

THE ROLE OF A CURATOR

**Crawford Learn
Art And
Gallery Explore**

OVERVIEW

A Curator has many roles in the Crawford Art Gallery. Curators develop interesting ways in which artworks can be interpreted through exhibitions, publications or events. Curators work with colleagues in areas such as education, research, conservation, design and marketing. A Curator organises displays of the gallery collection and loaned work from other collections or directly from an artist. An exhibition communicates with the public in a way that may inform, educate, entertain and inspire.

THE WORK OF A CURATOR

Organising exhibitions, working with artists,
Identifying and researching artworks and ideas.
Collaborating with other institutions, historians,
scientists and other specialists or technicians.
Developing ideas for exhibitions,
Organising and interpreting artworks
to present to various audiences.
Researching, compiling and preparing
written information about the collection.



CASE STUDY: SEEN, NOT HEARD

Crawford Learn Art And Gallery Explore

**Curated by Anne Boddaert
and Victoria Evans**

with support from
Emma Klemencic and Alice O' Donoghue.

THE EXHIBITION

This thematic exhibition examined the representation of children in artworks from the 18th century to the present. The artwork came from the Crawford Art Gallery collection, Irish art collections and Irish Artists.

The exhibition was organised in three loose sections: 'Power'; 'Perception'; and 'Play'.

The curators wanted to mount an exhibition which examined how children have long been an important subject matter in art whilst also encouraging the audience to reflect on their own ideas of childhood and on the place of children in society today.



QUESTIONS FOR THE CURATOR WE ASKED ANNE BODDAERT TO SHARE HER EXPERIENCE AS CURATOR OF THE EXHIBITION

Q. What needs to be considered or what is required when borrowing work from another collection or artist?

The initial work is a lot of research on the artists and individual work to gather as much information as possible to make sure the artworks selected fit in with what you are trying to do.

The big one is trust.

Whether you are borrowing from institutions, artists or private collections, you want people to know that you have good reasons and intentions to ask for a loan.

There are many practical concerns about the care of the works you want to exhibit such as safe transport of the works, insurance, etc. In the Crawford Art Gallery, there is a Registrar who looks after these aspects of organising an exhibition and Technicians who know how to handle and display artworks safely.

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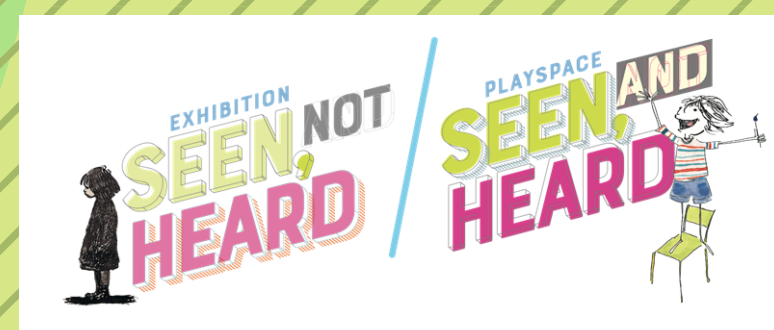
QUESTIONS FOR THE CURATOR: DISPLAYING THE ARTWORK

Q. When hanging the work, what considerations come into play?

There is a balance between the ideas you want to impart, the aesthetic and practicalities. For example you might want to display works in a particular sequence but then realise one work is too big to fit, or that a work on paper has to be positioned in a darker area and not exposed to daylight which could damage it.

You also want the public to be able to 'read' the exhibition. With '*Seen, Not Heard*', where the central theme of childhood is quite universal yet also personal, we were keen not to be too forceful in imposing our own vision about childhood. We hoped that maybe older visitors might reflect on their own childhood whilst a younger audience would maybe see a bit of themselves in some artworks.

Sometimes we will use design 'tools' (wall painted similar colours, text, timelines...) to create connections between artworks or sections or give an exhibition a particular look. In '*Seen, Not Heard*' and also the playspace '*Seen and Heard*' we used quotes and bright splashes of pink and green. We also used a logo with two variations.



CASE STUDY: SEEN, AND HEARD

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THE PLAYSPACE

The Upper Gallery was transformed into the *'Seen and Heard'* dynamic playspace, powered by fuel for the imagination. This was a space to play, rest, read, to draw on the walls and interact with a series of programmed activities.

COMMENTS FROM THE CURATOR

Q. Can you say a few words on how the playspace enhanced the display/education/outreach aspect of the exhibition?

An exhibition about children seemed the perfect opportunity to experiment and give visitors space to 'take over' our gallery. It was also the occasion to challenge the gallery as a civic space open to all. It was a challenge too because we are used to people who often look quietly at artworks and suddenly we invited movement, noise, free play...

Sometimes the playspace was just open for unguided exploration and at other times there were workshops and activities such stop motion animation, printmaking, puppet making etc... The drawing wall was very popular, it was wonderful to see how people, small and big, were enjoying leaving their mark on the wall!

