The online pre-image was famously once a continuous line. Growing row by row, at first loom-like and then in blocks, its general form could be gleaned around two-fifths of the way through.

The memory is corny, absorptive of nostalgia for early Internet innocence. Yet the prolonged image perhaps did in some way act as a buffer between living and online space, before that co-existence became long-term, more efficient, and overlapped. Today, digital image gestalt is instead based on progressive loading; a full image shrunk and given Gaussian blur, allowing for immediate download, is then augmented. The duplicated, echoing impression creates the effect of a shorter load time, moving between different levels of immersion that form and then break tension.

Clarity’s physical presence is intrinsic to the *Untitled Blur* series, but any break within that viewing tension is hard-won. The self-containment of these hazed, painted words is discomforting, as each static piece actively undoes communicative certainty and immediacy. Isolated text instead merges with the picture plane, acid eroding glass and the ability to translate coded shape. With time invested, a found word can inform the understanding of those it sits alongside. Written words become co-dependent when letters are so diffuse, leaving oxymorons that jar with repetitions and familiar phrases that relieve.

In these repeated constructions of oil paint, canvas, glass and wood the gravitas of such classical media is undone. An art form of touch, usually beguiling, shuns, and what typically separates audience and work overstates its bounds. When given a cursory view as a whole, “Ploughing the clouds” suggests overzealous UX-focused exhibition design rather than a body of paintings. Repeated self-sufficient totems, shrouded in white, could forever produce sealed reverberations of boxed, trapped and dispersed light.

The words encased within them, however, are at odds to any cold contemporaneity. Each reference is ambiguously religious and narcotic, alluding to transcendental experience. The intersection of these spheres, along with the suggestive space within the wording of each piece, brings to mind the fallibility of human narration and textual solidity that’s exemplified in the bible: where mental illness is characterised as demons, physical phenomena as promise and vengeance, dreams as message medium, and there is constant slippage into and out of parable, history and symbol. When representing otherworldly experience, seeing the pluralism in source and outcome involves embracing definition and suggestion in equal measure and with equal import.

The converging of these origins of transcendence is not arbitrary. The phrase “Ploughing the clouds” itself relates to a poetic futility, with function and physical labour found behind exaltation. A proposed and re-tread psychedelic drug ritual in ancient Irish history, described in Peter Lambourn Wilson’s 1999 book of the same title, aligns it with the ceremonial eating of Soma, or magic mushrooms, found within the Rig Veda, a sacred Hindu text. Crossed references of religious timelines and shamanist roles demonstrate the subconscious, introspective basis of mythology, and with that, creative and spiritual thought. As time spans forth and experiences combine, personal intoxication and inspiration becomes a collective touchstone, forming exteriorised narratives when ideas and words become fluidly representative.

Whilst working with the slippage of inspiration and language, the formal quality of the *Untitled Blur* paintings echoes official directives, or a more physical and residual religious output. They loosely recall the retina-burning bright colour and contrasting text seen on bible verse posters, of the kind often nailed to telegraph poles on country roads in Northern Ireland. Static messages would sit as punctuation against the moving information that was once overhead; they could be new or decades old. It was communication assured enough in its long-term relevance to be encountered by the stream of travelling bodies until they reached physical ruin, faded and drained. By isolating from their tertiary surroundings and the semiotics of colour coding, they singularly pursue efficient communication of its verse or principle for as long as they are materially fit.

Within the gallery site of physical preservation and active viewing, any stress on words found in “Ploughing the clouds” is as entry and exit points of both active and past experience. Comparative to the incentivised text - or indeed, the online pre-image – its passive absorption as a visual tool is impossible. Different modes of memory cannot fully engage with this pictorialised, atomised text that hovers on the precipice of representation. Language is no longer a granted common ground but becomes an interactive, slow-burning process: sight, thought and direct comprehension broken apart, to turn the practice of looking into something like a lucid dream.