



# **WAY OF THE PROCESS PAINTER**

**The Coexistence of Process & Painting  
Within a Wayfaring, Intuitive and Durational Practice**

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## ABSTRACT

This practice-led research project *Way of the Process Painter* explores process and painting as coexistent within a wayfaring, intuitive and durational painting practice, and can be likened to an open-ended journey where the physical artifacts offer points of arrival and departure within the larger duration of my project. I utilize wayfaring, thinking-through-making research methodologies to explore intuitive, playful and ritualistic painting processes as methods through which I attempt to transcend my unique duration and venture intuitively into the virtual realm, coalesce with material energies and draw the potentiality found therein into form. The materiality of painting is revealed to be the vessel through which this process takes place.

Within my paintings I explore a multiplicity of materials and mark-making strategies stretched throughout a unified body of work, these visual and affective links emanate a kinetic rhythm, which bounces between the paintings, involving myself, the viewer and the paintings in an affective spatio-temporal register that has the potential to open fissures between stimulus and response (Bergson), and draw us into a wayfaring spirit of inquiry.

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## **ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP**

I hereby declare that this submission  
is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief,  
it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgments),  
nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award  
of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution  
of higher learning.

Leanne Jackson

To my daughters Bleuenn and Saraia,  
Thank you so much for your unbounded support and encouragement,  
I sincerely value your honest and perceptive critiques

To Andy,  
Thank you for your kindness, wisdom, humour and support

To my Supervisors, Dienneke Jansen and Dale Fitchett,  
Thank you for your steadfast support  
and unwavering criticality

## INTRODUCTION

My practice-led research project *Way of the Process Painter* explores the coexistence of process and painting within my wayfaring, intuitive and durational painting practice. Throughout my research, I adopt a wayfaring, thinking-through-making research methodology.

Joining with the movements of materials and awareness, as they feel their way ahead [...] to join with the movement of making [...] to find ones way, to improvise, is to think through making. In thinking through making [...] nothing is ever finished [...] just a passing moment in a process of making (Ingold, 2013b, October 31).

In this way, my research can be likened to an open-ended, durational journey. Like stepping-stones, my paintings reveal the trace and trajectory of my project-in-process and as a wayfaring researcher I intuitively follow these trails. The “distinction between trail-following or wayfaring and pre-planned navigation is of critical significance” states anthropologist Tim Ingold (2007, p. 15), “the navigator has before him a complete representation of the territory, in the form of a cartographic map, upon which he

can plot a course even before setting out” (Ingold, 2007, p. 15), whereas, the wayfarer intuitively ventures forth thinking “with sensations” (Zagala, 2002, p. 21), aware and reflexive to the terrain in which she travels with a “commitment to being open to new possibilities” (Popke, 2009, p. 82).

I approach academic writing using a wayfaring, thinking-through-writing methodology, and because of that the analysis, evaluations, critical contexts and discussions are intended to unfold for you, as they have done for me, throughout the journey.

The body of this exegesis is defined by being written in two coexisting parts. Part One teases out my process and explores how paintings arise from my methodologies of making. Part Two focuses on what is happening within the paintings as physical objects, how they operate together, how the paintings affect the viewer and how the paintings coexist with my process in a multiplicity of ways. I have left this exegesis open-ended, opting

not to write a conclusion. In this way, the exegesis reflects the durational, wayfaring ethos of my painting practice – one of never being finished, forever in process.

## PART ONE:

In Chapter 1 Narrating the Process, I discuss how and why I use first-person narrative throughout the exegesis.

In Chapter 2 Materiality & the Ritual of Making, I begin to introduce philosopher Henri Bergson's concept of duration, and the intuitive ritual of making that enables me to access durational flows.

Chapter 3 Singing Over the Bones, is concerned with fleshing out the question "what is happening within my making process?" through an analogy that correlates to the virtual and actual realms.

In Chapter 4 Venturing into the Gap, I discuss how I go about accessing and actualizing the virtual through intuitively venturing into Bergson's 'gap'. I introduce 'casualist' and 'provisional' painting, discuss the importance of playful, experimental improvisation and articulate the limitations of the project.

Chapter 5 Laying a Trail evaluates how the paintings seem to visually mimic my process of wayfaring into the virtual realm, incorporating and utilizing the minds 'normal' tendency towards delineation and obfuscation.

In Chapter 6 Bringing Back the Treasure, I explore the difficulties in accessing the virtual and how the process of making a painting is revealed as integral to my ability to venture intuitively into the virtual.

## PART TWO

Chapter 7 Potter Painter explores the correlation between my making process and that of a pottery workshop and how time is a vital part of my process.

In Chapter 8 It's the Little Things & the Big Things, all in One, I position my paintings within a material and philosophical context of coexistent multiplicity and unity.

Chapter 9 Way of the Process Painter, engages with contemporary discussions concerning provisional and casualist

paintings. I explore how my paintings correlate with provisional painting, traditional raku ceramics, wabi-sabi aesthetics and drawing, and I articulate the humble joyfulness suffused within both process and paintings.

Chapter 10 Wayfaring through the Painting, explores wayfaring as a method of making and how a sense of wayfaring is activated within the viewer/painting(s) encounter.

In Chapter 11 An Affective Encounter, I explore how both my process and the viewer's encounter with my paintings are operating in an affective register through an experimental, energetic and rhythmic multiplicity and unity, that draws us into durational flows larger and smaller than ourselves.



# **PART ONE**



Figure 1. Jackson, L. (2015). *The Golden Palimpsest Video Documentation* (detail from still) 10:36mins

## 1 Narrating the Process

Throughout this exegesis I speak in the first person and explore my practice-led research project through narrative. My intention is that through weaving stories around and through my project, my analysis and evaluation of my practice-led research “will attain to fluid concepts, capable of following reality in all its sinuosities and of adopting the very movement of the inward life of things” (Bergson, 1903/n.d, p. 16).

I seek to flesh out process, methodologies, paintings and viewers in animated language in order for us to better visualize how they correlate within the larger affective body of my project, “for the things of this world are their stories, identified not by fixed attributes but by their paths of movement in an unfolding field of relations” (Ingold, 2011, p. 160).

Art writer David Geers (2015) has observed, “narrative and even biography have migrated into process” (para. 5) within the contemporary terrain of provisional painting, but he questions whether it is “enough to know that a given painting was made by

collecting rainwater, [or] using studio detritus” (para. 5). Provisional painters like myself are bringing process out of the back room, not for process to supersede the paintings, but in order to explore the central role process plays in a paintings becoming.

While the viewer may not be acutely aware that *The Golden Palimpsest* was left outside overnight (Figure 1), allowing rain and dew to affect the painting, the viewer *can* see that the painting carries the material traces of its own journey of becoming. In this way, the painting is revealed to be operating as a durational entity, one that contains within it the memory of its own making.

## 2 Materiality & the Ritual of Making

For this project I began painting outside on canvas (Figure 2). Through painting outside, I am attempting to intuitively access and participate with the thriving substrate of material energies around me. Theorist Jane Bennett (2010) “figures materiality as a protean flow of matter-energy and figures the thing as a relatively composed form of that flow” (p. 349).



Figure 2. Jackson, L. (2015). *The Golden Palimpsest Video Documentation* (detail from still) 10:36mins

Within the practical research I undertake, I seek not to master the matter-energy flow of the materials and the site with which I work by imposing form on matter rather, I intend to become masterful in my intention to “render manifest” (Bennett, 2010, p. 358), which is understood as “both to receive and to participate in the shape given to that which is received” (Bennett, 2010, p. 358).

My intention is to create an arena of making that allows the work to come forth, “not *things* made” contends philosopher Henri Bergson (1903/n.d., p. 15), “but things in the making, not self-maintaining *states*, but only changing states” (Bergson, 1903/n.d., p. 15). Bergson calls this “continual flux” (Bergson 1903/n.d., p. 15) duration.

All material energies present at the site of making, including myself, paint, ash, heat, rain and dew weave together in a lively performance that as anthropologist Tim Ingold (2013a) says, “place[s] the maker from the outset as a participant in amongst a world of active materials. These materials are what he has to work with, and in the process of making he ‘joins forces’ with them” (p. 21).

Theorist Simon O’Sullivan (2006) considers “art understood in [a] ritualistic sense, might be said to reconnect us with the world, opening us up to the non-human universe” (p. 50). The ritual O’Sullivan speaks of could be seen to correspond with intuition as a method of making, “by intuition is meant the kind of *intellectual sympathy* by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it” (Bergson 1903/n.d., p. 2).

I experience painting-as-process as a continuous ritualistic state of surging outward into this intuitive territory, where I attempt to consciously expand beyond my own individual duration and ‘intellectually sympathize’ (Bergson, 1903/n.d.) with material energies and the site with which I work, “intuition is [...] the movement by which we emerge from our own duration” says philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1988, p. 33) and bleed into “other durations, above or below us” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 33).

The intuition of our duration, far from leaving us suspended in the void, [...] brings us into contact with a whole continuity of durations which we must try to follow, whether downwards or upwards; in both cases we can extend ourselves indefinitely by an increasingly violent effort, in both cases we transcend ourselves (Bergson 1903/n.d., p. 15).



O’Sullivan (2006) muses that art is “a portal, an ‘access point’, to another world” (p. 50), and this other world is what Deleuze calls the virtual. The virtual, says Deleuze (1988), “*has a reality*; this reality, extended to the whole universe, consists in all the coexisting degrees of expansion (*détente*) and contraction. A gigantic memory, a universal cone in which everything coexists with itself” (p. 100).

The virtual is coexistent with the actual realm (O’Sullivan, 2006). The virtual and actual are enmeshed within each other, and one could consider that the pulsation between the virtual and actual realms - the continuous and creative process of the actualization of the virtual is the momentum of duration.

### 3 Singing Over the Bones

The archetypal “old woman stands between the worlds of rationality and mythos” (Pinkola Estes, 1992, p. 26) says Jungian psychoanalyst Clarissa Pinkola Estes. “It is not a void, but rather the place of the Mist Beings where things are and also are not yet, where shadows have substance and substance is sheer” (Pinkola Estes, 1992, p. 26). My practice of activating self and site into a



Figure 3. Jackson, L. (2015). *The Golden Palimpsest Video Documentation* (detail from still) 10:36mins

ritual of intuitive wayfaring, attentive presence, reflexive gesture and lively materials could be seen as a contemporary method of ‘singing over the bones’.

The sole work of *La Loba* is the collecting of bones. [...] When she has assembled an entire skeleton [...] she stands over the *criatura*, raises her arms over it, and sings out. That is when the rib bones and leg bones of the wolf begin to flesh out and the creature becomes furred. *La loba* sings more, and more of the creature comes into being (Pinkola Estes, 1992, p. 23).

The ‘work of La Loba’ (the wild woman) is akin to my intuitive, ritualistic process; materials, like the bones, are collected and the skeleton is assembled, the work is hung vertical or lain flat, ash and charcoal is foraged from the fire, pastels and pencils lie within reach and the singing is the making, in both the outdoor and indoor studio; the ‘creature’ or painting is fleshed out, brought forth from the vibrant, formless, energetic potentiality existent as a thriving substrate to visible life - the place of the Mist Beings (Figure 3).

Through the intuitive process of making, I am attempting to become this archetype by intuitively drawing paintings into being from the virtual. Bergson’s “duration [...] is the virtual insofar as it is actualized, in the course of being actualized” (1988, p. 42)

says Deleuze, duration is not a place, it is a creative continuation; it is the propulsion of matter into and out of the virtual, actualizing itself and giving itself form. By attempting to become a part of that larger durational flow, I am entering into and becoming a part of “the processes of actualization” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 105).

## 4 Venturing into the Gap

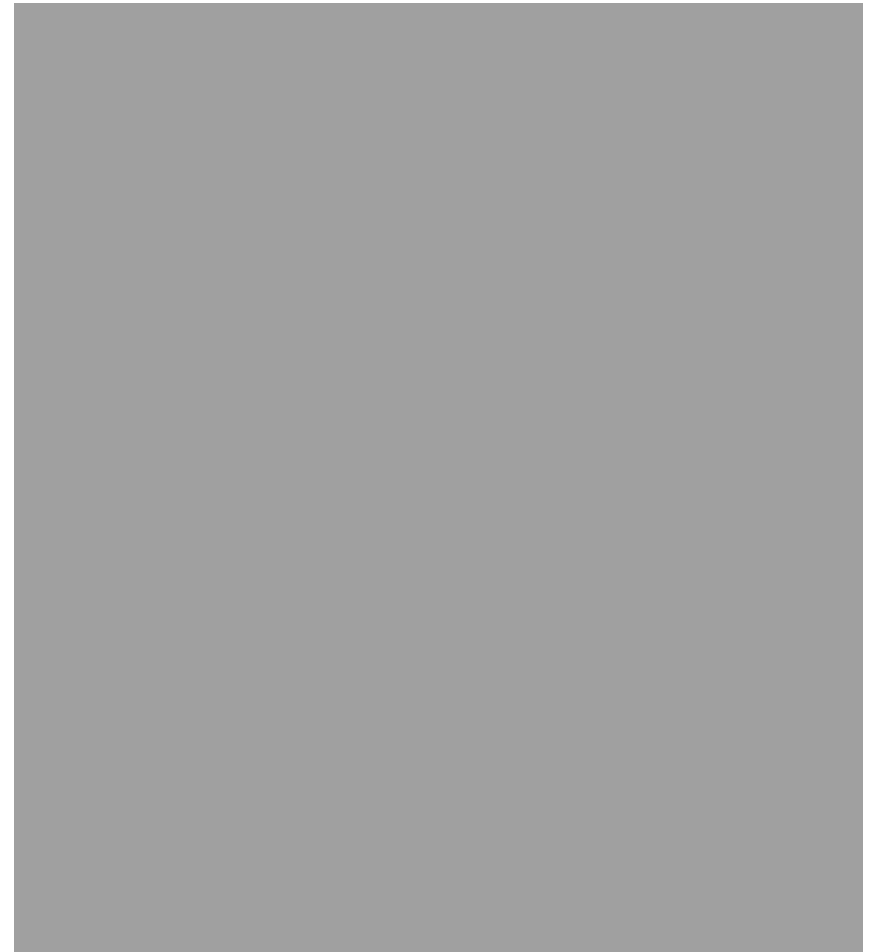
The place of the Mist Beings can be considered “a virtual realm of pure potentiality. Such potential, Bergson argues, can only be actualized when a gap is opened between stimulus and response” (O’Sullivan, 2008, p. 92). I endeavour to activate this gap by using intuitive wayfaring as a method of making, where my intelligence attempts to “place itself within the mobile reality [of duration], and adopt its ceaselessly changing direction” (Bergson 1903/n.d., p. 16).

I allow this gap to become present within my making process through actively venturing into the unknown by following ideas that drop into my mind. That may sound irreverent, but it is

exactly how it feels; a un-hitherto thought of method-of-making drops in, e.g. ‘paint over everything on that side of this line’ or simply ‘blue’, and I follow that urge, “push[ing] each line beyond the turn, to the point where it goes beyond [my] own experience” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 27).

Now, the crux is in the following through. This is something I have not thought of nor done before – it could ‘ruin’ the painting. But I choose to follow that line of inquiry; I choose to follow my intuition as a method that can access the virtual. To do this, I must have, as said by mythologist Joseph Campbell (1991) “the courage to face the trials and to bring a whole new body of possibilities into the field of interpreted experience for other people to experience” (p. 49).

Artist Takeshi Yasuda (Figure 4) discusses the importance of venturing into your unknown within an art-making practice, “what is going to happen? [...] If you assess your life, your method, or your working, from that way, you begin to get an awful lot of potentiality that you are already living in, which you eliminated unconsciously” (Buck & Yasuda, 2013, p. 74).



*Figure 4.* This image has been removed by the author of this exegesis for copyright reasons.

My methodology of making is “self-amused but not unserious [...] in favour of playful, unpredictable encounters” (Butler, 2013, para. 2), and it is my intention to approach each painting as a unique intuitive adventure into the virtual. However, within this playful inquiry, material limitations to this project have emerged.

Alongside “a certain insouciant abandon” (Butler, 2013, para. 3) cultivated within my painting and mark-making practice, I have set strong formal boundaries; the continued uses of canvas stretched into almost-squares, absorbent ground mixed with acrylic, and charcoal delineations. In this way, I am using “structured propositions and serial strategies” (Butler, 2013, para. 2) that are contrary to Butler’s ideas of casualism but rather than seeing a limitation, I approach each painting as a recurring inquiry into paintings vast potentiality. By positioning my project within the confines of similar formal structures, I am saying joyously, ‘look what I found! Again and again, a new painting emerges from the same substrate!’

Through this intuitive, wayfaring and playful inquiry within set boundaries, a unified visual language has emerged over the course of the project. We can see recurring trails of mark-making techniques and material gestures that act as physical markers for

the journey/project, and which are continuously evolving and recurring in a cyclical exchange. Each voice, or line expands upon my projects canon of visual language and material affinity, and feeds back into it, revealing a thriving, pulsating store of wayfaring, mark-making techniques. In this way “a simple theme evolves into a labyrinthine, meandering and multi-layered exposition of harmonic possibilities” (Von Busch, 2009, p. 17).

## **5 Laying a Trail**

Theorist Howard Caygill says the human body is naturally attuned to all existential phenomena that exist at any one time, but through a method of “selective de-actualization” (Caygill, 2013, p. 248), the mind delineates and obfuscates all perceptual data that is irrelevant to the individual’s immediate needs. Interestingly, my paintings seem to almost mimic this function of the mind to delineate and shroud extraneous data.

We could view the vast painted surface as being akin to an abundant virtual terrain through which I intuitively travel making sense of it through drawing intense charcoal black lines that lay a distinct trail. I then consider that there is ‘too much’ visual data





Figure 5. Jackson, L. (2015). *Home on the Range, The Golden Palimpsest, The Gentle Wayfarer & For Colin*. Installed in Testspace Gallery July 27-29. All 450 x 500mm

present competing for my eye and mind's attention, so I lay a swath of colour over a certain portion of the painting. This colour block remains translucent enough for the viewer to glimpse that further potentiality of virtual terrain, and yet the focus is literally drawn into certain areas of the virtual that has been actualized (Figure 5).

## **6 Bringing Back the Treasure**

Bergson (1903/n.d.) contends that through the huge efforts of intuition, one can become perceptive and reflexive to all other durations within the virtual and the actual realms. But “put bluntly, it is difficult, given the present human configuration, to access this pure perception and pure memory which is nevertheless a kind of ‘background’ to our experience” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 104).

Intuition, once attained, must find a mode of expression and of application which conforms to the habits of our thought, and one which furnishes us, in the shape of well-defined concepts, with the solid points of support which we so greatly need (Bergson 1903/n.d., p. 17).

I find painting to be an ideal methodology through which I can intuitively traverse through Bergson’s gap into the virtual realm of potentialities. It is precisely the materiality of painting that functions as a continuous realm of ‘solid points of support’ (Bergson 1903/n.d.) onto which my mind anchors itself throughout my intuitive, wayfaring journey into the virtual. My painting process could thus be seen as an “intuition incarnated in materials that takes [me] ‘beyond’ the actual, plunges [me] deep into the virtual, before returning with new actualizations” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 105).

## **PART TWO**

## 7 Potter Painter

Throughout my time at art school, I spent a lot of my time in the pottery workshop. I liked the quiet industry of the place; there were the squeaky rumblings of the kick-wheel, rows of pots on the drying racks, clay being churned into sausages, jam-packed kilns being fired, and bisque-ware being dipped into glaze. While I took only a rudimentary interest in making with clay at the time, the over-arching durational processes of the pottery workshop appear to have layered subtle sedimentary learning into my visual language, and methodologies of making.

The textural swathes of ash-loaded ground, translucent pasty colours and the dusty chalkiness of the absorbent ground I use in lieu of white paint in my paintings are more visually concurrent with the materiality found in a pottery workshop, than the bright plasticity that is usually found in acrylic paintings. The chalky ground is akin to unfired glaze and the pockmarked milky surface is reminiscent of Shino tea bowls (Figure 6).

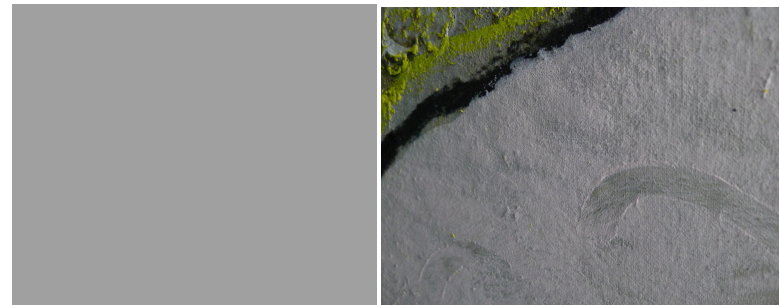


Figure 6. This image has been removed by the author of this exegesis for copyright reasons & Jackson, L. (2015) *The Golden Palimpsest (detail)*. Absorbent ground, acrylic, oil pastel, charcoal on canvas. 450 x 500mm

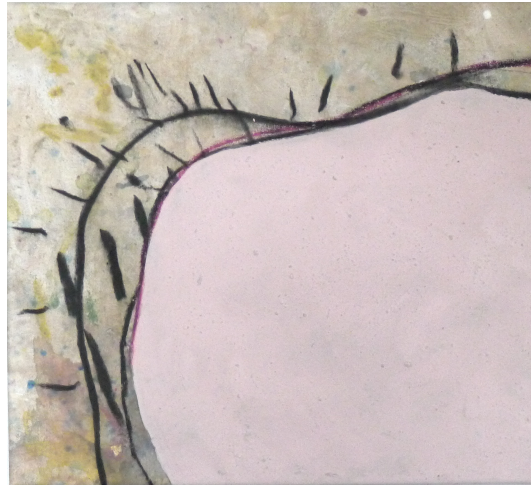
In a pottery workshop, the work is always in motion, in a continuous durational process, where “every artifact is a way station on its way to something else” (Ingold, 2013b). Like the potter, I have work in many different stages at the same time. Some are being painted, some are left outside to dry, some are being drawn in with wayfaring gestures, some are cut into smaller sections, some are stretched and wanting more, and some are stretched and satisfied.

What is implicit within this long process of making is the elasticized intensity of time that the paintings inhabit while strung between arrival and departure. Theorist Elizabeth Grosz (2008) discusses art making as an attempt to “provisionally slow down chaos enough to extract from it something not so much useful as intensifying, a performance, a refrain, an organization of color or movement that eventually, transformed, enables and induces art” (Grosz, pp. 2-3).

The durational quality of my project aims to stretch out time and ‘slow down chaos’ (Grosz, 2008) through the dispersion and concentration of multiplicity and unity, the repetition of process-

based making and the gaps between what we might call action-events within one painting’s evolution. These gaps between actions operate in the same way as Bergson’s gap “between stimulus and response” (O’Sullivan, 2008, p. 92), and can string out for seconds or months. Within this suspended gap, the paintings remain taut with anticipation, paused between movements, and never quite finished.

Artist Dan Brault’s “relationship to painting is one of joy, and the visceral materiality of paint informs his working method” (Beers, 2014, p. 50), Brault could be seen to intellectually sympathize with the materiality of painting through looking and listening (Figure 8), “to look is to listen, and you can’t have a dialogue if you’re not listening” (Beers, 2014, p. 50) he says. Much of my time within the process of making is spent in a similar state of active listening, allowing the paintings to speak to me in their unique material language. A painting could always pipe up (so to speak), wanting to go in a new direction (Figure 7).



*Figure 7. Jackson, L. (2015). A Million Light Years Away (development images). Absorbent ground, acrylic, ash, oil pastel, charcoal on canvas. 450 x 500mm*



*Figure 8.* This image has been removed by the author of this exegesis for copyright reasons



## **8 It's the Little Things & the Big Things all in One**

Within my project, I am materially and philosophically exploring complex relationships between multiplicity and unity, a notion of a multiplicity of composing parts and a breathable whole that is “living, and therefore still moving” (Bergson, 1903/n.d., p. 15). In this pursuit, I work on multiple works at any one time, I use a continuity of mark-making materials, a multiplicity of gestural techniques, I paint in a larger scale and then subtract multiple portions, and I stretch the use of particular mixes of acrylic, ash and absorbent ground throughout multiple works.

There is a succession of states, each of which announces that which follows and contains that which precedes it. [...] Whilst I was experiencing them they were so solidly organized, so profoundly animated with a common life, that I could not have said where any one of them finished or where another commenced. In reality no one of them begins or ends, but all extend into each other (Bergson, 1903/n.d., p. 3).

This multiplicity within the making process also fuses itself into the durational qualities of the paintings; each painting reveals itself to be part of larger and smaller durations, whether caused by being cut from the same painted terrain, using the same stick of charcoal, or the continuity found from almost always mixing

acrylic with absorbent ground - there is a durational pulsation between multiplicity and unity within this project.

Here, it is important to note that this is not a chronological account, where one thought or gesture distinctly follows another, “not simply succession but a very special coexistence, a simultaneity of fluxes” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 81), a multiplicity of durations all feeding into and out of each other within “a single duration, in which everything would participate” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 78).

## **9 Way of the Process Painter**

Artist and writer Sharon Butler (2013) says, “the Casualists approach their work intuitively, unfazed by ambiguity, ill-defined parameters, or truncated lines of thought” (para. 5), and this is akin to my wayfaring, intuitive approach to making. “Casualism is about hopefulness and forward momentum” (2013, para. 6) Butler says, and “despite high rents, low-paying jobs, crushing student loans, government gridlock, unprecedented budget deficits, and endless war, emerging [casualist] painters [...] manage to locate and harness a perverse sense of optimism”





*Figure 9.* This image has been removed by the author of this exegesis for copyright reasons

(2013, para. 2). Within my project, I feel an “ethical imperative to facilitate encounters that maximise [...] joy” (Popke, 2009, p. 83) through creating a playful sense of adventure within both my process and paintings.

Art critic Barry Schwabsky (2004) considers that through the provisional paintings of Raoul De Keyser (Figure 9), “painting becomes what it has hardly ever been - something like what Gilles Deleuze called a minor language” (2004, para. 3). The joyful momentum of casualist and provisional painting could be seen as a turn towards “a minor practice” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 73), which can “be understood as always in process, as always becoming – as generating new forms through a break with, but also a utilization of, the old” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 73).

In this endeavour, casual and provisional painters are “unafraid to explore gesture, improvisation, relational compositions, allusions to figuration and landscape” (Rubinstein, 2013, para. 1), whilst simultaneously venturing into new experimental terrain. My paintings are humble little joyous things that provoke playful inquiry, and allude to landscape as a way of conveying that the process of making them feels like a grand adventure, albeit played out on a modest scale (Figure 10).



Figure 10. Jackson, L. (2015) *The Gentle Wayfarer, The Darkest Hour & She's Lump* (Studio View September 18). Absorbent ground, acrylic, ash, oil pastel, charcoal on canvas. All 450 x 500mm

Provisional painting can be seen to correlate with traditional raku ceramics “which aimed at an artistic code emphasizing that which was quiet, sober and unassuming” (Miller, 1961, p. 63), wabi-sabi aesthetics that explore “suggestion, irregularity, simplicity and perishability” (Richie, 2007, p. 18), and drawing:

When we look at drawings we often position them very close to their maker. We are witnessing something being created at no further than arm’s [*sic*] reach, and can often see the moment passing or thought emerging, right there on the page (Kovats, 2007, p. 8).

My material gestures and wayfaring methods affirm a quiet joyfulness that I cultivate when I paint; painting for me is as humble a pleasure, as gentle and as satisfying as a walk in nature. Interestingly the Japanese definition of raku is somewhere between pleasure, comfort and ease. This durational quality of being at-ease within the continuous flow of duration is the state of mind I actively develop within my process, and the aesthetic quality that I try to achieve. In this way, my paintings have a process-based “aesthetic function of transformation, less involved in a making sense of the world and more involved in exploring the possibilities of being in – and becoming with – the world” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 52).

Art critic Alan Pocaro (2014) is critical of this emergent field of experimental inquiry; “bad painting has never had it so good” (para. 2) he says, “not nearly thoughtful enough to be conceptual, nor skillful enough to be aesthetically captivating, provisional painting falls harmlessly and lifelessly in the middle” (Pocaro, 2014, para. 7).

What this means in the language of contemporary art is that the work is not subversive enough; it is too consumer friendly, and thus devoid of substance. But subversion is not [artist, Christian] Rosa’s aim, and it must be said that the energy and curiosity of his work, though fleeting, leaves this criteria itself feeling nostalgic and more than a little institutionalized (Du Toit, 2015, para. 5-6).

For artist Christian Rosa (Figure 12), “filling the canvas is not a means to an end but an end in itself” (Du Toit, 2015, para. 2). Whether provisional or casualist, this emerging subset of contemporary paintings is interested in exploring the ways in which the process of painting “might enhance our affective capacities and engender new forms of engagement” (Popke, 2009, p. 82) and because of this, I would be more inclined to call my work process painting.



*Figure 11.* This image has been removed by the author of this exegesis for copyright reasons

## 10 Wayfaring through the Painting

*Caminante, no hay camino,  
Se hace camino al andar.*

Traveler, there is no path,  
Paths are made by walking.

Antonio Machado  
(Proulx, 1997, p. 11)

The purpose of the travelling line in my work “is to thread one’s way *through* the world rather than routing from point to point *across* its surface” (Ingold, 2007, p. 79). Anthropologist Tim Ingold (2011) uses the word “wayfaring to describe the embodied experience of this perambulatory movement” (p. 148), wayfaring in the context of my practice-led research project pertains to a methodology of continuous, durational movement. “The wayfarer is continuously on the move” (2007, p. 75), says Ingold, but more than that, the wayfarer “is his movement” (Ingold, 2007, p. 75).

Wayfaring can also be seen within this project to interrelate with thinking-through-making. The wayfaring maker does not lay out a detailed itinerary in order to move from here to there; the wayfaring maker finds her way through becoming a part of the larger and smaller durational flows around her “and who, in laying a trail of life, contributes to its weave and texture” (Ingold, 2007, p. 81).

This concept of the maker being enmeshed within the world’s durations and wayfaring therein is an apt description of how I trace paths within a painted terrain. The painted surfaces through which I trace charcoal paths are not considered a ground *on* which to draw, but a landscape through which to travel (Ingold, 2007), a new terrain that mimics the virtual realm, full of potential pathways.

I consider drawing within a painted terrain as a journey through a fecund forest, a philosophical state of being that walks within the forest, aware of, and reflexive to and with the forests presence. Here, the forest, or painted terrain, informs my movements equally as much as any inner urgings.



“For the Inuit, *as soon as a person moves he becomes a line*” (Ingold, 2011, p. 149) and in a similar way, I am revealed within my paintings through the material traces of my gestural movement and wayfaring journey - here I have dashed across the surface, like jumping boulders in the river, there I’ve gone over and over, round and round, like making a place to sleep, here I traverse the edge of a great canyon, there I lay amongst the falling leaves.

Because the paintings tremble somewhere between abstraction and representation, object and painting, they remain enigmatic but strangely familiar. Through using the “old modernist” (Du Toit, 2015, para. 3) trick “to avoid representation, yet come close enough to it to activate the viewer’s instinct to decipher an image” (Du Toit, 2015, para. 3), we are drawn into the paintings by a familiarity of mark-making that evokes landscape, figures and forms, yet we are greeted by a multi-layered palimpsest-like, textural site of gestural motion that reveals the traces of its own making (Figure 12).



Figure 12. Jackson, L. (2015). *Pulling Teeth* (detail of un-stretched canvas). Absorbent ground, acrylic, ash, charcoal on canvas. Approx. 1100 x 1200mm

It is my intention that my paintings embody a sense of playfulness, lightness, immediacy and fluidity that is connotative of intuitive exploration and “highlights an ethic of experimentation that can free us from the ‘fogs and miasmas’ which obscure the creative possibilities of the future” (Zagala, 2002, p. 20). I make the dusty, glittering charcoal or sticky oil pastel traces by walking through the painting, aware of, and reflexive to the painting, as the painting is the land within which I walk. It is these traces, which activate the viewer’s propulsion into wayfaring through the paintings, following the charcoal trails, and ashy terrain, finding their own way through.

I would like my paintings to evoke for the viewer, a sense of this wayfaring spirit, as if they have just encountered an adventure of discoveries suspended on the wall in a state of spider web-like tension. Just there, just so, just happened upon. In other words, the paintings need to retain a sense of duration – a sense that the path is still being travelled.

## **11 An Affective Encounter**

In discussing the work of artist Christian Rosa (Figure 11), art writer Wessie Du Toit (2015) says “when you come to a painting, there is an interesting moment when everything is in flux, and your eye can dance along a range of different sequences and relationships” (para 2), “the result is a sense of kinetic energy, and of things unfolding” (Du Toit, 2015, para 2). This sense of unfolding and movement is coexistent within both my process, and the resulting paintings.

Philosopher Henri Bergson (1903/n.d.) considers “duration as a multiplicity of moments bound to each other by a unity which goes through them like a thread” (p. 14), and it is the multiplicity of unique durational rhythms within each painting, that weaves through and between the whole body of paintings that creates a larger kinetic, durational energy (Figure 13). The materials within



Figure 13. Jackson, L. (2015). *Amoeba From Outa Space, A Million Light Years Away & Puff Puff Ghost* (Studio View September 16). Absorbent ground, acrylic, ash, oil pastel, charcoal on canvas. All 450 x 500mm



the painting-bodies are all pulsating at a different velocity from each other, forming a “complex composite of different speeds and rhythms” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 42).

Each painting has its own set of chords that it plays with its own affective rhythm, and this unique durational rhythm resonates in different ways with the other paintings. “Affect is to do with the body and with thought, and with what a body-thought is capable of” says O’Sullivan (2006, p. 39), and if we consider both the viewer and the paintings as body-thoughts vibrating at different velocities, then within their encounter an affective resonance occurs where “the molecular is opened up, the aesthetic is activated and art does what is its chief *modus operandi*. It transforms, if only for a moment, our sense of our ‘selves’ and our experience of the world” (O’Sullivan, 2006, p. 50).

The rhythmic and affective tone of the whole body of paintings is dependent on the unique arrangement within an exhibition space. Each painting is playing its own tune, but in combination with

other paintings, the rhythm expands and contracts, bouncing throughout the paintings and the space, creating larger more dynamic rhythmic structures and a larger durational tone that embodies a multiplicity of materials and gestures threading themselves throughout the unified body of works (Figures 14-17).

Each painting has the effect of being suspended between other paintings and the viewer is caught in this rhythmic durational web that contracts as a whole, and disperses into multiple paintings. Through the rhythmic, affective tone of the encounter, the viewer can perceptively ‘move’ into the paintings durational flow and adopt a wayfaring spirit of inquiry into the painted terrains offered; they can sit back and peruse the whole, like some strange landscape, or they can visually dive into the paintings, follow trails, leap over divides and sift through sedimentary strata, looking for their own small nugget of ‘treasure’, some small portal into somewhere they’ve never been before.



*Figure 14.* Jackson, L. (2015). AD15 Graduate Exhibition (November 12 – 14)





*Figure 15.* Jackson, L. (2015). AD15 Graduate Exhibition (November 12 – 14)





*Figure 16. Jackson, L. (2015). AD15 Graduate Exhibition (November 12 – 14)*





*Figure 17.* Jackson, L. (2015). AD15 Graduate Exhibition (November 12 – 14)

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