

Alchemy Mindscapes - Reaction:Interaction (2020)

With a lot of my previous work I have experimented using ink or paint on wet watercolour paper, which gives a fluid and soft result. The wet paper technique is very common to watercolourists, but I wanted to delve further, and create images where only the initial stages of application were directed, and the rest evolved naturally as a result of those first decisions. I aimed to create a directional aspect, aiming for extended, tree-like forms, but beyond that, the result would be akin to a chemical alchemy, images would emerge randomly, and be dictated only by the points at which the ink was applied, its density, and the wetness of the paper. The resulting experiments on this basis were not very interesting, so I added two more controlling factors to the process, which were the application of silver paint, and/or salt, while the ink was still wet. This allowed me to further interact with the random shapes as they formed.

The intervention of the extra media had to be fast and intuitive, because the ink soon dried to the point of not being fluid enough to move any further, and then the image would become fixed. This element of speed created a sense of urgency which is apparent in the final works. They often end up resembling an image comparable to a strange, fantastical forest.