

"I paint representational pictures of emotional situations"
Howard Hodgkin

"I paint emotional situations of representational pictures"
Karen Woods

I am primarily an oil painter whose subject (primarily!) is a traveler's view looking through a window of a moving vehicle. The images are made using photos taken from inside different modes of transportation (cars, airplanes, ferries) and often, though not always, in rainy weather.

After selecting a photograph from many possible prints, the painting process begins by loosely brushing in the image's main components. Then gradually, layer upon layer, the painting is refined until I've communicated its essence--not the essence of the photograph, but of the original experience. Its consequent realism is not an end, but a means of conveyance. The realism allows the viewer to enter into and share the experience. The painting reclaims the moment, explores its detail, and mines its emotional content. Nostalgic reverie is not the intent; rather, I aim to magnify that moment, scrutinize it, and perhaps reach a new understanding of it. These paintings are about freezing and compressing time; then elongating and decelerating it.

But they are also about roads: motorways and waterways. If the road is a common metaphor for the journey of a life, then taking snapshots and painting from them is an attempt to capture a moment in that journey. The click of a camera freezes an image that subsequently takes hours, days, weeks to paint. The difference in length of time and amount of effort between snapping the picture and creating the painting echoes the difference between the ease of blithely passing time versus the hard work of living an examined life. I create new space for contemplation and examination, both during the painting process and in the finished pieces. Throughout my years-long fixation with the familiar themes of driving, traveling and commuting, I'm also asserting that even the most mundane activities provide occasions worthy of serious reflection.