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### Nick Miller - Biography

Miller was born in 1962 and has exhibited widely in Ireland and internationally. He has been a member of Aosdána since 2001. In 2002 he curated the visit to Ireland of Chinese artist Chen Zhongsen. His work varies between landscape and figurative paintings and drawings. He often uses a converted truck as a mobile studio, a method that injects a vitality and urgency to his landscape work

#### Try to consider these questions about *Island, Lough Key*

1. This piece is full of lovely colours and exciting marks, does the painting have any hidden pictures?
2. Have you ever seen a place like this or can you guess where this place is?
3. This painting was developed with a variety of brush strokes. Was it only painted with a brush or are other techniques apparent?
4. Plein-air is a method of painting developed by the Impressionists. It means to paint outside (artists frequently returned to their studios after starting their work outside). Miller completes his paintings in the outdoors. Consider whether this has an effect on the finished work?
5. Nick Miller's work demonstrates the conflict between the ephemeral and the fixed with immense clarity. His understanding of his material is the fulcrum upon which this idea is communicated. The paint is never sacrificed to the image but stays lively and gentle.
6. Modern culture finds it easy to regard landscape as a form of organic machinery. Nature must be dominated, yet this thesis is conspicuously undermined by Miller's work. One may find inorganic elements, but in this work nature wins. Is the effect of this victory entirely benign?

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.