Difficult Conversations

In partnership with:

Ulster University
UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
Difficult Conversations

Published by British Council Northern Ireland in collaboration with the British Council Research & Insight team

https://nireland.britishcouncil.org/
https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight
http://adifficultconversation.com

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DOI
https://doi.org/10.57884/002G-DA22

Acknowledgements
The Editors wish to thank the British Council and the British Council UK/Australia 2021–2022 Season for their generous support for the difficult conversations project and in doing so fostering a global partnership between the University of Canberra and Ulster University. In particular we acknowledge the work of Camilla Rous, Jonathan Stewart, Helen Salmon and James Perkins. We also wish to thank Cian Smyth for his significant contribution to the design and development of the difficult conversations 2022 symposium and website, Ben Ennis Butler for design of the project website and all those who participated in these important forerunners to this edited volume. We are grateful to the anonymous reviewers in the United Kingdom and Australia who offered their expertise and comments to authors and editors on this manuscript, and to Pablo Rossello, Rosanna Lewis, Jenny Daly, and Nikki Locke of the British Council for their helpful feedback and support.

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The British Council is the United Kingdom’s international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. A registered charity: 209131 (England and Wales) SC037733 (Scotland).
Golden Delicious/ Midnight Feast
Louise Wallace

My research relates the feminine to the landscape in a way that problematises historical readings of place and Irish cultural identity. I visit overlooked sites, specifically the gardens of Lenadoon, an emergency housing estate in West Belfast. In this way I insert a specific, marginalised space and community into painting’s history. Through my field work I find surprising correlations between local garden decoration, art history and mythology. Both *Golden Delicious* (Fig. 1) and *Midnight Feast* (Fig. 2) interrogate the conflation of the female body with the land, especially tricky art historical images of Mother Ireland. My work is playful and surreal, focusing on a bird feeder in a neighbouring garden, which looks monstrously feminine in the twilight. The garden ponds and rolling topography can sometimes look like fruit which in turn resembles body parts. The effect is deliberately humorous and disconcerting, offering an alternative viewpoint on Irish femininity.
Figure 1. Louise Wallace, ‘Golden Delicious’, oil on canvas, 53x64cm, 2022. Image: Simon Mills (2022)
Figure 2. Louise Wallace, ‘Midnight Feast’, oil on canvas, 53x64cm, 2022. Image: Simon Mills (2022)