

Symptoms and Remedies

My current body of work originates in a fascination with ancient folk medicine inspired by a recent research trip to rural Latvia. The interest was sparked as much by the ritualistic processes of growing, drying and consuming herbs as by their actual medicinal properties. This new area of focus has led to a dramatic expansion of the parameters of my painting practice as I have used the language of alchemy as means by which to explore my own creativity.

I am seeking an equivalence to alchemy in my painting. I aim to create a therapeutic and revelatory effect through the application of paint on canvas. Looking back to prehistoric hunter-gatherer societies – in particular the theories of cultural historian Joseph Campbell that tribal people executed cave paintings to represent situations they hoped would come to pass – I am evoking contemporary painting as a shamanistic ritual. I am exploring painting's ability to transform and heal as well as its capacity to affect its viewer.

For me, the act of painting itself is an alchemical transformation. The focus is on tactility, dynamism of surface and the psychological effect of colour. The subject matter has become abstracted. Over time, my practice has begun to incorporate elements of both installation and performance, providing context and drama to the works on board and canvas. Ultimately all the elements of my practice are directed towards addressing painting's claim to bring on transformation, healing and change.



Rose hips and rosebay willowherb for increasing blood flow in the limbs, oil on canvas, 40x50 cm, 2016



Cowslip and magnolia bark for nervous tension,oil on canvas, 76.2x101.6 cm, 2016



Hawthorn for insomnia, oil on canvas, 76.2x101.6 cm, 2016



Lavender for depression, oil on canvas, 76.2x101.6 cm, 2016



Deadnettle for bruises, oil on canvas, 76.2x101.6 cm, 2016