



Patrick Hall

Beginnings

The Model 

Patrick Hall | Beginnings

Curated by Nick Miller

The Model
home of The Niland Collection

23 Oct. - 23 Dec. 2021

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Patrick Hall; *Beginnings*, curated by fellow artist and friend Nick Miller, brings together works from the past and present of Hall's long artistic career. The title of the show nods to the courageous nature at the heart of his work, as Hall approaches the act of drawing and painting with a beginner's mind, an attitude of intention that is core to both spiritual and creative practice. Both Hall and Miller are deeply alert to the present moment, and it is in this space that Miller finds common ground with Hall. Conversations on Sundays in Hall's studio in South Sligo form a chain of responses, reflections and observations, which Miller assembles in this essay. Previously unseen drawings and paintings are shown for the first time in this unique and very personal show. A long-time friend of Hall's, Miller offers a unique and intimate perspective on the day-to-day life of the artist, in this thought-provoking text.

Born in 1932 in Co. Tipperary, Patrick Hall attended Central St. Martins and Chelsea School of Art in London. Time spent living in Spain from 1966 is described vividly in Miller's essay. Hall returned to Ireland in 1974 and has continued his practice as a painter for over 60 years. Motifs in his paintings have become untethered throughout the decades, only to re-appear in almost abstract or angelic form in later works. Patrick Hall was elected a member of Aosdána in 1982 and his work is included in private and public collections, nationally and internationally.

Nick Miller was born in London in 1962, and moved to Ireland in 1984 to pursue painting, and has exhibited widely including solo shows at The Irish Museum of Modern Art, the RHA and the New York Studio School. He was elected as a member of Aosdána in 2001, and was the recipient of the inaugural 2014 Hennessy Portrait Award at the National Gallery of Ireland.

Warm thanks to Patrick Hall, Nick Miller, Daniel Paul McDonald, Pauline Hall, Neville Keery, Rob Dunne, and Noreen Cassidy; and to our funders the Arts Council and Sligo County Council.

Patrick Hall is represented in Dublin by Hillsboro Fine Art

www.patrickhallartist.com

Emer McGarry, 2021
Artistic Director

Beginnings

“If the Angel deigns to come, it will be because you have convinced her, not by your tears, but by your humble resolve to be always beginning: to be a beginner. ”

Rainer Maria Rilke, Letters to a Young Poet

Angels often find themselves in Patrick Hall’s work.

Over more than thirty years as a friend and fellow painter, I have come to recognise in Patrick a real embodiment of Rilke’s *“humble resolve to be always beginning”*, it manifests both in life and in the strange alchemy of painting in the studio. When I first encountered his work in Dublin of the mid 1980s, I was in my twenties with my own dreams of painting. I had very little understanding of what drew me to the awkwardness and difficulty of his work, all I could really intuit was that they somehow transcended the constraint of ‘pictures’ and entered a realm of ‘art’.

Patrick’s work arises from a life lived with what he describes as a ‘certain unknowingness’ and from a metaphysical journeying, mostly made in uncommon solitude. In a world that celebrates the outward achievement and the spectacular, he turns away to dwell with beginning intent, always re-entering the studio with a temperament that waits silently with work, allowing it to emerge without force or grasping, into the world.

Hall draws energy both literally and metaphorically from the deep well of ‘no-thing’ that can be understood to reside at the heart of the self. Some years ago he described this in an interview with the art critic Hans Ulrich Obrist: *“Energy itself is non-linear; you’re going in every direction and more at the same time. Also you’re going more inward than outward, and there are no paths, there are no lines, it’s a circling in to the heart of things. It’s being, just being, outside of space and time”*. Maybe, this understanding has become a little more tangible for us all, after nearly two years of dealing with a pandemic, sitting more alone with our own energetic realities and facing the strangeness of the fragile illusions we construct in the lives we inhabit.

At eighty-six, Patrick has been largely confined to his house and studio in rural Co Sligo for a number of years, only made more absolute during Covid 19. I have observed his response to the realities of ageing and health – rebuilding against the odds his capacity in body and mind – he inhabits the difficulties of his time, engaging with work to see what is at play.



Nick Miller
Patrick Hall, 6-10-20
ink on paper, 39 x 39 cm



Nick Miller
Patrick Hall, Drawing, 10-1-21
ink on paper, 26 x 18 cm

The relationship to art changes as the journey to the adjacent studio is something of a herculean physical task, as the awkward boulder of self is levered inch by inch towards moments of sanctuary that can be found in creative practice. Sitting at the drawing table, that boulder is transformed and weightless. Brush in hand, life is absorbed into work and back into life without expectation, as beginnings and endings can become one.

My visits in normal times are social, but as early Covid 19 restrictions took hold, it also became a task to deliver food. In hindsight, it was a gift; to break lockdown each week and drive the 35 km across deserted roads and police checkpoints, to spend Sundays in company and to focus elsewhere. The silver lining of unplanned time working in his studio evolved as an adventure in the possibilities of now – in his work, and in my own. The regularity of the visits allowed me the sustained opportunity over nearly two years to engage more deeply with him through portraiture, as I have frequently attempted over thirty years.

As the impetus grew to present this show for The Model, the unfamiliar rhythms and contexts of this particular time allowed me freedom to root in dusty folders and drawing books in his studio, finding works that somehow survived a lifetime. I found myself curious and touched by elements in his early work: In London, drawings of his first studio on the Kings Road in the late 1950s. In Spain, landscapes from his solitary excursions in rural Malaga and the interiors in Madrid as he began to more clearly inhabit art for himself in late 60's and early 1970s. And then settling back in Dublin from the late Seventies as

he established himself again at home in Ireland.

In curating this show, I am pulling a loose thread of energy between his more literal beginnings as a painter, to the more metaphorical possibilities of now – found in some new and ongoing '*working drawings*' – neither finished nor unfinished, but just taken from this time. I have also included some documentary photographs of a short-lived commission for the community hall of Terenure Synagogue in Dublin, based on "The Tree of Life"(1976-77) catching my eye in part due to my own background, but also recognising his early affinity with biblical and spiritual sources. The show includes just one large painting; "*Two Stones*" re-working a piece that somehow epitomises the strange freedom, process and courage at the heart of his life's work.

It is 15 years since his retrospective exhibition also presented by The Model "*50 Years Painting*" beautifully curated by the artist Isabel Nolan. This current exhibition has a more modest intent, bringing into light a small selection of mostly unseen drawings and other works, many made without the intent to exhibit, just moments, feeling a way into art, life and spirit - They are the beginnings that are held equally in his work today as then, and in the internal energetic dance between life and death.

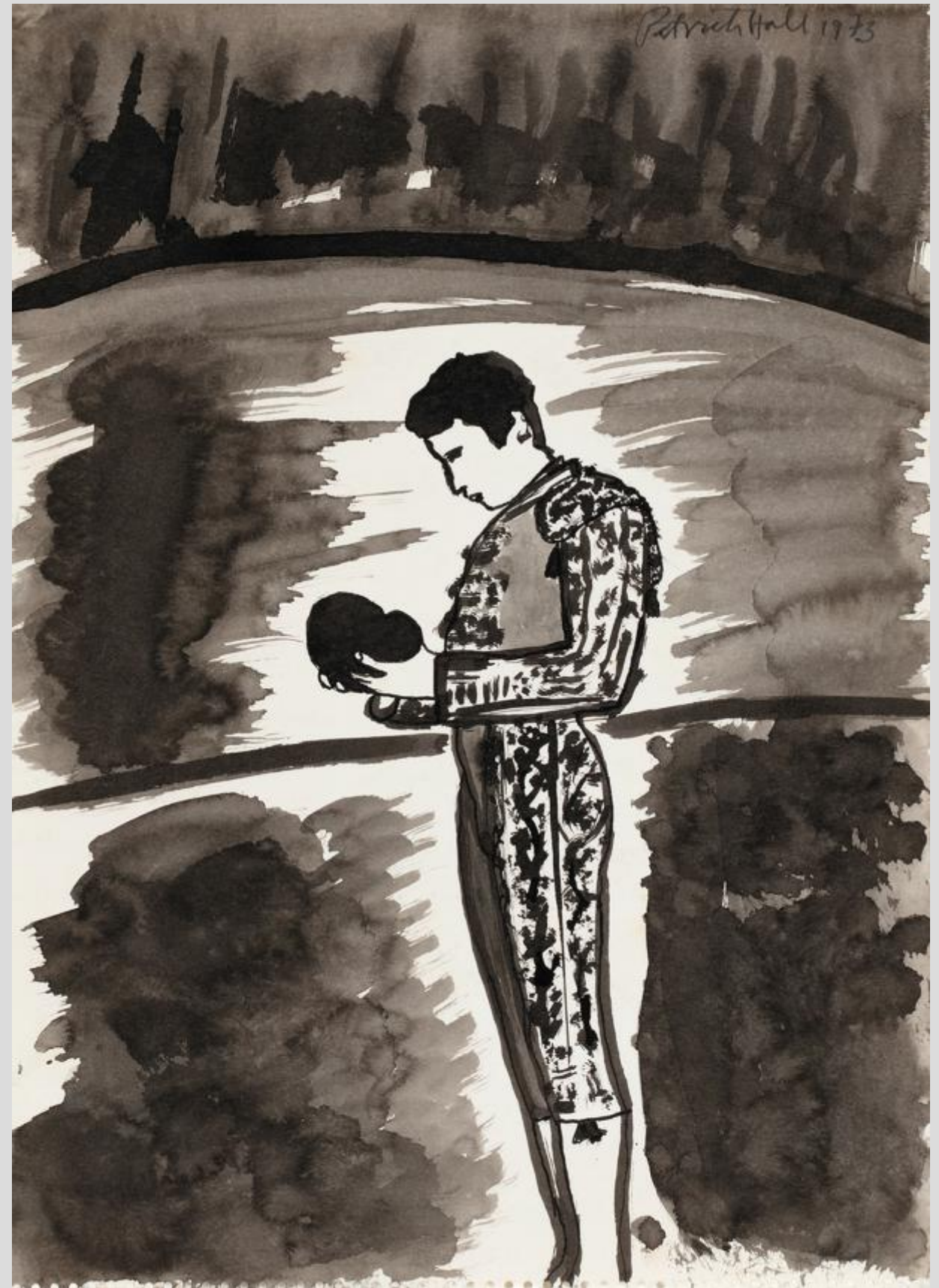
Nick Miller
October 2021



Patrick Hall, El Limonar, Malaga, 1973



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Bullfighter, Malaga, 1973
ink on paper
34 x 25 cm

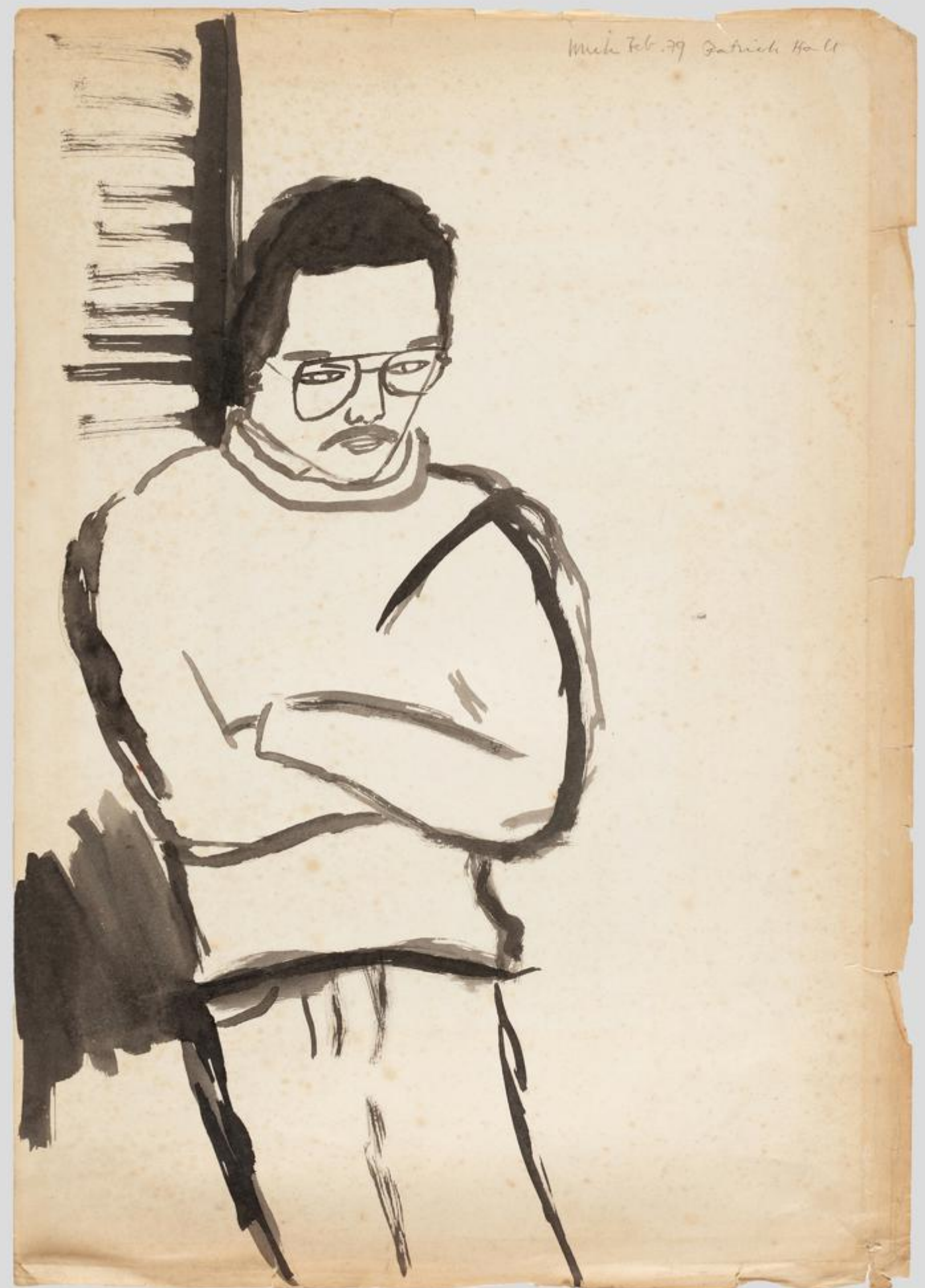


Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Mick, 1979

ink on paper

60 x 42 cm





Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Studio, Kings Road, 1958
charcoal on paper
51 x 64 cm

Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Chair, Kings Road, 1958
charcoal on paper
32 x 64 cm





Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Olive Trees, Malaga, 1972
pencil on paper
24 x 34 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Garden, Malaga, 1972

pencil on paper

23 x 16 cm

Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Abandoned Farmhouse, Malaga, 1973

pencil on paper

23 x 16 cm





Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Interior with Clock, Madrid, 1970

ink on paper

49 x 35 cm

Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 10, 2021
ink & watercolour on paper
26 x 36 cm

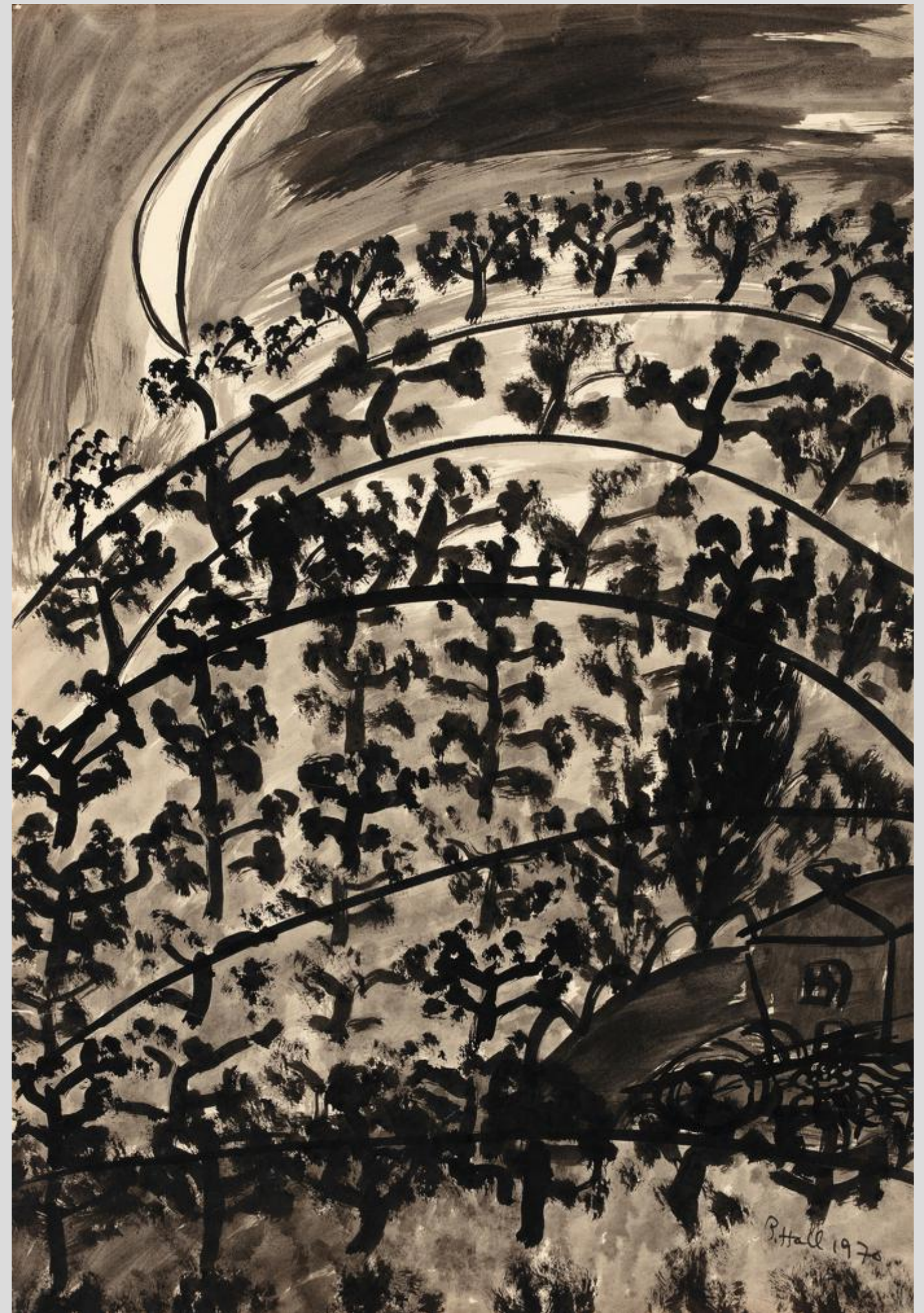


Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Crescent Moon with Trees, Malaga, 1970

ink on paper

49 x 35 cm



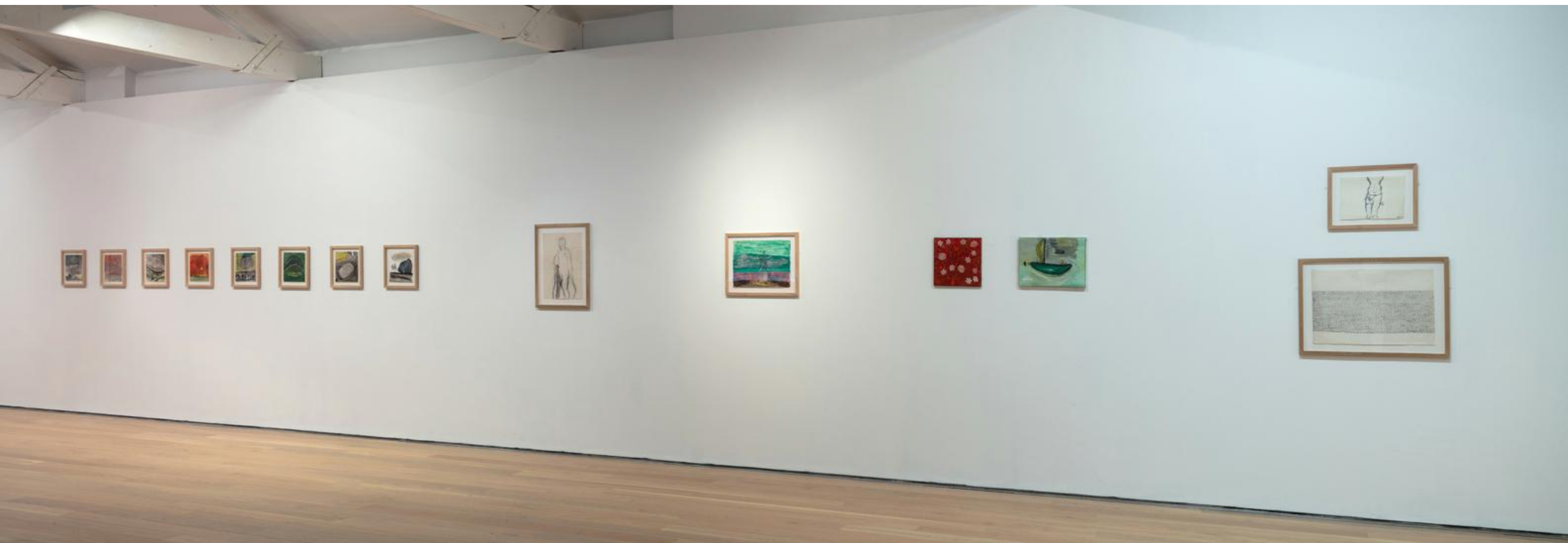


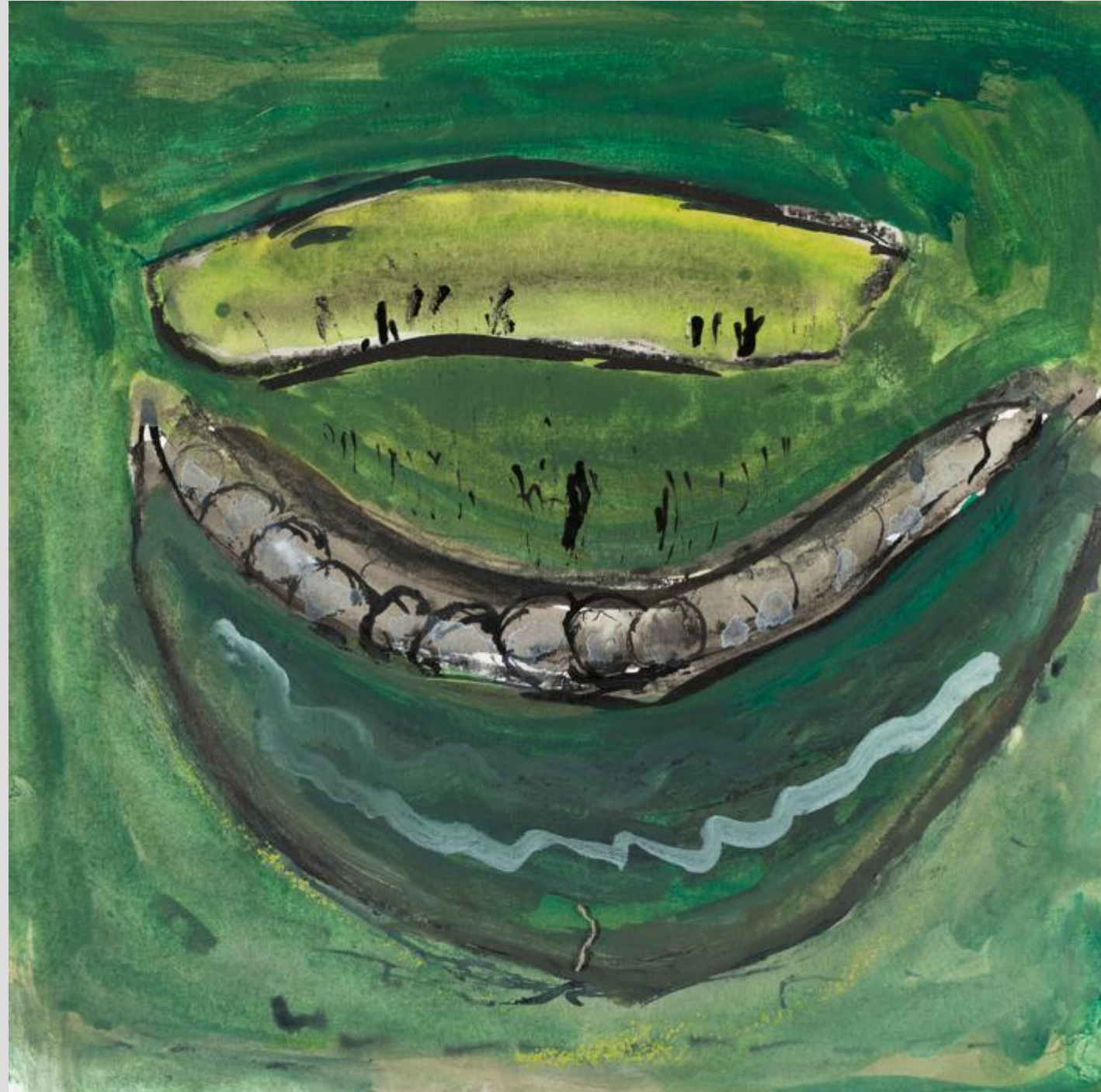
Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Two Stones, 2019

oil on canvas

152 x 157 cm





Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 5, 2021
ink & watercolour on paper
25.5 x 25.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 11, 2021
ink & watercolour on paper
Private Collection
25.5 x 25.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 9, 2021
ink & watercolour on paper
25.5 x 25.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 6, 2021
 ink & watercolour on paper
 25.5 x 25.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 8, 2021
 ink & watercolour on paper
 25.5 x 25.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 3, 2021
 ink & watercolour on paper
 25.5 x 25.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 4, 2021
 ink & watercolour on paper
 25.5 x 25.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 7, 2021
ink & watercolour on paper
25.5 x 25.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Figure with Apple, 2014
charcoal on paper
35 x 49.5 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Dancing on the Dead, 2012

ink & acrylic on paper

32 x 34 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Flowers, 1968

oil on linen

30 x 30 cm

Private collection



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Boat, 2018

oil on canvas

30 x 40 cm

Private collection

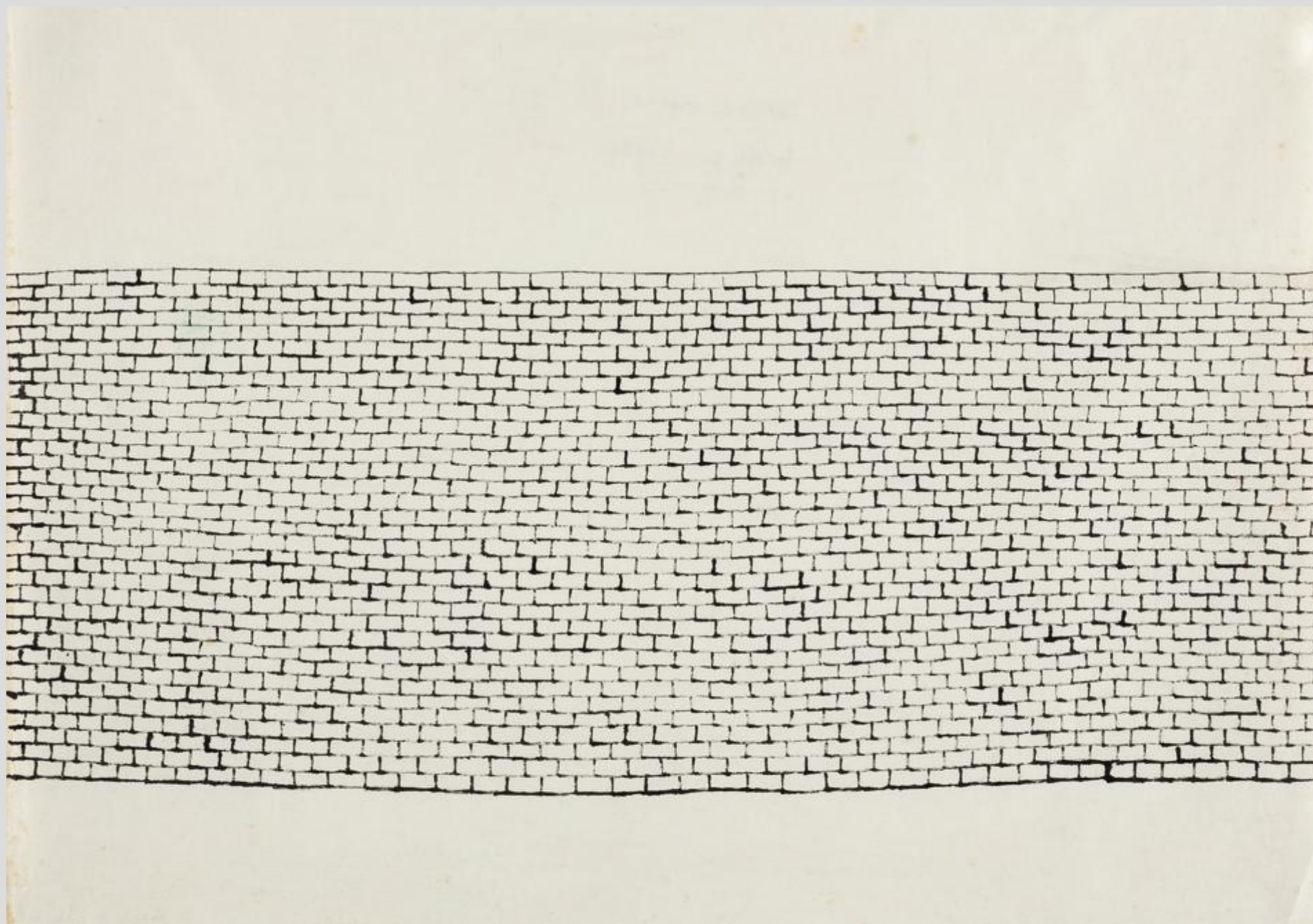


Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

After Grunewald, 1995

ink on paper

30 x 23 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Wall, 1997

ink on paper

40 x 57 cm

Patrick Hall (b.1935)

Terenure Synagogue Hall, 1976-77

acrylic on perspex

50 x 40 cm

Six surviving photographs taken by Fergus Bourke in 1977 documenting the transparent, painted perspex panels that made up Patrick Hall's installation commissioned for the community hall of Terenure Synagogue. It measured around 120 square feet set in wired glass, surviving only a short time before building renovations.

The work was themed loosely on *The Tree of Life*, and structured around the design of *The Star of David*.



PHOTOGRAPH EXHIBIT

PAINTED PERSPEX PANELS

Commissioned for
TERENURE SYNAGOGUE HALL
DUBLIN

Painted by
PATRICK HALL 1976-77

BOARD 1: These six photographs represent six panels from a unit of eleven panels of transparent perspex measuring approximately 120 square feet, and set in wired glass. The Star of David is used as a basis for the designs.


BOARD 2: These two photographs are details from a unit of four panels of transparent perspex measuring approximately 40 square feet, and set in wired glass. The central motif of the painting represents the Tree of Life.

Photographs by
FERGUS BOURKE

Exhibited by
courtesy of
the committee of
Terenure Synagogue

End. Ann. 1977

Star of David Panel

 Prussian Blue with little
Talus Brown

Orange Background total: Cad. Orange,
Cad. yellow Deep, Cad.
yellow Pale, Talus Brown.

Horpes: Cad. yellow Deep, Burnt
Carmine Aliz, some Rose madder.

~~Floral: Cad. Orange~~
~~Cad. yellow Deep and Viridian.~~

~~Simple: Amet. Cad. Limb, Cad. yellow
Deep, Rose madder.~~

~~Green on Right: Viridian on right side
Cad. Orange, and Cad. Limb.~~

Palm: trunk - Cad. Orange, Burnt
Carmine Aliz.

leaves - Viridian, Prus. Blue.
Cad. Orange over

Two Birds: left: Prus. Blue, Viridian, Burnt
Carmine Aliz, Amet. Cad. Limb,
Cad. yellow Deep, Cad. Orange.
right: Cad. yellow Deep, Viridian
Prus. Blue, Cad. Orange.

Star - Burnt Carmine Aliz with some Burnt
edges of Panel (floral only) - same as other

8.12.76 4 corner floral - Cad. Orange,
Cad. yellow Deep
Burnt Carmine Aliz (over)

9.12.76 Two Top seed-heads - Viridian, Cad. Orange, Prus. Blue

14.12.76 Pin Tree - leaves: Viridian, Prus. Blue.
some Cad. Orange on over
trunk: Cad. Orange, Burnt Carmine Aliz.

Final panels finished 31/7/77



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 2, 2020
 ink & watercolour on paper
 24 x 30 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Working Drawing 1, 2020
 ink & watercolour on paper
 26 x 36 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
Zarathustra's Mountain, 2012
ink & pastel on paper
44 x 32 cm

Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

Cloud, 2010

ink & acrylic on paper

18 x 25 cm





Patrick Hall (b. 1935)
The Dance, 2008
ink & watercolour on paper
32 x 34 cm



Patrick Hall (b. 1935)

WM in striped vest, 2005

oil on canvas

27.5 x 30 cm

Private Collection

Patrick Hall; *Beginnings*

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Acknowledgements

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Publication Design

Daniel Paul McDonald

Nick Miller

Image Credits

Patrick Hall

Nick Miller

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The Mall, Sligo | (071) 9141405 | themodel.ie
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