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Patrick Collins HRHA (1910-1994)

WATER ON A PLOUGHED FIELD, c.1976

oil on canvas

signed lower left; inscribed with title on reverse

28.50 by 36in. (72.39 by 91.44cm)

Provenance:

Tom Caldwell Galleries, Dublin

Exhibited:

'Patrick Collins', Tom Caldwell Galleries, Dublin, until 30 November 1976, catalogue no. 23

Although Patrick Collins sometimes paints other subjects, landscape dominates his art. He had an affinity with nature that began in his Sligo childhood and which eventually formed the foundation for his painting. Boyhood memories fed his art; he saw the bogs, earth, rocks and stones of the landscape as a physical link with his own youth as well as uniting the contemporary Celt with the ancients.

Collins always interpreted the landscape in an abstractly poetic way, but in the late 1960s excessive sentimentality and formlessness began to creep into the work. However, after working for nine months digging drainage ditches in Connemara he produced a remarkable series of austere bog pictures in 1970 which demonstrated a newly-found vigour. Although *Water on a Ploughed Field* was first exhibited in 1976, its style suggests that it may have been painted around the same time as the bog pictures rather than during his stay in France from 1971-76. This painting strips away inessentials with the exceptional boldness that characterised his work of 1970. It shows an elemental absorption with land, with moisture impregnating the entire picture and light bouncing off the surface water. The restrained composition sets a few strong lines against an animated void – Collins wanted to make empty spaces 'talk.' *Water on Ploughed Field* does talk to the viewer, poignantly expressing the loneliness and isolation Collins felt during this period.

Frances Ruane HRHA
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€10,000-€15,000 (£8,196-£12,295 approx).