

ARTIST STATEMENT April 2022

'A beginning is very innocent. It is a setting of something in motion, the destination of which remains a secret to all except itself.' (John O'Donohue)

This is as much a metaphor for life as it is for a painting. Life is always radically uncertain and especially so, during the past couple of Covid years.

My art practice has become a spiritual practice...the focussed process of making paintings is a long slow path to becoming my true self. It is a teacher. Learning to trust, surrender control, and be comfortable with uncertainty. Allowing things to unfold.

My work reflects the mysterious process of its becoming. Embracing the unexpected, letting go of preciousness and arriving at something that could never have been planned. My only intention at the beginning is to hold in harmony and balance, the tension of opposites – Aliveness AND stillness, Clarity AND Mystery, Raw AND ordered, Risk AND Calculation, Surface AND History. Echoing my desire to keep in balance, all the contradictions, paradoxes, ups and downs, sorrows and joys of ordinary human existence.

I feel most alive when I'm entirely present with the process of painting and drawing. For me, the freedom and vitality of the gestural marks and layers in the early stages are so energising. I'm trying to build up a rich, complex surface. Then comes the challenge of organising the chaos while leaving the life force intact. My organic approach is a rhythm of building up and breaking down layers, a kind of archaeology.

The work is always tethered to the visible landscape. Especially when I am alone in a landscape, my perception seems to be on quiet alert...a walking meditation ... and memories are implanted. My abstract vocabulary of colour, texture and mark expresses my connection to place as well as internal states of being.

My primary medium is oil paint mixed with cold wax medium and combined drawing media on board and canvas.