



# Saul Cathcart

## *Light Winning*

a series of landscapes and seascapes  
captured during the summer of 2009  
in the counties of Cork and Kerry.

# Saul Cathcart

*Light Winning*

Irish Exhibition

# Light Winning

I need to feel a part of the landscape around me, to experience it, to make sense of it, what it is saying and how it makes me feel. I love to walk on my favourite Cornish beaches, feeling safe and relaxed because I know them. Excited, because it's like meeting up with an old friend and remembering past times, but also because every day is different. The sea may be particularly vivid and the sun bright or it may be overcast with a strong breeze. The tide might be completely out, allowing me to walk for miles or I may stumble across a new, dramatic rock formation. I love the fact that the experience is new, but familiar. Painting Ireland felt like this to me. The coastline of Cork and Kerry is so similar to Cornwall, I felt stimulated from the word go.

My grandfather was Irish and grew up on a farm, surrounded by the landscape, near Enniskillen, Northern Ireland. I have been told countless stories by my dad, of sum-

mers spent working on the farm when he was a boy. It is clear that those times still mean a lot to him. For me, Ireland and its landscape is in my family's history. So I feel like I already have an extra link or connection with it.

I've always been interested in landscape spatially. This prompted me to study sculpture at Winchester School of Art. Since graduating in 2001, it didn't take long for me to revert back to the immediacy of painting and drawing. I usually work quite fast to capture a place over a period of time. The spontaneity found when sketching is important to me, it's honest. I want my paintings to have this, for the marks I make to be free, expressional and instinctual, but also observational.

Having the freedom to travel around from place to place in my van, stopping where I liked was integral to this project.

Moving through the landscape and along the coast enabled me to get to know places and to understand how they made me feel. I could capture wonderful scenes when it felt right to. It also meant that each painting in the collection could relate to the next. To tell a story, an experience of time spent, a journey.

I enjoyed every minute of painting Ireland. The feeling of distance, looking as far as the eye can see. The combination of vast mountains, coves and estuaries, together with exciting weather was inspiring. Most paintings were a battle, a fight with the wind and rain, but the light was always somewhere close, on my side, fighting to get through and show me something awesome.

**Saul Cathcart**

I'd like to thank Richie Scott, Finnualla and Declan Scott for their knowledge, support and kindness.

To Anna for sleeping under wet paintings!

# Tales of the landscape...

The Irish have always admired a good storyteller and each painting in Saul Cathcart's Irish collection develops a small but fascinating narrative.

Most landscape pictures are what they are, a snapshot that evokes the place, the shapes, the light. Saul's work does this brilliantly, but it also does more. Alongside the paradoxical blend of rich abstract marks with meticulous detail, we also get tales of the landscape: a cloud that has whipped across a sky, a hint of sun sharp and colourful as a laser, the incoming of a tide. Each painting seems to be able to encompass time passing in a place: gusty wind changing the forms of trees, the blustery journey of an incoming rainstorm, the sun going down. These elemental events allow the story of hours spent on coast or estuary to emerge on canvas. There is also a feeling that there has been a struggle to get to each particular view, and for light to win out over gloom.

These images are animated, full of optimism, movement and excitement – living.

**Sue King**

*Cornwall, England*

# No Rules

This style of landscape and seascape painting should not involve any sort of distress. This is about enjoyment; man with nature working as one, more of which we all need. The idea of painting on site is very exciting. I can imagine the first decent light after dawn, undisturbed by our own sounds, which is hard to find these days. I can picture the scene, getting psyched up both physically and of course mentally; a good breakfast would help. Load up and off.

The experience would have to be a solo one. There is no point in taking on this activity unless you are totally immersed, engulfed and above all respectful. Another person may like to meditate before diving in. The painting process varies immensely; some calculated, others wait and see what evolves. Above all it has to be enjoyable and exciting, keeping in mind there are “no rules”.

**Dave Mc Cormick**

*Painter*

*Cork, Ireland*

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# Market+Fire+Ice

Saturday 7th November 2009

An evening to celebrate the opening of *Light Winning*

Welcome to the Grain Store, the latest addition to Ballymaloe House. This new multi-purpose venue is a delicately converted 17th century farmyard building. The Grain Store is 50 yards from the main house. Its spacious lime washed interior, gooseberry coloured railings and bamboo floor create a pleasant setting for any occasion.

The Grain Store is available to be used for conferences, weddings, concerts, parties, dances, fashion shows, fund raisers and family events.

*Artistic Alliance would like to thank everybody involved with The Grain Store especially Fawn, Rory, Rebecca, Gentian, Roisín and Ted.*

**The Grain Store  
Ballymaloe House  
Shanagarry  
Co. Cork**

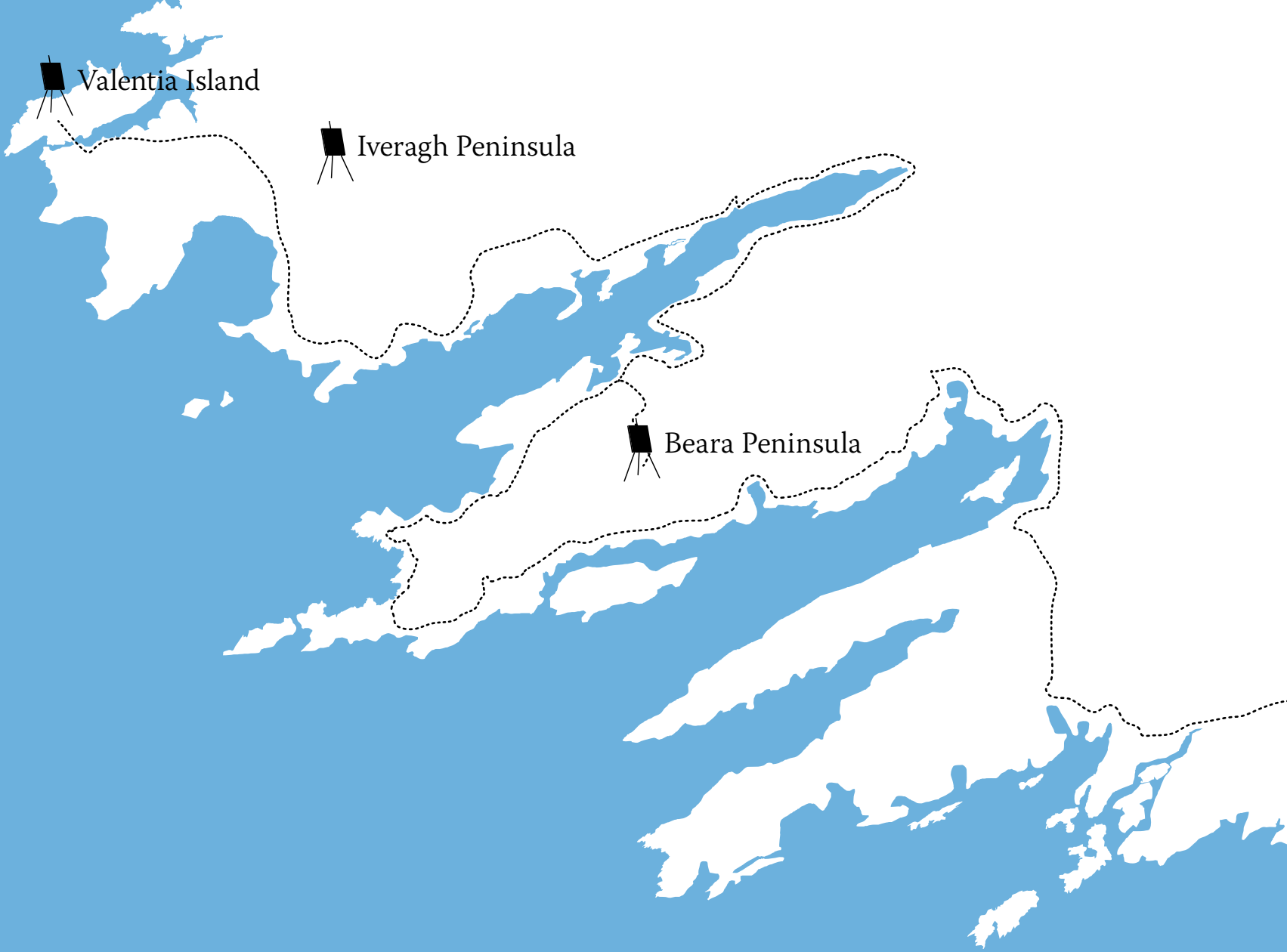
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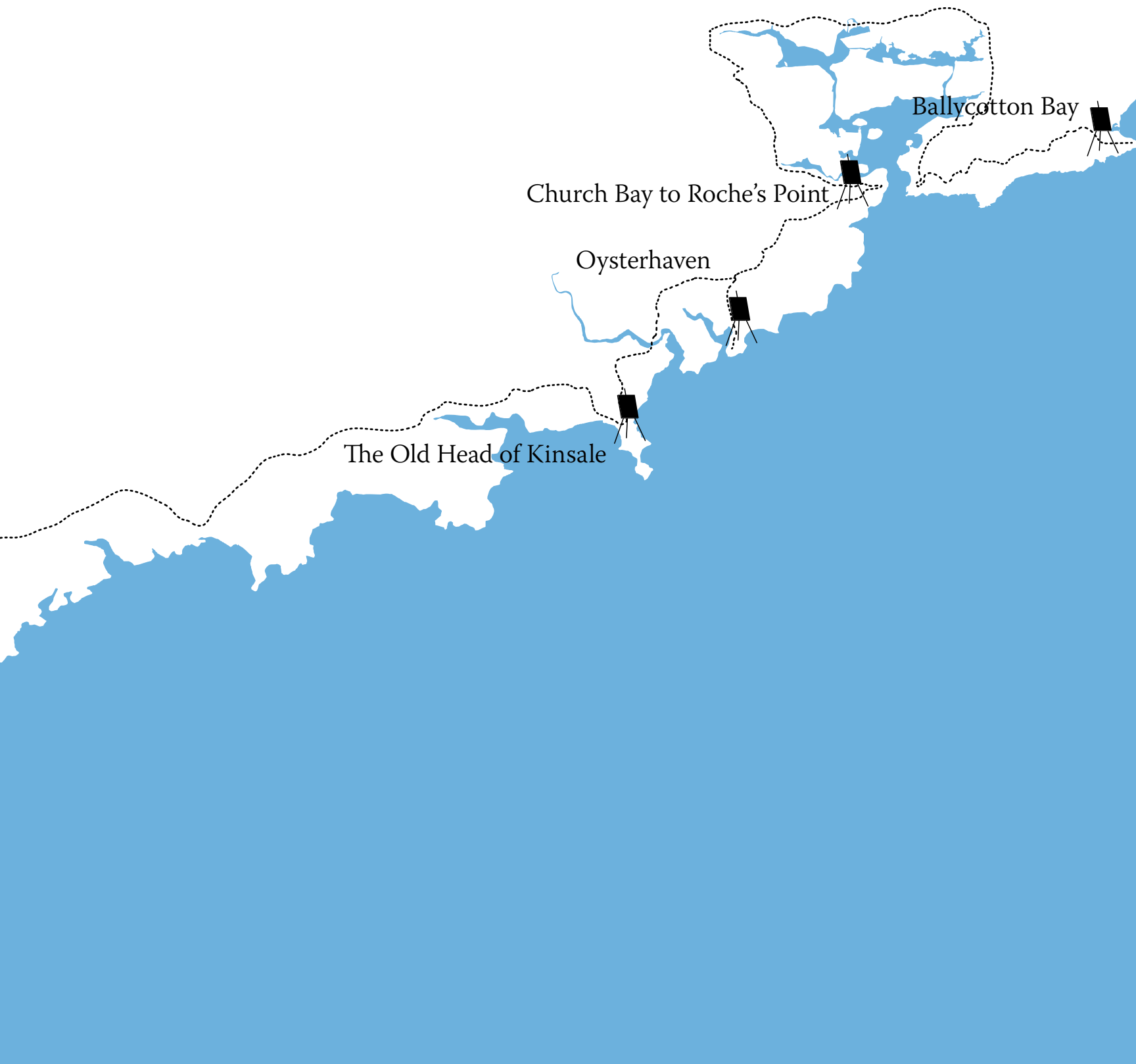
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# The Journey



The Old Head of Kinsale

Oysterhaven

Church Bay to Roche's Point

Ballycotton Bay

# The Paintings

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# Sky and cloud filled with sun

Ballycotton Bay

Acrylic, pastel, ink and pencil on canvas

117x117cm

Calm sea, few people, light almost pushing down on me. I feel restless, but energised, I want to create something new, to show my excitement of being somewhere new. This warm, abandoned bay. Sky and cloud filled with sun.



## Soft light, sea and sand

Ballycotton Bay

Acrylic, pastel, ink and pencil on canvas

71x76cm

Light illuminating the clouds, soft, bright sand with jelly fish everywhere, lonely bay, wind pushing me to my right. I feel like the sun is out just for me.





## Grey sea and yellow

Church Bay to Roche's Point  
Acrylic and pencil on canvas  
81x86cm

Grey and cloudy, light forcing its way through, dark purples and reds in the rocks.





# Cool water and red rocks

Church Bay to Roche's Point  
Acrylic and pencil on canvas  
81x86cm

Blue pebbles, distant sun, cool water, tide coming in, wet feet.



## Distant lighthouse

Oysterbed Bay to the Old Head of Kinsale

Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas

117x117cm

Searching for the right position to see The Old Head, straw bales surround me, sparkling sea, painting continually changing, frustrating to the point of me throwing it around, feeling inspiration from marks left by straw.





## Changing blues and yellow fields

The Old Head of Kinsale, Kinsale Harbour to the right  
Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas board  
30x38cm

First painting in Ireland, sun hitting the long grass, dark shadowy cliffs, white specks of sea gulls, incredible changing blues, golfers' cries behind me.



## Perfect blend

The Old Head of Kinsale looking towards Galley Head  
Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas board  
30x38cm

Blinding light on the water, a hint of the sun set to come, alone on the path,  
divers down below, wind-blown grasses and drifting clouds, perfect blend of  
rain, light, cloud, wind and sea.





## Light hitting the green

The Chimney Stack from the Old Head of Kinsale

Acrylic and pencil on canvas board

30x38cm

Light hitting the green, dramatic headland, body of the cliffs under the water,  
warm fields, end of the day.





## Seagulls and sun

Hole Open Bay, The Old Head of Kinsale and the Chimney Stack

Acrylic and pencil on canvas

61x81cm

Gulls swooping over me, turquoise waters, cliff shadows, distant sea light,  
immense feeling of height.





## Turquoise cove, wind and sun light

Courtmacsherry Bay towards Galley Head, from The Old Head of Kinsale  
Acrylic, charcoal pencil and pastel on canvas  
81x86cm

Cloud moving, sun breaking through, orange cliff face, curving land, boulders,  
light gliding over the sea.





# Misty light over Hungry Hill

Big Point looking down Bantry Bay, Beara Peninsula

Acrylic and pencil on canvas

81x86cm

A quick stop by the side of the road to catch the incredible light show. Vivid blue sky, misty light over Hungry Hill, silhouetted trees, peach clouds and distant rain, red and purple heather, angry ants biting my legs.













# Light rays

Hungry Hill, Beara

Acrylic on canvas board

30x38cm

Quickly trying to capture the rays before the rain.









## Deep blue sea

Buddhist Retreat, Drumsharra Point, Bere Island to right  
Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas  
81x86cm

Choppy waters, surf on rocks, headland stretching away,  
deep blue sea, layers of cloud.



## Little Islands

Loughawnagallig, Beara, looking across to Sneem  
Acrylic and pencil on canvas board  
30x38cm

Amazing swirling clouds over the water, distant mountains,  
feeling inspired by the forms of islands.







## Distant mountain light

Ardgroom Harbour, Beara, towards Sneem

Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas

81x86cm

I take a while to decide on the right place to paint from, but I know I want to get close to the water and capture Kenmare River. I also want to get closer to the mountains and study the light moving over their peaks. Angled rain and sun light, bright green seaweed.









# Healy Pass

Healy Pass towards Glanmore Lake  
Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas  
81x86cm

I love the feeling of space, looking across to the Iveragh peninsula. Fast moving clouds, light picking up the colours in the fields. Very windy climb to my location. A strong sense of connecting with the landscape around me.





## Wind and hard rain, light winning

Over looking Kenmare Bay and the Beara Peninsula from Blackwater,  
Rossmore Island behind the trees  
Acrylic and pencil on canvas  
81x86cm

I started this painting, but had to leave due to the rain. I returned to the same place and continued the painting a week later – a rare occurrence.

It is again very wet and slippery on the rocks and I lose the painting several times down the bank. The light is being absorbed and reflected by the clouds. There is a powerful purple glow with the water and clouds merging into one.





# Emerging hills

Oysterbed Pier, Sneem

Acrylic and pencil on canvas board

30x38cm

Distant hills disappearing and reappearing, pine trees and blue river, purple heather. Light picking up the colours in the flowers, in contrast to the backdrop of grey.











## Light moving across the water

The road to Caherdaniel looking over at Beara Peninsula

Acrylic on canvas board

30x38cm

Simple, abstract shapes, dark Beara, subdued water. I feel relaxed observing the light moving across the water.







# Sunset winning through

Caherkeen looking at Lamb's Head and Islands

Acrylic and pencil on canvas

117x117cm

I can feel the sunset behind the cloud, drizzle and mist. I wait, hoping, for the light to come; and suddenly the moment comes. I put all of my energy into it, battling with paint, wind and rain, to capture the moment of beauty. The rain becomes part of the painting as I desperately drag it back to the van before it is washed away. Just as quickly as it appeared, the light is gone and storm clouds move in.



## Spray, sun and colour

To the right of White Strand looking towards Beara  
Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas  
81x86cm

I follow the sun along the waters' edge, wanting to capture the bright reflective light and fast moving clouds. It is mid morning and although the beach is empty, I feel like getting as close to the expanse of water as possible, so I can feel the sea spray and enjoy the sun and colours.











## Clear morning light

Rath Strand over to Beara

Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas

81x86cm

Rain passing by in front of me, bright sky, rocky silhouettes. Distant hills discovered days before across the water and big white clouds. Clear morning light.











## The mist lifts for a second

Above Morgan's Island out towards Lamb's Head

Acrylic on canvas

90x160cm

Low mist and fog all around me, rough swell and incoming sea rain, light blue greens, the mist lifts for a second as light appears on the horizon, I feel alive, but damp. I trust my instincts and stop before it becomes over worked.





## Cloud covered island and incoming waves

Above Green Islands looking across to Abbey Island  
covered by sea cloud, Derrynane Bay  
Acrylic on canvas  
62x122cm

Light fighting through to the left of me, strong colours in the gorse, heather and  
lichen on the rocks, shells on the sand and incoming waves, mist rolling away.





## Distant mist covered islands

Derrynane Bay to Scariff Island and Abbey Island

Acrylic and pencil on canvas

46x76cm

Strong evening glow and dark clouds, pale almost see-through water, small waves, islands everywhere you look. Rich orange colours in the sand. Far away mist bleaches Scariff and Deenish Islands.



## Sun's haze

To the right of Derrynane Bay looking over to Eagle hill

Acrylic and pencil on canvas board

30x38cm

A sunny, far-off haze and interesting cloud formations. I begin to build up soft layers of paint, then wash them off with lots of water. Throwing the painting into the sea again and again, then adding more paint with sand creeping its way in and sticking. The sun coming and going.





## Islands and turquoise coves

Below Beenarourke, above Coosnagower and Derrynane Bay,  
across to The Beara Peninsula  
Acrylic, pastel and pencil on canvas  
117x117cm

Sun high in the sky, islands and turquoise coves. A soft, warm wind and  
seeing as far as the eye can see.











## Wind in the trees, yellow light and clouds

Across Lough Currane to Waterville

Acrylic and pencil on canvas board

30x38cm

I feel safe with trees surrounding me, looking across to Lough Currane and out to sea. The light is turning the field in front of me yellow and the distant mountains pale blue. The wind is creating a strong, but enjoyable sound through the trees.











## Golden light and pale pink clouds

On top of Valentia Island looking down on Beginish Island and Valentia Harbour

Acrylic and graphite on canvas board

30x38cm

Sunset nearing, heavy pale pink clouds covering the mountain peaks, powerful golden light on the fields, a small piece of blue sky holds its own.





