

# ERRATICS

My painting practice is built upon what I see, what I experience, and how I interpret the landscape. On close investigation, my paintings reveal themselves as fractured combinations of complex layers of paint, collage material, and photographs that reflect upon the natural world. Simple acts of engagement with unobserved natural surroundings have profound consequences for my work. Whether I am on foot or bike, my present environment guides investigations in the studio. The slow pace and openness of being self-propelled allows me to take notice of the environment. In the studio, I communicate the emotional and physical experience of crawling around in the bush, making connections, and touching everything I encounter.

My latest series of work was informed by my phenomenological research on Glacial Erratics “pieces of rock that have been transported from their original location by moving ice.” I spent five months at the Burren College of Art, a residency program in Ireland. I had no idea how drastically the nuances of my experiences, although seemingly banal and placid at times, could produce such a rich influence on my work.

*I spend my winter mornings walking over the landscape of the Burren. Large surface rocks, called ‘Glacial Erratics’, catch my eye. I follow them, like an array of markers, making a course over the limestone pavements, pausing to feel their newfound lichen skins.*

*I stop to consider their presence, and see them as a momentary assortment, lingering here temporarily, after being carried by the fluxes of past glaciers. Their current inertia, and grey self containment, belie the motion that once brought them here.*

*They seem to sit lightly now, as if propped on their own self-made pedestals, while the soft day-to-day mineral erosions of wind, and interspersing rain play out in the fresh happenings around them. I wonder as to their potential, perhaps as a reminder that some things shouldn’t be controlled, understood or neatly organized.*

I started painting by questioning what I knew of rocks as being heavy, inert, ancient and lifeless, forgoing their likeness to capture their essence. Drawing inspiration from the erratics as a perceivable image, I would flip the canvas reversing the orientation to displace the initial image. In this way, I began to capture the erratics glacial displacement through the ephemeral motion. A sense of dichotomy was built in the painting, that rocks could be simultaneously stationary yet seemingly fleeting, or indestructible, yet delicate like a butterfly wing.

Weaving through the landscape, I wandered from one erratic to the next. Time felt elastic in the Burren landscape. My paintings held the same malleable sense of time. I worked on multiple canvases simultaneously and purposely left them open to possibility. These paintings have encouraged me to question my working methods and expose my process.

I believe in the power of displacement, how the process shows us things we may have overlooked. When we become aware of all the subtleties around us, we open a new world into ways of seeing.