

## POISE

### An exhibition by John Philip Murray

Exhibition Room Cork County Library Building County Hall

*Defined as:*

*To balance, to make of equal weight, to examine                      to hang in suspense  
a weight which balances another*

The works in this exhibition have been made during the past two or three years.

The earlier works are based on studies of old paths and roadways. These form the starting point of a project based on a perceived human need for travel/journey/pilgrimage. Some are taken from actual roads in places like the Sheep's Head Peninsula, others near my home in Lissardagh and later ones near Millstreet. The latter are in the vicinity of an Iron-Age bog boat which had been dug out and researched by UCC. The boggy land reclaims it every few years and it becomes hidden once more.

Another strand deals with the annunciation paintings by Fra Angelico. He approached this theme over most of his active life, from the small paintings on panel, to large frescoes. It is apparent that as he grew older and more experienced, his lush gold, lapis lazuli and marbling gave way to more austere, measured patinated surfaces. At first glance, these may seem to be less reverential of his subject, but his gaze is unwavering. Like the angel in this story, he has a message to deliver and he is less tolerant of distractions. His subject pivots around the central image of "*the look*" that passes between the Angel and the Virgin. Fra Angelico has contrived a stage set via architectural use of space and finely wrought surfaces to bring all attention where he needs us to look. We can concentrate on the gentle, but firmly resolute face of the Angel, whose one purpose is to deliver a message. His head is slightly bowed, respectful, but his resolve is evident. The Virgin looks towards, but not directly at the Angel. She receives the message, but it is obvious that she can, already feel its weight.

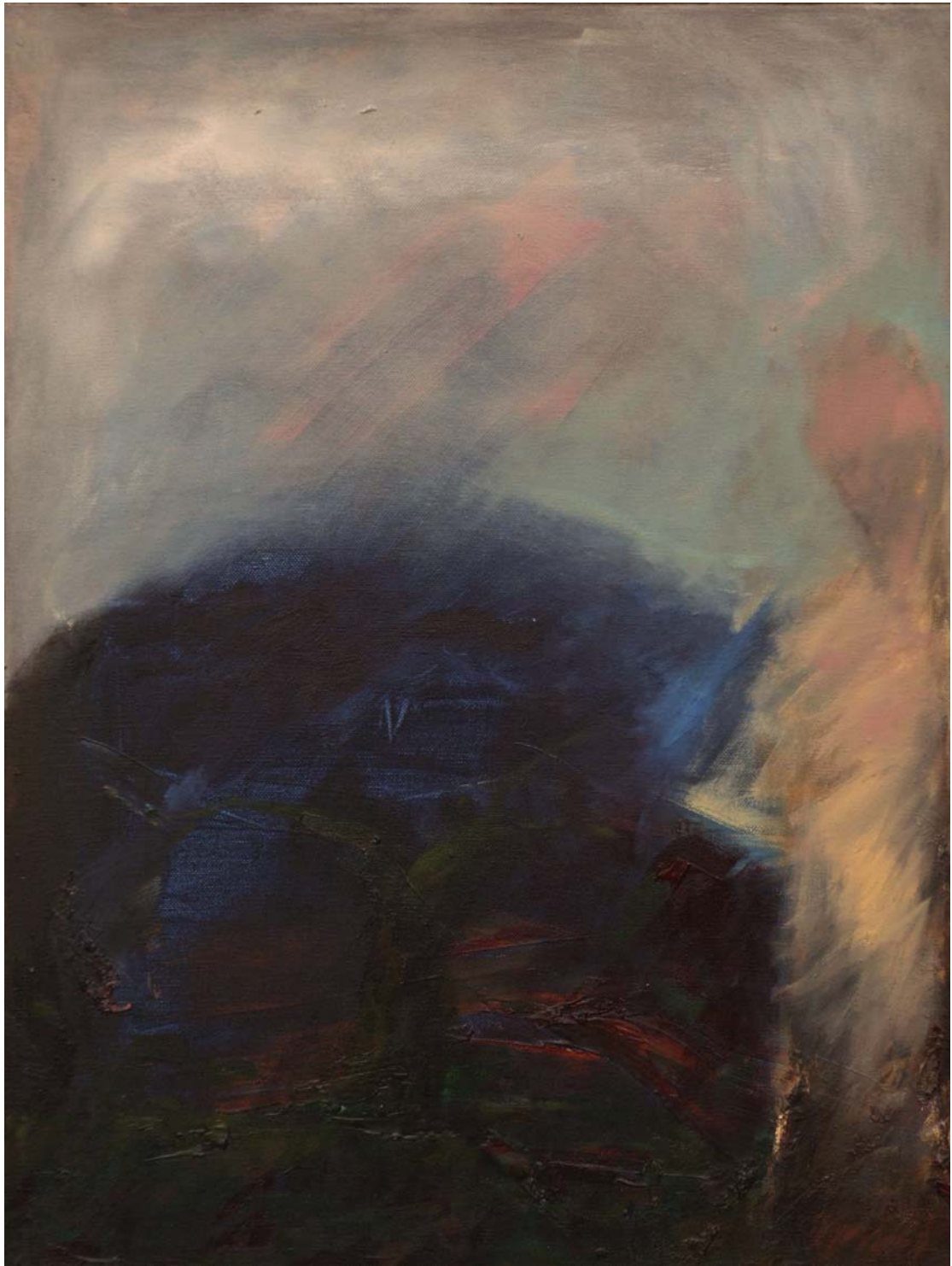
My paintings respond to Fra Angelico's work in the form of small watercolour studies and also take up the main part of a large triptych in oil. The triptych is called "Measure" and my main aim is to use the architectural space as defined in Fra Angelico's work to further examine that "look". It is, in some small way an attempt to measure current work against this giant of the early renaissance. In addition to the annunciation element, this triptych also treats on the "*Sacred Paths*" theme and others that I have used in paintings during the last thirty years.

John Philip Murray  
*Lissardagh, September 2010.*

Cork County Council Arts Office has contributed funding towards the production of the works in this exhibition.



1) Measure  
Oil on linen  
153 x 367  
2010  
(Photo credit: Roland Paschoff)



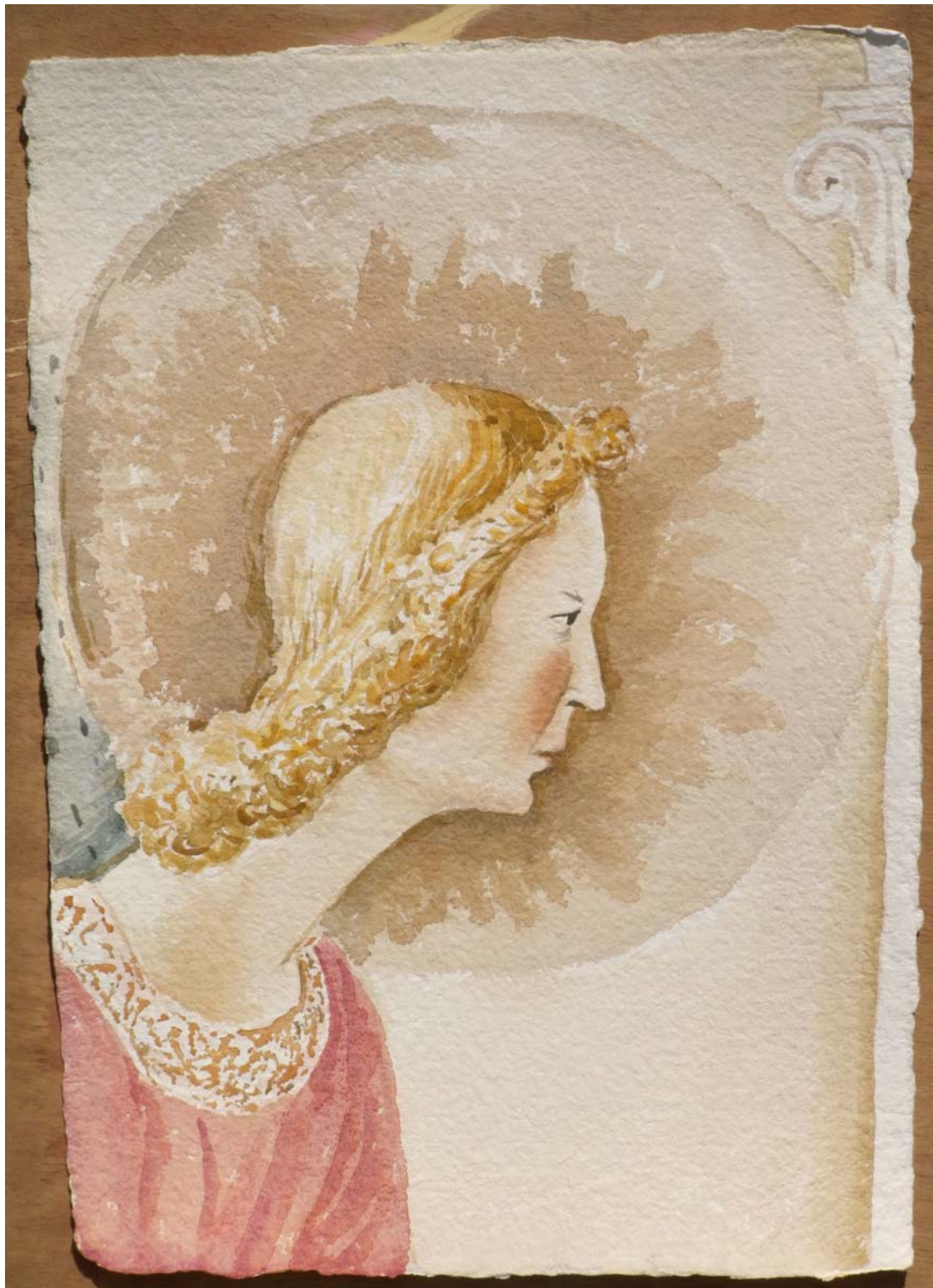
2).Pilgrim  
oil on cotton  
61x46  
2009



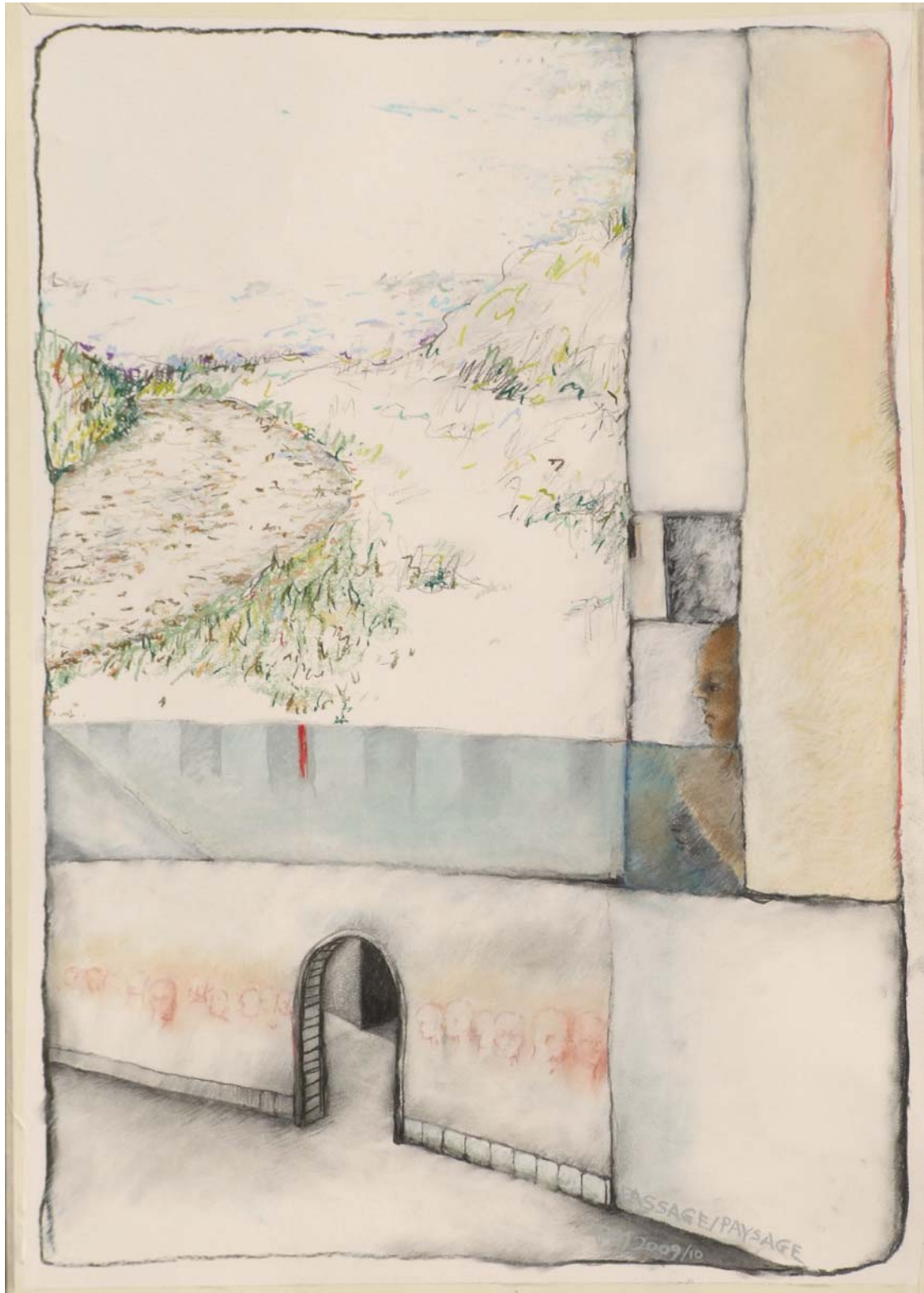
3).Cloister Series – Vaulting, Columns and Announcing Angel  
Watercolour on Cotman paper  
33x25.5  
2010



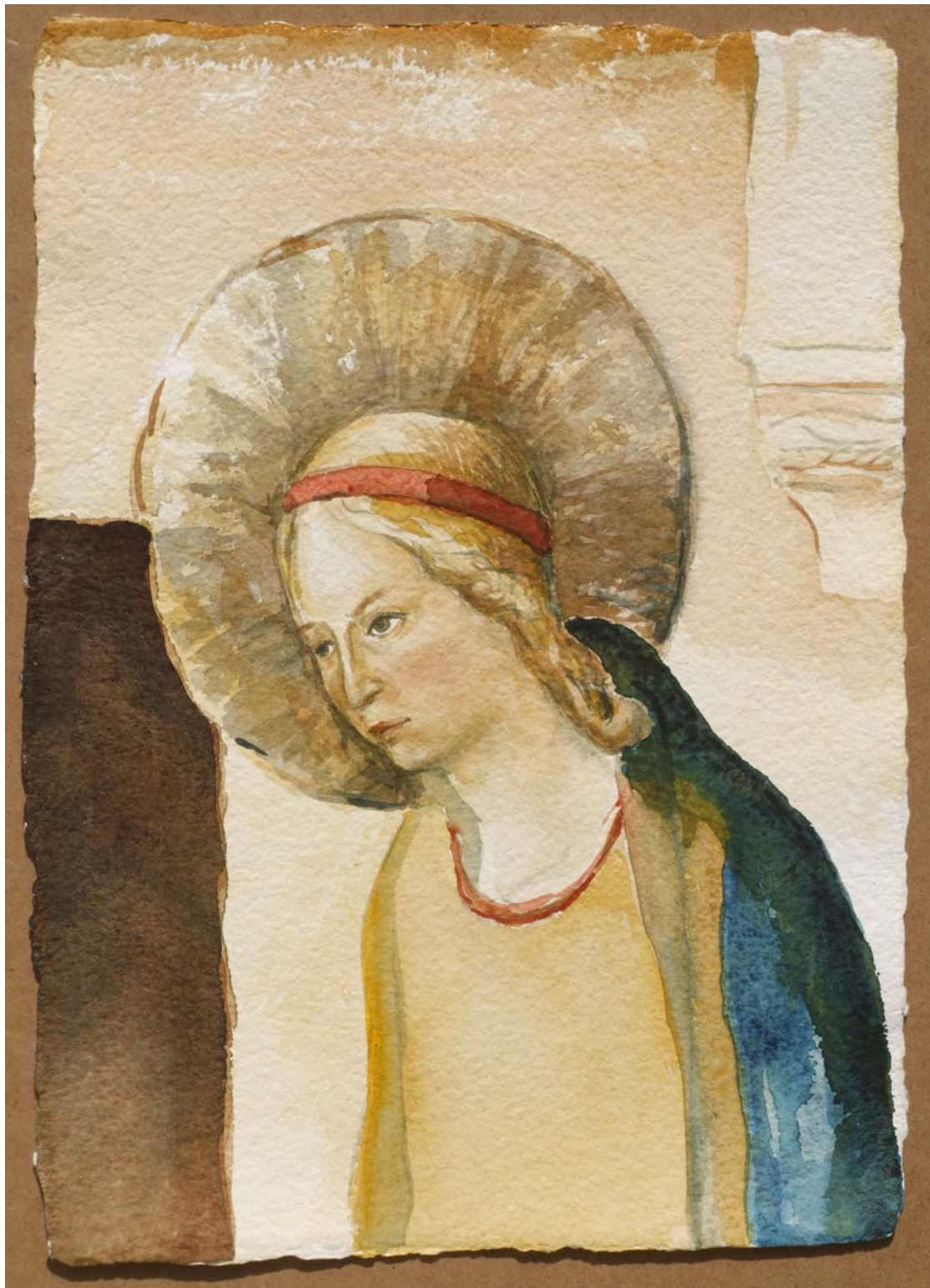
4).Cloister Series – Study  
Watercolour on Cotman paper  
30x40  
2009/2010



5).Angel; After Fra Angelico's Annunciation  
Watercolour on handmade paper  
44x32  
2010



6). Passage/Paysage  
Charcoal Conté & pastel on cartridge  
84x60  
2009/2010



7).Virgin; After Fra Angelico's Annunciation  
Watercolour on handmade paper  
44x32  
2009/2010



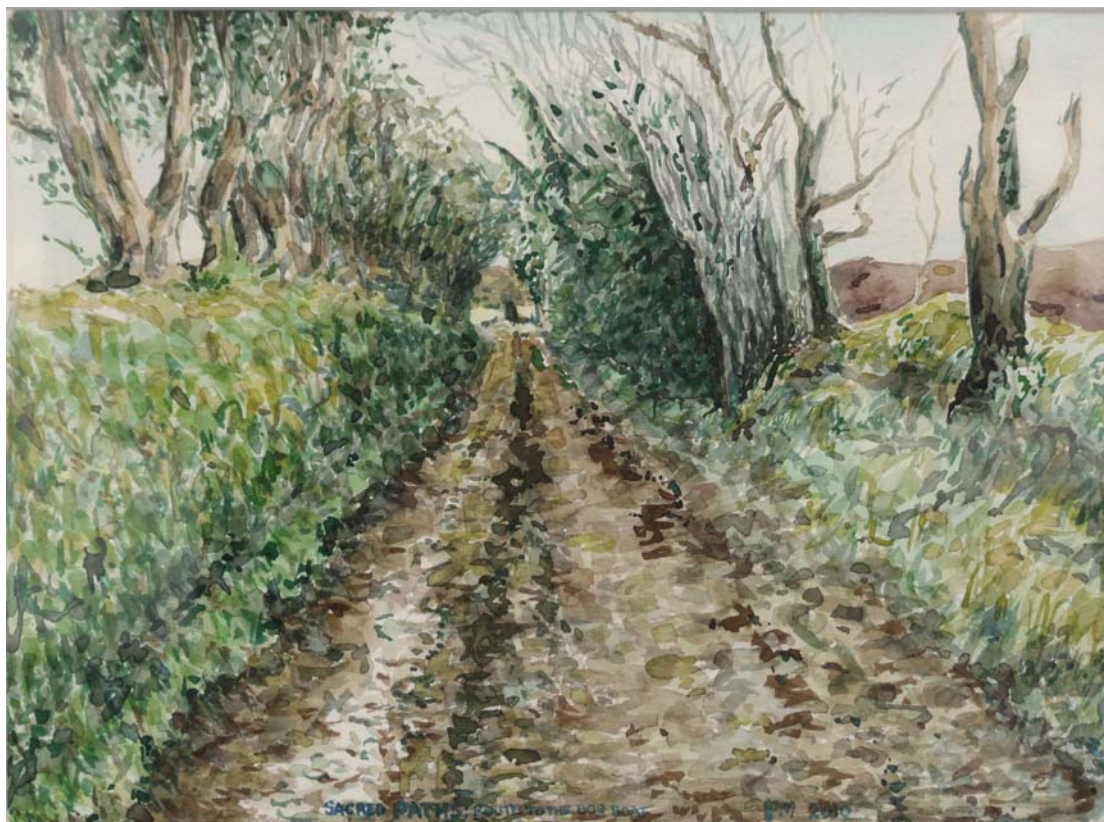
8).Cloister Series – Ethereal Shadows  
Watercolour on Cotman  
30x40  
2009



9). Sacred Paths; Afar  
Graphite on paper  
50x35  
2009



10). Sacred Paths; Blind Valley, Comeenatrush  
Watercolour on Cotman  
25.5 x 33  
2010-10-05



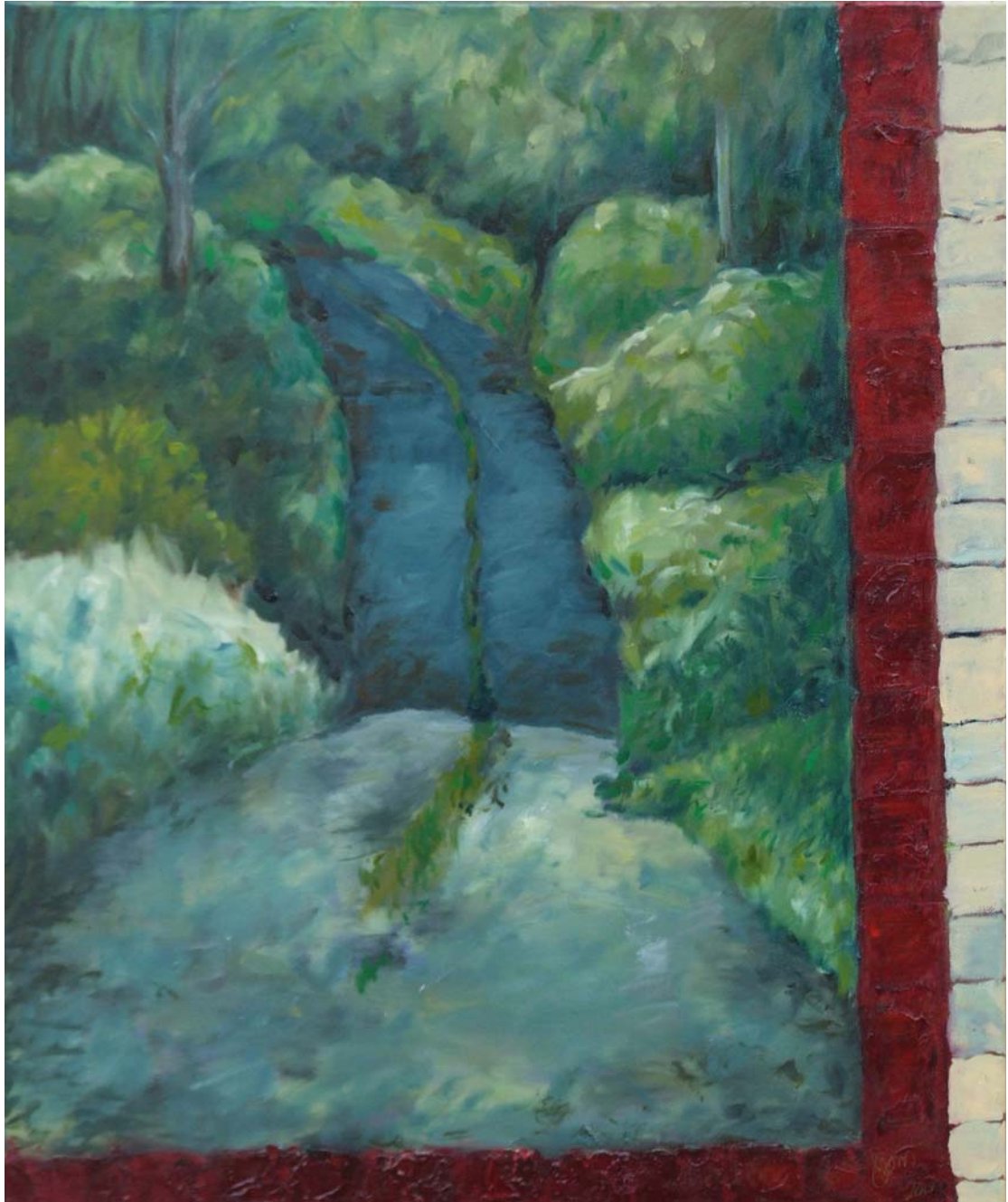
11). Sacred Paths; Route to the Bog Boat  
Watercolour on Cotman  
25.5 x 33  
2010



12). Sacred Paths (Destination) Site of Bog Boat  
Watercolour on Cotman  
33x25.5  
2010



13). Sacred Paths; Vision  
Oil on cotton  
61x51  
2009



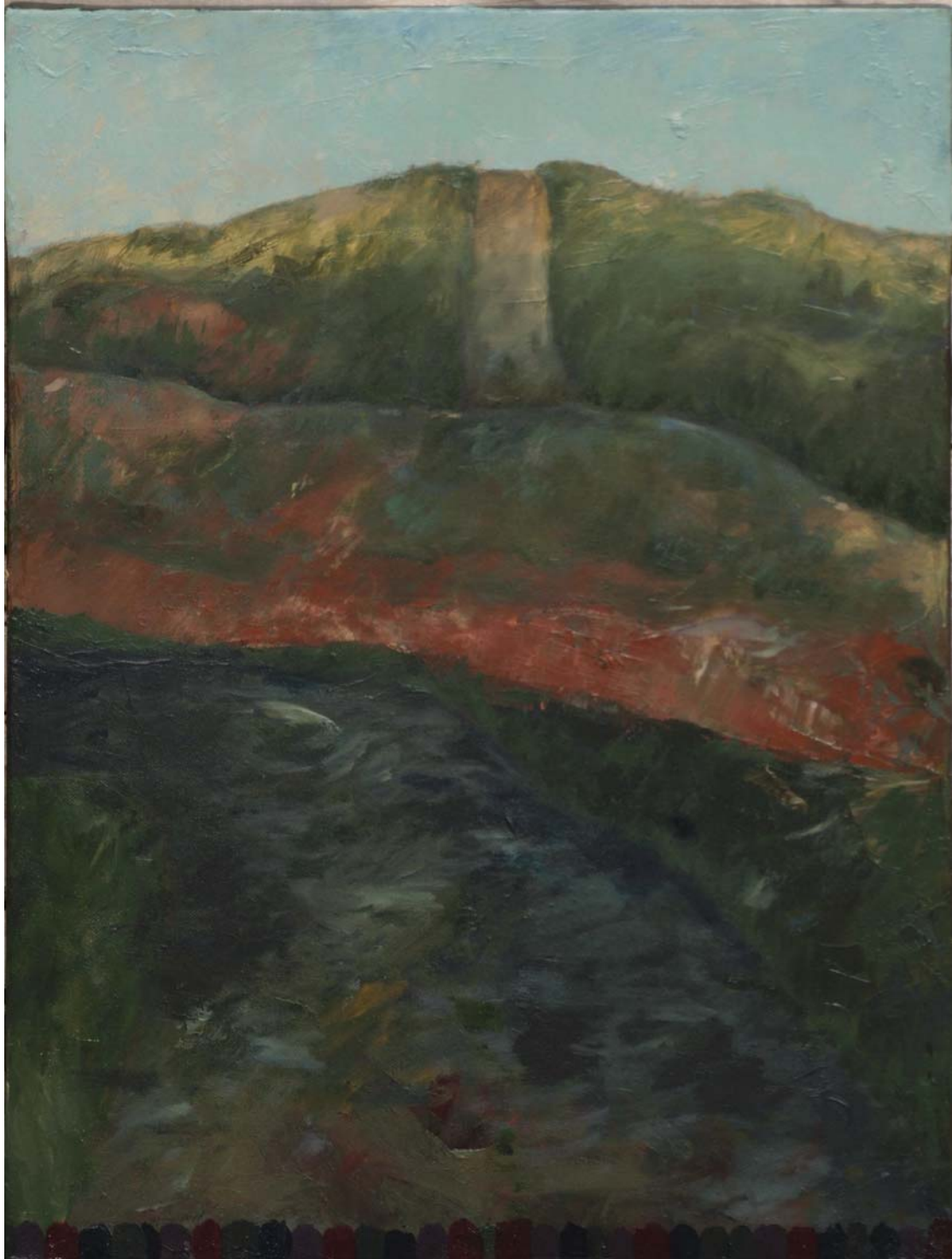
14).Sacred Paths; The Road Ahead  
Oil on cotton  
61x51  
2009



15). Sacred Paths; Backward Glance  
Oil on cotton  
61x51  
2009



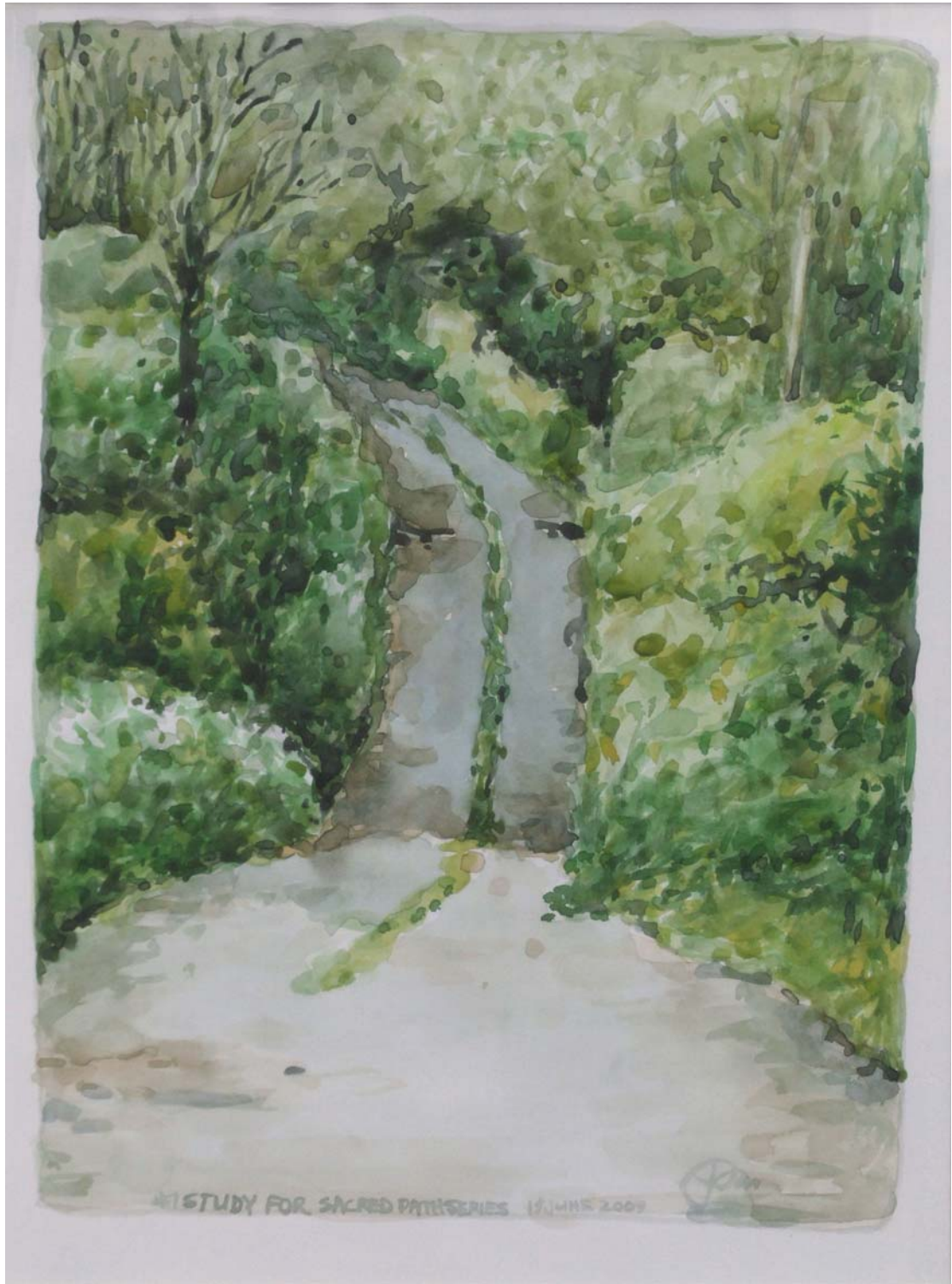
16).Journey  
Charcoal Conté & pastel on cartridge  
84x60  
2009/2010



17). Sacred Paths; Ancient Route  
Oil on cotton  
62x46  
2008



18). Sacred Journey  
Oil on cotton  
62x46  
2008



19).Study for Sacred Path Series  
Watercolour on Bristol paper  
31x24  
2009



20). Sacred Paths; Peninsula  
Oil on cotton  
46x62  
2008