaning.

The job at Hand (on a return to painting) is to exclude meaning deliberately, to overcome meaning! Post-meaning! A failed search for meaning! Beyond-meaning/meanings

The formation of a systematic approach, which reduces my aesthetic footprint and at the same time acknowledges contemporary cultural activities of:

Colouring Books

Mindfulness (Ugh)

Design

Fashion

Contemporary art and painting

Painting is not a 'value in association with' or a 'value of' – fashion, design, museums and galleries etc.

Painting as the means for a series of scientific colour experiments, a choreography through which experiments can be shown and explored.

The world will always try to exert its preference for meaning and associations upon something (painting for example)! Curation is the death of the artwork but the creation of a choreography of art (the exhibition) revealing the artist's intention.

XXXI

This series of paintings (*Horizons*) looks at the idea of 'Ecomemisis', of overcoming the job of describing Nature. Foreground and background are collapsed to dispel or displace the duality of 'human vs nature' and 'subject vs object' dichotomies. Flattened universal vectors aid the disintegration of images into a kind of camouflage, a 'hiding of itself in itself', using tonal and monochrome approaches to colour and mimicking strategies used in camouflage design.

Ecomemisis goes beyond representation.

Painting is interesting because it at once expresses the 'withdrawnness' (reducible to data or information) of things and provides an opportunity to reorganise and recreate that data in new and unexpected ways.

The ecological concerns of the work are focused on an analysis of our relationship with (the) world. We are the world and the world is us, as a sort of unavoidable meshing or *elimination* of boundaries between us and (the) World.

XXXII

Colour keys for *Horizons*

Greens:

1. Permanent Green No.1 / Holbein / H
2. Cadmium Green Pale / Holbein / H
3. Emerald Green Nova / Holbein / H
4. May Green / Schmincke / S
5. Permanent Green No. 2 / Holbein / H
6. Hookers Green Light / Daler Rowney / DR

(Extra – Leaf Green / Holbein / H) - No

Blues:

1. Cerulean Blue / Holbein / H
2. Manganese Blue Nova / Holbein / H
3. Cobalt Blue Hue / Schmincke / S
4. Ultramarine Light / Holbein / H
5. Cobalt Blue / Holbein / H
6. Peacock Blue / Holbein / H

(Extra – Manganese Blue Hue / Windsor & Newton / WN)

Pinks:

1. Opera / Holbein / H
2. Brilliant Purple / Schmincke / S

or ↓ ↑

Purple Magenta / Schmincke / S

3. Permanent Magenta / Daler Rowney / DR
4. Magenta / Daler Rowney / DR
5. Bright Violet / Schmincke / S
6. Brilliant Blue Violet / Schmincke / S

Yellows:

1. Lemon Yellow / Schmincke / S

or ↑↓

Cadmium Yellow Lemon / Schmincke / S

or ↑↓

Cadmium Yellow Light / Schmincke / S

2. Pure Yellow / Schmincke / S
3. Cadmium Yellow Deep Hue / Daler Rowney / DR
4. Chrome Yellow Deep / Holbein / H
5. Cadmium Orange / Daler Rowney / DR
6. Cadmium Red orange / Schmincke / S

XXXIII

Ideas:

1. Irish nineteenth-century painters such as J. A. O'Connor (Beyond the Horizon)
2. Caves (Below the Horizon)
3. Nature vectors – of conceptualised colonial versions of Irish landscapes.
4. Tourism – the driving force behind Irish international identity/as the Colonising of the self.
5. Cruise liners arrive and depart from ports on the same day (Cobh)



Fast Tourism

6. Passengers are disorientated and dazed, hardly aware of where they are.
7. Complications of several realities compressed or enmeshed together.... for example, the reality of the ship vs the reality of the destination (the port) vs the reality of where the passengers originally come from (mainly Europe and America).

Not quite fitting into this reality

Dislocated and Isolated

An outsider

Disjointed and separate realities/inner reality

Alternative and alternate realities (not being of this reality)

Vehicles for experience:

Biography

Travel

Coincidence

Weight of meaning

Symbolism

Alter ego

Murder/love

Fate – failure & success

"I am gradually losing my zest for scenery, and stood at the window tonight, while the sunset was touching the sprinkled snow on the lovely forms of the Mt. Angelo, rather with the sense of discharging a duty in drinking the draught of beauty than because it gave me pleasure. The sea horizon was dark, sharp, and blue, and far beyond it, faint with trebled distance, came the red, vertical cliffs, with the infinite delicacy of multitudinous touches of light which one cannot see without remembering Turner – and yet all subdued into one soft grey tone, on which the snowy peaked forms were touched, bright and pure, but still faint; and one sail, square, and as much fed with sun as with wind – a blaze of bright light – moving fast along the azure horizon. Yet all this could not touch me. I felt as if my whole spirit had been turned into ice."⁵⁹

Looking at imagined and fantasy landscapes, the figure/ground dichotomy, exaggerated descriptions of pastoral scenes as views, positioning the viewer outside the scene, at a distance! Landscape to be consumed rather than to be in/part of.

⁵⁹ John Ruskin, *Selected Writings*, chosen and annotated by Kenneth Clark, 'Self-Portrait, Extracts, Loss of Feeling' (ref. From the Journal, 27 January 1841: *The Diaries of John Ruskin*, ed. Joan Evans) Penguin Books 1982

XXXIV

Multi-denominational temporal realities – many people

Beyond me/out there/over there/untouchable or unknowable world

Inside/outside – my body / porous/added to/appendage – still my body

Infected/intrusion/alien body – still my body

Atoms/minerals – still my body

Mind/matter – still my body

Today, the drawings have been abstracted from J. A. O'Connor's landscape paintings so that the foreground and background are indistinct and reversed, you can still make out vestiges of his landscapes, but they have been collapsed into linear drawings and complicated by layering one on top of another.

Landscape vectors, symbols and camouflages – looking at a flattening process
– drawings from nature camouflages

XXXV

Materialism:

Estrangement + Confrontation
 + Allure

*The Estranged Object*⁶⁰

Counter figuration

Material instability

Hybrid articulation

Part-fictional scenarios

The tensions between the objects and their qualities

“(1) real objects are locked in impossible tension with the crippled descriptive powers of language, and (2) visible objects display unbearable seismic torsion with their own qualities.”⁶¹

“Confrontation – ‘Language overloaded with the glutinous excess of surface and aspects of the thing.’

‘Numerous bizarre or troubling features of a palpable thing are piled up in such excessive numbers that it becomes difficult to combine all these facets neatly into a single object.’

Allure – ‘Loose qualities trembling at the surface of perception, announcing their bondage to some deeper hidden entity that can only vaguely be named!’

‘The gap between the ungraspable thing and vaguely relevant description.’”⁶²

⁶⁰ Michael Young, *The Estranged Object*, Lecture https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7G06ZTaKG_I, March 2014

⁶¹ Graham Harman, *Weird Realism – Lovecraft and Philosophy*, Zero Books, 2011

⁶² Michael Young, *The Estranged Object*, Lecture Referencing ‘Weird Realism – Lovecraft and Philosophy’, Graham Harman, Zero Books, 2011
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7G06ZTaKG_I, March 2014

XXXVI

We are always already in the hall of mirrors of the world.

Camouflage is a reminder of this constant mirroring and hiding!

Children's nature books do not include humans or Human activities, teaching us that we are separate Spectators, conscious of nature as a resource to be exploited. We are consuming tourists in our own world.

'What Do We Want? Rights For Rivers'⁶³

Reading Timothy Morton's *Ecology Without Nature*⁶⁴ the separation of humans and nature is a central theme. This is an important issue because this dualistic approach explains why the earth is seen as a resource to be exploited rather than a nurturing sustaining necessity for the continuation of all life as we know it. This separation is visible throughout art history, particularly in representational painting where the viewer is always positioned outside the action, exposing a default position. Words like 'Environment' and 'Nature' describe this separation.

Nature as a confused sign.

The dilemma of positioning.

A non-relational perspective.

I have explored this dilemma throughout my work, particularly how this situation affects our perception of and place in the world. In the exhibition *I thought I dreamed of you* at the West Cork Arts Centre 2009 I was consistently attracted to flash points of representational inconsistency. For example, a favourite vista of the cliffs at Mizen Head (Co. Cork) can only be viewed from the middle of a bridge connecting two separate sections of the land, as you cross the bridge the cliffs fall into place revealing a gorgeously balanced spectacle of sea, sky and rock, though you are essentially floating in midair at the point when the vista appears. I installed an upside-down

drawing of this vista as a mural on the gallery wall for the exhibition, it was transformed into a water-filled cave due to its inversion, the sky becoming water, alongside this, I included fake documentation of the same mural installed on the same gallery wall right-side up, complicating time, association and space, to explore the gaps between the viewer, the viewed and the illusion of perception of time and space created by this gap. Photographs of flood-paths were mounted in an old-fashioned photo album installed in a museum-like case, to question the institutionalized domination of fixed readings of reality.

The Hunting Box Party and *Landscape Unions* are two works that appropriated Political situations to complicate the human/nature relationship dichotomy.

Camouflage opens the possibility of exploring representation by complicating the positioning of the viewer and the viewed, through the foreground/background dichotomy. The foreground becomes hidden and flattened, an ambient experience where nothing is highlighted above anything else, representation is messed up and fragmented becoming a non-hierarchical non-representational reality.

This spills over into ideas of cultural camouflage, identity camouflage and digital camouflage, using screensavers and Star Wars camouflage with Skellig Michael images where the island is hidden from a corporate encroachment bent on monetization.

Note to self:

We are always already inside and outside of situations and contexts; relations exist insofar as they are an idea.

- Context Does not Exist
- Situation does not exist
- Relation Does not Exist

The way we think is killing the world/planet. The Planet/our world.

We are always already situated
We don't think in the right way
↓
A way that is not separate from
↓
Nature/planet/world
↓
Our thinking is our biggest delusion
↓
Thinking we are different from...
↓
Always in a hypocritical state of being
↓
Never getting it right

Notes to self:

Horizons is a collaborative multi-disciplinary project that includes writing, poetry, photography, digital media, drawing and painting.

Horizons reflect on ideas of time and space, considering contradictions and asking questions about the nature of reality.

Purples:

1. Brilliant Purple / Schmincke / S - BP
2. Bright Violet / Holbein / H - BV
3. Quinacridone Purple / Schmincke / S - QP
4. Bright Violet / Holbein / H & Brilliant Bule Violet / Schmincke / S - BV & BBV
5. Brilliant Bule Violet / Schmincke / S - BBV
6. Ultramarine Violet / Schmincke / S - UV

Turquoises & Greens:

1. Cobalt Turquoise / Schmincke / S – CT
2. Cobalt Green Turquoise / Schmincke / S – CGT
3. Transparent Turquoise / Daler Rowney / DR – TT
4. Smaragdgrun Viridian / Schmincke / S – SV
5. Emerald Green Nova / Holbein / H – EGN
6. Viridian Tint / Holbein / H – VT

Brush: PorArte Miniature No. 1 and Smaller

Point of view/narrator/subject

Post-human = Post-romantic



In the Object Orientated Ontology O.O.O.⁶⁵ sense, not after humans.



Equal to all living and non-living things on planet Earth in different time scales.



The Asymmetric Phase



Now NOW Now....

Nature – normative/metonymy/future?

Ecomemisis – ‘I am part of nature’ – nature writing

The enunciated vs the enunciation

Nature writing is evidence of the problems with understanding reality.

You cannot know you are part of something (nature) without a position (outside the thing ‘Nature’) – A double Truth – the I that is describing and the I that is described - the quandary of description of describing something.

Ecology – the totality of life on the planet, including rocks etc. (everything)

‘This sentence is part of Nature’



Ignoring reality

This is a false sentence/an impossibility

Nature = Anthropocene; Inside agrology – ‘intraterrestrial’ rather than extraterrestrial.

⁶³ Sylvia Thompson, *What Do We Want? Rights For Rivers*, The Irish Times / Outdoors 14/04/2018
<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/environment/river-movements-seek-flow-of-rights-to-waterways-1.3458220>

⁶⁴ Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature – Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*, Harvard University Press, 2007

⁶⁵ Graham Harman, *Object-Orientated Ontology – A New Theory of Everything*, Pelican, 2018

XXXVII

The Bee Orchid is an example of a plant adapting to look like a female bee to attract male bees to pollinate it. The bees that pollinate the Bee Orchard are extinct, so the Bee Orchid has to self-pollinate. As a result, the plant is dying out. The Bee Orchid has become an image/a representation of a lost piece of nature, a figment of a lost past, and a ghost in the form of a flower. Images/representations are like ghosts of past realities.

We are both inside and outside a continual state of politics all the time.

Ontologically we are the same as manure, but politically we are not

Politics puts meaning as we know it on everything.

‘Being and being’

Both politically and ontologically at the same time.

Extinction takes A Long Time....

‘Down in the Woods’

from the French of Paul Verlaine

Some, like the innocent and the neurasthenic,
find in the woods only a languorous charm,
fresh breezes, warm scents. Good luck to them.
Others, dreamers, are seized with vague panic.

Good luck to them! I, nervous and aghast,
racked by a strange, insistent guilt complex,
tremble here like a faintheart who expects
a trap, perhaps an encounter with a ghost.

These great boughs, like sea waves never still,
with their dark silences and even darker
shadows – a sad and sinister décor –
inspire fears both profound and risible.

Worst is summer dusk when a fiery sky
merges in the grey-blue of mists its range
of blood hues while a distant Angelus
rings out like the echo of a plaintive cry.

Wind rises hot, strong: wild convulsions race
crazily through the increasingly opaque
density of the oaks until, grown weak,
they escape like exhalations into space.

Night hovers, an owl flies, and you think back
to grim rumours warning of awful things.
Below a thicket there, *there*, hidden springs
chuckle like killers lying in wait to strike.⁶⁶

The separation of the politics of being and the materiality or objecthood of being as suggested by O.O.O.⁶⁷ is reassuring and helps explain my constant dilemma with being.

⁶⁶ Derek Mahon, (2019), *The Adaptations*, (1975-2020), The Gallery Press, 2022

⁶⁷ Graham Harman, *Object-Orientated Ontology – A New Theory of Everything*, Pelican, 2018

XXXVIII

I went to the National Gallery of Ireland in Dublin as a student and saw a small painting there, a green vertiginous woodland scene from the 19th century. I Don't remember who it was by and have not been able to find it since. I remember being drawn into the painting and feeling immersed in the scene. That feeling has never left me! Perhaps I dreamt the painting because I needed the feeling.

While searching for this painting, I came across the nineteenth-century artists William Howis Snr. and William Howis Jnr. (father and son) both landscape painters who worked in Dublin and exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy RHA. Their work is rather dark and poorly drawn, I don't think they did very well, but is interesting because of its excessive immersive foreboding. Their work challenges the 'post-modern' and 'eco-post-modern' idea that romanticism failed to express our relationship with nature. Their work expresses an immersive relationship between nature and humans.

XXXIX

I want to get to the source of consciousness through visual experience, to show that 'everything' has consciousness on some level⁶⁸ in 'its' own way.

I use the science of seeing and being to transcend science through poetic engagement and imagination.

Note to self:

Stalagmites in caves are like forgotten geological frozen waterfalls. Waterfalls of geological time. Deep Time.

Creating or making a painting so that it transcends its qualities of flatness, of being a painting, imaginatively immersing the viewer into its world, like falling or folding into the image.

⁶⁸ Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter, A Political Ecology of Things*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2010

XL

Cybernetics; System Dynamics; Cellular Automata; Chaos Theory; Network Theory



Painting using these ideas as style and technique

Idea: Skellig Micheal + Caves +/- The Bunker at Stolzenhane Former Russian Nuclear Base (Germany)

Proposal:

Through the development of images based on the views of the horizon of the town of Skibbereen and the landscape beyond as seen from the different floors of Uillinn, West Cork Arts Centre (5 floors) and the variety of windows throughout. To explore the idea of the horizon as constantly shifting and ephemeral.

Making this work would require photographing all the views from the windows of Uillinn creating drawings from the photographs and developing a multi-layered abstract matrix of lines by layering the drawings on top of each other.

This work could be developed in several ways: firstly, as a series of drawings, which would then be worked up into paintings; secondly, as a large mural installed on the gallery walls; thirdly, developed for a community participation drawing project as landscape cutouts, titled *Build Your Own Horizon* and installed in the gallery.

XLI

As long as the exceptionalism of humankind persists life as we know it hasn't a hope.

Human exceptionalism will be the death of us on the planet.

I would advocate rights for all non-human entities such as rivers, trees, plants, animals, rocks, etc. the entire ecosystem.

The Quandary of Us and Nature.

The Quandary of Nature.

The Quandary of Us.

XLII

Yellow Horizon will have to be redone, it's not working.

Rereading Simone De Beauvoir's *The Mandarins*⁶⁹

I love the way her writing Interlocks thoughts in my head; I also read *The Uninhabitable Earth*⁷⁰ by David Wallace-Wells, Fintan O'Toole's *Heroic Failure – Brexit and the Politics of Pain*⁷¹ and Sarah Maitland's *Moss Witch*⁷²

In Maitland's *Moss Witch* there is a story 'Instant Light' about the inventor of matches John Walker I think this story and the invention of matches mark the beginning of the Anthropocene and the end of humankind. With the creation of the instant control of fire we have heralded Climate Change/Warming/Emergency marking the beginning of the end, the destruction of the planet which sustains us. Creating the existential mortality of the planet mirroring our mortality. The final conquering of nature requires its end, because we end.

We discovered Worlds End (in Kinsale) by matchlight.

The fear of death is now on the scale of humanity because of climate change, we necessarily have to carry on in the face of death, in addition, we have to carry on in the face of the loss of our habitat. Extinction takes a long time. Australia is burning, the oceans are warming and acidifying exponentially, and even if we stopped all carbon production we are still looking at between 4-8 degrees of warming by the end of the century. Is hope' in this case an opium or a help?

Headache!

I have less self-pity today, my headache is slowly improving, and I can go out again and face people and the world. Whenever I have a headache, Derek always makes me feel better "Do try to feel Better!" he would say jokingly.

I came across a review of Rachael Harrison's (1966-) work in the New York Review of Books, *Rachael Harrison Life Hack, The Great Amalgamator*⁷³ very Inspiring, now to paint in the same anti-aesthetic vane – *Vessels* as masks, pushing the commentary of found images.

⁶⁹ Simone De Beauvoir, *The Mandarins*, (1954), Flamingo, 1984

⁷⁰ David Wallace-Wells, *Uninhabitable Earth*, Penguin Books, 2019

⁷¹ Fintan O'Toole, *Heroic Failure – Brexit and the Politics of Pain*, Head of Zeus, An Apollo Book, 2019

⁷² Sarah Maitland, *Moss Witch and Other Stories*, Comma Press, 2013

⁷³ David Salle, *Rachael Harrison Life Hack, The Great Amalgamator*, The New York Review of Books, 16/01/2020

XLIII

Pandemic 2020

Derek died in October

Let time be locked away in a treasure chest forever.

This book reverts to musing for myself rather than a collection of ideas to share with Derek. Love and miss you, X

“Droll thing life is – that mysterious arrangement of merciless logic for futile purpose.”⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness with The Congo Diary*, (1926), Edited, Introduction and Notes by Robert Hampson, Penguin Books, 1995

XLIV

Proposal Update:

Build Your Own Horizon a site-specific public participation project, created during the Bealtaine Artist in Residence program at Uillinn, West Cork Arts Centre in association with Cork County Council, due to take place in May 2020. This project has been postponed until 2022 due to the Pandemic, hoping we can meet again soon.

The horizon helps position us and helps us know where we are and who we are, whether traveller, immigrant, local or refugee being situated helps us understand our reality. We will all have to rebuild this for ourselves again after the extensive disruption caused by the Pandemic, this project is part of a process of reconnection and rediscovery of place.

The participants will explore the idea of the horizon as constantly shifting and ephemeral, dependent on the viewer's position. The drawings of the horizons made by participants will be reproduced as cutouts on cards installed in the gallery and taken home.

Teetering on the verge of the visible and the invisible; the intelligible and the unintelligible.

XLV

Ideas about counter-culture and the disruption of norms inspired the *Vessels* paintings, kitsch psychedelic art and religious mandalas, Venn diagrams mixed with colouring book aesthetic tinged with a political agenda – togetherness, anti-homophobia, cultural and religious tolerance etc.

“‘Although we aren’t aware of it a huge amount is happening in our brains all the time to enable us to see, hear or make sense of anything’ ‘An experience itself is a creative act, let alone the echo of experience you get in the mind’s eye.’

‘I think (William) Blake (1757-1827) had a sense that all of our mental lives – not just the mind wandering, daydreaming, creativity and the artistic sense, but simply having an experience – is a creative and imaginative act.’ or as Blake himself put it: ‘The imagination is not a state: it is human existence itself.’

The limited, rational or logical part of our brains, which Blake characterized as Urizen, is actually only a model of how we understand the world.... ‘We think it’s real, we think it’s true,’ ‘when it feels under threat, it lashes out and tries to defend itself.’

‘You can see on social media people have a desperate need to be thought of as right. For Blake, it’s all about being able to step outside that and just see the rational brain for what it is, as a sort of quite limited small part of a much larger mental experience.’

Albert Einstein once remarked on ‘the stubbornly persistent illusion of passing time,’ which was also depicted by Blake in the form of Los.”⁷⁵

Imagination as experience, imaging a better future....

⁷⁵ Paul Glynn, ‘*Biography offers a glimpse into artist and poet’s visionary mind*’, Review, ‘William Blake Verses the World’, John Higgs, BBC, June 2021

XLVI

Horizons paintings after 'View of Powerscourt Waterfall' (1760) by George Barret are conceived as if you were looking at the image from different distances at the same time, like MRI scans where the register becomes degraded and multiplied as if you were stepping back from the picture and it was going out of focus. Several drawings of the same picture were created by changing the detail and edge constraints in the Photoshop posterizing filter and are drawn on top of each other. Disrupting the sweet spot, the spot or moment when the image becomes most visible, recognizable and pleasing, creates confusion through the layering of multiple images.

Idea: Paint in black and dark colours and luminous colour separation edges to resemble MRI scans.

XLVII

Exploded realities – loss of the horizon – disorientation - dislocation

Obscured – obscure - obscurity – out of the way - out of reach - lost – nowhere

Enlightenment – a universal world civilisation – a lost civilisation

De-centered – only others (we are all others)

Disorientated - multiple horizons at once – de-situated

Exploded Horizons⁷⁶

The preservation of the status quo continues through the indoctrination of neo-liberal capitalist consumerist agendas as otherworldly advertisements of goods, particularly cars, are mystified to suggest a necessary fulfilment of the life force when the opposite is the case, and is a dangerous illusion in the face of Climate Change. That car can't create a life force, only degrade it further.

⁷⁶ Kelly Growier, *Cornelia Parker: The artist who likes to blow things up*, BBC, 22/06/2022

XLVIII

What was I going to say? As I watch the new houses being built and occupied around me, I know that the vision of the West's security, a progression towards a state of manageable utopian peace, is an illusion, particularly in the presence of the War in Ukraine and Putin's parade of angry hard-done-by sense of disrespect by the West. Poverty and inequality, particularly in the US, the reason for the rise of Trump, seem certain to derail any attempts to alleviate climate change, which pushes the migration of people across the planet, adding fuel to the right-wing fire.

The government in Ireland is moving far too slowly to have any real effect on reversing the loss of local biodiversity we are experiencing as the 6th mass extinction accelerates around us - the changes in carbon dioxide levels (upward) due to human activity and deforestation of the Amazon = $H + CO_2 \Leftrightarrow H_2CO_3 \Leftrightarrow HCO_3 + H^+$ = extra hydrogen ions formed in the oceans by increased carbon dioxide levels causing acidification and the extinction of marine life, rising temperatures are melting the ice-capes of Antarctica and the North Pole changing the colour of the planet so less of the Sun's rays are reflected off the earth increasing the temperature exponentially - this estate seems to typify the sanitised control over nature we humans have championed for thousands of years. And yet, I can't help but enjoy the few birds that visit my garden as I let the winter debris accumulate, feeling hope for people as they move into their new homes.

What is the 'shadow' of our society, if not the denial of women their right to self-determination, the horror of the cervical and other medical failures perpetrated upon women, not to mention the past attempts to control women through the Church's practices of concealment and denial?

The erasure of women from the public sphere in Afghanistan is unspeakable, the human world cannot exist without Women.

Anger

DEREK'S DEATH WAS LIKE MY DEATH F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K I F.....KING MISS YOU
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K I F.....KING HATE THIS F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K I AM SO F.....KING PISSED OFF
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K GET A F.....KING LIFE F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K
F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K I
F.....KING HATE THIS F.....K
F.....K I AM SO F.....KING PISSED
OFF F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K
F.....K F.....K I F.....KING HATE THIS
F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K I AM SO
F.....KING PISSED OFF F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K I
F.....KING HATE THIS F.....K
F.....K GET A F.....KING LIFE
F.....K F.....K
F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K
F.....K I F.....KING HATE THIS

F.....K F.....K WHO
DO I F.....K KING THINK I AM? F.....K
F.....K I
F.....K KING HATE THIS F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K
F.....K I F.....K KING HATE THIS F.....K I F.....K KING MISS YOU
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K I AM SO F.....K KING PISSED OFF F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K I F.....K KING HATE
THIS F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K WHO DO I F.....K KING THINK I AM? F.....K I
F.....K KING MISS YOU K.....K F.....K
F.....K I
F.....K KING HATE THIS F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K GET A F.....K KING LIFE F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K I AM SO F.....K KING PISSED OFF F.....K F.....K F.....K
F.....K F.....K F.....K I F.....K KING MISS YOU F.....K I
F.....K KING MISS YOU F.....K FUCK!

In my 50s I am free to be invisible, a culturally instigated ageist public erasure which, funnily enough, is also a freedom to be seen how I choose and not have to deal with the tension of the male gaze.

This is difficult, writing about process and grief, and the disconnect between how our existence defines our needs in a finite world, where we seem set on self-destruction despite our incredible desire to exist and keep existing.

Depression

The Pit of human suffering and the unintended consequences this wreaks on the world around us, yet we carry on, we have no choice. The imaginative process of possibility is unstoppable.

Hidden and lost, unseen and invisible, a maze of uncertainty in the certainty of extinction whether personal, planetary or cosmic.....

“We roll up our sleeves and through rigorous application encounter the disastrous and mortifying condition of our interior selves. We exert poetic order upon the turmoil and chaos. We hew and hone and bring structure to the stricken heart; we codify our weary souls, giving form to the blues.”⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Nick Cave, *The Red Hand Files*, ‘Are songs from God?’, issue #297, August 2024

XLIX

The traditional idea of a stable horizon for navigation fixes an unstable shaky environment imaginatively, the artificial stabilisation and flattening of the world create an objectified reality from which subjectification is manifest as racism and oppression.

Central Perspective depends on a one-eyed stable immobile observer with a fixed single-eyed cyclops view at the centre of the world, this creates a disempowered observer, a two-dimensional horizon of us and them over there.

Curved and tilted horizons include the evacuated horizons of drones creating an overview as a three-dimensional hierarchy of power. The observer is floating and the horizon is unfixed, doesn't exist as it multiplies and spins out of view.

Three-dimensional vertical horizons introduce the idea of up and down, where we have to consider a radicalised hierarchy which takes into account everything above and below us that makes our position possible and therefore takes into account other people's positions, on that hierarchy the creation of huge inequalities as the norm of poverty and wealth.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Hito Steyerl, *In Free Fall: A Thought Experiment on Vertical Perspective*, e-flux Journal, April 2011

L

“Man has to be his being”⁷⁹ (her being)

Information as Material:

The Language of Landscape

Voices of Nature

Consult the River

Enunciative Substance - Uttering Substance/s

Expression vs Content

“...so as not to flounder in the social abandon of post-modernism.”⁸⁰

“The devaluation of the meaning of life provokes the fragmentation of the self- image: its representations become confused and contradictory.”⁸¹

The indexing/indexification/indexation of images as machine vision....

Q: You might ask where the horizons are in these pictures?

A: The *Horizons* paintings are not about what you see but the way you see them in the mind's eye.

The horizon is a perceptual quandary

The Language of Vision

⁷⁹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, (1943), Routledge, 2018

⁸⁰ Felix Guattari, *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*, (1992), Translated by Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis, Indiana University Press, 1995

⁸¹ Ibid

LI

Ideas:

Layer drawings of Karl Blossfeldt⁸² (1865-1932) nature photographs of seed heads and plants with explosion vectors.

Layer drawings of Karl Blossfeldt photographs with stock images of feathers, wings, seaweed in motion, ectoplasm and images from water-stilled movement.

Write a series of confused instructions for Chatbot GPT to wind the Artificial Intelligence AI/ Artificial Stupidity AS up in knots.... Take That B....tch!

Messing around with words and meanings.

Write a manifesto for Art, based on the Futurist's

Manifesto (1909) by F.T. Marinetti⁸³ (1876-1944) for today.

*Uncreative Writing*⁸⁴ Idea: List all the books including titles and authors of the online Library *Memory of the World*⁸⁵ – 1584493 books as of 16 July 20... starting with page one/the most recent – follow font and style – white on black text – etc.

Literature as music – poetry - words as sounds before meaning, meaning as music and sound, meaning as feeling.... “the sonority of the word”⁸⁶ including “the motor elements of articulation.....”⁸⁷

The shape of the book, not literally.... but how it is written, the content, like a series of waves, circles, a mountain or a winding path! “its verbal connections....”⁸⁸

Idea: *Build Your Own Desert* – collage found images and photos of the desert in the Style of John Stezaker (1949-) (collage artist) superimposing one image on top of another to suggest shifted realities of Space, Shape and Time questioning intention and complicating meaning.

When I first started painting in the late 1980s, I made paintings by sticking to primaries paying attention to contrast, shape and space. This process could be repeated over and over. I had discovered a system, a set of rules for making paintings, I let them follow their course to simpler and simpler compositions with sutler and sutler combinations of colours and contrasts of blues and greens until the colours were lost in the reflections of the painting's surface.

Now I use a systematic approach where rules are established beforehand to organise what colours will be used and how they will be painted to introduce the element of chance and undermine any possibility of self-expression. I use a mechanical approach to painting so that I am like a one-eyed ambient robot crawling across the surface of the painting eradicating any depth perception and diminishing aesthetic choices to chance encounters. The results are reminiscent of complex AI-generated camouflage designs, where the image is hidden in visual noise, confusing perception with no focal point or representation to lock it into space and time.

⁸² Karl Blossfeldt, (1865-1932), *Masterworks*, Foreword and Botanical Notes by Hansjorg Kuster, Edited by Ann and Jurgen Wilde, Translated by Roger Benner (Foreword) and James Grieg (Botanical Notes) D.A.P. Distributed Art Publishers, 2017

⁸³ F.T. Marinetti (1876-1944), *100 Artists, Manifestos – From the Futurists to the Stuckists*, Selected by Alex Danchev, 'The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism', (1909), Penguin Books, 2011

⁸⁴ Kenneth Goldsmith, *Uncreative Writing*, Columbia University Press, 2011

⁸⁵ <https://www.memoryoftheworld.org>

⁸⁶ Felix Guattari, *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*, (1992), Translated by Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis, Indiana University Press, 1995

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ Ibid

LII

“August is a Wicked” and Dangerous “Month”!⁸⁹

Depression

Artists, including me, are just a bunch of little despots! Yes, you are, admit it.

I feel like a failure, a fake, thwarted, wasting my time, a good-for-nothing, trying too hard, which feeds my despotic tendencies..... I withdraw and am the despot of my little world and my art.

The Quandary of the Artist

Is it possible to be an artist in a late capitalist, neo-liberal society? Will art and artists even exist in the future? The desire to be desired... What to do? Make work? What else is there to do?

Read and write, paint and draw, research and be lazy, and allow ideas to form and disperse, the more I write, the more the book enters my mind as a whole spreading out across space and time, I can see the entire work in my head, watch for irreducible nonsense and possible leads, allow repetitions and moments of clarity.

Note to self:

Hide your art in the future?

“Does life metaphysically depend (supervene) on the physical? Are non-teleological cosmic utopias possible? How does human consciousness change after physical death: does it completely disappear or is something retained (or, indeed, acquired) from the familiar earthly condition?”⁹⁰

Art was always my escape providing me with the possibility of losing myself. I have no sense of time and space when I work, the thrill and promise of making is such a high. When I'm working, I become the absorbed child again, lost in my world, free to exist anywhere....

Contradiction!

The Quandary is how to create without being a party to a fascist debacle, just adding to the problem. How to be human without destroying the world? How do we become utterly part of the world, as opposed to colonisers of the world?

⁸⁹ Edna O'Brian (1930-24), *August is a Wicked Month* (1965), Penguin Books, 1979

⁹⁰ Alexey Ulko, *Decolonising Russian Cosmism*, Cosmic Bulletin, 2022

LIII

Domination of: Nature
 Body
 Sex
 Identity
 Mind
 World

Who and what is dominated by who and what?

The politics, sociology and psychology of capitalist domination⁹¹ - dominate the dominated – dominating the world of thought – the thought world – experience as thought.... “I think therefore I am”⁹²

“Thoughts are something exterior for one who has passed through the portal of death – they are outside... as if they were an etheric painting.”⁹³

The domination and control of nature is also about the domination of our bodies, turning them into commodities, sights of exploitation for profit. To control you must medicate, reengineer, alter and change.... feel not good enough about yourself.

Ideas:

Thwarted Progress

We are the river we step into

Upside-down prints of waterfalls as time machines – by reversing the flow of the water time will flow backwards

Painting series as a storyboard for a film – a series of stills which tell a story about time, a paradox

Prints of caves as time portals multiplied into each other, reversed, upside-down and back-to-front

Idea: Drawings of nature prints superimposed with subjects about imperialism/domination/colonialism

Not to describe the world but to change the way it is seen - reconstruct reality anew.

William Henry Bartlett's (1809-54) prints of cliffs – a particular romantic Victorian relationship with the natural world.

Idea: Reinvent Bartlett's seascape cliff prints in such a way as to show the world anew, show a different articulation – ideas about time and caves as portals or passages to other dimensions – exaggerated configurations of cliff and rock fragments suggest gothic themes of transportation.....

The dislocation, disembodiment, disembodied post-colonial identity of states of being, a nation, a body, a self, fractured into cosmic unboundedness, outside the body, outside time and space?

Note to self:

Cliffs are created over billions of years through gravity, tectonic movement, weather and sunlight – the cosmic effect on Earth.

Hyper Feudalism – Hyper Inequality

The fusion of technology, philosophy, capitalism and socialism!

*Institute of the Cosmos*⁹⁴

A Super-material principle – Descriptions of Nature

Beautiful visual appearances of nature described in detail

A shared common cosmic consciousness

Truth as consciousness

Time as a shared consciousness

Transcending the limits of Nature

The human as the end of the process
of world creation?

“Russian cosmism does not present a singular vision, a consistent epistemology, or a unified theory....its nineteenth-to early-twentieth-century protagonists are often so divergent and contradictory that they appear incoherent, paradoxical, or delirious.”⁹⁵

“Russian Cosmism replaces God and divine providence with human labour and reason as the primary means for realising eternal life, deification and universal paradise.”⁹⁶

*The Factory of Literature*⁹⁷ by Andre Platonov (1899-1951) is an early version of a post-author or multi-author model for writing production, a way to write in a shared context, freeing the author of the original creative endeavour and long preceding 21st-century modes of communal production and *Uncreative Writing*.⁹⁸

“Platonov goes on to envisage a whole production process for a new kind of literature, collaboratively produced from the bottom up. It is among other things an intimation of what Bob Stein⁹⁹ calls the networked book.”¹⁰⁰

“It is also a sort of dialectical inversion of what would become the Soviet literary industry of socialist realism, where all stories are cut to fit the template of a communist horizon, determined from above by state literary administrators. ‘Factory of Literature’ shares an interest in productivist culture that was common at the time, although Platonov’s idiosyncratic version takes its distance not only from nascent socialist realism, and from the commodified culture industry satirised in ‘Antisexus,’ but also from certain features of the Soviet avantgarde.”¹⁰¹

Repositioning the centre of the human world towards the cosmos as the position to gauge organising forces of understanding, opens new horizons for dealing with planetary-wide issues such as Climate Change and War.

Cosmic Horizon

Identity in the face of Interplanetary Scale

Creativity within the machine – achieving immortality?

Science as a power for immortality through the replacement of organs -
Cyborgs

Are we not already immortal through consecutive generations
and the preservation of traditions?

Life and death a kindling and extinguishing continually
an expanding revolving situatedness as
Revolution

The horror of death and birth, that the Russian Cosmists express shows a deep mistrust of women and the 'down to earth' everydayness of existence, this is amplified by the heady success of the Russian Revolution (1917) and the feeling that anything was possible, why not push all boundaries? Even into the cosmos! (Russian Space Exploration)

Beyond the materiality of Property - The Self. The idea of property as the individual self, destined to die! Let go of this type of ownership, the ownership of the Self.

"This, finally, is the meaning of Biocosmism: a new ideology, the cornerstone of which is the notion of personality growing in its power and creativity up to its self-affirmation in immortality and the cosmos."¹⁰²

"Inspirations and ideas that come up out of our own depths are actually the answers the dead are sending to us."¹⁰³

"Ideas are so beautiful and they're so abstract. And they do exist someplace. ... I believe that if you sit quietly like you're fishing, you will catch ideas. The real, you

know, beautiful big ones swim kinda deep down there so you have to be very quiet and wait for them to come along."¹⁰⁴

Consciousness as a communal collective wellspring.

⁹¹ Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women – The Reinvention of Nature*, Free Association Books/London, 1991

⁹² René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method*, “cogito, ergo sum”, 1637

⁹³ Alexey Ulko, *Decolonising Russian Cosmism*, Cosmic Bulletin, Institute of the Cosmos, 2022

⁹⁴ Anton Vidokle, *Institute of the Cosmos*, Sirius Arts Centre, Cobh, Co. Cork, 2023
<https://www.cosmos.art>

⁹⁵ Editorial, *Russian Cosmism*, e-flux journal #88, February 2018

⁹⁶ Ibid

⁹⁷ McKenzie Wark, *Molecular Red – Theory for the Anthropocene*, ‘Andrey Plantonov; A Proletarian Writing’, Verso, 2015

⁹⁸ Kenneth Goldsmith, *Uncreative Writing*, Columbia University Press, 2011

⁹⁹ Bob Stein, *Social Reading*, ‘Reading - Traditional Concepts of Literary Reception and their Transformation in the Digital Age’ University of Goettingen, 2016
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CzDeMVaoNkc>

¹⁰⁰ McKenzie Wark, *Molecular Red – Theory for the Anthropocene*, Verso, 2015

¹⁰¹ Ibid

¹⁰² Michael Marder, *The Fire of Rebirth in the Writings of Aleksandr Svyatogor*, Cosmic Bulletin, Institute of the Cosmos, 2022, Svyatogor, ‘Deklarativnaya Rezoluciya’ [Declarative Resolution], in *Poetica, Biokosmizm, (A)Teologiya*, Cosmic Bulletin, Institute of the Cosmos, 2022

¹⁰³ Alexey Ulko, *Decolonising Russian Cosmism*, Cosmic Bulletin, Institute of the Cosmos, 2022, Rudolf Steiner, ‘Death as Metamorphosis of Life’ United States: SteinerBooks, 2008

¹⁰⁴ Alexey Ulko, *Decolonising Russian Cosmism*, Cosmic Bulletin, Institute of the Cosmos, 2022, Austin Kleon, “David Lynch on getting ideas,” *Austin Kleon Blog*, September 24, 2020,
<https://austinkleon.com/2020/09/24/david-lynch-on-ideas>

LIV

“The eros of enhancement, of transfiguration and elevation, this passionate striving toward an ideal, is present within the artistic drive on an unconscious, profoundly intuitive level. However, its role in art is tremendous. It is this very eros of enhancement that is the source of that mysterious “lyrical excitement” which is so different from “everyday” arousal in its purposefulness and regulatory and constructive force. Gorsky believed that a new type of eroticism is born through transformations stimulated by this excitement. This eroticism is magnetic and dispersed. Arousal isn’t limited to the sexual sphere but spreads throughout the entire organism. It forms around itself a powerful, energetically charged atmosphere, a “magnetic force field” of sorts. This erotic cloud surrounding the body gives rise to a feeling of wholeness, completion, and joyful omnipotence, and soon the artist’s entire being is alight with a striving for creativity. Through this creativity, life-transmitting energy finds release.”¹⁰⁵

Here we go.... creative drive and excitement can also be found in discovering the disconnect, collapse, disruption and dismantling of ideals.

“It always transpires that the icons that are the most creative in terms of immediate artistic perception are perspectively 'defective', whereas icons that better satisfy the perspective textbook are boring and soul-less.”¹⁰⁶

Reverse Perspective

Art must enact or create life rather than represent it.

The human as the subject and object of art, as creator and artwork in her/his/their own right - a sort of post-representationalism where the world and the self are acted upon and created.

Death is the major subject of most Western art.

Oh, Void, thou art the creator!

"'Just as it is in reality' - this usual praise for a naturalistic work of art surely bears witness to the fact that 'like in reality' is something that, without being reality, wants to stand beside the phenomena of reality. The illusion that comes closest to reality is in essence the furthest removed from it. 'You want to reach out and touch it; when what is before us is a flat canvas - isn't this triumph of naturalism a fraud that temporarily succeeds and shows what does not in fact exist? And why arouse in the spectator an unsatisfiable desire to take hold of the painted apple, when this can successfully be done with a real one? Illusionistic art wants to be a match for, only a match for, sensory reality, but for all its tricks it never attains reality and at best, if it did attain it, it would become unnecessary as art. It only attempts to deceive us that it is a match for reality.'"¹⁰⁷

Searching for a post-representational (post-image) feminist model for creating art, I de-image art historical images from the Irish academic tradition through a series of image distortions using computerised processes and analogue layering techniques to complicate and fracture the original images creating a kind of painting by numbers matrix which is then painted randomly in the style of camouflage.

Always wondering how to achieve work I looked up the Arts Council website to see about funding opportunities (I've made four applications to various Arts Council funding streams regarding the *Horizons* work since 2014 to no avail). The only funding application relevant was for funded projects in a defined future, so not applicable to work already underway, how do you fund work already underway? I left the sight. So much time is wasted on fruitless applications, which can take weeks of work to complete. Ideas don't start and finish they evolve continually over time and merge into each other.

¹⁰⁵ Anastasia Gacheva, *Art as the Overcoming of Death: From Nikolai Fedorov to the Cosmists of the 1920s*, e-flux journal #89, March 2018

¹⁰⁶ Pavel Florensky, (1882-1937), Edited by Nicoletta Misler, *Beyond Vision - Essays on the Perception of Art*, 'Reverse Perspective' (1920), Reaktion Books, 2002

¹⁰⁷ Pavel Florensky, (1882-1937), Edited by Nicoletta Misler, *Beyond Vision - Essays on the Perception of Art*, 'On Realism' (1923), Reaktion Books, 2002

LV

“What may count as ‘Women’s experience’ does not exist as a kind of prior resource, ready simply to be appropriated into one or other description. What may count as ‘Women’s experience’ is structured within multiple and often inharmonious agendas. ‘Experience’, like ‘consciousness’, is an intentional construction, an artefact of the first importance. Experience may also be re-constructed, re-membered, re-articulated.”¹⁰⁸

Consciousness is a fiction brought about by political and personal experiences of specific social and cultural situations.

Donna Haraway is the great situationalist.

I saw the possibility of ‘being’ through art as a child and now I see the possibility of ‘not being’, of ‘annihilation’, of the loss of the self through art – being de-situated (if only briefly).

A complete loss of perspective, no distance, no space, unseeing, working with my nose right up against the paper, tracing projected drawings directly onto the page in multiple layers, fragmenting and displacing recognisable motifs from the original. The history of art as a horizon of representation, I hover above the page like a drone mapping and marking the surface, building the layers towards a disorientation of subject matter and expression, to let the material utter its substance, be my guide, invested with its own integrated autonomy of being and consciousness. The matter appears through my subjectivity, a being or becoming in its own subject/objectness separate from but connected to me.

Notes to self:

A Contronym is a word with two contradictory meanings and can create

Conundrums – being still – still moving

Natant View – the ability to create and define your future

The intention is to show how the shacking up of language creates room for interpretations and how this can reveal illusions.

Valerian Muravyov (1850-1908) - The Production of Time:

"Muravyov was a theorist, a social democrat, and was part of the February Revolution. After the October Revolution, he was immediately arrested by the Bolsheviks and sentenced to be executed. Leon Trotsky visited him in his jail cell, where they had an overnight discussion, as a result of which he was released and given a job as a researcher with the Ministry of Lor. In his treatise about the production of time (which he means literally), he talks about how events and phenomena recur when the same conditions are reconstructed: for example, water always boils when the temperature of 99.98°C is reached. It transforms into vapour and can condense into water again when the temperature is lowered. He wonders if water produced by the condensation of vaporized water can be regarded as the same water. He suggests that it is the same and this seems to imply to him that a recreation of certain conditions can result in the recreation of more complex systems, even humans who "evaporated" in the past. He sees this as the control and production of time. He also makes a point of differentiating this from shamanism, which believes that the reproduction of certain sounds, movements, utterances, or mixtures of ingredients can result in the production of unrelated actions or objects elsewhere. He stays more on the scientific side of things."¹⁰⁹

How are things, ideologies, words, images etc adapted/adopted with unexpected results, where can they go?

Cooking is the ultimate reproductive act.

We are consuming our ancestors.

Cosmic Fashion is a pleonasm, a tautology, like saying 'Black Darkness'.

Fashion is a high-tech enterprise to reprogram the living,
their relations and shared minds.

Note to self:

Teach the Cosmos reason - Impart consciousness to all matter.

¹⁰⁸ Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women – The Reinvention of Nature*, Free Association Books/London, 1991

¹⁰⁹ Hito Steyerl & Anton Vidokle, *Cosmic Catwalk and the Production of Time, Art without Death: Conversations on Russian Cosmism*, e-flux Journal #82, May 2017 <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/82/134989/cosmic-catwalk-and-the-production-of-time>

LVI

The Cosmic Handbook:

1. Driving at night on the New Macroom By-pass and through Tree Tunnels
2. Closing Your Eyes (in a safe place)
3. A single lamp-post in the middle of Nowhere in the Dark
4. Staring at Stars
5. Listening to Euphoria – ‘A Decade of Trance Anthems’ – continuous mix 3
6. Dancing to ‘Sash’ like you are 12 years young
7. Watching clouds and bird murmurations
8. Falling into Joseph Albers Colour Swatches
9. Listening to Silence
10. Reading ‘Finnegans Wake’ by James Joyce¹¹⁰
11. Thinking About Reading ‘Finnegans Wake’ by James Joyce
12. Browsing Derek's Library of Books
13. Having no gender and imagining you are a Cyborg
14. Contemplating The Paradox of Time
15. Reflections of oncoming car headlights on a Rainy Night
16. Walking on a beach, watching the Horizon
17. Lying on the ground watching the clouds and feeling the spin of the Planet
18. Reading ‘Howe Strand’ by Derek Mahon¹¹¹
19. Looking at The Moon
20. Watching the Film ‘Into the Inferno’ by Werner Herzog
21. Imagining your house is a Spaceship when the Heat Pump is running
22. Looking at the patterns created by ice in a frozen birdbath
23. Thinking of Time as a constant Present Presence
24. When The Moon Has a Huge Halo
25. The Blue Ultramarine Light of Evening
26. Exploring Google Earth
27. News Reports of Moon Landings, especially the ones that tip over
28. Collecting Artist's Impressions of Star Formations from the Internet

29. William Orbit – his name and music
30. Visualising Impossible Images of Dark Matter and Black Holes
31. Contemplating Edouard Manet's painting 'Olympia'
32. Thinking About How Gravity Affects Us
32. When collective consciousness asserts itself and becomes evident
33. An Aaahhhh moment.....
34. Seeing the history of the world as light projected out into space
35. Exploding supernovas
36. The ancient light of stars as it reaches us
37. Thoughts about immortality
38. The idea of infinity

¹¹⁰ James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, (1939), Wordsworth Classics, 2012

¹¹¹ Derek Mahon, *The Poems*, The Gallery Press, 2020

LVII

How do you reconcile the asymmetrical lopsided experience of physical time - the feeling of going forward in one direction - with symmetrical expanded time going backwards and forwards, stretching out evenly into the past and future from the present? What we think we experience as time is the illusion of smoothed time differences so we can navigate the world. For example, sound and light waves move at different speeds, and our minds reconcile the difference.

Our brains are time machines.

Microscopic processes happen in either direction of time, both forward and backwards symmetrically.

Increased Entropy - going forward in time - directional

Light and sound travel at different speeds, our brains make them appear to travel at the same speed so we can make sense of the world!



Synthesise the Disparity



Connecting asymmetrical elements to make sense



Seems like they are happening at the same time



The Paradox of Irreversibility



The imbalance of asymmetric time - always seems to be moving in one direction



The laws of physics are always time-symmetric →→ travelling backwards and forwards in time all the time! ←←←←←←←←

“Global bureaucracy is a secular mode of control over our existence in time?”¹¹²

Create your own genealogy....

The myth of the self as an artist. An interrogation to find one self. Still searching for the meaning of art....

Searching.....Searching.....Searching.....

Quote: “...there can be no history without a point of view; history must be selective unless it is to be choked by a flood of poor and unrelated material.”¹¹³

Response: Oh! To be choked by a flood of poor and unrelated material rather than be situated!

“The Common Denominator of Beauty ‘is seen as an absolute ideal outside the artist, as something to be grasped and attained.... ‘a new manifestation of humanity in the face of the realities of Nature.”¹¹⁴

A climb back down into Matter; the Matter of paint and colour; Material for Material’s sake; Matter for Matter’s sake; the Material consciousness of Matter; of Material; self-directed; random forms towards a self-determination of the Material; I extract myself to remove the human-centric determinist, situationist position, to have no position! To get beyond myself to understand ‘being’ better; What’s the Matter? No Matter, It Doesn’t Matter.

“Away from my table, I am stupid. Ink is my natural element. Nice liquid, by the way, this dark liquid! And dangerous! How we drown in it! How attractive it is!”¹¹⁵

Making art is about a conscious movement away from the self. In this context, the making of art becomes a paradox, as artworks are the vehicles for expressing the self, ending up in a minefield of thought paradoxes and the constant feeling that the work is worthless, after all, how can we do much more than “just do it”? I can’t help

circling back around to asking again and again what am I doing? Why make art? Yet the instinct is strong, the desire to exist to extend beyond oneself out into the world.

The people of Gaza, Israel and Ukraine or the victims of attacks and war have an experience of an undeniable reality that affects them directly, that first-hand experienced reality should be championed over the distanced (seen through a screen) imagined reality created for political ends. The 'intention' of the 'imagined' reality created through the media is where our attention should be, what it is we are being shown and why, what choices have been made to present this information in this way, what agendas are being fulfilled, directing us to understand reality in this particular way, directing how we should feel and what to believe? How does something move between opposite points of view, through different positions of difference?

Reality is information and experience constantly judging and juggling a matrix of positions regarding how to respond and feel.

First-hand experienced reality can overwhelm and shock in a way that imagined reality does not, therefore is the imagination the facility with which art should appeal? How should art respond to the world of fake news? Or is it part of the problem?

The inducement of emotions through films, news and images? Tell me
Something real! Manipulate my imagination!

Thinking and imagination are the facilities art should engage with to
Induce a state of thinking imagination

Hallucination¹¹⁶ Man!

"When we are really moved at the theatre we are always both on the stage and in the auditorium."¹¹⁷

‘Antigone’ – The Art Tragedy – The Tragedy of Art - art condemned to be immured in a cave, condemned to death.

¹¹² Boris Groys, *Force of Ignorance*, e-flux on Instagram 26/06/2023 & Notes – e-flux, 14/11/2023
<https://www.e-flux.com/notes/574295/the-force-of-ignorance>

¹¹³ Sir Karl Popper, *Modern Art and Modernism – A Critical Anthology*, Edited by Francis Frascina and Charles Harrison, ‘Historical Interpretation’, (1961), Paul Chapman Publishing LTD. 1982

¹¹⁴ Emile Zola, *Modern Art and Modernism – A Critical Anthology*, Edited by Francis Frascina and Charles Harrison, ‘Eduard Manet’, (1867), Paul Chapman Publishing LTD. 1982

¹¹⁵ Gustav Flaubert, To Louise Colet, 14 August 1853

<https://litteraturefrancaise.net/en/auteur/gustave-flaubert-2/life-and-works>

¹¹⁶ Naomi Klein, *AI machines aren’t ‘hallucinating’. But their makers are*, Guardian News Paper, May 2023 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/may/08/ai-machines-hallucinating-naomi-klein>

¹¹⁷ Rodger Fry, *Modern Art and Modernism – A Critical Anthology*, Edited by Francis Frascina and Charles Harrison, ‘An Essay on Aesthetics’, (1961), The Open University, Paul Chapman Publishing LTD. 1982

LVIII

Reading Hugh Haughtons' *The Poetry of Derek Mahon*¹¹⁸ Derek had a sense of displacement from Northern Unionist Prods, and I being a Prod born in the South of English parents, have an in-between sense of 'place' I am constantly a displaced 'other'. I think Derek felt comfortable in my in-between-placedness, he and I represented a place to be together at the centre of our world. I explored the dilemma of loss of self through my work while he explored the dilemma of displacement through an interrogation of self as a constant finding.

Cosmism provides a place for contemplation in the no-place beyond the Earth, a non-positioned nowhere space. AI is another non-place, intra-space vs outer-space, beyond representation.

"In 1846, having had his attention drawn to the precise determination of the distance between the stars and the earth (and the amount of time it takes their light to reach the earth), the jurist Felix Eberty published his work *The Stars and the History of the World*. He rightly supposed that—given ideal conditions for observation—a ray of light that had left the earth on Good Friday in the year 30 A.D. would still be moving away from us across the cosmos: which means that all of prehistory is stored in the universe in tracks of light. Thus the entire history of the world is travelling through the cosmos as MOVING SEQUENCES OF IMAGES (Eberty did not know the word cinema)."¹¹⁹

The Sun is the greatest cinema show on earth.

Every moment from the birth of planet Earth is recorded in space through an ever-expanding light show.

Idea: A circular conversation with an AI interlocuter rooted in the history of painting about representation and abstraction, vision and seeing, time and displacement,

designed to cause as much confusion as possible to create disorientation and confound the AI. Analyse That!

“Philosophy is the science of the background”¹²⁰

Notes for a paper on painting and the expanded field:

Possible Titles:

Blended History Painting as Rendered Imaginary Landscapes.

Blended Histories and Rendered Futures.

My research into *Horizons* and painting as a key to unlocking reality through the imagination.

Note to self:

The expanded field of painting has to include a political dimension.

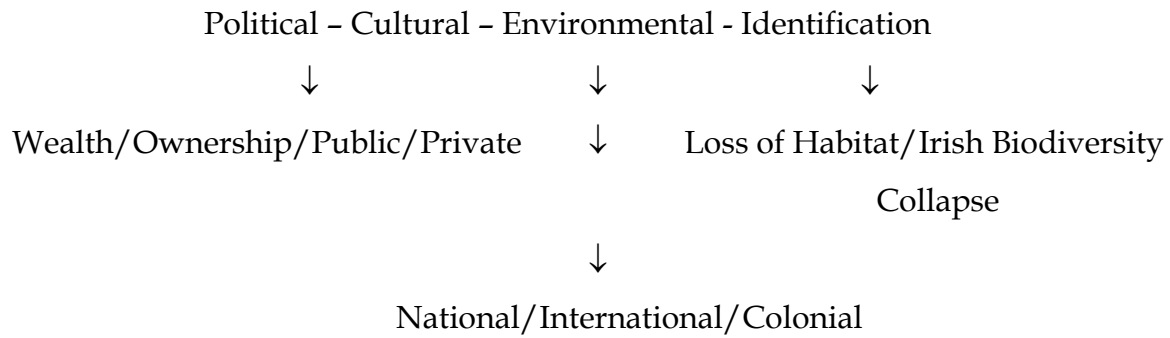
Start with the painting ‘A View of Powerscourt Waterfall’ (1760) by George Barret, and multiply the image to create confusion through a digital overlaying process.... Barret painted several versions of this painting, so it’s already a representational quandary.

Construction, Deconstruction, Reconfiguration

Romantic Aesthetic and Representation

White Male Gaze

The landscape as seen through the eyes of a white male artist of the high romantic period, an artist with a sensitivity to contrasts and the manipulation of colour harkens back to a lush pre-industrial verdant landscape full of biodiversity that we can only imagine today in our climate catastrophe and wildlife-denuded reality. A history of a cliched nostalgia for beauty that was a colonised reality for local people and is still privately owned. A national treasure exploited for tourism.



Imagined Futures - imagined expanded futures - “a future forbidden to no one”¹²¹

Drawing as an imagined digital landscape, a web of interlocking drawn lines crossing and recrossing each other, in an attempt to obliterate the original and render it post-representational, post-image, drawn lines like paths in an inhabited landscape or the contour lines on a map informing us through spatial relations of the highs of peaks and the lows of valleys, blurred so that a 3D program (Blender) can translate them into a virtual digital world that represents an imagined landscape, a place we have always known and never known at the same time.

Displacement into the Digital World/ The Digital World as Displacement

Aesthetics is like a time machine transporting me when I see from my car windscreen, that ticket of ferns and briars by the side of the road on a shadowy autumn day in rain-drenched sunlight under a rainbow.

The experience of existing is overridden by the need to exist.

Freefall and post-representation – the desired state of intoxication.

¹¹⁸ Hugh Haughton, *The Poetry of Derek Mahon*, Oxford University Press, 2007

¹¹⁹ Alexander Kluge, *Cosmos as Cinema*, e-flux Notes, July 2024
<https://www.e-flux.com/notes/616913/cosmos-as-cinema>

¹²⁰ Graham Harman, *Wierd Realism: Lovecraft and Philosophy*, Zero Books, 2011

¹²¹ Derek Mahon, *The Poems, 'Kinsale'*, The Gallery Press, 2020

LIX

Katie Bouman created this first image of a black hole at the centre of the Milky Way in 2019 when she rendered images captured by the Event Horizon Telescope (EHT), a network of eight linked radio telescopes across the planet. It shows a halo of dust and gas measuring 40 billion km across and is 500 million trillion km from Earth¹²². The image was rendered by recovering underlying images from corrupted measurements and image noise from photographs of outer space. The possibility of discovering new and unimaginable entities through image generation models (IGM), artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) is a new zone of discovery beyond representation. Using the background to create new kinds of images.

Technology is also revolutionising how digital cameras function and what is understood by a photographic image¹²³. Photographic images in the traditional representational paradigm are based on the idea of capturing something that is out there in the real world. This post-representational paradigm creates images based not on what is visible in the world, but on what the camera thinks the image should look like based on the data the camera has access to, stored photos in the camera, social media accounts, etc. The camera becomes the photographer creating images based on a gamble related to our previous choices. Representation here is exposed as a kind of dark matter, an invisible sea of data heralding the death of the image and the visible world.

¹²² IMPA. 2019. "Katie Bouman: The woman behind the first black hole image." December 4, 2019. https://impa.br/en_US/noticias/katie-bouman-e-a-matematica-na-1a-foto-de-buraco-negro/.

¹²³ Steyerl, Hito, 2023. "Politics of Post-Representation." Interview by Marvin Jordan. *The DIS Blog*. 2023. <https://dismagazine.com/disillusioned-2/62143/hito-steyerl-politics-of-post-representation/>.

LX

*The Lady of the Lake is Hiding in the Expanded Field*¹²⁴

Abstract:

Is it possible to be an artist in a world where everything is watching you as much as, or even more than, you are watching it? The 1981 film *Excalibur* by John Boorman, filmed at Powerscourt Waterfall, provides a wonderful analogy of what it's like to be an artist navigating digital technologies in the 21st century. A loss of situatedness leads me to wonder if I am the sword 'Excalibur' embedded in the stone waiting to be released, to be plucked from the dilemma of the past so that a heroic potential can be realised and put to use, only to be broken, thrown into the depths of the lake (or in this case the pool at the bottom of Powerscourt Waterfall) and lost, once more to be rescued again as new and held on high by the Lady of the Lake?

Art is key to unlocking realities through the imagination, an apophenia making sense out of the noise. Painting has been a means of falling into our imaginations, reminding us that the act of experiencing is a creative act of imagination. In this paper, I will discuss ideas of representation and transformation in developing artwork through my practical and thinking processes, as part of my *Horizons* project. Taking George Barret's 18th-century paintings of the *View of Powerscourt Waterfall* (he painted several versions - one is in the National Gallery of Ireland and another is in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool) as source material, to create drawings and paintings and developing digital 3-dimensional virtual landscapes exploring a sense of dislocation and disorientation in the situationless-ness in a data-driven digital era.

When your accent provokes a 'Brits Out' response from passing school children on your way home as a child.... I knew this was subjective and narrow-minded, but it seeded a kernel of doubt, a sense of displacement about whether I had a right to be there, to exist.... I was bullied at school. I tried hard to understand

what was going on but felt diminished. In my teens, I consciously decided to be Irish; I could see it was a choice.

The Horizon is dead or deadly, filled with fire, flood and blood!

↓ ↓
Climate Anxiety War

The Horizon is also expensive, you have to pay for that View →
Homelessness

→ We are the Horizon (Ireland) now for many immigrants and refugees → Burning Hotels → creates a diminished sense of self for those seeking shelter → The Horizon is now here!

↓
Which must be already fragile.

Free the Horizon!

Notes to self:

Use the personal to make sense of the general creating a connection.

A meditation on the horizon and situationlessness.

I'm trying to express something beyond the human, which opens up the possibilities of something beyond ourselves that is always already all around us.

¹²⁴ Sarah Iremonger, *The Lady of the Lake is Hiding in the Expanded Field*, '2nd Symposium of Digital Art in Ireland', UCC University College Cork and Sample Studios, UCC Department of Digital Humanities, June 2024
<https://s3.amazonaws.com/images.icompendium.com/sites/sarahir1/sup/8745047-The-Lady-of-the-Lake.pdf>

LXI

I am interested in ideas about impossible, hidden, unknowable and unseeable images as a poetic gesture beyond the visible beyond our cultural and sociological knowledge.

Manet's 'Olympia' was unknowable in 1865 (people and critics didn't understand what they were looking at) no sociological or cultural references existed. The model in the painting was described as a gorilla in one review because the image of her did not conform to the idealised images produced of women in painting at the time:

"'This Olympia' wrote Amedee Cantaloube in *Le Grand Journal*, 21 May 1865, 'a sort of female gorilla, grotesque in India-rubber surrounded in black, apes on a bed, in a complete nudity, the horizontal attitude of the Venus of Titian, the right arm rests on the body in the same way, except for the hand which is flexed in a sort of shameless contraction.'"¹²⁵

Note to self:

If something can be described then it is an act of plagiarism.

Notes for a paper on digital art:

The alternate reality of the computer through the computer screen:

The amazing ability to move things around on a virtual desktop.

Idea: Printout images of a virtual desktops from the 1990s

*The Quandary of Painting*¹²⁶

Perception as thinking and seeing, a constantly flickering/moving experience:

Cosmic "Pussy Paw"¹²⁷ reaching out beyond our planet to catch the universe like a mouse! The space colonisation impulse of grabbing for a piece of the space pie.

Thinking the World Differently – Catch a New World!

Idea: Create a dialogue between visual digital alternate realities and the analogue world, flipping back and forth between these worlds, creating implications for representation and post-representation and allowing for variations and mistakes to create jarring textural experiences.

Express the inexpressible; Derek and I discussed the attempt to express something and the failure of the means – the inadequacy of our means of expression, the inadequacy of words or images to express or describe something.

The limits of the possibility of expression.....

Derek asked me what I thought of his poem 'First Love'¹²⁸ I said I thought it was about words being his first love. He didn't try to change my thoughts, but now I realise it is about the inability of words to describe love.

I am primarily a painter, obsessed, conflicted and confused by what painting means, fascinated and disenchanted in equal measure.

Disenchanted by:

Paintings' hierarchical history of control.

The power of property and wealth.

The politics of ownership through colonialism and the

Culture of domination.

The mythology of the master and the author as genius.

The privileging of the image as a spectacle, the hunger of the eye
to see everything.

The failure of expression.

The inability to affect change.

Meaninglessness.

Strategies to disrupt the idea of painting:

Politics – Meanings

Science – Diagrams

Art History – Everything

Digital Technologies – Contemporary

Participatory Interventions

Popular and Folk Art:

Colouring Books

Painting by Numbers

Philosophy - Being and Otherness

Perception – the Theory of Seeing

Technologies – Robotics

Systems – devise a systematic approach for the making of

Paintings

The shock of the importance of images in creating our reality.

The bombardment of images:

Endless Scrolling Through:

Social Media

Online Shopping

Research

Resist images - making them insensible through open-ended, free-flowing, ever-expanding possibilities of painting and the implications of its history and context.

¹²⁵ T.J. Clark, *Modern Art and Modernism – A Critical Anthology*, Edited by Francis Frascina and Charles Harrison, 'Preliminaries to a Possible Treatment of Olympia in 1865', (1980), The Open University, Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd. 1982

¹²⁶ My Website: <https://www.sarahiremonger.com/artwork/nothing-the-quandary-of-painting-1998-2003>

¹²⁷ RTE, Space X's Falcon 9 Mission, March 2024 (my description)

¹²⁸ Derek Mahon, *The Poems*, 'First Love', The Gallery Press, 2020

LXII

Notes for a paper on digital art continued:

General Introduction:

Digital Art a Genuinely Expanding Field.....

I am a painter foremost, even if I am a conflicted painter!

I will discuss my *Horizons* painting project and its migration into digital art as a meditation on situationlessness.

The digital has always had an air of the magical for me, though it is a tool like any other, open to misuse and abuse.

The *Entangled Horizons* paintings have a digitised effect but are hand-drawn and hand-painted, they are an exploration of the digital image in the context of painting. It took three months to paint, each colour (6 of them) had to be painted separately as individual standalone shapes, this act of intense attention to detail and perseverance comments on human labour (time) and craftsmanship.

"In the 'image-haze' of the world everything becomes an ever reproducible sign."¹²⁹

"The sign then makes us forget the thing signified."¹³⁰

I am messing with reproducible signs, immersing myself in them, to de-sign, and complicate the image.

Eighteenth-century painting is pre-industrial and concerned with nature as the inspiration for art, its ceaseless renewal and complexity of form, from the microbe to the galaxy, providing metaphors for the self and the other.

In the image-haze, haze the image of art history. The image-haze of the digital world today loses the sign because there are too many, it becomes simply an 'image-haze'.

Painting as marking time - a repetitive act – a spent time

New title for work: *The Magical Resolution of Art History through the Digital*

A search for meaning as an apology for ineptitude -
the failure to be relevant, real!

Consumption is the harbinger of its demise (the fruit dissolves deliciously in the mouth and becomes delight) to consume is to destroy, form dies in the mouth as it is consumed.

Disenchantment with the world

Disenchantment – how do you express this? Is it even
necessary?

Delight as destruction through consumption

Conflicted and disenchanted

Painting nonetheless, an unexplainable excitement....

Art as an excitement of a constantly dissolving self, a constant displacement and reimagining. Art is the consumption of the self.

The dissolving of form into delight.

¹²⁹ Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New - Art and the Century of Change*, (1991), Thames & Hudson, 2000

¹³⁰ Joseph Joubert, (1754-1824), *The Notebooks of Joseph Joubert*, Translated and Introduction, Paul Auster, (1983), New York Review of Books, 2005

LXIII

Navigating a world of images as language and finding forms of resistance through de-image-ification and exploring ideas of impossible/disintegrating/unreadable/unseeable images

Induced “image-haze”¹³¹ – loss of the sign (meaning)

Overcomplicated mixed-up/unreadable images as an antidote/a form of resistance to image spectacle and proliferation:

Too many images all at once (too much going on in my mind)

Social Media makes everyone an artist – “Everyone is an Artist” – “Social Sculpture” the collision of art and Sociology, Joseph Beuys described by Claire Bishop – “Art Without Audiences”¹³²

The loss of the image = The Loss of meaning & The loss of the sign

The loss of art

The loss of the artist

The loss of the audience

The loss of understanding

The loss of reality

Forgotten reality

“The present is a time of doubt.”¹³³

“Classical modernity believed in the ability of the future to realize the promises of the past present – even after the death of God, even after the loss of faith in the immortality of the soul.”¹³⁴

I describe myself as *not even* an atheist....

no belief in a belief system, not even a belief in belief.

I am interested in how technological advances complicate the meaning of images and how this affects our understanding of the world – unseen and seeable realities, how images are used to build and control our understanding of the world, using painting as a context and a means to explore the world, ourselves in the world, and how fear and anxiety are used to promote war and a neo-liberal militarisation¹³⁵ of the world.

The death of the image - the death of painting

Loss of autonomy – Displacement

The Image and Painting Quandary

The Quandary of the World

“Once a target is seen aesthetically, as a design, its use is lost. It stops being a sign and becomes an image.”¹³⁶ (Describing ‘Target’ by Jasper John) No, it becomes a painting complicating the sign.

This quote suggests aesthetics is powerful *enough* to remove meaning from an object when placed in an art context turning it into an image, that images only exist in an art context, that meaning is associated with use and only becomes an image when the meaning is removed through the aesthetics of the art context. What a headwreck, you can’t *remove* the meaning from something it is not a separate entity, it is not a special thing existing independently from the object. Meaning can be manipulated and distorted, not obliterated and images are not specific to the art context, they exist everywhere and have for a long time.

Image = sign, meaning, aesthetics

The tradition of ‘visual overall-ness’ as a continuous matrix of marks –

Seurat to Pollock

What is the relationship between a painting and an image as a sign?

‘This is Not a Pipe’ by Rene Magritte (because it is a painting)

Painting is *reduced* to aesthetics

Painting as meaning?

Painting as a complication of image meaning?

Painting as a context of meaning

Painting as Context

Thinking of painting as consciousness as having autonomy – switching the aesthetic decisions to the non-human object – the painting demanded to be painted that way.

I am the empty vessel guided by the requirements of the painting.

Meaning as an unstable context for understanding the world.

The death of meaning and its complicity towards a confusion
between reality and images.

Dissolving Meaning

Post-Meaning

No-Meaning

“A picture held us captive. And we couldn’t get outside of it, for it lay in our language, and language seemed only to repeat it to us inexorably.”¹³⁷

Note to self:

Maybe I’m hanging onto the history of painting as a footing to avoid the voided/evacuated self, as an amelioration of the situationlessness of reality.

Post-situation = loss of self

My brain is a drain, exploding with possibilities.....

Neurodivergent = Neurodiverse

In a Dyslexic Heaven

AI does not like an undefined world, everything has to be pre-established, an 'is' and not an 'as'! A middle ground is sought, a sort of blandness which often doesn't make sense. Local, artistic and neurodivergent idiosyncrasies are not accepted and prompts constantly prompt for changes my computer screen flashes warnings in red, yellow and blue at me, blocking my view of the screen.

Physics, through mathematics leads beyond the visible to the relationship between artificial intelligence AI and immortality - physically and mentally. AI is an amplification of consumerism's promise of eternal youth.

¹³¹ Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New: Art and the Century of Change*, (1991), Thames and Hudson, 2000

¹³² Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells, Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, Verso, 2012

¹³³ Boris Groys, *Comrades of Time*, e-flux Journal #11, December 2009

¹³⁴ Ibid

¹³⁵ Iain Boal, T.J. Clark, Joseph Matthews, and Michael Watts. *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War: Retort*, Verso: London and New York, 2005

¹³⁶ Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New: Art and the Century of Change*, (1991), Thames and Hudson, 2000

¹³⁷ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, (1953), Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009

LXIV

“‘Meaning is use’....Wittgenstein’s ideas about use are often misunderstood. I take him to mean that there is no ‘meaning’ – no ‘it’ that a word means, no ‘something’ that adheres to words in isolation from their use. Words get their meaning from the sentences they appear in. But those sentences are also in need of determination. We can’t understand what work a sentence does, or what work a word does in a sentence, until we understand the work the sentence does in the specific circumstances in which it has been uttered.”¹³⁸

So, how does this translate into art? Seemingly there is no ‘meaning’ only situated ‘use’ as context and context as situated experience.

Post-Paradigm - beyond the theory of fixed positions and forced change in a state of constant crisis.

A paper investigating the image in the context of painting and the digital complication of representation in crisis.

Crisis as the harbinger of change.

“The déjà-vu of the rerun (on TV) born of the total availability of images erases the sense of being in a given place at a given time.”¹³⁹

Horizon as scale concerning concepts of “navigation and human-centric ideas to big and small worlds on a planetary scale and localising forces.”¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Toril Moi, *Revolution of the Ordinary: Literary Studies After Wittgenstein, Austin, and Cavell*, The University of Chicago Press, 2017

¹³⁹ Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New: Art and the Century of Change*, (1991), Thames and Hudson, 2000

¹⁴⁰ Patricia Reed, *Navigation Beyond Vision*, ‘Orientation in a Big World: On the Necessity of Horizonless Perspectives’, e-flux journal, Sternberg Press, 2023

LXV

“Like literary spirits floating down the stairs”¹⁴¹

“Diversity, equality, inclusion and belonging”¹⁴²

Idea: *Image Poems* – drawings of images in the form of language, like Chinese characters.

Note to self:

Painting is an opportunity to work with the mechanics of light.

“‘What I would like to write,’ Flaubert declared with provocative hyperbole, ‘is a book about nothing, a book dependent on nothing external, which would be held together by the inner strength of its style’ (letter to Louise Colet, 16 Jan. 1852). This statement indicates his ambition to give narrative prose the autonomy of stylization and the expressive qualities of poetry, and thereby to establish the novel as the dominant literary form of the nineteenth century. His narrative method has been called ‘impersonal’ which is meant a kind of self-suppression by the author – an implicit repudiation of the Romantic notions of creative inspiration and intense self-expression. For Flaubert, the presence of the writer in his work should remain elusive. Whereas the narrator of a Balzac novel is overtly (and often ostentatiously) omniscient, Flaubert’s stated ideal was a different kind of God-like narrator, one who would be ‘present everywhere but visible nowhere’ (9 Dec. 1852).”¹⁴³

“To ask about the new is tantamount to asking about value. Why do we attempt to say something at all, to write, paint, or compose something that was previously not there? Where does the belief in the value of cultural innovation of our own come from, if we know from the outset that the truth remains inaccessible? In our desire to be ‘creative’ ourselves, are we perhaps just succumbing to a diabolical temptation that we should in fact resist in order to maintain our integrity?”¹⁴⁴

“What is the point of the new?”¹⁴⁵

“A cultural work’s value is determined by its relationship to other works, not by its relationship to some extra-cultural reality, by its truth, or by a meaning. The inaccessibility of truth, the signified, reality, being, meaning, evidence, or of the presence of the present – an inaccessibility ceaselessly affirmed by contemporary postmodern thought – should therefore not be deemed a devalorization of all value and all newness. On the contrary, the inaccessibility of truth and the absence of meaning make the question of value and newness possible in the first place.”¹⁴⁶

Meaning is the blind spot at the centre of the visible world.

¹⁴¹ Daniel Murray said, Net Artist, <https://melonland.net>

¹⁴² Ian Greer Queen’s Vice-Chancellor Professor, commenting on the riots in Belfast, RTÉ 9/8/24

¹⁴³ Brian Nelson, *The Cambridge Introduction to French Literature*, ‘Flaubert: The Narrator Vanishes’, Cambridge University Press, 2015

¹⁴⁴ Boris Groys, *On the New*, ‘Introduction’, Verso, 2014

¹⁴⁵ Ibid

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

LXVI

Cultural validation vs mass culture (everything else)

The loss of mass culture to cultural validation - We Are all Artists and
Everything Is Art!

An immersive art experience in Museums as a backdrop to my Selfie -
The Disappeared Spectator - exhibitions and museums as content
creation engines for social media - We are all artists.

Merging/mixing it up/kitsch it up/camp it up

Cultural validation is a constant dialogue, back and forth
between the areas of validation and mass culture - a
dying art

Everything is culture - everything is mass culture -

An Undifferentiated Field of Continuous Activity

The original as mass Production - the
original as a copy of the original.....

A mass-produced original (oxymoron)

Loss of the artwork - if everything is an artwork, then nothing is.

Loss of the cultural value system - a valueless value.

Loss of the artist - if everyone is an artist then no one is.

I am not an artist just a human killing time.

Concern with 'The Void' re-enters the art value system and all that implies,

Making sure art's *uncanny* abilities are kept safe....the myth of the creator for
example.

Art always needs an 'other' to remain relevant.

A contrast; A difference; A viewer and the viewed; A spectacle and the spectator;

A; A; A; A; A; A; A; A; A; A; A.....

Unrepresentable - unseeable - out of the void - uncanny- unreadable -
unrecognisable - blinding - hidden from view - disappeared - God

Unfinished - becoming - incomplete - human

Represent - show- standing in for

Something -

Proof

appropriate; reuse; recycle; reframe; adapt; reproduce; re-present; hijack; usurp;
steal; disrupt; distort; abuse; disappear; blind....

appropriate the banal, the mundane = Modernism

The original- What original? - From the void? - the artist's genius

Comes from the Void?

The original as the mundane - the banality of the original =
Modernism

The Void = The Origin = The Original

Art is the constant negotiation or navigation of the sites of cultural value, a dance or stand-off between acceptance and rejection, in an attempt to be admitted to that value culture, and is as such an act of inequality, privileging privilege, and is political. We are always *standing* in the wings. The cultural value system aims to *socialise* the individual and secure representation for minorities. This proves contradictory because the distinctions that admit to difference cannot be overcome; they are merely moved, hence the dance.

Post-modernism argues the *importance* of the discussion about reality as holding a higher value than reality itself. This leads to a loss of reality and opens the way for the destruction of the real through fake news, misinformation and violence.

The Heart of the Void

The Depth of the Surface

Avoid the Void

The surface is thin and fragile, it can be stripped or flayed, and is what is visible.

The visible takes all, becomes everything, only surface, only the visible, stripping the void of its power its otherness, everything becomes the same, in a sea of sameness.

Outer or external appearance as opposed to or distinguished from an inner nature.

2-dimensional = superficial

Bring it to the surface!

Digital technologies have changed our perception of the painting field, its spatial orientation has been expanded, flattened and shattered.

Note to self:

Art is a fight to the death, each creation is either a good death or a bad death.

The Void is at the centre of the Western tradition of art, everything is a battle to avoid the void; we are constantly falling into and climbing out of the void.

Cosmic travel is an attempt to conquer the void (death).

I found myself in the void – space, emptiness, a gap in the wall, passing through something, experiencing the loss of something or someone, invalidated, nullified, destitute....

SCREAMING INTO THE VOID

I think I've been getting this (making art) all wrong or at least been wrong-headed about it. I want to work and make a living, who doesn't, but every time I try to fund my practice, it has a deadening and corrupting effect. I'm thrown into a contradiction of expectations, a vortex of confusion, a blind spot, that feels like a void, which has to be overcome constantly, a falling and picking up when I should be working, writing, painting, drawing and researching not thinking about money.

Note to self:

Art is a great vehicle for exploring philosophical ways of being in the world.

"At the still point of the turning world"¹⁴⁷

We are all already at our still point of the turning world, "where time becomes vertical"¹⁴⁸ instead of linear we just need a reminder now and then, at the still point things come into focus because we have stopped to look and listen, every animal, plant and rock already know this, the world knows it, and from this perspective everything is beautiful and our personal drama doesn't seem so important.

I am Joubert being Montaigne "I am like Montaigne: 'unsuited to continuous discourse.'"¹⁴⁹

I'm writing this to get rid of something..... "a record, the objectification of a mind."¹⁴⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ T.S. Elliot, *Four Quartets*, (1944), Faber, 1976

¹⁴⁸ Daniel Murray said, Net Artist, <https://melonland.net>

¹⁴⁹ Joseph Joubert, (1754-1824), *The Notebooks of Joseph Joubert*, Translated and Introduction, Paul Auster, (1983), New York Review of Books, 2005

¹⁵⁰ Lydia Davis, *Essays*, 'Revising One Sentence' Hamish Hamilton, Penguin Books, 2019

IMAGES
CANTOS-OPEN HORIZONS

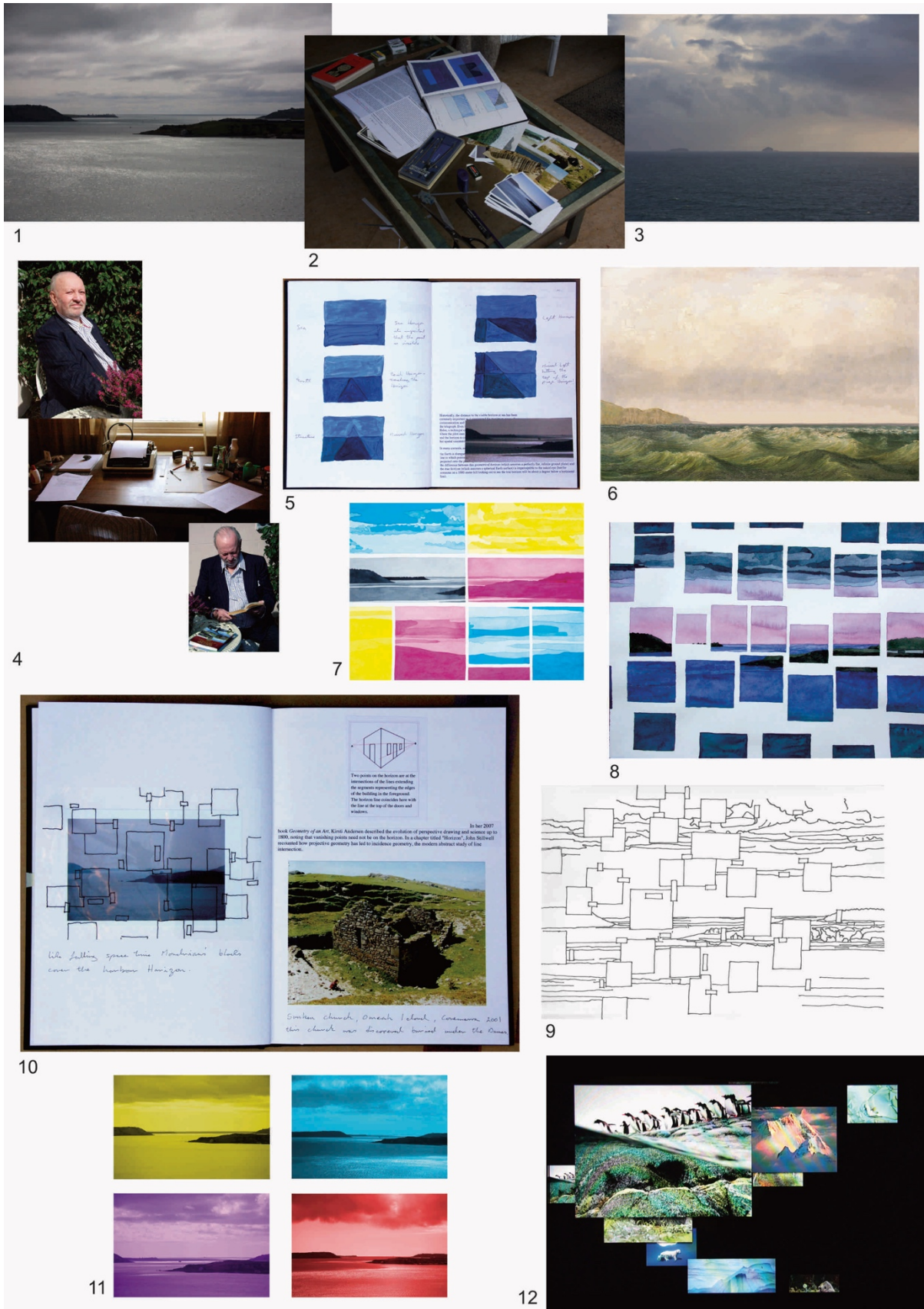


Image 1. The mouth of Cork Harbour photographed from Cobh, 2014; Image 2. Cill Rialaig Studio, 2014; Image 3. The horizon at Cill Rialaig, 2014; Image 4. Derek Mahon at The Grove, Kinsale, 2015; Image 5. Notebook, 2014; Image 6. *Clear Horizon as a Solipsistic Solution 1* Digital Image after 'The Steamship 'Nimrod' of the Cork Steam Packet Company' by George Mounsey Wheatly Atkinson c.1844, 2015; Image 7. *Horizons 2* (Cork Harbour) montage of a Mondrian abstract painting and an image of Cork Harbour, watercolour on paper, 48 x 63 cm, 2015; Image 8. *Pink Horizon* (Cork Harbour) montage of a Mondrian abstract painting and an image of Cork Harbour, watercolour on paper, 56 x 76 cm, 2014; Image 9. Drawing for projection of Cork Harbour & Mondrian, 2014; Image 10. Notebook with photograph of The Sunken Church on Omev Island Connemara, 2014; Image 11. Coloured Photos of Cork Harbour, 2015; Image 12. Screen Saver photographed from a TV and used in the development of horizon images, 2015



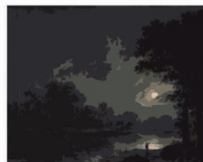
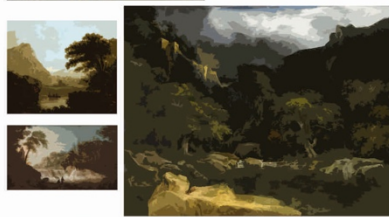
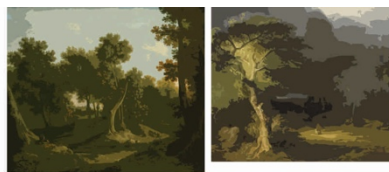
Image 13. *The Doon Lab*, 2015; Image 14. *Blue Horizon* (Cork Harbour) montage of a Mondrian abstract painting and an image of Cork Harbour, watercolour on paper, 48 x 63 cm, 2014; Image 15. *Star Wars Camouflage*, digital image, 2016; Image 16. *Woodland, Pink, Desert and Sea* camouflages for Skellig Michael, watercolour on paper, 45 x 66 cm, 2016; Image 17. Adapted found image of Skellig Michael, 2016; Image 18. *Blurred Skellig Michael with Screen Savers*, watercolour on paper, 45 x 66 cm, 2016; Image 19. *Horizon 9* colour separations with screensavers, Skellig Michael watercolour on paper, 45 x 66 cm, 2016; Image 20. *Submerged Horizon*, watercolour on paper, 49 x 66 cm, 2017; Image 21. *Lens Blurred, Woodland, Pink, Desert and Sea* camouflages for Skellig Michael, computer-generated image, 2016



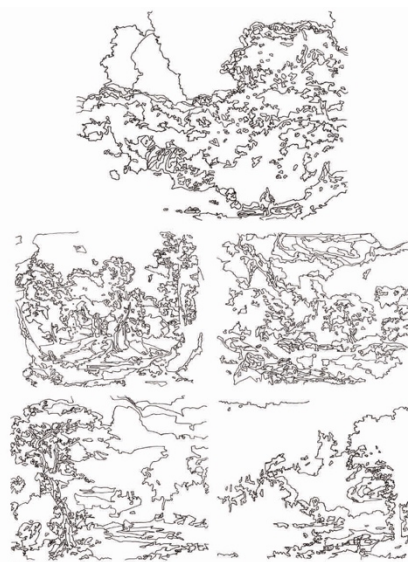
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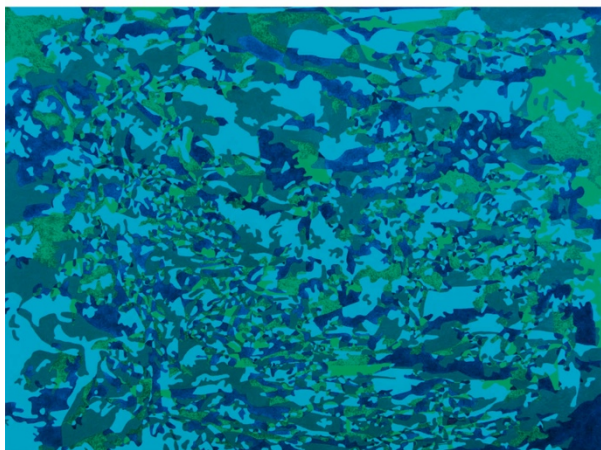
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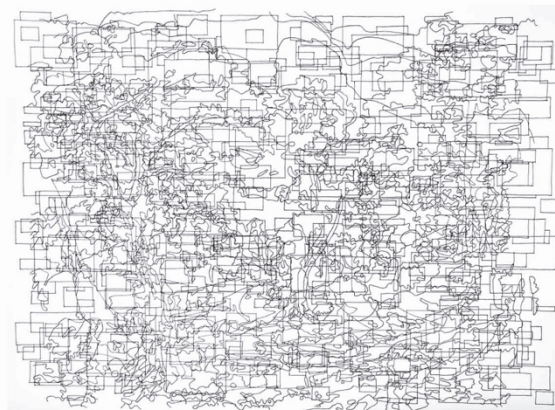
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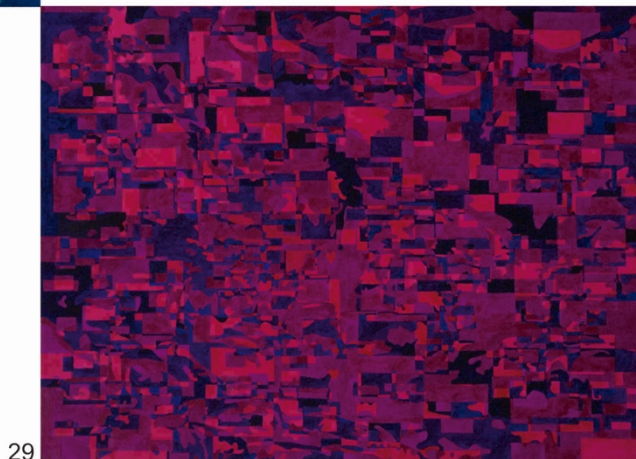
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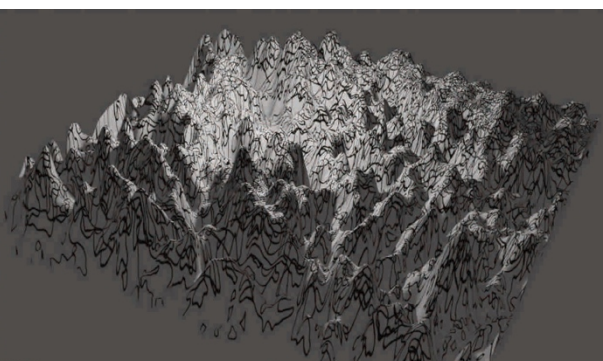


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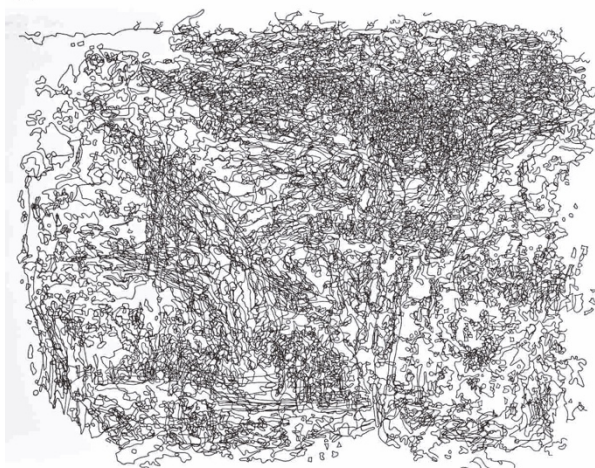
Image 22. James Arthur O'Connor's 'A Thunderstorm: The Frightened Wagoner' 1832; Image 24. Cutout of James Arthur O'Connor's paintings 'A wooded Landscape' 1830, 'A Thunderstorm: The Frightened Wagoner' 1832, 'In the Dargle Country' c.1831, 'Moonlight Scene' c.1841, 'Figure in a Landscape with Waterfall' 1825, 'On Coming Storm' 1832, made in Photoshop 2017; Image 25. Drawings made from cutouts of James Arthur O'Connor's paintings 'A wooded Landscape' 1830, 'In the Dargle Country' c.1831, 'Moonlight Scene' c.1841, 'Figure in a Landscape with Waterfall' 1825, 'On Coming Storm' 1832, ink pen on paper 2017; Image 26. *Lost Horizon*, after James Arthur O'Connor's paintings 'A wooded Landscape' 1830, 'In the Dargle Country' c.1831, 'Moonlight Scene' c.1841, 'Figure in a Landscape with Waterfall' 1825, 'On Coming Storm' 1832, watercolour on paper, 49x66cm, 2018-19; Image 27. *Beyond the Horizon 2* after J.A. O'Connor and screensavers/drawing, ink pen on paper, 52 x 70 cm, 2018; Image 28. Woodland camouflage and drawing, 2017; Image 29. *Beyond the Horizon* after 'In the Dargle Country' by J.A. O'Connor 1829 and screensavers, watercolour on paper, 47 x 66 cm, 2018; Image 30. Derek Mahon with Sarah Iremonger and Matthew Geden 2017- 19



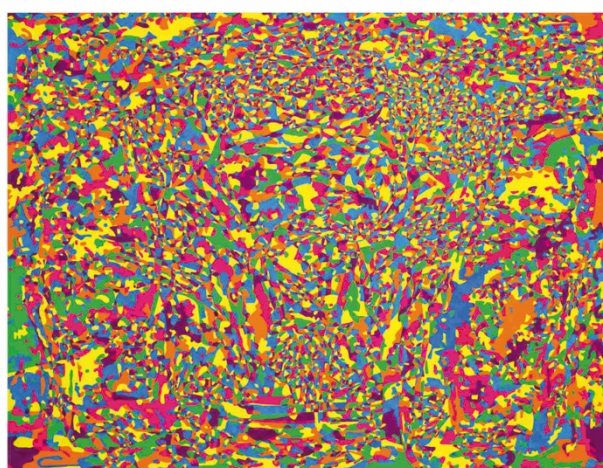
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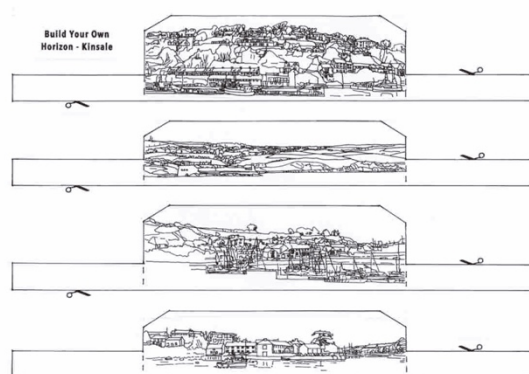
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Image 31. *Entangled Horizon 2* after 'View of Powerscourt Waterfall' by G. Barret 1760 as a Virtual 3-D landscape/detail, blender rendered jpeg 3.5 MB, 2023; Image 32. *Entangled Horizon 2* after 'View of Powerscourt Waterfall' by G. Barret 1760 as a Virtual 3-D landscape/overall view, blender rendered jpeg 3.5 MB, 2023; Image 33. *Entangled Horizon 2* after 'View of Powerscourt Waterfall' by G. Barret 1760, ink pen on paper, 52 x 70 cm, 2023; Image 34. *Entangled Horizon* after 'View of Powerscourt Waterfall' by G. Barret 1760, watercolour on paper, 50 x 69 cm, 2024; Image 35. *Build Your Own Horizon BYOH/Uillinn*, ink drawings and photocopies on card/cut-outs, 2022; Image 36. *Build Your Own Horizon / Kinsale*, cut out printed ink on card/cut-outs, A3, 2019; Image 37. *Uillinn Skyline*, multiple drawings from Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, ink and pen on paper, A4, 2022; Image 38. *Build Your Own Horizon BYOH/Uillinn*, ink drawings and photocopies on card/cut-outs, detail, 2022

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³ Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago*, (1958), A New Translation by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, Pantheon Books, 2010

⁴ Derek Mahon, *Olympia and the Internet*, 'Horizons', The Gallery Press, 2017

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¹¹ Mairi Robinson, Editor in Chief, George Davidson, Editor, *21st Century Dictionary*, Chambers, 1999

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