



Press Release

Craft embraces technology and goes interactive at the Kilkenny Arts Festival.

**Craft Programme curated by Angela O'Kelly
At Kilkenny Arts Festival
www.kilkennyarts.ie**

6-15 August 2010

After the highly successful introduction of craft as a programme strand at last year's Kilkenny Arts Festival, this year's line-up of events at the National Craft Gallery explores some brand new directions in craft.

With the Festival working together with the Crafts Council of Ireland to bring craft to a wider Festival audience, some of the highlights will include craftmakers working with cutting-edge technology and an interactive exploration of why we wear jewellery.

TWO EXHIBITIONS:

Mah Rana & EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY

7 August – 20 October 2010

Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm; Sunday 11am-5.30pm

National Craft Gallery, Castle Yard

Gallery 1:

Mah Rana, *Jewellery is Life/ Meanings and Attachments*

London-based jeweller Mah Rana presents two exhibitions tying into our connections to the jewellery we wear.

Jewellery is Life

An exhibition of conceptual jewellery, highlighting the ways we use jewellery to mark occasions and events, significant or the everyday. Through jewellery, issues of value, communication, personal and collective histories are explored. The work reflects the importance of owning, giving and wearing jewellery throughout our lives.

Meanings and Attachments

An ongoing interactive event held in different countries creating a written and photographic record of people's personal connections to the jewellery that they wear. <http://www.mahrana.com/meanings04.htm>

This very social event, which thrives on public engagement, will see visitors sharing stories and experiences and confirm the essential role of jewellery as a marker of significance in our lives.

The public are invited to be part of this exhibition. Jeweller **Mah Rana** will be on site as individuals are photographed wearing their jewellery, and a wall of photographs is constructed along with a written record of the wearer's attachments to the jewellery.

All are welcome to participate as public engagement with Mah takes place:

- Saturday 7 August, 10am-5.30pm
- Sunday 8 August, 11am-5.30pm
- Monday 9 August, 10am-5.30pm

Gallery 2:

Embracing Technology

14 Irish and UK makers who are *Embracing Technology* and pushing boundaries through inventive use of materials and technology. Combining hand crafting with new technologies like laser cutting, water jet cutting, rapid prototyping, motion capturing, textiles set in concrete, interactive magnetic wall coverings and site-specific textiles for walls and windows, these makers challenge our perceptions and expand the potential of craft.

EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY MAKERS:

JO ANGELL

Is inspired by nature, combining hand-crafting with new technologies to create canopies that offer protection from the sun, yet retain an aura of a changeable, magical light. She observes nature on a microscopic scale with laser-cutting enabling her to experiment with the different light-diffusing effects achieved by everything from the tiniest holes to larger, bolder shapes. Based in London

KATIE BUNNELL

Will enable craft practice to enter new territory. As leader of the 3D digital production research cluster at University College Falmouth, she aims to develop new production methods integrating digital technologies with other processes to find new ways of exploiting the communication and networking capabilities of digital data.

VANESSA CUTLER

Builds structures that test the strength and fragility of glass and explore the boundaries of the material. She uses the machine-like qualities of abrasive waterjet to produce work at once solid and fragile with ribbon-like qualities of glass. She is based in Swansea.

TAVS JØRGENSEN

Motion capture rapid prototyping, digitizing and CNC milling? All part of Devon-based **Tavs Jørgensen's** practice, which focuses on the creative use of digital development tools. He believes it is vital to explore and utilize these new methods, however, it also takes intimate knowledge of materials and making processes to realise the full creative potential of IT tools.

RACHEL KELLY

Rachel Kelly's Interactive Wallpaper Studio has an international reputation for innovative and **interactive wallpaper designs**, producing wall coverings ranging from laser and CAD-cut decorative wall and glass stickers to hand screen-printed wallpaper. High-profile clients include the BBC, the Arts Council and the NHS, and in 2010 she was nominated for a Grand Design Award for her print designs for Habitat UK Ltd. She is based in Cumbria.

JENNY LEARY

A textile designer who invents new recipes for surface design. Her work, which sits comfortably both in artistic and scientific contexts, questions the boundaries between engineering and craft. Whether creating **magnetic materials for wall coverings, hand-bound books, or apparel**, Jenny seeks out uncanny surface qualities that are bound to challenge our senses. She is based in London.

AOIFE LUDLOW

Aoife Ludlow's work explores the concept of the journey, from maps and motorway lights to the near-meditative state of a long-distance runner. Her recent work combines laser-cutting, digital print, animation and film alongside traditional textile techniques. A designer for Tactility Factory and co-director of design consultancy We Like Soup, she is based in Belfast.

RACHEL McKNIGHT

Produces necklaces, bangles, earrings and rings to form **quirky creations in plastics and rubber**. The excitement of sourcing and experimenting with new materials inspires her to produce original and innovative jewellery. In the last two years she has embraced new technology and with the help of laser-cutting has developed the lace pattern used in some of her pieces. She is based in Belfast.

JUSTIN MARSHALL

His work on ceramic bowls was developed at Bath Spa University Ceramics Department by investigating a piece of 3D CAD software for its creative potential in producing ceramic forms. He is based at University College Falmouth.

LYNNE MURRAY

Exploring new technologies, she translates impulsive, drawn designs into visually engaging and technically challenging **digital jewellery**. Her research into the manipulation of computer-generated design, in partnership with hand-made interventions has produced incredible results. She is based in London.

LIZ NILSSON

An interdisciplinary textile artist. Her work *Constructed Remembrance* investigates memory and our ability to memorise experiences. Weaving together used and new fabrics, the multi-layered nature of her work represents repetition, recall and habit and refers to the way in which memories are formed. Based in Dublin.

C J O'NEILL

Inspired by memories and everyday ceramics, **CJ O'Neill** re-interprets existing objects, adding a new layer of pattern over the old. Punching old, manufactured, everyday objects with a 'newness' that refers to current mass production, O'Neill places these **old objects in the spotlight** and asks how their value has changed with the imposition of a new narrative. Based in Manchester.

JILL PHILLIPS

An award-winning, multi-disciplinary designer of bespoke furniture, textiles and interiors. Her work combines old and new, antique and modern, in unique and exciting ways. Based in Belfast.

TACTILITY FACTORY

Unites expertise from architecture and textiles to bring tactility into the built environment. Architect Ruth Morrow and textile designer Trish Belford combine the hard properties of concrete with the softness of textiles by using patented technology, to deliver **beautiful and sensually-engaging surfaces** with a unique, hand-crafted, antique feel. Based in Belfast.

TALKS & EDUCATIONAL EVENTS:

Exhibition Tours

11am daily

Tours of the exhibitions will take place in the National Craft Galleries.

Artist Talks

2pm, Sunday 8 August

Admission: free.

Craft curator **Angela O’Kelly** and participating artists will discuss their work. Mah Rana will introduce the audience to the public engagement concept of the ‘Jewellery is Life’ exhibition followed by Jenny Leary, Rachel Kelly, Trish Belford who will discuss some of the new technologies used in their practice.

Children’s Craft Workshops

2-4pm daily, Tues Aug 10 – Thurs Aug 12.

National Craft Gallery.

A children’s introduction to the materials and techniques used in the exhibitions and an exploration of jewellery, textiles and new technologies.

Giant Interactive Willow Loom

Sat Aug 7 – Fri Aug 13

Castle Yard will play host to a Giant Interactive Willow Loom, created by Lian Callaghan. Visitors are invited to weave a giant length of fabric using wool and willow in a fun and easy way for all the family to learn how to weave.

Christine Monk is the Kilkenny Arts Festival publicist

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FURTHER MEDIA INFORMATION ON CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND

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WEBLINKS:

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