

# Imagination

## Thoughts of an Australian abstract artist

Cathy Quinn



My current practice is an interpretation of my environment and experiences conditioned by my imagination.

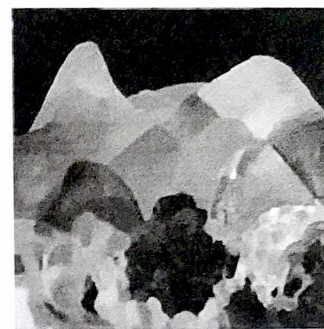
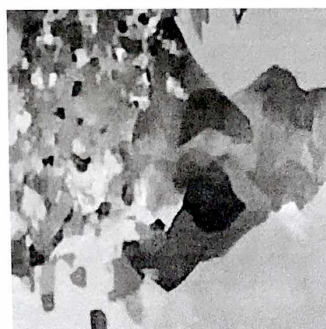
It is about finding the magic that lies within both the beautiful and the seemingly unattractive.

The works are an investigation into the possibilities of change and transformation.

They continue with the notion of looking through the mind's eye to alter what is banal or confronting and shifting that reality to create a positive slant.

Looking into the distance and experiencing the uncertainty of what lies within and beyond those undulating mountains.

My focus is on the ambiguity created by melding the shapes and weaving layers of colour, light and atmosphere.



The idea of chance plays an integral part of the process and I enjoy working intuitively. I take photos, make notes and sketch out thoughts and always begin a work with an intention, but then there is a point where the internal experience just needs to take control and I need to surrender to my imagination.



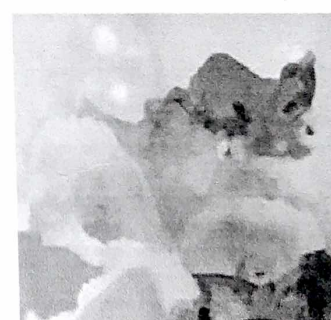
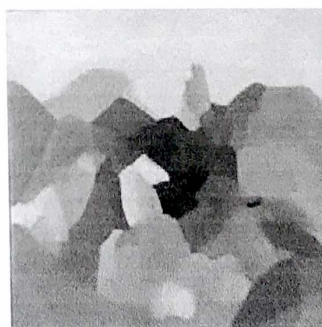
Someone mentioned recently they thought my work had an oriental quality which I thought was an interesting observation as I lived in Hong Kong for five years and one of my pastimes was hiking the national parks. I find it interesting to see how experiences reveal themselves in my work.

I enjoy making work where the viewer can navigate their own way into the work and what they see may be something different to others.

### My process

My medium is oil paint which I build up and break down, incorporating and excluding.

I begin by gesturally splashing the base colours on by thinning the oil paint with turps. I then map out the ideas with more colour, sometimes trying to pare back the intense colours which assists with the layering effect I enjoy, but then adding in the rich colours.



I love the buttery quality of applying the paint onto linen and the mark making. I build the paint up with a glaze medium and once the work is close to finishing I look at each section and tidy up the brush marks until I am happy with the surface and texture. There are many hours of leaving the work, to come back to it with fresh eyes, and finally it leaves the studio and sits on the mantel piece in my lounge where I live with it and scrutinise it, until I know it's complete.



### Palette

Although the colour combinations are intuitive I am interested in colours in nature such as the tiny pop of yellow on a mauve iris against the green leaves. Some days it's nice just to go walking and observe nature or watch colour combinations in people's clothing or interiors of stores, or anything and everything around me.