



VINCENT DEVINE (Irish, b.1986)

## "THE BLOSSOMING"

Acrylic on canvas  
Each panel: 100 x 150 cms.  
Signed and dated verso  
Created in Ireland 2024



*Commissioned by The All Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) [www.aicri.org](http://www.aicri.org)*

This powerful triptych tells the story of cancer research on the island of Ireland and beyond through a symbolic and vibrant landscape spanning the past, present, and future. Read from left to right, each panel represents a phase in the journey to understand, treat, and ultimately overcome cancer.



### Panel 1: The Past

The left panel of the triptych, in dark purples and volcanic imagery, symbolizes the chaos of a cancer diagnosis. An erupting volcano spreads fire, representing the spread of cancer from its origin. Dark and foreboding, it reflects the fear and mystery faced by early patients and researchers. Mountains honor Irish cancer pioneers Dr. Denis Parsons Burkitt, who identified Burkitt lymphoma, and Dr. Moya Cole, pivotal in tamoxifen's first breast cancer trial.

A dolmen signifies the cycle of life, while a werewolf evokes medieval views of cancer as monstrous and unnatural. Fossils and birds, descendants of dinosaurs, highlight cancer's ancient roots, including osteosarcoma in a 77-million-year-old dinosaur. A bird near a raptor skull symbolizes resilience and adaptation.

An African child reaching for high-hanging fruit symbolizes humanity's origins and the struggle to understand cancer. The unreachable fruit represents past challenges in cancer research, while a rotten fruit near the child's feet symbolizes failed treatments. A hexagon links to pharmaceutical chemistry—serving as a stepping stone towards the child reaching a treatment they need.



Panel 2: The Present

The middle panel transitions to brighter colors, depicting a lush landscape where hope emerges through innovation in cancer research. At its heart, the Tree of Co-Operation (Crann Comhair) symbolizes collaboration across prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, with diverse fruits representing the growing range of therapies. A wooden staff, crafted from the tree, honors those affected by cancer and emphasizes quality of life, with a message of hope inscribed in Ogham. A bat, known for its cancer resistance, symbolizes potential breakthroughs in prevention.

A dragon, representing chemotherapy, melts a glacier symbolizing a tumor. Its fiery breath highlights the balance needed in treatment—both protective and potentially harmful.

A starling embodies patients forming support groups, daffodils reflect varied cancer journeys, Venus flytraps symbolize targeted therapies, and a hummingbird, inspired by a metastatic breast cancer advocate, represents resilience and dedication.



Panel 3: The Future

This panel reflects the potential for life and the genetic mutations that can lead to disease. The future landscape is intentionally left mostly blank, symbolizing the unknown and the possibilities that lie ahead. In the darkening sky, a bright Morning Star shines—a universal symbol of hope—illuminating the path for patients, researchers, and families navigating the complexities of cancer. This star embodies unwavering hope, driving research not as a battle, but as an evolution toward understanding and healing.

Increasing order and regulation of streams in the landscape represent future advancements in cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. At the bottom, a pair of unfinished feet and lower legs walk into the distance, symbolizing a hopeful path forward. The detailed vasculature in the legs references innovative biochip technology being developed to mimic how osteosarcoma cells spread in the body.

The triptych's layered symbols weave together the emotional, scientific, and collaborative journey of cancer research, highlighting past struggles, present innovations, and the promise of a brighter, more hopeful future.

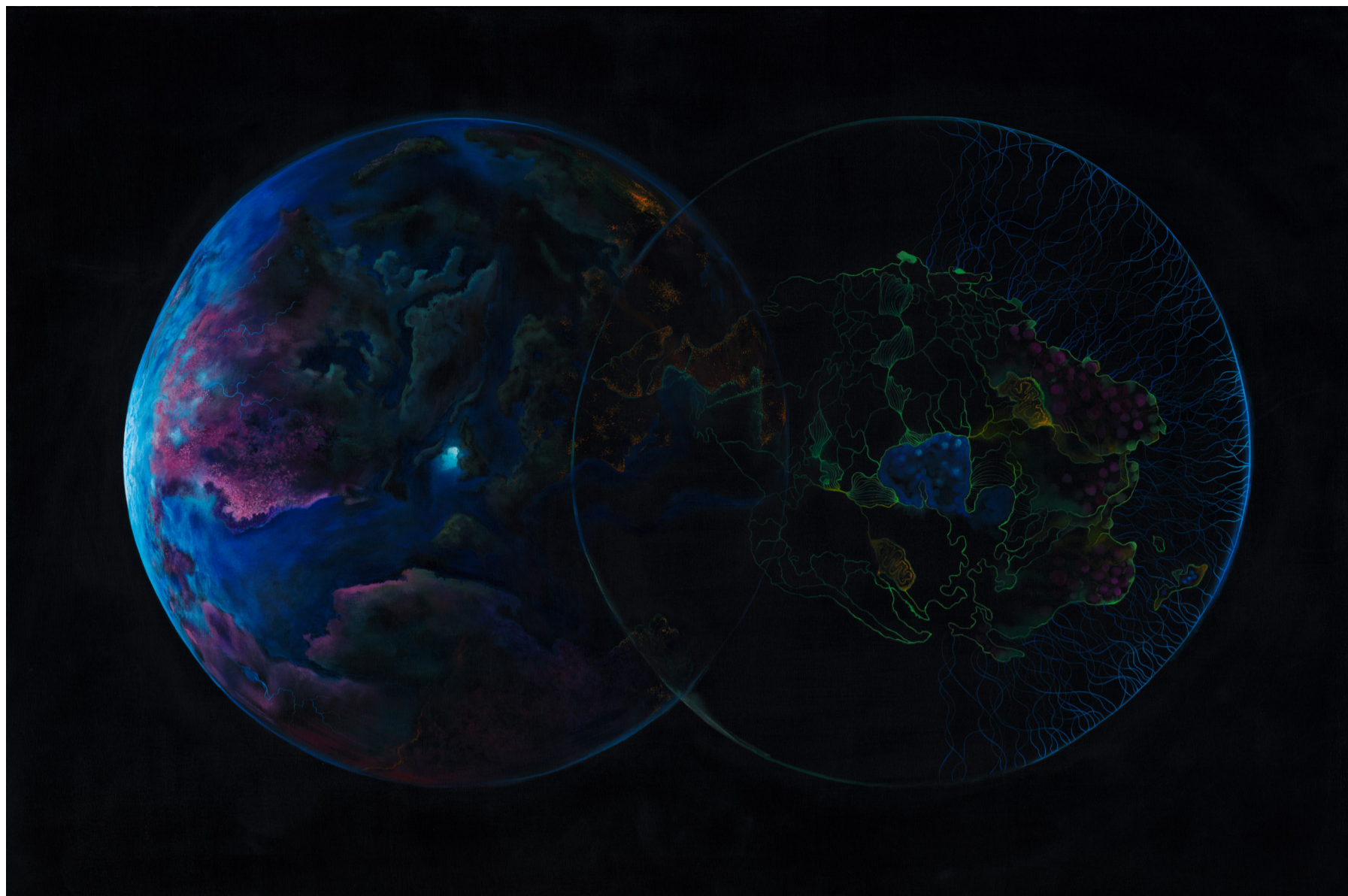
## ABOUT AICRI

The All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) is a pioneering, collaborative network dedicated to advancing cancer research across the island of Ireland and internationally, recognising that cancer has no borders. Founded on a strong partnership across the island of Ireland, AICRI brings together leading researchers, clinicians, patients, and institutions to foster innovation, deepen the scientific understanding of cancer, and develop personalised treatments that significantly improve patient outcomes. Through strategic programmes and training initiatives, AICRI has established itself as a key player in cancer research, linking local expertise with international collaborations to accelerate progress in patient care.

At the heart of AICRI's mission is a deep commitment to patients, guided by the principle: "With the patient; around the patient; for the patient." By actively involving patients and the public in shaping research priorities, AICRI ensures that their voices directly influence the future of research and evidenced based healthcare. Beyond research, AICRI has driven important initiatives to identify opportunities for industry partnerships, investment, and innovation, while assessing the cancer research landscape to highlight strengths and address gaps.

AICRI is committed to putting people first, continually strengthening its collaborations and networks to create lasting impact in cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, ultimately transforming lives.





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## "NEXUS"

Acrylic on canvas

150 x 100 cms.

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In NEXUS, we explore two Earths – one from the distant past and one from a speculative future – revealing insights into life, the ancient roots of cancer, and our quest to understand this complex disease.

On the left, Earth appears as it was 100–150 million years ago, before continental drift shaped the world we know today. The united continents remind us that all life was once connected. Another ancient link uniting us across time is cancer. Recent discoveries show that even dinosaurs suffered from cancer, proving it is not a modern illness. This ancient world features vibrant rivers symbolizing the disorderly blood vessels often found in tumors. Near one river, dense magenta-coloured flora hints at how pathologists grade cancer by examining tissue under a microscope. Closer to the river, the flora becomes chaotic, reflecting the unregulated growth of cancerous tissues. Splashes of colour in the upper right represent innovative imaging techniques that reveal diverse cells, including immune cells, within tumours. At the ancient Earth's centre, a bright glow marks where Ireland once lay, symbolizing hope and the vibrant cancer research thriving there today.

To the right, Earth transforms into a vision 250 million years into the future, where continents have converged into the hypothetical supercontinent, Pangea Proxima. This future Earth mirrors the structure of a human cell. A blue nucleus holds the cell's genetic material, DNA – the blueprint for life and often the starting point of cancer. Nearby, another nucleus begins to change, symbolizing uncontrolled cancer cell growth. Surrounding the nucleus, orange mitochondria fuel the cell with energy through respiration. Purple bubbles represent the cell's internal sorting and transport structures, or vesicles, which send messages between cells, potentially fuelling cancer spread. To the far right, a vesicle carries genetic material, highlighting the communication that can promote cancer's progression. Waves of blue fibres weave through the space, representing the extracellular matrix that supports cells and facilitates communication, alluding to how cancer cells connect with their microenvironment and spread.

These two worlds illustrate life's extraordinary journey – from ancient Earth to complex cellular biology – highlighting the interconnectedness of all living things. The future Earth pays tribute to scientific progress, demonstrating that as our understanding of biology grows, so does our ability to combat diseases like cancer. It also underscores the importance of global collaboration, showing that by uniting our knowledge and expertise, we can better address humanity's shared challenges.



VINCENT DEVINE (Irish, b.1986)

## "CRANN COMHAIR"

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The central tree represents AICRI, growing on an Ireland-shaped landmass. Its branches shelter wildflowers symbolizing cancer patients and protect them from carcinogens. The triple helix trunk reflects collaboration among stakeholders, while varied branches represent diverse cancer types and knowledge sharing.

White flowers along the Ireland-Northern Ireland border symbolize peace under the Good Friday Agreement, vital to AICRI's growth. Flora and fauna highlight the complexity of cancer research. To the left, lung-shaped trees commemorate Ireland's 2004 public smoking ban and emphasize the need for ongoing lung cancer research and molecular-level precision treatments. To the right, face-shaped trees symbolize AICRI's origins from a 2018 UCD conversation between a cancer researcher and patient advocate, highlighting cancer care inequities influenced by social and geographical factors. One face honors Dr. Denis Burkitt's work on Burkitt's lymphoma and links between fiber intake and colorectal cancer.

The moon symbolizes the US-led Cancer Moonshot initiative. The 25 stars mark the 25th anniversary of the Ireland-Northern Ireland-NCI Cancer Consortium, with three stars forming a triangle for the tripartite partnership that improved cancer care and research. Professor Patrick Johnston, a key figure in the consortium, is symbolized as a lighthouse guiding future efforts.

An American bald eagle with an egg in its talons represents the ongoing US-Ireland collaboration, with a red egg in a nest signifying established partnerships. The landmasses of Ireland, Britain, and Europe are drawn together, symbolizing unified cancer research efforts with Ireland as a bridge between America and Europe.

A European flag star shines on Ireland, symbolizing the Groundshot initiative's emphasis on research-active hospitals. A butterfly on a coin highlights financial inequalities in cancer care, referencing the European Cancer Patient's Bill of Rights. A hummingbird represents European observers spreading AICRI's collaborative ideas. Stars in the sky symbolize the legacy of cancer research, echoing Paddy Johnston's call to "dream no small dreams."

# VINCENT DEVINE

## Artist Profile

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Vincent Devine is an Irish artist based in Co. Offaly, Ireland. He learned to draw at the age of 4 and paint at the age of 9. He studied at The Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest and holds an Honours Degree in Visual Communications. Devine’s work is in public and private collections internationally, and he has exhibited in Hong Kong, Toronto, Miami, and extensively in the UK and Ireland. His work has featured in many publications, including The Irish Times, The Sunday Business Post, and the Irish Independent. His record-breaking portrait of female health campaigner Vicky Phelan garnered national coverage, including features on RTÉ News and Nationwide. His oeuvre focuses on reconstructing tree forms, while his portraiture reflects his love of the human anatomy and the unseen.

In 2023, his work expanded into cancer research when he was invited to work with University College Dublin to depict the intricate layers of cancer. While working closely with cancer researchers and patient advocates, Devine has developed groundbreaking paintings that, through public engagement events, help communicate complex subjects to increase awareness and improve public engagement with the sciences. His work serves as a visual medium that dismantles barriers, inviting viewers to contemplate and explore profound subjects beyond traditional methods.

### Patient Advocacy Collaborations

Vincent Devine’s journey into cancer research began with The Triptych Portrait of Vicky Phelan, a profound artwork capturing Phelan’s courageous advocacy in exposing systemic failures within Ireland’s healthcare system. Diagnosed with cervical cancer after a missed diagnosis in 2011, Phelan’s refusal to sign a non-disclosure agreement during her 2018 legal battle brought national attention to the CervicalCheck scandal, prompting significant reforms in women’s healthcare. Collaborating closely with Phelan, Devine crafted a triptych that symbolizes her past, present, and future, set against the backdrop of Doonbeg Beach, her cherished sanctuary. Through a blend of Realism, Surrealism, and Expressionism, the triptych conveys Phelan’s resilience, advocacy, and unwavering commitment to women’s health rights. This seminal piece not only honors Phelan’s legacy but also laid the foundation for Devine’s ongoing collaborations with cancer researchers, patient advocates, and institutions like AICRI, using art to bridge the gap between science and the public.



“The Vicky Phelan Portrait” (2021)



“The Vitruvian” (2023)

### Patient Advocacy Collaborations

In 2023, Vincent Devine’s work expanded profoundly within cancer research through a collaboration with University College Dublin (UCD), inspired in part by the impact and legacy of Vicky Phelan, a celebrated advocate for cancer awareness and patient rights in Ireland. Invited to visually interpret cancer’s complexity, Devine worked closely with researchers and patient advocates to create powerful paintings that depict the layered realities of cancer.

His artwork, notably The Vitruvian: Uncovering the Layers of Cancer, builds on Phelan’s legacy, connecting deeply with the public through the exploration of science and empathy. These public engagement pieces foster greater awareness and understanding of cancer, serving as visual platforms that break down scientific barriers and invite the viewer to engage with the science and humanity behind the disease.

Vincent Devine’s collaboration with the All-Island Cancer Research Institute (AICRI) exemplifies the intersection of art and science, using visual storytelling to communicate complex scientific ideas to the public. His work with AICRI underscores a multidisciplinary approach, blending artistic creativity with cutting-edge cancer research. Through his paintings, Devine brings to life the intricate layers of cancer biology, patient experiences, and scientific advancements, making them accessible to a broader audience. His projects, such as Crann Comhair, are emblematic of this collaboration, incorporating symbolic representations of cancer research, patient care, and key historical milestones in healthcare.

Working alongside cancer researchers, patient advocates, and institutions across Ireland and internationally, Devine fosters a unique dialogue between science and art. AICRI’s partnerships, including those with the Cancer Moonshot initiative in the US and the Ireland-Northern Ireland-NCI Cancer Consortium, have allowed Devine’s work to resonate globally. His art serves as a bridge between researchers, patients, and the wider public, highlighting the importance of international cooperation in cancer research. This multidisciplinary synergy not only enhances public engagement with scientific endeavors but also emphasizes the human aspects of cancer care and research, reflecting AICRI’s ethos: “With the patient; around the patient; for the patient.” Devine’s ability to visually interpret complex concepts ensures that the collaborative efforts under AICRI are not only recognized but also deeply felt, promoting awareness, empathy, and hope in the fight against cancer.



“The Blossoming” (2024)