

8-Oct-2009

**Application for 'Less is More' @ CONNEXION Gallery**

My work is inspired by the natural world. Its beauty and its cruelty. Its hostility and its hospitality. Its paradoxes and its contrasts.

When looking at nature, one can't help but see its destruction at the hands of humans. It is virtually impossible to find unspoiled nature. Our planet's ecological balance has been severely compromised, and phenomena such as global warming and the deterioration of the ozone layer affect every inch of the planet.

I feel strongly that each of us must use the tools at our disposal to preserve and restore the natural world. As an artist, I employ visual language to address these issues with the goal of awakening interest and inspiring my audience to action. I also work with groups such as the IPCC (Irish Peatland Conservation Council) to learn more about each series' subject in order to better understand and communicate its essence.

Those who cannot be reached by depressing news about the dire state of our world may be reached by images of its beauty (Ansel Adams successfully showed this) and the threat imposed on it. Art has the power to make one see things in a new light. It allows us develop a love for places and things that we would otherwise not have noticed, or thought of as ugly or boring. It helps us discover the beauty of the ocean floor, the dirt that is bog, the bark of a tree.

Rather than re-creating a landscape on a canvas, I aim to express its essence.

Obviously, no single work can hope to distill the complex spirit of a landscape, much less the infinitely sophisticated ecology that sustains it. So, in order to capture this richness, I work on a large number of paintings concurrently. At the earliest stages the theme itself often dictates decisions concerning composition, materials, and format. I prepare a large number of working surfaces, typically involving a minimal, organic, underlying construction of wax and bold colour, over which numerous layers of paint allow the final image to evolve.

This allows me to transport strong elements and effective techniques from one piece to the next. Each multi-layered rendering shares some details with the other works in the series. The overlap of elements enriches each individual expression and deepens the cohesion within the series.

Ultimately, each piece captures some fragment of the landscape's power until the larger body of work coalesces to express its deepest essence.

The use of raw pigment, wax, scrapers, and other manual and tactile instruments and materials, create texture, forming the template from which the landscape is abstracted, and as a result, validated in the context of the late 20th/early 21st century culture. A delicate integration of colour and tone in the overall composition counterbalances the aggressive, spontaneous mark making. Sparse, minimal compositions are broken up, by a few strokes of color marks, allowing them to stand out.



“Searching for a Path”, encaustic monoprint 2009



"Unwilling to Give Up", encaustic monoprint 2009