



Image credit: Mary Swanzy (1882-1978) 'Samoan Scene', c. 1923
Collection Crawford Art Gallery, Cork (Part of the AIB Art Collection Donated to the State, 2012)
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Mary Swanzy

Voyages

Press Release 4/03/19

Preview: 5:30pm, Thursday 14 March
Exhibition: 15 March – 3 June, 2019

Crawford Art Gallery exhibits pioneering figure Mary Swanzy

Mary Swanzy (1882-1978) was a pioneering figure in Irish Art who witnessed the birth of Modern Art and after 1914 exhibited at the Paris Salons alongside those artists who are now household names. She mastered the academic style of painting at a young age and her work rapidly evolved through different styles: Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, Symbolism and Surrealism; each of these interpreted and transformed by her in a highly personal way. Over 70 works will be on display in this fascinating exhibition, initiated by the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) and curated by Seán Kissane. The exhibition aims to reintroduce audiences to the artist's extraordinary achievements and reinstate her as a Modern Irish Master.

Born in Merrion Square in 1882 she was educated in Dublin, Germany and Paris at the turn of the last century. Swanzy mastered the academic style of painting at a young age and her work rapidly evolved through different styles: Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, Symbolism and Surrealism; each of these interpreted and transformed by her in a highly personal way

After Crawford Art Gallery this IMMA initiated exhibition will tour to Limerick City Gallery of Art from 20 June – 15 September 2019.

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Dyane Hanrahan
Marketing & Communications Manager
E dyanehanrahan@crowfordartgallery.ie
T +353 (0) 21 4907856
M +353 (0) 86 8278151
W www.crowfordartgallery.ie
Crawford Art Gallery,
Emmet Place,
Cork, Ireland.
T12 TNE6

More about the Artist : Mary Swanzy

Mary Swanzy was a pioneering figure in Irish art. Born in Merrion Square in 1882 she was educated in Dublin, Germany and Paris at the turn of the last century. There she witnessed the birth of Modern Art and after 1914 exhibited at the Paris Salons alongside those artists who are now household names. She mastered the academic style of painting at a young age and her work rapidly evolved through different styles: Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, Symbolism and Surrealism; each of these interpreted and transformed by her in a highly personal way. Very widely travelled and well educated, she spoke a number of languages and had seen much of Europe by the age of twenty. Following the devastation of the First World War she went to Czechoslovakia as an aid worker and travelled widely in the region. In 1923 she literally crossed the world on an epic voyage to Hawaii and Samoa producing a body of work that is unique in an Irish context. Throughout the 20s and 30s she exhibited in the USA, Hawaii, UK, Belgium, Ireland and regularly in Paris at both the Salon des Independents and the Beaux-Arts. In 1920 she was elected to the committee of the Paris Independents and she also participated in the founding of the Society of Dublin Painters – Ireland's first Modern Art gallery; and participated in the first Irish Exhibition of Living Art. In 1946 she was included in a group exhibition in London with Braque, Vlaminck, Dufy, Chagall, William Scott and Henry Moore. This record of achievement is unsurpassed by her better-known contemporaries yet there has not been a substantial exhibition of Swanzy's work in Dublin since the 1968 Retrospective at the Municipal Gallery. Aside from the tangible issue of her gender, this neglect may have been due to the fact that in the mid-20s she decided to settle permanently outside of Ireland in self-imposed exile. Among other factors this was because the Swanzy name was associated with British rule and atrocities that occurred during the War of Independence, however it meant that she lived in relative obscurity in London and her career and reputation

suffered. This IMMA initiated exhibition aims to reintroduce our audiences to this artist's extraordinary achievements and reinstate her as a Modern Irish Master.

More about Crawford Art Gallery

Located in the heart of Cork city and free to enter, Crawford Art Gallery, is home to a collection of national importance and is a must see for locals and tourists alike. Welcoming over 230,000 visitors a year the Gallery is open seven days a week and delights in all visitors young and old.

Originally built in 1724 as the city's customs house, (when Cork was one of Europe's most important trading ports), the Gallery is described by many visitors as an "Oasis" offering the tranquillity and atmosphere only a building with such history and beauty can provide. As well as offering a stunning place for reflection, Crawford Art Gallery is right in the middle of a vibrant shopping, cultural and hospitality area. As well both historic and modern exhibition spaces, the Gallery boasts an award- winning Café in stunning surroundings serving fresh local produce for which cork is famous.

Crawford Art Gallery is home to an expansive collection featuring works from the 18th century to present which are of key national importance and tell a compelling story of place and history. It is also home to the famous 'Canova Casts', which were gifted to the city of Cork nearly two centuries ago. Well-known and loved works by 20th century Irish artists such as Seán Keating, Harry Clarke, John Lavery, Jack B. Yeats, Norah McGuinness, Mainie Jellet, Gerard Dillon and Muriel Brandt feature in the gallery's historic collection, while the modern collection features work by contemporary artists such as Eilis O'Connell, Gerard Byrne, Dorothy Cross, Maud Cotter and Hughie O'Donoghue. The Gallery hosts numerous temporary exhibitions by local, national and international artists showcasing visual art, film.

Learn and Explore

For details on the Learn & Explore programme guided tours, access and education, please visit our website: www.crawfordartgallery.ie

