

*the
way
that
we
went*

**Cecilia Dannell
Comhghall Casey**

Donald Teskey

**Éanna Byrt
Eithne Jordan
Geraldine O'Reilly**

Kathy Tynan

**Kaye Maahs,
Martin Gale
Matthew Mitchell**

Mollie Douthit,

Nick Miller

Nuala Clarke

Patrick Harris

Peter Burns

Selma Makela

Will O'Kane

5th November – 18th December 2021
Ballinglen Museum of Art, Ballycastle, Co Mayo

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foreword

When invited to curate an exhibition at the recently built Ballinglen Museum of Art, I was struck by the fact of its remote location. Yet tiny Ballycastle village, home to the Ballinglen Arts Foundation, has hosted hundreds of international artists since its inception almost 30 years ago.

As a result the countryside around North Mayo might just be the most recorded landscape in the country. It boasts all the seductive elements of a wild Irish landscape - dramatic coast, sparse population and picturesque human habitation, vistas that have beguiled artists for well over a century.

While this is certainly the focus of some of the works included in 'the way that we went', there is also a keen eye for the socio-political and the realities of rural life. These moments of solitude and reflection hint at a lived rural experience often concealed in art that addresses this seductive landscape. With this selection of works by ten former Ballinglen Art Foundation fellows and seven artists 'new' to Ballinglen, this exhibition hopes to offer a glimpse into this dichotomy.

American artist Mollie Douthit, now based in West Cork, recalls her feelings of loneliness through her depiction of everyday, even banal, objects. Here her studies of country-made kitchen chairs create intimate humble portraits that invite the viewer to reconsider the object's significance. Martin Gale meanwhile, catches a moment of pathos in his work *Free Travel*, where his subject walks away from the viewer toward another day marking time by taking the free bus to town.

Conversely the drama of the elemental is captured in Nick Miller's huge and thrilling painting, *Benwee Head* – shown in Ireland for the first time, while Pat Harris' *Sighting Portacloy* captures a physical legacy of 'The Emergency' on the nearby coast.

In her wonderful essay, commissioned for this catalogue, writer Joanne Laws considers the combined histories of the Ballinglen Art Foundation and its location, drawing on historical perceptions from Robert Lloyd Praeger, Seamus Heaney and archaeologist Seamus Caulfield.

These collective observations peel away the layers of a familiar landscape, offering, as the best art does, another way of seeing.

Anne Mullee
Exhibition Curator
October 2021

*the
way
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*living
archive:
landscape
and the
rural
imagination*

Joanne Laws

*The long summer days spent in the Limestone Plain, where the gentle undulations of the ground only occasionally hid the distant rim of brown and blue hills; the marshy meadows, heavy with the scent of flowers; the great brown bogs, where the curlews alone relieved the loneliness... the savage cliffs of the Mayo coast; the flower-filled sand-dunes which fringe the Irish Sea.. all have left memories that can never be effaced.*¹

– Robert Lloyd Praeger, 1901

Situated in the coastal village of Ballycastle at the edge of the Mayo Gaeltacht, The Ballinglen Arts Foundation was established in 1992 by Philadelphia-based art dealers, Margo Dolan and Peter Maxwell. The couple sought to develop a vibrant residency model that would attract international artists to live and work in the region, with the additional aim of offsetting some of the tangible effects of rural decline. Over the course of three decades, Ballinglen has become a thriving artist's retreat and an essential part of County Mayo's visual art infrastructure, which continues to expand in scope and ambition.

To date, highly competitive residential fellowships have been awarded to hundreds of established and emerging artists of recognised ability, working across various media – from painting and drawing, to photography, printmaking and sculpture. Like other residencies, Ballinglen temporally liberates artists from their habitual or familiar environments, offering opportunities to respond to new vistas while nurturing particular aspects of their ongoing practice. Likewise, resident artists may bring with them intrinsic knowledge of distant landscapes – an intensity of prior engagement that may be temporarily transferred onto the topography of Ballycastle, when they come to stay for short periods of time.

The enigmatic and ancient surroundings of Ballinglen continue to enchant and inspire new and returning artists. Its Atlantic boundary is dramatically fringed by a serrated cliff face of primitive limestone and metamorphic rock, while its coastal moors form part of a wild ecology of blanket bog, characterised by treeless hills, colourful mosses, heathers and lichens. To the northwest are The Céide Fields – the archaeological site of an enclosed Neolithic settlement, believed to be the oldest known field systems in the world. Built by settlers five and a half thousand years ago, the site was perfectly preserved through its subsumption by an encroaching bog – an occurrence which lead archaeologist, Seamus Caulfield,² likened to a “slow-motion Pompeii”.³ In his 1975 poem, *Belderg*, Seamus Heaney referred to the site as “a landscape fossilised”⁴, retelling how excavators “stripped off blanket bog”, and the “soft-piles centuries fell open like a glib”.⁵

To paint or otherwise document the land ultimately involves a one-to-one encounter between an artist and the terrain – something the late cartographer, Tim Robinson, described as “an existential project of knowing a place”.⁶ Prior to the advent of analogue photography, changes in the landscape were recorded solely through the kindred disciplines of painting and cartography. Maps documenting prominent geographical features (such as mountains, rivers or settlements) have been found in Stone Age cave paintings, incisions on clay tablets, and diagrams etched onto rock, tusks or bone – suggesting that the human impulse to visually record our immediate environment extends back to prehistoric times. According to Levi-Strauss, by seeming to simplify the landscape through a reduction in scale, these ‘manmade miniatures’ are not just “pleasing projections or passive homologues” of the scenes they represent – “they constitute a real experiment with it”.⁷ In this way, each artwork created by Ballinglen fellows is a unique artefact that retains the history of its own making – whether recording stylistic innovations, fleeting ambient conditions, or the memorialisation of the built environment for posterity.

At the conclusion of their residency, each artist gifts an artwork to the Ballinglen Permanent Collection, which currently comprises over 850 artworks. Amassed over a 30-year period, the collection forms an important durational record of artistic experience within the locality. This living archive is effectively a microcosm of North Mayo, spanning multiple vantagepoints, mediums and timeframes. It constitutes a unique and special legacy for the region, precisely because it contains and preserves all manner of conceptual, environmental and epistemological processes, directly arising out of immersion in the surrounding landscape.

The Ballinglen Museum of Art is a custom-built, contemporary gallery space, adjacent to the main building, which was officially opened last year to suitably house and exhibit the permanent collection, while also accommodating a new education centre, print gallery and meeting rooms. Presented this winter is the group exhibition, ‘the way that we went’ – a title which plays on an early-twentieth-century guidebook by Robert Lloyd Praeger⁸, an Irish naturalist and botanist who walked around Ireland “with reverent feet”, rejecting motor transportation, while “stopping often, watching closely, listening carefully.”⁹

Curated by Anne Mullee, the exhibition is thematically assembled around contemporary interpretations of landscape that extend beyond idyllic, romanticised or clichéd touristic frameworks, to reimagine rural mythologies. A two-pronged curatorial process has brought together a robust selection of artists previously unconnected to Ballinglen¹⁰, whose enigmatic artworks will undoubtedly find a receptive audience there. These are presented alongside selected works from the permanent collection by past fellows of Ballinglen¹¹, who have also been invited to show an additional new or existing work, many of which have been obtained on loan from other private or public collections.

Collectively the selected artworks capture the realities of rural life, from the ritualistic to the ad-hoc, whether illustrating agricultural produce (such as Comghall Casey's trussed shoulder of lamb), the occasional loneliness felt in remote locations (as chronicled in Mollie Douthit's studies of solitary chairs) or distant woodland scenes, found in Kathy Tynan and Cecilia Dannell's portrayals of remote forests in Ireland and Sweden respectively. The sparse simplicity of monochromatic drawings and prints – such as Donald Teskey's nimble drypoint etching or Pat Harris's moody charcoal study – offer quiet counterpoints to the exhibition's more dramatic painterly moments, found in Nick Miller's expressive depiction of Benwee Head, Martin Gale's brooding scenes of rural habitation, or Eithne Jordan's pensive study of a remote Mayo bungalow. Also presented is a moving image work created during lockdown by Ballycastle-based artist, Nuala Clarke, whose abstract dreamscapes recount colour experiments by seventeenth-century Irish alchemist, Robert Boyle. A kaleidoscopic colour palette is also observed in Peter Burns' fantastical landscape, while Selma Makela's night sky, illuminated with cosmic lights, shows the magic of the natural world, reviving landscape as the site of the sublime.

Joanne Laws is an art writer and editor based in the west of Ireland.

Endnotes

- 1 Robert Lloyd Praeger, 'Irish topographical Botany', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 7, Series 3, 1901, pp 1 – 140.
- 2 The Céide Fields was originally discovered in the 1930s by schoolteacher, Patrick Caulfield, who, while cutting turf, noticed organised piles of rocks that were located below the blanket bog, suggesting an ancient origin. Patrick's son, Seamus, later studied archaeology and led excavations of the site from 1969 onward.
- 3 Megan Harlan, 'A Pompeii in Slow Motion', *New York Times*, 8 July 2001.
- 4 Seamus Heaney, *Belderg*, 1975. The poem reportedly accompanied a letter from Heaney to Patrick Caulfield, after Heaney's visit to The Céide Fields in 1974.
- 5 Glib (Historical, Irish) – A thick mass of curly hair, worn down over the eyes.
- 6 Tim Robinson, *Interim Reports* (Galway: Folding Landscapes, 1995) p 76.
- 7 Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, Trans. George Weidenfield and Nicholson Ltd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962) p 63.
- 8 Robert Lloyd Praeger was an Irish naturalist, writer and librarian who worked in the National Library of Ireland in Dublin from 1893 to 1923. He co-founded and edited the *Irish Naturalist* and wrote extensively on the natural history of Ireland.
- 9 Robert Lloyd Praeger, *The Way That I Went* (Dublin: Hodges & Figgis & Co, 1937).
- 10 Exhibiting artists (new to Ballinglen): Peter Burns, Éanna Byrt, Cecilia Dannell, Kaye Maahs, Selma Makela, Matthew Mitchell, Will O'Kane and Kathy Tynan.
- 11 Exhibiting artists (Ballinglen past fellows): Comhghall Casey, Nuala Clarke, Mollie Douthit, Martin Gale, Patrick Harris, Eithne Jordan, Nick Miller, Geraldine O'Reilly and Donald Teskey.

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artworks

Comhghall Casey, *Rock VII*, 1999, 48 x 50.5cm, oil on canvas.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection





Comhghall Casey, *Shoulder of Lamb*, 2016, 25 x 58cm, oil on canvas.

Image courtesy of the artist





Donald Teskey, *VI*, 2000, 30.2 x 32.8cm, drypoint.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection



A/P

2-17-00

Donald Teskey, *IV*, 2000, 30.2 x 32.8cm, drypoint.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection



Donald Teskey, *Now His Days*, 105 x 152cm. charcoal on Fabriano. From the series *The Idea of Islands* (2010).

Image courtesy of the artist



Eithne Jordan, *Downpatrick Head 1*, 2005, 32.5 x 43.2cm, oil on canvas.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection



Eithne Jordan, *Mayo Bungalow*, 2006, 50 x 65cm, oil on linen.

Image courtesy of the artist



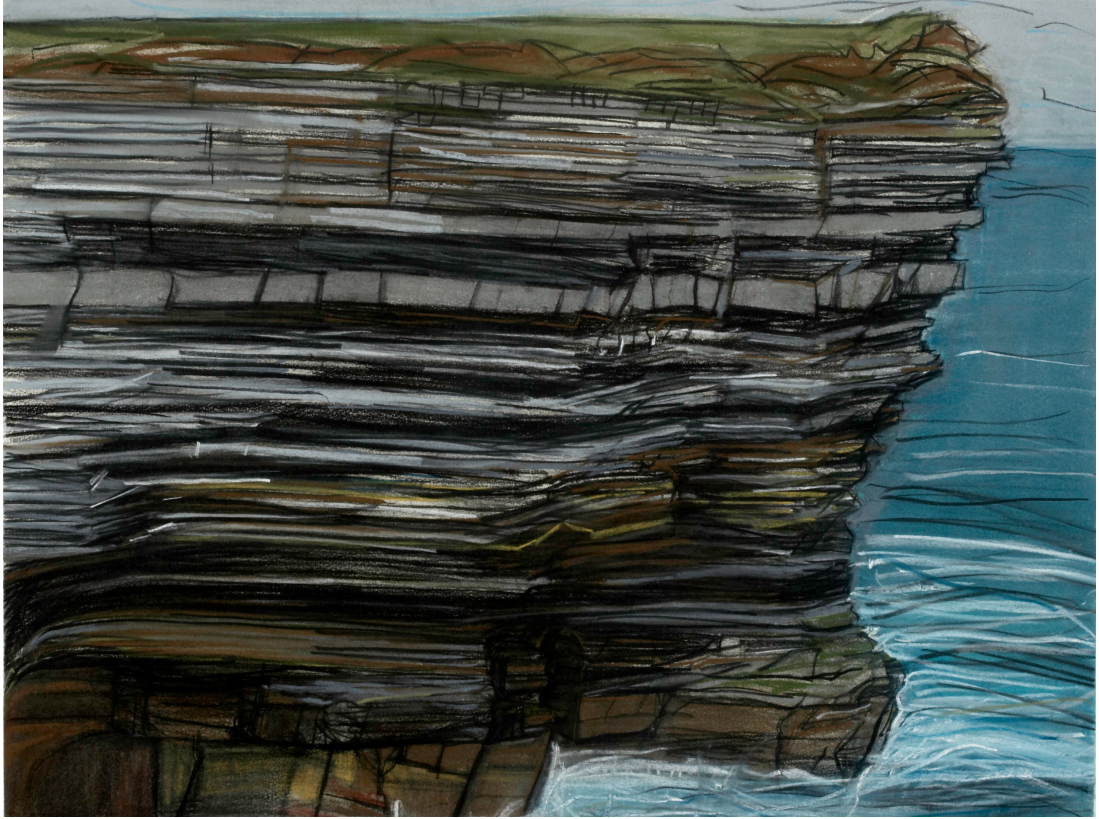
Geraldine O'Reilly, *Cut Bog at Ceathrú Thaidgh, Co Mayo*, 2005, 76 x 89cm, conté drawing.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection



Geraldine O'Reilly, *Downpatrick Head*, 2005, 76 x 89cm, conté drawing.

Image courtesy of the artist



Martin Gale, *Free Travel*, 61.2 x 76.4cm, oil on canvas.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection



Martin Gale, *Flooding Behind the Beach*, 105 x 120cms, oil on canvas.

Private Collection



Nick Miller, *Benwee Head*, 1998, 183 x 183cm, oil on linen.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection



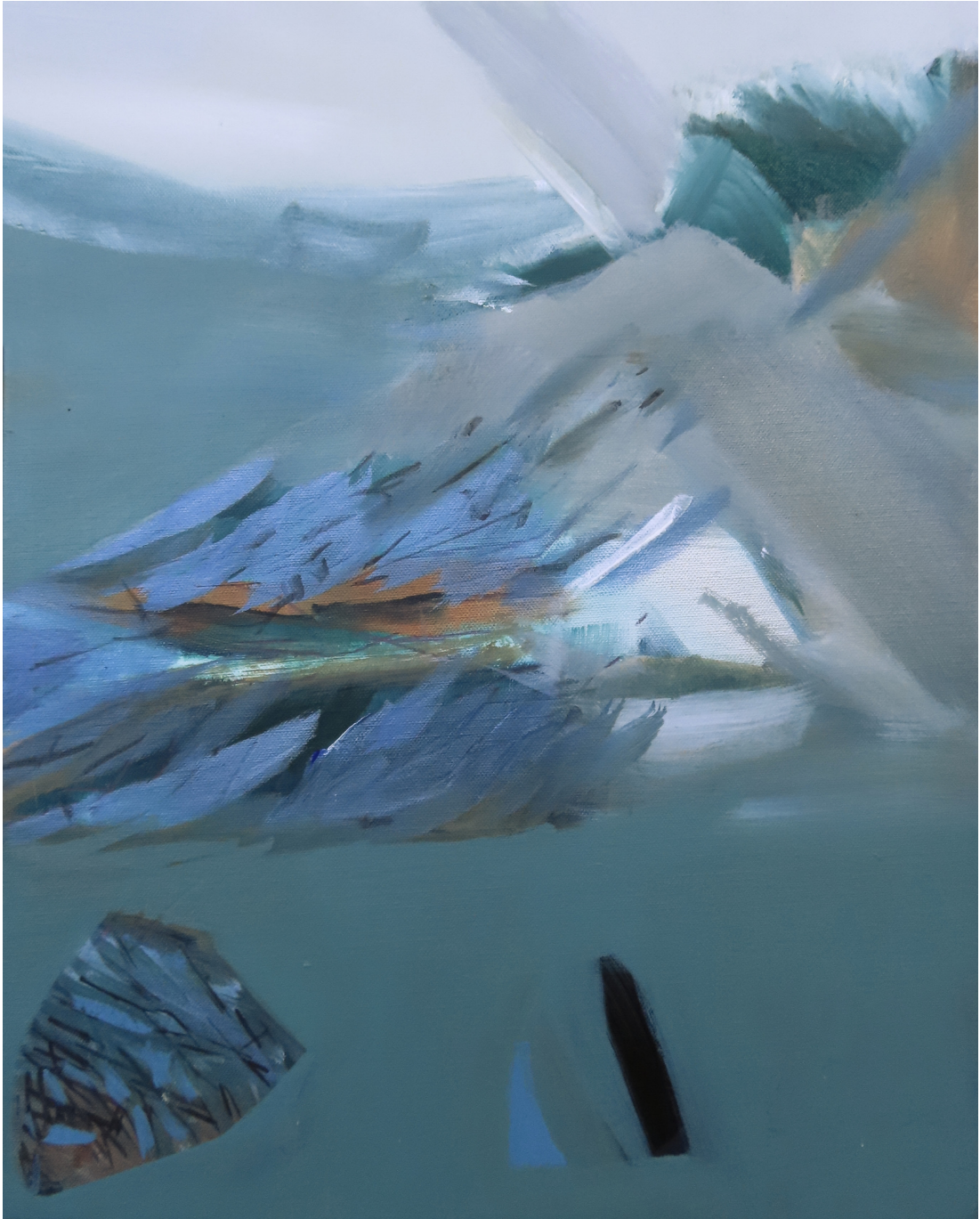
Nick Miller, *Céide*, 1996, 78 x 81.3 x 2cm, oil on canvas.

Image courtesy of the artist



Nuala Clarke, *Day One*, 2013, 50.7 x 40.6cm, acrylic & watercolour pencil.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection



Nuala Clarke, *so I have observed*, 2021, video still.

Image courtesy of the artist



“In the second world war Ireland erected various look out posts, LOPs, and assigned various people to man them and report sightings. Until recent years it got little attention. However a couple of years ago Michael Kennedy wrote Guarding Neutral Ireland, a book which details the various LOPs in Ireland and their part in WWII. This painting is of the Stags of Broadhaven seen from LOP 63. I often think of the men that manned this little building, often in horrendous conditions and of what they might or might not have seen.”

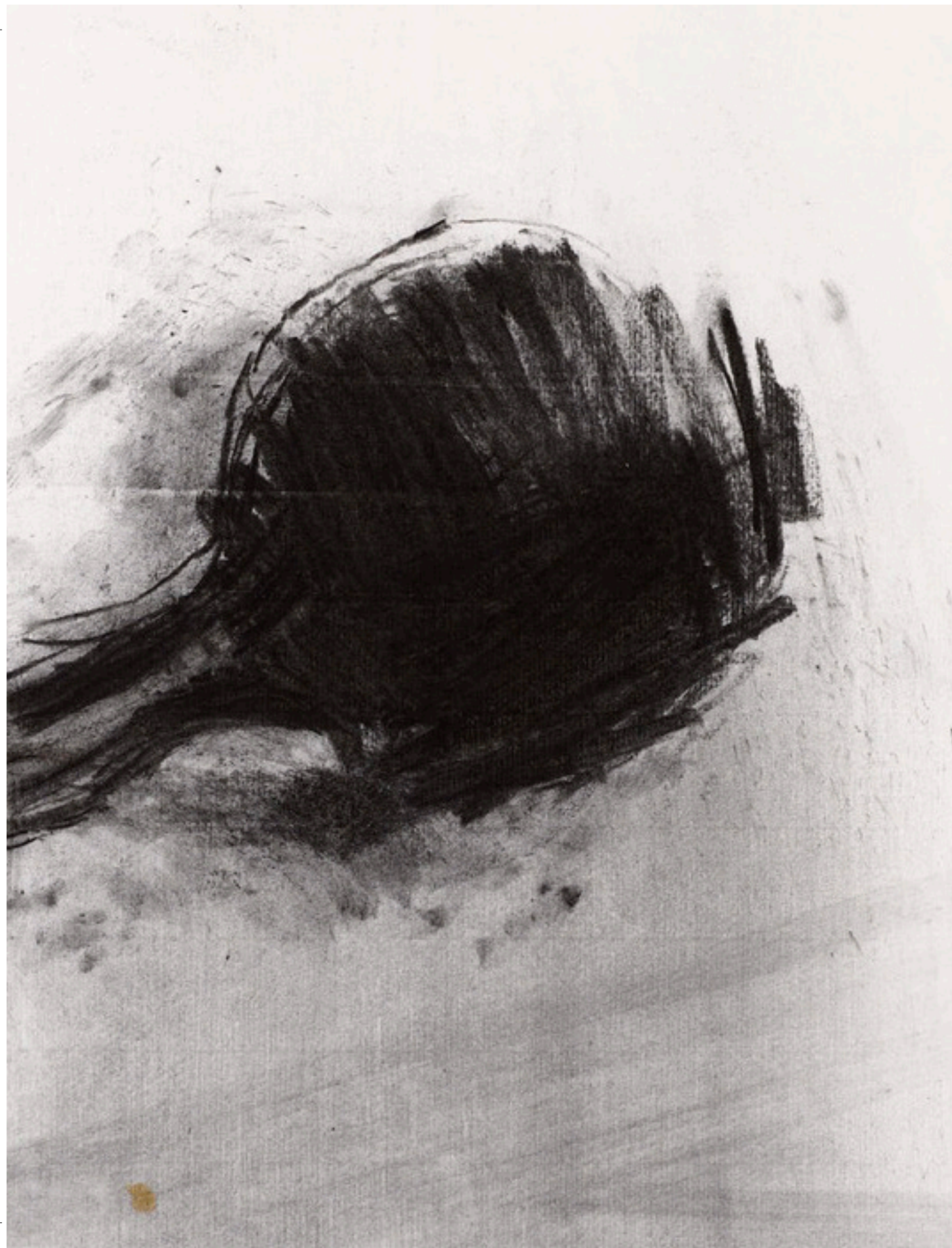
Pat Harris

Patrick Harris, *Sighting Portacloy*, 2020, 60 x 80cm, oil on linen.

Image courtesy of the artist







Patrick Harris, *Séan McSweeney's Ongion*, 2004, 52.5 x 85.5cm, charcoal on paper.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection



Mollie Douthit, *Grey in Brey*, 2015, 25.5 x 30.5cm, oil on panel.

Ballinglen Arts Foundation Collection





Mollie Douthit, *Make It*, 2016.

35 x 30cm, oil on panel.

Image courtesy the artist



Mollie Douthit, *Nothing Day*, 2016.

35 x 30cm, oil on panel.

Image courtesy the artist

Cecilia Dannell, *The Highest Hill, The Highest Hill*, 2019, 61 x 76cm, oil and acrylics.

Image courtesy of the artist



Éanna Byrt, *Running in the marram grass*, 2021, 76 x 61cm, oil on aluminium panel.

Image courtesy of the artist



Kathy Tynan, *Watching from the sky*, 2020, 30 x 25cm, oil on canvas.

Image courtesy of the artist



Kathy Tynan, *Old Ways*, 2020, 60 x 40cm, oil on canvas.

Image courtesy of the artist







Kaye Maahs, *Achill Garage*, 2021, 23 × 34cm, oil on canvas.

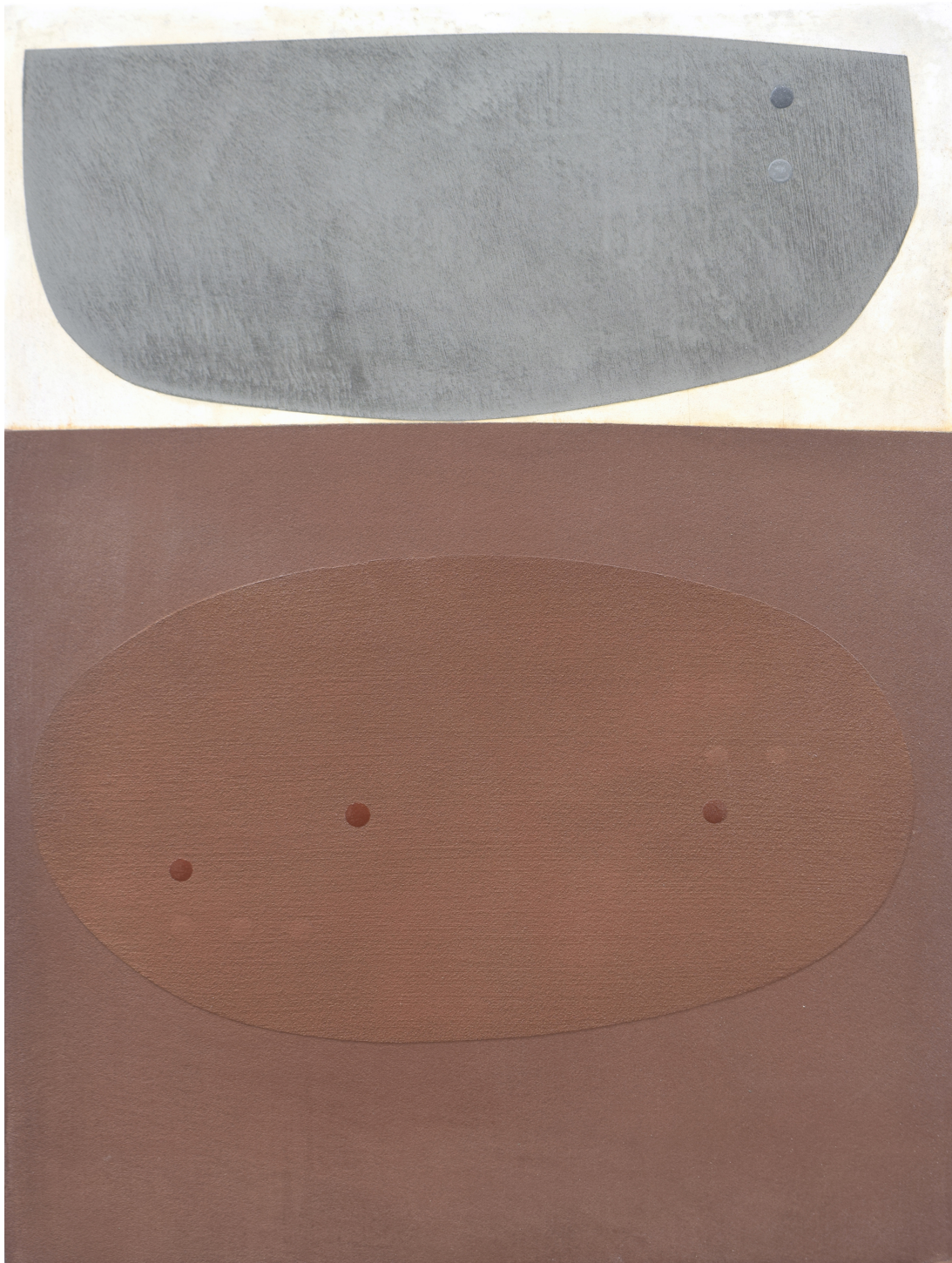
Image courtesy of the artist



Matthew Mitchell, *Cloch II*, 2020.

44 x 33cm, material from Fanore and oil paint and enamel on board.

Image courtesy of the artist



Peter Burns, *Mountain Kingdom*, 2018, 35 x 46cm, oil on canvas.

Image courtesy of the artist



Selma Makela, *Look Out Post*, 2021, 25 x 30cm, oil on canvas.

Image courtesy of the artist



“For this painting ‘A Nova Scotia Telegram’ I was thinking generally of the geographical relationship of North America to North Mayo. The work teeters between pictorial representation and the idea of painting as a fetishised material thing. Communication is the main theme of the work suggested by the use of post it notes as a framing device. Contemporary painters like Peter Gallo came to mind while working but equally important was the Irish painters of the 1960/70s.”

Will O’Kane

Will O’Kane, *A Nova Scotia Telegram*, 2021.

30.5 x 21 cm, oil and acrylic on board with plaster and post-it note frame.

Image courtesy of the artist



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*artist
biographies*

Cecilia Dannel

Cecilia Danell (b.1985) is a Swedish artist based in Galway, Ireland since 2004. She has been shortlisted for numerous art awards including the Hennessy Craig Award and the RCSI Art Prize, and was in residence at Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, in 2020 as the 2019 recipient of the Visual Artists Ireland/Suki Tea Art Prize.

She has received several Arts Council Bursary and Project Awards (2010, 2011, 2017, 2019, 2020), the 2017 Arts Council Next Generation and has been awarded a two-month residency at the Nordic Artists' Centre Dale, Norway (2016). Her work is held in public and private collections in Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Canada, France and the UK, including those of the OPW, the Arts Council and Motala Municipal Council, Sweden.

Recent exhibitions include: 'I set a Bait for the Unknown' (solo), Kevin Kavanagh, Dublin (2020), 'In a Landscape' (solo) at the Royal Hibernian Academy (RHA), Dublin (2019), 'Winter Wanderer' (solo) at Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin (2019) and 'Futures - Series 3 Episode 2' at the Royal Hibernian Academy (RHA), Dublin (2018). She is represented by Kevin Kavanagh, Dublin.

Comhghall Casey

Comhghall Casey was born in Co. Donegal in 1976. His family moved from Ramelton in Co. Donegal to Omagh in Co. Tyrone in 1979. Casey attended St. Conor's Primary School, Omagh (1980-1987) followed by the Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Omagh (1987-1994). In 1994 he studied Foundation Art and Design at the Belfast School of Art, and in 1995 began the BA Hons Fine Art course at the same college, graduating in 1998 and beginning work as an artist. In 2000 he moved to Dublin where he has since been living and working. In 2017 he was elected an Associate Member of the Royal Ulster Academy.

Donald Teskey

Donald Teskey was born in Co. Limerick and graduated from Limerick School of Art and Design in 1978. He came to prominence as an artist through his skill as a draughtsman during the 1980s with several significant solo exhibitions. Since 1992 he has crafted out a substantial body of work as a painter of the landscape focusing on the ruggedness of the western seaboard. Sometimes working on a very large scale, his images reflect his response to the formal elements of composition; shape, form and fall of light. He is a member of Aosdána and the recipient of awards from EV+A, the Claremorris Open Exhibition, the Royal Hibernian Academy and the Royal Ulster Academy.

In 2002 he was awarded a full fellowship to the Vermont Studio Centre, USA. He has participated in international residencies including the Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris and at the Josef and Annie Albers Foundation, Connecticut, USA. Teskey's work has been exhibited in the UK, USA, Canada, China, Germany, France, Finland and South Africa. Collections include the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Arts Council of Ireland, corporate and private collections worldwide. He is represented by Oliver Sears Gallery, Dublin; Dolan/Maxwell Gallery, Philadelphia and Art First Contemporary Art, London.

Éanna Byrt

A 2005 graduate of the Limerick School of Art & Design, specialising in printmaking, Éanna worked for several years in arts and music before re-engaging with a studio practice in 2016, after studying painting and drawing in the Royal Hibernian Academy. He currently occupies a studio space in the Courthouse Gallery & Studios Ennistymon where he explores traditional oil painting techniques with a combination of digital tools and image manipulation processes.

Having spent lockdown helping his four-year-old son navigate this formative period in isolation, his work began to document this time exploring their home landscape of the North Clare coastline. The work seeks to capture the innocent joy of discovering new sensations and begins to draw on the experiences created while his son made his own first experiments with paint in the same period.

Eithne Jordan

Eithne Jordan was born in Dublin where she studied at Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology. She was awarded a DAAD scholarship to study at the Hochschule der Künste in West Berlin, where she subsequently lived for several years. Since 1990 she has worked between Languedoc in the south of France and Ireland. Jordan is a member of Aosdána and the Royal Hibernian Academy. She has exhibited extensively in Ireland and Europe and her work is in major public and private collections in Ireland, Europe and the USA.

Geraldine O'Reilly

Geraldine O'Reilly is a Visual Artist and Printmaker. She is a graduate of the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. She has had many solo exhibitions and shown in selected group exhibitions throughout Ireland, America, Australia, France, Belgium, Sweden, England and Poland. A former board member of Graphic Studio Dublin, she was elected to Aosdána in 2004. She has received awards including the Fulbright Scholarship, commissioned exhibitions of contemporary prints, designed a postage stamp for An Post, and won commissions including Per Cent for Art and Public Art projects.

Kathy Tynan

Kathy Tynan (b.1984) makes paintings which typically depict details and particularities of urban and domestic scenes. Her direct and energetic approach to the painted surface favours liveliness over correctness of representation. While her paintings are figurative, the real subject matter of her work is the moment of encounter within the everyday when ordinary or usually overlooked aspects of a scene become illuminated.

In 2018 she published her first book of paintings, *Proud & Strong All Day Long*. She has completed a three-month residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris and has been awarded the Dublin City Council Visual Arts Bursary (2019). She has been shortlisted for The Hennessey-Craig prize for painting and has received a special award from The Golden Fleece in 2020.

Solo and two person exhibitions include *Two Painters*, Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda (2020); *Green Like Now*, Kevin Kavanagh, Dublin (2019); *Luminous Twitch*, The Lab Gallery, Dublin (2019) and *Atonal Supersound*, Kevin Kavanagh, Dublin (2017). Selected group shows include *Everything is in Everything*, Sirius Arts Centre, Cork (2019); *Traversées du Marais*, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris (2018); *Trophy Hunters*, Dada Post, Berlin (2018); *Constellations*, Kuvataide Academia, Helsinki (2018); *Many Worlds*, Centre Cultural Irlandais, Paris (2017). She is represented by Kevin Kavanagh, Dublin.

Kaye Maahs

Kaye Maahs is a painter and a native of Kerry who has been living and working in the Burren, County Clare since 2003. Kaye holds a BA in Fine Art (2015) from the Centre of Creative Arts & Media, GMIT, Galway. Maahs is the recipient of awards including the Thomas Dammann Junior Memorial Trust Award (2019), enabling her to travel to Iceland for research, and the Art Council of Ireland, Agility Award (2021). She has undertaken numerous residencies in Ireland, including the Tyrone Guthrie Centre (2017) the Heinrich Böll Cottage Residency on Achill Island, Mayo (2017) and at Cill Rialaig Project Residency.

Recent shows include the RHA Annual Exhibition (2021), Cairde Visual (2019), Kerry Visual Artist Showcase (2019), September Group Show, Claremorris Gallery Mayo (2018), the Hermione Exhibition at Alexandra College, Dublin, curated by Aisling Prior (2018), Claremorris Open Exhibition, Curated by Tom Morton (2017), VUE Art Fair at the RHA with Claremorris Gallery (2017), Boyle Arts Festival (2017), and the '9 Walls' Exhibition (2017) at the Hyde Bridge Gallery, Sligo.

Martin Gale

Martin Gale was born in Worcester, England, and moved to Ireland at a young age. He studied at the National College of Art and Design. His work generally responds to the contemporary Irish landscape, and how people interact with it. His paintings often create a dark commentary on rural life in modern Ireland. In 1980 Gale represented Ireland at the XI Biennale de Paris, Nice, Lisbon, Finland, and had a solo show at the Taylor Galleries where he has continually exhibited since. Gale is a member of Aosdána and was elected a member of the RHA in 1996. A major retrospective of his work was held at the Academy's Gallagher Gallery in 2004, moving to the Ulster Museum in Belfast the following year. His landscapes are a unique take on the tradition of photorealism, and most often it is the contemporary figures occupying them that are the true subject of his work. His work is held in numerous collections nationally and internationally.

Matthew Mitchell

Matthew Mitchell is a fine artist painter based in Co Clare. He trained as a printmaker at the University of the West of England and as an art teacher at Goldsmith's College, London before completing his MFA at the National College of Art and Design in 2017 and was awarded the NCAD Studio Residency at NASTudios, Dublin. He is recipient of the emerging Irish Artist Residency Award at Burren College of Art, and has exhibited widely in Ireland.

Mitchell has exhibited in Law Society of Ireland, VUE Art Fair Dublin, Mason Hayes and Curran, The Sailors Home in Limerick and the RHA annual exhibition, 'INTERPLAY', Burren College of Art and 126 Artist-Run Gallery, Galway, and 'LEGACY' in The Courthouse Gallery Ennistymon.

His work has been purchased by the OPW, the Law Society of Ireland, and are held in private collections internationally.

Mollie Douthit

Mollie Douthit (b.1986) is a Cork based oil painter, utilising her own biography she creates small-scale paintings. Originally from North Dakota, since 2012 Douthit has resided between Ireland and the US. She holds a BFA from the University of North Dakota; Post Baccalaureate from Tufts University, Boston; and MFA from Burren College of Art, NUIG. Major achievements include the 2013 RHA Hennessy Craig award, a solo exhibition at the North Dakota Museum of Art, twice awarded the Elizabeth Greenshields Grant, and an Arts Council Bursary. Douthit has an autumn 2021 show show at Molesworth Gallery and works in the 191st RHA annual.

Additionally, her work has been featured in Hyperallergic, The Irish Times, Sunday Times Culture, New American Paintings, and Ilikeyourworkpodcast. Her work has been supported by residencies at the Jentel Foundation for the Arts, Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Ballinglen Arts Foundation, and Vermont Studio Centre.

Nick Miller

Known for his personal approach to revitalising the traditional genres of portrait, landscape and still life in contemporary painting. He spent 17 years engaging with the landscape of the North west of Ireland with a unique series 'Truckscape', paintings made in a large truck converted for use as a mobile studio. Miller was elected to Aosdána in 2001 in recognition of his contribution to the arts in Ireland, and was the recipient of the inaugural 2014 Hennessy Portrait Award at the National Gallery of Ireland. Significant solo exhibitions include: The Irish Museum of Modern Art, the RHA and the New York Studio School. His work is held in many collections nationally and internationally, including; IMMA; The Hugh Lane, Dublin City Gallery and The National Gallery of Ireland.

Nuala Clarke

Nuala Clarke was born in Dublin where she received a BA in Fine Art Painting from the National College of Art and Design. She then moved to New York City where she exhibited at Thomas Werner Gallery, Chelsea (2005/6) & Boltax Gallery, Shelter Island, NY (2005-11), among others. In 2007, received a fellowship to the Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Mayo and began returning to Ireland from NYC to work there every year. In 2013 she moved full-time to the West of Ireland, where she is part-time Learning Curator at The Ballinglen Arts Foundation. She is the recent recipient of the Arts Council Bursary and COVID-19 Emergency Response Grant in 2020. She often works in collaboration with writer Crystal Gandrud and is represented by Sara Nightingale Gallery, Sag Harbor, NY, USA.

Patrick Harris

Born in Dublin, Pat Harris studied at NCAD and Higher Institute of Fine Art, Antwerp. He is regarded as one of Ireland's leading figurative painters. He has lectured in Painting at the Royal Academy of Fine Art, Antwerp and at NCAD. He has exhibited widely in group shows in Ireland and throughout Europe with numerous solo exhibitions in Belgium: De Zwarte Panter Antwerp, Gallery Brabo Antwerp, Gallery S65 Aalst and in Ireland at the Fenton Gallery in Cork, Fenderesky Gallery Belfast and Taylor Galleries Dublin.

His work is represented in a number of public collections, including: The Arts Council of Ireland, The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, The Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin, The National Self-Portrait and Contemporary Art Collection Limerick, University College Dublin and The University of Antwerp, Belgium. He is a member of Aosdána and an Associate Member of The Royal Hibernian Academy where, in 2017, he was elected Professor of painting. He is represented by Taylor Galleries, Dublin and Purdy Hicks, London.

Peter Burns

Peter Burns was born in Dublin and now lives and works in County Mayo. He holds a BA and an MFA in Painting from the National College of Art and Design. In 2012 he was selected for the Royal Hibernian Academy's Futures 12 survey of emerging Irish artists, and has subsequently exhibited widely in Ireland and Northern Ireland, London and New York. He is the recipient of the Pollock-Krasner Grant and Mayo County Council's Tyrone Guthrie Centre Award.

Selma Makela

Selma Makela is based in Galway. Her practice references meteorological and geological phenomena as a means to explore the complexity of memory, migration and our changing environment. Paint is her main medium but she also works with print and more recently alternative photographic processes, to explore concepts of distance and dislocation in terms of geological timelines, migration and home.

She has been the recipient of awards and residencies from the Arts Council (2021), Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris (2021), Fogo Island Arts, Newfoundland (2011), Fleck Fellowship, Banff Centre, Canada (2010), Galway County Council (2020) Leitrim Sculpture Centre (2017), The Model, Sligo (2017). Solo shows include: The Whitaker Art Gallery, Rosendale UK (2022), The Model, Sligo (2017), Galway Arts Centre (2013), PEER, London (2012, 2008), Oonagh Young, Dublin (2010). Selected Group Exhibitions include: RHA, Dublin (2021), Gerald Moore, London (2020), Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris (2015), Creekside Open, London (2017), Barbican Arts Trust, London (2016), RWA, Bristol (2017), Void Derry (2015).

Will O’Kane

Will O’Kane was born in Mayo in 1979. He operates within a speculative open-ended process, reaching for whatever technique will carry the idea. He has a particular interest in the synthesis of form and content.

“For this painting ‘A Nova Scotia Telegram’ I was thinking generally of the geographical relationship of North America to North Mayo. The work teeters between pictorial representation and the idea of painting as a fetishised material thing. Communication is the main theme of the work suggested by the use of post it notes as a framing device. Contemporary painters like Peter Gallo came to mind while working but equally important was the Irish painters of the 1960/70s.”

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Thank you

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