
Donald Teskey - Biography

Donald Teskey was born in Co. Limerick in 1956. He graduated from Limerick College of Art and Design and is now based in Dublin. Since his first solo show in 1980 he has had numerous important exhibitions in Ireland and the U.K. and has also been part of Group Exhibitions in Ireland, USA, U.K, Germany, Canada and Europe. His work is in the collections of The Arts Council of Ireland and the National Contemporary Drawing Collection.

A fellowship at Ballinglen Arts Foundation in north County Mayo five years ago first drew him towards the rural landscape. He applies his paint thickly, a creamy impasto, and the images reflect his response to the formal elements of composition, shape, form and the fall of light. Works are made in his studio but based on extensive studies and detailed notes. The result is powerful images of instantly recognisable parts of the Irish landscape with large abstract passages and surfaces, which articulate the relentless energetic and elemental force of nature.

Try to consider these questions about *From the Station to the Shore*

1. What are the people are in this painting doing? What part do they play in the story of this piece of art?
2. The name of this piece is "From the Station to the Shore" so we are concerned with the sea. Do you think the weather is important to the painting?
3. Carefully examine the surface of this painting. Consider how it is at once crude and refined, how do you imagine these marks were made?
4. Compositionally there is a very determined balance of dark and light in this piece. This is of course only one of the powerful balances that this piece embodies, can you describe another?
5. The act of seeing is generally treated very casually by viewers. We more commonly look rather than see and of course the primary action of the painter is to see. So hesitate when viewing because the first glance is deceptive, remember that no single detail or feature in this painting has been neglected or overlooked.
6. Tesky's process involves rigorous research this is achieved with drawing and small paintings in acrylic. In fact he states that he is attempting to see through his drawing. He disregards the camera in favour of what David Hockney calls 'direct eyeballing'. Does the rigour of this approach have a bearing on the finished work?

On the reverse of this sheet is a short one-page exercise to assist you while looking at the painting. It comprises of five questions. Feel free to fill it out and take it home with you or you can simply use the questions in your mind as prompts to look at the painting more thoroughly. (If you do fill it out, please tell a member of staff so we can replace it for the next visitor)

1. Answer the first question, "Like/Dislike", with just one of these two words.
2. The next one is "Description", here describe all the physical details you can about the painting such as the name of the artist; the title; medium; dimensions as well as how the paint is applied and so on.
3. For the next one "Imagery", note down what the painting is of. For example Barrie Cooke's Two Lough Key Islands might include, "an island in mist, sort of abstracted, out in the lake but sort of floating in the painting" or Blaise Drummond's *Wreck of Hope* might include "a passenger aeroplane flying through a circular gap in stormy clouds in the centre of the painting. The plane is very small for the size of the painting" Describe as much as you can, everything you notice such as the choice of colours, the position of things in the painting and so on.
4. In the next one "Interpretation". Try to figure out what the artist was trying to communicate, what they meant by putting these things on the canvas, why are they there, what does the choice of colours signify, how does one bit relate to another, what was the artist feeling? Think about this for a couple of minutes before you come to your conclusions.
5. Finally you come to "Like/Dislike" again, but this time rather than just one word, give a sentence or two about your answer.