

CULTURECRAFT - CULTURE IN THE MAKING: A LANDMARK EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY IRISH CRAFT REFLECTING CULTURE AND SHARED HISTORY

16th January 2014

CultureCRAFT – Culture in the Making showcases the work of 36 makers who have created an object that reflects their understanding of culture, and how material objects can carry a community's shared history and reflect a cultural perspective.

CultureCRAFT, National Craft Gallery, Kilkenny,
21 Jan 2014 - 19 Mar 2014

'3 feet make a yard but 3 of your feet make a shipyard' Helen McAllister.



Helen McAllister

Opening Event, 7pm Friday January 24, 2014

Opened by Martin Bradley, MBE, Chair, Craft Northern Ireland

Preceded by Curator Talk, 6pm Friday January 24, 2014

www.nationalcraftgallery.ie

"Craftsmanship at its best is a human activity which brings out the spiritual nature of work.

The craftsman gives something of himself to the object he shapes."

Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland, speaking at the launch of CultureCRAFT in the London Street Gallery, Derry, August 2013.

CultureCRAFT – Culture in the Making showcases the work of 36 makers who have created an object that reflects their understanding of culture, and how material objects can carry a community's shared history and reflect a cultural perspective. The exhibition was a key component of the City of Culture 2013 celebrations for Derry, and was opened there by Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland, in August 2013.

This exhibition provides an antidote to mass-produced contemporary products and a wonderful opportunity to showcase Irish culture and creativity to national and international audiences. *"We are delighted to be hosting CultureCRAFT at the National Craft Gallery as part of the exhibition's touring programme,"* said **Karen Hennessy, Chief Executive of the Crafts Council of Ireland**. *"Culture, identity and nationality are intrinsic components of craft. The crafted object's unique ability to express who we are encompasses both the richness of our tradition and our creative ability to innovate and adapt to new technologies. This is reflected in the work to be*

admired in CultureCRAFT, and the exhibition beautifully illustrates our history and the human face of Irish craft today."

The Crafts Council of Ireland worked closely with Craft Northern Ireland, Craft Connects, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Derry County Council on CultureCRAFT. The exhibition includes work in a wide range of craft disciplines from both emerging young makers and those who are at the forefront of their field, embodying a broad spectrum of cultural identities and backgrounds.

CultureCRAFT curator Seliena Coyle said, *"...material objects can be used to document the lives of a people. However, we must realise that it is not the material objects that distinguish one group of people from another but how people interpret, use and perceive those material objects."*

Some interesting makers to look out for in the show include:

Dr. Helen McAllister and **Nigel Graham Cheney** who, in addition to their work for this show, recently wrote *Textile Surface Manipulation* published by Bloomsbury in January 2014. The book will inspire those looking for new inspiration and techniques with textiles. Dr. Helen McAllister is the Head of Fashion and Textiles at NCAD.

Stuart Cairns, a silversmith in County Down who once worked as a landscape gardener. His work combining natural materials and found objects feels as though it has come straight from the landscape, and gives a new dimension to everyday domestic objects.

Tara Ní Nualláin, whose great sense of pride in her "Irishness" and her "Dublinness" is evident in her work which reflects on Irish culture and history as a base for a modern Irish identity. Her piece for CultureCRAFT features a series of stitched drawings of Dublin's M50 motorway cast into cylinders of stitched concrete.

The exhibition is supported by a specially produced catalogue, featuring essays from a number of leading scholars - including Dr Audrey Whitty, Dr Jessica Hemmings, Dr Joseph McBrinn and Professor Declan McGonagle - which aim to contextualise the exhibition and convey the cultural importance of craft.

Images from CultureCRAFT can be viewed [in this Dropbox](#)
Please note: the photographer to be credited is Sylvain Deleu.

Full List of Makers

Neil Read / Adam Frew / Peter Meanley / Gail Mahon / Peter Fulop / Deirdre O'Callaghan / Scott Benefield / Peadar Lamb / James Toal / Charlene McFarland / Richard Sinclair / Rachel McKnight / Eily O'Connell / Sabrina Meyns / Justyna Truchanowska / Cara Murphy / Angela O'Kelly / Grainne Morton / Stuart Cairns / Seliena Coyle / Tara Ní Nualláin / Liz Nilsson / Caroline Schofield / Logan McLain /

Mary R. Cullen / Brigitta Varadi / Suzanne Woods / Liam Flynn / Tom Agnew / Joe Hogan / Dr Helen McAllister / Alex Scott / Alva Gallagher / Dr Caroline Madden / Michelle Stephens / Nigel Graham Cheney

Education & Outreach Events

Late Date: Artist Talk with Caroline Schofield

Thurs 30th Jan, 6pm

Family Day: Playful Puppets with Mairead Holohan

Sat 8th Feb, 10.30am and 12noon

Late Date: Artist Talk with Nigel Cheney & Helen McAllister

Thurs 27th Feb, 6pm

Family Day: Paper Blossoms with Carrie Lynam

Sat 8th Mar, 10.30am + 12noon

Gallery Tours

Crafternoon Tour at National Craft Gallery, Kilkenny, Saturdays at 3pm - Booking Required (Early booking recommended.)

Media Information:

For the National Craft Gallery and CultureCRAFT

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For the Crafts Council of Ireland,

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Notes for Editors

National Craft Gallery

Established by the Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

www.nationalcraftgallery.ie

Exhibition Curator, Seliena Coyle

Seliena is a maker and curator, who was born in Derry. She creates original and contemporary jewellery that combines traditional and unexpected materials. Coyle achieved a Masters of Fine Art in Metalsmithing and Jewellery Design from Indiana University, finishing in 1998. She is currently the Administrator of Continuing Education and Design (CEAD) in the Faculty of Education of the National College of Art and Design in Dublin.

Crafts Council of Ireland

The Crafts Council of Ireland (CCol) is the main champion of the craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. CCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland. CCol currently has over 70 member organisations and over 2,750 registered clients. www.ccoi.ie