



ELEMENTS

The background of the page is composed of a dense field of thin, parallel lines. These lines originate from the left edge and fan out towards the right. The colors of the lines are varied, including shades of light blue, pale green, and soft pink. The overall effect is a sense of movement and depth, similar to a perspective drawing of a road or a field of reeds.

ELEMENTS



## ELEMENTS

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## VENUES

### September

Belfast Central Library, Belfast

### October

Phoenix Park Visitor Centre, Dublin

### November

Larne Town Hall, Larne, County Antrim

### December

Enniscorthy Castle, County Wexford



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**Galleries:** Taylor Galleries, Rubicon Gallery, Stoney Road Press, Hillsboro Fine Art Gallery.

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## FOREWORD

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**Brian Hayes, TD**  
*Minister of State at the  
Department of Public Expenditure  
and Reform with special  
responsibility for the Office of  
Public Works.*



**Sammy Wilson, MP MLA**  
*Minister for Finance and  
Personnel, Northern Ireland  
Executive.*

*Elements* is the latest in a series of annual joint art exhibitions organised by the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) in Northern Ireland and the Office of Public Works (OPW) in the Republic of Ireland. This is the fifteenth joint annual exhibition and represents a selection of art from the collections of both Departments.

The theme of this year's exhibition focuses on how the elements may be represented in art works, and explores how the various artistic styles depict the four fundamental elements – fire, earth, air and water. We see how some artists have made an element an intentional focus, whereas others may be deliberately obscure. The art works included provide us with various examples of the elements from the personal perspective of each artist.

There are four venues for this year's exhibition tour, starting with the Central Library, Belfast in September, followed by Phoenix Park Visitor Centre, Dublin, in October. The exhibition then moves north again to Larne Town Hall, County Antrim for November before finally returning south to Enniscorthy Castle, County Wexford for December. The choice of venues for this year's tour provides an interesting variation of exhibition spaces.

We would like to acknowledge the excellent co-operation our staff has received from the venues and also thank the artists for the art works and the insights they have provided us with for the exhibition catalogue.

It is with great pleasure that we, as Ministers for the participating Departments, bring you this exhibition.

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A desire to understand and describe the nature of the universe and our existence within it is an instinctive and irrepressible human trait. Throughout the history of civilization, this has manifested itself primarily in the disciplines of philosophy and science. Modern science has succeeded in identifying 118 chemical elements which, created in the development of the cosmos, can most simply be described as nature's building blocks. The discovery of the chemical elements extends back to the days of medieval alchemy, however, philosophical speculation on the underlying nature of the universe has a more ancient and cross-cultural history that is represented in the legacy of the classical elements: fire, earth, water and air. According to Plato, the Sicilian philosopher Empedocles (ca.450 BC) was the first to identify the four elements, from which he believed everything was made. However, the existence of comparable elements is also found in the history of diverse cultures from around the globe including Indian, Egyptian, Chinese and Japanese. In addition, many societies believed in a fifth element, one that represented substances that are not of this world.

The classical elements are traditionally associated with specific properties relating to their material form and appearance in nature. However, due to their early scientific importance, the elements were adapted by other philosophies and systems of belief and assigned greater conceptual, spiritual and mythological meanings that quickly attained wider cultural recognition.

Visual art is an expression of how we interpret our world and our place within it. The evolution of western art is intrinsically linked with that of science and philosophy and artists have been continually drawn to represent the natural elements. This was particularly evident during the European Romantic movement of the early to mid-nineteenth century, when landscape artists such as JMW Turner depicted the elements as they occurred at their most extreme and picturesque, highlighting the more psychological

relationship between human consciousness and the natural world. However, throughout the history of western art, artists have also explored the varied cultural contexts in which the elements have appeared, exploiting their rich iconography to communicate complex concepts or emotions associated with religion and mythology.

This exhibition, formed from the art collections of the Office of Public Works and the Department of Finance and Personnel, showcases a selection of works in which the classical elements feature as either the subject matter or as a source of inspiration. Reflecting the varied nature of these collections, the works on display represent diverse periods from the history of western fine art, ranging from eighteenth century Baroque painting to contemporary, post-conceptual sculpture. While the various aesthetics and visual idioms in operation vary greatly, perhaps even argue with each other, the artists behind them share a fundamental interest in the workings of nature and a desire to capture or question them through artistic imagination and material processes.

In Gaetano Gandolfi's Baroque composition, *Vulcan at his Forge* (1767), the Italian artist draws on the mythology of ancient Rome in his portrayal of Vulcan, the god of fire. The Roman deity is traditionally associated with both the destructive and fertilizing powers of fire which, in Gandolfi's painting, are symbolised by the blacksmith who works at a forge. Vulcan was also connected with volcanoes, a natural phenomena featured in Tom Fitzgerald's landscape *Eircom Unbundles the Local Loop – at Last* (2006). Fitzgerald's decidedly naïve aesthetic lends the volcano, which spews out fire and ash, a more fanciful and unthreatening appearance in an imaginary and dreamlike environment. Volcanoes are also the subject matter of Gabhann Dunne's oil painting *The Island's Birth* (2011). Dunne's painting, which depicts a volcanic eruption at sea and the consequential formation of a



new island, highlights the creative rather than the destructive powers of a natural event that has helped to shape the formation of the planet. It is a reminder that the awesome powers of nature, through which it creates and preserves life, are often violent and terrifying. However, in contrast to the Romantic painters of the mid-nineteenth century, the small scale and abstract quality of Dunne's painting subverts, rather than emphasizes, the massive scale and force of the volcano. This renders the event silent and inconsequential to the viewer, a visual device that suggests our increasing detachment from the processes of nature - as though we are observing them from a great distance.

In Norah McGuinness's dramatic representation of the inferno that engulfed the Dublin Four Courts during the Irish Civil War in 1922, the artist clearly presents the more distressing and destructive powers of fire. The building, which also housed the Public Records Office, was destroyed during a prolonged clash between Republican forces and the Provisional Government. The fire that rages at the heart of her painting is symbolic of the collapse of law and order and the devastation that was brought to society during this violent period of Irish history.

Fire creates ash, a basic chemical process that illustrates the perceived relationship between fire and earth within the classical elements. Earth is most commonly associated with the terrestrial world and is symbolic of the changing of the seasons and the cycle of life and death in nature. This theme is central to Tim Durham's photograph *Beauparc 7* (2007). Under a thick canopy of the intertwining branches of a large Rhododendron, through which little light appears to penetrate, a brilliant scattering of red flowers colours the undergrowth. However, having fallen from their branches and cut-off from the nourishment that had fuelled their blossoming, this is a final and private performance before the flowers wither and disintegrate and are slowly absorbed back into the earth. The connection between flowers and the earth (and its

different forms) also makes an appearance in Blaise Drummond's work *Rocky Mountain Wild Flowers* (2007). Drummond is fascinated by the relationship between the natural world and (post)-Modern society and how we experience and understand nature is addressed in his unassuming piece that consists of a reference book for flowers positioned on a shelf - both of which are constructed from wood.

A scientific understanding of the earth and plant life has, since early civilisations, allowed man to exploit the natural world for his own needs. Perhaps the most basic, yet consequential example of this, is the ability man has acquired to collect or extract fuel from nature. Peat (turf), formed in wetland bogs, is an accumulation of partially decayed vegetation and has been used as a source of fuel for centuries. It has particular cultural significance in Ireland, as it is historically important to industry and domestic life. As a result, it features prevalently in Irish art and artists from Paul Henry (1877-1958) to Robert Ballagh (b.1943) have been drawn to depict the various aspects of its 'life cycle'; its formation in the bogs of Ireland to its use as fuel for domestic fires. In his oil painting *Working in the bog, Achill*, Alex McKenna presents a more prosaic view of the local people cutting and collecting turf. Similarly, Brian Scampton's *Making a Turf Stack* depicts two men constructing a turf stack to allow the peat to dry in preparation for its use as a fuel.

Water, like earth, is classified as inward and downward. The immense power of water to shape the earth is evident in Geraldine O'Reilly's oil painting *Overhang, Glendalough* (2012). The spectacular valley and its lakes, formed by a glacier during the last ice age, are a well-known beauty spot and during the nineteenth century, the location was popular with artists seeking to create picturesque views of the Irish landscape. O'Reilly's painting presents a more personal interpretation of the location, capturing a glimpse of the dramatic landscape from a low-lying perspective at banks of the lake. Water covers 71% of the Earth's

surface and accounts for approximately two thirds of the human body and due to its importance to the proliferation of life it holds huge symbolic significance. In most religions it is considered a purifier; it is central to the sacrament of baptism in Christianity and to the ritual bathing of the dead in Islam. Eilis O'Connell's bronze sculpture *Effra Amphora* (1998), draws on both ancient Irish culture and the biological importance of water as a source of inspiration. The bulbous shaped drinking vessel combines the contoured form of a water drop with the bow-shaped structure of an Early Iron Age trumpet.

For some Irish painters, the fluidity, amorphous structure and potentially volatile properties of water have provided an endless source of inspiration. This is evident in the work of Jean Boelan-Gascoigne, Sheila McClean and Kevin Rafferty, who share a particular fascination with the movement and effects of water. The coastline, a place where the land, water and sky merge, has been of particular interest to painter Gwen O'Dowd for many years. In her abstract and highly expressive compositions, O'Dowd has continually explored this interstitial space, the form of which is constantly fluctuating and therefore seemingly indefinable. In *Port Study* (2007), she introduces a suggestion of human activity and enterprise in the geometric shape of a man-made pier, which interrupts the more ambiguous form of the natural world. Man's relentless endeavour to overcome the power of the elements, through technological ingenuity and invention, are further evoked in Dorothy Cross's *Ghost Ship* (2011). The photograph is after her 1998 public art project *The Ghost Ship*, in which a decommissioned lightship was covered in luminous paint and illuminated to glow and fade. The work is a powerful and poignant homage to the many lightships that once marked dangerous reefs around the Irish coast.

Air, or Earth's atmosphere, is a body of gas that surrounds the planet. It essentially lacks any visual form, however, the array of

colours from sunlight, the formation of clouds and the effects of the movement of air on material substances, such as water and plants, have provided subject matter for artists from John Constable (1776-1837) to Grace Weir (b.1962). In this exhibition, atmospheric dynamics are the focus of attention in Janet Pierce's *Night Sky 1* and the dramatic, summer sky of Tracey Quinn's *Saul, Co. Down*. In the classical tradition, air is held to be pure, as it exists in a space between the terrestrial world and the heavens. In his oil painting *36,000 Feet Up*, John Turner depicts the atmosphere above the clouds as an ethereal world of almost spiritual substance. Within this vast expanse a single airplane passes by. The detail is an obvious reference to the Romantic era's preoccupation with nature's dominance over man. Here the insignificance of man's technological achievements is acutely apparent.

Many of the works on display feature the elements in various combinations relating to how they occur in nature or how they relate to human activities. However, in John Kindness's, *Trapper in the Snow* (1988), which depicts a lone hunter negotiating a hostile environment, the artist presents a scene in which all of the elements come into play. The hunter, in his search for food, traverses an inhospitable terrain, enduring a harsh winter snowfall and most certainly freezing air temperatures. However, in the rifle that he carries at his side he controls and wields the power of fire. This will aid his survival, allowing him to acquire nourishment from a relatively barren and unfruitful habitat. The painting is a compelling evocation of man's eternal journey in which he must continually contend with, adapt to and learn to harness the power of nature's elements.

[Donal Maguire](#)

*Centre for the Study of Irish Art,  
National Gallery of Ireland.*

Margaret Arthur was born in Derry. She studied fine art in Belfast, completed a post-graduate year at Brighton College of Art and a teaching degree at the Ulster College of Art & Design.

As well as living and working in Washington DC, Arthur also worked in Stanford University in California and in San Diego culminating in solo exhibitions. She was elected as Associate Academician and later Academician to the Royal Ulster Academy. At Seacourt Print Workshop in Bangor, which she founded with Jean Duncan in 1981, she is now an Honorary Director and on its Board of Trustees.

*My work explores relationships, describing the essence of the experience, situation or places that are important to me - often symbolically, sometimes through narration. Recent work has developed into more mixed media, using hot beeswax to fuse the many layers of fine papers on to a firmer surface like wood. It always has at least an element of print but is a 'once off' unique image.*

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## Fairy Ring

Mixed media on paper / 35.5×48.5 / 1995

Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel

*Fairy Ring was part of a series I did a long time ago based on a part of Donegal where we had a cottage. My parents had always referred to parts of their fields, where I spent holidays growing up, as Fairy Rings - places where blackthorn bushes grew and the farmers never would touch or cut down. They cut the grass around it. We were never allowed to play there for whatever reason. For me, it was a magical place infused with all the stories and folk tales but also during our darker days in Northern Ireland, came to represent a place of safety where one could escape without fear and no one would dare to touch.*

Her recent awards and exhibitions include the Royal Ulster Academy Annual Exhibition 2011 and the Paul Henry Award for Landscape sponsored by The Gormley Gallery, Belfast.



Malcolm Bennett was born in Derby in 1942 but has lived in Northern Ireland since 1948.

Bennett attended the Technical High School in Belfast and from 1962-1966, Stranmillis College. He had his first solo show in The Bell Gallery in 1966 and was a founding Member of Group 63, a collection of Northern artists who felt that by joining together they could collectively make a bigger impact on the Ulster art scene.

Although Bennett continues to search for new imagery abroad, he always returns to Ireland to view the landscape with a fresh eye, as with his series *Flying Over*, which depicts the landscape from an aircraft.

Bennett's work, while echoing places at home and abroad, maintains an ethereal quality that takes the viewer on a journey into the artist's unique interpretation of place. Each image evokes a sense of mystery and draws the viewer into his world.

*Our observations of physical things, our feelings and emotions, while occupying the present, immediately glide in the next moment into the past. There they remain forever enshrined in our memory as something that once filled our experience as an immediate present. My work deals*

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## Looking Down

*Oil on board / 59x59 / 1998*

*Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel*

*with people, places and situations - the half noticed, the forgotten- and documents stages in a journey both physical and imaginary, that start with the surface and by adding or taking away reveals what, in a sense, is already there. My subjects are encapsulated in memory and experience from the past, like raindrops captured in mid descent and hardened into their form from saturated and dissolving fragments. These forms re-emerge as an immediate present. I rarely work on the spot, preferring to rely on small studies and photographs if I require exact reference when everything comes together in a distillation process in the studio. It is the distillation process that brings to the work a real sense of a particular place or situation.*

A much travelled artist, he has worked in Spain, France, Cuba, America, Sri Lanka and Australia. The artist currently lives and works in the Ards Peninsula. His work has been shown in major exhibitions including the Irish Exhibition of Living Art; Oireachtas na Gaeilge; the RHA; Ulster Painting; the RUA; Soviet/Irish Art, and Contemporary Irish Art, Boston.





Jean Boelan-Gascoigne was born in Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire. She became a professional artist in 1998 after graduating in Fine Art at Staffordshire University.

Though Boelan-Gascoigne's inspiration comes from the natural world, she has developed her love of art into the fields of art therapy, sand play therapy and puppet therapy. The main aim of these fields is to help achieve a healthier sense of self.

*The inspiration for this painting came whilst visiting the west coast of Ireland... where the sea roars in from the Atlantic Ocean full of life, vibrancy and changes of colour as the light reflects on the ocean. Within the process of doing the painting, I recalled my experience of being trapped in the mouth of a cave as the tide came rushing in.*

The artist has been involved in solo and group exhibitions and her work is located in collections world-wide. She is a Member of BAAT (British Association of Art Therapists) and a Registered Art Therapist Practitioner of HPC (Health Professions Council).

She lives and works in Carrickfergus, County Antrim.



Ken Browne was born in Dublin in 1966 and is a self-taught artist. Having been a professional musician for many years, he always had an interest in the arts and began studying calligraphy and painting. In 2007 he was invited to the first of four residencies in Cill Rialaig, County Kerry, where his passion for landscape painting began. Since 2008, Browne has been exhibiting his work in a variety of solo and group exhibitions and gradually evolving as an artist. *Untitled (No.3)* was part of a collection of twelve paintings. They came as a result of a commission to design the cover of a music album for guitarist Kevin Kastning, which was recorded in Hungary in 2009.

*A process of layering invokes the elements of land, sea and sky. Derived from memory and emotions, I am bringing them back together in my paintings, holding on to the chance accidents and spontaneous marks which are integral to my technique without losing the overall compositional intention. I balance between habitual mark making and*

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### Untitled (No. 3)

Mixed media on canvas over board / 60×60 / 2011

Collection of the Office of Public Works

*recognising happy accidents when they occur. This process of layering is not only physical – there is a darker edge to my paintings, a deeper meaning that lurks in the shadows. They are not only abstract landscapes but ‘inscapes’, bringing the outside and inside world together, merging places with emotions and letting the viewer follow me on my emotional journey while experiencing their own – that is what my art is about.*

In 2011, Browne was invited to show at the Oliver Sears Gallery as part of the group show called *Black and White*, alongside Hughie O’Donoghue, Colin Davidson, Robert Motherwell, Amelia Stein, and many more. His works can be found in many collections, including Wexford Opera House, Fox Linton Associates, London, and Christina Noble Children’s Foundation.

He currently lives and works in Kells, County Meath.



Michelle Considine lives and works in Dublin. She graduated from Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art and Design in 2003 in Fine Art Painting. Capturing the natural landscape is key to Considine's work and focusing on this topic, she looks at the earth with all its complexities as a start off point for her images. She studies the unique and complex forms found in nature and how extraordinary natural occurrences effect the land and skies around us. With a fascination in the power of the natural environment, she tries to convey this in her work often adding familiar environments to engage the viewer and creating a somewhat surreal narrative.

Over the last number of years, the Aurora Borealis has become a strong feature in her work and highlights her intense use of colour and luminosity. Considine works from her own photographs and found images. She works in a wide range of media, from drawing and painting to photography and video.

In January 2012 she completed an artist residency in Reykjavik, Iceland. She has exhibited her work at the Boyle Arts Festival and has been selected for the Royal Hibernian Academy Annual Exhibitions several times. Recent exhibitions include *Strange Days*, Ballina Arts Centre; *32.9.00*, Reykjavik, Iceland; *Pallas Periodical Review*, Pallas Projects, Dublin; and *Room Outside*, Group Show at the Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin.



Terence Coyle was born in Derry in 1972 where he still continues to live and work. His life-long love of painting brought him to Newcastle University where he completed a foundation year in art. Still undecided if art was for him, it was not until some time later that he returned to the University of Ulster where he completed his Fine Art degree.

Coyle's work is mainly concerned with Irish landscape, including Donegal and Derry scenes, with a preference to paint on a large scale. He also, at times, likes to introduce a figurative element to his work. Coyle has travelled widely throughout Europe gathering valuable insight and stimulation, that give his paintings an added dimension.

*I painted the picture during the final year of my degree in 1999. The inspiration for the painting came from my memories of travelling around Europe in 1998. Prague was the location of the Autumn Remembered and the painting comes from those memories.*

His first exhibition was in the McGilloway Gallery, Derry and he has since exhibited widely, including the Bell Gallery and the Caldwell Gallery, Belfast. He won the Paul Henry Prize in the RUA in 2006. His work can be found in many public and private collections.





*Ghost Ship* is a limited edition etching printed over a base of luminescent ink. The image absorbs light during the day and releases it slowly as a phosphorescent glow during the night.

*Lightships were located on reefs that were too deep to build lighthouses. Daunt is the name of the reef on which the 128ft long ship Albatross was moored. It was painted bright red with large white letters spelling the word Daunt across the hull. The light-ships were engineless, moored by great chains, bow and stern, to the bottom of the sea. The lamp was kept alight by lighthouse men. They lived three weeks on board and three weeks on shore... In 1970, most lightships around Ireland were decommissioned and replaced by satellite buoys. In 1999, the Irish Museum of Modern Art held an open submission competition for a non-permanent work to be made in the Dublin area. I had a very simple idea to turn the lightship into a ghost ship.*

*To create the glow we built an out-rig on the hull and superstructure to attach large UV lamps. A generator was put on board, and a timer that boosted the lights every ten minutes. The ship was painted with phosphorous paint. The paint was of the highest phosphorous content. The paint absorbed the light and glowed. When moving round the ship at night, the surface appeared translucent. The Ghost*

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## Ghost Ship

*Luminescent etching / Edition 21 of 75 / 48x55 / 2011*

*Collection of the Office of Public Works*

*Ship remained in Dublin Bay for three weeks. Its glow varied according to the weather. It was at its best on dark clear nights. At the end of the night, the glow faded to almost nothing and disappeared.*

Dorothy Cross was born in Cork in 1956. Her work ranges from object to opera: working with sculpture, photography and video. The themes of her work have dealt with memory and inheritance, sexuality and desire, and the position of the human in nature. Her work came to mainstream public attention with her solo show *Ebb* at the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, Dublin in 1988. This was followed by several major shows including *Powerhouse* at the ICA Philadelphia (1991) and at Arnolfini, Bristol, England (1996). These shows were made up of large sculptures that often contained found objects both from her family and from studios such as the Pigeon House power station in Dublin Bay where she worked for four years in the early 1990's.

She represented Ireland at the Venice Biennale in 1993 and the Istanbul Biennial in 1997 with her *Udder* series. In 2005 a major retrospective of her work was held at the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

She lives and works on the northern coast of Galway.



Born in Liverpool in 1967, Blaise Drummond obtained a Masters in Philosophy and Classical Art at the University of Edinburgh, before embarking on a career in Fine Art. He graduated from Fine Art & History of Art at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin, in 1994, and continued a Masters in Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art, London. He is internationally represented in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and the United States.

His works are experimental set-ups in the field of fine arts. Influenced by Post-Minimalist concepts, Drummond cites the reduced, abstract language of the 1960's and 1970's and transforms this into a semantic system that now belongs to our general culture. He refers to these roots using architecture by Le Corbusier and van der Rohe, for example, seeing them as locations of idealised human existence, which he longingly evokes in his pictures and simultaneously presents as an artificial construct. In his works, the architectural icons of Modernity come together with drippings or decalomania in plant form, profane objects or fragments of nature. Drummond's examination of the

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## Rocky Mountain Wild Flowers

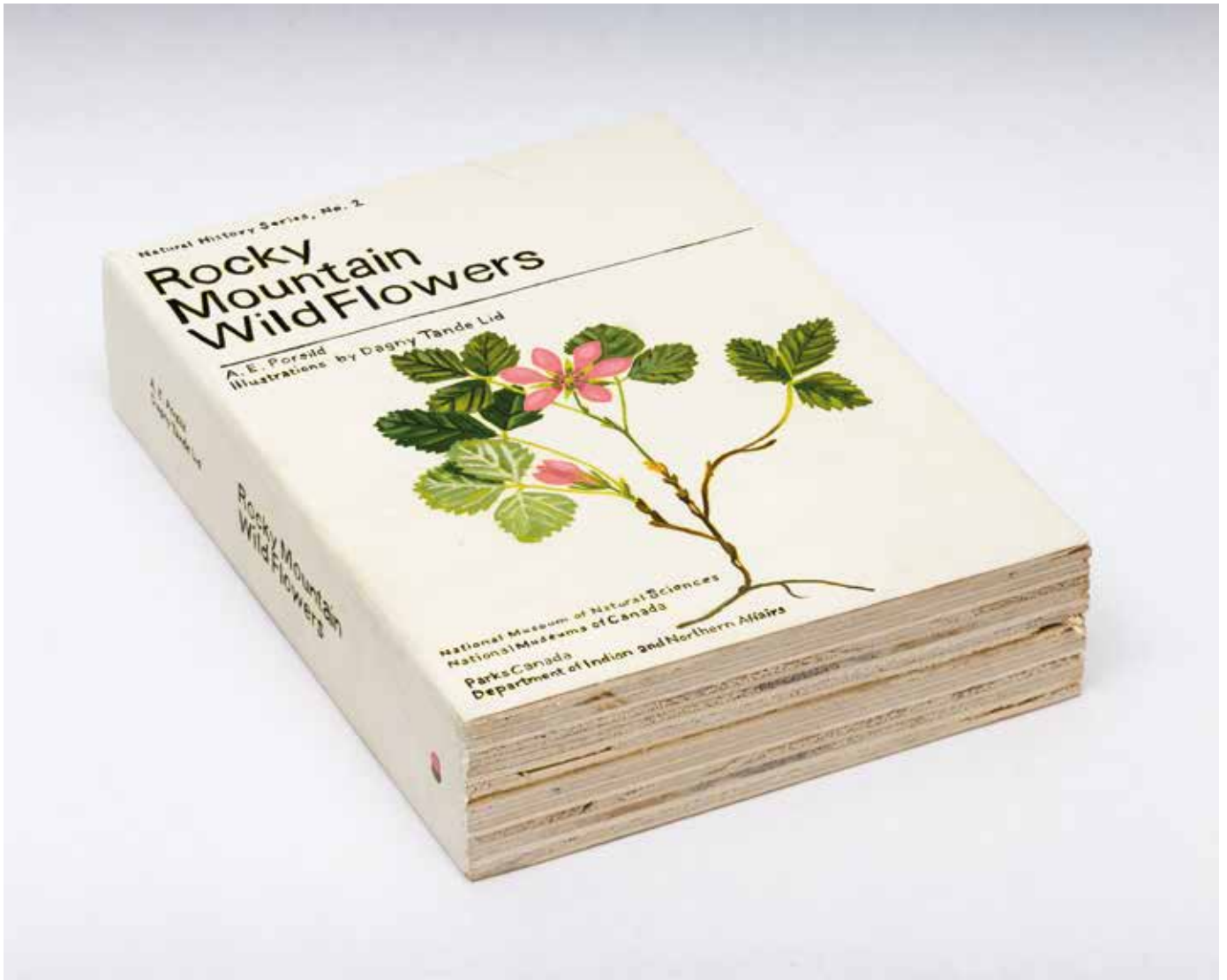
*Oil on gessoed Plywood / 17.5 x 12.5 x 4 / 2007*

*Collection of the Office of Public Works*

past does not produce any nostalgic déjà-vu; instead, it directs our gaze towards the present through the mirror of our history.

*The books are painted versions of books I had in my studio. Over the years I have used them as sources in making other works, mostly paintings. At some point I thought they deserved to be there themselves. Painted wood. Mostly they were books I'd grown up with around the house, or if not I'd gathered them since because they reminded me of them. To me they seem to belong to a time when the world was made up of more certainty and of more wonder.*

Drummond's work can be found in many prestigious collections, including Irish Museum of Modern Art; The British Council; The British Government Collection; Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool; Fonds Cantonal d'Art Contemporain, Geneva, (FCAC); Fond Municipal d'Art Contemporain, Paris; Deutsche Bank/Morgan Grenfell; UCD, and Limerick City Gallery of Art.



Jean Duncan was born in Edinburgh and is a graduate of Edinburgh College of Art.

She moved to Northern Ireland in 1964, and in 1973 was one of eight founding members of the Octagon Gallery. Some years later, Duncan received an Advanced Diploma in Print Making from the Ulster Polytechnic Art and Design Centre. Duncan, alongside Margaret Arthur, is a co-founder and Honorary Trustee of the Seacourt Print Workshop.

*The work is mixed media and was from a series I did inspired by the Mourne and the amazing light there. We had a cottage for many years near the Annalong river, and I particularly liked the bleak moorland around and the effect of cloud shadows. I remember very well the extraordinary shaft of light on the little bit of farmed ground.*

The artist is represented in many private and public collections, including the Arts Council for Northern Ireland; Bank of Ireland; Dundee City Art Gallery, and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Dublin. She has taken part in solo and group exhibitions in countries all over the world, including Portugal, France, Italy and Japan.

She currently lives and works in France.



Gabhann Dunne graduated with an Honours Degree in Fine Art from the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) in 1997. He completed his Masters in Fine Art at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin in 2011, where his practice continued to focus on painting. He has lived and worked in Amsterdam, New York, Seoul and Granada, and is currently based in Dublin.

The artist uses the Romantic landscape and its sublime qualities to critique the marginalization of the spaces animals occupy, often reinventing found images to complement his imagined narratives. Using the wolf as a vehicle to express erosion of a non-human world, he has been attempting to bring this extinct and symbolic animal to a fantasised paradise in the Arctic island of Svalbard. *The Island's Birth* is one of the encounters along the way and directly references the ninth century Brendan Voyage, when a submerged volcano is sighted off what is now Iceland and is described by the monks as the fiery mountain which is perceived as a gateway to hell.

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### The Island's Birth

Oil on panel / 35×45 / 2011

Collection of the Office of Public Works

Dunne was the recipient of the Craig Hennessy Scholarship Award and the Whytes Award in Painting for his entry in Royal Hibernian Academy's 2009 exhibition. He has been in numerous solo and group exhibitions, including *Thecklas Wood*, Alternative Entertainments Gallery, Tallaght 2008; *The Outermost House*, Nag, Dublin 2009; *The Fold*, VISUAL, Carlow, 2011; *The Crossing*, Roscommon Arts Centre, 2012; and most recently *The Wavemakers Vision*, a solo show at the Rubicon Gallery, Dublin, 2012.





Tim Durham was born in London in 1963. Self taught, his love for photography started in childhood through a desire to capture what he saw. He worked as a freelance travel photographer in Africa, Europe and North America between 1989 – 1999. He came to Ireland for a visit in 1990, and decided to make Westmeath his home in 1995. In 2002, he moved away from travel photography to focus more on fine art photography.

*Beauparc 7* is an image from a series made for the *Perfect Imperfect* exhibition at the Solstice Arts Centre during August 2007. This body of work was made in rhododendron gardens around Ireland, particularly in Meath, and features fallen flowers.

*Rhododendrons are so connected to the gardens of Ireland. Most were planted in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the great age of exotic plant collecting. There were private and institutionally sponsored expeditions to the Himalayas. Almost all of the rhododendrons in cultivation here are derived from China and Tibet, and some from India. The estates of Ireland and the western Atlantic seaboard in particular were ideally suited to rhododendron cultivation. There was space, acid soil and a climate that in many ways mimicked the warm, wet Himalayan monsoons. Once back in these isles, the plants were propagated and dispersed as an insurance policy against accidents and disease, but equally because people wanted to have the latest thing.*

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## Beauparc 7

*Lambdachrome print under diamond polished acrylic / 70×100 / 2007  
Collection of the Office of Public Works*

*Science, horticulture and foreign travel were the fashions of the time, and amongst the gentry there was the finance to support them. Many didn't even see the results of their labours and the plantings were often for the appreciation of the generations that followed.*

*In the making of these rhododendron photographs, I am contemplating a fresh look at the beauty of gardens, a fresh look at this often unintended floral display. We so often connect beauty with perfection: full blooms at the height of their season when it comes to gardens. These intimate views of gardens feel special to me. These scatterings are the garden's secret. The window of opportunity is narrow; the petals quickly rot and become absorbed into the bare mulch under the plants. It's not usually where the gardener intended us to look. The scene has not been contrived and prepared. The camera gives me an excuse to look beyond the surface, to go behind what we are so often told to look at.*

He has received commissions as part of the Per Cent for Art Scheme from both Westmeath and Meath County Councils. He has achieved many awards, namely the Arts Council of Ireland Travel Award in 2000 and the Westmeath County Council Bursary to the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in 2006. He has taken part in many solo and group exhibitions, and his work can be found in a number of prestigious public and corporate collections.



Myriam Fearon was born in County Louth. She has an MBA from Queen's University Belfast and a degree in Fine Art from the University of Ulster.

*I studied Fine Art at the University of Ulster between 1992-1996, specialising in painting. At that time, my work was largely figurative in nature and heavily influenced by the American Abstract Expressionist movement, particularly artists such as Robert Motherwell and Mark Rothko. I rarely produced any landscape or cityscape work. When I moved to Belfast in 1992, I found it to be a place which suffered from a severe lack of colour and vibrancy. For me, the social and political tensions of that time seemed to manifest as a thick grey veil over the city.*

*The completion of the Lagan Weir in 1994 dramatically changed the Belfast landscape at night and provided a much welcome shot of dramatic colour over the Lagan.*

*At a time of change, it felt like these powerful blues and yellows represented a new beginning for Belfast and spoke of a better future to come. I felt compelled to represent this new and palpable sense of optimism, for a city which I had grown to love.*

Fearon's main solo exhibition took place at the One Oxford Street Gallery in Belfast, which has since closed. She lives and works in Belfast, where she runs a successful consultancy firm providing strategic solutions for not-for-profit organisations.



Tom Fitzgerald was born in Limerick in 1939. He studied at the Limerick School of Art and Design, where he later served as Head of the Sculpture Department. He retired early to pursue his own work. He was a founding member of Limerick's annual ev+a exhibition in 1977. He has exhibited widely in Ireland and abroad. His practice includes sculpture, drawing, painting, installation and temporary environmental interventions. This work was purchased at an exhibition entitled *The Celtic Zoo* which took place at the University of Limerick's Bourn Vincent Art Gallery.

*This drawing came about due to my frustration at being unable to get broadband where I live in County Limerick. The reason given was that Eircom hadn't yet 'unbundled the local loop' - technical gobbledegook to me. I decided to make a drawing set in the distant future when Eircom finally get round to doing the necessary 'unbundling'. The drawing is a satire on Eircom's tardiness. The Eircom workers have an audience of zebras, elephants, a large crowd of people and a delighted band of angels passing overhead. The volcano and the exotic animals suggest that there must have been a major shift in the earth's tectonic plates, moving Ireland into tropical zones, perhaps. Only then does Eircom get its act together...*

Solo shows include *A History of Silence* at the Ashford Gallery, Royal Hibernian Academy (2006); *The Ministry of Dust* at Limerick City Gallery of Art (2004); a retrospective at Monaghan Museum (1999); solo shows at the Butler Gallery, Kilkenny and the Rubicon Gallery, Dublin (1998); Project Arts Centre, Dublin (1995); and Hendriks Gallery, Dublin (1985). He has participated in group shows in France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, New York and South Korea. He received bursaries from the Arts Council (1981, 1986, 2004) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (1984, 1987, 1992), as well as the Scott Tallon, Walker Award (1982) and the Oireachtas Gold Medal (1981). He was elected as a Member of Aosdána in 2001.

His works are found in many public and private collections which include An Chomhairle Ealaíon (The Arts Council); Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery; Marley Park Sculpture Garden; Gordon Lambert Collection, IMMA; Allied Irish Investment Bank, Dublin; Olympic Park, Seoul, South Korea; Limerick City Gallery of Art and the Butler Gallery, Kilkenny.



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## Gaetano Gandolfi

Born at San Matteo della Decima in the Po valley, Gandolfi was educated at Bologna and attended the famous Accademia Clementina from c.1751 to 1756. In 1760 he spent a year in Venice, which had a profound effect on his style. After his return to Bologna, he painted a large number of religious and mythological paintings particularly during the period 1770 to 1782, and was in constant demand for cycles of oil and fresco paintings for the palazzi of the city. His most famous work is the cupola fresco of Santa Maria della Vita in Bologna.

Later, Gandolfi was influenced by French Rococo and English Neoclassical painting which he knew through engravings. In 1787, he travelled to London, and the influence of Neoclassicism was very pronounced in his work after this visit. He died in Bologna in 1802, one of the city's most famous and popular artists.

This painting is one of eight works painted by the artist, which are displayed in the Throne Room in Dublin Castle. It was separated from the other works at the time of their purchase by the Board of Works (OPW) in 1839. The painting was housed in the Under Secretary's Lodge in the Phoenix Park, which became the Papal Nunciature in the 20th Century. Dr. Michael Wynne of the National Gallery of Ireland was the first to notice its similarity to the Throne Room paintings.

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## Vulcan at his Forge

*Oil on canvas / 97×97 / 1767*

*Collection of the Office of Public Works*

The discovery of a preparatory drawing for the work in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London by Dr. Róisín Kennedy (during her research for the publication *Dublin Castle Art*), confirmed that it is part of the group of paintings.\*

The subject matter of this painting deals with the power of the gods. Vulcan, the God of Fire, was the blacksmith who forged the weapons of many gods and heroes. He was the educator of primitive man, and taught him the proper use of fire. He is seen in his forge standing at the anvil, hammer in hand. Helmets, breastplates and weapons he has forged lie about the floor at his feet. His chariot is drawn by dogs, as was usually depicted.\*\* He was subject to worship in Ancient Roman times. During the month of August, a festival in his name was celebrated, at a time when crops and granaries were most susceptible to burning.

The work was restored in Dublin in 1999 for public display in the Drawing Room of the State Apartments in Dublin Castle.

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\* *Dublin Castle Art* by Róisín Kennedy

\*\* *Hall's Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*





James Greenway was born in County Cork, Ireland in 1985. He studied at the Crawford College of Art and Design in Cork where he received an Honours Degree in Fine Art. This work was purchased from his Degree Show in 2010 under the Per Cent for Art Scheme. Upon graduating, he was the recipient of various prizes including the CIT Registrar's Development Bursary; The Black Mariah Graduate Award; The Cork Art Trail Graduate Award and The Ormond Studios Graduate Award. His practice utilizes drawing, sculpture, photography and moving image.

*Observations of the Irish landscape have become a framework in which I begin to explore notions of social and cultural happenings. A visit to a specific place gives the opportunity to occupy a space for a given period of time. How that place is experienced and recorded, what past it holds and what potentialities it inspires is how I hope to explore the fundamental nature of being and the world.*

He currently lives and works in Berlin.



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## Patrick Hall

Born in County Tipperary in 1935, Patrick Hall was educated at the Chelsea School of Art, London between 1958 and 1959 and the Central School of Art, London between 1959 and 1960. He moved to Spain in the 1960s and returned to Dublin in 1974. He became a Member of Aosdána in 1982.

*When I'm in my studio, it's the one place above all others I'm actually most in touch with the earth and with myself, and at the same time it's freedom, the greatest objective in life... I have been intrigued by mountains since, as a child, my family used to bring me up into them in north Tipperary for visiting and picnics, and since then they have seemed to me both to entice and to alienate... They used to say in the time of the Greek civilisation that the gods retreated to the mountains, but I think stones are kind of the abode of the gods in some ways, insofar as deity is incarnated and made human.*

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## Burning Mountain

*Lithograph / Edition 26 of 36 / 75.5×56.5 / 1995*

*Collection of the Office of Public Works*

Hall has work in the permanent collections of the Irish Museum of Modern Art; Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane; Model Art Gallery, Sligo; Limerick City Gallery, and The Arts Council of Ireland, amongst others and has been documented in many publications in Ireland, Netherlands, Boston, UK and the USA.

His most recent project was a performance collaboration with Estonian dance and video artist Kaspar Aus at the Green on Red Gallery, Dublin in August this year.

The artist works between County Sligo and London.



Ros Harvey comes from Malin, on the Inishowen peninsula in County Donegal. She is a Member of the Royal Ulster Academy, the Pastel Society of Ireland and the Ulster Arts Club.

The youthful impressions of a Malin childhood have enabled the artist to capture the vivid and rugged elements of the Donegal landscape, with its great variety, and this is the essential focus of her work. She was a leading pioneer of pottery in Ireland, but a back injury sent her down the path of decoration and illustrative work on paper, eventually leading her into the use of pastels. When a friend left behind a small box of pastels, she found their feel and tactile qualities worked well with her love of clay.

*I rush to catch any startling or unusual light conditions, and Morning Magic was an exceptional one, with the low sun shining on the dried seaweed. Whether in winter, spring, summer or autumn, the magical moment will stay with me until I have put it down on paper.*

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## Morning Magic

Watercolour on paper / 37×48 / 1998

Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel

*I work with pastels which I find a quick and exciting way of working. To rough out the elements of the moment is frantic and exhilarating, but does not take up much time, then I fill in the details quietly at my leisure.*

Her work has been shown in the Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin and the Royal Ulster Academy.

She has exhibited in England, France, USA, Italy and Germany, and has won many awards, including the Guest's Choice Prize in the prestigious London Mall Galleries.

Harvey currently lives and works in Malin, County Donegal.



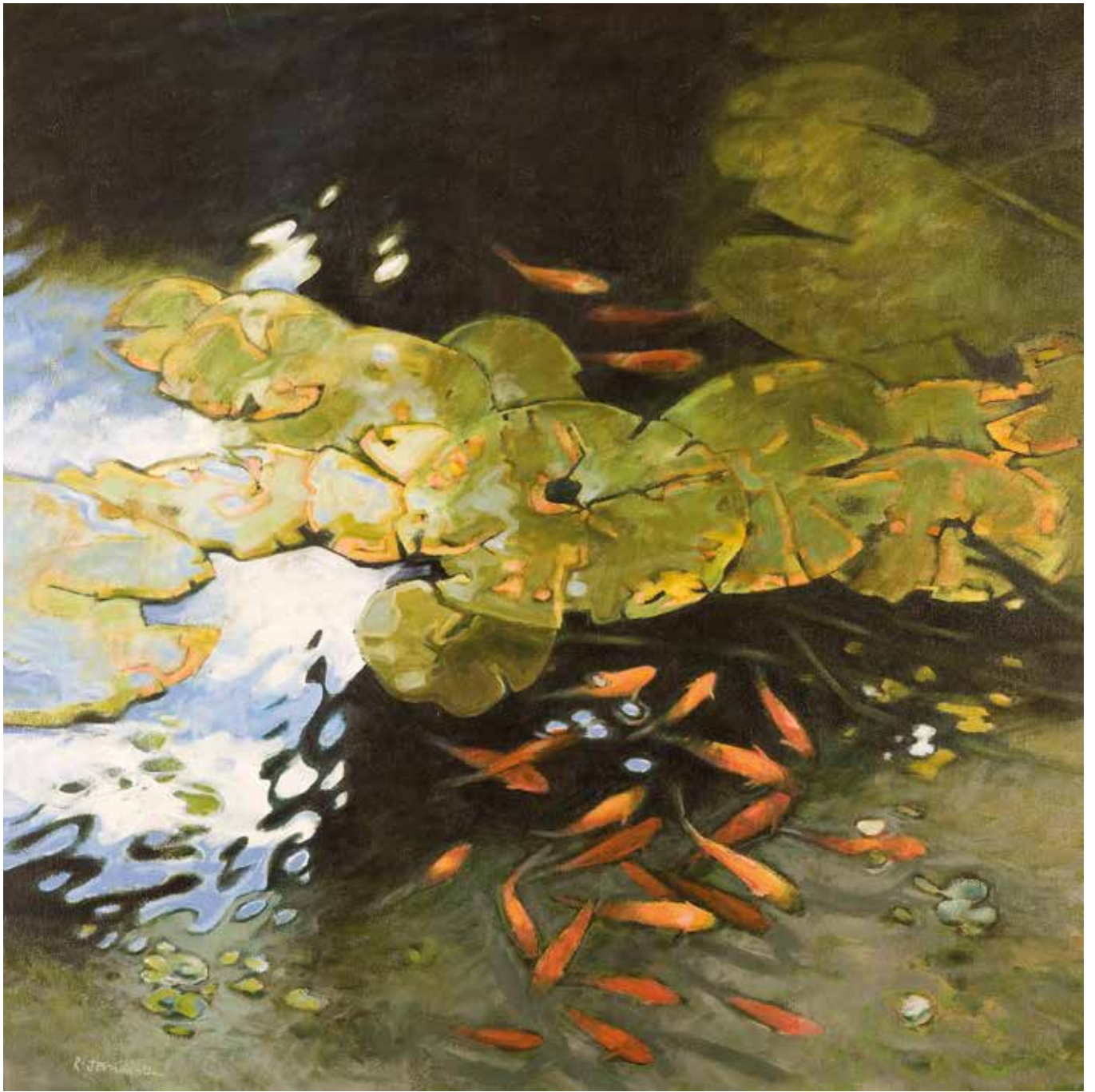
Robert Jennison studied at the West of England College of Art, Bristol in the 1950s and went on to lecture at both St Luke's College and then Exeter University when the two merged. In 1984 he gave up teaching to concentrate on painting full-time.

Throughout his career, Jennison has dedicated himself to art and art education. His work not only includes oil painting, but also pencil and pastel images. The regional character of the Devon countryside, with its mood and atmosphere, is the main theme for his work, and he chooses to create work in the studio rather than outdoors.

Jennison explains that *from initial drawings, daily and hourly contact and observation, memories and subconscious responses triggered by association, I work on a number of paintings at once.*

His work is shown extensively throughout the south east of England including the Plymouth Arts Centre; Exeter University; the Bristol Guild and Spacex Gallery Exeter. He has had solo exhibitions in Belfast, Bristol, London and Milan, and his work can be found in public and private collections throughout the world, including the USA, Canada and Australia.

He lives and works in East Devon.





Dragana Jurisic is a Croatian born, Dublin based photographer. Since receiving a distinction for her MFA (University of Wales, Newport) in 2008, Jurisic was selected as an Axis MAstar in 2009, 'An annual selection of the most promising artist from the UK's leading MA courses'. In 2010 she was selected as a finalist in the Julia Margaret Cameron Award (a worldwide competition for women photographers), short listed for the European Women's Lobby Photography Prize and she received the Arts Council of Ireland Travel and Training Award.

In 2011, she won the Royal Hibernian Academy's Emerging Photographic Artist Award, Arts Council's Travel and Training Award and Culture Ireland funding, as well as the Graduate Student Prize from the International Rebecca West Society. This photographic archival ink-jet print was part of a series entitled *Fairy Forts*.

*My aim with the Fairy Forts series was to explore the mythology and symbolism that these areas of land still continue to evoke and reveal some truths related to the superstition, fear and the human need to ascribe*

*significance to the intangible. I was also attracted to this project due to my personal history, which is entangled in myths of members of the family who were able to 'see the future' and 'talk to the dead'. The 'fairies' or the 'good people', as my aunt insists I call them, allegedly bestowed this gift upon them. These photographs are my personal contribution to the project and they refer to the inner struggle felt when confronted with my own family inheritance.*

Jurisic has exhibited widely internationally and her work is part of the University of Michigan collection, amongst others internationally. She is currently undertaking her PhD research in the European Centre for Photographic Research (University of Wales, Newport).



Born in 1958 in Clonmel, County Tipperary, Bernadette Kiely studied at the College of Art and Design, Waterford and the Slade School of Fine Art in London. Her practice is driven by an intimate connection to the places she paints. It is the product of a process that involves a close examination of her subject through drawing, painting and experiencing the landscape first-hand at all times of day and throughout the changing seasons. Intriguingly, the patient and systematic investigations into space and place that characterise her work can often, at first glance, seem strangely at odds with the constantly changing nature of her subject matter. However, closer inspection reveals Kiely's interest is held by nature and the elemental, which illustrates a sense of continuous and repetitive movement.

The passage of time is felt in the languorous movement of a lazy river or the slow-moving smoke rising from a long-burning fire, as in *Haystacks Burning – Marina's Field*. Kiely is fascinated by the insubstantiality of these subjects rather than their material presence, and their instability is rendered in an indistinct representational style that is both timeless and ever changing.

Kiely has had numerous solo exhibitions nationwide since 1994, and has shown at the Boyle Arts Festival and extensively at the RHA Annual Exhibition. Selected awards and residencies include Artflight award from The Arts Council; Fellowship in Cill Rialaig Artists Retreat, County Kerry; Major Bursary award from The Arts Council, and the Exhibition Bursary from the Cultural Relations Committee. In 2007, she was elected a Member of Aosdána. Her works can be found in many public collections throughout Ireland.

She currently lives and works in Thomastown, County Kilkenny.



John Kindness was born in Belfast in 1951. He studied Fine Art at the Belfast College of Art where he graduated in 1974. Memoirs of his childhood, *Belfast Frescos*, can be found on permanent display in the Ulster Museum.

Kindness worked in both graphic design and art. He once said, 'Mosaic, by turning out to be one of the oldest permanent mediums in our civilization, helped me to understand the importance of creating unique and physically tangible works of art'. In 1986 Kindness decided to focus on his art practice full time.

He used pastels for this piece, completed in 1984, which shows a rich tapestry of colour and texture.

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## Trapper In The Snow

*Charcoal on paper / 46.5×76 / 1984*

*Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel*

In 1989 Kindness received the PSI Fellowship to New York, was awarded Artist in Residence at the Ulster Museum 1995, and in 2001, was awarded Sargent Fellowship to the British School of Rome. He has had solo exhibitions in the Ulster Museum; Douglas Hyde Gallery Dublin, and *Art in General*, New York. His work is in numerous prestigious public and private collections including the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Boston Museum of Fine Art. He is one of Belfast's most established and internationally known contemporary artists.

He now lives and works in Dublin.



Mary Lohan was born in Dublin in 1954 and studied at National College of Art & Design, School of Painting, and later became a Member of its Board from 1996 to 1999.

In relation to the artist's work, Art Historian, Catherine Marshall states:

*Mary Lohan is a contemporary artist. She does not easily fit the descriptions 'conceptual', or 'expressionist'; it is difficult to describe her as Modernist, not to mention a post-modernist. Yet she certainly could not with any credibility be described as academic either, and to cap it all, she paints the same theme with only relatively small variation over and over again and has done so for twenty years now. Yet her work is widely admired, even loved by art audiences across the whole spectrum of gallery-goers and collectors... Her canvases are modestly scaled but they still point to the sublime. The horizon line can be low, so that the viewer hovers above it, sometimes it is so high that you are sucked right into the muddy, encrusted land itself, frequently it is blurred so that you can't locate yourself within it. Lohan*

*never subscribes to the Irish tradition of mythologising the western coastline either, so we can't fall back on that to find our feet. Instead no matter which scenario we are presented with, we are obliged to deal with the dislocation on our own. There are no proxies from folklore or history to help us, only contemporary painting.*

The artist was awarded the Taylor De Vere Award at the 1991 RHA Annual Exhibition and 1st Prize at the Claremorris Open Exhibition in 1992. She was elected as a member of Aosdána in 2001. In recent years she has shown her work at the National Gallery and Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, the Linenhall Arts Centre, Mayo and the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin. She has regular solo shows in the Vanguard Gallery in Cork, and is frequently included in major exhibitions focusing on the Irish landscape in art. Her work is featured in the collections of the Department of the Taoiseach, AIB, OPW, A & L Goodbody, Bank of Ireland and in various private collections in Ireland, Europe, Japan and America.

She currently lives and works in Dublin.





Gerard Maguire is a self taught artist from Belfast. Born in 1963, he has exhibited throughout Ireland for the last eighteen years. His most recent solo exhibition *The Wind among the Reeds – Seascapes, Boglands and Mountains of the West* was held in the Canvas Gallery, Belfast in May 2011.

His landscapes of Donegal, Down, Antrim, Cork and Connemara seek to capture the essence of the Irish landscape by gestural brush strokes and fluidly applied impasto. He follows in a long line of Irish landscape painters whom he admires including Paul Henry, Jack B Yeats, JH Craig and Patrick Collins. His inspiration has come from the bleak ruggedness of the weather beaten landscape, the shifts of light, sudden changes of weather, mutations of light and shape on sea and stone and in the dramatic action of the clouds.

*My landscapes are mostly based on locations along the Irish coastline. I take inspiration from the rugged shores, the ebb and flow of the tide and the patterns left on the foreshore: The drama between sky, sea and shore is ever-changing and the sheer vastness dwarves our human existence. Shoreline fields, bogland, reedy loughs and heather covered rocky outcrops are regular staples of my oeuvre.*

Maguire is held in private collections in Ireland and abroad including those of Lord Eames and is also in public collections including the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Law Society of Northern Ireland. He was commissioned to paint a landscape of Armagh for the new Law Society Building in Belfast in 2009.



Born in Dublin in 1971, Conor Masterson studied photography at Dun Laoghaire College of Art & Design, graduating in 1992. He moved to London in 1997, where he now lives and works. In 2007 he was invited to show his photography as an 'Emerging Irish Artist' in the Boyle Arts Festival and in 2011 his work was exhibited in a group show in Dublin *Photography from the State Art Collection*, which was held in the Farmleigh Gallery, Dublin, curated by Davey Moor. His personal work covers a variety of styles reflecting his interest in narrative and aesthetic photography.

*This image was photographed in Galway. The fog was incredibly dense and I initially wandered in to photograph the posts against the seamless grey. I was amazed to hear sounds of play coming through the haze and as I reached the centre of the fog I saw this small soldier walking into battle.*

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## Going into Battle

*Giclée print / 37×44.5 / 2007*

*Collection of the Office of Public Works*

*I am always trying to simplify any photograph reducing the elements down to the most important details for the story. In this case I simply framed the woman and boy against the only elements left, the posts.*

Masterson has shown extensively in Dublin and London. He has exhibited at the Association of Photographers Open Exhibition in London, and has been honoured with many awards from the advertising industry for his work.



Sheila McClean is originally from Moville, County Donegal, but is now living in Derry. She paints the land and sea that surrounds her. She studied at Belfast College of Art from 1956, gaining a Diploma in Fine Art (Painting) and an Art Teacher's Diploma. She became Head of the Art Department in Thornhill College, Derry, and in St Breacan's Boy's Secondary School, Derry. In 1981 she retired from teaching in order to concentrate full-time on painting.

*Painting for me is a necessary means of self-expression. My desire as a painter is to establish a relationship between intuitive imagery, and a spontaneous method of painting. I try to achieve this, through a combination of economic statements, which are personal rather than purely descriptive and keeping myself aware of the life and integrity of the paint itself. Paint is the image. Image is the paint.*

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**Foam (Pollan, Donegal)**

*Oil on board / 39x44 / 1994*

*Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel*

In relation to her work, Joseph McWilliams, PPRUA, stated:

*Her landscapes are painted landscapes, her boglands are expressive marks of paint, on richly textured surfaces redolent of bog cotton and dank brown pools... Her work reflects a deep understanding of both place and paint.*

McClean is a Member of RUA and has exhibited at the Gordon Gallery, Derry; Kerlin Gallery, Dublin; Cavehill Gallery and the Ulster Arts Club in Belfast; and the Royal Hibernian Gallagher Gallery, Dublin. Her work can be found in the collections of the Glebe Gallery, Donegal; Northern Ireland Civil Service; Thomas Haverty Trust; and in private collections in Ireland, UK, USA, New Zealand, Australia, Holland and Germany.



Deirdre McCrory trained at Belfast College of Art where she obtained a National Diploma in Design in Printed Textiles and Jewellery in 1965. She then completed a three year Postgraduate Course at the Royal College of Art leading to Masters in Design in Jewellery in 1968. Since then, McCrory's has worked as an applied artist specialising in enamelling and latterly printmaking. She also taught part-time jewellery and enamelling in the University of Ulster. In 1997, McCrory's work took on a new dimension when she started printmaking at the Seacourt Print Workshop, Bangor. Belonging to a thriving artistic community helped her develop new ideas and methods of working on a larger scale.

*Gannets IV is one of a series of prints inspired by a visit to the Skelligs, County Kerry. The smaller of these rocky islands provides the habitat for a huge colony of these fascinating birds. Gannets IV is a monotype – a unique one-off print. The image has been painted in inks onto a plate and transferred to paper through an etching press.*

She has exhibited nationally and internationally, both as an individual artist and a Member of the British Society of Enamellers. In 1998 and 1999, she won Silver Medal in Enamelling, RDS Crafts Competition.

She lives and works in Hillsborough, County Down.



Gannets IV

Deirdre M'Bray



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## Trevor McElnea

Trevor McElnea was born in Monaghan in 1957. He has been a full time professional artist since graduating from the Belfast College of Art in 1980. He exhibits in the Eaken Gallery, Belfast. He has works in many public and private collections.

*Over the years I have developed my own unique and distinctive style. I use strong contrasting colours with dramatic light and shade to create a 'feeling', a moment caught, thereby highlighting the transient nature of time and existence.*

McElnea paints contemporary genre in his own individual style. Perspective along with mood created by light and colour are the basis of his work, with big heavy confident brush strokes. This painting depicts a cricket match taking place on a bright day. The interactions of man and nature is skilfully depicted. The viewer can sense the wind at play through the branches of the tall trees which provide shade for the tiny figures at play. Scudding clouds add to the quiet drama of the match in progress creating a pleasing and evocative composition.

McElnea now lives and works in Portadown, County Armagh.

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## Cricket Match

*Oil on canvas / 74×99.5 / 1993*

*Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel*



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## Norah McGuinness HRHA

The Irish landscape artist, graphic designer and illustrator Norah McGuinness (1901-1980) is one of Ireland's most prestigious artists. Born and raised in Derry, she travelled to study drawing and fine art painting at the Metropolitan School of Art, Dublin (now the National College of Art & Design), the Chelsea Polytechnic, London, and then (on the advice of Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone) under the French artist André Lhote, in Paris. From France, McGuinness moved to London, becoming a member of the avant-garde London Group, and from 1937-39 she lived in New York. She represented Ireland at the Irish Historical & Cultural Pavillion at the New York World Fair in 1939. She returned to settle in Dublin in 1940.

McGuinness was a founding member of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art of which she was President for over twenty years (she succeeded Mainie Jellett in 1944). She first showed at the RHA in 1924 and became an honorary member (HRHA) in 1957 but resigned in 1969. She exhibited her paintings and designs in Ireland at the Victor Waddington Galleries, the Dawson Gallery, Dublin, and Leicester Galleries and in London at the Wertheim Gallery.

Together with Nano Reid, she represented Ireland in the 1950 Venice Biennale. In addition to paintings, McGuinness executed a large number of book illustrations, theatre sets and costume designs during her career – most notably an Abbey Theatre production of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 1926 and the illustrations for *Stories of Red Hanrahan and the Secret Rose*, 1927 by WB Yeats. Yeats thought highly of her work.

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## The Four Courts

*Oil on canvas / 67.5×89.5 / 1940*

*Collection of the Office of Public Works*

She also designed the sales windows of Altman's in New York and Brown Thomas, Grafton Street for over thirty years.

In 1968, a retrospective of her works, numbering over 100, was staged by the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College and another took place at the Frederick Gallery in 1996. Her work appears in all the major Irish and international public collections including Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane; Arts Council of Ireland; Arts Council of Northern Ireland; Ulster Museum; Crawford Art Gallery; Irish Museum of Modern Art; National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and several other important overseas collections.

This painting – *The Four Courts* – was painted in 1940, the year she returned to Ireland from New York. The subject matter is that of the Four Courts and its adjoining Public Records Office which, like some of Dublin's finest buildings, suffered the ravages of the civil war in 1922, which followed the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Both buildings were almost completely demolished. Priceless legal and historical records were lost, including the complete records of the Irish Parliament, the original wills of every Irish testator from the 16th century, and the registers of hundreds of Irish parishes. The work demonstrates McGuinness's earlier flattened illustrative style, which is more representational than her later semi-abstract works.

She died in Dublin in 1980.



Alex McKenna was born in Balbriggan, County Dublin and was educated at University College, Dublin where he received both a Bachelor of Arts and Higher Diploma in Education.

The main theme of McKenna's work is that of rural life on the west coast of Ireland. In particular he focuses on the labour of men, on both land and sea. His fondness for these themes is entrenched in his own personal life, as he worked the land, making hay and cutting turf. He finds inspiration and influence from artists such as Camille Pissaro and Paul Henry.

*The painting was painted in the 1980s and is a view of a bog by the road on the way to Keel, Achill. It shows workers cutting the turf by hand (before machinery was used) and then putting the turf into large bags.*

McKenna has exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions including Apollo Gallery; RHA Group Exhibitions; *Academy Without Walls* RHA '93; Contemporary Arts Fair Kilmainham, and Oireachtas na Gaeilge. His work is also in selected collections and commissions including AIB, Ulster Bank and Marino Higher Institute of Education and the Homes Collection. In recent years, he has exhibited at Art Expo New York and Beijing Art Salon China.



Seán McSweeney is one of Ireland's foremost painters. Born in Dublin in 1935, McSweeney is a self-taught artist. In the early sixties, he started showing in group exhibitions like the Irish Exhibition of Living Art and the Oireachtas na Gaeilge. From 1965 he began to exhibit regularly in the Dawson Gallery, Dublin. Since then he has had regular solo exhibitions and his work has been included in group exhibitions in Ireland and abroad. In 1967, he married, left Dublin and moved to Wicklow. He was elected a Member of Aosdána in 1984, the same year he moved with his family to his mother's birthplace of Ballyconnell in County Sligo where he now lives and works.

His Sligo landscape and bog pool paintings are iconic in Irish art. His later works tend to adopt a horizontal format, with bands of intense colour depicting land, shore and sea or land, water and sky. His works also take on differing view points, some with a clear horizon line, where others adopt an overhead perspective, as though the audience is viewing the scene from above.\*

McSweeney's expressive abstract style is perfectly demonstrated by *Salt Water Lands*. He has painted the shoreline and an area of cutaway bog close to his studio. The colouring is exquisite, the deep blues and greens of the painting offer a rich palate that draws the eye in, full of vivid brush strokes that give it an energy in keeping with the wildness and drama of the scene. Shades of black create depth. An innate colourist, his work is Romantic, following in the tradition of Jack Yeats and Patrick Collins.

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## Salt Water Lands

Oil on canvas / 81 x 111.5 / 1990

Collection of the Office of Public Works

McSweeney has had many major retrospective exhibitions, which include; *Retrospective 1965—1990* at the Galway Arts Festival and RHA Gallagher Gallery, Dublin in 1990 and *Seán McSweeney—Retrospective* in the Model Arts and Niland Gallery, Sligo. He has represented Ireland abroad on many occasions including the Sense of Ireland Festival, London in 1980 and the 1985 Festival of Painting at Cagnes-sur-Mer, France. Over the years he received numerous Carroll's Awards at the Irish Exhibition of Living Art exhibitions and in 1989, he was awarded the Douglas Hyde Gold Medal. His work can be found in many public collections such as the Arts Council; the Arts Council of Northern Ireland; Limerick City Gallery; Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane; Trinity College, Dublin; Sligo Museum & Art Gallery; Ulster Museum and Dublin City University.

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\* Brian Fallon – *Sean McSweeney and Landscape*, Taylor Galleries 1998 Catalogue





Award winning Irish artist Eilis O'Connell was born in Derry in 1953 and studied at the Crawford School of Art in Cork, and the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston. She has been the recipient of numerous awards including the GPA Award for Emerging Artists 1981, a Fellowship at the British School at Rome 1983/1984 and a PS1 Fellowship for New York from the Irish Arts Council. While in New York, she won a two-year residency at Delfina Studios in London and was based there until 2001. Since moving back to Ireland she continues to undertake international commission projects.

While based in the UK, O'Connell exhibited widely and obtained many prestigious public art commissions at a number of important locations, the most significant being *Secret Station* made in 1992 using bronze, fibre optic light, and steam for the Cardiff Bay Arts Trust at the Gateway, Cardiff; *Vowel of Earth Dreaming its Root*, a 12 meter high Kilkenny limestone sculpture for the London Docklands Development Corporation at Marsh Wall, and *Pero* footbridge, a rolling bascule bridge 54 meters long designed in collaboration with Ove Arup Engineers, London in 1999.

*This sculpture is one of my earliest bronzes, made in my first London studio in Brixton conveniently located right next to the Red Bronze foundry. While there I did a course on how to set up a foundry and developed a lifelong respect*

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## Effra Amphora

Bronze / 14 x 42 x 23 / 1998

Collection of the Office of Public Works

*for the process of casting. I lived in the heart of Brixton for eleven years and could walk to the foundry, one of the nearby streets was Effra Road and I named many of those small sculptures after London streets that I liked. These early pieces were made of wax, a material I love to work with; their forms often referred to vessels, containers, useful ordinary things.*

She received the Art and Work Award for her sculptures at 99 Bishopsgate from the Wapping Arts Trust, and in 1998 she won a Royal Society of Arts Award. She represented Ireland at the Paris Biennale in 1982 and the Sao Paolo Biennale in 1985. In 2002 her large bronze *Unfurl* was lent by the Cass Foundation to the Venice Biennale and her smaller sculptures were shown at the Guggenheim Museum. She has completed two sculpture commissions for Lismore Castle in County Waterford. Recently, she won a major sculpture commission for Trinity College, Dublin to commemorate the life and work of the Nobel Prize winning physicist ETS Walton.

She is a Founder Director of the National Sculpture Factory in Cork, and a former Member of the Arts Council of Ireland. She was elected a Member of Aosdána in 1984, and a Member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 2008.

She now lives and works in Iniscarra, County Cork.



Gwen O'Dowd was born in Dublin in 1957 where she continues to live and work. O'Dowd is one of Ireland's foremost contemporary artists. She has received many awards and prizes and is a Member of Aosdána. She has exhibited nationally and internationally, in both group and solo shows.

'Her formal concerns have always been rooted deeply in the tradition of landscape painting, yet the specific locales from which she has drawn inspiration, the modes of addressing them, and the metaphoric import of the resulting series of paintings have varied considerably over the years'.\*

*This painting Port Study was made as result of a project that the Graphic Studio initiated based on Dublin Port. A carborundum print was also made for the exhibition. Subsequently, a small series of paintings followed, this is one of those paintings.*

This work was purchased from a joint show with Eilis O'Connell entitled *Across Three Decades* at the Hillsboro Fine Art Gallery in March of this year.

O'Dowd's work is found in important private and public collections including the Irish Museum of Modern Art; Aer Lingus; AIB; Trinity College, Dublin; Arts Council of Northern Ireland; Smurfit Collection; Arts Council of Ireland; Ulster Investment Bank; Kilkenny Arts Society; Contemporary Irish Art Society; Office of Public Works; Aer Rianta and many others.

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\* *Catalogue Entry: In the Time of Shaking, Art for Amnesty, Irish Museum of Modern Art*



Geraldine O'Reilly was born in Dublin. She attended the National College of Art and Design from 1977 to 1982, obtaining a First Class Honours Degree in Fine Art and Art History. Since graduating, she has divided her time between working, mainly in teaching for FÁS and the VEC and rearing her three daughters, Sarah, Kate and Saoirse.

Despite the demands on her time, she has managed to exhibit in group shows over the years, including the RUA Annual Exhibiton in 2009. Through her involvement with New Art Studios, an Arts Council funded co-operative which she co-founded, she has taken part in three touring shows, *A Place of Work*, 1991; *An Urban Angle* 1992, and *X Marks* in 1993. Recently she has taken a break from the usual 9 to 5 work routine to devote more time to producing her art.

*I have been working mainly from landscape visited on a regular basis while hill walking. I sometimes like to concentrate or focus on some of the more incidental things one comes across while walking. The flow of water running off in a roadside ditch to dark crevices in rock contrasting with the bright sunlight, the texture and hue of grasses growing around a broken down fence and how these features create their own miniature landscape within the whole nature and it is here I find myself.*

*The Glen of Two Lakes – Glendalough, contains all elements of impressive and memorable landscape. Imposing mountains and on a good summer's day, large expanses of clear blue sky, and white clouds float gossamer like. The reflective, light filled, water, and tall strong overhanging trees which line the paths and in the distance cover the lower end and sides and then march along the top of the mountain. With your back to the round tower and from the high ground to the right of the upper lake, one can catch glimpses of the sky and the glints of light on the water through the strong sinewy branches of the trees with their rough bark, in parts silhouetted against the bright light backdrop of the lake. From this high ground one could almost reach out and touch the spiky twigs and foliage of the trees and knowing that the mountains are there – their imposing presence felt with the distinctive V where they meet to form the valley of the two lakes. I wanted to capture the essence of the place with all its most distinctive and recognisable natural features.*



Janet Pierce was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1947. She studied at Edinburgh College of Art and Moray House, Edinburgh from 1965 to 1969 and had her first solo exhibition in the Everhart Museum, Scranton, Pennsylvania in 1973. After four years in America, she moved to Ireland where she has since lived and worked, while keeping in touch with her native Scotland.

Pierce holds a deep connection to landscape – earth, sea and sky. In the past, her work has been informed by emotional landscapes such as the Scottish Highlands or the rugged seascapes of Donegal. In 2006, her work took a new direction, after she had a highly mystical experience at the source of the holy river Ganges, high in the Himalayas. Here she spent a month meditating and painting. This experience served to fuel her hunger for transcendence, realised through the contemplation of landscape and the cosmos. Pierce states, *in general, my work is about light contained within landscape.*

In relation to her work, the art critic Marina Vaizey observed:

*Her images move from the specific to the universal. Janet's paintings capture light, the idea of change and also the dissolution of borders, journeys in time and space,*

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## Night Sky 1

Watercolour on paper / 51 x 51 / 1978

Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel

*expressed through that essential of the artist, coloured light. All is flux, constant movement, shapes turning and flowing, metamorphosing, never static or sharply outlined.*

Pierce's work can be found in many important collections, both public and private, including, Taylor Galleries, Dublin; Galeries ArtFelt, New Delhi, India; DCLA Santa Monica, USA; Bank of Ireland, and the Department of Justice. She has won many awards including 2010 Banff Art Residency Award and Culture Ireland Award 2006, 2008/9 and 2010.





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## Tracey Quinn

Tracey Quinn, originally from Lisburn, County Antrim, studied Fine Art in Leicester, England and Orleans, France. She draws her inspiration from the constantly evolving light and its dramatic presence in the ever changing skies of the natural Irish landscape.

Her work is not a literal translation but a creation of mood and a sensory impression of light and time touching the land form, illuminating distant fields. Quinn's simplification of forms and use of loose brushwork with thin layers of oil on canvas, embodies the air and atmosphere of the landscapes from which she is inspired.

*Landscape is difficult to define. Its colour and atmosphere, split seconds and aeons, skies, seas, land and spheres are captured in the paintings which look for the essential form and quality of these places. The painting, Saul, Co. Down was painted in 1994, and depicts a favourite view near the town-land of Audleystown, Strangford.*

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## Saul, Co. Down

*Oil on canvas / 60 x 75.5 / 1994*

*Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel*

Quinn's work has been included in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Ireland, England, USA and Hong Kong. The recipient of travel and material grants from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Arts Council of Ireland, her work features in private collections in Ireland, UK, USA, Canada, and many important public collections including BBC; Arts Council of Northern Ireland; Arts Council of Ireland, OPW and the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

She lives and works in Dublin.



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## Kevin Rafferty

A full time painter since 1990, Kevin Rafferty graduated Belfast College of Art with an Honours Bachelor Degree in Fine Art and a Diploma in Art Education. Rafferty exhibits nationwide and can be found in private collections throughout the world.

*I explore mood, time, action, space and textural qualities in my work. Capturing the dynamism of movement, my paintings are generally focused studies of the ocean and rocky coastline, which have absorbed my attention in recent works. I presently seek to work beyond the purely representational image of water, through portrayal of the restless tides that meet the shores of Donegal.*

In this painting, the viewer is immersed into the cool blue sea. The movement and power of the crashing waves are depicted skilfully in the close-up composition where the splash of the foam is held almost momentarily by the artist's brush stroke. Rafferty's works now are largely abstract and try to resonate with the viewer's personal experiences.

He lives in County Donegal and works at the Green Door Studio in Portnablagh.

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## Summer Surf

*Oil on canvas / 59.5 x 59.5 / 2003*

*Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel*



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Nigel Rolfe's work encompasses many media that include sound and audio production, video and photography. His primary reputation for the past thirty years is working live, making performances throughout Europe, and the former Eastern Block, North America and Japan.

Born in the Isle of Wight in 1950, Rolfe moved to Ireland in the 1970s. In the 1980s and 1990s, he worked with the pan-European group Black Market International. Since the late 1990s, he has made several solo performances in Ireland, namely at the National Sculpture Factory in Cork in 1998 and the Cork Film Centre in 2002. In 2003/4, Rolfe performed as part of the Irish Museum of Modern Art's National Programme.

Internationally, he has exhibited in Biennales in Kwangju in 1997 and Sao Paulo in 1998. His retrospective *Archive* was shown at the Irish Museum of Modern Art in 1994, and *Nigel Rolfe Videos 1983 – 1996* was exhibited as an installed retrospective at *The Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris* in 1996. He has also had one person exhibitions of works with photography and video in Ireland, New York, France and Germany. In 2004 he took

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## Flame

C-print / Edition A/P / 28 x 28 / 1993  
Collection of the Office of Public Works

part in the European Performance Art Festival in Lublin, Poland and made a performance in the Images O4 Festival in Vevey, Switzerland. In 2010 he took part in the EPAF 2010 at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw. He most recently exhibited in the Green on Red Gallery in July 2012, incorporating a performance piece entitled *Pendulum* and he participated in *Contexts 2012 – the Sokolovsko Festival of Ephemeral Art* in August.

Although based in Dublin, Rolfe is Visiting Professor in Fine Art at the Royal College of Art in London, and Senior Visiting Critic to postgraduate fine art courses in the USA and Europe.



Brian Scampton was born in Belfast in 1965 and grew up in Derry. He lived in Japan from 1989 to 1994.

*This work depicts the manual activity of building a pyramid stack of turf in rural Ireland. It is a sight much less common than before the industrial era. The reason the stack is built in a pyramid is so that the rain runs off at the sides and the turf blocks in the centre are kept very dry. The labourers are toiling away in the heat of the sun by the sweat of their brows as they turn the earth's resources to good use. It is a scene of timeless relevance.*

*The medium of charcoal I found to be perfectly suited to convey the subject as it too is vegetation that has been converted into another use. The gritty willow charcoal on the grey paper helps to suggest the atmosphere of an austere and arduous task.*

Scampton has had solo exhibitions including the Heritage Library, Derry 1999 and Tullyarvan Mill, Buncrana, County Donegal in 2004. He has participated in many group shows in both Ireland and Japan. His work is currently on view in The Shipquay Gallery, Derry and Ace of Arts Gallery, Letterkenny.

He now resides on the Inishowen peninsula in north-east of County Donegal.





Adrienne Symes is a graduate of the National College of Art and Design and Trinity College, Dublin. She worked in advertising and was Head of the Art Department in the King's Hospital School for many years. She works in a variety of media including watercolour, sculpture and printmaking. Her botanical watercolours have been reproduced on china and fabrics for Sybil Connolly. Other work has been reproduced on a series of table mats depicting Georgian doors of Dublin. Her work was selected for *Drawing Éire* in China, an exhibition of contemporary Irish drawing of almost 100 artists. She is a Member and former Board Member of the Graphic Studio, Dublin. Symes was invited to take part in an exhibition celebrating the tenth anniversary of Leinster Printmakers entitled *From Bog Bodies to Turf Stacks: Bog* 50 x 70.

*Studying the details of nature through drawing is a very important part of my work. Many of these details appear in my paintings, most of which depict water creating a mystery as water distorts all that is reflected in it, strengthening*

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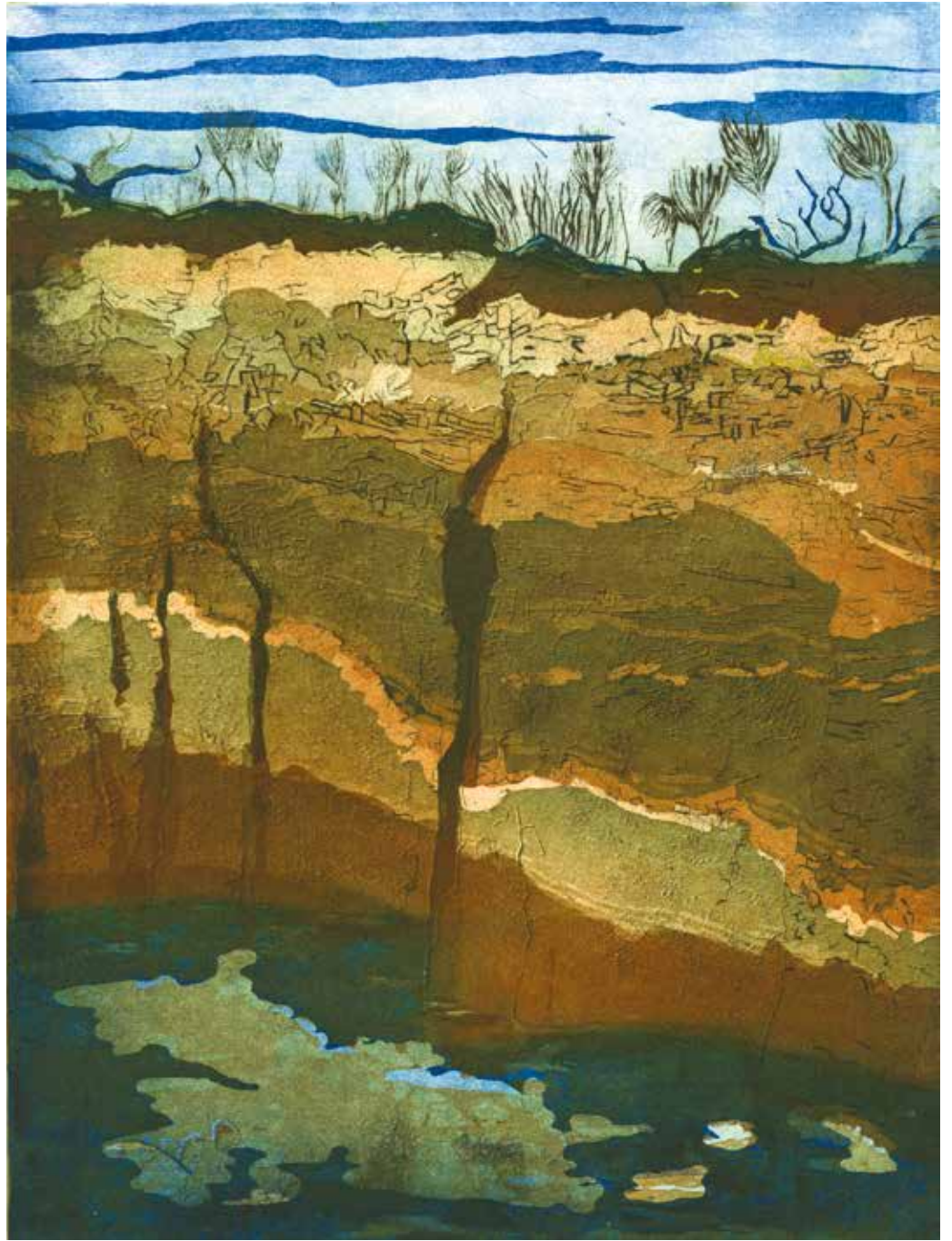
## Bog Secrets II

*Etching & aquatint / Edition 3 of 15 / 40 x 30 / 2008  
Collection of the Office of Public Works*

*and intensifying their colours and holding many secrets. My etching 'Bog Secrets II', involving an element of mystery, develops this idea. It depicts a bog cutting revealing layers of rich earthy colours indicating its age, history and climate over thousands of years. It also reveals other secrets such as fragments of bog bodies and magnificent gold hoards, which have been hidden for many centuries.*

Among other places, her work has been exhibited in the RHA; Oireachteas na Gaeilge; Jorgensen Fine Art; Birr Castle; Alliance Francaise; Kilcock Art Gallery; Farmleigh Gallery (Graphic Studio Dublin's 50th Anniversary exhibition) and the Graphic Studio Gallery. Her work is included in numerous collections, including the Hunt Museum, Limerick; St James' Hospital, Dublin; Philippe de Patoul International, Luxemburg; Chevalier & Mme de Patoul; Hon. D & Mrs. Guinness, and many more worldwide.

This art work was included in the group show *Convergence*, which was the first exhibition held by the Olivier Cornet Gallery, Dublin.



John Turner (1916-2006) was born in Belfast and studied at the Belfast College of Art from 1935 to 1938, then the Slade School, University College, London from 1938 to 1941.

In relation to his work, Professor Mike Catto stated:

*Ivor Beaumont, the then Headmaster of the College of Art Belfast, was a great champion of John Turner and his work. Beaumont, in his 32 years as Headmaster, referred to only two of his students as 'genius', Turner was one of those students.\**

On returning home to Northern Ireland from London, Turner taught art at numerous schools including Coleraine High, Coleraine Technical School, Ballynahinch Technical School and Down High. His love of teaching led to a long and distinguished career in both secondary and higher education. He returned to lecture, part time, at the Belfast College of Art in 1960, becoming a full-time member in 1964.

*Oil on canvas / 52.5 x 75 / 1986*

*Collection of the Department of Finance and Personnel*

1948 saw Turner's first solo show, *Exhibition of Portraits*, which was hosted by CEMA Gallery, Belfast. He also exhibited regularly in the annual exhibitions of the Royal Ulster Academy, where he won the Conor Award in 1997. In 2004, Turner, in connection with the College of Art (now the Faculty of Art and Design at the University of Ulster), established a fund in his name, and that of his late wife Rachel. The bursary provides £1000 each year to a graduate who is outstanding in their field.

His work is included in many public and private collections, including the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the Ulster Museum, and Belfast City Council.

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\* Professor Mike Catto, Visting professor to the University of Ulster



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**Trevor McElnea:** [www.mcelnea.com](http://www.mcelnea.com)  
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