



Namaskard (A Special Place)

Date

1989

Primary Maker

Brennan, Cecily

Medium

Oil on paper

Description

"The terms vista, view, landscape, to most of us conjure ideas of a fixed image, a place which has been the same since time immemorial and will stay the same forever more. This is an appealing notion but it is obviously not true. The landscape and its profile are in a constant state of turmoil and change. The forces that are brought to bear upon it can be extremely diverse - from the action of the elements to significant surface changes enacted by mankind through, for example, ploughing, tilling and

planting. For a number of years, I have worked with Irish landscape as my source material and have attempted to explore the contradictions between man's effort on the landscape and our notion of its permanence. This work ranged from the market garden area of North Dublin with its highly controlled planting of fruit, vegetables and flowers in serried ranks, to Co. Wicklow where habitation, tree-planting and bog-cutting have changed the landscape, and to a small man-made rhododendron garden in North Dublin. In 1987, I went to Iceland, specifically because in geological terms it is a very young island. The formlessness of the Icelandic landscape with its lack of patterning, where very little can be planted and grown and where large areas of the island are uninhabitable due to ice, snow and barren earth sounds like the archetypal description of 'wild' landscape. But this landscape contradicts many of our ideas of beauty - it lacks the subtlety of colour which we associate with Ireland. Its surface forms are ones which have not grown but have belched their way into existence from under the Earth's crust. One is constantly reminded of the massive movements underfoot by the regular explosions of boiling water in the form of geysers, boiling hot pools, sulphur pits, steam vents, and hissing and volcanic bubbling craters. Enormous fields of black rope lava, which have been petrified into writhing coils, confront the viewer and amaze us by the haphazard and formless quality of their movement. The painting that I have made for this exhibition juxtaposes black rope lava and hot water pools surrounded by sulphur-coloured earth which I saw in Namaskard in the North of Iceland. My paintings are not about landscape in very specific and pictorial

terms. They attempt to be about change, both man-made and elemental. In this context Iceland is for me a very special place. Its beauty is not a traditional one, but a beauty created through transience, movement and change." Cecily Brennan

Dimensions

Object: 72 × 51 cm Framed: 82 × 61 cm