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# In Conversation



*An Eroded History of the Lower Depths Vol I, Wilderness-Eroded Suite (2007)*  
Archival inkjet and silkscreen, 1350 x 950 mm



*Clahane, Irish Landscapes Suite (2010) Etching, 600 x 400 mm*

**In this series of artists in conversation, Nick Richards talks to Paul Haydock-Wilson about the evolution and personal geography of his etchings.**

**NR** *I remember your project 'Deptford Deposit', where you submerged etching plates into the bed of Deptford Creek. What is the connection between this and your Irish Landscapes series?*

**PHW** The basic connection is the etching process. Wider than that are the processes of erosion and accretion, and my background as a geographer, looking at different ways of representing landscape. The grounded and ungrounded plates I used in 'Deptford Deposit' were crude geographical recording devices, taking on characteristics of their tidal environment. They were literally creek-etched and became, through a long creative journey, the Wilderness-Eroded Suite of Inkjet prints.

**NR** *So you didn't envisage the digital outcome of the Wilderness-Eroded Suite?*

**PHW** I was open to the possibility but at that time I wasn't really into digital techniques. I envisaged an intaglio outcome but I felt I was losing so much of the information on the plates. Bits of rusted steel were actually coming off during proofing and when I experimented with blind embossing and overprinting I was unhappy with the results. The plates though were interesting, having accrued silt and algae on the top surface and underneath, muddy corroded abstract patterns. It was only through digital scanning and enlargement that those patterns and colours became perceptually clear.

**NR** *So how did you turn this scanned digital image into a print?*

**PHW** It was hard work, about a year of my life sitting with computer, scanner, and printer, learning by trial and error. It was important for me that they became fine art prints and were my most ambitious work in terms of size.



*Cyanon (2016) Photopolymer etching, 180 x 280 mm*

I wanted people to be able to navigate these abstracted surface maps that defied any reading of scale. The viewer could be immersed into the image. They were printed onto 350gsm Lana Aquarelle digital inkjet paper, which really brought out a 3D quality. To further enhance the image surface, I screenprinted on an oil-based gloss varnish, which made the print really zing. Also it meant I could physically do something to the digital print.

**NR** *And yet you returned to a more traditional approach in your Irish Landscapes?*

**PHW** I felt saturated with computer-based work and wanted to get back to the fundamentals of drawing and etching.

**NR** *But the themes are still of erosion and accretion?*

**PHW** Yes those themes run throughout my work. I'm interested in these processes both externally and internally as an artist who reflects on traditional and contemporary notions of landscape, but also on internal, physical and emotional conditions. The landscapes are a metaphor for our own personal geography.

**NR** *Can you say more about these Landscapes and your method?*

**PHW** The Irish Landscapes are about a land that bares the marks of its long history. They are stark and literally hard-bitten. Each state is an expressively hand-drawn soft-ground, from a detailed study I've done in the field and then through a controlled foul-bite I've allowed erosion to take place on the copperplate. The foul-bite creates a noise across the entire surface of the plate, which further helps to break down the image. Then further work with scraper-burnisher is sometimes required but often the plate can be editioned after three or four states.

**NR** *What projects are you planning for the future?*

**PHW** I've recently been experimenting with photopolymer but at the moment I'm undergoing major limb reconstruction. When I'm recovered enough, I'd like to make some trips to the Kent coast and marshes, which have an ethereal quality, wide watery horizons, with sketchbook, camera and etching plate.

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In the next issue, Paul Haydock-Wilson interviews Brian D. Hodgson