



Ciara O'Connor. *Welcome to the Club (detail)*. Thread, found fabric, linen. Courtesy of the artist.

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Following Threads a new exhibition at Crawford Art Gallery presents a selection of artworks featuring tapestry, embroidery, rug making, drawing in thread, sculpture and quilting. The artworks are informed by an exploration of technique, colour, pattern and shape, as well as exploring themes of labour and reproduction, memory and history.

This exhibition features twelve artists, including: Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, Isabel Nolan, Matt Smith, Ciara O'Connor, Cecilia Danell, Mainie Jellett design by Ceodogán rugs, Dorothy Cross, Michelle Malone, Jennifer Trouton, Anne Kiely and Mary Palmer.

Textile as a medium also is a nod to the gallery's history as Crawford School of Arts; lacemaking and lace design were taught and developed

during the 1800s. these material histories and teachings will be illustrated in *Following Threads* with the display of our collection of lace artefacts.

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain works with films, computer generated imagery, collage, print, installation and tapestry. *Intrusion III*, is a large scale Jacquard tapestry translated from loose digital collage depicting scenes of architectural ruination.

Working on a more intimate scale, **Ciara O'Connor's** thread drawings deals with themes of identity, feminism, trauma and recovery: "When I stitch, I am aware of how my actions mirror those that have gone before me, and I relish the connection. Whilst honouring the labours of the past I seek to utilize these techniques in new and dynamic ways to explore societal issues, challenge the notion of craft, and tell stories about my experience of being a woman in today's world."

A recent addition to the gallery's collection, *Daunt*, **Dorothy Cross'** work is a work brings to the fore familial and local geographic traces by replicating a photograph taken by the artist's father in the 1930's into a tangible object.

For **Matt Smith** History is a 'constantly selected and refined narrative' that edits out marginalised histories. After sourcing tapestries, mostly on eBay and auction sites, Smith laboriously unpicked and re-stitched them to subvert their original in order to challenge our perceptions and highlight the fluid nature of memory and history.

Isabel Nolan has an extensive practice in term of media. Echoing stained glass of churches and grand chandeliers *The Light Pours Out of You* offers a dysfunctional, chandelier like sculpture which cast fabric instead of light. Nolan's powerful and playful signature work was one of the key works in Limerick's EVA International Biennale (2018).

The 3 tapestries by **Michelle Malone** where initially shown in her installation *Great Uncle Joe* about her family experience with the Artane Boys Industrial school. The sourced imagery for the 3 works were the Artane volume of the archives of the Commission to enquire into child abuse (established in 2000).

Between fiction and reality, **Cecilia Danell** hand-tufted rugs are inspired by the Swedish landscapes of her childhood, layered with the artist's research in fiction and science-fiction novels and how the natural world is rendered in theses stories.

Jennifer Trouton has described her practice as '80% painting but also embroidery, or collage and assemblage, things that were ascribed to women and that were seen as women's work, women's subjects and women's craft.' The 6 embroideries relate to topical and feminist questions

of bodily autonomy and the State, herbs and flowers that have traditionally been known to induce abortion during pregnancy are paired with maps of Ireland and the female pelvis and uterus.

Championing Modernism in 1920s Ireland, **Mainie Jellett** (1897 -1944) designed rugs derived from her abstract cubism art and from in-depth research in the use of colours, patterns, and shapes. In 2008, **Ceadogán Rugs** issued a limited edition of her rugs' designs. In 2023 they were commissioned to make a rug from Carpet Design, a small Mainie Jellett's watercolour in the gallery's collection.

Acquired by the gallery in 2021, **Mary Palmer** and **Anne Kiely's** collaborative art quilt *Who Will Tell the Bees* delicately combines hand screen-printed images, etchings, and manipulated photographic images to produce layered designs that echo characteristics of the handmade. *Who Will Tell the Bees* addresses key environmental concerns, as well as the histories of women's work.

ENDS

For additional imagery please click [here](#)

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More about Crawford Art Gallery

Crawford Art Gallery is an Irish national cultural institution, dedicated to contemporary and historic visual art, located in a significant heritage building in the heart of Cork city. Home to a collection of national importance, it tells a compelling story of Cork and Ireland over the last three centuries, while also offering a vibrant and dynamic programme of temporary exhibitions.

Originally built in 1724 as the city's Customs House, the Gallery is home to the famous Canova Casts, gifted to Cork two centuries ago. Featured in the gallery's collection of over 3,000 objects are well-known and much-loved works by Irish artists James Barry, Harry Clarke, Mainie Jellett, Seán Keating, Daniel Maclise, Norah McGuinness, Edith Somerville, and Jack B. Yeats, as well as contemporary artists Gerard Byrne, Maud Cotter, Dorothy Cross, Eilis O'Connell, and Hughie O'Donoghue.

An oasis of calm and tranquillity, Crawford Art Gallery is open seven days a week, free to enter, and a must-see for locals and tourists alike. Welcoming over 265,000 visitors annually, the Gallery boasts an award-winning indoor and outdoor Café in stunning surroundings, serving fresh local produce for which Cork is famous.

Opening Hours

Monday–Saturday 10.00am–5.00pm
Late opening Thursdays until 8.00pm
Sundays and Bank Holidays
Gallery: 11am - 4pm
Entry Free

Free Tours

Sundays and Bank Holidays 2:00pm
Thursdays 6:30pm
This project is in support of the Night-Time Economy and funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.

The Green Room Café

A great blend of nostalgia and modernity. A classic old world dining room in Cork's cultural epicentre that mixes traditional food offerings alongside contemporary trends. The best of local Cork & Irish produce, treated with a light hand by chefs committed to simplicity and flavour.

For opening hours

www.crawfordgallerycafe.com



**An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir,
Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán**
Department of Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media