

## Iron

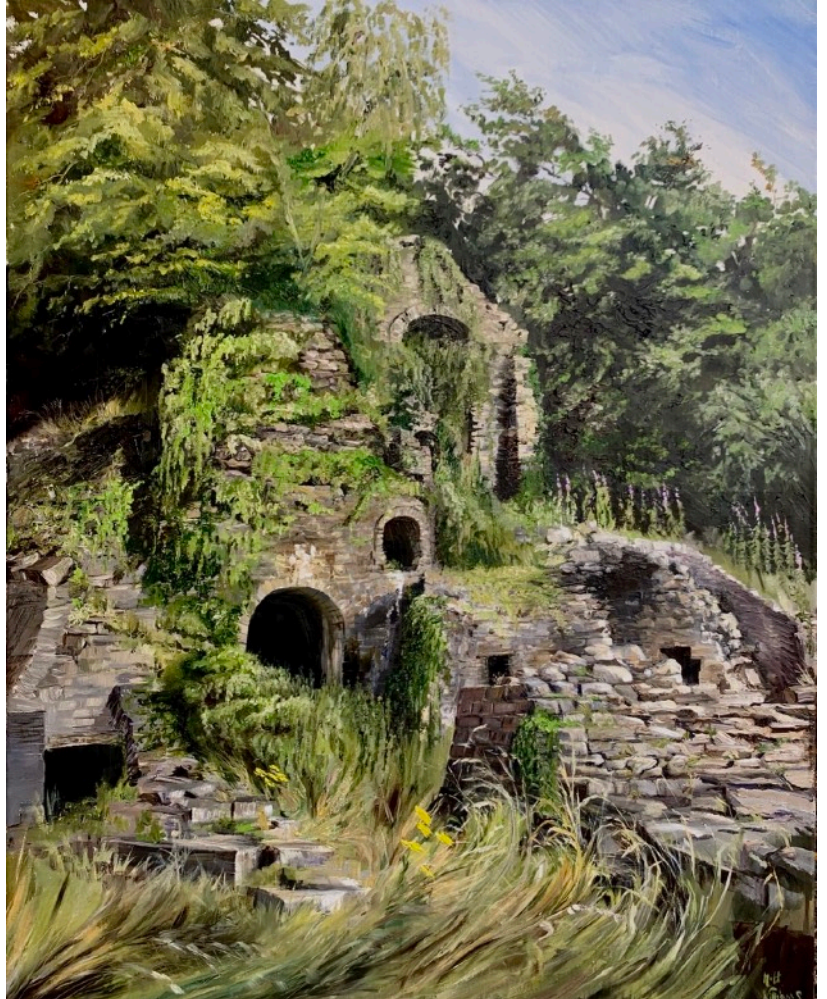
What hell would have raged  
Within these stone walls?  
How was this alchemy wrought?  
What violence of pressure?  
What heat and force  
Applied with what brutish intent?  
To take what was once solid and true  
and bend it to a Master's will?

I speak not of iron nor steel nor rock,  
For they are but elemental forms;  
But of matter more precious,  
Yet valued so cheap -  
the soul of the working man.

Buckled and contorted,  
Poisoned and burned;  
Gripped in the capitalist fist.  
Enslaved by the owners  
For the enrichment of few.  
And trapped in a snare of toil.

Slumped against the hill  
like a decomposing corpse;  
This place keeps its council.  
Its chimneys, toppled,  
Its furnaces, fallen  
As broken as the lives it held;

But never forget, in this quiet vale,  
That their price is yet to be paid.  
From where wild flowers bloom  
And where grasses grow free  
Blood once soaked the soil  
Into which the lives of men were trod.



Painting of Clydach Gorge Iron Works. Oil on Canvas.