

Drawing into Life: Drawing as a catalyst for change

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Abstract

I am very interested in how deceptively simple drawings can act as catalysts for change. My drawings seem to have evolved with a stylised simplicity that seem to resonate with people in a way that is difficult to describe. I haven't really tried to articulate this process before so it could be interesting to explore this as part of this drawing symposium.

Last Winter a humpback came for the first time to the Shannon, Ireland's longest river.

For weeks it travelled up and down past the site of a proposed LNG terminal for fracked gas.

I spent many days watching from the shore, fascinated by the arrival of this huge creature and concerned for it's safety in a busy shipping channel.

I wondered if it had a message for us and what it might say if it could talk.

The following lines landed as I sheltered from rain after seeing the humpback.

The drawing followed and was exhibited for months at an exhibition before being purchased by the Office of Public Works for the Irish State Collection.

After around eight weeks, the humpback disappeared

What if the humpback came to talk

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What if the humpback came to talk
To tell us something important
That the dolphins could not convey
Amidst the noise
Of tankers full of fuel
To feed our insatiable diet for data and stuff

What if the humpback came to ask
What if we could turn this around?

Bring the enormous juggernauts of distribution to a halt
Give back to the earth
More than we have taken.
So that the sea can cool down and return to life
And we can inhale again without
The deep worry that it is too late

What if it is not too late?

What if we could dream big
And focus on the things that matter
Sharing laughter not stuff
Connecting with life
Walking in the mountains
Standing on the shore will full hearts
Knowing that we did everything possible to protect this
precious planet

What if the humpback came to say that
EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE

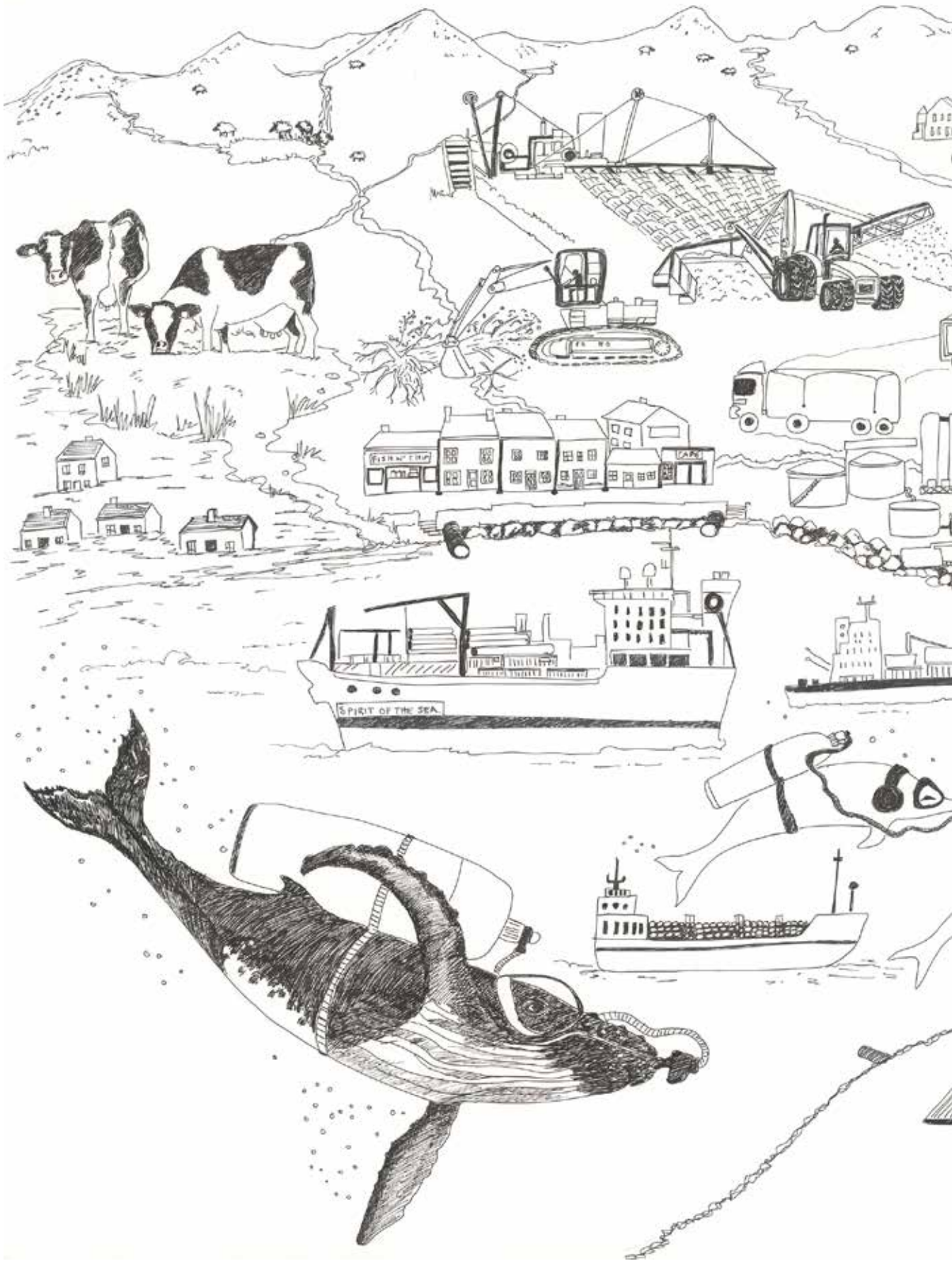
But what if the humpback is hurt?
What if it can't find its way and took a wrong turn?
What if it has a belly full of plastic?
What if it is a hungry, struggling to find food in seas
Where sprat is stolen from the wild to feed farmed salmon
What if it travelled all the way to this special area of
conservation
To find that is not so special after all

What if it came to find sanctuary
And found itself caught in traffic
A tailback to Tarbert?

What if the humpback has come to wake us up
To ask us to rise in solidarity
So, it can return to where it belongs saying

I told them
They listened
They are with us
They have turned around
To face the rising sun
The crescent moon
The clear break of waves with green blue underbelly

They are swimming in the sea
They are with us
And they see





What if the Humback came to talk?, Ink on Paper, 1000mm x 700mm, Lisa Fingleton, 2025