

---

### Joe Hanley - Biography

Joe Hanley is a lecturer in print at the Dublin Institute of Technology and is a life member of the Temple Bar Gallery and Studio. He is a very active member of the Dublin art scene and is widely collected.

#### Try to consider these questions about *Between You and Me*

1. This is a big painting. What are the main colours and shapes?
2. Give this painting one descriptive word, a word that will sum up the first impression that it gives you.
3. Joe Hanley has been quoted as saying that his work is both abstract and expressionistic yet it is not to be seen as abstract expressionism. What is the implication of this statement?
4. This painting is a visual feast. It is not a passive work. It explodes out to the viewer, yet it makes no pretence of having a visual narrative. Therefore, is this painting a deliberate exercise to conceal a deeper meaning or, should it be appreciated on a more direct sensory basis?
5. There is a great opportunity when considering this painting to appreciate the activity of looking. If looking were left simply to the apparatus of the eye (regarding the eye as a camera) then the world we apprehend would dissolve in front of us. We know this from work done with blind people who have recovered their sight; it can take years for them attribute words and meanings to the things and colours that they are seeing. In this way language is deeply connected to sight. Seeing is a consequence of an alert and highly complex consciousness, yet when confronted with work of this character, we are given the opportunity to remove value judgments and simply enjoy the moment.
6. Casual conversation is full of subjective opinion or personal views, we don't expect to endlessly justify our opinions and support our ideas with the weight of academic research. Many painters operate in the same mode; their work is an opinion that is supported by their body of work and the greater context of art history. This is one of Art's greatest strengths and for many people one of its great frustrations. When viewing this painting, bear in mind that this is a physical result of the artist's subjective consciousness.

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.