



# Life

in Still Life





**Welcome**  
to **Life in**  
**Still Life**



© Government of Ireland and Crown Copyright  
2019

Published by the Office of Public Works (OPW)  
and the Department of Finance, Northern Ireland  
(DoF)

**Design:** Paperjam

**Print:** GPS

**Curators:** Margaret Bowen, Philomena Grant,  
Deirdre Neill, Hazel Neill and Trevor Woods

This catalogue is also available in Irish.

Dimensions unframed, height preceding width,  
unless otherwise noted.



**OPW**

Oifig na  
nOibreacha Poiblí  
Office of Public Works

# Venues 2019/20

**September – October**

Burnavon Theatre, Cookstown

**November – December**

Hollywood Library, Hollywood

**January - February**

Phoenix Park Visitor Centre, Dublin

**March – April**

Portumna Castle, Co. Galway

# Foreword

Welcome to *Life in Still Life*, the latest in a series of joint art exhibitions organised by the Department of Finance (DoF) and the Office of Public Works (OPW). Both Departments have been working in partnership organising art exhibitions since the late 1990's. These exhibitions, which have toured many venues across the island, bring both collections to wider audiences.

This year the exhibition focuses on the theme of still life and the 54 artworks chosen reflect the variety of work in each collection. A group of five art educators from across Northern Ireland has provided comments on their initial responses to each piece of art which they selected for the catalogue. The exhibition will tour four venues.

It will begin in Burnavon, Cookstown in September 2019. It will then travel to Hollywood Library in November, and then to Phoenix Park Visitors Centre, Dublin from January 2020. The fourth venue from early March is Portumna Castle, Co. Galway.

We would like to thank our group of art educators who curated such a captivating exhibition. We would like to acknowledge the excellent co-operation our staff have received from the venues. We also wish to thank all the included artists, without their work there would not be an exhibition.

**It is with great pleasure  
that we bring you this  
exhibition.**



Sue Gray  
Permanent Secretary  
Department of Finance



Kevin 'Boxer' Moran  
Minister of State  
OPW and Flood Relief

# Notes on an Exhibition

---

This year, 2019, marks the twentieth year of continuous co-operation between the Office of Public Works (OPW) and the Department of Finance of Northern Ireland (DoF). Since 1999, the two Government Departments have worked together to share artworks in the Irish State Art Collection and the Northern Ireland Civil Service Collection with wider audiences. The two collections are mainly on display in public buildings and the purpose of collaborating on the annual exhibition is to bring these artworks to new audiences. The exhibitions have toured numerous venues across the island and have over the twenty years featured works by several hundred artists.

The cross-border exhibition started informally in 1996 when six artworks from the Northern Ireland Civil Service Collection were loaned to the OPW for its touring exhibition *Art of the State - Emerging Art*. In 1997, the two Departments decided to organise a joint exhibition of landscapes entitled *Landscapes North and South*. In 1999, building on the success of the two earlier exhibitions, the DoF and the OPW agreed to continue to work together to open up access to the two collections and to collaborate with other partners, such as arts organisations, schools, colleges and local authorities.

Since 1999, each annual exhibition has been given a distinctive theme. Past exhibitions have focused on landscapes, portraiture, printmaking, emerging art, sculpture, and even the titling of artworks. Connections between artworks and artists in both collections have been explored in different ways in the thematic exhibitions. In more recent years, the two Departments have taken the initiative of opening up the selection process to new partners. These partnerships have added an extra dimension to the cross-border project. Every exhibition has been accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue.



## — 1999 – 2019

This year's catalogue is the twenty-first in the series. Over the past twenty years, the exhibition catalogues were researched and written by art college graduates, art historians, curators, as well as by the staff managing the collections in both Departments. The catalogues are published now in both English and Irish.



**...in a still life, there is no end to our looking, which has become allied with the gaze of the painter; we look in and in, to the world of things, in their ambiance of cool or warm light, in and in, as long as we can stand to look, as long as we take pleasure in looking.**



*Mark Doty*  
*poet & memoirist*

## Life in Still Life

---

The theme for the 2019 exhibition is still life. The curators for this year's exhibition are arts educators who are members of the Association of Art & Design Education (AADE) in Northern Ireland. This group of curators brought their critical thinking skills and experiences as art educators, and artists, to the selection process. *Life in Still Life* explores still life as a distinctive artistic genre. The exhibition includes paintings, prints, photographs and sculpture.

From ancient times, the depiction of inanimate objects has been present in European art. Drawings and paintings of objects appear on wall paintings in Egyptian tombs and in Greek and Roman architecture. The technical terms *Stilleven* in Northern Europe and *Vanitas*, *Nature Morte* or *Memento Mori* and *Bodegón* of Southern European art schools are used to catalogue still life. These terms created significance for the genre. The acknowledgment of the creation of still life as a distinctive theme also offered artists the opportunity to show their technical skills to enhance the audiences' appreciation of the genre. Skillful renderings of objects such as ripening fruit, decaying flowers and food, candles and hour-glasses symbolised the passing of time; filled glasses, pewter vessels, musical instruments, and jewellery placed next to a skull acted as reminders to the viewer that all earthly pleasures pass.

In the 17th century, Flemish and Dutch painters developed the symbolic, moral and allegorical language of the European still life, creating a visual vocabulary to reflect on life (and death) in all its complexities that still resonates today in contemporary artworks. Still lifes, although low in the traditional hierarchy of the European art academies, became artworks sought after by collectors, not only for their aesthetic qualities but also because of the philosophical, religious and symbolic messages that they conveyed. In the 19th century, with the arrival of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, the still life continued to interest artists as a subject matter in its own right and many of Europe's most renowned artists created still life works of great beauty that stand amongst the great masterpieces of the world. In the 20th century, Modernist artists took the tradition in very different directions with Cubism. The invention of photography brought new life to the genre and in the 21st century, the still life genre continues to be explored in innovative ways across diverse artistic media.

# Is there life

## — 1999 – 2019

The work of fifty-one artists is featured in this exhibition. The artists are at different stages in their careers with some in the early stages and others with international reputations. Each artist brings their own individual approach to their work and this diversity of approaches makes for a visually interesting exhibition.

In making their selection of artworks for the exhibition, the curators discussed the history of European still life and the variety of approaches taken by artists to the genre through the centuries. They decided to include artworks across artistic media to tease out what the term 'still life' means in the 21st century. They selected paintings, prints, photographs, drawings, and sculpture in ceramics and glass to open up this discussion for audiences.

As a group of art educators and artists themselves, the curators agreed that they wished to explore artistic excellence and experimentation in the works they selected for the exhibition. They focused on how each artist approached their subject matter and the techniques artists used to create their artworks. The curators' aim was to invite questions, not provide answers. They agreed that each artwork speaks for itself and decided to include short personal statements, often intuitive, on each work so that visitors to the exhibition are free to bring their own interpretations to each work.

The curators considered the theme of still life from many angles, aesthetically and historically. It is their hope that visitors to the exhibition will bring their curiosity to the theme and ask their own questions. Questions such as what does still life mean to artists and audiences in the 21st century? Can a sculpture be a still life? Does this matter in contemporary artistic practice? Taking such questions as a starting point, the curators hope that visitors will be encouraged to ask their own questions and decide if there is life in still life?


Jacque Moore  
*Art Adviser*  
August 2019

# in still life?


# Brian Ballard




## Flowers in Green Jar





I was drawn to this piece when I first saw it. The forms on the table have a beautiful balance and the light coming through the window gives the picture an interesting perspective.



Archetypical still life, plant/flowers, pots window and table top but in tones of blues/green. Loosely, strongly painted.



An unconventional treatment for a traditional still life arrangement. Both additive and subtractive, loose yet illustrative, this almost monochrome painting is assured in its delivery.



oil on board  
34 × 24 cm


Purchased in 1986  
DoF Collection




# Larry Bennett





## Dublin Postcard



This picture is a very sensitive piece which has provoked so many memories. It is lovely to receive a postcard and I would like to receive this one.



The Partial colour spectrum and postmark add poignancy that hints of past friendships and fading memories.



etching  
45 x 30 cm

1979  
OPW Collection



# William Bogle

## Walking Shoes

oil on canvas  
50 × 55 cm

2016  
DoF Collection

What it shows in the painting – a pair of brown laced shoes on a broken shoe box? Why are they so composed? What's the key?

A subject I have seen before (Van Gogh's brown boots?) These shoes are old and have been polished and cared for. I sense the comfort of old shoes that have the physical moulding of the feet of the person who has worn them all these years.

William Bogle takes a very traditional approach to the genre of still life painting. By his acute and meticulous observation and his careful composition, he has made something beautiful out of a simple and almost mundane subject, as did the earlier artist Van Gogh, when he painted his boots in his yellow house in Arles.

I just want to lift the shoes out of the canvas and put them on. This picture brings back so many memories.

Not so long ago, it was part of the daily routine to polish shoes. This beautiful photorealist painting captures that sense of yesteryear. Does the box contain shoe polish equipment and what's the tent peg doing here?







# Michael Boran




## Tony Potts





This photographic work carries a very interesting narrative. There are many opportunities to create stories. Where is the man going and why is he leaving the house?



This artist has taken a very original approach to the genre of still life. He creates a story within a story, questioning the verity of photography by assembling a group of objects which, photographed from a different angle could create an illusion of a three dimensional scene but which from this perspective, disrupt the illusion.



Like a still shot from a storyboard, our imagination creates a plot. Is it a thriller or is it a humble biography?



c-print  
40 x 51 cm


1989  
OPW Collection



# Sara Brown



## Jug of Lilies





Quite dramatic in colour but has impact in its single image of vase with lilies.



Look at me!

Spiky, elegant, noble lilies stand proudly against a flat, black background. Diagonal lines and contrasting colours add drama and impact.



monotype  
45.5 × 36 cm

Purchased in 2002  
DoF Collection




# Campbell Bruce

## Morning Light

—  
This painting uses the interesting device of a frame within a frame.  
There is a lovely contrast of colour and tone between the inside and outside spaces.

—  
Like a modern version of a Matisse, this drew my eye from the sculpture in the foreground to the outside scene and back again. The push and pull interaction counter balances the vision between two compositions.



—  
oil on canvas  
152.5 x 107 cm


2005  
OPW Collection




# Hilary Bryson





## Still Life



I love the inclusion of sculpture busts and maquettes, the cloth on the table, plants, bowl of fruit, all very still life genre objects given a modern observation.



Pastel, table top with assorted objects composed on or against or behind a table.



pastel on board  
49 x 61 cm

Purchased in 1995  
DoF Collection







# Jade Butler




## A New Way




A little piece, exquisitely painted, makes a huge impression on me.





This small painting has and makes a big impact. The representational nature of the content is beautifully painted.



A contemporary view of traditional still life objects: flowers and a nostalgic object – a well - worn tin. Hard and soft memories.



My eye is drawn to the objects of soft femininity and hints of a special occasion in an earlier age. Like the owner who may be long gone, the keepsakes are fading leaving only their presence as a memory.



oil on canvas  
40 × 40 cm

2018  
DoF Collection



# Bridget Cox

## Windowsill Studio March

oil on canvas  
49.5 × 75 cm

Purchased in 1997  
DoF Collection

The colour palette and content create a beautifully sensitive piece. I am struck by the arrangement of the objects and how they create a balance on the canvas.

The colours are vibrant, florescent. I love the blurring edges. The hope that spring light brings in through the window. I think of Rothko as well.

I love it. Ethereal.  
Leaves me speechless at its beauty.

The simplicity of subject matter and lack of detail is the strength of this painting. The subtlety and softness of the colour and the placing of objects within the composition produce a wonderful atmosphere of stillness and an almost meditative quality.

This gentle painting of three typical still life objects lined up like soldiers emerge softly from a luminous light. The shallow depth and contrasting colours add to the stillness of the scene.



# Michael Craig-Martin

## Close Relations

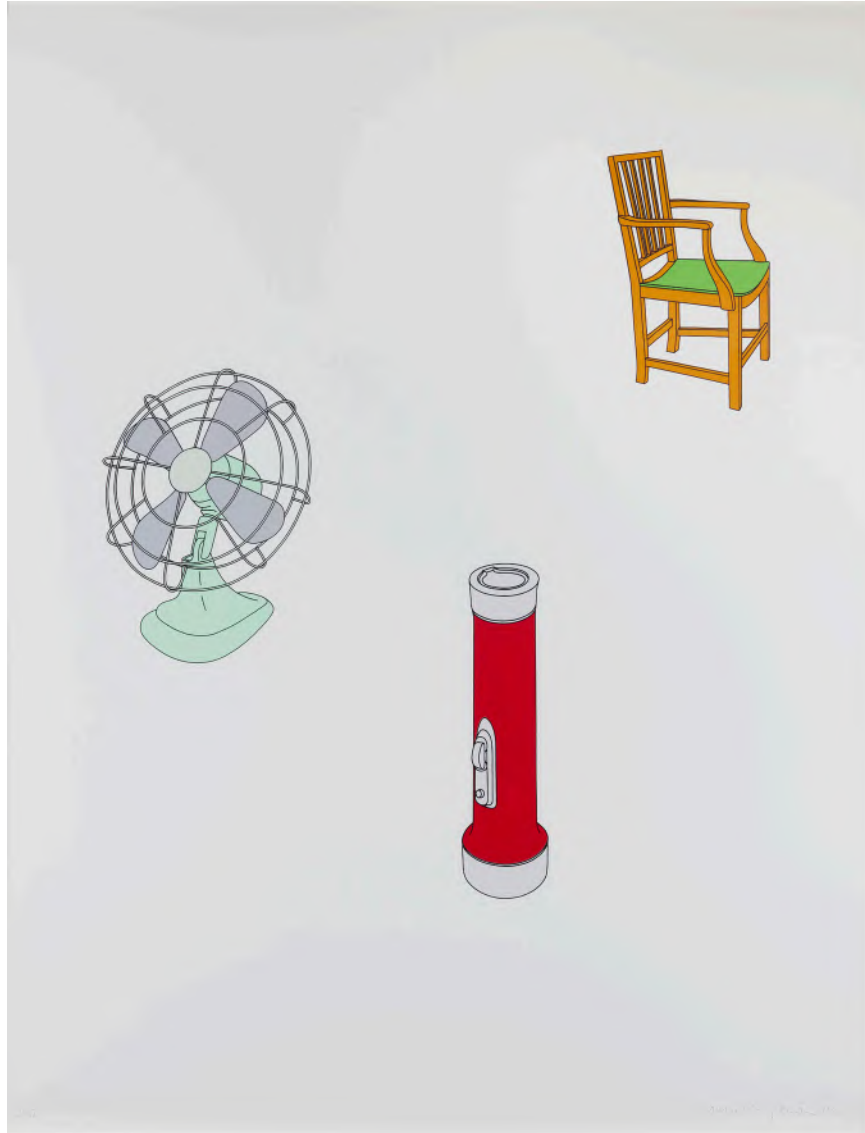
By his very untraditional approach to the subject of still life Michael Craig-Martin sets out to question the genre. The objects chosen appear almost arbitrary. They are drawn in a precise graphic style and spaced across the picture plane rather than carefully arranged as one would expect with tone and shadow eliminated.

Objects floating, resting in space, seemingly ordinary but the space around them makes each one so important.

A carefully considered print composition. The artist uses a limited colour palette which makes a very strong statement.

screen print  
97 x 77 cm

1996  
OPW Collection



# Richard J Croft

## Still Life with Blue Oil Lamp

This large painting has excited me as a viewer. The arrangements of lamp, lemons and other objects excite my visual senses.

Everything about this work enchants me. Colour contrasts, unusual perspectives, jewel points of colour, handling of paint. Mad about it. Oh, and the scale of it too.

A composition of contrasts. Geometric vertical and horizontal lines are offset by random scatter of lemons combined with a restricted palette of complimentary colours. Like falling rain, soft blurred shadows pull my eye backwards and forwards before focusing on the distinctive curves of the oil lamp.

oil on canvas  
118 × 90 cm

Purchased in 2000  
DoF Collection





# Fionnuala D'Arcy

## Still Life 1

Floating in space, contradicting still life. Lovely little jewels, childlike.

Without the title, "Still Life 1", you could imagine that these images were of trees, plants, balloons, fireworks or just simple doodles. The charm of the painting is in its simplicity.

This canvas has many small elements which combine to make an exciting sensitive still life. The elements are dotted across the canvas creating a balance.

oil on paper  
25 × 36 cm

2005  
DoF Collection



# Sarah Davidson

## Still Life with Apples

—  
Cézanne influence or homage?  
Apples mature, textured, strong.

—  
I think of Berthe Morisot when I look at this still life. I love the treatment of the cloth – the blues and the opposing oranges and reds of the apples. The same colours in the bowls. All filling the canvas with a nod to a background at the top.

—  
Davidson's homage to Cézanne borrows from his distortion of viewpoints. A limited palette and looseness of touch are applied to the crumpled tablecloth that provides a foil to the apples.

—  
oil on board  
60 × 49.5 cm


Purchased in 1995  
DoF Collection




# Mark Dion





## The Salmon of Knowledge Returns



There's much more to this than meets the eye! It's not just a stuffed fish atop a table filled with dripping red objects. Everything is significant.

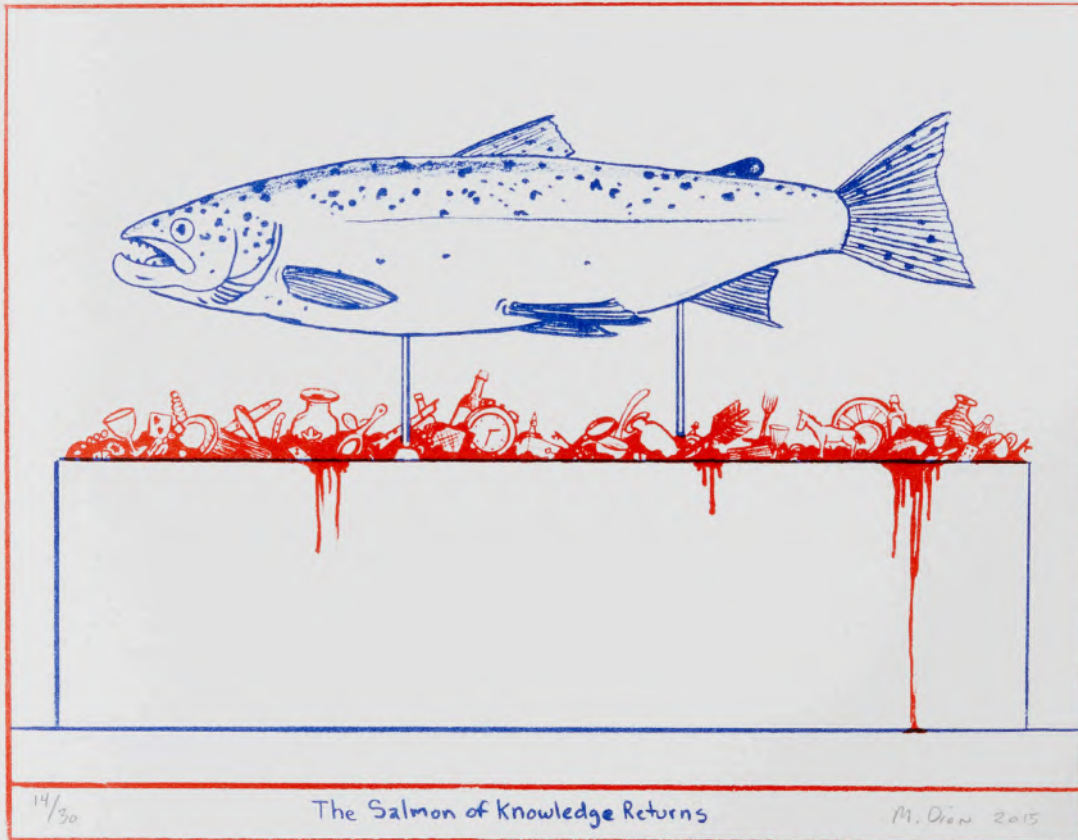


The two colour linear image highlights the underlying message. Impaled forever above a bed of decaying and putrefying rubbish, the salmon of knowledge is destined to suffer from our ignorance.



lithograph  
29 x 38 cm

2015  
OPW Collection



# Daniel Dowling

## The Measurement of Time

The hour glass is a component in many classical still life paintings which are often allegorical i.e. other meanings hidden within. This one allows time for more contemplation of what is within, differing from more straightforward and obvious works in the exhibition.

An hour glass – an object that appears in many traditional still life as a reminder of time and our own mortality. Here the artist captures the movement in time where he lives. People moving about like the grains of time.

painting on canvas  
122 × 91 cm

2018  
DoF Collection





# Nathalie Du Pasquier

## Half a Shoe

oil on canvas  
130 × 130 cm

2004  
OPW Collection

Nathalie Du Pasquier's interest in surface pattern and three dimensional design has an obvious influence on her still life painting. The objects in this large scale painting are stylised and simplified and perspective is deliberately distorted so that each item sits almost in isolation rather than part of a cohesive whole, lending an almost surreal quality to the work.

The work brings together a collection of still life forms arranged in a way which engaged me as the viewer. The large still life makes a significant impact on the viewer.

The colour palette and tonal range is harmonious. The placing of the objects and their relationship to each other is calm. When I found out this is an artist with a design background – the penny dropped, I get it!

Enigmatic and disturbing. The cool colours and clinical shapes are juxtaposed with part of a shoe. Who does it belong to? Why is it there?



# Beatrice Elvery, Lady Glenavy

## Soldier, Sailor

oil on canvas  
53 x 43 cm

1967  
OPW Collection

Perfect porcelain, exquisitely painted, perfectly arranged.

A beautiful sensitive painting of porcelain. I feel I should be able to lift them out of the picture.

This interesting painting includes a bird's skull, (a skull being a traditional element in the 'Vanitas' still life genre) along with two china figurines. The artist has obviously enjoyed capturing the delicacy and translucency of the chosen objects.

A still life collection of porcelain objects with real flowers, shells, and a bird's skull. Beautifully painted in pastel tones – images of a bygone age.

This collection suggests the genteel and privileged life of the owner but the symbols of a traditional *Vanitas* still life are here. The artist has depicted the trappings of wealth and the power it brings but also how it cannot conquer the brevity of life. I love the composition; its restrained colours and the contrast between objects.




# Simon English

## Vitrine

—  
This piece conveys to me a sense of space. How the light is trapped in the glass box and how the shadow is cast across the table makes me feel content.

—  
The beauty of this painting is its ability to create a feeling of isolation and solitude with a minimum of detail and a softness and subtlety of light.

—  
This is very mysterious. A glass box within a glass frame. Inside a house with lights on a top of an inaccessible plinth. Who is inside the house? – I feel a sense of being trapped by a still life painting.



—  
oil on canvas  
40.5 × 51 cm

2012  
OPW Collection



# Gillian Freedman

## Juggling About

Cups and bowls in woven tapestry.  
Interesting tonal colours with almost  
abstract shapes. Lovely to see textile art.

What a lovely interpretation in tapestry!  
It reminds me of the ceramics in my kitchen  
cupboard at home.

Wonky and woolly but not a weaving!  
The bold, flat colours and simple outlined  
shapes of the tapestry sit securely on a dark  
geometric background. Like folk weavers,  
the personality of the artist is woven into  
the fabric.

tapestry  
35 × 40 cm

2001  
OPW Collection





# Guggi




## Untitled II

It's untitled. So are we allowed to see what we want in this painting? I see two white bowls but the whole abstract nature of the shapes the colours the use of mixed media. I love this piece.

This artwork is beautifully composed and makes me feel elated. The balance of shapes pleases the eye. The viewer is drawn to the bright orange and red on the shape which travels horizontally across the canvas.

Beautifully balanced in contrasting shapes and colours. Flat and contemporary in what looks like a classical setting. Is the background marble? Are the bowls stone? I don't know but my eye is constantly drawn to it.



mixed media on paper  
50 × 70 cm

2005  
OPW Collection




# Ken Hamilton



## Still Life with Irises

—  
Strong composition, classic organisation,  
lovely paintwork.

—  
I love the rich jewel-like colours that radiate  
from an intensely dark background. There  
are suggestions of religious symbolism and  
more than a passing nod to traditional  
still life.



—  
oil on canvas  
44 × 34 cm


Purchased in 1993  
DoF Collection




# Austin Hearne





## Sr Peter Yellow Rose



A very interesting approach to creating a still life. Atmospheric.




The traditional still life of *Memento Mori* and *Vanitas* is given a contemporary twist. The dying flower and peeling disposable cup will soon be gone with the distorted shadow on the corrugated cardboard hinting at cinematic effects.



inkjet & printed on painted wallpaper, wallpaper paste, pva, gloss varnish, over board  
17.5 x 18 cm

2017  
OPW Collection



inkjet print & wax over board  
20 x 20 cm

2017  
OPW Collection




# Olive Henry



## Shipshape

—  
Shipshape is an abstract piece that is visually stimulating. The rectangular red section draws you into the picture. The black line holds together the form of the picture.

—  
Rolling seas and stormy weather necessitate the restriction of items on board. The pale aquatic colours and grid-like structure contained by a border, control the composition, as they would objects. Restrained yet loose, this beautiful painting has influences from her work as a stained glass artist.



—  
oil on canvas  
40 × 50 cm

Purchased in 1989  
DoF Collection





# Alexey Krasnovsky

## Blue Plate

The plums have a beautiful range of purple and blue hues. The turquoise plate with all the colours echoes in the table cloth. It is clearly recognisable but has an abstract quality in the shapes.

My eyes are drawn to the plate of plums. They sit confidently in the centre of the canvas and are to be admired.

Rich, luscious plums just waiting to be eaten. My favourite blues.

oil on canvas  
30 x 40 cm

circa 2005  
OPW Collection




**Stephen Lau**



## Predator & Prey

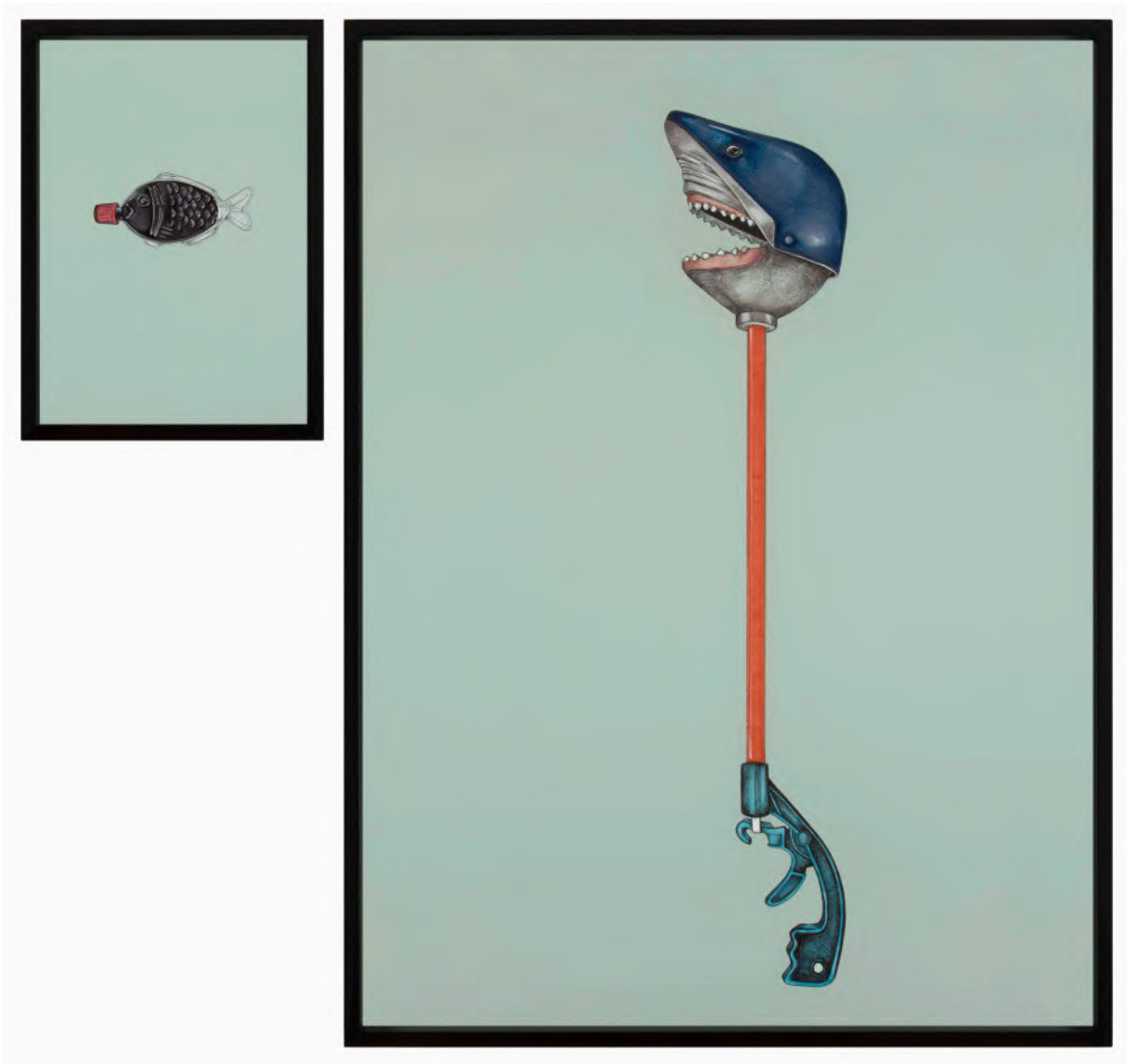
—  
A litter picker? A garden object?  
An everyday object given a humorous but  
disconcerting alternative imagery.

—  
A very strong visual statement.  
It makes me want to play.



—  
dye - based ink and pigment  
based coloured pencils on paper  
79 x 84 cm


2017  
OPW Collection




# David Long





## Still Life



Exquisite composition, strong Dutch 17th century influence.



This still life is a beautifully sensitive and highly representational piece. I feel I could reach into the canvas and lift out the glass to fill it with water.



watercolour on board  
24 × 30 cm


Purchased in 1992  
DoF Collection



# Clare Lyons




## Bouquet





A new media to appreciate!  
The colours are heightened and captured.



An intense array of colour in print.



Intense, highly saturated blooms glow against the stark, white background. The cultivated flowers seem incongruous in their placement of what could be rustic, whitewashed walls or folded paper.



risograph  
42 × 31.5 cm

2018  
OPW Collection







# Deborah Malcomson




## Unfamiliar Article





Certainly unusual, very pleasing in colour and composition, abstract.



A wonderful abstract painting.  
The colours are sumptuous.



This art piece pushes the boundaries of still life. The beautiful arrangements of shapes on the canvas creates a sensitive balance.



oil on canvas  
30 × 38 cm


Purchased in 2001  
DoF Collection




# Eddie Mallon





## Prayer Plant



The colours and the flatness of the objects in the canvas make me feel content, gives me a sense of pleasure. The single figure in the background increased my level of interest in the picture. Are they taking time out of their day to contemplate what is to come?



Shades of Patrick Caulfield. Linked to Caulfield in style? Still work, simple, light filled.



acrylic on canvas  
50 X 40 cm

1998  
DoF Collection



# May Maxwell

## Still Life

A delicate water colour.  
I think of the 1920s in the imagery.  
The delicacy of the paper lamp, parasol and  
the fan.

This is a beautifully sensitive watercolour.  
The artist has created an interesting  
composition and the parasol has a significant  
impact on the piece.

It speaks as a still life, very self-contained,  
pretty and delicate, Chinese themed. It is a  
surprisingly large work.

watercolour on paper  
65 × 50 cm

Purchased in 1996  
DoF Collection



# Aisling McEntee-Walsh

## Yellow Jacket

A yellow jacket hung in exhibition wins as a work of art in itself. Lovingly painted with wonderful tonal observations.

The artist's love of the jacket I feel is very evident in the painting. I like the directness of this piece and how the artist has captured the colour in the shadows.

Very impressive, great impact, wow colour factor. Combines hot and cold.  
Works for me.

Like a conundrum, this composition intrigues me. A yellow jacket that retains the shape of its absent owner is suspended by hanging rods. But it is a painting, not the subject of it that hangs in a gallery by hanging rods! This is a painting of missing elements. Is it a portrait or is it a still life?

oil on linen  
79 × 59 cm

2018  
DoF Collection






# Elizabeth McEwen

## Cherry Blossom

—  
Beautifully composed piece with a sensitive use of watercolour.

—  
Tranquil, almost monochrome composition of objects associated with classic still life – curtain, vase of flowers and a decorative mat.

—  
A traditional arrangement with subtle nuances of white is given depth and form through reflected greens. The cut lace coaster, linen backdrop and floral arrangement all hint at purity. Feminine, delicate and sensitive handling of almost monochrome tones is given interest in an unconventional composition.



—  
watercolour on paper  
29 × 23 cm

Purchased in 1993  
DoF Collection



# Maedhbh McMahon

## Jennifer

A piece of cloth with strong emotive and historical significance that portrays a sense of childhood. I am left with a sense of sadness.

A very visual story. Memories good and bad!

Deceptively pretty dress hanging in a crude, coarse box. The story behind this is sad and definitely not pretty.

mixed media  
46 x 47 x 24 cm

2007  
OPW Collection




# John Moore




## Crucible II




## Crucible III





Love this monochromatic study in graphite.  
So bold and confident.



A sensitive monochrome still life.  
Easy on the eye.




Soft, almost ghostly forms emerge but look  
insubstantial, fading back to their source.



graphite on paper  
21 × 29.5 cm

circa 1990  
OPW Collection



graphite on paper  
21 × 29.5 cm


circa 1990  
OPW Collection




# Yvonne Moore




## Table Top





Richly textured painting in the traditional mode, with subtle colouration.



The artist has used a highly textured surface to interest the viewer. I wanted to reach into the picture to run my hand across the surface of the canvas.



Wine bottle and a jug of flowers are familiar still life objects...But stacks of plates!? I love the colour palette and the thick application of paint.



oil on canvas  
40 × 50 cm

2004  
DoF Collection







# Paula Nolan





## Napkin Holder



Regular repetition creates an aesthetic beauty and suggests a calm, orderly life. Yet the empty spaces and removal of names are subtle reminders of the transience of life. There is no vanity here, the only hint of personality is in the differing folds of the napkins.



The napkins of a religious community that is beginning to reduce in numbers. The photograph expresses to me the sadness of loss.



giclée print  
28 x 40 cm

2014  
OPW Collection



# Abigail O'Brien

## Blue Ribbon & Locks

lambda c-print  
49.5 × 74.5 cm

2010  
OPW Collection


—  
This relatively simple photograph has so many complex connotations. We can't help wondering about each and every relationship symbolised here. Where are these couples now?

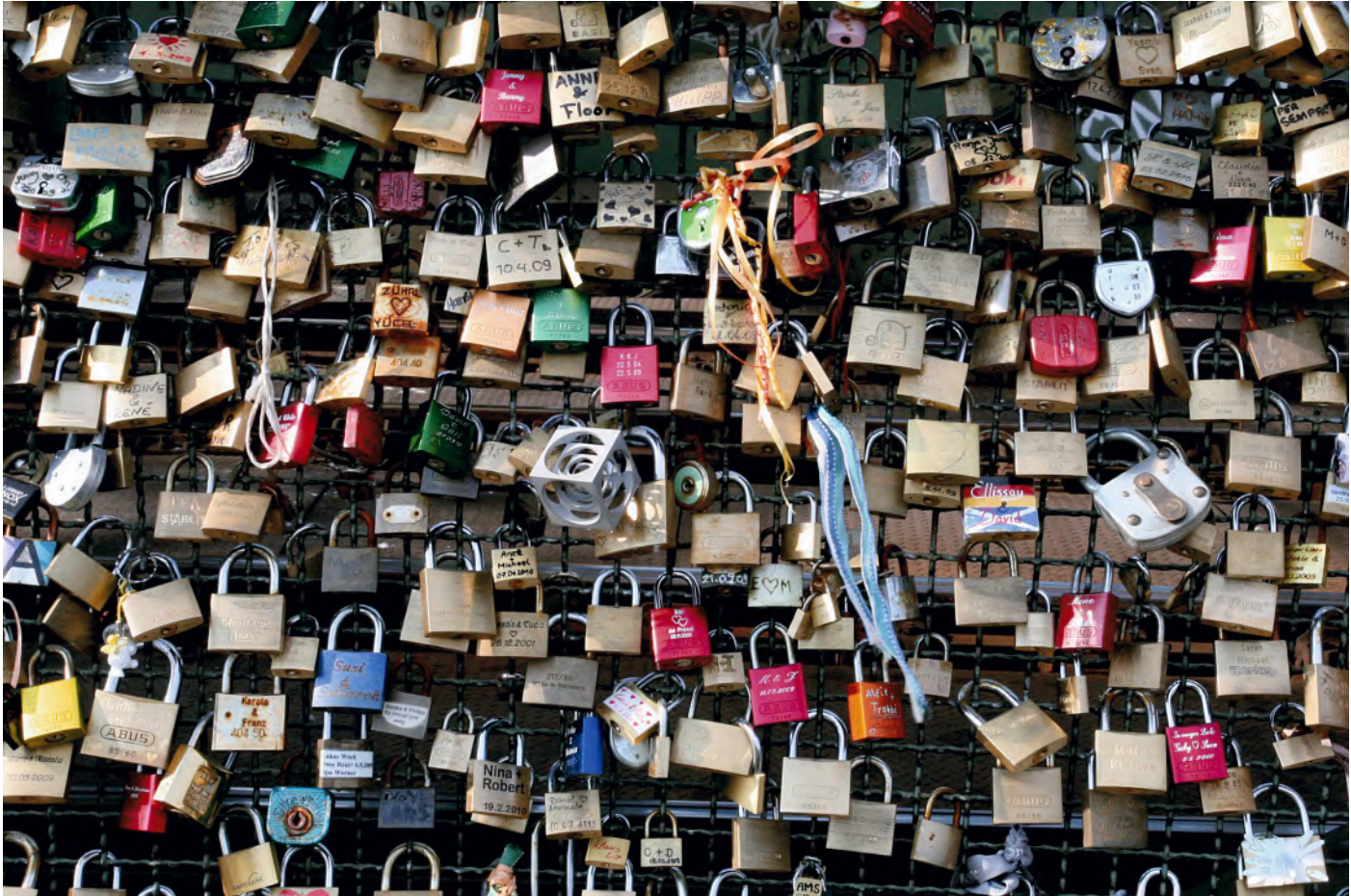
—  
Having seen pieces like these all over the world the image makes me think of why you would do this. The image clearly depicts the personal messages left on the locks which I find most interesting.

—  
I love the observation of the pattern and forms. I also wonder how many of the "locked couples" are still together.

—  
Locked together until separated by rust. A sample of an idea gone mad, captured for eternity.

—  
All keyed up! Love locked forever on a metal grid like the carved initials on a tree.






# Sadbh O'Brien



## Torn Colgate Smile with Apples

—  
Still life objects – apples and cloth - yes.  
Photo montage of arms, hands, and a smile  
and are the pom poms puppet eyes?

—  
This piece makes me smile and I wonder  
what the artist was thinking when they  
were searching for the still life content of  
this picture.



—  
giclée print  
88 x 62.5 cm

2016  
OPW Collection




**Eimear O'Connor**

## Unwanted Burden

—  
A still life creation in glass.  
How wonderful this portrayal of a ripped  
bag!

—  
Transparent interpretation of a bag.  
What a beautiful form!



—  
blown glass  
13 × 18 × 21 cm

2011  
OPW Collection





# Cormac O'Leary

## Blue Studio Still Life II

Blue, blue, the studio is blue and it works for me. Focuses the eye beautifully on the centre of the composition, one luminous green bottle.

This looks like an abstract painting then I register the table, pots, bottles and knives. A blue room the opposite of Matisse's *Red Room*.

This small still life is punchy and the striking blue background gives the picture a significant presence. The simplified forms on the table creates a balance in the picture.

Like Picasso's Blue Period, the mood is macho and expressionistic. Tightly focused objects of no apparent aesthetic appeal are casually assembled without deliberation. Centrally placed yet with objects cut off, like a frame from a movie scene, the expectation is for the camera to move on.

oil on board  
30 × 30 cm


2018  
DoF Collection



# Gay O'Toole




## The Open Window (Moonlight Shadows)




watercolour on paper  
50 x 35 cm


Purchased in 1998  
DoF Collection




This is an exciting canvas.  
The dark tones create stark contrasts with  
the moonlight flooding through the window  
highlighting the objects in the room.  
The shadows lead the viewer into the  
picture.




Simple but strong composition.  
Strong contrasts of light and dark.



The chiaroscuro is the main subject here.  
The moonlight streaming through with  
strong cast shadows from the window, the  
chair and stool: brave.



Reminiscent of Edward Hopper's work,  
this atmospheric scene is full of enigma.  
The chiaroscuro, strong lines of direction,  
empty chair and stool create a sense of loss  
emphasised by the blown out candle.







# Henry Pim




## Untitled





Melded and melted, strange and unusual.  
A real object fused with a distorted ceramic  
portrayal of other domestic forms.  
The forms fused together and the use of  
glaze is fascinating.



Still life on another level.  
This beautiful relief form leaves a lasting  
statement on society.



Earthy, chunky and organic.  
The assemblage of *objet trouvés* and  
constructed ceramics are juxtaposed in an  
unnatural twist.



ceramic  
40 × 23 × 15 cm

2007  
OPW Collection



# Martin Redmond

## Box

The mystery of the simple object – a torn brown paper covered box. Perfectly existing in its own space.

The painting of this is exquisite. A simple object given artistic homage of a Dutch still life from the Golden Age.

What is in the package?  
A very sensitive use of paint to interpret such content. Inspiring.

Who opened the parcel? What was in it?  
A still life of emptiness that is devoid of objects is an anomaly. The image is compelling: the sepia tones suggest a bygone age when everything had its reuse. Nothing was thrown away, everything had value.

oil on linen  
37 × 33 cm

2019  
OPW Collection







# Neil Shawcross





## Red/Black Still Life



Utterly dramatic and deceptively simple.  
Red and black may be hellish colours but  
the effect is heavenly.



The artist has made a very strong statement  
through his choice of colour.



watercolour on paper  
58 × 76 cm

Purchased in 1989  
DoF Collection




# Sasha Sykes



## Caliology, I

—  
Trapped eternally never to decay.  
A perfect, beautifully constructed nest that  
is safe, warm and comforting like one's  
memories of a childhood.

—  
Strangely appealing: hard exterior, fragile  
interior, protected but clearly visible,  
totally still.



—  
blackbird's nest & resin  
12 x 19.5 x 19 cm


2014  
OPW Collection




# Julius Szabo




## fUNCT series





A still life existing in real space; real objects created by the artists. All together with their cast shadows, create a three dimensional abstraction.



Three beautiful semi sphere forms that create a very strong identity.



Tiny shards of confetti speckle this beautifully smooth, pristine surface. Interior dishes of perfect hemispheres are glazed in primary colours and enhanced by placement of a blue, blue mat.



porcelain  
variable

2017  
OPW Collection



# Mavis Thompson


## Song of the City II

—  
A still life sculpture of assembled found objects evoking the musical cultural experience of a city. I am reminded of Picasso and Duchamp. I love the sense of fun in this piece.

—  
Such a creative and exciting use of found objects. Engaging.

—  
A quiet symphony in painted wood.

—  
Funky, twangy musical instrument.  
Cool enough to be played at the Cabaret Voltaire.



—  
driftwood, paint,  
prefabricated plastic & metal  
90 x 9 x 3 cm

2013  
OPW Collection





# Jennifer Trouton

## Conceal

Sensational in simplicity. Embodies the concept of still. An absolute essential of traditional still life – the curtain, no longer behind the scenes but in a starring role.

This painting is a visual delight it evokes a sense of comfort and security.

This beautifully painted study of yellow cloth is to me “an adoration of fabric” capturing the moment you want to touch the cloth.

wallpaper and oil paint on board  
60 × 50 cm

2018  
DoF Collection



# Marcel Vidal



## Yellow Rose


Elegant, glorious yellow rose, not quite in its proper place. Interesting to consider the impact of the position.

An intricately portrayed rose occupying a third of the space gives this painting a surrealistic quality.

What an intense burst of colour placed very carefully on the canvas to make you think!

A perfect photo-realistic rose that is in contrast to the soft monochromatic background.

An intriguing and unusual composition that draws the eye and invites the viewer to imagine the rest of the scene.



oil on linen  
30 x 25 cm

2018  
OPW Collection



# Ulrich Vogl

## Mikrofon Silber 1 Teleskop

mixed media  
31 × 22.5 cm  
(framed)

2011  
OPW Collection

mixed media  
31 × 22.5 cm  
(framed)

2011  
OPW Collection

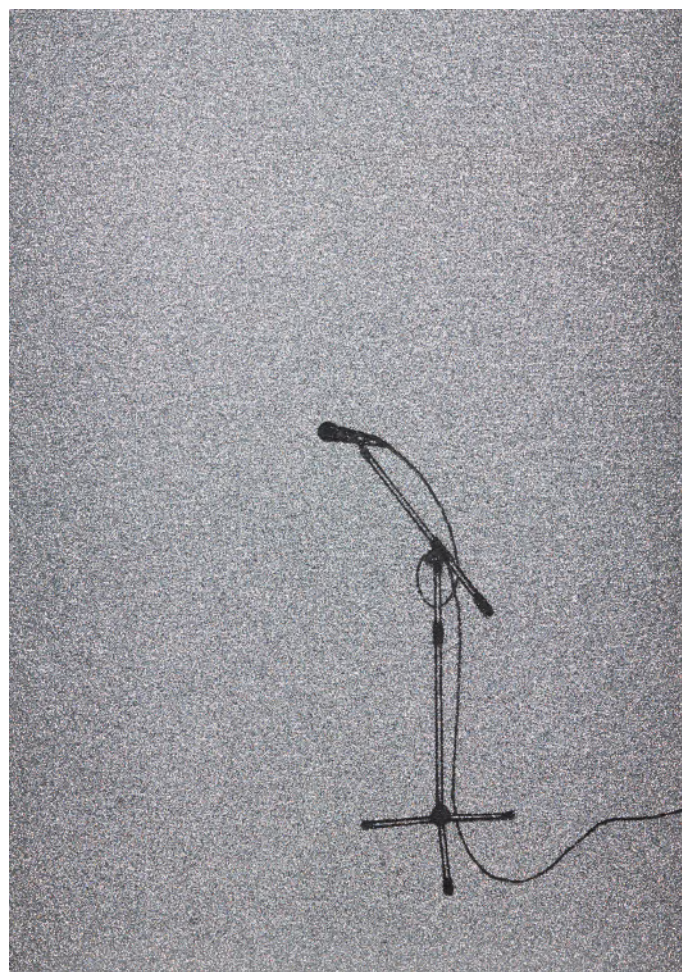
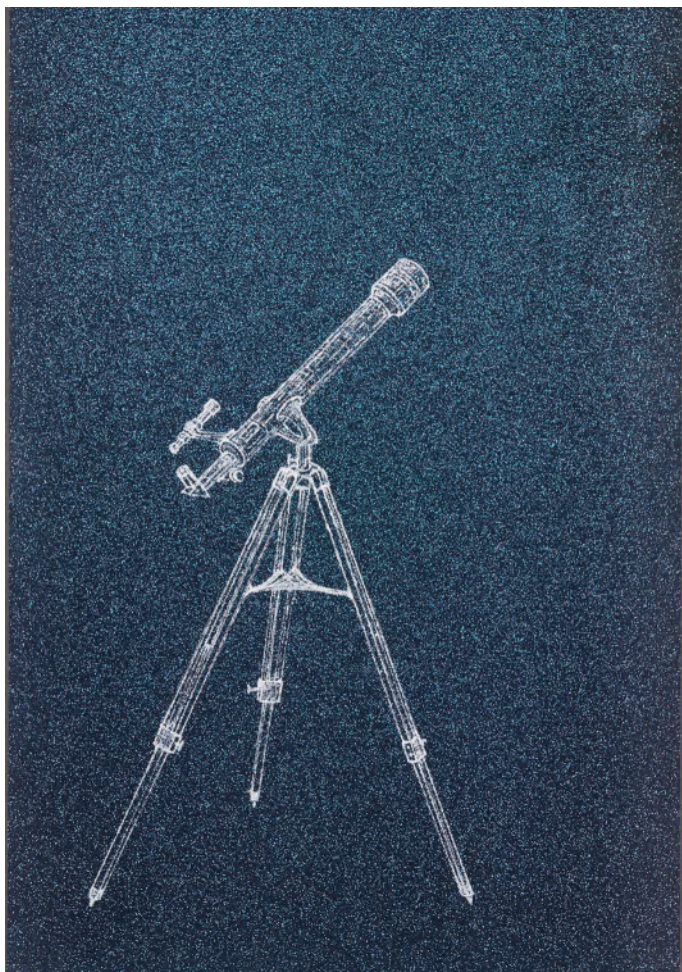
Two technological inanimate night objects, the telescope on the sparkling blue background – the night sky. The mic stand and lead on a silver sparkling background – the night life at a gig/concert

Both of these objects float on backgrounds which suggest a vast cosmic space. Both seem to infer the absence of a person and perhaps the emptiness of a universe?

There's nothing like a bit of bling for grabbing attention. Starry, starry night, in blue and silver featuring the constellations of the telescope and the microphone.

The very clearly defined images float on a sparkly background. I feel it elevates these forms to another level.

The mic seems to communicate with a planet; is it listening? The telescope is focused on the vast emptiness of the outer galaxies; is there anyone listening?



# Dave West

## Cakes

It is interesting in today's climate of obsessively photographing and uploading photographs of restaurant meals on social media, to study this artist's approach to the subject of food.

There is a wonderfully fresh and immediate quality to this painting. The colour is highly saturated and balanced by the subtle reflections on the table surface.

Luscious scrumptious cake painted with luscious scrumptious paint.

I could eat these cakes right off the painting. So reminiscent of Wayne Thiebaud and Pop Art but with extra richness and cream!

These cakes can dance. I want them all. Not only do you see the cake itself but you have the reflection as well. What a feast!

Yummy, luscious, gooey cakes just waiting to be eaten. A feast for the eyes.

oil on canvas  
50 x 70 cm

2019  
OPW Collection





# Artists

---

Brian Ballard	—	09
Larry Bennett	—	11
William Bogle	—	13
Michael Boran	—	15
Sara Brown	—	17
Campbell Bruce	—	19
Hilary Bryson	—	21
Jade Butler	—	23
Bridget Cox	—	25
Michael Craig-Martin	—	27
Richard J Croft	—	29
Fionnuala D'Arcy	—	31
Sarah Davidson	—	33

35  
37  
39  
41  
43  
45  
47  
49  
51  
53  
55  
57  
59

—  
—  
—  
—  
—  
—  
—  
—  
—  
—  
—  
—  
—

Mark Dion  
Daniel Dowling  
Nathalie Du Pasquier  
Beatrice Elvery  
Simon English  
Gillian Freedman  
Guggi  
Ken Hamilton  
Austin Hearne  
Olive Henry  
Alexey Krasnovsky  
Stephen Lau  
David Long

# — Index

Clare Lyons	—	<a href="#">61</a>
Deborah Malcomson	—	<a href="#">63</a>
Eddie Mallon	—	<a href="#">65</a>
May Maxwell	—	<a href="#">67</a>
Aisling McEntee - Walsh	—	<a href="#">69</a>
Elizabeth McEwen	—	<a href="#">71</a>
Meadhbh McMahon	—	<a href="#">73</a>
John Moore	—	<a href="#">75</a>
Yvonne Moore	—	<a href="#">77</a>
Paula Nolan	—	<a href="#">79</a>
Abigail O'Brien	—	<a href="#">81</a>
Sadbh O'Brien	—	<a href="#">83</a>
Eimear O'Connor	—	<a href="#">85</a>

<a href="#">87</a>	—	Cormac O'Leary
<a href="#">89</a>	—	Gay O'Toole
<a href="#">91</a>	—	Henry Pim
<a href="#">93</a>	—	Martin Redmond
<a href="#">95</a>	—	Neil Shawcross
<a href="#">97</a>	—	Sasha Sykes
<a href="#">99</a>	—	Julius Szabo
<a href="#">101</a>	—	Mavis Thompson
<a href="#">103</a>	—	Jennifer Trouton
<a href="#">105</a>	—	Marcel Vidal
<a href="#">107</a>	—	Ulrich Vogl
<a href="#">109</a>	—	Dave West

# Resources

---

abigailobrien.com  
alexeykrasnovsky.com  
artscouncil-ni.org  
artuk.org/visit/venues/northern-ireland-civil-service  
art21.org/artist/mark-dion

brianballard.co.uk  
bridgetcoxart.com  
burnavon.com

campbellbruce.net  
cargocollective.com/gumcollective  
clarelyons.net/  
crawfordartgallery.ie  
cormacolearyartist.yolasite.com

davewest.ie

eddiemallon.co.uk  
eva.ie/artist/simon-english-3

guggi.com

henrypim.com

imma.ie/collection  
irishartsreview.com/digital-archive

jadebutlerartist.com  
jennifertrouton.com  
juliusszaboceramics.weebly.com

librariesni.org.uk

## — Websites

marcelvidal.net  
martinredmondart.com  
michaelcraigmartin.co.uk  
michaelboran.blogspot.com

nathaliedupasquier.com  
nationalgallery.ie  
nationalgallery.org.uk  
nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/collections  
nmni.com/our-museums/ulster-museum  
nival.ie/collections/artists-database

opw.ie/en/stateartcollection

paulatnolanphotography.com

rhagallery.ie/learn/rha-archives  
ross.ie/irish-art-news/hilary-bryson-exhibition  
royalulsteracademy.org

sarabrownartist.com  
sashasykes.com  
sculpture.gla.ac.uk  
stephenlauart.weebly.com

tate.org.uk

ulrich-vogl.de  
uswa.co.uk  
uws.org.uk

visual-arts-cork.com/irish-artists

# Resources

---

## — Publications

*Art and Architecture of Ireland, Volume V, Twentieth Century*, eds. Catherine Marshall and Peter Murray, Yale University Press for Royal Irish Academy and the Paul Mellon Centre, Dublin, New Haven and London, 2014

*Dictionary of Irish Artists 20th Century (Second Edition)*, Theo Snoddy, Merlin Publishing, Dublin, 2002

*Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*, James Hall, John Murray, London, 1996

*Drawings, paintings and sculptures, the catalogue*, ed. Eileen Black, Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland, 2000

# Acknowledgements

---

Exhibition curated by  
Margaret Bowen, Philomena Grant, Deirdre  
Neill, Hazel Neill and Trevor Woods.  
Organised by Art administration sections of  
DoF and OPW.

## Photography

OPW / Denis Mortell;  
Pages 12, 16, 20, 28, 36, 40, 44, 46, 48, 56,  
62, 76, 86, 92, 94, 100, 102, 108, 110  
Davey Moor;  
Pages 42, 52, 58, 74, 98, 106  
Artists;  
Pages 80, 82, 84

DoF / Chris Hill

All artworks may not be displayed at each  
venue due to restrictions with certain  
gallery spaces.





**DoF**

Department  
of Finance

[www.finance-ni.gov.uk](http://www.finance-ni.gov.uk)



**OPW**

Oifig na  
nOibreacha Poiblí  
Office of Public Works

---

## Thank You

Special thanks to the curators, artists, their representative galleries, the exhibition venues, the specialist art installers and the government Departments that released the included art works, for their assistance with this exhibition.

