



The Third Guard

CLONMEL JUNCTION YOUNG CURATORS EXHIBITION

2B OR NOT TO BE

📍 THE MAIN GUARD



THE THIRD GUARD – also known as **Tija BrazYTE, Milo Fahey and Oliwia Kurpan** – followed a callout from Clonmel Junction Arts Festival to Transition Year students in Clonmel to curate an exhibition from the rich collection of the University of Limerick. The project invited them to participate in all the processes of curatorship, from an initial visit to view, select and inspect hanging arrangements at the University of Limerick campus, supported at every stage by Yvonne Davis, curator of the collection there, and culminating in this exhibition.

They called themselves The Third Guard in reference to the makeup of their group and the exhibition venue and revealed their modernity by playfully punning on Shakespeare's great line 'To be or not to be' in the show's title. Nothing was too much for them, they worked through hundreds of images, refined their selections over weeks and researched the artists who made the work and worked on the final arrangements of the work from hanging to publicity.

On their behalf, we would like to thank the University of Limerick, who so graciously made their entire collection available to us, especially Yvonne Davis (who allowed us to interrupt her holidays to provide information we couldn't get elsewhere). Our sincere thanks also to the OPW, Lorraine Egan and staff of the Main Guard for allowing the use of the first floor for the exhibition and for our regular meetings.

The outcome of this process is entirely the work of the Third Guard, their selections and their interpretations of the artworks they chose as shared through this brochure, media outlets, press interviews and videos, with some of this delivered *as Gaeilge* by Milo. They were a joy to work with.

Rebecca Lenehan

Artistic Director, Clonmel Junction Arts Festival

Catherine Marshall

Curator and mentor of the project

«2B OR NOT TO BE» will be showing in the Main Guard from 3rd July to 30th September with the goal of getting young people involved in the world of art. All work is provided by the University of Limerick.

SCULPTURE



THE THIRD GUARD tell us more about the seven sculptures they chose together.

▼ **Michael Canning** «Self-portrait, Three Skulls»

This is the only piece chosen by all three of us. We were drawn to it due to its mysterious aura. It seems to represent the three of us as curators, the skulls are attached at a singular point but are each their own individual skull. The material gives the skulls a realistic decaying effect, despite three conjoined skulls being an entirely unnatural phenomenon.



► **F.E. McWilliam** «Woman of Belfast»

F.E. McWilliam created a series of bronze sculptures in the 1970s during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. We looked at "Woman of Belfast" in particular because we find it important to look at our past history and learn from it. This piece stood out because the woman's distress is depicted effectively and you can feel her anguish.





◀ **Rowan Gillespie**
«Self-portrait»

Rowan Gillespie is a Dublin-born sculptor. He is famous for his work 'Famine' on the Custom House Quay in Dublin, depicting Irish people, skinny and starving walking toward the docks to board a coffin ship during the famine. Oliwia and Tija chose his self-portrait as it encompasses every aspect of him and his work. A pillar of objects and things significant to him holds up a casting of his head. In 2007 he was awarded an honorary Doctorate in Fine Art by the Regis University in Denver, Colorado.

▼ **Imogen Stuart**
«Self-portrait»

Imogen Stuart's self-portrait was created out of bronze, deviating from her regular media of stone and wood. We liked the piece due to its play on mirroring although it is not perfectly symmetrical. The lock of hair on the right side is raised, making it more sculptural.



▲ **Deirdre McLoughlin**
«Self-portrait»

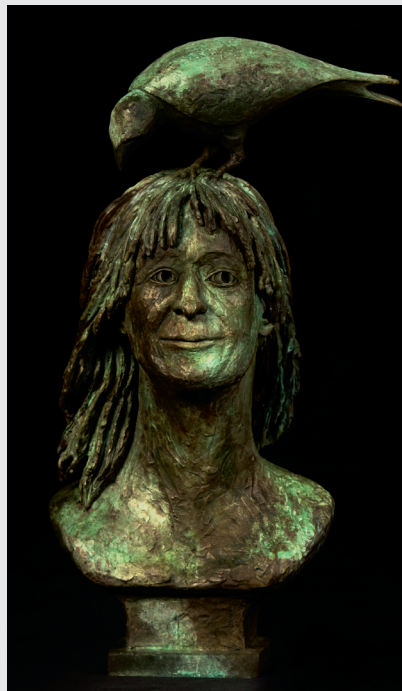
Deirdre McLoughlin's high-fired ceramic self-portrait is a deviation from her usual organically shaped pieces. Her other sculptures are a representation of her trauma after the horrors she experienced during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. This piece resembles a bird, the white colour representing peace and tranquillity, contrasting with her other sculptures.



◀ Maighread Tobin

«Mask with Twig»

Maighread Tobin's 'Mask with Twig' is incredibly eye-catching with the white being broken up by Maighread Tobin's face in patinated bronze. There are pine cones in front of the eyes tying in to the bark-like look of the piece. The twigs connecting to the pine cones make a shape resembling glasses.



◀ Catherine Greene

«Self-portrait, The Crossing»

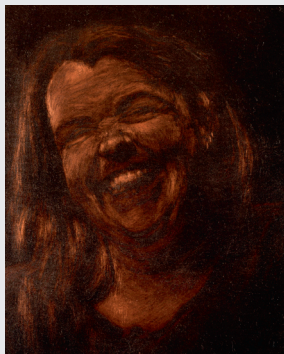
Catherine Greene's self-portrait entitled, 'The Crossing' features a bust of her head and a jackdaw. Her work often combines human and animal features creating a surreal effect. Her work is eye-catching and intriguing.

I've really enjoyed going to see the art and picking pieces for the event. I found it a bit difficult to explain my reasons for why I picked a piece I liked. I'm really glad I chose to join the young curators as I find it very interesting and I've never done something like this before.

▼ Michael Canning

«Self-portrait, Three Skulls»

Michael Canning is an Irish artist from County Limerick. He was born in 1971 and studied art in Limerick, Athens and Dublin. He is best known for painting nature scenes such as plants, hedges and the Irish countryside. He uses materials like oil paint, wax, and ash to give his paintings lots of texture and detail. His work is inspired by rural Ireland and often focuses on nature and the outdoors.



◀ Pamela Dunne «Self-portrait»

Pamela Dunne is an Irish artist and printmaker from Limerick. She studied Fine Art at the Limerick School of Art and Design and later at the University of Ulster in Belfast. She is best known for her detailed printmaking and drawings, which often focus on places, memories and personal experiences. Her artwork is inspired by Limerick city and explores themes like identity and emotions.

▶ Vera Klute «Self-portrait»

Vera Klute is a German-Irish artist who lives and works in Ireland. She studied art, briefly in Germany but completed her art education in Ireland in the early 2000s. She is best known for her portraits, sculptures and drawings. Her artwork often focuses on people and facial expressions, and she uses both traditional and modern styles, materials and technologies in her work. Vera Klute has exhibited her art in galleries across Ireland and internationally. She has also created public sculptures and has won awards for her work.





▲ Estella Solomons «Self-portrait»

Estella Solomons was an Irish artist and printmaker born in Dublin in 1882. She studied at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art and became well known for her etchings and portraits. Her artwork often showed scenes of Dublin, landscapes and important Irish figures. During the Irish War of Independence, she also helped the republican movement by hiding documents and giving support to members of the movement. Estella Solomons exhibited her work in Ireland and abroad and became an important figure in Irish art. She died in 1968, but her artwork is still admired today.

▼ Rowel Friers «Self-portrait»

Rowel Friers (1920–1998) was an artist and cartoonist from Northern Ireland. Born in Belfast, he studied art at the Belfast College of Art. He is best known for his cartoons and humorous drawings, many of which were published in newspapers and magazines. His work often included political and social satire, but also lighter, everyday humour. He also worked as a painter and teacher, and he helped promote art in Northern Ireland. He exhibited his work widely and was a member of several art organisations.



▲ Tom Climent «Inner Self-portrait»

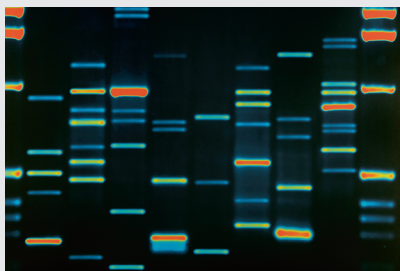
Tom Climent is an Irish contemporary artist from Waterford. He studied at the Crawford College of Art and Design in Cork. He is best known for abstract landscape paintings that are inspired by nature, maps, and aerial views of land. His work often looks like patterns or layered shapes rather than realistic scenery. He usually uses paint in calm, muted colours and builds up many layers to create depth and texture.

This was a very fun experience getting an insight into the art world and how setting up an exhibition works. I was surprised at the level of generosity shown by the University of Limerick without whom this exhibition would not be possible.

▼ Brian King

«DNA Portrait»

Brian King, the artist for this piece was a leading modernist and conceptual artist. He loved the chance to offer a different kind of self-portrait. Websites such as Dynamic DNA Laboratories offer personalised DNA profiles, each unique, using your DNA. All Brian King had to do was to sign a computer-generated DNA map. Dynamic DNA Laboratories normally focuses on DNA tests for specific purposes to help people live healthier lives.



▲ Francis Matthews

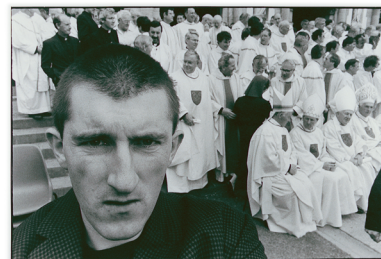
«Harold's Cross Road»

Born in 1980 in Dublin, where he currently lives and works. Francis Matthews has been painting full time since 2005. He is represented by the Molesworth Gallery in Dublin. He attended University College Dublin, 1998-2004, graduating with a First Class Honours degree in Architecture. His most common medium is oil on board, his paintings are often night scenes devoid of people. Due to the lack of people in his paintings you are often drawn to the buildings that come out of the darkness.

▼ Tom Shortt

«Self-portrait with bishops and priests»

Educated at the CBS in Thurles, Tom Shortt is a Limerick-based artist known for his commitment to social justice and equality. He has taught at the Limerick School of Art and Design and is currently working as Arts Officer for the Irish Prison Service. In 2024 he curated 'Alternative Ways of Seeing', an exhibition of work by people in custody.



Self-Portrait with Bishops & Priests, 2009

Tom Shortt, 1989



▲ Robert Ryan «Self-portrait with Encounter»

Born in County Limerick, Robert Ryan graduated from Limerick School of Art and Design in 1987. He worked in Copenhagen and London before returning to Ireland in 1994. He lives and works in Lough Gur, Co Limerick, which has been continuously inhabited since the arrival of neolithic people 5000 years ago and is of outstanding archaeological significance. This environment has been an inspiration for many of his paintings. His paintings are often landscapes featuring a small white dog-like animal, sometimes accompanied by similar figures or a larger, parental presence.

▼ Kathy Prendergast «Untitled»

Kathy Prendergast was born in 1958 in Dublin. She studied at Manor House School, Raheny, and studied sculpture at the National College of Art & Design and the Royal College of Art, London (1983-1986). Her drawing and sculptural works consider issues of sexuality, identity, mapping and power, often using a wide variety of unconventional media, including wool, fabric, human hair and found objects. Her use of contour maps is an inventive way of showing three-dimensions on a flat surface.



▲ Samuel Walsh «Self-portrait №42»

Samuel Walsh has been a leading painter and critical writer for many years. He works with simple geometric shapes which are used in a variety of ways to convey alternative narratives and to call attention to forms. His self-portrait is like an 18th century silhouette, which allowed him to call attention to the shape and form of his own face but remaining highly abstract.



As a curator, I enjoyed looking at artworks and curating them into a collection. Participating in this project has given me new perspectives and taught me to not think so critically when analysing an art piece. I grew as a person. I think that people often dismiss contemporary art

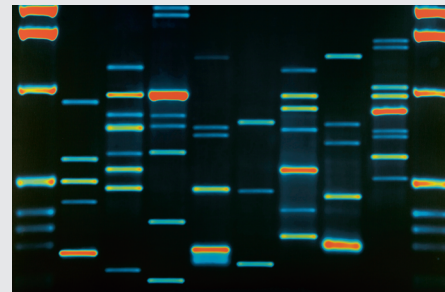
▼ Pamela Dunne «Self-portrait»

Pamela Dunne is a Limerick – based artist and printmaker. She is currently working at the Limerick School of Art and Design as a Technical Officer. Her 2016 self-portrait stood out to me as it felt genuine. She didn't take herself too seriously in this portrait and it seemed to capture a purely joyous moment. Her portrait piece stands out as most of her other photography practice focuses on nature or urban features such as pylons and road-signs.



▲ Maeve Kinney «Bird Contemplates Artist»

Maeve Kinney is the artist behind 'Bird Contemplates Artist', a mosaic piece. This piece stood out to me as initially, I believed it was about the artist viewing the bird, not the other way around. Mosaic portraits are unusual now but were famous in Ancient Rome and Greece.



▲ Brian King «DNA Portrait»

Brian King was an artist born in Dublin. He started off as a sculptor and transitioned to creating works more focused on the environment throughout his life. I chose his DNA Portrait as it felt very personal. It's the structure and fundamental make-up of a person, but unrecognisable if you don't understand what you are looking at. This piece was a deviation from his usual sculptures.

as "unimpressive" or "effortless" and I was the same until this project. Looking at these pieces with context helped me understand the point the artist was trying to make. Putting these pieces into a joint collection was intriguing. All three of us chose quite a few of the same pieces but once narrowed down none of them repeated. I loved seeing everyone's perspectives throughout the project.



▲ **Rachel Joynt** «Self-portrait»

Rachel Joynt is an artist from Kerry. She's a sculptor who mainly uses nature as her muse. Many of her pieces feature birds or focus on the sea. This piece is unique as it departs from her usual artworks while still keeping the theme of nature. I liked this piece due to the contrast of the hourglass and her skin. She usually creates public art and is best known for her piece, with Remco de Fouw, 'Perpetual Motion' at the Naas roundabout of the M7.

▼ **Ultan McAvinue** «Heritage II»

Ultan McAvinue is a Limerick based artist. He uses mainly silkscreen and woodblock printing in his art. I chose his piece 'Heritage II' as I liked the collage style of it. I loved the contrast between the aluminium can tabs and the yellow Celtic designs.



▲ **Fiona Quill**

«Your House is on Fire I & II»

Fiona Quill is a Limerick based printmaker and educator working as a lecturer and PhD researcher at the Limerick School of Art and Design. She shows her concern for social, environmental and political issues through her pieces. I chose 'Your House is on Fire' due to its powerful aura. The plain background with rubbish is simple but effective. Her style is very experimental, with models often having their faces obscured. This print is different as both the woman and child are fully visible to the viewer.

OUR SINCERE THANKS TO:

- **Yvonne Davis and the President of the University of Limerick** for their generosity in allowing us access to the University of Limerick Art Collection.
- **The Clonmel Show** for sponsoring the production and printing of this brochure.
- **Lorraine Egan** and all the staff at **OPW** for the use of the Main Guard and their help and kindness during the installation of the exhibition and throughout.
- Our principal funders the Arts Council and Tipperary County Council.

«2B OR NOT TO BE»

📍 The Main Guard, Clonmel, E91 P7Y8

3 July – 30 September

CLONMEL
JUNCTION
ARTS
FESTIVAL



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