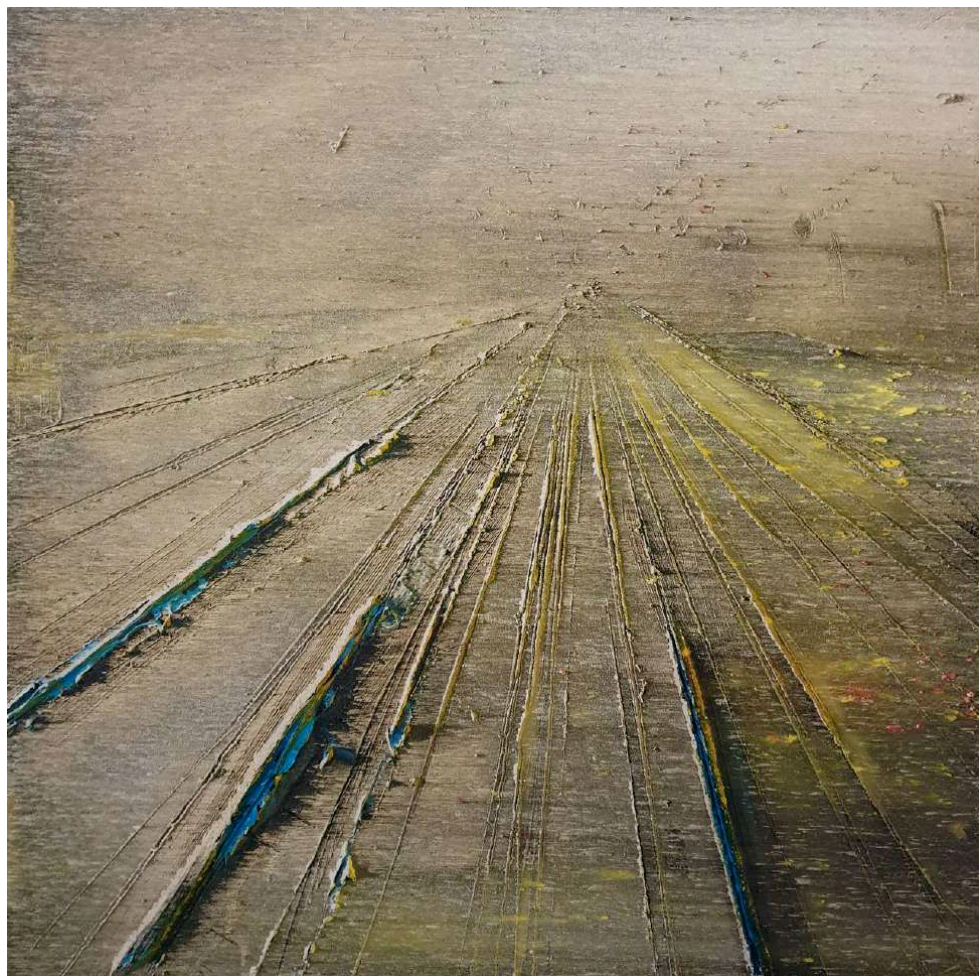


# AUTUMN EXHIBITION

*From this Land*



The Walks : Land Residency

MELANIE COMBER

GS

GALLOPER-SANDS  
*Fine Art & Artisan Crafts*

# INTRODUCTION

It is a great pleasure to be able to welcome Melanie Comber's beautiful work back to the farm for the Autumn 2020 programme, which also sees the launch of our new year-round online gallery Galloper-Sands. We last showed Melanie's paintings at the farm in 2015 as part of the Alde Valley Spring Festival Exhibition. Six paintings were presented as a group, hung in a grid at one end of the farm's early 19<sup>th</sup> century Threshing Barn. Their presence was striking : a burst of vivid colours and dramatic patterns, all curiously reminiscent of farmland. One particular painting stood out. Its surface was a rich velvety earthy grey, laced with a dusting of silver and white pigments punctuated by sharp bursts of a bright yello-green. It reminded me of an emerging crop of winter barley that I had photographed on a field behind the farmyards called The Walks the previous New Year. Every field on the farm has a name. The Walks is one of the largest : a broad expanse of soft, flinty sand and sandy loam that sweeps across the horizon north of the farmyards. Its agricultural mapping code is Field TM 5362 2815 and it embraces 22 acres of land. Almost all of this was cultivated until 2009, when White House Farm, as part of a larger family owned farming business called Great Glemham Farms, entered a ten year Higher Level Stewardship agreement with Natural England. This helped finance the introduction of a wide range of conservation projects, all designed to boost biodiversity and restore landscape features.

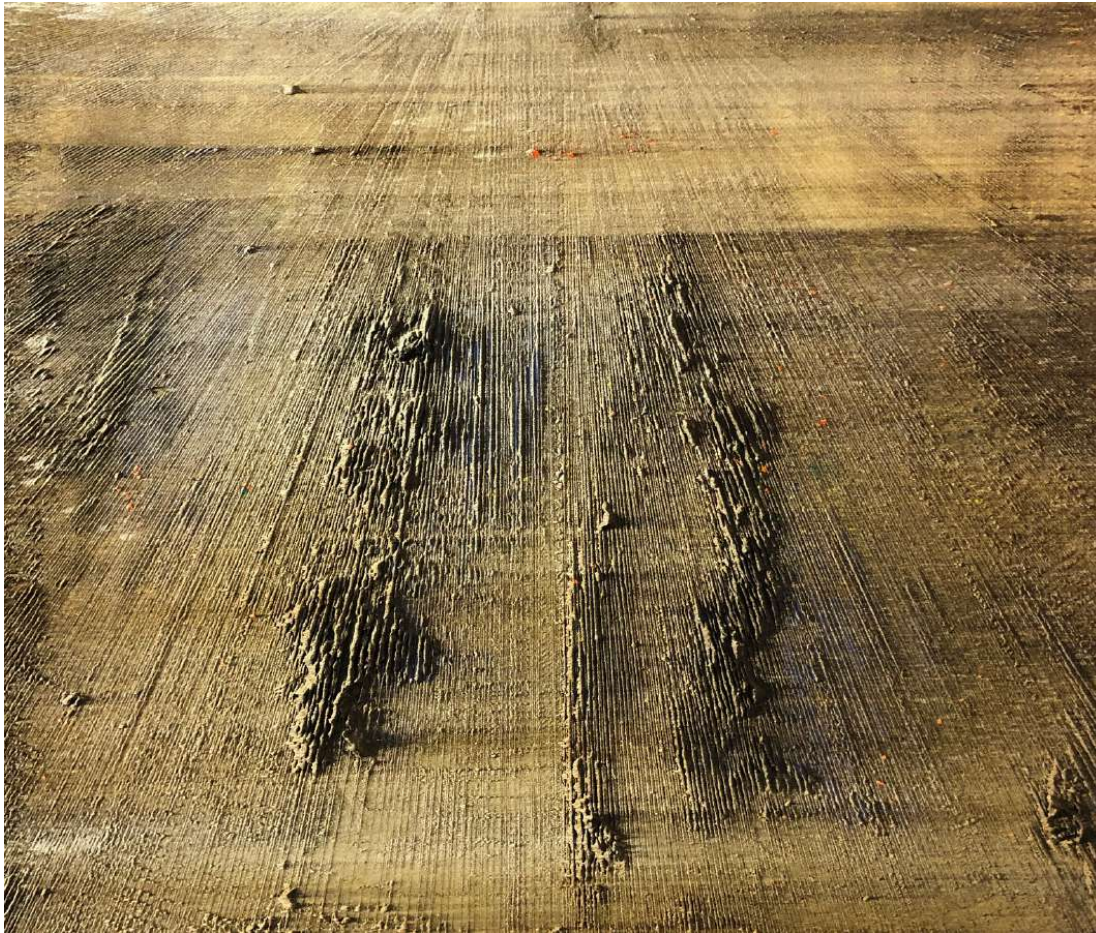
On the The Walks these interventions included the creation of a 6m grassy margin around the field, a new one acre woodland and two acres of Wild Bird Seed Mix : an annual crop of millet, mustard, fodder radish, triticale, sunflowers and *Phacelia* planted to provide food for songbirds in the winter months, with nectar in the summer for pollinating insects. In 2016 a 6m grass margin planted along the northern edge of the field was attracting skylarks – the first I had ever heard singing over the farm. Their song, drifting down from the summer sky above the field felt like an adornment or blessing upon the land. But it was fleeting – there was not enough grass for the birds to safely nest in. The following winter, we hand-seeded an extra 24m x 390m strip along the north edge of the field with drought tolerant wildflowers and grasses to create a much larger area of rough grassland. The skylarks came back and they now seem to be nesting there – whilst moths and other insects have returned in abundance. On another part of the field, we are teaming up with permaculture adviser Nigel McKean and gardener Sam Starke to explore market gardening for vegetable boxes and to test small plots of new food crops. In the meantime the remainder of the The Walks – a great sweep of free-draining sandy soil - is cultivated for crops grown by arable contractors FS Watts.

It is into this farming context that Melanie has been invited for a year long Land Residency at White House Farm to observe, reflect and interpret the landscape on and around The Walks field. It follows on from a previous year long residency *Field TM 3562 2815* with the artist and bronze caster Kabir Hussain in 2016/17; and co-incides with a Wool Residency *Across the Plough* offered to Sarah Butters to explore folk lore and oral history associated with ploughing, through wool work using fleeces from the farm's small flock of sheep. Melanie's residency will culminate in a Solo Exhibition of her work as part of our 2021 Autumn Programme. As a prelude to the The Walks Land Residency, we are delighted to offer a selection of beautiful new paintings made by Melanie before, during and after the recent lockdown. They are presented as a highlight of our autumn programme *From this Land* – and as central part of Galloper-Sands' inaugural exhibition.

Jason Gathorne-Hardy [Curator]. White House Farm. 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020.



# ARTIST'S STATEMENT



*Furrow, 2020. 1110mm Wx300mm. Oil and pigment on canvas.*

The force that drives my work is an intention to create paintings which allude to a sensory experience of 'place'. Generally that 'place' will exist in the real world, and sometimes it will exist within the possibilities of painting. It is always specific, there is a search within the work for something that is recognised through experience. It is a search for learning but also for familiarity.

These are monuments of personal experience .. moments in time .. an attempt to trap an incidence or an experience. I want to create a drawn space that exists somewhere between the use of an abstractly painted mark and a traditionally recognised landscape-depicting mark. I hope to find a place which is about the possibility of mark making, illusory space and an object which exists in three dimensions : literally a play between painting, photographic illusion and sculpture.

Recently the work has been focused on the depiction of a horizon line and asks various questions about scale. Often this will appear with reference to a landscape space and similarities will be drawn with a landing strip or a ploughed field, a landscape carved by man, or a trail left by an animal or insect or even an aerial view.

Melanie Comber. Rochester, Kent. August 2020.



# LAND RESIDENCY STATEMENT



The artist standing in The Walks field at White House Farm. September 2020.

I propose to make four designated visits to the site over the period of the next year. The purpose of these visits will be to collect and document information which will then be transported to my studio in London, where memory will also play a role in the creation of work. These visits will be September 22nd 2020 The Autumn Equinox, December 21st 2020 The Winter Solstice, March 20th 2021 The Spring Equinox and June 21st 2021 The Summer Solstice. Four defined points in time, of the natural calendar which I hope will inspire four significant paintings (as well as subsidiary works) which document the passing of time across a specific location : monuments of time and experience in that place.

Melanie Comber. Rochester, Kent. September 2020

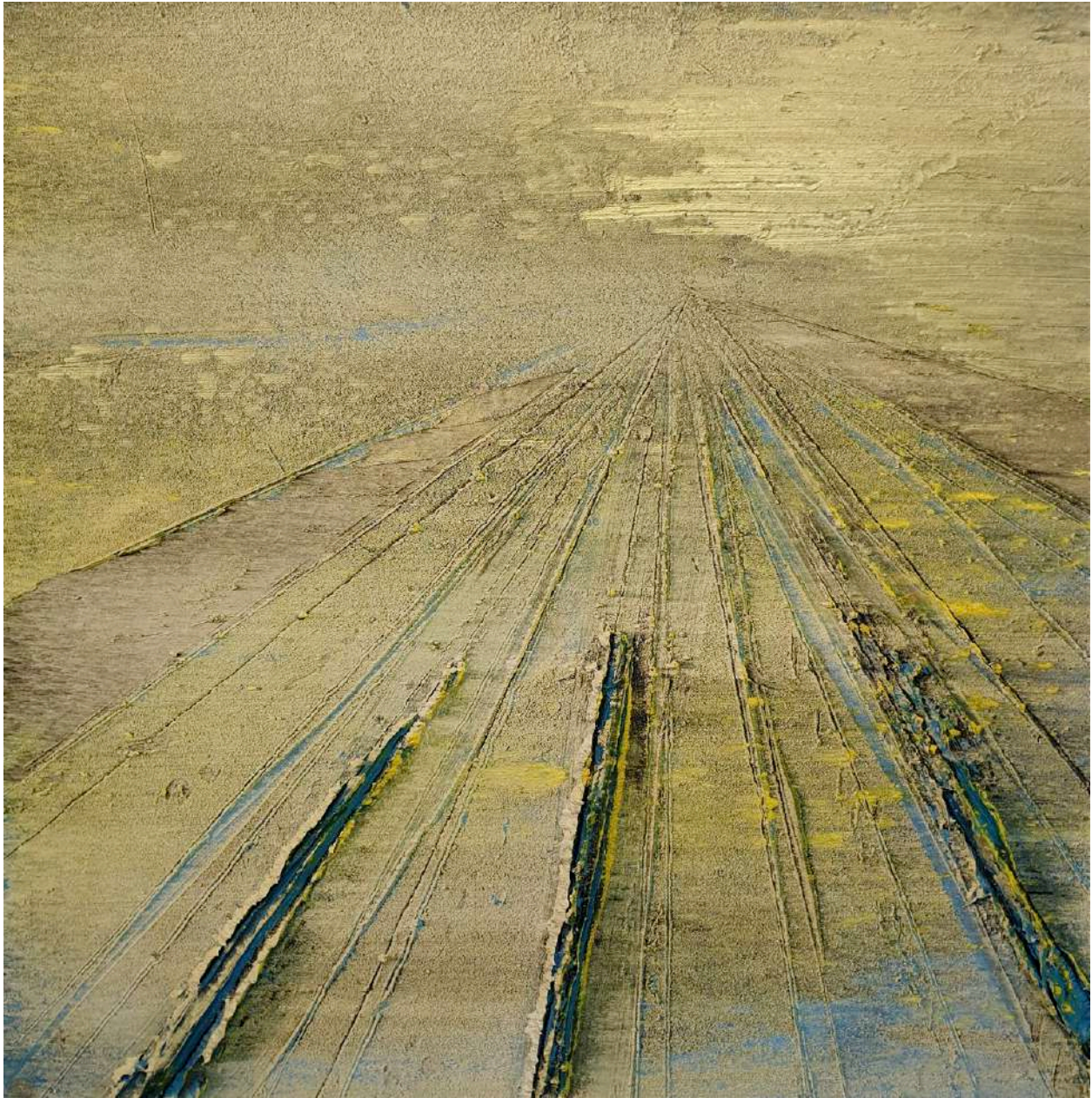




*Inward*, 2020. H800mm W800mm. Oil and pigment on canvas.

£5,000

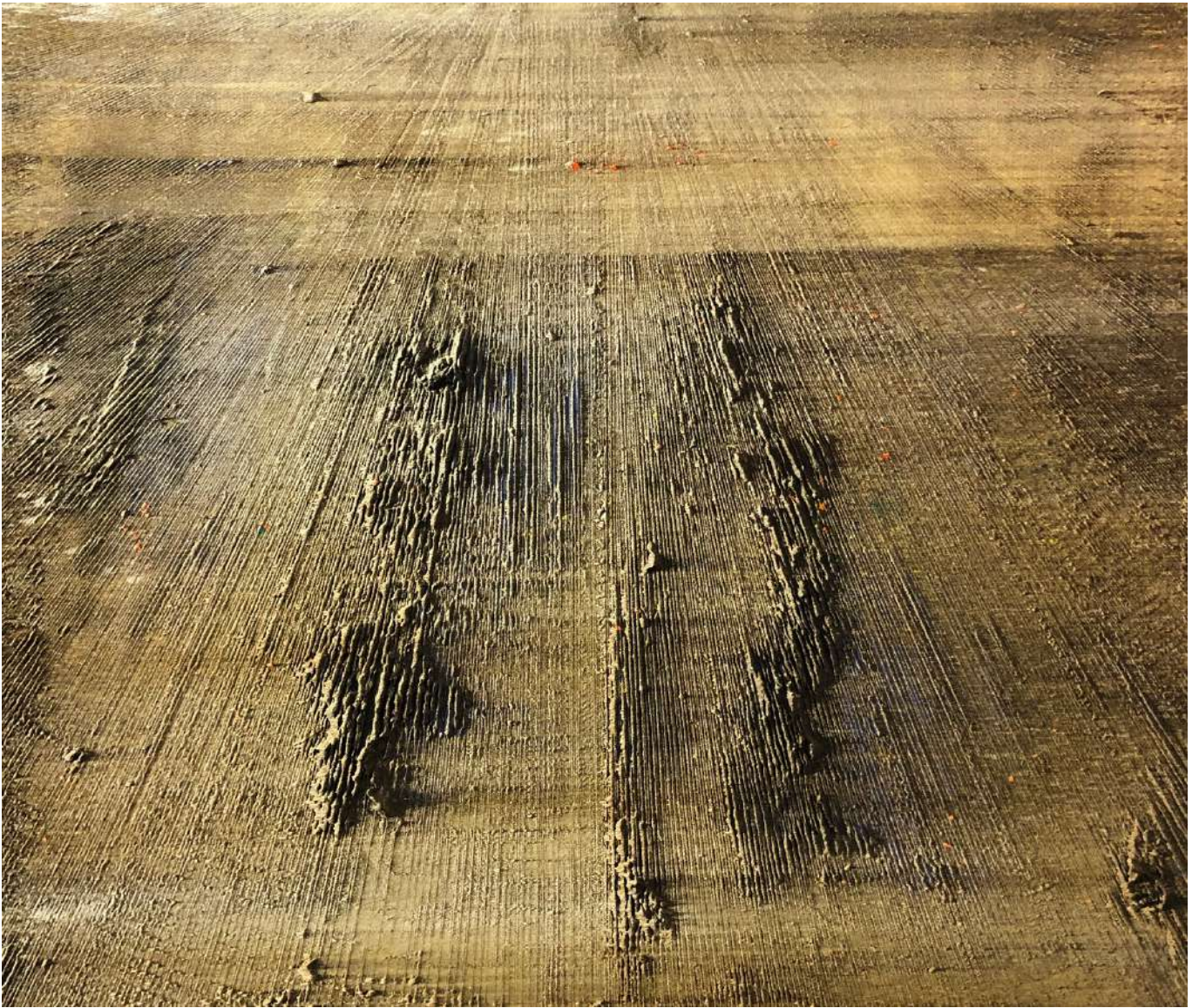




Outward from Ross & Rose

*Outward*, 2020. H800mm W800mm. Oil and pigment on canvas.  
£5,000





*Furrow*, 2020. Himm W300mm. Oil and pigment on canvas.

£8,000





*Breaking Ground 1*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475



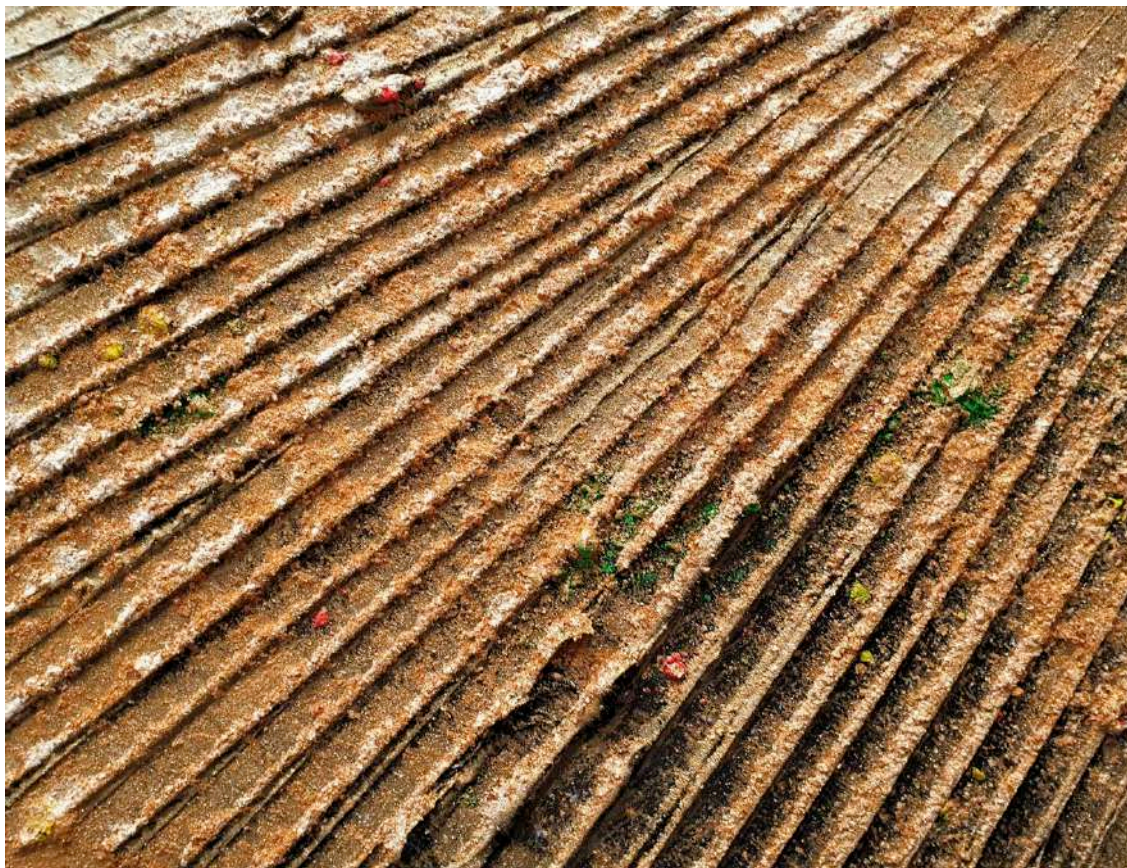


*Breaking Ground 2*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Breaking Ground 3*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Breaking Ground 4*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Breaking Ground 5*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Breaking Ground 6*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Breaking Ground 7*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Breaking Ground 8*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Breaking Ground 9*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Breaking Ground 10*, 2020. Oil and pigment on paper.

Framed H255mm W305mm.

£475





*Barrow*, 2020. H900mm W800mm. Oil and pigment on canvas.  
£5,500



# MELANIE COMBER

## ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

### EDUCATION

Foundation Diploma, Maidstone College of Art, 1989  
BA Hon Fine Art, Wimbledon School of Fine Art, 1993  
MA Fine Art Painting, Chelsea College of Art, 1994

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2013 *Tourist*, The Cat St Gallery , Hong Kong  
2011 *No Man's Land*, The Fine Art Society, London  
2008 *Daytripper*, The Fine Art Society, London.  
2007 *Snowglobe*, The Fine Art Society, London.  
2005 *Long Distance*, The Fine Art Society, London.  
2004 *Voyager*, Fosterart, London.  
2000 *Melanie Comber @ Hiscox Art Café*, London.  
2000 *Melanie Comber Paintings from Iceland*, The Blue Gallery, London.  
1998 *Heavy Breathing*, The Blue Gallery, London.  
1996 *Melanie Comber New Paintings*, The Blue Gallery, London.  
1995 *Melanie Comber Paintings*, The Blue Gallery, London

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2020 The London Art Fair Osborne Samuel Gallery  
Wells Art Contemporary  
2019 Space and Time Knightwebb Gallery London  
Summer Exhibition Campden Gallery  
The London Art Fair,  
2018 Winter Exhibition Lemond Gallery Edinburgh  
Another World Charity Auction Deutschebank Frieze London  
The RWA 166 Annual Exhibition, Bristol  
The Pittenweem Arts Festival 2018  
The London Art Fair  
2017 The Discerning Eye Mall Galleries London  
Small is Beautiful, Flowers Gallery London  
The RWA Academy Open 165 Bristol  
The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition.  
London Art Fair 2017 Osborne Samuel Gallery  
Palm Beach Modern and Contemporary  
2016 Art Miami with Osborne Samuel Gallery London  
Small is Beautiful Flowers Gallery London  
Art 16 London Unix Gallery New York  
Group Exhibition Unix Gallery Madison Avenue New York  
The Alde Valley Spring Festival Suffolk  
2015 In Visual Dialogue Unix Gallery New York  
Art Silicon Valley Unix Gallery New York



- Small is Beautiful Flowers Gallery London  
The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London  
The Alde Valley Spring Festival, Suffolk
- 2014 Art Taipei with The Cat St Gallery Hong Kong  
The Alde Valley Spring Festival, Suffolk
- 2013 Wonderworks The Cat Street Gallery Hong Kong  
The Alde Valley Spring Festival, Suffolk  
Postcard from my Studio, Acme Project Space London  
Signal 8 The Cat Street Gallery Hong Kong  
8 Studios From Here, Deptford X London  
8 Minutes From Here, The Royal Festival Hall, London
- 2012 The Materiality of Paint, The Fine Art Society London  
Small is Beautiful XXV Flowers London  
The British Cut The Cat St Gallery Hong Kong
- 2011 The Summer Exhibition, The Royal Academy, London  
Small is Beautiful XXIV Flowers London  
Kitchen Projects Trans Siberian Art Centre touring show.
- 2010 The Marmite Art Prize, Manchester, Coventry, London  
Small is Beautiful XXVIII Flowers Central London  
BFAMI Gala charity Auction Christies London
- 2009 Volta Basel, with the Fine Art Society.
- 2008 Scope London with the Fine Art Society.  
Scope Miami USA, with the Fine Art Society.
- 2007 Select, Bourne Fine Art, Edinburgh, Scotland.  
Monochromed 2, The Fine Art Society, London.
- 2006 Monochromed, The Fine Art Society, London.
- 2004 Small is Beautiful XXII, Flowers Central, London.
- 2003 3hree, Bcontemporary, London.  
Atlantic, Fosterart, London.
- 2002 Balmy Daze, Houldsworth Fine Art, London.
- 2001 Line Up, Gallery Fine, London.  
British Abstract Painting 2001, Flowers East, London.  
Boriginal, Bcontemporary, London.
- 1999 Bankside Browser, Tate Gallery, London.  
White Out, Gallery Fine, London.
- 1997 Focus, Claus Goedicke, Melanie Comber, Selfridges London .  
The Nat West Art Prize, Lothbury, London.  
Splash, British Art In America, Raw Gallery, New York.
- 1995 Elemental, The Blue Gallery, London.  
Tusk Force Auction, The Serpentine Gallery, London.
- 1994 SBC European Art Award, Swiss Bank House, London.  
The Contemporary Art Society Art Market, The Royal Festival Hall, London .  
No Turkeys, Raw Gallery, London.
- 1993 The New Art Award, Cubitt Street Gallery, London.



## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

*Heavy Breathing*, The Blue Gallery, Published by The Pale Green Press (1998).

*The Nat West Art Prize 1997*, Published by Weald Press.

*66 degrees,33'N, 18 degrees,01W*, The Blue Gallery Published by The Pale Green Press.

*Artworks, British and German Contemporary Art 1960 -2000* (ISBN 1 85894 118 0) Published by Merrell.

*British Abstract Painting 2001* Matthew Collings (ISBN 1 902 945 271) Published by Momentum.

*Long Distance*, The Fine Art Society (ISBN 0 905062191)

*Snowglobe*, The Fine Art Society (ISBN 978 0905062 396)

*Daytripper*, The Fine Art Society (ISBN 978 0905062 556)

*Monochromed*, The Fine Art Society (ISBN 0 905 062 302)

## COLLECTIONS

Deutschebank, Coutts, RBS, Hiscox, RGB Underwriting, Jupiter, Pantheon Ventures, The David Roberts Foundation, Sainsburys and numerous private collections in the UK and abroad.

## AWARDS

1997 Prizewinner The Nat West Art Prize, London.

1994 Finalist SBC European Art Award, London.

1993 Finalist The New Art Award, London

Galloper-Sands is the online gallery for The Alde Valley Spring Festival Ltd

Company No 7592977 [www.aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk](http://www.aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk)

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