

An abstract painting with a textured, layered surface. The color palette is dominated by earthy tones: beige, tan, and brown, with a prominent vertical streak of yellow-gold on the left side. A vertical streak of light blue is visible on the right side. The bottom edge features a dark, charcoal-like band with some white and pinkish-red accents. The overall effect is one of depth and movement, with visible brushstrokes and some areas of apparent peeling or cracking.

CAROL HODDER
INFLOW



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gallery

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Tara Murphy
requests the pleasure of your company
at the private view of

CAROL HODDER

INFLOW

to be opened by
Catherine Hammond
Independent curator and art consultant

on
Thursday 30 August 2018
from 6pm to 8pm

at
Solomon Fine Art, Balfe Street, Dublin 2
(next door to the Westbury Hotel)
tel: +353 (0)1 672 4429 / email: info@solomonfineart.ie / www.solomonfineart.ie

Artworks may be viewed prior to the opening by appointment or online at www.solomonfineart.ie
The exhibition continues until Saturday 22 September 2018

Open: Tuesday to Friday 10am – 5.30pm / Saturday: 11am – 4pm

Front cover: DOCKLANDS, oil on canvas, 60 x 60 cm
Inside cover: OVERCAST I, oil on canvas, 102 x 102 cm
Back cover: STORM TIDE II, oil on canvas, 120 x 150 cm



Purple Rain, oil on canvas, 30 x 76 cm

The Eye and its Mind

The eye often perceives things differently from the mind. Each can play tricks on the other, distorting reality or verifying an illusion. But one can only truly flourish when the other is in tow, like binary soul mates overcoming disagreement, listening and speaking in unison - an adorable couple, finishing one another's sentences.

When oil paint is suddenly asked to capture what hovers in front of the eye and its mind, the relationship becomes a little strained. There is an enigma at work, as if this opaque, unctuous material could ever dare attempt the impossible: to miraculously transform into veritable light and air, into tangible sights and sounds. Might this transformation of matter into a whispered idea, be as mysterious as a diamond dragging over a vinyl disc to conjure a full symphony orchestra, right there in your living room. Theory might be able to explain how it happens, but why it happens (or not at all) is a different matter altogether.

For Carol Hodder the process of navigating the mercurial seas of paint is like exploring a wilderness without a map. She has a good sense of where her destination lies, but is not entirely sure how she will get there. Waiting patiently for a painting to announce its arrival, underscored by antique clock movements, in places half remembered. An image gradually and inexorably imposes an order to the random marks that first defied the rancorous void of a blank canvas. One mark leads to another and transforms into cloud structures, distant cranes, riverbanks, storm surges, sea caves, trees or fields.

The image reveals itself through toil. Only then does this beguiling, vexing and just sometimes exhilarating occupation begin to make sense. Then, the eye and its mind can rest, if only just for a while.

Mark Ewart is a lecturer in Education at CIT Crawford College of Art and Design. He is also an art teacher at Ashton School, a writer and artist based in Cork.

Carol Hodder in conversation with Mark Ewart, 21st June 2018

ME: We were talking earlier about your relationship with water and its connection to a physical or emotional journey and how this might engender a sense of 'place' in your paintings. Tell us a little bit about the importance of the journey and the destination.

CH: Well in the last year I have travelled to Iceland, Berlin and America and these three different places did provide a general, but different sense of place. Now this might not be obvious to anybody else, but it is obvious to me because when I do the work afterwards, I get taken back to that place. It sort of transports me back and once the work captures it.... I can leave it...I have arrived; I know that place and it's okay.

ME: So in a sense the place only really exists for you once you have completed the painting – it becomes physical for you in your mind and on the canvas?

CH: It becomes a memory of a place, the Berlin ones gave me a strange feeling, the trees there represent both the city's dark history and optimism for its future and they came strongly into my memory in relation to that place. Those landmarks count. It's a sensory thing, not a photographic thing. In America it was Anni Albers' pond, which I swam and kayaked in almost daily. It's almost like I'm referencing a memory from another time in my own existence.

ME: That's fascinating because if we pick up the idea of the journey not being a literal one but rather metaphorical, then your paintings become aspirational, a place you would like to be rather than where you are. Water though is a constant. Does it add a layer of narrative to your paintings because you are in close proximity to Fountainstown beach here in Cork?

CH: Funnily enough not in Fountainstown, but going right back to childhood, we had a lake down from where my parents had a holiday home in the North Kerry mountains. So when we went fishing on the lake we used to stay out a bit too late and if you are on a lake when the weather changes, the water turns black and the sky gets dark. And there was a slight terror because I nearly drowned when I was a child, so there was a fear of drowning in the lake even though we were doing something pleasurable like fishing. That sense of the water turning on you and there would be nobody to rescue you if that happened. So it was danger, but excitement. And I suppose the other thing was we had a 'Swallows and Amazons' experience on an island in the lake which we named Puck, our own magical island with fully grown bonsai-like native trees that we used to picnic on and play hide-and-seek. But you know, you always had to go away from that island and come back to the shore and in a mountainous area, the wind and elements can be very, very extreme. Even when lying in bed, one of the bedrooms had a corrugated roof and the noise of the rain and the wind could be deafening. So that is the sort of water I'm thinking about.

ME: So those early experiences are clearly imbedded into your subconscious and you can tap into them because there is an energy and potency to them.

CH: The thing is there is a beauty to the fear. It's the extreme experience, which I don't have usually if I go swimming or to a beach. That doesn't do it for me. It's water as life-and-death that drives me; it's the power of it.

ME: That brings us back the word sublimation that I hinted at earlier and how information from different places is subconsciously used to construct imagery for your paintings. By extension, the Sublime power and drama of nature, such as in a Friedrich or Joseph Wright of Derby painting. Are you trying to represent the power, danger and the majesty of nature?

CH: I'm interested in the contrasts in nature, which I never think it through in an academic way, because I have seen the extremes. When I went to Newfoundland for a residency in 2006 I wanted to see icebergs. I wanted to see things that are extreme in a place that was so inaccessible, to see again that raw energy. But I think it all stems from the childhood experience being out on the boat with my Dad fishing, I do actually. What a wonderful thing for children to have that experience, we just lived in a sort of wild way. We had no electricity or running water, nothing but the basics, but there was tremendous freedom in that.

ME: I think we are getting to that sense now of where were you are not only as an artist, but also where you have come from as a person. But just to bring it back to the construction of the paintings again, there is a sense from what we said earlier that you don't set out with a definite idea of what you are going to paint and you allow the materials to work for you. You might express the difficulties you find in that process... it can be frustrating, yes...?

CH: Yes, it's very frustrating because I don't have a notebook and if I try to do sketches, I lose interest very quickly. If I had a menu or recipe that I was just following it would be different, but I don't. And it's challenging if there is an exhibition coming up because there is a body of work expected. So you have to pin things down, which is hard. I don't know what I'm setting out to express in the beginning but when it starts to come together a bit, I begin to get a sense for what I'm heading for.

ME: You cue off and respond to something that reveals itself through the early painterly marks and you begin to impose an order onto those marks?

CH: Well I can easily lose early marks as I build up layers of paint but the process leads me along and sometimes I find myself chasing a colour scheme [holding up a painting] if I could just redo that again, I would do it again and again. But I have done something there and I don't actually remember how I did it, so I like to surprise myself because I do get bored with my own process and I don't want to feel like I'm painting to rote. I'm looking for the mystery or the magic - whatever it is - that creates a painting that interests me... but I can't tell you how that happens. ME: Which is the alchemy of painting, something that can't be unlocked.

CH: It's alchemical, that's it exactly! You could go on for another ten years looking at this painting, doing more to it and you would just be turning over pages really and the same story would be there, but you would be just turning pages. So at some stage you have to stop and say, 'this is as much as I can express right now' but if I hang onto it, I might express something else next week, but will that improve it or not?

ME: Is that when you are able to let go of a painting? And while there might be doubts, you hope the work resonates and that you have left enough space to allow others to eventually impose their own narrative, without you having to continue anymore with it.

CH: That's interesting, so the person that engages with it will bring their own story to it?

ME: Yes, so it becomes a relational aesthetic in a sense - to appropriate contemporary practice theory for a minute - it's about them completing that artwork because they can impose their own interpretation on the painting. So you don't have to worry about it because it is gone.

CH: I think that is hard [laughs] because you never want to let it go at that stage. I'm conscious that I would try and control it to the end, and risk it becoming overworked, but it's all in an effort to surprise myself and I look at things and think 'is that really what I want to say?' Sometimes I don't think I have achieved it, I honestly don't know. You have to get out of your own way, as they say in the song but it's hard, as you are always chasing something that doesn't exist.



Opposite page:
ICELANDIC SEA
oil on canvas
25 x 30cm

STORM TIDE
oil on canvas
120 x 150 cm



OVERCAST XI
oil on canvas
30 x 76 cm



OVERCAST X
oil on canvas
30 x 76 cm



OVERCAST IX
oil on canvas
30 x 76 cm



OFFSHORE II
oil on canvas
30 x 76 cm



DAWN APPROACH
oil on canvas
60 x 90 cm



OVERCAST XII
oil on canvas
25 x 30cm



OVERCAST IV
oil on canvas
40 x 50 cm



OVERCAST VII
oil on canvas
40 x 50 cm



FAR SHORES
oil on canvas
30 x 40 cm

Carol Hodder is a self-taught painter who has exhibited throughout Ireland and was the recipient of the Republic of Ireland Award at the National Open Art Competition (NOA) at the Royal College of Art, London, 2015. She is a Fellow of the Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Ballycastle, Co. Mayo and was recently an invited Artist in Residence at the Josef & Anni Albers Foundation in Connecticut, USA. She lives and works in Cork.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2018 Inflow, Solomon Fine Art, Dublin
2016 Shorelines, Catherine Hammond Gallery, Skibbereen, Co. Cork
2011 Leanings, Catherine Hammond Gallery, Glengarriff (in conjunction with West Cork Literary Festival)
2010 Landmarks, Catherine Hammond Gallery, Glengarriff
2007 Wetlands, The Pigyard Gallery, Wexford
2000 Landmarks, Sirius Arts Centre, Cobh Co. Cork
COE 2000, Claremorris, Mayo

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2018, 17 Boyle Arts Festival, Roscommon
2018, 15 Skibbereen Arts Festival, Co. Cork
2017, 16, 15, 14 VUE Contemporary, RHA, Dublin
2017, 16, 15 Art on a Postcard, Unit, London, Maddox Gallery, London & Soho Revue Gallery, London
2017, 16, 15 National Open Art (NOA), London, Sussex & Chichester
2017 Solomon Fine Art, Dublin, Winter exhibition
2016 DRAW - Backwater Artists, Cork
2016, 12, 02, 01 CASE, Lavit Gallery Cork
2015 Harrogate International Visual Arts Expo (HIVE)
2015, 14 The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London
2015-2004 Catherine Hammond Gallery (regular group exhibitions)
2014 On the Edge of the World, Ballina Arts Centre, Co. Mayo
2013, 02 The Lime Tree Gallery, Kenmare
2013, 09, 03, 01, 99-97, 94 Lavit Gallery, Cork (regular group exhibitions)
2010 On the Edge of Abstraction, Urban Retreat Gallery
2009 Images from North Mayo, Courthouse Gallery, Ballycastle
2007 Through Irish Eyes, Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication, Beijing, China
2006, 03 Tidelines, Gallery One, Kilkenny (two person)
2005, 04, Hillsboro Fine Art, Dublin
2005 C2, Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork
2004, 03 Decade I +II, The Sirius Arts Centre, Cobh, Co. Cork
2003, 01 Eigse, Carlow Arts Festival
2003 Ballinglen The Artists in Rural Ireland, Mayo
General Hospital, Castlebar, Co. Mayo
2002, 01 Oireachtas, Dun Laoghaire County Hall, Dublin
2002 Art of Love, Gallery 44, Cork
Bass Contemporary Art Awards, Northern Ireland
Art in St. Finbarre's, Cork
2002 Aisling Geal, Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge, Co. Kildare

2001 Cill Rialig project, Waterville, Co Kerry
2001-98, 95, 93 Iontas, National Small Works Exhibition, Sligo, Dublin, Limerick, Belfast and Cork
2001, 1999-96 Caldwell Gallery, Belfast
2001, 95 Royal Ulster Academy, Belfast, Northern Ireland
2000 Silent Echoes, Kilmallock, Co Cork (3 person show)
1998 Newtown Connections, Garter Lane, Arts Centre, Wexford
Cork University Hospital, 20th Anniversary Exhibition
1997 New Generations, Triskel Gallery, Cork
Art Trail '97, Proby's, Cork
The Dyehouse Gallery, Waterford
1997, 96 The Antique Print Gallery, Pittsburgh, USA
1996 Exhibition of Living Art, Liberty Hall, Dublin
1995, 93, 92, 91 Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin
1995 Scoip '95, Siamsa Tire, Tralee, Co. Kerry
Spillers Lane Gallery, Clonakilty, Co. Cork
1994 Uisce, Jameson Gallery, Middleton, Co. Cork
Laid Bare, Wellspring Gallery, Tralee, Co. Kerry

AWARDS/RESIDENCIES

2017 The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, Connecticut
Arts Council of Ireland Travel and Training Award
2015 The Republic of Ireland Award, National Open Art, London (NOA 2015)
2014 The Golden Fleece Award (shortlisted artist)
2008-1999 The Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Ballycastle, Co. Mayo; Fellowship and Residencies
2007 Arts Council Travel Grant, Beijing, China / Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication, China
The Pouch Cove Foundation, Newfoundland
2005-2000 Board member, Sirius Arts Centre
2002 Cill Rialaig, Ballinskelligs, Co Kerry

COLLECTIONS

The Josef & Anni Albers Foundation
The Ballinglen Archive, The Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Ballycastle, Co. Mayo
Office of Public Works
The Chichester Arts Trust
Cork University Hospital, Millennium Collection
Limerick County Council
Newtown School, Waterford
Patrick J Murphy
Scott Tallon Walker Architects
Bank of Ireland
Bunnyconnellan House, Myrtleville
The Pouch Cove Foundation, Newfoundland

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31 August - 22 September 2018

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