

draíocht

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Draíocht in association with Shell/ter Artist Collective presents work of 10 emerging artists.

The ladder is always there

Curated by the S/TAC Collective

Launched on 8th December by Christina Kennedy, Senior Curator: Head of Collections in IMMA

Running until 03 February 2024

Ground and First Floor Galleries, Draíocht Blanchardstown

Featuring work by the Shell/Ter Artist Collective (S/TAC): Diana Copperwhite, Allyson Keehan, Niamh McGuinne, Sharon Murphy, Geraldine O'Neill; With Ten emerging artists: Maya Brezing, Matthew Coll, Karen Ebbs, Spencer Glover, Ami Jackson, Mary Martin, Fiach McGuinne, Sorcha McNamara, Eileen Leonard Sealy and Catherine Ward

The exhibition's title, 'The ladder is always there', is from the poem 'Diving into the Wreck' by the feminist American poet Adrienne Rich who conjures the image of a woman preparing for a deep-sea scuba dive to explore a shipwreck. The ladder can be understood as both an object and as a metaphor for support and movement, always there.

The main focus of this exhibition is to highlight the role of an artist collective as a form of support for early career artists and to encourage collective action through art. It presents new works by recent graduates alongside more established artists in drawing, painting and its expanded forms - photography, print, film, installation - which take inspiration from or which reference painting, both materially and conceptually.

Shell/ter Collective Artist, Niamh McGuinne said:

"The word Shelter means to me what you care for and how you do that both physically and psychologically. The importance to me of the Shell/ter Artist Collective is that it is a dynamic space, one in which to experiment and find connections that you might not find on your own. My hope is that it continues to change and adapt ... while remaining a form of shelter in itself."

The Shell/Ter Artist Collective explores the concept of shelter from emotional, psychological, and philosophical perspectives and seeks to provide a dynamic space for artists whose work resonates with or delves into the theme of shelter. This is closely aligned with Draíocht's commitment to support young, early career artists from Dublin 15, Fingal County and beyond through commissions, exhibitions, studio residencies, bespoke mentoring, and international exchange.

Launching the Exhibition, Christina Kennedy, Senior Curator: Head of Collections in IMMA, said:

"Emerging art is so energising. It invites us to piece together the fragments of meaning of a world with ever shifting perspectives. Every artist is finding their way in the construction of their own artistic journey and conveying their own sense of what we are all feeling in the world today. Emerging art does not conform, it thrives in the space between definitions. To experience it is to embrace the discomfort of the unfamiliar and find beauty in the unexpected. Emerging art challenges traditional modes and perception, it provides a catalyst for cultural reflection and is a celebration of experimentation and diversity. The ethos of Shell/ter is wonderful. It evokes a space where experiences and ideas and reflections are nurtured, evoked, encouraged and exchanged and it is a two-way street, and I'd like to congratulate everyone involved in this exhibition."

Shell/ter Collective Artist, Sharon Murphy said:

"Being a visual artist can give a sense of immense independence but can also engender a greater sense of isolation. The idea of creating a shelter for others, a kind of collegiality, sending the elevator back down, so to speak, creates huge richness and support, while also helping to create wonderful art and shared ideas."

Director of Draíocht, Emer McGowan, said:

“Every now and again there’s an exhibition likes this that so chimes with Draíocht and what we stand for and what we’re about and how we like to support emerging artists and there’s such joy in that. So this exhibition has a really special resonance for all of us here.”

Artist Collectives are not new. From ancient sculpture workshops, medieval painter guilds, Renaissance master studios and schools of the French and other European art academies to the modernist collectives of the Dadaists, the Situationists, the Bauhaus and the Fluxus Group, shared identity, common purpose and egalitarian values underpin much of the desire to work as a group.

The Shell/Ter Artist Collective (S/TAC) evolved organically during the pandemic 2020 and was driven by a desire of the artists to talk about the effects, both personal and professional, of a shifting and unpredictable world. In this dynamic space the artists found ways to explore, enrich and diversify their independent practice while supporting one another.

Quotes from Emerging Artists

Maya Brezing (NCAD, 2022) BA Fine Art Print

“Taking inspiration from derelict, overgrown spaces around Dublin, I look at how nature constantly renews itself and reclaims spaces and buildings that have been abandoned.”

Matthew Coll (NCAD, 2022) BA Fine Art Painting

“The experience of “Being” and Memory are often key sites of interest within my practice which explores real and imagined crowds.”

Karen Ebbs (NCAD 2021 + 2023) BA + MAF Fine Art Painting

“I probe new possibilities of “seeing” and understanding the world, exploring how everything is connected.”

Spencer Glover (Griffith College, 2023) BA Photography

“My work is about the nature of photography – why we believe the camera never lies and the vernacular expectation within that.”

Ami Jackson (NCAD 2021) BA Fine Art Print

“I’m interested in how our surroundings are formed of physical and psychological sanctuaries.”

Mary Martin (University of Brighton, 2021) BA Fine Art Painting

“Myth and folklore provide me with inspiration in their references to metamorphosis, liminal worlds and surrealism.”

Fiach McGuinne (NCAD, 2024) BA Fine Art Painting

“My work is process based and often intuitive. I mostly make paintings, a slow process that is counter to the fast-paced world we inhabit.”

Sorcha McNamara (Limerick School of Art and Design, 2021) BA Fine Art Painting and (IADT, 2023 MA Art + Research Collaboration

“My practice explores transgressive possibilities of painting, specifically looking to dismantle how painting is framed, structured and positioned in any given space.”

Eileen Leonard Sealy (NCAD, 2023) BA Fine Art Painting

“My work is concerned with capturing the complexities of the human disgust response, understanding the emotional and psychological reactions that it evokes.”

Catherine Ward (NCAD, 2023) Fine Art Painting

“My work is inspired by landscapes marked by human intervention and disused quarries and industrial sites.”

Useful Links:

Exhibition Web page: <https://www.draiocht.ie/gallery/exhibition/the-ladder-is-always-there>

Exhibition Catalogue: <https://www.draiocht.ie/content/files/The-ladder-is-always-there-Exhibition-Information.pdf>

Exhibition Pricelist: <https://www.draiocht.ie/content/files/The-ladder-is-always-there-Exhibition-Pricelist.pdf>

This exhibition is accompanied by a programme for children & young people:

[Exploring Still Life Painting](#) / With Exhibition Artist Geraldine O'Neill / Tue 09 — Thu 18 Jan 2024 , Variable Times

[Exploring Light and Shade](#) / With Exhibition Artist Allyson Keehan / Tue 09 — Thu 18 Jan 2024 , Variable Times

[Puffy Paint Family Day](#) / Sat 13 Jan 2024 , 12pm / 1.30pm

[Surprise Still Life Family Day](#) / Sat 20 Jan 2024 , 12pm / 1.30pm

About Draíocht:

Opened in 2001 and located in the heart of Dublin 15, Draíocht is an arts centre steadfastly committed to serving its local community. At Draíocht, our work goes far beyond our programme of events. Throughout the year, we help people of all ages to make space for the arts in their lives. Working collaboratively with artists of all disciplines, we journey with thousands of people to enhance their lives through arts events, projects and initiatives. We bring the public and artists together and in that space, magic happens.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

FACEBOOK @DraiochtBlanch

TWITTER @Draiocht_Blanch

INSTAGRAM @draiocht_gallery

About Shell/ter Collective:

The collective developed organically during the pandemic, initially through shared dialogue about the effects, both personal and professional, of a shifting and unpredictable world. The purpose was to create a space where members could explore, enrich and diversify their practice while supporting each other. The artists work in very different formats, yet their underlying reoccupations and the issues they address overlap.

Their most recent exhibition was shelter, curated by Anne Hodge (S/TAC artist's Collective and invited artists and works from the NGI Collection), National Gallery of Ireland (Print and Drawing Galleries), July - November 2023. Forthcoming exhibitions include; the ladder is always there (S/TAC Shell/Ter Artist Collective and invited emerging artists) at Draíocht Dublin, curated by S/TAC, December 2023 - Feb 2024; in a dream in the happy house, (S/TAC Shell/Ter Artist Collective) at Limerick City Gallery, Curated by Una McCarthy, June-Sept 2024; Visual Projections and other works, (S/TAC Shell/Ter Artist Collective) at GOMA, Waterford, curated by Jenna Whelan, October 2024.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

INSTAGRAM @shellter_artist_collective

Biographies

Diana Copperwhite (RHA) is a member of Aosdána. Her paintings explore the relationship between colours, gestures, figuration, and representation. She gives structure to the unseen world of atoms and molecules to examine the psychological and spatial interpretation of self. Layering fragmented sources that range from personal memory to science, media and internet, Copperwhite's canvases become worlds in which the real is unreal and this unreality is in a constant state of reforming.

<http://www.dianacopperwhite.ne...>

Allyson Keehan has recently completed a PhD in Fine Art Painting from Glasgow School of Art titled: Painting and Materiality: Three Creative Strategies for Transformation. Keehan's work investigates expanded notions of painting

by creating painting/sculpture hybrids. Looking closely at veiling and artifice, her practice incorporates drapery and the frame to create complex structural experiences of real and imaginary spaces.

<http://www.allysonkeehan.ie/>

Niamh McGuinne is a recent MFA graduate from NCAD. Her practice combines print, sculpture and film to create interactive installations. The embodiment of psychological experience and the nature of somatic response is an underlying theme in her work in which she creates interactive structures, inhabitable or often wearable, which present an invitation to participate - physically or imaginatively.

<https://niamhmcguinne.com/>

Sharon Murphy is an artist and curator with a background in performance. Her lens-based work is rooted in the theatrical and questions the boundaries between the seen and the unseen, the real and the unreal. The theatre curtain is a recurring motif in her work, suggesting preoccupations with hidden meanings, the limits of realism and the nature of liminal space.

<https://sharonmurphy.ie/>

Geraldine O'Neill (RHA) is a member of Aosdána. Playing with incongruities of time and space, she juxtaposes traditional references with scientific reasoning and contemporary perspective in large-scale compositions. Her works address protection and shelter from a domestic and environmental viewpoint to emphasise the fragility of life.

<http://www.geraldineoneill.ie/>

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FOR FURTHER MEDIA INFORMATION & HIGH RES IMAGES PLEASE CONTACT:

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Draíocht is a registered charity, not for profit arts organisation, generously funded by Fingal County Council with additional funding provided by The Arts Council.

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