

LP'S (LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS)

My grandfather never threw anything away. Old clothes, corks from bottles, aluminium foil, string, ribbon, shoe laces, jars, cardboard boxes, newspapers, yoghurt tubs, offcuts of wood, scraps of metal, plastic shopping bags, cardboard milk cartons, plastic wrapping, gift wrapping, nails, screws, sticks, rocks, seeds - he kept it all. Everything was remodelled, repurposed. A hessian sack and a piece of found foam became an outdoor chair pillow, stockings and twigs held up the plants, juice cartons nurtured seedlings, soda bottles made funnels, ice-cream containers caught the rain. You hear people mention this resourceful habit as a hangover from wartime survival. Indeed, it stemmed from his experience growing up in Eastern Europe, having little, living through the Second World War. He told me stories of trading onions for shirts under the fence of a prisoner-of-war camp. I remember a tiny silver dustbin outside his house, standing proudly on a plinthlike square cement slab. A monument to efficiency. His laundry room was always filled with mountains of recycling. Boxes filled with plastic bags, bottles, junk mail catalogues and newspapers.

As a kid I remember him coming around and picking me up and driving me to his place. He said 'Come on, I have a job for you'. He showed me his latest project. A neighbour's fence had fallen over and they were replacing it. We needed to collect the wood. 'It's good wood' he'd say. He gave me a hammer and set me to work. I stayed all afternoon removing the nails from the old planks. But then I also had to hammer each nail straight. 'They are good nails' he'd say. He jarred the nails in one of his used jam jars and the wood he milled and tidied up and set aside, just in case. For the future. For the perfect project. All the furniture in his house he made from salvaged, scrap wood.

Recently I ran out of canvas and paper and I went through quite a period of painting on my son's food boxes. Gruffalo cookies, oat bars, frozen pizzas, gingerbreads, Rice Krispies, Weetabix. The cards differing physical, material qualities were nice. Soon I moved my attention to other card surfaces in the house. The record collection - an absolute gold mine.

These paintings are on cardboard record sleeves. Shit records that I didn't listen to often. I kept the records just in case I wanted them for noise samples. Sound as material. Once cut open, the folded card sleeve makes a nice diptych landscape format. The card, porous and unsealed, drinks up watercolours, yet remains durable enough to take a beating, scratching, and scrubbing. Each sleeve has a unique surface colour depending on card stock, age and history of use and mis-use. Some yellowed, browned, stained and curling. Just another material being reused and reimagined.

Abstractions, landscapes. Markers of my time, experience and memory. They hover in between all of it. Places I have been. Life shared with others. The marks slowly build, filling the space over time. I work between multiple surfaces over weeks or months revisiting each space. Each place. Horizons form. Pathways into the scrubland open out onto calm lagoons. Creeks flow past dry farmland. A lonely

abandoned plain soon shifts into a dirty swamp. Ominous skies loom, threatening a deluge. A sunset with a single pink cloud hangs low above a vast, darkening sea.

I could walk these spaces forever. I can see them in my past. If I end up there, in one of them, I hope it's with you.

David Turley, 2023

For C & S