



## All Truths Are Easy

Mary Donnelly

*Art is the queen of all sciences communicating knowledge to all generations of the world.*

Leonardo da Vinci

Artists and scientists have a common desire: to return to the light of the first morning; to discover the divine code. As an artist, I set about entering this mysterious reality during the process of making art; here I encounter new worlds of comprehension, discovering the creative potential in every moment. In these encounters, like the poet whose imagination exists in the space between the words, my perceptions and sensitivities are present in a space beyond the realm of the physical senses and intellect, a place where non-language exists, the space between the atoms.

*One cannot really say it, one can only paint it.* Barnett Newman

The creative desire to make art, to make something visible, to discover a reality by revealing what lies beneath the layers of paint and image, is a mysterious process. This is a power that manifests through the practice of painting and does not come from the physical world. As a landscape painter, I develop my creative sensitivities and perceptions by returning again and again to discover truth and beauty through my subject matter, the Connemara landscape. This sublime landscape, the physical manifestation of the primary creative force, is essential for my creative process.

A significant aspect of my artistic process is living within this landscape. This allows me to be open, to see and perceive, with intense observation of nature and light. There is purity of light in Connemara which is filled with both luminosity and darkness, carrying the story of the stars. Daily engagement over the years with my materials of paint and mixed media has allowed me to develop creative fluency. This, together with my immersion in the landscape, deepens my intuition to become aware of the myriad of creative possibilities. I paint in layers. Uncovering a truth that is lying below the surface, I unearth – by sanding and cutting – what is otherwise hidden.

With each encountering of new creative potentials and invisible territories, there is more evidence to pursue, more questions to be answered, more insights derived, and more intimate, invisible connections made. As an artist, I work to reach the immeasurable: that which cannot be spoken of. Through my technique of making marks, texture, line, and paint, invisible spaces are revealed. The use of wire, as fence or boundary, places the viewer as the observer and perceiver of realities contained within the canvas.

In these new territories come new visual discoveries. The discovery I am looking for, however, is an inner path that will give me intuitive insights into comprehending aspects of the creative mysteries. This is similar to the physicist who dreams of finding the entirety of creation coming to existence in a mathematical equation. The elusive ghost particle and the electron changing on observation resemble the creative potentials in painting. These become revealed by an unintentional observation rather than by direct observation. It is as if the painting's unawareness of being observed reveals something of itself.

*Rain over Renvyle* 2017 detail  
Mixed media on canvas and board with wire. 80 x 80 cm.



*Light of the Night Stars* 2017  
Mixed media on canvas and board with wire. 40 x 40 cm.



*Standing within this Otherness* 2017  
Mixed media on canvas and board with wire. 50 x 50 cm.

These hidden creative possibilities are like the metaphysical forces behind the visible world recognised by quantum physics. There is movement in the invisible realm – movement that works in a nonlinear, zigzag manner, solving problems and bringing harmony.

The artist, like the scientist, experiences moments of disappointment, uncertainty, and defeat. Discarded creative decisions, hidden underneath layers of paint, are barely exposed by repeatedly sanding down and building up again and again with paint and texture. This reveals the creative history of the painting, the physical act of trying to find a way into the elusive universes of space-time and energy contained in the mysterious field that lies behind all levels of energy and matter

Finding order out of chaos, the invisible realm comes into matter. The first gesture, making a mark in the void of empty space contained in the canvas, is similar to the composer laying the first note into silence. This first mark and first note bring a creative charge, and so begins the process of creating something out of nothing:

Light of the first morning comes in on the Darkness.

The artist places the first mark in the visual void, and the composer lays the first note in the silence. But who or what placed the first mark, or played the first note in the universal void and ignited the creative charge which caused the Big Bang?

In Aboriginal cosmology, writes Robert Lawlor, 'Seeds contain forms and worlds yet to germinate; the roots, leaves, and flowers of the entire plant are invisibly enclosed in the seed to primordial patterns that are laid down in the very beginning.' The tree is the dreaming of the seed, the creative potential contained within. Creative potentials in the arts come into being through the same metaphysical powers behind the Light of the first morning.

The painting is the dreaming of the artist, the musical score the dreaming of the composer, the poem the dreaming of the poet. There is a dream dreaming us, but who is dreaming the dream?

*All truths are easy to understand once they are discovered; the point is to discover them.*

Galileo Galilei

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### III

#### *Ave Maria*

*Annunciation frieze, Fountains Abbey*

Someone  
 chiselled off  
 the features  
 of your face  
 as delicately  
 as a sculptor  
 wanting to  
 explore  
 the process  
 of creation,  
 to trace  
 the source  
 of truth or beauty  
 below the detail  
 to base stone,  
*Urgrund*,  
 and finding  
 in the oval  
 of nothingness,  
 a certain peace  
 and stillness  
 like an astronomer  
 gazing at  
 the moon  
 and resting on  
 the shadow  
 of Mare  
 Tranquillitatis.

Ave Maria by James Harpur *The White Silhouette* Carcanet 2018