

## Unstable

For some time I have been interested in the idea that paint can be manipulated to resemble anything and could therefore, in its unused state, have the potential to represent everything. *Unstable* developed from a series of paintings I made that took paint itself as their subject matter.

The drawings present images of paint deposits on mirrors. Perhaps because of their bilateral symmetry, they are reminiscent of icebergs, flowers, insects, sex-organs... They also resemble Rorschach inkblot tests, possibly the most widely interpreted images we use. In making the drawings, I have also found myself thinking about mediaeval bestiaries of chimeras. All of the subjects for the works could have appeared differently at any other given moment.

It has become apparent to me that the series should be drawn. There is an intimate connection between the observed and the attempt to faithfully record through an intentional rather than causal means. A photograph has an indexical link between object and image, but drawing requires a conscious stance in relation to honesty (and acceptance of failure) that cannot be reproduced mechanically. Risk within communication (the risk of being misunderstood or lied to) is an important part of any language. It is also important that they are drawings rather than paintings, as the practice of drawing has a much closer link with the idea of information gathering, whereas painting has always hinted at the spectacular. Drawing also remains the preferred medium in scientific circles for the description of newly discovered flora and fauna. It seems necessary to me that these random arrangements should be presented in a format that suggests an attempt at classification.

I am still trying to work out why I want to make these drawings. They may suggest parallels with the times we live in: It is now a relatively straightforward matter for us to redefine our own shapes through cosmetic surgery. The human genome project promises to show us why we are what we are, and in so doing suggests that we may continue this quest for perfection on a molecular level. We embellish our world with endless new designs for training shoes, cars and household goods, and can now give shape to any of our fantasies using both real and imaginary materials. It seems appropriate to draw a substance that, for millennia, has had the primary function of mimicking the appearance of everything else, when the mutability of appearance is now such a fundamental part of our culture.

Or maybe my real impulse to produce these drawings is the recognition that monsters are born out of every random arrangement, a fact known to any child left alone in their bedroom with a pile of clothes after the lights have been switched out. My desire to classify and record these nightmares may be no more than a childish attempt to conquer my fears through drawing them, and therefore control a substance I seem to spend a large part of my life staring at.