OLIVIER CORNET GALLERY

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‘Tales of Human Follies’

6 November 2026 -
6 December 2026

ARTISTS’ STATEMENTS

GALLERY COPY

Dublin Gallery Weekend

in association with ADDLESHAW GODDARD

05 — 08 Nov 2026

1. **Hugh Cummins,** *Rope Dancer 1 to 5*, Sycamore dyed different colours, varied sizes.

"In studying Jonathan Swift's important work of satire in Gulliver's Travels, I encountered the numerous flaws of various civilisations, the elaborate critique of human nature, societal flaws and norms, and of personal relationships.
I was particularly struck by the number of meetings Gulliver had with leaders/royalty, the interactions with their cultures, and their disparate complicated responses to living together.
Although Gulliver does find a friend in each of his travels - in general the tone of the work is often bleak and necessarily very detailed.
In response, artistically, I chose to highlight the very limited mentions of colour – drawing on the first encounters with the King of Lilliput.
The Emperor, ... Mully Ully Gue, invited Gulliver to be diverted with "Rope-dancers performing in Country Fairs with dexterity and magnificence". In addition the Emperor desired "...I would stand like a colossus, with my legs as far asunder as I conveniently could; he then commanded his general ..... to draw up the troops in close order, and march them under me; the foot by twenty-four in a breast, and the horses by sixteen, with drums beating, colours flying...."
Highlighting colours with newly explored designs, containing movement and pattern, offers a distinct and memorable contrast."

Hugh Cummins

2. **Miriam McConnon,** *Hunting the Wounded*, oil on canvas (40x40cm).

Miriam Mc Connon's painting Hunting the Wounded connects to the themes of forced displacement and occupation, that are so prevalent in Johnathon Swift's Gulliver's Travels.
In this artwork, Miriam references the archeological documentation of war through the image of displaced Palestinian families etched onto the side of an ancient ceramic pot. History is more often narrated through a series of battles, won and lost. Miriam McConnon's work aims to document and to archive for future generations this overlooked side of this war. To preserve the narrative of the resilience of the domestic living space and its function as a gate keeper of everyday security. It is a space that has to be constantly re-created during the battle to survive war and occupation. The work references how the scars of colonization remain embedded in the land and as in Swift's novel, she examines the hypocrisy of its legacy.

3. **Kelly Ratchford,** *The RedHat-ians - A Fealty of Fools*, stained glass, clear glass, solder and fishing line (dimensions vary).

“The learned among them confess the absurdity of this doctrine, but the practice still continues, in compliance with vulgar.” Gulliver’s Travels, Jonathan Swift, Part 1, “A Voyage to Lilliput”, Chapter 6, 1726

Swift’s satire includes a tale of civil war breaking out when the people of Lilliput fight over which end of an egg must be broken. The Big-Endians die for their cause and the Little-Endians submit to the ludicrous.

Three hundred years later, we have the RedHat-ians, a fealty of fools hysterically defending a convicted criminal and ill-equipped President. The President has no clothes. He is nothing but a red hat.

The small RedHat-ians stay small and the big RedHat-ians grow wealthier and more powerful - caught in a pyramid scheme of sorts. Or perhaps it’s just a series of distracting ornaments shining in the chaos.

Kelly Ratchford

4. **Colin Eaton,** *Spirelíne*, paper-cut, collage mixed media (80x27cm).

"When I think of Gulliver's Travels, I think of scale. Disparities of scale. Contrasts of scale. I think of Le Corbusiers Modulor. His anthropometric scale of proportions created some 220 years later linking the human body dimensions with architecture.
Swifts 1726 satirical prose novel concerns the intrepid traveller Lemuel Gulliver. In Lilliput, he encountered tiny people concerned with petty political disputes. In Brobdingnag, he himself is a tiny man surrounded by giants who criticise European customs. In Laputa, he encounters impractical intellectuals disconnected from reality. In Houyhnhnms he encounters rational horses living amongst savage human-like creatures called Yahoos.
Recontextualizing to the herein. To the proximate. I thought of Dublin 1, close to the gallery. I thought of O'Connell Street. It's comparative vastness of scale. It's most recent significant intervention, The Spire.
An amalgamation of two words. Spire and line. The piece represents the Spire in Dublins O'Connell Street. Líne from the Irish meaning line, as in skyline and also as a reference to the diagrammatic ostensible simplicity of the Spire being rather like a single line itself.

An international competition was launched in 1998 to replace what was once Nelsons Pillar. The brief called for 'a vertical emphasis, an elegant structure of 21st century contemporary design which shall relate to the quality and scale of O'Connell Street as represented by the late 18th and early 20th century architecture'. London based architect Ian Ritchie won the competition and late Frank McDonald, of The Irish Times, (who incidentally opened the Cycle Through The Rages exhibition at the Olivier Cornet Gallery in 2019), praised the winning design noting that 'this sensational structure will redefine the city centre and people's perceptions of where that is, quite apart from providing Dublin with a new icon'.
An element of my art practice which is a constant is the reappropriation of materials. Indeed I often find that my offcuts and 'waste', lying on the studio floor catch my eye and suggest a new life as part of a new work. Speaking of reappropriation and indeed irony. If there was an irony in the political story of the replacement of Nelsons Pillar with the Spire, it is perhaps that Nelson's Pillar was the work of Dublin-based architect Francis Johnston, while its replacement, the Spire was designed by London based Ian Ritchie. Some might say that the imperial monument which met its fate in 1966 could be said to be more Irish than its replacement. I however see it as a collage of history and magnificent melting pot of cultures and values. A palimpsest.

My piece, in its dimensions and proportions alludes to that sense of verticality. It also takes reference from Swifts Lilliput. The contrasts between the tiny people and Gulliver.

I typically work at a smaller scale. Necessitated in part by my studio size. In this piece the spire itself is placed centre composition and uses handpainted papers to evoke its reflective quality. That reflective quality is also reflected, as it were on the horizontal. Although monumental and tall the spire doesn't cast an overbearing shadow. Rather it ignites and illuminates all around it. In homage to that I created a shadow, or reflection by placing an assemblage of eyes on the ground, that material being taken from local magazines. Others from international publications, in the spirit of multiculturalism, inclusivity and welcoming.
But is also speaks of the disparity in scale. When we walk along O'Connell street we feel small compared to the vast width of the street. Mere Lilliputians.

Although noble in its aspiration, the idea of paving that section of O'Connell Street opposite the GPO and the Spire in the manner of a piazza – an outdoor livingroom sits somewhat incongruously with its overriding function as a thoroughfare for cars and buses. But that may change.

My response to that surface decoration is to cover O'Connell Street in the words of Flan O'Brien. From his book, The Third Policeman. The reason for the choice of text. Apart from the fact that I enjoy the book and the parallels with my collage practice whereby through years of cycling his bicycle he becomes his bike, or indeed his bike becomes him. Intertwined. There is also another interesting parallel whereby Mícheál Ó Núalláin, the brother of Myles na gCopaleen/Flann O'Brien began a court action to attempt to halt the Spire project. He claimed it would reduce O'Connell Street to 'an absurd Lilliputian dimension'. He even proposed going forward as a candidate for the Dáil using the motto 'Stop the Spike'! He didn't!
Happy Anniversary to Lilliputian Island."

Colin Eaton

5. **Colin Eaton,** *I think it's over he said - it's the beginning*, paper-cut, collage mixed media (80x27cm).

"Again, thinking of Gulliver's Travels, I think of scale. Disparities of scale. Contrasts of scale. I think of Le Corbusier's Modulor. His anthropometric scale of proportions created some 220 years later linking the human body dimensions with architecture.
Swifts 1726 satirical prose novel concerns the intrepid traveller, Lemuel Gulliver. In Lilliput, he encountered tiny people concerned with petty political disputes. In Brobdingnag, he himself is a tiny man surrounded by giants who criticise European customs. In Laputa, he encounters impractical intellectuals disconnected from reality. In Houyhnhnms he encounters rational horses living amongst savage human-like creatures called Yahoos.
One of the most iconic Dublin emblems in terms of scale. A heroic scale indeed is The Poolbeg Chimneys. I didn't want to simply represent them as they stand. I decided upon a certain abstraction of the elements which would be layered reflecting the many multifaceted relationships and memories Dubliners and those of us who came to live in or visit Dublin have with these wonderful idiosyncratic chimneys.

My chosen title, 'Is it over yet?', refers to the uncertain fate the chimneys suffered for years. Slated for demolition by the Electricity Supply Board, much to the chagrin of many, so they could 'decontaminate' and sell as an 'unencumbered' site for development the Poolbeg Chimneys were eventually placed on the Record of Protected Structures, (making them listed buildings – or structures!) in July 2014! 'Is it over yet?'. No! Thankfully 'It's only the beginning', of a whole new lease of life for the iconic chimneys.

The buildings around the chimneys and their shadows are abstracted somewhat. I applied some pages of words and images taken from old Irish text books. Evoking memories of past times. Of pastimes. Of memories walking along East Wall. Of associations with the chimneys and their omnipresence.
Ostensibly static and orthogonal, on further investigation the chimneys and their relationship to their surroundings display a spatial dynamism with a positive tension between the still and the kinetic, filtering volumes and imparting corresponding spatial and emotive experiences.

There is a certain stillness to the chimneys. A permanence. While all around clouds move. The wind and rain encircles them. Birds dance around these striped totemic emblems. I wanted to convey a sense of that movement so towards the top of the chimneys I created a cacophony. Birds circling. It could also be flashes of the warning lights. The words within describing their fate – and future. There is a further avian, (albeit in nomenclature) connection because, Poolbeg is situated adjacent to the now-decommissioned Pigeon House generating station, where electricity was first generated in 1903 also with the distinction of being the first in the world to generate three phase power.

The Pigeon House was previously a military barracks and the officers accommodation building still exists. It was used for power generation until it was decommissioned in 1976, and the Poolbeg plant is still known locally as the Pigeon House.

In their physicality and monumentality they are certainly long lasting, particularly now given their listed status. But also in the memory.
The chimneys, being a metaphor for life. ‘I think it’s over he said - it’s the beginning’. Is that a statement or a question? I think it’s over. He said it’s the beginning. A statement. Of hope in a time of uncertainty.
Are we in Lilliput?, where the tiny people are concerned with petty political disputes and Gulliver looms large. Are we in Brobdingnag?, where Gulliver himself is a tiny man surrounded by giants. The contrasts in scale are undeniable."

Colin Eaton

6. **Mary A. Fitzgerald,** *The Stretch*, acrylic on canvas (100x120cm).

Scale and Perspective — ‘Gulliver’s Travels’
Brobdingnag - A fictional land populated by giants

"In recent years my work has moved from small format paintings to large scale work. ‘Stretch’ is the largest painting I have made to date. For DGW we are responding to ideas based on Johnathan Swifts ‘Gulliver’s Travels. The idea of working with scale relationships and the shifts in perspectives within a composition is the thematic which underpins the work. I am interested in the idea of imagining new worlds, in open-ended narratives, that a viewer, or reader completes the story.

I am aware of how a shift in colour and placement of marks impacts the overall. The image is always in flux and at the edge of resolve. As a painter, I work instinctively and in a haptic manner, paintings are evolved in progressive manner, undertaking a series of incremental decisions. Images emerge which bounce between opaque abstractions and recognizable forms.

My vocabulary of iconography originates in the everyday; an eclectic gathering of images, daily random observations entangled with memory and recall. These ‘new realities’ with their combination of personal narrative, of momentary and fleeting images, are brought together, transformed and communicated through the process of painting.

The work suggests new places and objects, while also incorporating personal sensation and experience. Playing with perceptions of physical and emotional space, the work questions the extent of what we can ever truly know, see or feel. The process of revealing and concealing the narrative, of building up and scraping back, creates a history and archaeology of my daily travels and painterly process within each piece. Each work enjoys both a tangible and a subliminal existence. The spaces and silences created in- between remain for the observer to explore."

Mary A. Fitzgerald

7. **Yanny Petters,** *Extracting Sunbeams from Cucumber, January to December, Dawn to Dusk*, watercolour and monoprint (70x50cm).

"Gulliver goes to the Grand Academy of Lagado in 1706 to see what experiments the scientists are working on. One 'projector' is extracting sunbeams from cucumbers with the purpose of preserving them to warm the Governor's garden at a reasonable cost. He begs Gulliver for a donation of funds to continue his work for a further eight years. Swift satirises the Royal Society which in his view encouraged absurd and useless experiments detached from human needs that didn't change the divide between rich and poor.

My piece is based on the Sunbeams from Cucumbers experiment, and highlights our constant tweaking of nature. Now we have ended up with too few varieties of vegetables to sustain us, even though we've spent years and millions on 'improving' on nature. It's still just a few 'Governors' who benefit."

Yanny Petters

8. **David Fox,** *Last House Keem Bay*, oil on board (51x37cm).

"For my response to the theme I chose: Travel as Estrangement — an abandoned structure isolated within an overwhelming landscape, continuing my ongoing exploration of derelict buildings and the changing relationship between human habitation and the Irish landscape.
An oil painting depicting an empty beach scene at Keem Bay on Achill Island. The building in the foreground been known famously for being featured in the movie Banshees of Inisherin."

David Fox

9. **Eoin Mac Lochlainn,** *Glubbdubdrib*, watercolour and wood carving on birch panel (30x30cm).

10. **Eoin Mac Lochlainn,** *Laputa island*, watercolour and wood carving on birch panel (30x30cm).

11. **Eoin Mac Lochlainn,** *Blefuscu*, watercolour and wood carving on birch panel (30x30cm).

"Lilliput, Blefuscu, Laputa, Glubbdubdrib, Luggnagg – these were some of the fantastical places that Gulliver visited on his journeys across the world. I liked the idea of islands as a source of wonder and perhaps, contrivance - so I decided to create a new series of works on this theme. In the beginning I was painting with watercolour on birch plywood but when I began to carve into the wood, I felt that the multiple layers in the plywood reflected the many layers - the political allegory, the philosophical and cultural critique etc - in Jonathan Swift's satirical novel."

Eoin Mac Lochlainn

12. **Daniel Lipstein,** *Swift, a Turn to the Unconscious (triptych)*, oil and gold leaf on panel (46x20cm).

"Marking the 300th anniversary of Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, my vertical triptych painting 'Swift, a Turn to the Unconscious', oil and gold leaf on panel, focuses on an inward journey, as a type of ascension rooted in sacrifice, of the protagonist, painted as one of my 'Moods' after myself, the artist.

Swift the artist, as Gulliver in the book, (Lemuel Gulliver was the pseudonym of the writer when the book titled, 'Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World. In Four Parts', was first published, and later it was named Gulliver's Travels), goes through massive transformations during his four journeys.

I took the oceanic environs of the journeys as the theatre of the unconscious that provides the background to everything that takes place through the four parts of the book. And because the unconscious became conscious of itself as being the unconscious only in the twentieth century, I projected a so-called modern soul onto the strata of Swift's writing by painting myself there in the middle of that ocean.

Gulliver is imprisoned by petty dwarf conniving politics in Lilliput kingdom, then he is utterly humiliated by becoming a dwarf pet toy under the care of a child giantess, and then he has to tolerate the ridiculous over-intellectualised logic of the scientists of Laputa whose knowledge is severed from real life experiences and practices just like their island is disconnected from the surface of the earth. Eventually in the land of the sublime horse-like creatures the Houyhnhnms he realizes that he is no more than a sophisticated brute, one of those human-like Yahoos he despises and abhors. Finally, as he is back in England, he is unable to tolerate the presence of humans who resemble those Yahoos and he can only be in a stable in the company of horses with whom he communicates.

My painting focuses on the beginning of Gulliver's travels and on the end where my 'alter ego' of my projected higher self onto the animistic sublime purity is the fish or the shark instead of Swift's horses, and all that happens in between is expressed through many insights and realisations done by my stream of consciousness style of writing in the surfaces of the oil paint in the oceanic body over gold leaf.

The bleak or claustrophobic outlook on life in the book is resembled by the condition of the artist in my painting sprawled in a horizontal crucified position and fastened by little Lilliput-like demons to the bottom of the ocean, aware that these resemble his own inward restrictions and limitations, the artist knows that the cross like ladder is also a way upwards towards the light or enlightenment above where the giant shark is.

The shark in spite of its frightening presence is a resemblance of a sublime purity similar to the unfathomable purity of the Houyhnhnms horses of Gulliver's last journey but here in order to come into his own true sublime nature the Yahoo-like artist has to study and understand the true nature of the prehistorical fish that contains the yet unknown data of life on earth. In my painting the Swiftian bleakness is redeemable through the vertical journey of understanding, this ascension inevitably includes sacrifices until the artist's tightly held falsehoods evaporate and disappear. In the concrete reality of my life as a painter and printmaker this happens through the ongoing daily work of my practice.

My intaglio textural expressions come to the fore in this painting in the form of these scratch marks continuous writing in paint that reveal the gold leaf beneath. In this writing I express many ideas and connotations inspired by the writing of Jonathan swift. For example, I go into a comparison dear to my heart with the philosopher-artist Friedrich Nietzsche who was believed to heartily embrace a horse that had been cruelly beaten by a human, he talked to the horse with great compassion, and then his mind collapsed. Swift suggests such mythical end to his life embracing horses and rejecting the unbearable vices of human Yahoos. As I write to my heart's content inside the painting I elaborate on this and also on other insights about the true lives of fish, and what is the great animistic 'alter ego' of an artist, his or her way of shapeshifting to become a certain animal, in a parallel mirror-like life, perhaps not dissimilar to the way Freud, Lacan and other thinkers, who used the unconscious as a viable arena of purification and redemption, could or would have seen it.

Swift's Houyhnhnms Horse-like immaculate creatures communicate by a certain language vocally using words while my fish communicate silently by deep gazes with their eyes and expression of faces, the depiction of which is suitable for a painter and printmaker.

This composition came up in my imagination almost in its entirety as soon as I heard of the project and I remember that the position of the artist as Christ on the cross was very important to me. The viewer can see in her or his way whatever is in this painting and my explanation is the way I see it. Constructing a visual composition after a voluminous text is a matter of instinct, the painting should feel good and make sense visually, and what I say about it afterwards is an effort to explain, if only to myself, the inward logic of the vision, while not disturbing the visual-textural plot."

Daniel Lipstein

13. **Vicky Smith,** *Saoirse ag caitheamh an gúna bándearg i nDún na nGall, Saoirse wearing a pink dress in Donegal*, acrylic on panel (40.6x30.5cm).

Vicky Smith's painting of domestic scenes encapsulate moments of motherhood,intimacy and the everyday informed by memories of her childhood. Her autobiographical paintings of family speak to the experience of tenderness and relationships. Smith's recent paintings collate a number of personal scenes from memory and family photographs. The re-enactments, captured and staged photos add visual depth and an inventive exploration of the medium of paint. Patterned wall paper, duvets, dressing gowns, folds of clothes, baby-gro's and dresses are personal and full of inherited histories, the artist's own childhood and her experience as a mother with a young daughter. The paintings possess a documentary quality that is loaded with personal meaning.

For Tales of Human Follies—a group exhibition responding to the 300th anniversary of Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels—artists present a series of works that hint at the distorted mirrors held up to human vanity, reason, politics, and self-regard, all disguised within a traveller's tale.

Smith's painting, Saoirse ag chaitheamh an gúna bándearg i Dún na Gall, Saoirse wearing a pink dress in Donegal, stages an intimate captured moment just after the artist's young daughter has dressed for her cousin's confirmation in Donegal. Waiting comfortably in her own body on the hotel bed, she prepares to go to the church and celebrate with her older cousins. Saoirse bought the bright pink ruffle dress independently and quickly during a shopping trip to town the previous weekend. Her pose is grand yet innocent, filled with anticipation for the family day ahead and her future as a young child living with her family in Ireland.

14. **Sheila Naughton,** *Gulliver's Travels I (diptych)*, collage of painted papers (78x58cm).

26. **Sheila Naughton,** *Gulliver's Travels II*, collage of painted papers (57x45cm).

"I took a theme of disassociation and disconnectedness as representing an aspect of "Gulliver's Travels".
Jonathon Swift, the writer of "Gulliver's Travels" suffered from Ménière's disease, the symptoms of which are dizziness, vertigo and increasing deafness. This would have caused a growing sense of isolation for him and may have been why he ultimately becomes alienated and detached from society, despite having some positive experiences and kindness shown to him on his travels. I focussed on the idea of travels in the mind, as the book is more about his imagination and the stories he invents to comment on the society in which he lived than on any literal travels.
I chose to work with painted collage as the life of Jonathan Swift seems to me to be like a collage of disparate elements. The dark indigo blues suggest long voyages by night in his dreams and also a mindset which focussed on the darker aspects of human nature. The fragmented shapes represent how he perceived his experiences of the imaginary countries and cultures he found himself in."

Sheila Naughton

15. **Annika Berglund,** *Entanglements ; Air*, Wet felted Marino wool with silk and Tencel fibre and cotton thread (70x50cm).

17. **Annika Berglund,** *Entanglements ; Fire*, Wet felted Marino wool with silk and Tencel fibre and cotton thread (70x50cm).

18. **Annika Berglund,** *Entanglements ; Earth*, Wet felted Marino wool with silk and Tencel fibre and cotton thread (70x50cm).

25. **Annika Berglund,** *Entanglements ; Water*, Wet felted Marino wool with silk and Tencel fibre and cotton thread (70x50cm).

"One image immediately comes to me when thinking of Gulliver's Travels. It is the scene where he wakes up on the beach in Lilliput immobilised by myriads of thin ropes. A giant threat brought down by a community working together.
It made a strong impression on me already as a child.
The tying together of things, people, events is a recurring theme in my work.
Threads that bind and support, hold a strong personal meaning for me. Networks and personal, familial, and professional ties connect us, sustain and hold us up, but in some ways it can also constrain."

Annika Berglund

16. **Yanny Petters,** *Quercus Gulliverii*, pen and watercolour (16x28cm).

"Europeans who voyaged the world in the 18th Century in search of adventure brought back many plant specimens as part of a great urge to discover the world. Captain James Cook (1728 – 1797) and the botanist Joseph Banks (1743 - 1820) sailed on HMS The Endeavour, venturing into the unknown and putting their mark on the world's discoveries. They named many plants after themselves, and through Carl Linnaeus' (1707 – 1778) plant nomenclature we see these and many other Europeans immortalized. Was this a selfish and egotistical urge? It's still a common practice today.
In Swift's Gulliver's Travels we see Gulliver compare Europe with the places he ends up in, often presuming that all things European are better than these Kingdoms.
I have been inspired to research how plant illustration would have looked and been used in the early 1700s based on the works that were reference material through the 16th century to the 19th century.
I imagine the plants that Gulliver describes in Lilliput, using inspiration from old master artists and engravers Leonhart Fuchs (1501 – 1566) and Sigmund Zwinger (1744 – 1813) to illustrate an Oak tree in proportion to Gulliver from his description of it being about seven feet high. I have included a silhouette of Gulliver in a similar way to which modern illustrations of trees often show a silhouette of a man beside the tree for scale.
Just as the discoverers of the 18th Century named the plants they found after the Genus, the place they found it and themselves, I have named the illustration after Lilliput and Gulliver. Quercus petraea is the genus Sessile Oak, and the variety is named after Gulliver. The illustration is as it might have been seen in a contemporary illustration.
The undercurrent to the work is to show how Europeans presumed to have discovered the world, and their way of claiming ownership and control over nature."

Yanny Petters

19. **Nickie Hayden,** *I Am Only a Mouth*, mezzotint print (19x17cm), 2000. See Russian Doll image

20. **Nickie Hayden,** *Self Inflated Ego*, mezzotint print (19x17cm), 2000. See Russian Doll image

21. **Nickie Hayden,** *Oh Yes It is*, mezzotint print (19x17cm), 2000. See Russian Doll image

22. **Nickie Hayden,** *Manually Inflated Ego*, mezzotint print (19x17cm), 2000. See Russian Doll image

23. **Nickie Hayden,** *Ascending Stupidity*, mezzotint prints on blank wooden Russian dolls (1.5cm to 20cm in height), finished with acrylic paint and gold leaf, sitting on a rotating plinth (39cm diameter).

"Many years ago, as a member of Black Church Studio, I made work for an exhibition titled The Emperor's Wardrobe, selected by John Rocha. When Olivier Cornet invited me to respond to Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, I saw a direct connection between my earlier work and Swift's satirical exposure of vanity, power and society's hypocrisy.
This new work is an opportunity to revisit what I believed then and what I believe now; Ego is still at the heart of our problems, in that it leads to a lack of morality and empathy, and the desire for money. The endless need to possess more wealth, more status, more power, more women. i.e. Trump's America.
What concerns me is today's failure to understand the lifelong consequences of the misuse and abuse of children, boys, girls and women.
A woman who has been controlled, exploited or valued primarily for her sexuality does not simply walk away when the immediate abuse ends. It can shape how she understands herself for the rest of her life.
In these times, women are still being pilloried for finding a way to survive.
The cycle continues: first she is controlled, then she is condemned for how she responds to that control. She is judged for the inappropriate choices she makes.
We still live in a world where women are judged for their sexuality while men are far more readily excused for theirs. The supposed flaws of these women cannot be separated from the original violence done to them.
Tales of Human Follies/The Emperor’s Wardrobe is my response to that contradiction.
Like Swift, I use satire to expose the absurdity beneath the surface — the vanity, entitlement and brutality of those who believe power gives them ownership of others.
I live in hope that our society can learn to meet victimised women with compassion rather than condemnation and understand the ways in which survival can shape a life.."

Nickie Hayden

24. **Conrad Frankel,** *Looking for water I*, oil on canvas (24x30cm).

27. **Conrad Frankel,** *Looking for water II*, oil on canvas (46x60).

In the book Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift holds a mirror up to human self-importance, folly, and conceit.
When he died in 1745, he bequeathed his estate to found St. Patrick's in Dublin, Ireland's first psychiatric care facility, with the jab 'no nation wanted it so much.' He wasn't a man who held back his opinions, and were he alive, he'd enjoy the comedy of George Carlin and Louis C.K. He was a writer who used irony, exaggeration, and humor to expose and criticize the foolishness and corruption of individuals, politics, and society.
I watched a 1970s Australian documentary on water divining a few years ago. The lead diviner was so confident but ultimately failed the double-blind test that was set up for him. There is no reliable scientific evidence that water divining works better than chance, yet people are passionate about it. I was struck by the diviners priest-like devotion to what ultimately is nonsense, and started making images of it a few years ago.
Satire is not for everyone. But here I doff my cap to Dean Swift, in gratitude for bringing some lightness to an ever darkening world.

Conrad Frankel