N o w [ ] h e r e

Custodians, guardians, stewards, let's meet here, let's retrace the steps that advanced us so abruptly into 'civilization,' with all its spoils, and let's revisit the other paths we could take, from nowhere to here.

> Seoras: They're just a pile of stones, you know.
>
> Helen: No, Seoras, they're like life. Like our life. It's as if you have to understand every single hand-carried stone in order to understand the total cairn.
>
> From *Camster*, a play by Scottish writer George Gunn.

Tumuli

> **Tumulus** *noun:* (plural tumuli) A mound of earth and stones raised over a grave or graves. Tumuli are also known as barrows, burial mounds, or kurgans, and may be found throughout much of the world. A cairn, which is a mound of stones built for various purposes, may also originally have been a tumulus.

The spatially illusionistic paintings, *Tumuli,* offer a synthesized version of a cairn—an assembled mound of gathered rocks, hand-built stone by stone through the centuries by locals and visitors to memorialize their journey or commemorate and connect with the spirits of their ancestors. *Tumuli* plasticizes these ancient stone piles via saturated color, forced perspective, and simplified shapes to create a spare, simulated landscape.

Lithic Scatter

> **Lithic Scatter** *noun:* A surface scatter of cultural artifacts and debris that consists entirely of lithic (i.e., stone) tools and chipped stone debris. Lithic scatters can represent a palimpsest of activity, sometimes containing several technologies from different archaeological periods.

The individual pieces of *Lithic Scatter* take their visual cue from the standing stones that dot the landscape of Scotland. Many a lone Pictish stone stands in a field, carefully mowed around by the farmer. At Achavanich, a horseshoe shaped placement of enigmantic bronze-age stones has weathered 4000 years of storms. One can only guess at the original meaning, though likely ceremonial. Similarly, *Lithic Scatter* conjectures the monument of ceremony.

Primordial Soup

> ***Primordial Soup*** *noun***:** A solution rich in organic compounds in the primitive oceans of the earth, from which life is hypothesized to have originated.

Primordial Soup imagines the birth of civilization, drifting in on islands, full of hope and enterprise.