

PRESS INFORMATION

Crafts Council of Ireland participates in Collect 2009

Collect is Europe's premier juried fair of international contemporary craft objects. Presented by the British Crafts Council in the Saatchi Gallery in London, it is the flagship event for makers of fine craft objects, international galleries, dealers and private collectors. Since its establishment in 2004, the fair has grown each year to become a significant and prestigious event on the applied arts calendar attracting worldwide attention.

For the first time the Crafts Council of Ireland's National Craft Gallery will be exhibiting at Collect; the gallery was invited to submit craftwork of the highest standard for jury consideration in 2008 and five of Ireland's most respected and innovative craft workers were selected to represent Ireland at the event.

The makers chosen are all selected members of **PORTFOLIO**, which is an initiative established by the Crafts Council of Ireland in 2005 that aims to *'promote the work of individuals showing excellence in craftsmanship at an international level'*. Currently there are 45 members of PORTFOLIO, selected by an international jury of experts, all of whom are making work of the highest international standards, contributing significantly to the perception of Ireland as a country rich in creativity and innovation.

The five makers selected for Coplect 2009 each explores a variety of techniques and concepts to create work which is diverse, fresh, inspiring, and of world class standard. These makers are the trail blazers, making work which deftly occupies the space between fine art and fine craft;

Cormac Boydell is one of Ireland's most innovative and interesting ceramic artists. Based in the rural beauty of Allihies in West Cork, Boydell creates jewel-like ceramic plates and vessels with a gestural, sculptural feel. His previous background as a geologist informs his work, and his clays and glazes are all created from the natural materials and pigments surrounding him, transformed alchemically through the firing process.

Joe Hogan is a basketmaker who has spent many decades perfecting his craft, and adapting to the rhythms of growing the willow that he uses as his main raw material, combining that with pine cones, lichens and moss to create objects of ethereal beauty. Though deeply rooted in traditional making processes, Hogan has pushed the boundaries of his discipline through the unique sculptural pieces he creates,, which are now respected and collected world-wide.

Angela O'Kelly is a jeweller with a unique take on materials. Taking her cue from the European influences of studio jewellery she eschews more precious materials to create sleek, complex forms of layered and stacked papers and felt, which are hand-made, dyed and carved into sinuous forms. In addition to making, O'Kelly also lectures on and curates fine craft exhibitions and has built up an impressive reputation internationally, with work her work represented in major collections such

as the Museum of Scotland, The American Museum of Art and Design, and the British Crafts Council Collection.

Silversmith Cara Murphy seeks to transform our ideas of tableware through her work. Her hand-made pieces challenge traditional perceptions by taking a more conceptual approach to the domestic items that populate our tables. Condiment holders become interactive sculptural forms of silver and wood and candelabras double as opulent chocolate holders! She is currently working on a major commission for No. 10 Downing Street. All of her work is primarily exploring the concept of 'arrangement' and each time a piece is used the arrangement of its parts changes and results in endless interesting juxtapositions and permutations.

Liz Nilsson is a textile artist who employs many different techniques in the creation of her work. Processes such as screen-printing, stitching, folding and cutting are employed to create layered and repeating patterns of form and colour that echo the language of abstract painting through the employment of structure, repetition and specific parameters within which ideas are rhythmically explored. The resulting meticulously created pieces are meditative and painterly wall panels. She aims to continually explore and exploit the properties of her materials and often works to large scale making her work suitable for commission or installation in public or private buildings.

The inclusion of craft workers from Ireland in Collect 2009 is something the Crafts Council of Ireland are extremely proud of. The event celebrates the diverse, extraordinary and new in the fine craft field, it is only fitting that Irish

makers should contribute to and celebrate at this gathering of wonderful handmade objects.

ENDS

For further information on the Crafts Council of Ireland's participation in Collect 2009 please contact Ann Mulrooney, Exhibitions Manager & Curator at the Crafts Council of Ireland.

T: 056 77 61804

E: ann@ccoie

W: www.ccoie