

Press Release

VERNACULAR

**An exhibition tracing the influences of the
Kilkenny Design Workshops in
contemporary Irish craft and design**



**Tent London, London Design Festival, 19 - 22 Sept 2013
National Craft Gallery, Kilkenny, 25 Oct 2013 - 15 Jan 2014**

www.nationalcraftgallery.ie

“Ireland’s language and culture has always been shaped by journeys. Through these influences the vernacular language evolves, honed by history and formed through conversation, exchange and relationship. This idea of an evolving language is the starting-point for the exhibition.”

Ann Mulrooney, Manager & Curator, National Craft Gallery.

‘**Vernacular**’ was devised by the Crafts Council of Ireland’s National Craft Gallery to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Kilkenny Design Workshops (KDW). Curated by Ann Mulrooney with Exhibition Design by Steven McNamara, this new exhibition shows the influence of the internationally-renowned Kilkenny Design Workshops on contemporary practice.

The Crafts Council of Ireland will premier ‘**Vernacular**’ at Tent London during London Design Festival this September before the exhibition opens at the National Craft Gallery in Kilkenny at the end of October.

2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the foundation of KDW, established by the Irish state in response to an influential design audit led by Kaj Franck. This innovative project – the first ever state sponsored design agency - brought international designers together over a period of 25 years to Kilkenny Castle's stables complex, now home to the National Craft Gallery.

One of the successes of KDW was in its uniting of European Modernism with indigenous and traditional materials and processes, developing new idioms in Irish material culture as a result. '**Vernacular**' is a tribute to this, Ireland's 'Bauhaus Movement'.

The exhibition is characterised by a deep engagement with the making process, and an authenticity that is materially embedded. '**Vernacular**' showcases work by over 20 makers and designers including Superfolk, Andrew Clancy and Colm Moore of Clancy Moore Architects, O'Donnell + Tuomey, Designgoat, Derek Wilson and Makers&Brothers with Jerpoint Glass.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a conference KDW@21C in Kilkenny on 26 October, chaired by Catriona Crowe of the National Archives of Ireland, with Keynote by Mary Mullin, Chair of the Sir Mischa Black Awards in the UK, who was deeply involved in the establishment of KDW. Further information can be found at <http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie/exhibitions/vernacular>.

Images from Vernacular can be viewed in a Dropbox at:
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/x43aaie0jaf3azo/NQwy3R1U8j>

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Notes for editors

Ann Mulrooney studied at the Crawford College of Art, Cork, and the Royal College of Art, London. She worked as a freelance curator before joining the Crafts Council of Ireland in 2008 to run the National Craft Gallery (NCG) where she curates national and international exhibitions, including NCG's participation in COLLECT at the Saatchi Gallery, London, from 2010 to 2013. She has been a lecturer, external assessor and frequent contributor to cultural publications and programmes in Ireland, the UK and USA.

Steven McNamara is an exhibition designer and founder of the studio, Roji Designs. He recently led a multi-disciplinary collective to curate and design two exhibitions to represent Ireland at a World Design Capital 2012 event in Helsinki. The Irish exhibition became a featured event of Helsinki Design

Week, and allowed for collaboration with the Irish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2012. Steven has organised numerous public workshops and exhibitions, and has been invited to give talks at international design events such as Habitare AHEAD in Helsinki and 'le cool Dublin' tours.

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.

Crafts Council of Ireland

The Crafts Council of Ireland (CCoI) 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. CCoI's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland. CCoI currently has over 70 member organisations and over 2,750 registered clients.