

After Seamus Heaney, Irish Artist Sarah Dwyer Paints Her Native Country in Surreal Abstraction

The London-based Irish artist [Sarah Dwyer's Surrealistically tinged](#) and compositionally dense paintings find their genesis in memories of personal loss and the landscapes of the artist's native Ireland.

ARTSY EDITORIAL

JUN 16TH, 2015 2:12 PM



Sarah Dwyer
Hepzibah, 2015
Jane Lombard Gallery



Sarah Dwyer
Eluku, 2015
Jane Lombard Gallery



Sarah Dwyer
Brie Eile, 2015
Jane Lombard Gallery

Dwyer's latest show at [Jane Lombard Gallery](#), "[Sunk Under](#)," the artist's first in New York, takes its name from the poem "Bogland" by the Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney—a poet best known for his lush descriptions of the famed Irish terrain as an entrance point into Irish identity. In Heaney's poem, he speaks to those swampy, mysterious ecosystems as he experienced them as a child.



Sarah Dwyer
The Itinerant, 2015
Jane Lombard Gallery
SOLD



Sarah Dwyer
Lask Edge, 2015
Jane Lombard Gallery



Sarah Dwyer
Yoked Together, 2015
Jane Lombard Gallery

Dwyer has chosen to bring these paintings under the banner of that poem, creating works based on enduring memories buried deep within her chosen medium; working over her paintings in multiple layers, erasing and filling in thin lines with bold colors, she strives to retain the impulsive nature of drawing while deploying uniquely painterly techniques. Her gracefully winding shapes and the tactile feeling of her compositions have placed her practice within the legacy of such painters as Willem de Kooning and Arshile Gorky.



Sarah Dwyer
Eatramh, 2015
Jane Lombard Gallery

In “Sunk Under,” Dwyer’s large-scale abstractions have been hung in a meticulous progression, the half-forgotten fragments that form her nebulous shapes placed in order to complement each other in the gallery. Working often from the written word—whether expressly, in terms of the painting’s title, or simply by using fragments of poems like Heaney’s as loose inspiration—Dwyer’s work is the result of a winding, dynamic process of translation. The artist also draws on mythology, literature, newspaper clippings, and folklore to create her unique and dynamic memory paintings.

—Molly Osberg

“Sunk Under” is on view at Jane Lombard Gallery, May 14th–Jun. 27th, 2015.