



TO NEVER
LOOK AWAY



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The artists:

Rachel Fallon, Joy Gerrard, Claire Halpin, Myra Jago, Paul Mac Cormaic and Amna Walayat

The poets:

Fióna Bolger and Nasouh Hossari

Curated by **Claire Halpin**

Exhibition: 7th - 31st March 2024.

Exhibition Launch: Thursday 7th March 2024/ 6-8pm

Opening conversation with **Clíodhna Shaffrey**, Director Temple Bar Gallery + Studios



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TØN Dublin is delighted to present the exhibition To Never Look Away which brings together six visual artists whose work and practice are politically, socially engaged and motivated. The themes and subjects in their work span that of protest, labour, the migrant crisis, racism and matters of war, conflict and the media.

As artists - Rachel Fallon, Joy Gerrard, Claire Halpin, Myra Jago, Paul Mac Cormaic and Amna Walayat are images makers, using their individual visual language to mediate the saturation of media images, scrolled, liked and shared that we are somewhat inured to and to try and make sense of it through what they make. There is something about the artist sitting with the work, meticulous, painstakingly painting, making, mediating on these images.

As poets - Fíóna Bolger and Nasouh Hossari were invited to contribute poems that respond to the exhibition. Their selected poems as texts and translations are installed as artworks, reflecting the prescient themes of language and memory in the exhibition.

There is an onus, the role of the artist as bearing witness, testimony - I was there, I saw, I recorded. It is the task of the artist to ask important questions of society and the world around us. And to be cognisant of the artworks they put into the world. They have to matter.

As curator - the aesthetic and what connects each of these artists' work and practice is their engagement, commitment in using traditional materials and means from ink on paper, oil on gesso on canvas, gold leaf to cast iron. They are makers, hands on artists immersed in the tools and materials of their craft and trade. We are drawn into their work in a way that there is a familiarity and a luring in by the beauty of the painted surface, the hand drawn detail of the cast material to realise there is a deeper meaning or message to their work.

The artists raise questions about how we remember the past; choose to record history - the veracity of painting, photography, and the media in documenting future history and the role of art and artists as bearing witness...to never look away.

“The trouble is that once you see it, you can't unsee it. And once you've seen it, keeping quiet and saying nothing, becomes as political an act as speaking out. There's no innocence. Either way, you're accountable.”

Arundhati Roy, Power Politics, South End Press,

Rachel Fallon is a Dublin based visual artist using sculpture, drawing, photography and performance techniques. Her most recent work, Jelen Vangyk, was commissioned by the Kiscelli Museum/ Budapest Galeria, Hungary. Her work is held in public collections including IMMA, the Arts Council of Ireland and the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw.

Rachel Fallon's sculptures deal with the effects of violence in domestic realms, addressing ideas of motherhood and women's relationships to society. Mother, mothering, maternal love, chains of fealty, food chains, tied to war, tied to status. An absurd chain of office that is too heavy to wear, a memorial coin that no one wants to pick up, these works signal the politics of food and healthcare in a world that is for some warm and soft and others hostile and lacking. The work is informed by maternal histories, as is the medium - iron; inherently domestic, a component of blood and a raw material of war.

Rachel Fallon

Maternal Chain of Office - Order of Our Blessed Lady of the Food Bank
Hand cast iron, silk embroidery, steel. 1.40m x 1.80m - dimensions variable.

Made with the support of the Iron-R Project; a research project initiated by James L. Hayes.

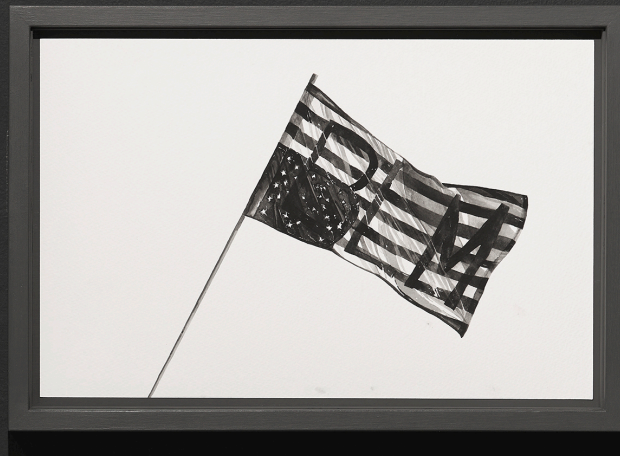


Joy Gerrard is a Belfast based artist. She graduated with a BA from NCAD, Dublin and an MA and MPhil from the Royal College of Art, London. Recent solo exhibitions include Highlanes Gallery, Butler Gallery, RHA Dublin. Selected group exhibitions include Image as Protest, a two person show with Paula Rego, Cristea Roberts Gallery, London (2023). Joy is an elected Associate member of the Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin. She is represented by Cristea Roberts Gallery, London and her work is in numerous public and private collections.

Joy's visual work focuses on themes of protest and urban space. She archives and painstakingly remakes media-borne protest crowd images. Her subjects include climate change, Brexit, BLM protests and women's equality. These crowds are re-imaged in large monochrome paintings and small complex drawings made with Japanese ink. In her work, the figure of the crowd represents an expression of collective agency. Gerrard's crowds are often viewed from above in urban environments. The re-scaling of news images into dramatic, painterly forms disrupts our understanding of their ephemerality, permitting a reflective, critical perspective on an excess of media representation.

Joy Gerrard

1. Sign of distress 2021 (version 1) 2. Sign of distress 2024 (version 2)
Ink on paper. Grey box frame. 43 x 30cm, 2021/2024



تذكرني ايها الصغير
انا الذي خبأتك خلفي حينما كنت تلعب مع أصدقاءك الصغار.
انا الذي تحملت ضربات الكرة حين كنت تركلها بقوة وانت تلعب مع الاصدقاء ك
رة القدم.
وانا الذي كتبتَ عليه كلمة "احبك" كي تقرأها حبيبتك عندما تمر من امامي
تذكرني ايها الصغير
انا الجدار الذي بناه جدك حجرة حجرة
وزرع اباك شجرة زيتون خلفه
وانا الان مفتت الى اجزاء عديدة
دمرتني الحرب على غزة.
هل تعدني يا صغيري. بأنك ستعيد بنائي كما فعل جدك. وتزرع شجرة زيتون بدل ا
لتي احترقت.
وانا ادك بأني سأفعل مع أولادك كل ما فعلته معك .
سأتحمل ضربات كراتهم
واخبأهم حين يلعبون مع اصدقاءهم
وسأسمح لهم ان يكتبوا بالطباشير ما يشاءون.
واخيراً.
سأحميهم من القنابل واتشظا الى الالاف القطع مرة اخرى كي لا يصابوا بمكروه

نصوح حصري

Wall of Gaza

Do you remember me, little one?

Am I the one you hid behind when you had fun with your young friends?

Am I the one who endured the strikes of the ball when you kicked it hard
playing soccer?

Am I the one on which you wrote 'I love you' for your sweetheart to read as she
passed by?

Do you remember me, little one?

Yes, I am the wall built by your grandfather, stone by stone,
your father planted an olive tree behind me,
and now I am shattered into many pieces.

The war on Gaza has destroyed me.

Promise me, my little one, that you will rebuild me as your grandfather did,
and plant an olive tree to replace the one that burned.

And I promise you that I will do with your children what I did with you.

I will endure their ball strikes

hide them when they play with their friends.

I will allow them to write on me whatever they want.

Finally, I will protect them from bombs

shatter into thousands of pieces again,

so they will not be harmed.

Nasouh Hossari

Claire Halpin is a Dublin born and based artist. Her work has been exhibited widely through solo and group exhibitions in Ireland and internationally in London, Sweden, Georgia and Iceland. Most recently in solo exhibition at Gallery Cabaret Voltaire, Rome, Italy. Her work is included and exhibited in many major collections including IMMA/ Irish Museum of Modern Art, OPW and Trinity College Dublin.

Claire's work explores themes and concepts around contested territories and histories through painting, sculpture and installation. This current body of work attempts to navigate the complexity of the contemporary theatre of war as battlefield expands to battlespace in the information age. The means, methods and technologies of modern warfare from mass clandestine surveillance programmes to unmanned warfare and its real time reporting through the lens of the media. The paintings employ imagery from the media, surveillance, military history, maps, archaeology, early civilization, bible stories and from the canon of art history of Byzantine and Early Renaissance to weave together a narrative through painting.

Claire Halpin

Siege of Gaza II, Oil on Gesso on board, 20cm X 25cm, 2023



Myra Jago is a Wicklow based artist. She received her MFA (Painting) and BA(Hons) from NCAD 2005-2011. She recently exhibited with Lavit Gallery Cork, Luan Gallery, Athlone and the Royal Hibernian Academy with solo exhibition Now Islands at Ashford Gallery, RHA in 2019. Her work is included in many Collections including - Business to Arts, Deloitte, Central Bank, OPW, Green8Tokyo, NICS-Stormont, Activate Capital, Killeen.

Myra Jago's oil paintings examine our relationships with the world and each other, opening up conversations on social, political and identity issues. Embedding ideas within folds, she leans heavily into the still life tradition, while remaining rooted within the contemporary art world. Supercontinent examines land borders, harking back to Earth's single landmass of Pangaea, while Linn (Us) expands on the notion of surface to consider Human Skin Tones and how appearance is used divisively to marginalise and exclude. Linn proposes instead to celebrate skin, the telltale covering we all wear, by drawing attention to the beauty within its tonal diversity.

Myra Jago

Linn (Us) , Oil on gesso on canvas 100cm X 100cm X 4cm, 2023



پروینا تہ امی ، سندس نیچوس جاویدس خاطر غزل
(غانب ۱۹۹۱)

ژے گتہ چھن ژور میون حلال تھومت
بہ ژھانڈان چھس پنن نیچیو زونہ گاشس

اکھ بازا او پیٹھی تہ نیون خبر کوت
کیا سہ چھا پہاڑن منز زونہ نزدیک

یلہ سہ غاب گو مے کھوژن روؤ
بہ فوجس گسان چھس زونہ گاشے تہ آفتاب

مے ژھانڈیو کیمین ، ہسپتالن تہ جیل خانن
سہ کتہ چھ؟ میانس شرس زون نظر گڑھان تہ چھا؟

مے حفاظت کرمس یوت یوت بڑان گو
لوسہ وئی تہ بڑوئی زونہ حفاظت کرمس

یمہ لاشہ یمو ٹجمڑ چھے بد فطرات تلان چھم
زندن ہوند اوش زونہ گاشراں چھے

تیم سندن پھلون بُتھ مشتہ گسیم نہ زانہ
سور لاشہ چمکان چھے زونہ گاشے

ترجمہ کار : طاہر فراز

Ghazal for Parveena and her son, Javaid (disappeared 1991)

Where have you hidden my new crescent moon?
I search for my son by the light of the moon

A hawk swooped down and took him away
is he high in the mountains, near to the moon?

When he disappeared my fear went away
I approach the armed men under sun and moon

I've searched camps, hospitals and jails
where is he? Can my child see the moon?

I watched over my son as he grew
under the waxing and waning of the moon

The bodies they've found prove our worst fears
the tears of the living light up the moon

I cannot forget his bright sunny face
grey corpses glitter beneath the full moon

Fíona Bolger

Paul Mac Cormaic is an artist based in Kilbarrack, Dublin. Born in 1961, he studied Fine Art at Dún Laoghaire IADT, graduating in 2006. He was shortlisted for the Zurich Portrait Prize in 2023, 2021 and 2019 exhibited at National Gallery of Ireland. Paul regularly exhibits at the RHA Annual Exhibition and in 2023 received The Ireland-US Council/ Irish Arts Review Award for portraiture. And recent solo exhibitions at The Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely and Séamus Ennis Centre, Dublin.

Paul's work takes the form of realist painting, social comment, often imbued with a wry sense of humour. He notes trends, advertising, the environment, and human behaviour. Daddy, There are some Black People at the bottom of our Garden - The best way to ridicule and counter the nonsense put about by anti-immigrant racists is to illustrate and exaggerate their claims. Through social media, rumours have been spread that foreigners are coming here to take 'our jobs' and rape 'our women'. The painting features a group of African militiamen hiding in a hedge, ready to launch a reverse colonial attack on suburbia. Although painted in 2010 it is even more poignant now, when the far right uses words like 'men of fighting age' instead of 'men who will work and pay taxes' coming to accommodation centres.

Paul Mac Cormaic

Daddy. There are some Black People at the Bottom of our Garden
Oil on gesso on canvas, 94cm X 124cm, 2013



Amna Walayat is a Cork-based, Pakistani-born visual artist, received her MA from UCC in 2016. Her work focuses on traditional and neo-Indo-Persian Miniature painting. She has recently exhibited at the RHA, IMMA, Dublin Arts and Human Rights Festival and the 40th EVA International 2023. She is a member of Backwater Artists, Art Nomads, Smashing Times, Sample-Studios, and VAI, and a recent recipient of Arts Council Ireland's Next Generation Award and Project Arts Centre Bursary Award.

The artwork Daisy Cutter refers to the nickname of a controversial weapon system that can flatten the ground in a 300-meter radius, used in recent wars in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. Originally created for the EVA International 40th Platform Commission responding to the theme of Citizenship. I approached this theme addressing my own position as an artist with dual citizenship and titled the project - A Flight of Two Half Birds. Here, I explore the mourning of the self and the sense of home, reflecting on the human experience of displaced citizens residing in a multi-cultural world. In this work I try to express this duality of cultural experience of home and new home combined with the questions of identity, estrangement loss and conflict. It aims to consider a search for utopia through this process of self-exploration and to reflect on the challenges that I face in this in-between space.

Amna Walayat

Daisy Cutter. Half tone, watercolor, gouache, tea wash, ink, earth pigments, lead pencils, marbling and 22ct gold on stretched sheep skin, 110 x 80 cm irregular edge. Framed



A Claude glass (or black mirror) is a small mirror, slightly convex, with its surface tinted a dark colour. Bound up like a pocket-book or in a carrying case, Claude glasses were used by artists, travellers and connoisseurs of landscape and landscape painting.

The black mirror has the effect of reducing and simplifying the colour and tonal range of scenes and scenery to give them a painterly quality. The user would turn their back on the scene to observe the framed view through the tinted mirror—in a sort of pre-photographic lens—which added the picturesque aesthetic of a subtle gradation of tones. The Claude glass is named after Claude Lorrain, the 17th-century landscape painter, whose name became synonymous with the picturesque aesthetic.

Here contained in a handstitched felted wool box - the choice of material and construction references the “Act for Burying in Woollen” of 1666 and again more radically in 1678 which laid down that all corpses excepting plague victims and the destitute should be buried in wool and no other material whatsoever. Failure to comply resulted in a £5 forfeit. Intended to support the wool trade, it was detrimental to the textile industry in Ireland and Scotland where it had been customary for the deceased to have shrouds of linen. Eventually this wool burying act was extended to Ireland in 1733 before falling out of favour around 1770. However burials in wool are being revived, this time in the form of woollen coffins due to the materials’ biodegradable and sustainable qualities.

Inserted in the box lid a miniature tondo painting of migrants on a raft, the background composition based on the Gericault painting *The Raft of The Medusa* (1819), with a contemporary image of migrants crossing the Mediterranean. This is only somewhat reflected in the Claude glass, depending on how it is angled and how much the viewer selects to view.

The portable artwork harkens back to manuports and the small folded icons carried by pilgrims, crusaders and conquistadores as well as personal items, memento mori carried in pockets by migrants and refugees lost at sea, buried at sea, unrecorded.

This artwork reflects many of the themes in the exhibition, how we look observe, record and bear witness to the horrors of war and conflict around us - the artists through their tools, materials and visual language making more bearable these horrors - anaesthetic aesthetics.

To Never Look Away

Artists: Rachel Fallon and Claire Halpin. Glass technician: Madeleine Hellier

Hand stitched wool felt box, kiln formed black glass, oil on gesso tondo panel, 14cm diameter X 6cm depth, 2024



