

Press Release – Wednesday September 29, 2010

Artists stitch their way into history at Kilkenny's National Craft Gallery

The Narrative Line
29th October 2010 – 11th January 2011
National Craft Gallery, Castle Yard, Kilkenny.
www.nationalcraftgallery.ie and www.ccoi.ie

Exhibition by contemporary textile artists Bernie Leahy and Alice Kettle.

“My storytelling with thread concerns longing, searching, questioning, and discovery. With the alchemy of stitch I can reconfigure, redraw and create a narrative line made up of the twisted threads running over and through and around each other.”

– **Alice Kettle.**

The Narrative Line:

Two remarkable artists will feature in the forthcoming exhibition The Narrative Line, at the Crafts Council of Ireland's National Craft Gallery in Kilkenny. UK-based Alice Kettle and Irish artist Bernie Leahy both work with thread to embroider extraordinary images with fluidity and skill. Drawing upon their daily lives as the raw material, Kettle investigates the dynamics of everyday relationships through the vehicle of the mythic while Leahy explores the detail of the day-to-day.

“We are particularly excited about a new work by Alice Kettle directly inspired by Kilkenny's Alice Kytler, who was famously accused of witchcraft back in medieval times. The piece was made in response to the location of this exhibition in Kilkenny,” said Ann Mulrooney, Exhibitions Manager and Curator at the National Craft Gallery, “These two inspirational artists both share an interest in the quality of line and of drawing, and we are delighted to show their work here together for the first time.”

A series of creative events inspired by the exhibition, see below, will take place in the National Craft Gallery throughout the exhibition, providing gallery visitors with unique insights into the work of these two talented artists.

Exhibition Events:

Friday October 29, 3-4pm

Artists' Talk: Alice Kettle and Bernie Leahy talk about their work and give a tour of the exhibition.

Friday October 29, 6pm

Official Exhibition Opening attended by both artists.

Friday November 5, 11am & 2pm

Sketchbook Talk: Bernie Leahy will give an in depth look at the thinking process, sketches and inspiration that lie behind her work.

Friday November 26, 6-8pm

Late Date: Kilkenny writer-in-residence, poet Grace Wells, will read new work created in response to the exhibition.

In her own words, by Alice Kettle:

“My new work, inspired by Kilkenny’s Alice Kytler begins with an intriguing coincidence of name (Alice Kettle). I am somewhat wary of being in allegiance with a perceived witch, so I keep a respectful distance, whilst knowing that in thread there is the magic to conjure up another universe with its power to transform.

“I have always been captivated by the pattern of myth and of storytelling. Every birthday and Christmas my godfather gave me an edition of the Andrew Lang Fairy stories. These stories were often grotesque and violent, but also magical in their roots in folklore. They are a rich tableaux of archetypal love, endeavour, honour and valour, played out in an indeterminate place that is touched by the fantastic and unreal.

“I cannot help thinking that these tales are being played out whilst I stitch. During this time of creating my head is filled with dreams, of escapism, of transcending the everydayness of life, and is often a manner of confronting the roughness of daily challenges.”

About the artists:

Alice Kettle:

An historically significant maker, this is Alice Kettle’s first major Irish show. A contemporary textile artist based in the UK, her work is stitch, often large in scale, figurative and inspired by mythology. Commissions include the National Library of Australia, the Scottish High Court in Edinburgh, and both Gloucester and Winchester Cathedrals. She is currently Research Fellow at Manchester Metropolitan University and is Honorary Fellow at the University of Winchester.

Bernie Leahy:

Dublin’s Bernie Leahy has exhibited widely, and represented Ireland in FiberPhiladelphia’s 7th International Fiber Biennial, USA in February and March 2010. Her work is featured in many private and public collections including the Office of Public Works Collection, Dublin.

FOR FURTHER MEDIA INFORMATION ON THE NARRATIVE LINE:

Christine Monk | Irish Arts Publicity | 087 675 5329 | christinemonk@eircom.net

FOR FURTHER MEDIA INFORMATION ON CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:

Susan Brindley | Crafts Council of Ireland | 056 779 6152 | susan@ccoie.ie

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

1. The National Craft Gallery

The Crafts Council of Ireland's flagship exhibition space is housed in the beautifully restored 18th Century stables of Kilkenny Castle. It exhibits a programme of groundbreaking national and international contemporary craft and develops exhibitions that tour museums and galleries worldwide.