

CHRISTINA PARKER

GALLERY

CAROL BAJEN-GAHM GROUNDED IN THE LITTORAL

This week I dipped a clump of grass in some red ochre silt I found alongside the path and threw it on an unstretched canvas; last week I took a piece of muslin out of the composter. Sometimes Asian paper or canvas sits outside for weeks with rusty metal and plant roots leaving natural patterns sometimes investigated by ants and worms. I am grounding my work using silt, sand, dirt clods, soaked grasses, seaweed, rusty metal, buried material and ashes.

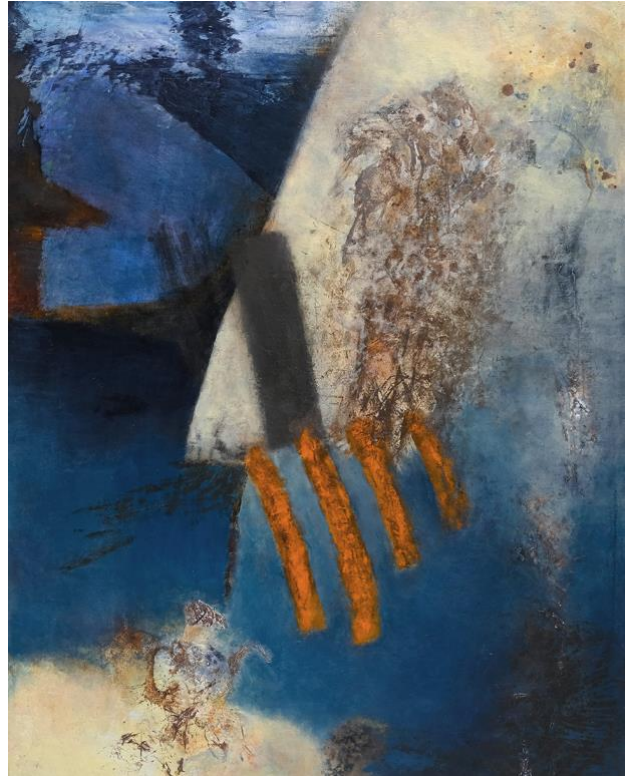
I had become trapped by painting on boards, but a new approach using unstretched canvas has given me a great freedom to experiment. I have broadened the range of the processes I use to begin my work. Although I still use oil, cold wax, and printed images, my palette has expanded to include inks, acrylic mediums, graphite, and pigmented encaustic gesso.

Nature inspires me as I work with its raw power and fierce beauty to create an environment for my work. The constant changes of light and weather that engulf me in my shoreside studio have always been a part of my paintings, but now I am inviting nature to physically join in the dance, using materials not necessarily considered beautiful to make layers that end up as interesting textures, to create an atmosphere that comes together and breathes together.

The musician John Cage would use readings from the *I Ching* to determine what notes he would use in a composition to "let the sounds be themselves". That same sense of chance plays a large part in my practice.

I am working with atmospheric settings that create an environment for my paintings.

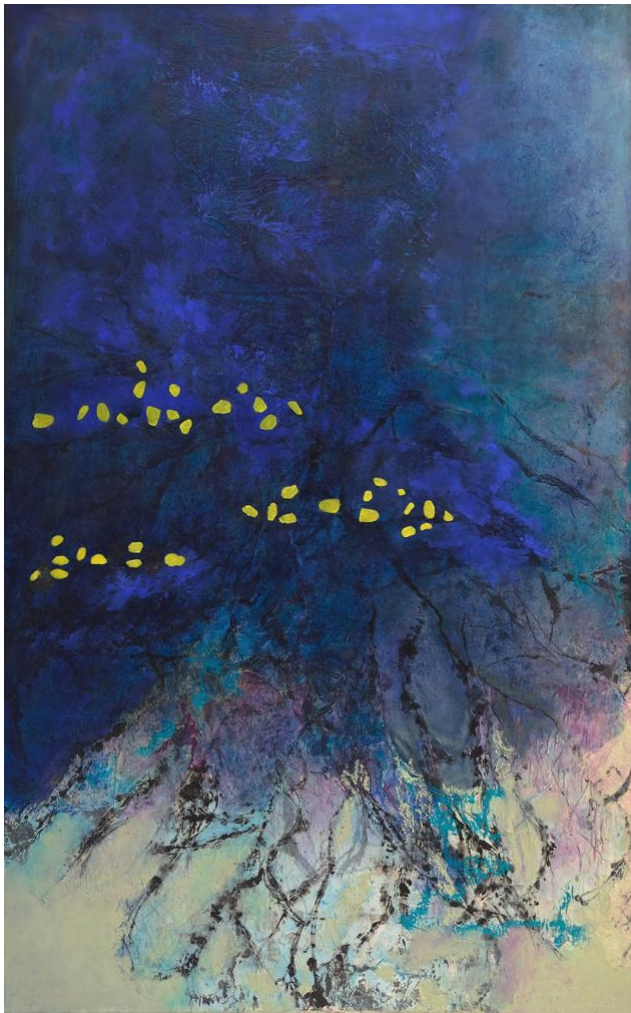
— Carol Bajen-Gahm, 2024



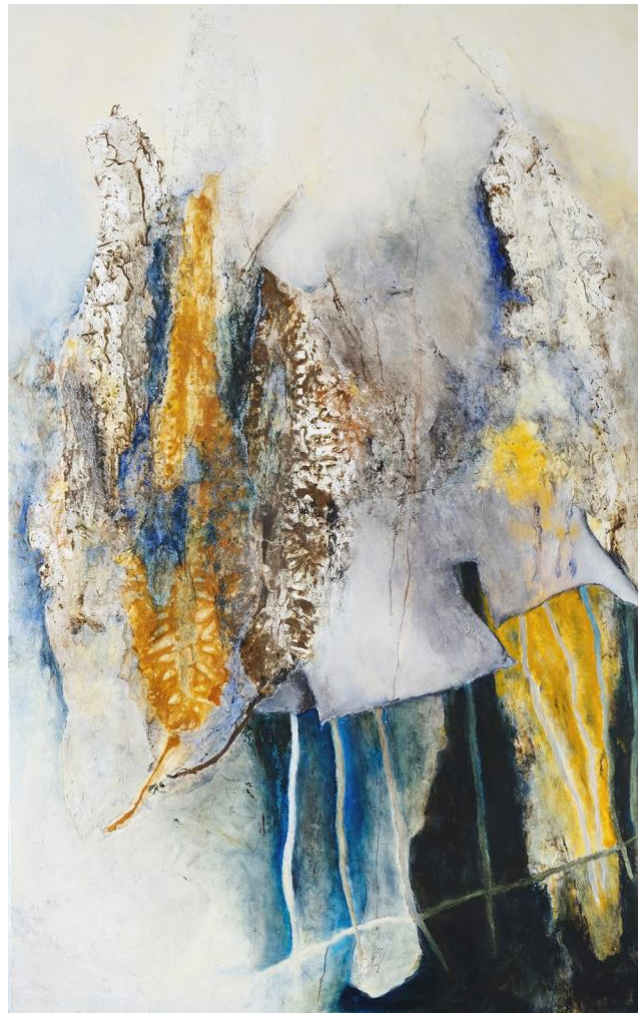
Rocky Path, Acrylic, graphite, ochre silt, oil on canvas on board, 40 × 30", 2024



Ice Melt, Inks, rust, acrylic, grasses, watercolour, oil on canvas, 36 × 36", 2024



Twilight, Inks, acrylic, oil, seaweed prints on Asian paper on canvas, 56 × 35", 2024



Cod Flake Echoes #2, Inks, acrylic, seaweed contact prints on Asian paper, oil on canvas, 56 × 35", 2023

CAROL BAJEN-GAHM is an artist from Massachusetts who first came to Newfoundland for a painting residency in 2002. Affected by the light, landscape, and people of Newfoundland, she and her husband bought a house and studio in Torbay.

Carol has a multidisciplinary master's degree from UMass Amherst from both the music and art departments. She now concentrates on her abstract oil and mixed media works which explore the effects of nature, place and time on the inner and outer landscape. She likes to investigate dark spaces, tangled areas, time shifts and spatial juxtapositions in her work.

Carol's work has been exhibited at Art Toronto, in Austria, and in the United States in New York City, Kingston NY, Boston, and western Massachusetts.



Old Ochre Moon, Oil, acrylic, seaweed prints on Asian paper on canvas, 44 × 56", 2024