

LAURA FITZGERALD
RIGHT-OF-WAY

We can meet for a chat and then I can go do the weekly shop. Definitely have ran out of welding rods, that nice salt and also probably should get some bin bags.

IN EVERY DREAM HOME A BIT OF PARACORD

"I was doing research in Wexford on agricultural land and land usage so I decided to take this day course. It was called THE ESSENCE OF SURVIVAL. We sat around on logs in a circle. This guy talked to us about surviving. He showed us how to light fires. He showed us how to use knives. It was about pure survival. Nothing to do with end-times. Key tips for you to survive should you find yourself in a tricky situation. He really hammered home the important points: Always have flint material on you. And always, always have some paracord on you."

A GREAT CLAMOUR

"So, I bought all this paracord. Green, speckle, snake skinned. They're suspended in space, going across the entire height of the gallery. Which is like an overlap between the supermarket and an art market. And I've made these full-on signs in the studio. They are based on offers which usually say things like LOW VALUE, GREAT VALUE, FEASIBLE. And then you have these rocks at the back of the space buying land, rocks buying power tools in the supermarket. And then you have



these shelves which hold up these old drawings I've made over the past ten years. Drawings of fields. Drawings of my dad. I've made these shelves myself. Some are empty and have a drawing table vibe. They are both for sale and being displayed. The art market and the supermarket. You walk in and this is what you see. To be intense? Yeah, that would be a strength."

TELEGENIC HOLY RELICS

"I've also been making these scapulars. I've made loads of them. Sixty of them. They're suspended. I'm laminating them as I go: it's a very pleasing activity. Are they still a thing? Well, according to Etsy they are. Definitely. I'm making them with power cord. I think of them like the price of things in a supermarket, the way they are itemised. Slung around the shelving units throughout the space. An index, if you like: scapulars, paracord, adverts, Tesco, Clubcards, Quinnsworth, Maurice Pratt."

START SHOPPING NOW

"Left to right is the way to go. Is that the way you go through a supermarket? Maybe that's just me. You know if you go to a supermarket and by mistake, you take the dodgy trolley? It's a bit fecked: it works and it doesn't work and it makes your life really difficult. Two wheels have directionality. The other two wheels are fixed. But you are able to push it and you can travel through, like so. And at this stage now, the whole thing is an installation as opposed to a series of drawings. Here, for example, is the "veg" section. It's super green here. Quite lush. A bit clustery. You know the way the peppers would be in a smaller quadrant in the supermarket? It's a bit like that. But very green. And over here you have the foods that are least good for you. They are far away. But the trolley is flexible."

THREE F'S FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

"The lists. My dad loves making lists. His voice is reciting these lists of everything he has in his farm. I've never done anything spoken with my dad before. He's always quite...silent in my videos. So, this is an experiment. Your idea of having the lists in the space in printed form: this made me go back

and look at a box of lists my dad made for me during Covid. If I was going to Tralee or Killarney - Tralee, more than likely - he would give me or my sisters a list of shopping. But these lists could be written on anything. The back of yoghurt cartons. Confit of duck. Different food products. Which on the other side, you have Dad's idea of important things: sausages, welding rods. You know yourself. There's an empty carton of Danone Yoghurt. And on the other side, Dad explains how the Land Acts came into being. And it's nice to have this as a takeaway: what is it again? The three F's? Fair rent, fixity of tenure, free sale. It was drilled into us by our Dad."



YOUR THINKING ONLY GETS CLARIFIED WHEN YOU ARE DOWN TO THE WIRE

"There's something liberating in those pink drawings. This is how I felt when I made them. It was a joyful studio time for me. Those other drawings, the bigger, translucent ones, they are the "I Want To Go Home Now Series". I made them in a studio in Peckham, south London. I was thinking about fields and home. They have a thick pigment on them. A friend once commented that I was an awful eejit to use oil paper on unprimed paper. But given the current climate, my un-archival might outlive us all... I've enjoyed making this show a lot more than other shows. I was in the shed this morning at half eight. Welding. Dad is bending all the steel for me by hand. He hand-bends them out of shape and straightens them for me. There is something very serious about this makey-uppy role.

These are excerpts from a conversation between Laura Fitzgerald and the writer Colm McAuliffe in Killarney, Co. Kerry, in August 2022.