

Maker Seminar: Communicating Your Craft

Date: Friday 8th February 2013
Time: 1.30pm – 5.30pm
Venue: Berkley Room, Pembroke Hotel, Kilkenny. <http://goo.gl/maps/qUC4>
Audience: Registered Craft Enterprises, Associate Members, GANS, Postgrad Students

‘Our writing about [craft] must aspire to be as nimble and open to revision as the materials we are writing about.’ Professor Jessica Hemmings.

Communicating Your Craft is a seminar designed for craft makers, focusing on the importance of concise and relevant writing in statements and proposals. The seminar examines the written word as a tool used to explain, contextualise and promote craft practices within catalogues, articles, websites, exhibitions and applications. Organised by the Crafts Council of Ireland (CCol) in association with the National Craft Gallery, this seminar aims to support you in effectively communicating your craft.

Professor Jessica Hemmings, textile writer and Head of Visual Culture at the NCAD, will introduce the seminar with a keynote address entitled *Writing about Practice: Material Words*. Drawing on examples from fiction alongside theoretical writing, this presentation will consider how textiles negotiate their future relationship with written language. In this lecture, Hemmings proposes that our attention to the material of language should be comparable to that given to the development of the discipline.

The afternoon will continue with a presentation, by Muireann Charleton, Education & Innovation Officer at CCol offering clear and practical advice on making applications. CCol staff will share tips from the perspective of the selection panel and offer valuable advice on presenting your work in a professional and convincing manner.

Continuing the seminar, Dr. Eleanor Flegg will facilitate a master class entitled *Creative Practice in Writing*, focusing on employing your creativity in writing statements, in order to appropriately represent your craft practice. In this workshop Flegg, along with the panel, will examine a sample selection of participant statements to determine how you are communicating your craft.

The seminar will conclude with a peer workshop in which participants share their statements in small groups. This session is designed to reflect on the information shared during the day and to identify how your work is portrayed when your text stands alone.

Contributors:

Muireann Charleton, Education & Innovation Manager, CCol
Emer Ferran, Enterprise Development Programme Manager, CCol
Eleanor Flegg, Writer and Academic
Ciara Garvey, Development Manager, Collector & Tourism Programmes, CCol
Jessica Hemmings, Head of Faculty Visual Culture, NCAD
Susan Holland, Education & Outreach Officer, CCol

Seminar Schedule:

1.30pm **Registration**

1.50pm **Welcome**

2.00pm **LECTURE - Writing about Practice: Material Words**

Prof. Jessica Hemmings, Head of Faculty Visual Culture, NCAD

Drawing on examples from fiction alongside theoretical writing, this presentation will consider how textiles negotiate their future relationship with written language. Spared the long shadow of an existing cannon, the opportunities for collaboration between text and textile are remarkably open-ended. The ability of the textile to avoid restrictive labels and constantly reposition and re-imagine its place in our lives means that our writing about them must aspire to be as nimble and open to revision as the materials we are writing about.

2.40pm **PRESENTATION - What, Why and How you're Applying**

Presented by Muireann Charleton, Education & Innovation Manager, CCol

This presentation will discuss the process of compiling applications, from exhibition proposals to grant applications, and offer some simple tips, which will potentially improve your chances of success.

3.00pm **PANEL - Advice on Applications; Top Tips from CCol**

Chaired by Susan Holland, Education & Outreach Officer, CCol

Panel: Muireann Charleton, Education & Innovation Manager, CCol; Emer Ferran, Enterprise Development Programme Manager, CCol and Ciara Garvey, Development Manager, Collector & Tourism Programmes, , CCol.

This panel will discuss what it is that makes an application successful, drawing on their experience of assessing numerous proposals and applications, in their various capacities, and will offer practical advice for future submissions.

3.30pm *Coffee*

3.45pm **MASTER CLASS - Creative Practice in Writing**

Facilitated by Dr. Eleanor Flegg, with Prof. Jessica Hemmings, Head of Faculty Visual Culture, NCAD; Muireann Charleton Education & Innovation Manager, CCol and Ciara Garvey, Development Manager, Collector & Tourism Programmes, , CCol.

Creative Practice in Writing will explore how craftspeople can harness the creativity that they use in making objects to enhance and empower their written work. Focusing on the artist's statement, this master class will offer simple practical advice, shortcuts and troubleshooting techniques designed to help makers produce powerful (and painless) personal statements and possibly even enjoy the process.

4.30pm **WORKSHOP - What does Your Statement Communicate?**

Facilitated by Susan Holland, Education & Outreach Officer, CCol

Statements of intent are the primary means through which you communicate the complexities of your practice; be that on your website, in an exhibition text or a catalogue. Your statement is essentially your voice when you are not present to express yourself in person. In this peer workshop we invite you to share your statement in small groups and to give feedback on what the text communicates to you.

5.20pm *Ends*

Guest Contributor Biographies:

Prof. Jessica Hemmings writes about textiles. She studied Textile Design at the Rhode Island School of Design, graduating with a BFA (Honours) in 1999 and Comparative Literature (Africa/Asia) at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, earning an MA (Distinction) in 2000. Her PhD, awarded by the University of Edinburgh in 2006, is published by Kalliope Paperbacks under the title *Yvonne Vera: The Voice of Cloth* (2008). She writes articles and exhibition reviews for publications such as *Crafts*, *Selvedge* and the *Surface Design Journal* and has taught at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, the Rhode Island School of Design, the Winchester School of Art and Edinburgh College of Art. Publications include *In the Loop: Knitting Now* (Black Dog: 2010), *The Textile Reader* (Berg: 2012) and *Warp & Weft* (Bloomsbury: 2012). She is Professor of Visual Culture and Head of the Faculty of Visual Culture at the National College of Art & Design, Dublin.

Dr. Eleanor Flegg is a writer and craft historian. She lectures in design history at the Dublin Institute of Technology and is a craft and design columnist for the *Irish Arts Review*. A contributor to the *Sunday Times*, *The Irish Times* and *Ceramic Review*, she also produces and presents radio for Lyric FM's *Culture File*. She is the founder of the *Dublin Craft Writers' Group* and has recently run a series of writing workshops in the Dóchas Centre under the Arts Council's *Writers in Prisons Scheme*. She is the co-editor, with Jessica Hemmings, of *Make Believe*, a forthcoming online publication of Craft Writing.