

EACH DAY Eilis O'Connell (Born 1953)

Eilis O'Connell was brought up in Donegal and studied art at the Crawford College of Art in Cork and Massachusetts College of Art. O'Connell hoards objects as diverse as gourds and discarded agricultural tools and through her drawings transforms them to enjoy a new existence in her sculpture work. She has built her reputation on large-scale public sculpture, sensitive to its environment in Ireland and the UK. She takes inspiration from archaeology, architecture and the human body to create her unique forms that can be at the same time intimate and monumental.



to enjoy a new existence in her sculpture work. She has built her reputation on large-scale public sculpture, sensitive to its environment in Ireland and the UK. She takes inspiration from archaeology, architecture and the human body to create her unique forms that can be at the same time intimate and monumental.

Each Day is a sculpture in bronze that occupies the courtyard of the Crawford Art Gallery. It stands two and a half metres tall and echoes the form of a cloak, cowl, or folded cloth. There is a human presence evoked by the shrouded form, a strong, immovable, protective force that seems ancient and magical. The dense, bronze surface is gently curved and encompassing and at the same time reassuringly robust and impermeable.

DISCUSSION

- What is the first word that comes to your mind when you see this sculpture?
- What do you think the sculpture is made from? Is it made from one piece or from many pieces joined together?
- Look at the surface of the piece, is it rough or smooth, regular or irregular?
- The inside surface is flat and the outside is ridged, why do you think the artist chose to design it this way? Would it change the feel of the sculpture if it were the other way around?
- What sort of look does the surface give to the piece: does it seem modern, ancient, sharp, cruel, gentle? Find some words to describe the surface.
- Is it bigger than you? Does it feel comforting or scary to be beside it?
- Can you stand inside it? How does that feel? If the piece were half this size would you feel different about it? How? What if it was twice as big?
- Does the form remind you of anything? Have you seen a form or an object like this before in a bigger or smaller size?
- Do you think the artist might have taken her ideas for the sculpture from a natural object; does it look like a natural shape or a mechanical shape?
- What colour is the sculpture? Is this a colour you see in nature or a man made colour?

- The sculpture is in the courtyard, is this a good location? Why do you think so? Does the sculpture look as though there might be more under the ground?
- We see new and unusual shapes and structures around us all the time, how do you feel when you come across objects that are completely new to you?
- Do you sometimes see shapes in nature and buildings and objects that you think are amazing and beautiful? What have you seen like this?
- What do you think the title *Each Day* could mean?
- Do you think this is a very new or very old piece of sculpture? What seems new? What seems old?

In the gallery look in the display case for these objects from the Gibson Bequest, would some of these forms make interesting sculptures?

How big should they be and what colour, material, texture?



HANDS ON

Go on a nature walk and gather some objects such as seedpods, greenery, pine cones, nuts which have an interesting form.

Back in the classroom you can get some clay and model the shapes and forms that you find most interesting.

Sketch your modelled piece and then add on to this drawing to create a new idea for a sculpture.

Trace or photocopy your drawing and draw small people beside it to see how it would look as a large-scale sculpture.