

# Art Talk Collective

Artist To Watch | Paul McCloskey



*Awakening Reloaded in Violet. 42cm X 30cm*

Irish artist Paul McCloskey discusses his newest three dimensional oil painted landscapes, his dynamic contrast palette and their spiritual qualities.

Paul McCloskey was born in Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan, Ireland and is now living and working in Gorey Co. Wexford. Paul attended the National College of Art and Design (N.C.A.D) Dublin). He also attended De Montfort University UK and was awarded a Master's Degree in Fine art (MFA) in 2010. Paul is a professional member of 'visual artists Ireland'. He has exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally throughout the UK, London, Venice, Paris, Macedonia and New York.

**AT:** *Growing up and currently residing in Ireland, how has being surrounded by this beautiful landscape transformed your work?*

**PM:** *Without a doubt the varied landscape in Ireland from north to south and east to west is beautiful, however it's the light that's really special, fleeting, varied and fluctuating light often transforming a familiar landscape into something new and changing one's focus on varying aspects*

*of a scene. Highlighting the seemingly ordinary and transforming it into something extraordinary. A simple break in clouds can transmute a scene with endless variations.*

**AT:** *When discussing your oil paintings, your palette has such a vibrant contrast between dark and light that seem to just spark on the canvas. What inspires this energy on the canvas? What inspires your colour palette?*

**PM:** *Certainly my trilogy series 'The Alpha' 'Reloaded' and the 'Omega' have strong light and dark contrasting elements, in this series I wanted to place emphases on the emerging light to yes highlight the ordinary, the luminosity of light and colour is central to all the work, light being used to reflect birth or life; for without light there is no life. but more importantly to suggest a personal growth towards enlightenment towards an awakening. The dark into light is very much a spiritual representation for me. The Awakening trilogy is consciously addressing the three parts of the whole, mind, body and spirit.*

**AT:** *You have worked in both abstraction and figurative, do you prefer one to the other? Does one provide something the other does not?*

**PM:** *I prefer to abstract the subject rather than meticulously represent what is in front of me, my work is mainly based on landscape, this is the starting point based on a accumulation of memories, interpretation and surrounding views. Landscape gives the viewer an initial starting point a familiar focus which invites them in, once in then the work is open to the viewers interpretation based on their own memories, emotions and mood. Abstraction allows for this emotional interaction both for me the artist and the viewer. However process is primary for me, the act of doing of allowing is where the magic happens irrespective of the subject.*



***Installation view of The Omega 3D. 2018. Courtesy of the artist.***



***Installation view of The Omega 3D. 2018. Courtesy of the artist.***

**AT:** *Your newest work, the Omega Series, combines your abstract painting style with that of 3D rotating cubes, allowing the viewer to experience the paintings from an entirely different perception. What inspired this shift towards 3D?*

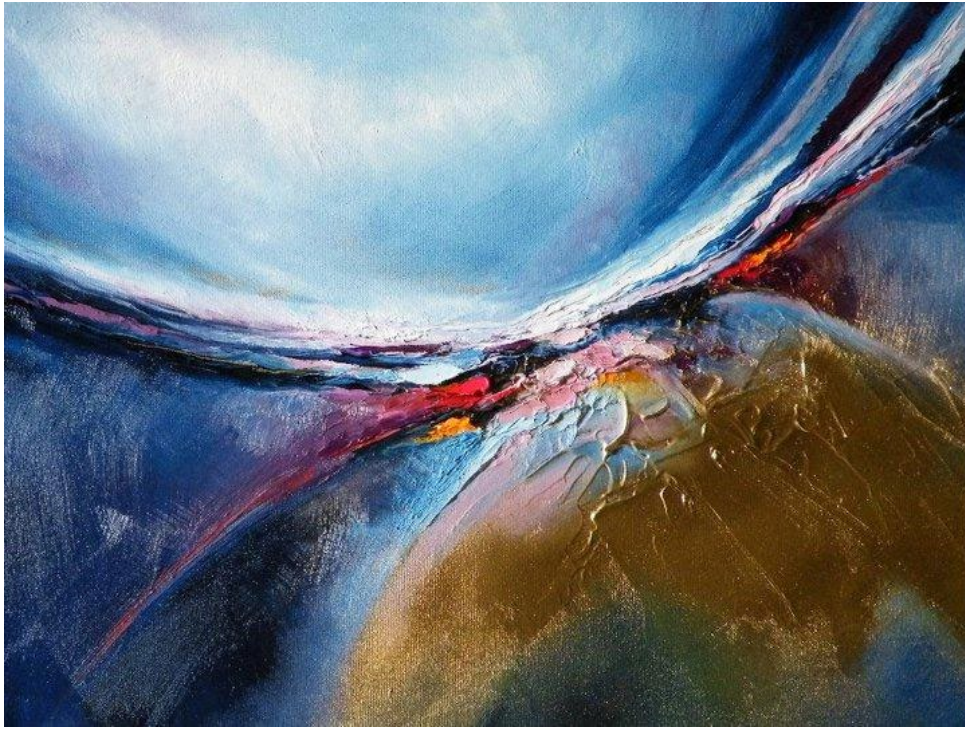
**PM:** *The Omega 3D is the third and final instalment of the Awakening series, here I decided to work in three dimensions as a way of representing the Divine or spiritual aspect of my work, suggesting that the spiritual is all things, in all directions at once. I worked on the cubes to challenge myself to resolve pictorial complications not just on a 2D surface but to think in 3D as I worked and also to hold the spectator's interest hopefully enticing them into my visual world. The suggestion of heaven and earth in constant struggle, merging yet separable, solid yet amorphous all suggest the multidimensional nature of the spiritual, the beginning and the end, the alpha and omega, the struggle within, between the conditioned self and the divine/spiritual self.*

**AT:** *What other artists have inspired your work or artistic education?*

**PM:** *I admire many artists, but the Irish painter Jack Yeats was certainly one of my earliest inspirations. I like expressive works that convey an atmosphere or mood. However, Mark Rothko's chapel series of paintings convey a quiet spirituality and are very powerful in their simplicity.*

**AT:** *Going forward, what are some of your goals for your art? Anything you would be interested in experimenting with?*

**PM:** *I'm currently working on a new series again based on landscape, where my pallet is considerably brighter and fresher, I'm constantly looking to convey that seemingly ever elusive magic and wonder of nature, to show that we are all one and of the same, connected to the world around us. The process of creating is a spiritual act for me, to paint with truth, one must first be truly present. Everything happens in the present moment, painting reinforces this truth for me.*



*Awakening Reloaded blue and gold. 62cm X 62cm*



*Awakening Reloaded in Blue-green2. 42cm X 30cm*