

KERRY
VISUAL ARTISTS'
SHOWCASE

2017



Cover Image: Des Fitzgerald, *Striking Out*, Mixed Media, 91cm x 61cm x 6cm, 2017

FOREWORD

The standard of visual arts practice in Kerry is extremely good. I think this is as a result of a number of things; the inspiration provided by the natural beauty of the county, the energy of the people, the international mix of creative practitioners in Kerry as well as the access to training and mentoring in visual arts offered nearby in both Cork and Limerick.

I was particularly taken with the range of media, subject matter and artistic angles conveyed through the work.

I wish all those selected every success with the Kerry Visual Artist Showcase 2017 and look forward to viewing their work for many years to come.

Ian McDonagh

Arts Officer, Cork County Council

On the edge of the Atlantic, with dramatic mountains, hidden valleys, bog land, towns and villages all brimming with creativity; Kerry is a place that entrals residents and visitors. The dynamic flow of nationalities across this landscape is a constant source of inspiration to visual artists. Kerry County Council is aware of the value visual artists bring to their county, that their work is seen in the county and appreciated by people locally, nationally and internationally. The Arts Office, in consultation with the arts sector identified the need for a curated show of work from Kerry artists. This project is co-funded by Kerry County Council and the Arts Council, and aims to promote the variety of work and styles, all of such a high standard, that exist in Kerry today. I would like to thank Ian McDonagh for his time and expertise during the short-listing process for KVAS 2017 and 2018.

It is vital that people can engage with creative work practice in visual arts, Kerry County Council, supported by the Arts Council and the Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht are delighted to support this Kerry Visual Artist Showcase (KVAS) in 2017. The standard of KVAS continues to demonstrate the breath of talent based in Kerry. Having the opening of KVAS on 'Culture Nigh't, when we celebrate the living culture and creativity in our locale lends to the importance of this exhibition. It is the only countywie opening on a night full of local offerings!

I would like to thank the Arts Office staff for their work in bringing this to fruition, and to all the artists who applied for the exhibition. I hope this showcase will prove effective in promoting awareness of the actual standard of visual art in Kerry, the variety of work and the sheer skill of artists across the county. We are proud to have so many talented artists living in Kerry and wish all concerned continued success in their careers.

Le gach dea ghui,

Kate Kennelly
Arts Officer, Kerry County Council

Kerry County Council values the arts as an integral part of life in Kerry. Many great artists, be they painters, writers, musicians, dancers, actor, filmmakers and others lived and work in Kerry. Kerry inspires visual artists and creative practitioners who take inspiration from its kaleidoscope of scenery and daily life.

Kerry County Council is proud to support the arts across all disciplines, and through the implementation of the Kerry Arts Strategy 2016 – 2021, is working to ensure the on-going provision of support and opportunity for creative individuals and communities throughout the county.

Now in its fourth year, the Kerry Visual Artists' Showcase 'KVAS' is an important exhibition opportunity for visual artists living and working in Kerry. The artists selected for this Showcase are among the best visual arts practitioners in the count. Their work shares the creative viewpoint and challenges us to explore and think by witnessing their inspiring work in a wide range of artistic media.

Nine Kerry based artists have been selected for the 2017 Showcase: Des Fitzgerald, Karen Hendy, Kaye Maahs, David Morrison, Roisín McGuigan, Philip O'Rourke, Niamh Porter and Tracy Sexton, all of whom have created work that demonstrates the very best in contemporary visual arts practice.

I would like to thank Ian McDonagh, Art Officer for Cork County Council who curated this exhibition, the staff in our own Arts Office for organising this Showcase, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for presenting the exhibition in their wonderful foyer space, and the Arts Council for their continued financial support of this important initiative.

Moira Murrell

Chief Executive, Kerry County Council

Creativity and culture are a key part of life in the Kingdom. Kerry is a county filled with creative people who gather to tell stories and sing songs. We write books and perform plays. We paint, dance, and recite poetry. Celebrating this creativity is also a key part of life, and I am delighted that our visual artists are celebrated through the annual Kerry Visual Artists' Showcase.

The Showcase is an initiative of Kerry County Council established by the current Arts Strategy and it is proving to be an important visual arts event in the annual cultural calendar. This is the third year of the Showcase and once again the work of the exhibiting artists clearly shows the quality of contemporary visual arts practice taking place in Kerry today.

Hosted by the Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht in Killarney, this exhibition is an ideal opportunity for the people of Kerry to explore and appreciate the work of our best artists; to be inspired by their vision and to celebrate their talent.

Cllr. John Sheahan
Cathaoirleach of Kerry

ARTISTS

Des Fitzgerald

Karen Hendy

Kaye Maahs

David Morrison

Roisín McGuigan

Philip O'Rourke

Niamh Porter

Tracy Sexton

DES FITZGERALD

Tralee born Des Fitzgerald has been awarded a B.A. (Hons) degree in Fine Art at CIT Crawford School of Art and Design in 2014. The artist works with a variety of different media ranging from photography and sculpture to filmmaking. Themes are inspired by everyday life and utilize familiar objects and imagery. Des is a member of *Studio8 – Kerry Contemporary*, which provides an important platform for his work, whilst also supporting his creativity as an independent artist. His work is on display in galleries in both Cork and Kerry.

We can get very upset if we loose a personal item, which leads to a stressful time searching in the hope of recovering the object. But the loss of family, friends and country, due to forced displacement has a profound and lasting impact on people as they search in the hope of finding and adjusting to their new life in the global village.

Striking out, Mixed Media, 91cm x 61cm x 6cm, 2017

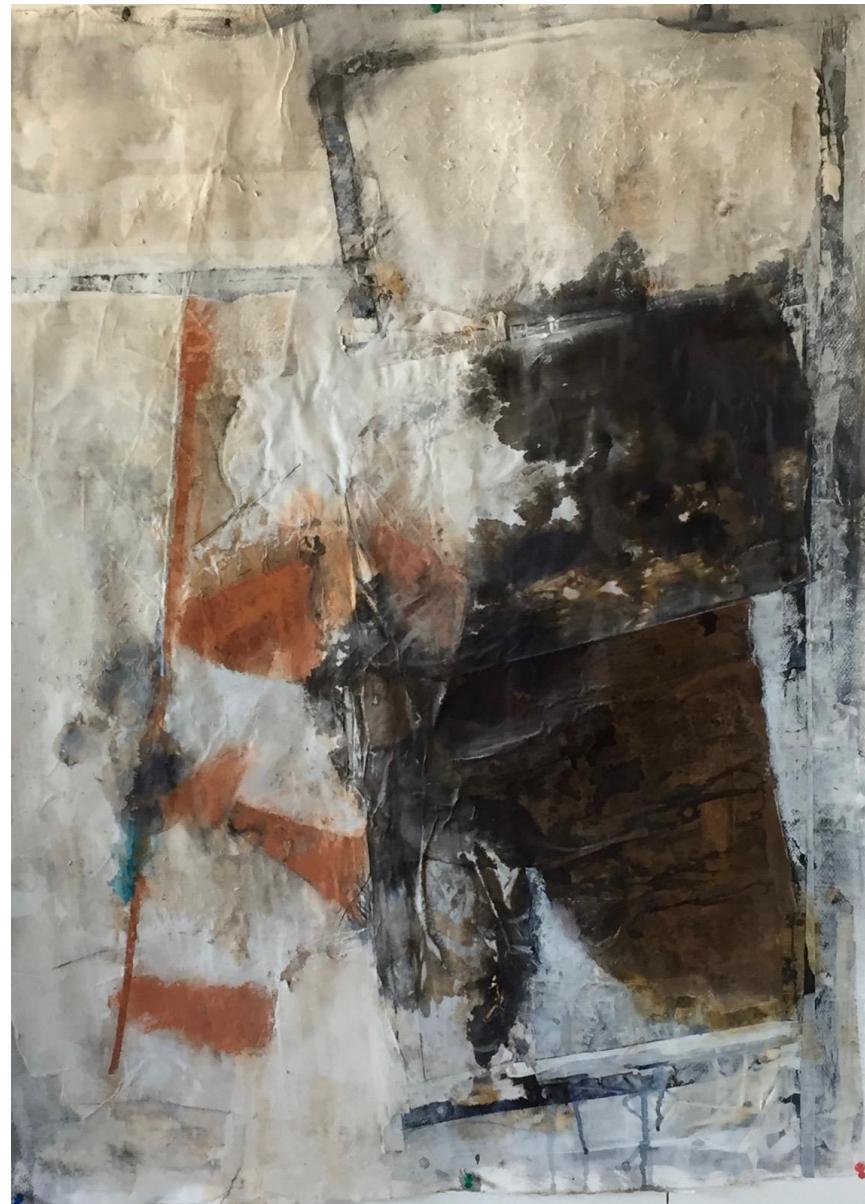


KAREN HENDY

Since graduating from NCAD and the Burren College of Art, Hendy has been practicing as a full time Artist, she has exhibited at EVA International, Eigse, RHA, RUA as well as exhibiting in group and solo exhibitions both in Ireland and abroad. Hendy is recipient of numerous awards and bursaries, she is currently Artist in Residence at Siamsa Tire, and is a Fellow of the Ballinglen Arts Foundation.

Karen Hendy a native from Kenmare works in the medium of painting, installation and mixed media. Her work responds to concepts of time, temporality and flux, evident in the creative process and the philosophical foundations for the work. She draws on her experience of living within a rural community to narrate themes of change and impermanence in relation to the human condition and the geology of the landscape. Having experienced the burning of the land, ploughing, tilling and sewing as part of the yearly ritual of renewal, she deliberately introduces these physical processes in her work. Her abstract work combines unconventional materials with unorthodox processes: layers are exposed through mechanical grinding, silage foil is transformed by burning with torches and shovels are used to spread gesso.

Liminal Series, Mixed Media On Paper, 120cm x 100cm, 2016



KAYE MAAHS

Kerry native Kaye Maahs is based in the Burren, County Clare. She holds a degree in Fine Art from CCAM GMIT Galway. She is the recipient of the 2017 Tyrone Guthrie Artist Bursary Award by Clare County Council and is one of the selected artists for COE 2017.

Maahs' work is rooted in both the local and the personal. Her practice is defined by daily observations and musings. It is the residue of these moments that informs her paintings.

"My work begins with the subject matter but in the end I follow the paint. I can never be quite certain of how a painting will progress so there is always a challenge at hand. Photographs and sketches are used as reference points but more often than not they become redundant and are disregarded once I begin to paint."

Reddened Land Early March, , Mixed Media on Paper, 90 x 75 cm, 2017

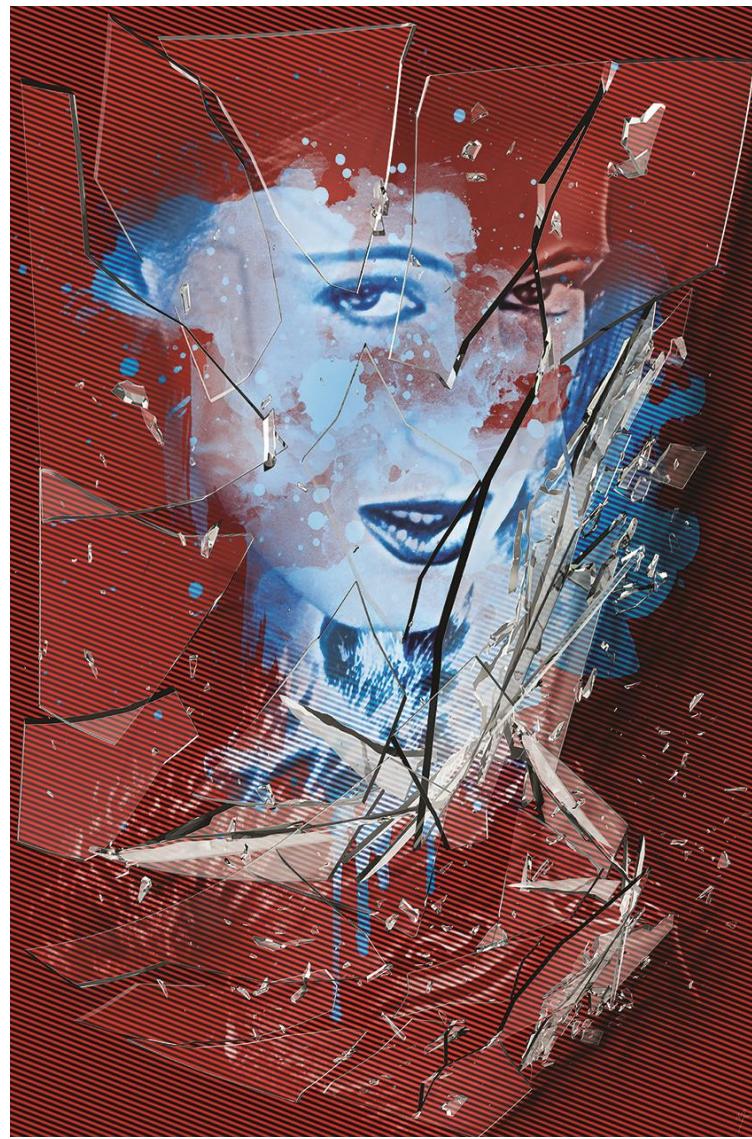


DAVID MORRISON

A Freelance Stock photographer and Artist, specializing in Stock images for license to Advertising, commercial and media clients. I took up photography in the eighties, with the savings from my first real job, soon after I set up a darkroom in a garden shed at home in Knockanore County Waterford and developed my own style while teaching myself black and white printing skills. I spent a number of years living between Ireland and London England and in between different jobs, I freelanced for various companies doing commercial shoots and also working with actors from the Royal Shakespeare Company doing personal portraits. I returned to Ireland in 1997 where i took a year out to bike around Ireland taking photos of what ever scene i came across. I am now settled and married to Cathy with three children in the beautiful scenic west of Ireland, in Ballybunion County Kerry. Joined Jerry Kennelly's Stockbyte in 2002 where i learned all there is to know about Retouching and where I gained all my Photoshop skills. In 2006 Stockbyte was sold and from the generosity of Jerry and Johanna was able to start my own company Morrbyte.com and later to become an artist.

My Creations are a way for me to tell a story & evoke a feeling that I hope will be encouraging and spiritual, to make the familiar appear unfamiliar, to capture the beauty in the mundane. And that when viewed, people, even if for a small moment will loose themselves within the image.

I am intrigued by the endless possibilities of virtual digital technology fused with the real world materials of paper, paint and other materials. A Self taught Photographer and artist, using the realism of photography as the foundation & starting point of my work and then using computer software as my paintbrush to make alterations, to exaggerate and enhance, to make extreme and unusual changes. To manipulate light, tone and colour and to sometimes add layers of paint and other raw materials to give depth and feeling to my Art and to follow my heart as there are no boundaries in my creativity. I love to see how I can add to my original photograph and make a story come alive from that same image. Above all my images do not have to be understood to be enjoyed.



ROISÍN McGUIGAN

Roisín McGuigan is a graduate of NCAD and Burren College of Art. She is represented in Ireland by The Paul Kane Gallery in Dublin and her work has been exhibited as part of Cork European City of Culture at the Crawford Gallery of Art, as well as at the Hun Gallery, New York, Emerge Art Fair in Washington DC, and the Irish Museum of Contemporary Art, Dublin.

Roisín has received bursaries from Kerry County Council and the Arts Council of Ireland, was shortlisted for the Tony O'Malley Studio Award in 2010, and was Artist in Residence at Institute of Technology, Tralee from 2012 – 2014 where she is currently External Examiner for the Creative Media Dept.

Her work was recently included in *30 Years, Artists, Places*, a major survey exhibition of Irish Art which toured nationwide from 2015 – 2017.

My practice is driven by an interest in place and belonging, and the iconography of landscape takes centre stage. Recent works evoke geography, topography and echo cartographic references, which encourage a viewer/image dialogue, whereby familiarity and personal association inform the conversation. The work introduces questions relating to the boundaries of place and the demarcation of territory, either political or personal.

Brave New World, Oil on Perspex, 8" x 8", 2016



PHILIP O'ROURKE

Philip O'Rourke is a Castleisland native living in Dublin. Philip took up photography in 2014 and some of his achievements to date include receiving a Licentiateship in 2015 and an Associateship in 2017, both awarded by the Irish Photographic Federation. He is also an Artist of the International Federation of Photographic Art.

Horse fairs are becoming more restricted with every passing year - being moved out of their historical central locations in towns, facing obstacles such as the removal of trotting areas, and experiencing localised attempts to shut them down.

In my most recent body of work I sought to document horse fairs in towns and villages around Ireland. The excitement of an annual horse fair in my hometown of Castleisland is a dominant memory of my youth. Now as an adult, with my newfound passion in photography, I see the fair day with fresh eyes. As I explore each fair the excitement and nervousness of the horses tends to reflect my own feelings.

For me the horse fair experience often ranges from moments of complete calm to moments of great excitement and action - by concentrating on the horses and the people of the fairs I want to portray the diverse range of my experiences.

Back Off, Canson Platine Fibre Rag , 10" x 18", 2017



NIAMH PORTER

Niamh Porter is a visual artist based in Limerick. She attended Limerick School of Art and Design (2012-16), graduating with a BA Honours in Fine Art, Painting. She is currently working as a member of the Culture Team at Ormston House, a cultural resource centre in Limerick city.

Group exhibitions include *K-fest Music and the Arts 2017*, Killorglin; *Limerick School of Art and Design Graduate Show*, Limerick; *Unimaginable Depth*, The Sailors Home, Limerick and *Transmit*, The Hunt Museum, Limerick.

Niamh was awarded the Screaming Pope Prize at *K-fest Music and the Arts 2017*. Her work is represented in the collection of the Office of Public Works, Ireland.

Capital: Icons of Modernity

Niamh Porter's work examines the legacy of Modernist architectural design and the materials that construct Europe's multifaceted identity. Monumental in scale, the buildings depicted (designed from 1960 to 2014) exhibit the realisation of Modernist ideology and technology. Using photography to document what is seemingly indestructible; the corporate headquarters, residential buildings, museums and public squares of Berlin, London and Rotterdam, Porter translates the tension between permanence and transience into painting. The landmarks depicted have been rebuilt from wreckage, demonstrating the unexpected fragile state of the built environment.

The work engages with what prodigious architecture signifies; wealth, power, ambition and transformation. It is in these power structures that political and social realities are shaped. Influenced by Constructivist photography, this work aims to express the dynamism of the city and relationship between photography and painting; a balance between digital and manual manipulation is achieved. The near exclusive use of metal and glass in urban space, the bleaching of historical architecture and the significant photographic processes used throughout the work inspires the provisional form and colour.

Das Bauhaus Archiv, 91.44 x 121.99 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2016



TRACY SEXTON

Educated in the Crawford College of Art and Design Tracy achieved an Honours Degree in Fine Art painting, Higher Diploma and Masters in Art and Design Education. Tracy was awarded 'The Marshall Hudson Award' for excellence in art and design education in 2008 and won the Screaming Pope Prize at Kfest Music and Arts Festival in 2017. Tracy currently teaches art in various educational settings in Cork city. Tracy and her husband Daniel recently opened their own art school, studio and gallery called 'The Art House' in Killarney which they hope will be a centre for creativity in Kerry. Tracy has exhibited throughout Ireland and her work encompasses painting, installation and mixed media work.

Tracy is interested in the interplay between dream and reality. Her work questions the surety of perception and plays with notions of memory and observation. She often delves into and pulls apart themes of beauty, nature, the human condition and experience. Her current work is a combination of acrylic, oil and encaustic painting techniques which are employed on board.

Her pictorial narratives express something of the transience of the human condition as well as the fragmented nature of the world around us. 'Contemporary experience is fragmented, truth is shadowy and reality subjective. In a world where much of our experience is received second-hand, through photographic imagery, I am interested in the nature of the reality we construct around ourselves.'

Untitled Dialogue, 80 x 63cm, Mixed Media and Oil on Board, 2017



Thanks to

Exhibition Curator, Ian McDonagh
Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht

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An Roinn
Cultúr, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of
Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht