

## SEÁN SCULLY: Figure/Abstract

June 27 – September 12, 2015

SEÁN SCULLY'S FIRST MUSEUM EXHIBITION IN CORK CELEBRATES HIS PROGRESSION FROM FIGURATIVE TO ABSTRACT ARTIST OVER 50-YEAR CAREER

Crawford Art Gallery presents *Seán Scully: Figure/Abstract*, a career-spanning exhibition by Ireland's most pre-eminent artist, to coincide with his seventieth birthday on June 30.

Seán Scully has achieved international acclaim as an abstract artist, yet *Figure/Abstract* is the first exhibition of his work to include his early figurative drawings and paintings. The earliest works date back to 1964, when Scully was nineteen. Anyone familiar with his monumental abstract paintings may be surprised to find that these early works are so modest in scale and feature such domestic subjects as a dog and a cat, as well as sketches of his brother Tony. Most of the works in *Figure/Abstract* have never been shown before.

*Figure/Abstract* (June 27 – September 12) demonstrates how Scully's interest in figuration continued to develop alongside his early explorations in abstraction throughout the 1960s, before he began making the large abstract paintings that have occupied him since the early 1970s.

The exhibition also features works on canvas - including *Untitled -Seated Figure* (1967); *Backcloth* (1970) and *Inset* (1973)– which together demonstrate how Scully's conversion to abstraction drove his development as one of the most original painters of our times. Scully is today best known for his epic 'stripe' paintings, and the exhibition features a recent work from this series, *Horizontal Soul, 2014*, which is more than eight metres in length.

To mark the occasion, and to celebrate Scully's achievements as an Irish artist on the international stage, the Crawford Art Gallery will restore the síneadh fada over the 'a' in the spelling of Seán for the duration of the exhibition *Figure/ Abstract* in Cork.

Seán Scully will participate in a public conversation with curators Marc O'Sullivan and Tina Darb at 5pm on June 26 (no booking required, but please be advised that seating is limited), followed by the official reception at 6pm (all welcome).

*Figure/Abstract* is accompanied by a full-colour catalogue with essays by Seán Scully, Marc O'Sullivan and Beate Reifenscheid available in the Crawford Art Gallery bookshop priced €35.

**For further information, images or a pdf copy of the catalogue contact:**

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Press Release: Thursday 4 June, 2015

## **EDITOR NOTES**

**Public Talk:** 5pm, Friday 26 June

Seán Scully in conversation with curators Marc O'Sullivan and Tina Darb

**Preview Reception:** 6pm, Friday 26 June

### **About the artist:**

Seán Scully was born in Dublin in 1945. His family moved to London when he was four. He studied art at Croydon College of Art and the University of Newcastle, graduating in 1971. His first exhibition in London, in 1973, was a critical and commercial success and one of the works featured, *East Coast Light 1* (1973), is in the collection of the Crawford Art Gallery.

Scully emigrated to America in 1975 and established himself at the heart of the New York art world. His paintings now hang in museums and private collections all over the world including Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Gallery, London; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Ulster Museum, Belfast and the Deutsche Bank Collection.

*Figure/Abstract* ran at the Ludwig Museum, Koblenz in 2014, and at Kunsthalle, Rostock from March – May 2015. The exhibition at the Crawford Art Gallery will be its only presentation outside of Germany.

*Figure Abstract* at Crawford Art Gallery, Cork is produced by Crawford Art Gallery with concept and curation by Marc O'Sullivan and Tina Darb.

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### **About the Crawford Art Gallery**

Crawford Art Gallery is a National Cultural Institution and regional art museum for Munster, dedicated to the visual arts, both historic and contemporary. The permanent collection comprises over 2500 works, ranging from eighteenth century Irish and European painting and sculpture, through to contemporary video installations. At the heart of the collection is a collection of Greek and Roman sculpture casts, brought to Cork in 1818 from the Vatican Museum in Rome. Through its temporary exhibitions, publications and education programmes, the Crawford Art Gallery is committed to fostering recognition, critical assessment, and acknowledgement of historical and contemporary Irish and international art practice. Located in the heart of Cork city, the gallery is a critical part of Ireland's cultural and tourism infrastructure, welcoming over 200,000 visitors a year.

### **How to get to the Crawford Art Gallery**

Crawford Art Gallery is located in the heart of Cork City centre, adjacent to Cork Opera House and Opera Lane, just off Patrick Street. Ten minutes walk from Cork's Kent Train Station and five minutes walk from Cork Bus Terminus. Disabled parking zones are available at the front entrance of the gallery at Emmet Place and Academy Street.

### **Access & Education**

For guided tours and education contact: [emmaklemencic@crawfordartgallery.ie](mailto:emmaklemencic@crawfordartgallery.ie) or <http://www.crawfordartgallery.ie/education.html>

### **Admission / Opening Hours**

Admission to the Crawford Art Gallery and *Séan Scully: Figure/Abstract* exhibition is free.  
Monday - Saturday: 10 am - 5pm (last entry 4:45pm); Thursday: 10 am - 8pm  
closed Sundays and Bank Holidays

**Crawford Art Gallery, Emmet Place, Cork, Ireland**

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