

AMELIA BARRATT

‘MARINA’

“An oblong puddle inset in the coarse asphalt; like a fancy footprint filled to the brim with quicksilver; like a spatulate hole through which you can see the nether sky.”

Vladimir Nabokov, *Bend Sinister*, 1947

Amelia Barratt’s complex compositions are filled with latent energy. Guided by a voracious eye for the often overlooked details in the post industrial landscape that surrounds her studio in Glasgow, Barratt finds inspiration in car washes, tool centres and the perpetual hum of traffic bisecting the city. Looking beyond the persistent activity of bodies in motion, she is drawn instead to the remnants and detritus of industrial labour: oil spilled on the ground, spent gas canisters and a bulk order of engine coolant stacked on a pallet. These industrial tableaux become the source material for Barratt’s intricate paintings, which hover somewhere between abstraction, still life and landscape.

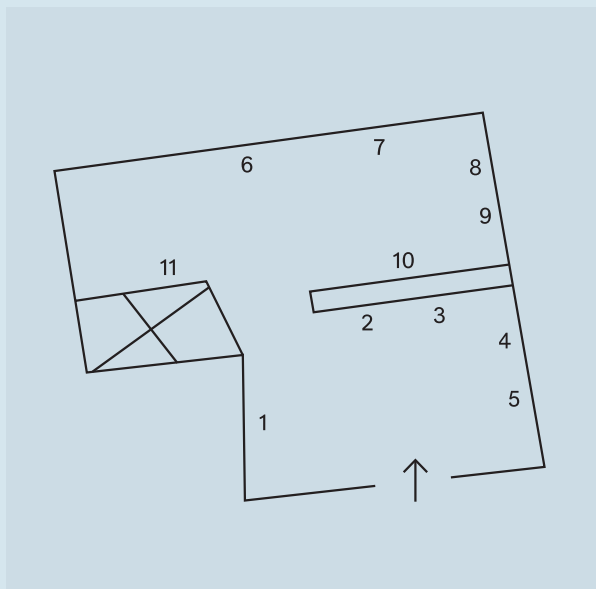
Walking to the studio every day, Barratt documents these scenes on her phone, zooming in and cropping to the point at which the image becomes difficult to decipher. The first phase of painting is intense, focused and fluid taking place under the guise of drawing, trying to make sense of the forms until a starting point is achieved. Thereafter, the cadence shifts towards a slower kind of attention, where fidelity towards the original source gives way to imaginative possibilities and time spent with the surface of the painting. The application of paint is varied. Thickly applied, opaque areas of block colour collide with thin washes and sections where the paint has been scratched or wiped away. Colour plays a central role. The palette draws on the coded

language of the city: the red, green and amber of traffic lights, the primary blue of street signage and the seductive glow of neon. There is a sense that Barratt’s hues and tones are mined directly from our collective consciousness.

For *Marina*, Barratt’s first exhibition at CORPUS, she has made a new body of paintings executed over the last year. The title of the exhibition sets the tone for the show, a site of activity and potential, day and night; a liminal space where nothing remains static. The individual titles also hold significance. *Out of Doors*, *Oil*, *Alkaline*, *Filter*, *Orbital Waste* all provide linguistic cues or possible routes into reading the work. In *Oil*, 2026, we encounter a tightly cropped composition, in which a spectrum of reds, burgundies and ochres dominate the palette. Slightly off centre is a loose tangle of energetic, brushstrokes made up of blues, blacks and greens. It recalls the shimmering technicolour sheen of light reflecting off a pool of oil, bringing to mind Nabokov’s recurring puddle motif, in which whole worlds are constructed. The white staggered stripes on black that cut across the canvas in *Orbital Waste*, 2026 read instinctively as road markings, yet they could equally be the inset neon tubes that illuminate an underground tunnel. The internal logic of the composition resists traditional perspective, and it appears as if the scene is viewed from above, perhaps a consequence of Barratt’s preference for working

flat. Taken together, the prevailing sense one gets from Barratt's exhibition is that she is asking the viewer to slow down and look again.

Alongside her painting practice, Barratt works across writing, performance and music. In 2023, Barratt published 'Real Life' a collection of ten spoken performance pieces and in 2025 she released 'Loose Talk', an album in collaboration with Bryan Ferry. Although Barratt considers these registers distinct, what ultimately unifies her practice is a belief in the shared capacity of writing, music, and painting to transmit more than the sum of their parts. Barratt's paintings suggest that even the most incidental surfaces of the city hold potential. By slowing the act of looking,



she transforms the overlooked residue of urban life into a site where perception, memory, and imagination converge.

Amelia Barratt (b.1989) lives and works in Glasgow. Selected solo exhibitions include: Out of Hours, A_Place, Glasgow (2025); Cut Wire, William Hine, London (2024); Cool Ground, Boardroom Committee, Glasgow (2024); Librarian, The Drawing Room, London (2021). Selected group exhibitions and performances include: Loose Talk: Spatial Playback, Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2025); Drawing Biennial 2024, Drawing Room, London (2024); An Entertainment (live with Christian Flamm), Charles Asprey Tyers Street, London (2023); Tableau, Outlier, Glasgow (2023); Readings from Real Life, David Dale, Glasgow (2022); OUT NOW, Uferhallen, Berlin (2021); Performance for Gabriella Boyd: For days,

Seventeen, London (2020); Alvaro Barrington: Artists I Steal From, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, London (2019); Museum Lates: Night Council Radio, The Museum of London, London (2018); Tall Tales From An Artist-Led Space, Cubitt Gallery, London (2018); Performance for Glasgow International, The Old Hairdressers, Glasgow (2018); To write, to publish, to speak, to move, CCA, Glasgow (2017).

In 2025, Barratt collaborated with Bryan Ferry to release the album Loose Talk (Dene Jesmond Records); Barratt is the author of Real Life (published by Charles Asprey, 2022), a collection of performance texts published in print and audio. In 2023 an audio collaboration with the artist Christian Flamm, An Entertainment, was released on cassette (Studio Scilla).

1
Amelia Barratt
Hybrid, 2026
Oil on canvas
175 × 155 × 4 cm

2
Amelia Barratt
Winter's Edge, 2026
Oil on canvas
80 × 70 × 4 cm

3
Amelia Barratt
Out of Doors, 2026
Oil on canvas
45 × 50 × 4 cm

4
Amelia Barratt
Poolside, 2026
Oil on canvas
35 × 30 × 2 cm

5
Amelia Barratt
Oil, 2026
Oil on canvas
50 × 75 × 4 cm

6
Amelia Barratt
Shipping, 2026
Oil on canvas
110 × 100 × 4 cm

7
Amelia Barratt
Gas Leak, 2026
Oil on canvas
105 × 80 × 4 cm

8
Amelia Barratt
Vegetation, 2026
Oil on canvas
30 × 35 × 2 cm

9
Amelia Barratt
Alkaline, 2026
Oil on canvas
70 × 80 × 4 cm

10
Amelia Barratt
Orbital Waste, 2026
Oil on canvas
105 × 135 × 4 cm

11
Amelia Barratt
AM, 2026
Oil on canvas
30 × 25 × 2 cm