

RUST CANVASES

Michael O'Donnell

The original rust canvases were first made in 1988. In this period they were simple, plain monochromes, which formulated their own imagery and were allowed to develop their surface richness in a purely arbitrary way. The process of laying on the iron and its holy water sprinkling, rusting process was a ritualistic working method which in its silence and sanctity proved to be an oasis in the normal frenzied studio activity.

Prior to this period the rust and the faded soap-pink colours were strategies employed in order to remove the objects from a sharp-edged reality and force them towards a disappearing, decomposing, fading presence.

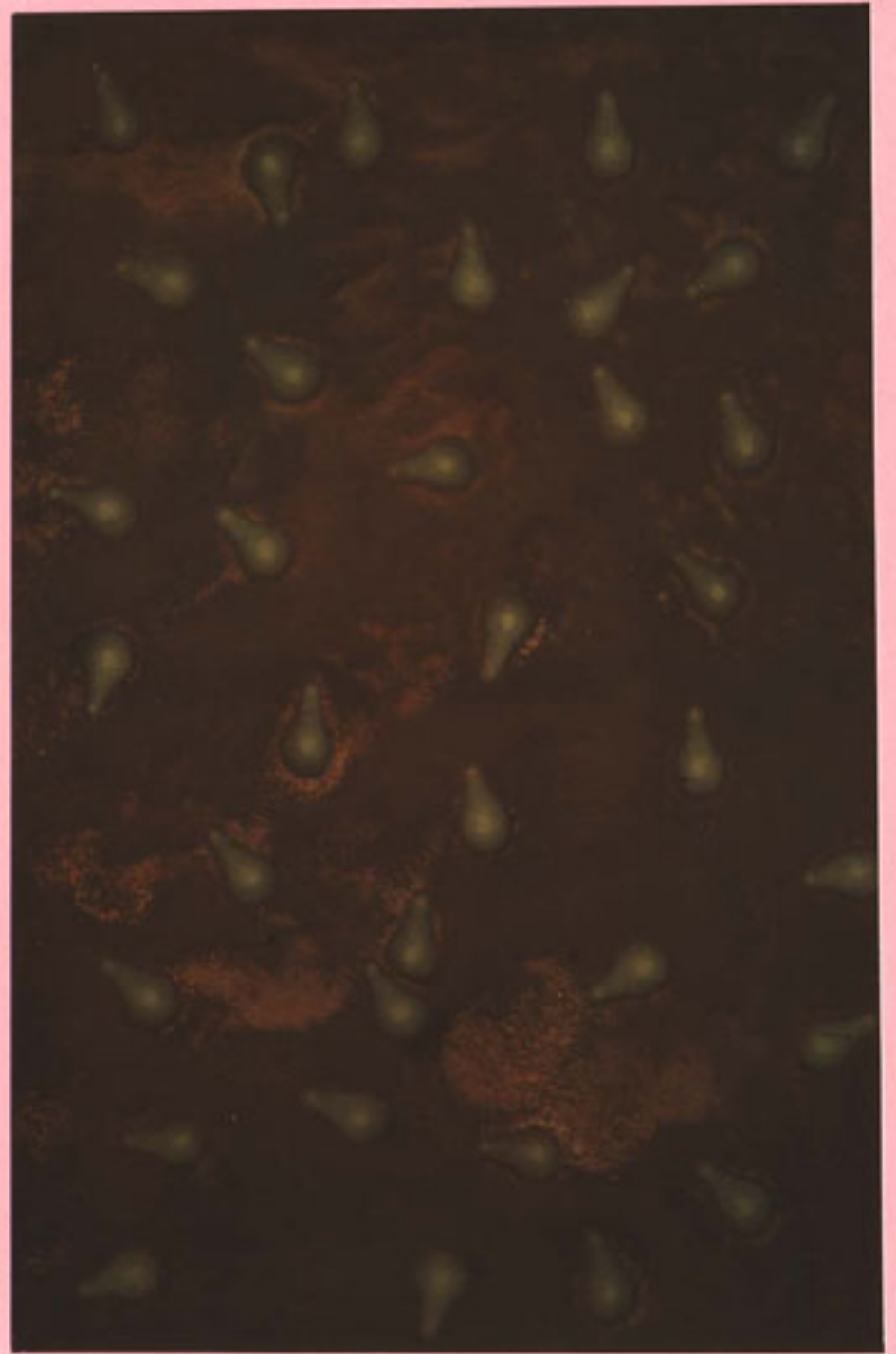
Things do have a tendency to turn up again — A work from this period was brought into the studio in order to be cleaned, repaired and sent out to a historical show.

The way the light bulb works have veered off towards - light reduced works, where the bulbs have been wrapped in lead, covered in iron, plated with gold, placed on the inside of surfaces so that the light was negated, seems to link up with these fading works from the eighties.

I decided to use real objects as templates in the iron canvas process picking out things which in a way followed me around for the last 12 years or so, thus playing a double fade, that of the silhouette trace of the object as image i.e. the object itself as a behind the shed, on the shelf, forgotten, no longer used thing — and its surrounding rust fade landscape, which carries the image off to destruction.



Rust canvas 1. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



Rust canvas 2. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



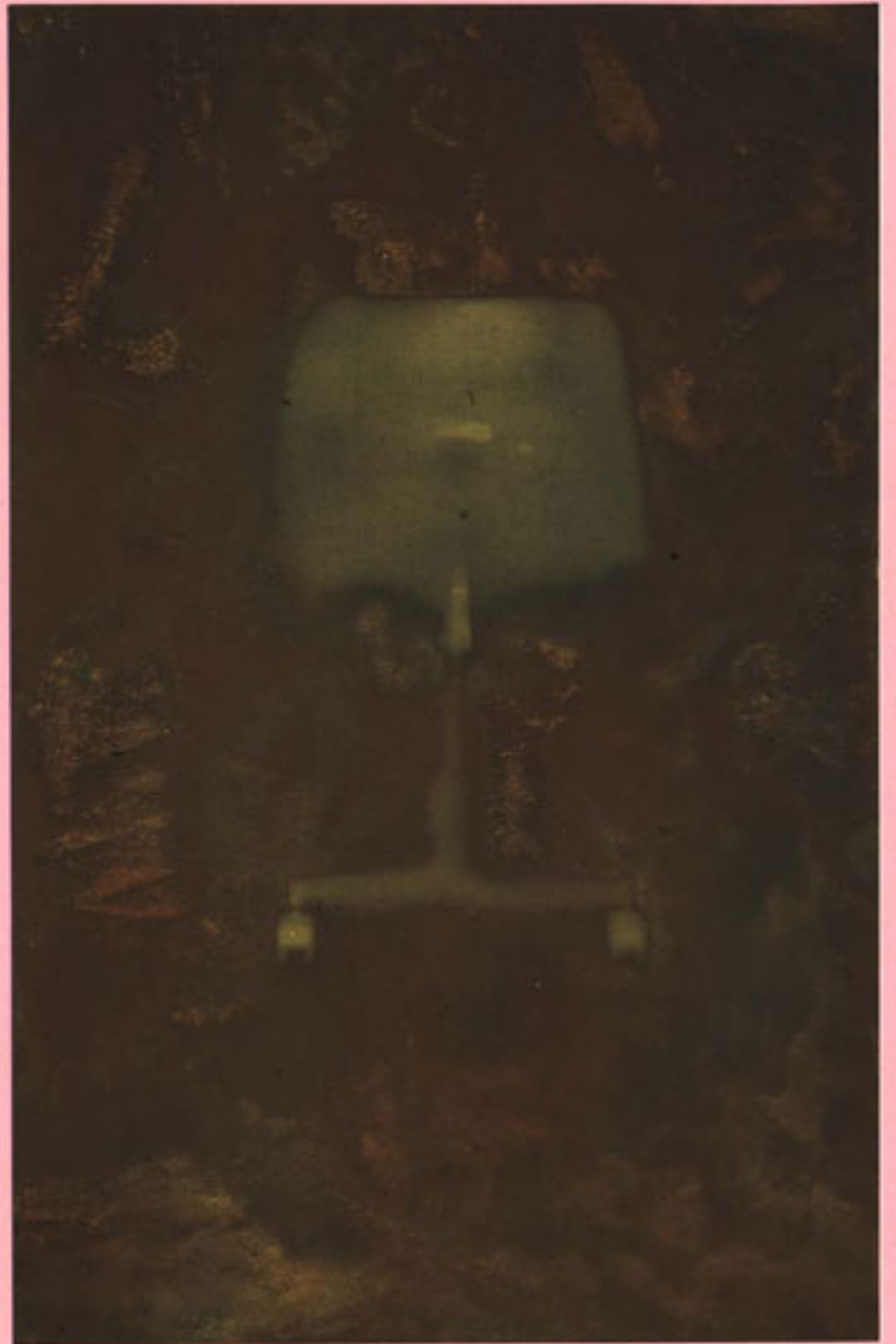
Rust canvas 3. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



Rust canvas 4. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



Rust canvas 5. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



Rust canvas 6. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



Rust canvas 7. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



Rust canvas 8. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



Rust canvas 9. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



Rust canvas 10. 1996
150cm x 100cm.



18 K.W. rust canvas 1997
5m x 2m.



New Landscapes 1985
cast iron and stone, wood
8m x 3m x 80cm.