



Ire/land III

Date

1982

Primary Maker

Patrick Graham

Medium

Oil on canvas

Dimensions

183 x 122 cm

Description

From a very young age, Patrick Graham showed a facility for drawing. He was awarded a scholarship to the National College of Art and Design and graduated in 1964. While his talent was highly regarded, the accolades bestowed did not sit well and he struggled through periods of despair. He has said that his paintings 'come from silence and a world of abandonment.' An experimental approach

and technical mastery are hallmarks of his painting, and the philosophy of Heidegger and paintings by Piero della Francesca, Giotto, Emil Nolde and the masters of early modernism are among his diverse influences. The earthy colours and memories attached to the landscape surrounding his grandparents' farm also endure in his work. The theme of religion is prevalent, and obviously so in the grimly ironic work *Ire/land III* where Graham confronts ambivalent religious and political beliefs particularly in relation to the extreme violence of the Northern troubles. Here a draped corpse, like a sacrificial victim, is starkly raised on a bier-pedestal. A shamrock, a symbol both for Ireland and the Holy Trinity unites the portrait triptychs of Catholic and Republican icons: the Sacred Heart, Catherine McAuley and the Virgin Mary; and the revolutionary heroes James Connolly, The O'Rahilly and Wolfe Tone.