



# mergeemerge

A collaborative drawing project by  
**Michael Geddis** and **Joanna Kidney**, 2016-2021

This project began as a purely visual conversation by way of a series of small drawings posted back and forth between two artists. What emerged from this silent contemplation is a grand expression of the convergences and divergences in the work of Michael Geddis and Joanna Kidney.

After meeting during a Residency in Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Co. Mayo, Ireland, their collaboration began in 2016 in response to the shared similarities of their work. As the collaboration has evolved over 5 years, the tensions arising from the differences in their approaches to drawing have come to energize their work. Taking cues from patterns and forms of science and the natural world, they passed drawings back and forward, both of them adding a part drawing to each one sequentially. Their joint drawings grew organically until each one reached its conclusion. Emerging from their combined intuition, imagination and memory are intertwined otherworlds...worlds which speak of the minutiae, connectivity, touch and slowness.

This project has been kindly funded by Arts Council of Northern Ireland; Wicklow County Council; Ards and North Down Borough Council and supported by Mermaid Arts Centre, Co. Wicklow; Outpost Studios Residency Programme, Co. Wicklow and Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Co. Mayo.

# Drawing deeply

Dr. Doris Rohr

The first time Michael Geddis showed me initial results of the collaborative work with Joanna Kidney, it became immediately apparent that this was a symbiotic relationship. Sharing a love for drawing, pattern-making and scientific images provided sufficient common denominators to overcome the differences in each other's approaches and idiosyncratic vocabularies, daring to let each other intervene, without surrendering a mutual sense of respect. Geddis' cellular approach to drawing as growth delightfully contrasts with Kidney's reductivist preferences. If Geddis' work displays characteristics of kenophobia<sup>1</sup>, Kidney's averts claustrophobia. This polarity acts as a catalyst for creativity and has resulted in astonishing productivity.<sup>2</sup>

A departure point could be Rauschenberg's apocryphal erasure of de Kooning's drawing (1953) that opened the door to interventionism. To quote Tania Kovats: 'it is significant that he [Rauschenberg] opened up the arena for art activity by deliberately erasing a drawing – the symbol of artistic authenticity – declaring that a work of art could be a negation.'<sup>3</sup> Yet, important as this act of iconoclasm has been for future generations of artists, the assault on authorship bears only some relevance here, to be found in a consensual gentler form of editorial processes of addition and subtraction. In the twenty-first century, the concept of unique authorship is an arena that has been sufficiently tested and questioned, as a result there is a greater readiness to accept that all acts of creativity involve a degree of appropriation. So one assumes that there is a tacit acknowledgement and awareness in collaborative practices of the kind we encounter here, but the question of authorship is not at the heart of this project.

<sup>1</sup> I was told that Michael Geddis never uses an eraser, whereas it appears one of Joanna Kidney's favourite tools. '... [K]enophobia, is the filling of the entire surface of a space or an artwork with detail. In physics, "horror vacui" reflects Aristotle's idea that "nature abhors an empty space." ' Wikipedia (2020) Horror vacui available at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horror\\_vacui](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horror_vacui).

<sup>2</sup> In total over 5,000 individual part-drawing exchanges and hundreds of hours of studio activity have been spent on this project over a period of over four years (from January 2016 onwards and at point of writing this introductory essay August 2020). From this vast body of works the artists produced the shortlist of works which will be presented at the Mermaid Arts Centre, Wicklow in 2022. J Kidney (2020), pers. comm., [19th February 2020].

<sup>3</sup> Tania Kovats (2007) *The Drawing Book* London: Blackdog Publishing.

<sup>4</sup> David Rothenberg's, *David* (2011) *Survival of the Beautiful* (London: Bloomsbury), Lucy Lyons ('Drawing your Way into Understanding' TRACEY (2012) [available at <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/microsites/sota/tracey/journal/edu/2012/lyons.html>] and (2017) 'Drawing Connections: Art, Medicine and Surgery', *Design for Health*, 1:1, 29-41). Sarah Casey and Gerry Davies (2020) *Drawing Investigations* (London: Bloomsbury).

<sup>5</sup> Arguably Sol LeWitt established a 'quasi-scientific' mathematical approach to drawing which no longer required an individual author or maker. Making became stripped of any sense of individual ability or origin; instead formulae were developed which allowed anyone in principle to follow the rules of the game how to make a drawing. LeWitt's intentionality is entirely different, from the approach taken here, an area I return to further on in this essay.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Geddis (2019) 'The Art of Science' in *From Dream to Dream Where Science Meets Art* [ed. Alannah Robins], Letterfrack, Connemara: Artisan House, p 29 (total page numbers 29-35).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Kidney, *Artist Statement* (2020).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

A team-based approach to furthering new insights is habitual to many forms of scientific research. This no doubt has influenced art science collaborations and aided a mutual understanding of how art can relate to science, and vice versa.<sup>4</sup> From Geddis' perspective this works both as a means to deconstruct the assumed objectivity of scientific image making, and as an opportunity to graft scientific methodologies inserting systematic rigour<sup>5</sup> to the act of making drawings:

*At first glance, my work appears to simply allude to conventional ecological and philosophical themes in nature like the fragility, beauty, and sanctity of life. But this familiar discourse camouflages a subversive attack on the mythical sufficiency of the dogmatic 'scientific gaze' as the only valid means of investigating and understanding nature.<sup>6</sup>*

Geddis' interest in scientific lifeforms is fuelled by his curiosity; his image generation 'adopt[s] a pedantically methodical (or "scientific") approach',<sup>7</sup> yet the fictional visual language he develops is based on imagination.

Kidney's concerns, subject matter and process differ in orientation. I sense a desire to reinvent linguistics as pictographs, a shift from phonetics to the symbolic, to create visual utterances, sounds from a different world, perhaps from our evolutionary past.

*The language of drawing is a cornerstone. It performs several roles: as a discipline in itself; a tool for recalling/collating/mapping and a foundation for expanding with encaustic paint (molten, pigmented wax) and spatial installations. The humanity of the hand-drawn mark connects me– its immediate, intimate and primitive qualities.<sup>8</sup>*

Kidney explains that her practice interrogates 'abstract vocabulary through drawing, painting and installation.[...] it attempts to reflect on our place within the complex, infinite universe.'<sup>9</sup>

Intuition and sub-conscious recall contribute to Kidney and Geddis' respective methodologies. While Geddis may rely on his scientific memory when recalling observed natural forms and structures freely and in an improvised manner, Kidney bypasses such references and recalls fractures or remnants of

forms that have embedded themselves in her unconscious. It is hard to put the finger on the differences between the type of memories at stake here. One may say that Kidney's memories are more condensed and more readily poetic, whereas Geddis' fabrications speak of precision, detail and the narratives of biological timeframes.

This polarisation appears to confirm a continued division between the creative mindset of an artist from a scientist. However, on closer inspection these differences melt away. In conversation with both artists<sup>10</sup> it became evident that Geddis memorizes patterns of observed natural structures yet refuses to draw directly from the organisms or their reproductions in textbooks. Thereby he is introducing an element of chance and fiction, of creative freedom, disabling the simplistic equation that science means truth, and art means imagination.

Chance, the prerogative of modernist innovation, speaks of avantgarde techniques of liberating the visual arts from representational skills, hence giving art greater autonomy akin to that of other disciplines of knowledge. Chance, the liberating agency, that the poetic inner vision of the artist can bring to the inflexibility of taxonomies of scientific disciplines.

This extraordinary project started in January 2016 and moved through several distinctive phases with a projected ending in 2021. In the initial stages both artists engaged with a large number of small mixed media drawings on paper. These were posted to each other and there was no dialogue or verbal instruction, forcing both participants to act on visual clues and to exercise visual thinking. Initially clearly traceable to the respective author, with each exchange the origin of the marks added less distinguishable, the drawings becoming a document of approach, hybridization, improvisation, intuition and acceptance of the unforeseen and unforeseeable.

<sup>10</sup> Zoom meeting Geddis, Kidney, Rohr, 5th August 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Casey and Davies op.cit, p 85.

<sup>12</sup> Gary Barker (2005) Robert Morris Blind Time Drawings available from <http://fineartdrawinglca.blogspot.com/2015/02/robert-morris-blind-time-drawings.html> [accessed 31 August 2020]

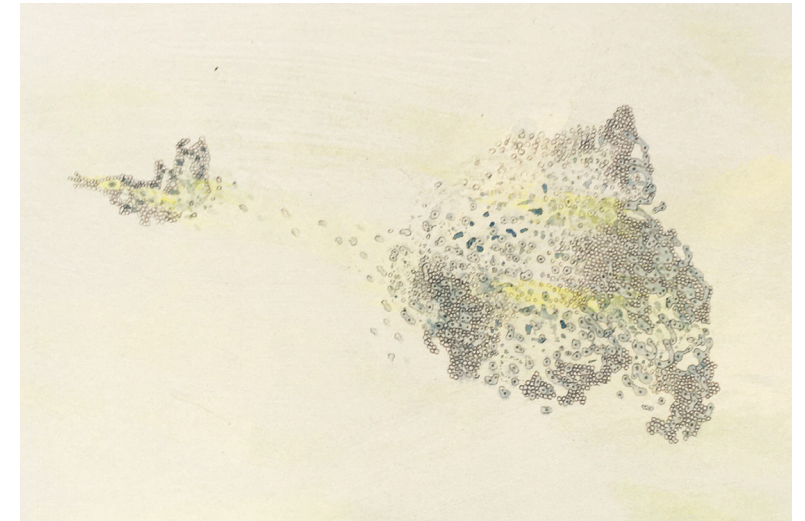


Fig 1

This example appears an animated cell dividing into a mythical longnecked creature, open to interpretations yet alluding to stories of a long past, pre-human. The drawing is characterised by an openness of what these marks may mean, symbols perhaps of another language, shared across beasts and men.

During the second phase the artists developed a table for evaluation, applying a taxonomy to facilitate aesthetic judgement for their project. This approach brings to mind Sol LeWitt's rules for making art, emulating the language of logic of science, and adopting a 'pseudo-mathematical method'<sup>11</sup>, to use Casey's and Davies' expression. Related to this are Robert Morris' instructions on how to make drawings, initially set for himself involving a set of rules such as setting time limits and working with covered eyes, then in a second series changed to instructions given to another person, who was blind from birth. Gary Barker refers to the objective as 'self-referential' drawing making'.<sup>12</sup> Yet, in this second series Morris dictated rather than collaborated, and while the limitations set in the first series proved conducive towards unlocking his own visual vocabulary, the ethical premise of the second series appears doubtful.

To sub-conclude then, although the artists here are cognisant of avantgarde inventions and methodologies liberating drawing from the slavery of observational skills, their project is not reduceable to another variation of the theme of self-referentiality. It seemed that each time a drawing was passed back to one-another it stimulated an elaboration and augmentation of each other's reasons for drawing. In conversation Geddis stressed the importance of narration, of telling or retelling a story in his approach to making drawings. This physically became evident in a linear approach of making concertina drawings in the second phase of their exchange. The concertinas used in part Surrealist drawing techniques and stimulated semi- or subconscious responses in each other. The meeting points of the artists drawings only occur on the perimeter of a visible folded page, leaving each other oblivious to the previous part of the story, picking up, like a dreamer just awakened, the last phrase and attempting to make a coherent story out of what was only known in parts. This quasi-mythological approach led to works that have a more sculptural presence, at the same time evoking time and duration, as if to interpret a musical score.

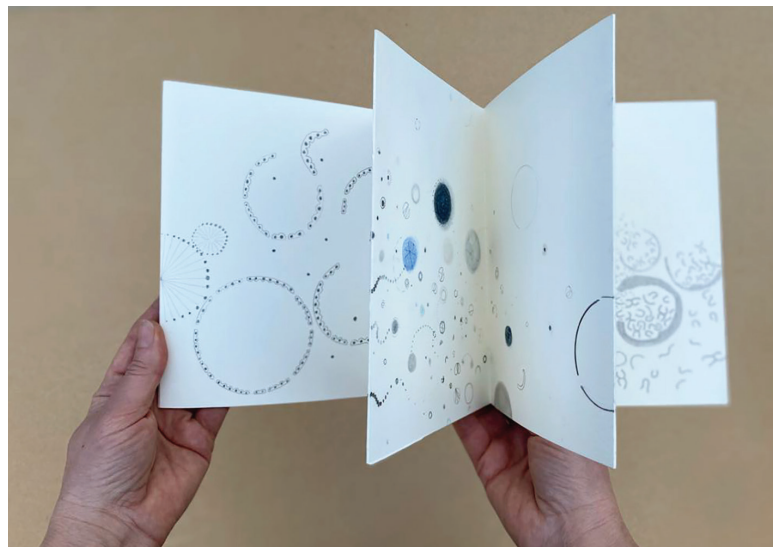


Fig 2

Above illustration was most surprising as executed according to the rules of a parlour game, exquisite corpse, yet betraying this encounter with chance.

The desire to explore new formats and challenges promoted further phases of remote exchange. The Mermaid Arts Centre in Bray enabled both artists to come together and reflect being physically present, thereby interrupting the solipsism of remote exchange. The meeting enabled an embodied interaction, a conversation acted out through gesture and the act of mark making, within view of each other. Such collaboration differs from remote exchange, in the sense that one observes each other, and the direct proximity of mutual interventions take a new direction.

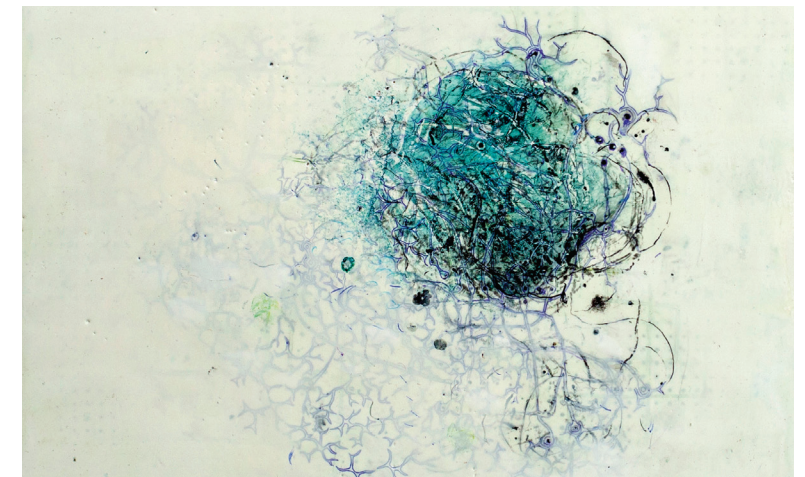


Fig 3

This small encaustic work betrays a sense of history, a laboured, worked and worn surface giving insight into its past, reminiscent of fossils in limestone, and of opaque rockpools, associations of another world.

The most recent phase involved the ancient practice of encaustic - one of Kidney's areas of expertise. Not only the ambition in scale, starting with 30 x 30 cm encaustic drawings, and proceeding to 100x100 cm, but the medium alone posited a shift in methods, process and outcomes. Encaustic embalms previous layers of production already sunken into the past. It permitted Kidney to re-exercise her ability to edit a drawing to leanness and concision. It curtailed or fragmented narratives into a score, adjusting visual text into a libretto of an unknown language.

Following the artists' joint project in its gestation and metamorphosis, it is apparent that despite their individual visual languages becoming infiltrated with each other's vocabulary, their underpinnings and intentions, as much as the matter of meaning or purpose, remain distinct. The unpredictability of each other's responses to a posted drawing was a key factor in disrupting style or formula. The introduction of encaustic as medium added another element of lesser predictability of outcome. Thereby the (unspoken) rules of the collaboration led to sloughing skins of habit and familiar practices in both artists. Kidney prunes gently the invasive habits of her collaborator, enabling the drawings to breathe and sing. Geddis furnishes the project with a knowing yet imagined scientific vocabulary providing a counterpoint through the generosity of his marks.

Drawing enables the artists to embody internalised images and thoughts or what precedes articulated thought. The processes of adding, subtraction and layering emulate growth, stasis and desiccation, entropy and regeneration. Rather than to attempt to reproduce such dynamic aspects of the natural world, where all is becoming, absorption, metamorphosis, in flux, the artists invent processes that parallel natural phenomena. Is this not a recognition of something familiar, a resurfacing of something already known but not yet discovered?

To conclude, then - a matter so far avoided - the issue of meaning. In Kidney's words there was 'no desire to control or direct the viewer to very specific meanings'.<sup>13</sup> Whereas for Geddis figuration blends into abstraction, and vice versa: 'I see a pattern, a structure, an element [...that] creates a narrative.'<sup>14</sup> If the origin of his forms is located in cellular organisms becoming and vanishing, the results are interpretations or inventions of a kind. Kidney likewise embraces 'growth, transition, temporality.'<sup>15</sup> A desire to abstract is most certainly evident as a prime motivation, however, similar to Emma Hunter's work, the intentions are 'to go beneath language'<sup>16</sup> as known and accepted, drawing providing an experience in itself where the process helped to achieve this goal. Further, in this appreciation of process letting content emerge, one is reminded of Ellen Gallagher's drawings, in particular those of

<sup>13</sup> Kidney Zoom meeting 5th August 2020.

<sup>14</sup> Geddis: 'I can't help interpreting data' (op. cit.).

<sup>15</sup> Kidney, op cit.

<sup>16</sup> Davies and Casey, op.cit. p 45.

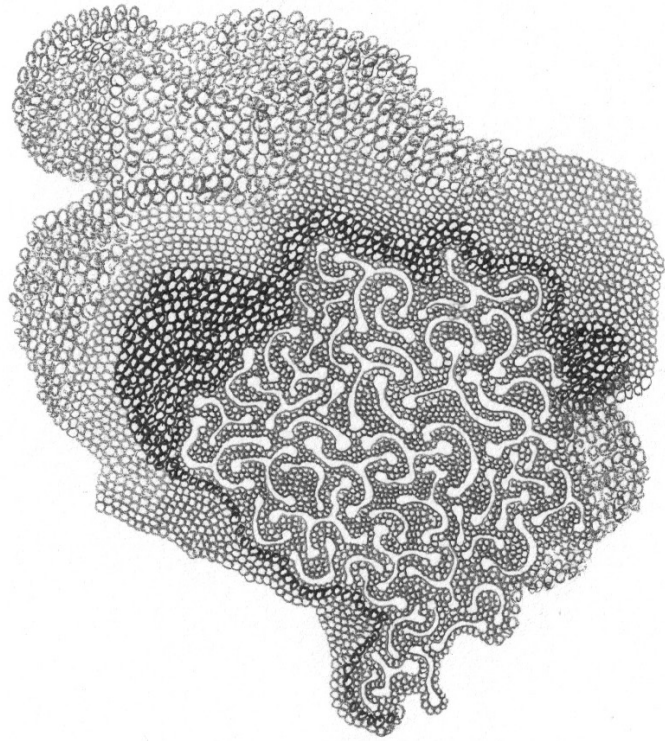
<sup>17</sup> Kovats (op cit), p 20.

<sup>18</sup> Rachel Carson (1953) *The Sea Around US* London Staples Press, p. 78

Watery Ecstatic. Kovats describes this as image making where known content has been stripped, new symbols have been created, 'individually drawn' and 'mutating like cells': 'forms emerge from within the work.'<sup>17</sup>

In particular in the encaustic body of work, where linearity of time has become compressed into time other, one senses that alternative communications resonate from the deep. I am reminded of ecologist Rachel Carson's evocation of the otherness of time in the unreachable depth of the oceans, and the sediments left from inhabitations of prehistory. Carson reiterates the cyclical processes of thickening ice sheets corresponding to the lowering of sea levels, and melting ice leading to the rising of sea levels, referring to this as 'alternate robbery and restitution'.<sup>18</sup> This is an apt phrase to sum up merge**emerge**. Waxing and waning: a song for the future.

Dr. Doris Rohr's practice involves drawing, writing and the spaces in between, addressing phenomenological encounter with site and place.



**204-6**  
2018, graphite pencil on paper, 23.5 x 21.5cm

**Installation view**  
Mermaid Arts Centre, Co. Wicklow, 2022



# Correspondence with Brian Fay

## Blank Space

**Brian Fay:** A standard dynamic in drawing is the making of marks onto a blank surface. When drawing over the others work, how does this differ and what is at stake?

Sent: 24 Nov 2020, at 16:50

**Joanna Kidney:** In the early stages of our drawings, I tend to make my additions in the negative spaces or the openings within the evolving forms. Later on in the process, if the form has become too tightly structured, I can find it difficult to find a 'way in'. My additions in these instances often involve erasure, so as to interrupt the structure to open it out. In the early stages, there is little at stake. When the drawings have grown and matured, there is obviously more to lose. Though sometimes risky, continuing to work instinctively is important for me in maintaining a dynamic quality to our drawings.

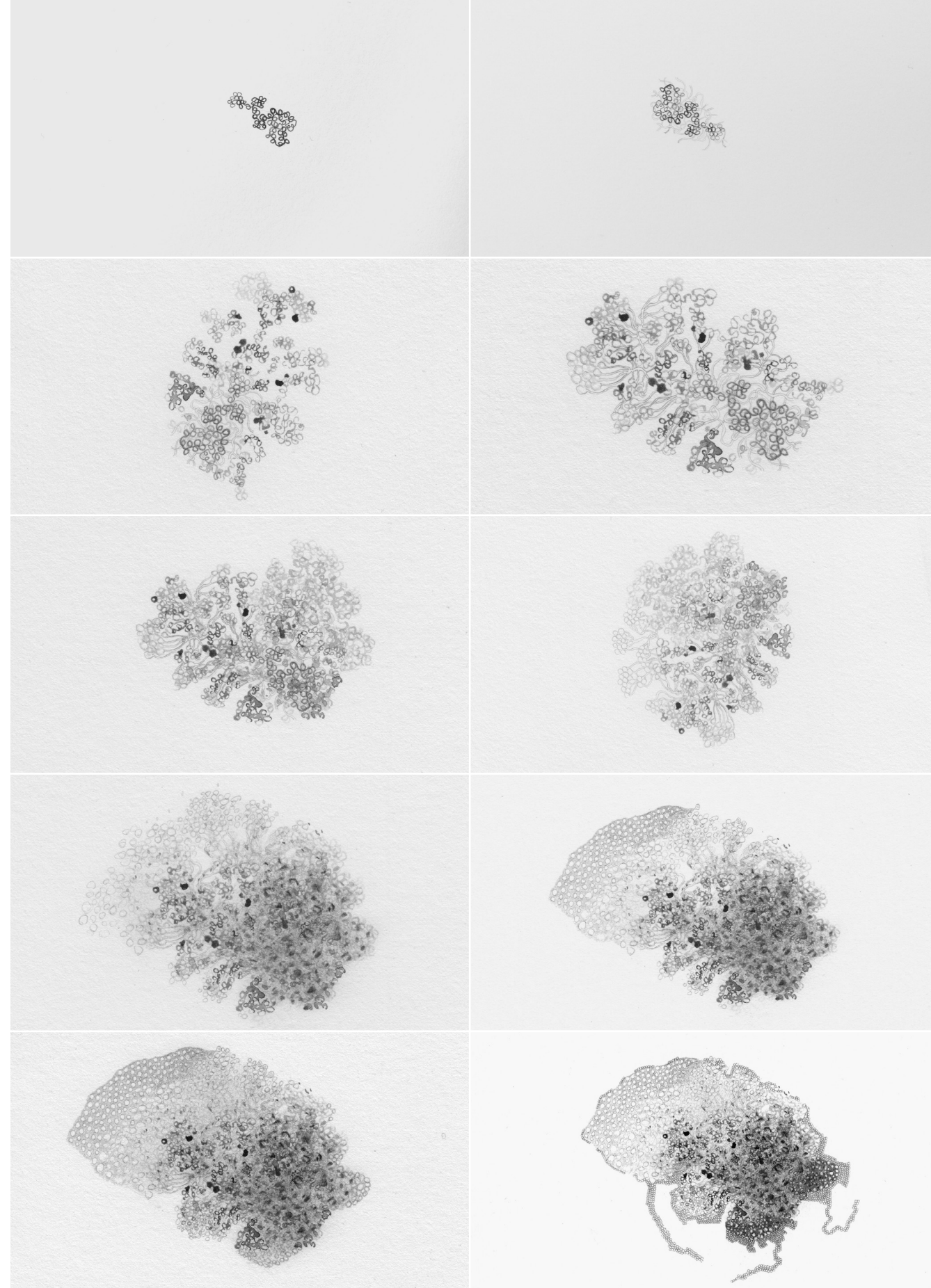
Sent: 24 Nov 2020, at 20:20

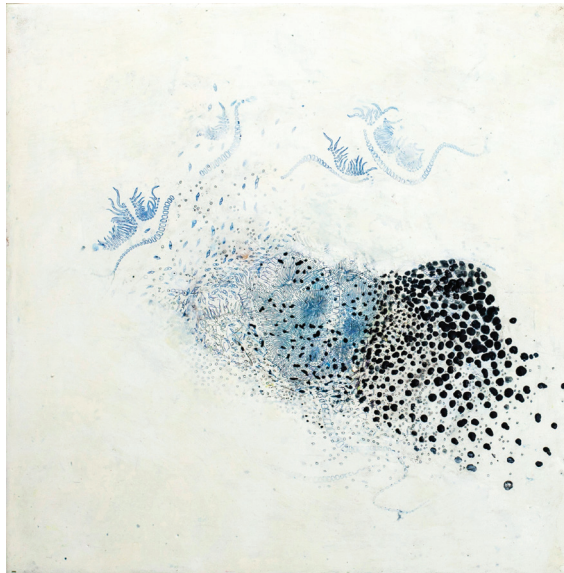
**Michael Geddis:** In my solo work, I never erase or rework marks made. When working with Joanna, I adopted this form of editing, in order to assist with integrating our contributions into viable compositions. In our most recent work, by necessity, Joanna initiated all the drawings by laying down layers of encaustic for me to inscribe marks into. At first glance, they often resembled slightly tinted and textured blank pages. However, after a bit of looking, I could usually discern hints or fragments of forms and patterns in their subtle but interesting surfaces. I much preferred starting with these surfaces to the totally sterile blank sheet of paper.

Sent: 25 Nov 2020, at 10:28

I concur with Joanna's comments about what is at stake but would tend to be more cautious with drawings nearing completion.

The evolution of drawing 214-10





Sent: 26 Nov, 2020 at 10:45

Sent: 27 Nov, 2020 at 18.34



Sent: 28 Nov, 2020 at 15.49

## Chance & Control

**BF:** Could you talk about the properties of chance and control in these collaborative works? Do they differ from the same properties when they apply to your individual work?

**MG:** My drawings all start the same way – I spend a lot of time visualising in fine detail what I will draw before I start. This is possibly a habit that I picked up when I was in veterinary practice and spent many hours visualising detailed anatomical structures before completing orthopaedic operations. For me, these initial visualisations are entirely intuitive.

Once I start drawing, there is a high degree of control with little scope for chance happenings as I draw exactly what I have seen in my imagination. In the case of our collaborative work, each time I receive a drawing back with Joanna's changes, I regard it as a completely new drawing and repeat the process of visualisation using it as a starting point.

**JK:** Chance has always played a role in my work. It ties in with possibility, discovery and the unknown. I relate control to logic and consideration. I'm fascinated by the pendulum swinging between impulse and logic, improvisation and consideration during the process of making work. Michael's controlled methodology was one of the foremost reasons I chose to work with him.

When he passes me back one of our drawings, I need to get to know it afresh before I start working on it. My additions generally work against the organised structure and defined forms characteristic of his additions. This tension between our differences energises the drawings and is a key aspect of our collaboration.

**343-11**  
2019- 2020, encaustic and oil on panel, 30 x 30cm

**368-11**  
2020, encaustic and oil on panel, 30 x 30cm

## Taxonomy

**BF:** Could you talk about the need and use of your taxonomy of drawings, as you worked collaboratively?

Sent: 13 Nov, 2020 at 16:52

**MG:** The taxonomy, based on key visual characteristics, enabled us to systematically sort and classify our initial output of over 200 small drawings. As a result of this analysis, we were able to develop an agreed list of generic descriptors relating to both successful and unsuccessful drawings. Up until this point, our investigation into the process of jointly making intuitive drawings had been entirely open-ended. Whilst not intended to be prescriptive, the list of descriptors for successful drawings provided a useful framework to focus this activity. Our descriptors for unsuccessful drawings were also a valuable tool. We used them to spot 'dead-ender' drawings that were likely to prove unsuccessful at an earlier stage, which allowed us to make much better use of our time.

Sent: 16 Nov 2020, at 09:02

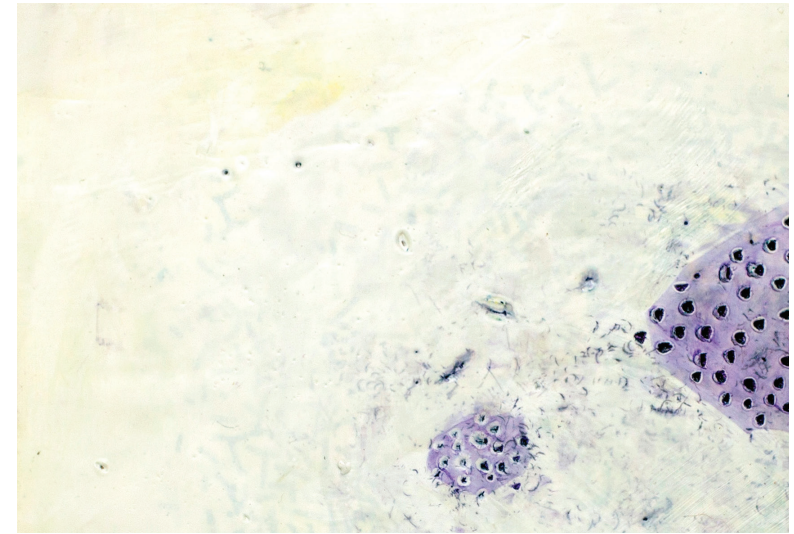
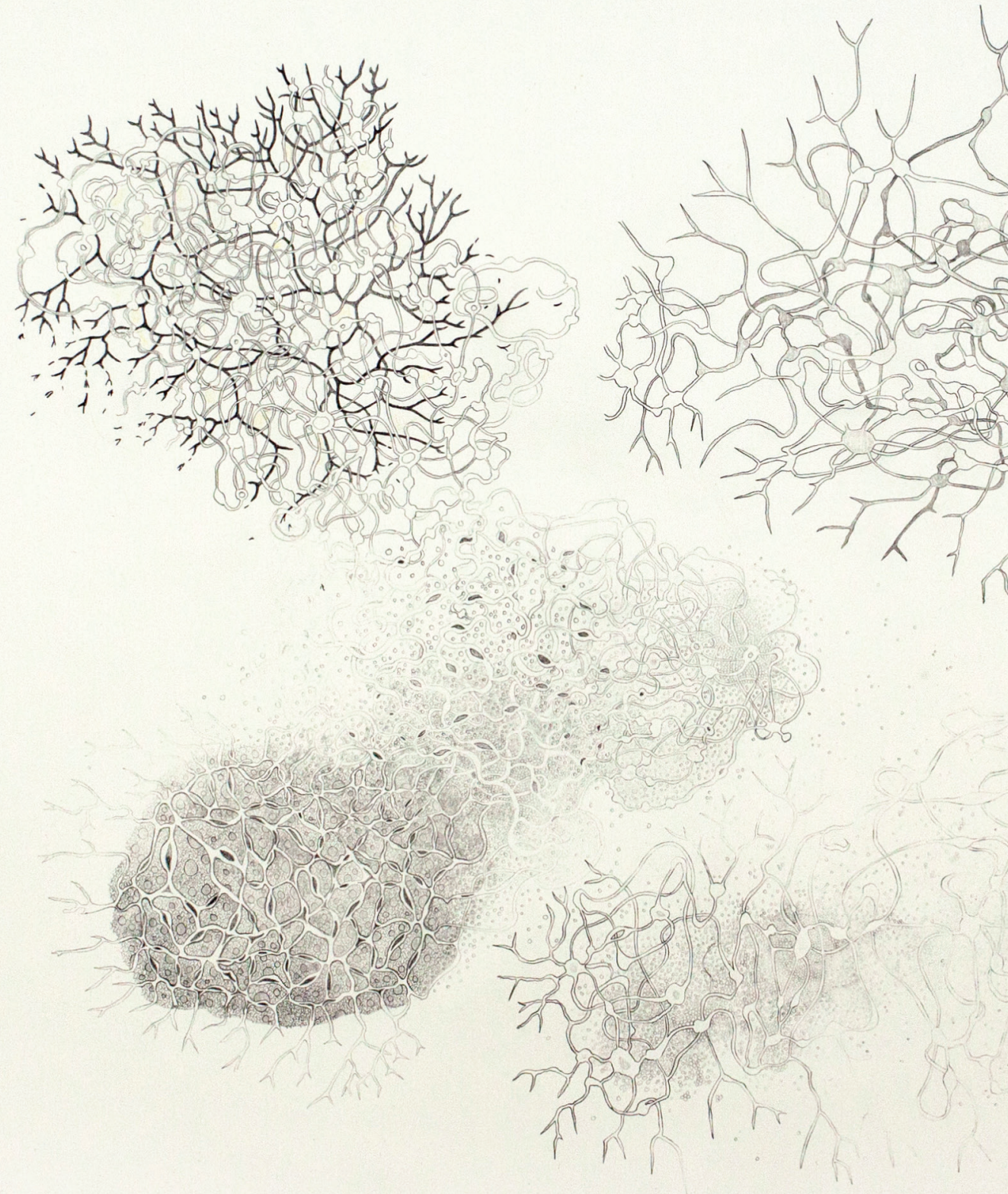
**JK:** Using taxonomy to define and categorise a body of works was a new and fascinating approach for me. Michael introduced it about two years into the project. We'd been intentionally communicating (almost entirely) through visual means until then, which had enabled us to assimilate each other's visual vocabulary. The large number of drawings we made during this time were varied and experimental in content; the taxonomy was brilliantly succinct in taking stock of them.

Sent: 16 Nov, 2020 at 12:09

This was an important juncture in the collaboration - following initially getting to know each other's language, we needed to interpret the resulting drawings. The findings of the taxonomy gave us direction for where we would take the project next.

**236-14** (detail)  
2018-2020, Graphite pencil and watercolour on paper, 56 x 56cm





**329-11 (detail)**  
2018- 2020, Encaustic and oil on panel, 30 x 30cm

**Installation view**  
Mermaid Arts Centre, Co. Wicklow, 2022

**267-12 (detail) left**  
2019, Graphite pencil on paper, 56 x 56cm

## Scale

**BF:** Scale is important in drawing, as it has implications for gesture, marks and relations with our own bodies. In the case of collaborative work, how did you decide what scale to work at, and how did this impact the drawings?

**JK:** We began the project with many small scale drawings to allow us to get to know each other's language, to be experimental with techniques and materials and to be able to send the initial drawings to each other via the post. After taking stock of the strengths and weaknesses of this series of drawings, it was a natural progression to move up in scale and so we began making larger drawings on paper. We took the same approach for the encaustic works, making a large number of 30 x 30cm works, before embarking on the 1 x 1m scale, and the same for the concertina folded drawings. The larger works developed over a longer period of time, involving more passes between us to conclude. This generated exciting results in terms of visual depth and complexity. Erasure and subtraction became a vital tool for me in manipulating Michael's defined structures and intricacy on the larger works.

**MG:** The larger scale definitely supported more protracted and developed visual conversations. I also like the way that the larger drawings totally fill the visual field of viewers, as they stand at a comfortable viewing distance. This effectively immerses them in our drawings and enhances their experience of the work. Some of the later medium scale graphite pencil works on paper featured larger and looser gestural marks made by me (much to my surprise!). During the course of the project, under Joanna's influence, my drawing became slightly less figurative and more abstract. Such gestural marks were not possible with the larger encaustic panels because I was using surgical instruments to incise my marks into their surfaces. These tools are designed for precision and do not lend themselves readily to making large sweeping marks.

Sent: 29 Nov 2020, at 12:06

Sent: 2 Dec 2020, at 12:43

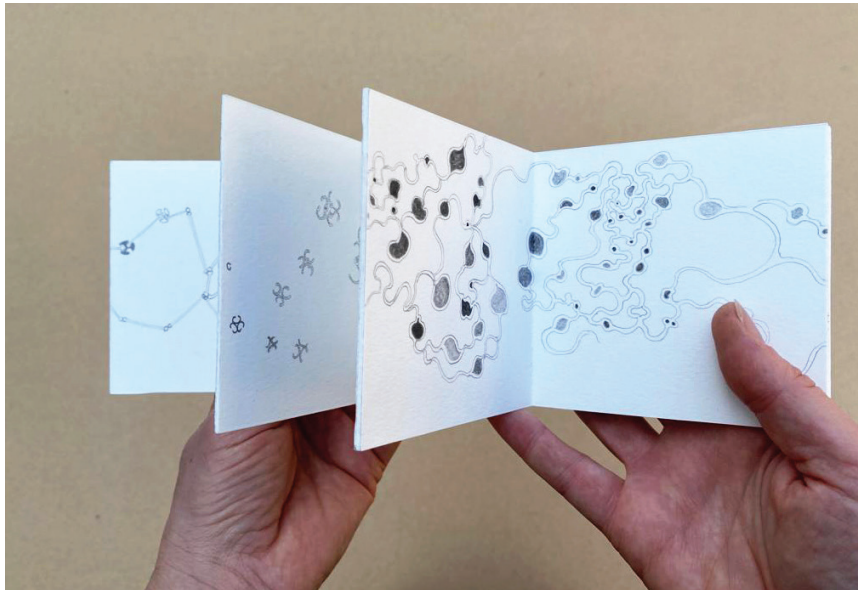
Sent: 3 December 2020, at 12:17



**Installation view**  
Ballinglen Arts Foundation Gallery, Co. Mayo, 2021



Installation view  
Mermaid Arts Centre, Co. Wicklow, 2022



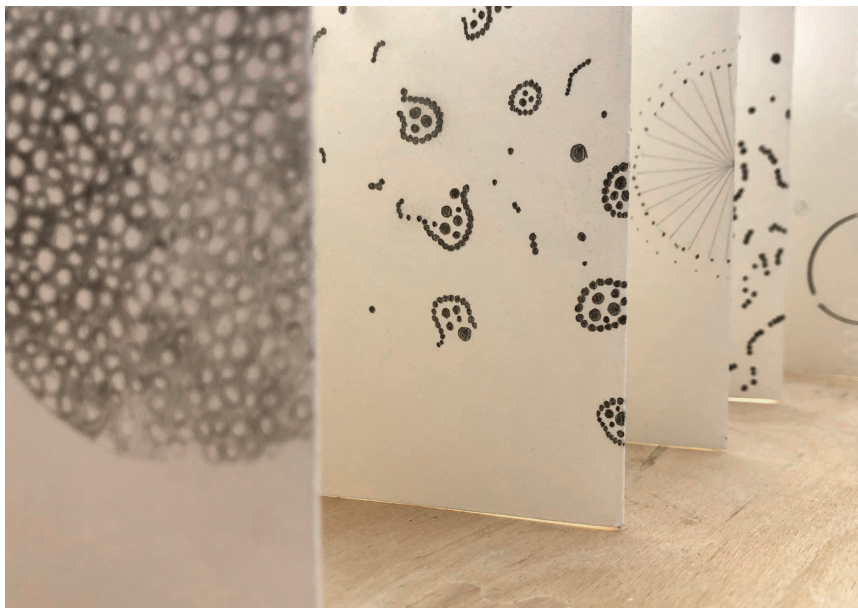
Sent: 3 Dec, 2020 at 08:20

Sent: 3 Dec, 2020 at 12:17

## Concertina

**BF:** How did your approach to drawing, sequential elements and surfaces alter when you used the folded concertina format?

**MG:** We adopted two distinct approaches using the concertina format. In one, the entire concertina was visible to both of us all the time. In the other, previous concertina spreads were wrapped and thus hidden, except for a tiny piece of the most recent drawing continuing onto the next blank spread as a prompt for the other. With both approaches, I found drawing on the concertinas to be an artistically emancipating experience. I did not have to concern myself with leaving openings for Joanna within each section of my drawing. I also found it helpful to know that my drawing would not be subjected to subsequent modification or deletion. It was still very much a collaborative drawing process – probably the one that I enjoyed the most within the project.



Sent: 7 Dec, 2020 at 13:03

**JK:** The process of making the concertina drawings together was completely different from making two-dimensional drawings together. For me, the format invited a greater degree of imagination and playfulness. There was an ease with making these drawings, akin to doodling. With the approach of keeping the concertina wrapped whilst making, we were working largely from the memory of the additions each of us had previously made. This created a kind of linear narrative and sequence for me in these drawings which was not part of the two-dimensional drawings.

### Concertina 2

2018-2020, pencil and marker on paper, 10 x 115cm

### Concertina 3 (detail)

2018-2020, pencil and pastel on paper, 20 x 145cm

## Layering & the Palimpsest

**BF:** How important is the idea of layering and the palimpsest to the collaborative encaustic drawings?

**JK:** The encaustic drawings evolved through adding many layers of paint – with varying degrees of translucency and opacity – each holding parts of the drawing within. I use a lot of scraping with encaustic to erase, edit and make hidden information visible again.

As with a palimpsest, I also radically erased/scraped away to start over with a number of our drawings which seemed to be at a dead end. (It should be noted that Michael has remained extraordinarily tolerant of my brutal erasure and subtraction habits throughout the collaboration!). This combination of layering and scraping creates an optical depth containing fragments of the drawing, sometimes only faintly visible, relating to the palimpsest.

**MG:** I am very drawn to the intriguing visual properties of drawings layered in translucent wax and find the illusion of optical depth particularly fascinating. I enjoyed experimenting with fineness of line and colour perspective to optimise this illusion. In the large encaustic drawings, successive layers of wax and drawings act like multiple geological strata by imparting a timeline and a sense of sequence. It is possible to peer deep into the wax and find tiny 'fossilised' fragments that subsequently evolved into drawings in the upper layers. The unique properties of encaustic and Joanna's accomplished manipulation of it allowed us to develop highly complex multiple-layered drawings that would probably be unachievable (or undecipherable) using other mediums.

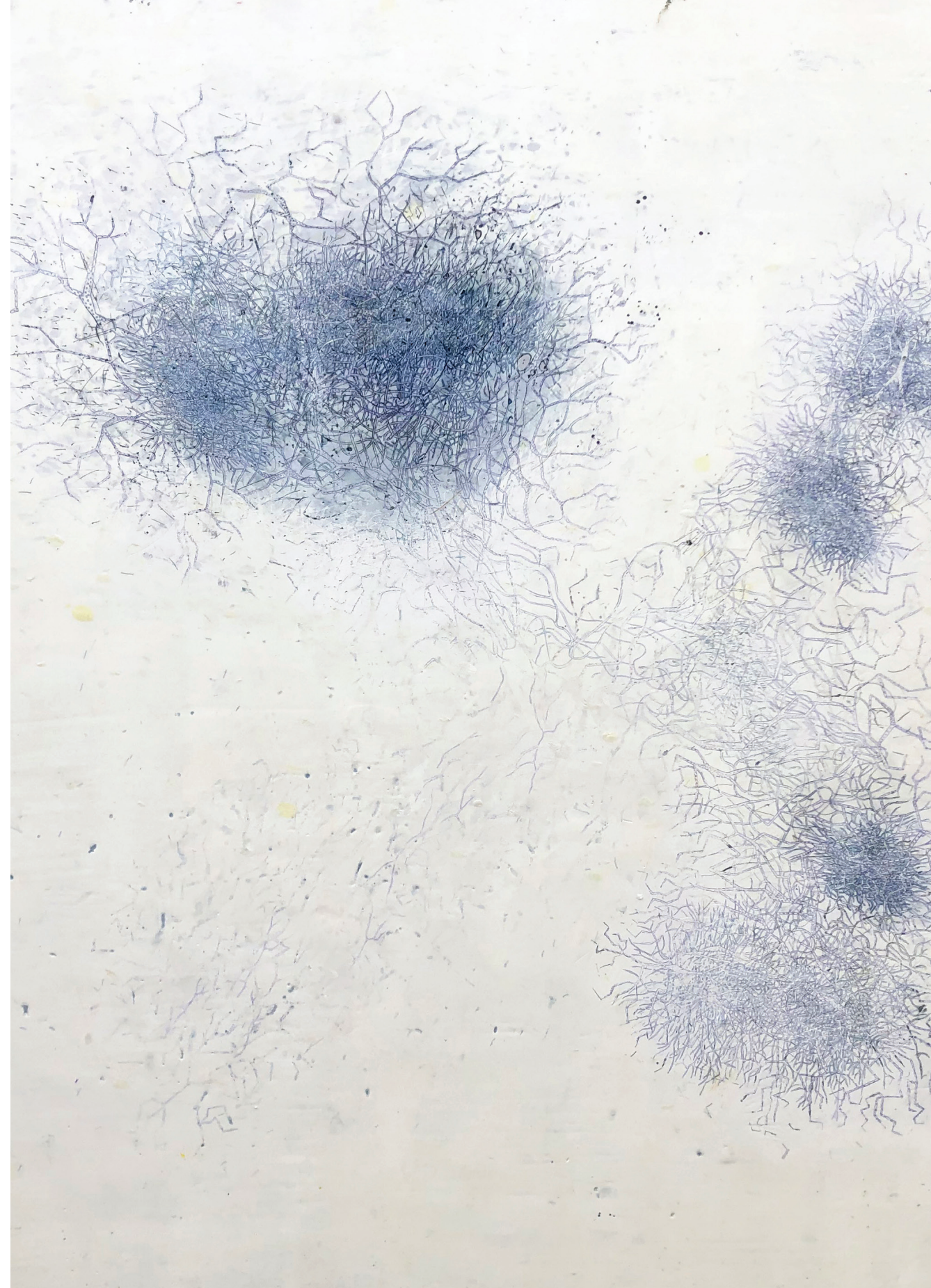
Brian Fay is an artist and Senior Lecturer in Fine Art and Visual Culture at Technological University Dublin.

**360-11** (detail)  
2019-2020, encaustic on panel, 100 x 100cm

Sent: 7 December 2020, at 16.54

Sent: December 8, 2020, at 18.51

Sent: December 9, 2020, at 09.57





**Installation view**  
Mermaid Arts Centre, Co. Wicklow, 2022

**Installation view**  
Mermaid Arts Centre, Co. Wicklow, 2022

**363-15 (detail) right**  
2019-2020, encaustic and oil on panel, 100 x 100cm



## Michael Geddis

Northern Irish visual artist/retired veterinary surgeon Dr Michael Geddis specialises in very finely detailed drawing. He delights in the elegance of natural forms/patterns and finds microscopic structures particularly inspirational for his intuitive work. His degree show (2013) drew acclaim at national level (James White Prize for Drawing at the RDS's Annual Student Awards).

Subsequently, several awarded residencies/bursaries, collaborations and a series of projects funded by the National Lottery through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland [ACNI] underpinned his artistic development. His work is included in the art collections of the National Gallery of Ireland, Office of Public Works, Northern Ireland Civil Service, ACNI, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Ulster University. He has exhibited widely across Ireland as well as England, Finland, Sweden and Washington DC. Geddis was awarded the Royal Ulster Academy's Drawing Prize (2019) and the Anna Cheyne Biennial Award (2017).

[www.michaelgeddisart.co.uk](http://www.michaelgeddisart.co.uk)

## Joanna Kidney

Joanna Kidney's practice considers the sensory, holistic, temporal and interconnected aspects of being human. It is concerned with the non-material, that which is not visible and concrete. Using the language of abstraction, her work is an enquiry of the mark and the line through drawing, painting and physical space.

She has exhibited in Solo and Group Exhibitions in Ireland, France, Germany, UK and USA. As well as her individual art practice, she works collaboratively and in collectives. She is the recipient of Arts Council of Ireland and Wicklow County Council funding; a Royal Hibernian Academy Studio Award and a Dublin Institute of Technology Award of Excellence. International residencies include Swarthmore College, Philadelphia, Kiðjaberg, Iceland and Brigham Young University, Utah. She is a co-founding member of Outpost Artists Studios, Co. Wicklow. Her work is held in Irish and International public and private collections.

[www.joannakidney.com](http://www.joannakidney.com)

## Brian Fay

Brian Fay lives and works in Dublin. Working through drawing he uses the materiality of pre-existing artworks and objects to examine our complex relationship to time. He exhibits nationally and internationally and has recently been invited on to the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation Residency Programme. He was recently awarded a Three Year Membership Studios at Temple Bar Gallery and Studios, Dublin.

His work is in the National Drawing Collection Ireland, and collections of The Crawford Art Gallery, DLR Art Collection, Office of Public Works and numerous private collections. He holds a practice led PhD from Northumbria University, England, entitled States of Transience: Drawing practices and the conservation of museum artworks. He is the winner of the 2014 Derwent International Drawing Prize, the 2016 AXA Drawing Prize and is a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at TU Dublin.

[www.brianfayartist.com](http://www.brianfayartist.com)

## Dr. Doris Rohr

Dr. Doris Rohr's practice involves drawing, writing and the spaces in between; a paper-based practice that frequently involves the outdoor. Fieldwork consists of walking, haptic interaction with place and notebook activities underpinned by phenomenological encounter. Outreach activities involving drawing with members of the public, form an important aspect to Rohr's understanding of the value of drawing, creativity and art.

Dr. Doris Rohr is board member of Florence Arts Centre, Egremont, Cumbria, where she is part of the curatorial team. She is an editorial board member and co-founder of Intellect Journal Drawing Research Theory and Practice. Most recently she co-edited DRTP Volume 6, Number 1, (2021) with the editorial 'Drawingability' together with Dr Claire Penketh (Head of Disability Studies, Liverpool Hope University). She is a member of The Drawing Journal, a collective of seven drawing artists, has been producing collective drawings through mail art initiatives, the outcomes have been virtually exhibited at the Dillon Gallery, Culturlann, Belfast in 2020/21, and can be found via the archive.

[www.imageofthought.com](http://www.imageofthought.com)

This book has been published to archive merge**emerge**, the 5 year collaboration by Michael Geddis and Joanna Kidney. It was exhibited in Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Co. Mayo, 2021 and Mermaid Arts Centre, Co. Wicklow, 2022.

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