



## ***Time out of Mind***

**31 May 2012 – 2 September 2012**

IMMA @ NCH at Earlsfort Terrace

**Exhibition Notes for Primary School Teachers**

### **General Information**

IMMA's new exhibition from its Collection was inspired by the history of the Earlsfort Terrace building part of which was once a medical school. While *Time out of Mind* allows for multiple readings, it particularly engages with the theme of science in celebration of Dublin City of Science 2012.

*Time out of Mind* encourages audiences to explore the artists' engagement with ideas about time, memory, space, metamorphosis, perception, and knowledge creation. All these concepts absorb both artists and scientists. Focussing mainly on works from the 1990s onwards, the exhibition includes the following artists: Carlos Amorales, Lynda Benglis, Michael Craig-Martin, Dorothy Cross, Tacita Dean, Marcel Duchamp, Clodagh Emoe, Barry Flanagan, Marie Foley, Anita Groener, Cristina Iglesias, Callum Innes, Isaac Julien, Elizabeth Magill, Mark Manders, Fergus Martin, Niamh McCann, Stephen McKenna, William McKeown, Chung Eun-Mo, Linda Quinlan, Eva Rothschild, Sean Scully, Grace Weir, Alexandra Weychert.

Art and science ask many of the same questions, traditionally the one through creative tension, the other using systems and analysis. However, since the 1960s many artists have also adopted methodologies associated with science, ranging across such diverse fields as biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, astronomy, archaeology, psychology, neuro-science, acoustics and computer science in following their ideas. Yet while they may draw on scientific concerns and often bring important scientific ideas within reach, their central aim is to communicate experience.

As part of the exhibition programme, IMMA will invite artists to reflect on their works in the exhibition in the context of current developments and facilitate discussion around the cultural aspects of science and the impact of science on their art, ideas and personal philosophies.

*Time out of Mind* is curated by Christina Kennedy, Senior Curator: Head of Collections, IMMA, assisted by Brian Cass, Curatorial Co-ordinator, Collections Department, IMMA.

An exhibition guide with texts by Georgie Thompson, Hilary Murray and Brian Cass accompanies the exhibition, with an introduction by Christina Kennedy.

The exhibition and related programmes are sponsored by Dublin City of Science 2012.

*Time out of Mind* is supported by THE IRISH TIMES.

**The IMMA Primary School Programme will focus on the *Time out of Mind* exhibition from 31 May until the end of June 2012.**

## List of Artworks

Please note that a number of the following artworks may be visited during a guided tour of the *Time out of Mind* exhibition. However, the particular artworks visited will vary according to circumstance on the day, and additional artworks which are not covered here may be included. The list below contains both background information for teachers and viewing suggestions for children.

### **Cristina Iglesias, *Untitled (Vegetation Room X)*, 2002**

#### *Background Information for Teachers*

Cristina Iglesias is a Spanish sculptor and installation artist. Her work has evolved in the context of European and American sculpture during the 1980s and 1990s, when a generation of artists expanded the object of sculpture into the realm of installation. Incorporating various interests, the works present a sensual and evocative setting using disparate materials and techniques.

The body is always present in the environments Iglesias creates, either directly or by implication. Iglesias alters the architectural environment in which she exhibits, bringing images or symbols from another time or another place to bear on it. As her works re-shape the real space in which they are placed, they require the interaction of the viewer.

The *Vegetation Rooms* are constructed as larger-than-life organic environments that reduce the viewer in scale. At once reassuring and claustrophobic, these environments are constructed from numerous segments cast from the same mould, referring to the mechanics of creativity and reproduction. In these ways, organic and architectural structures are placed together to illustrate the slow time of geology and the fast pace of technology.

*Untitled (Vegetation Room X)* from her *Vegetation Rooms* series reveals the richness of her process and creates an extraordinary dialogue between the marine culture it refers to and the world of contemporary art.

#### *Viewing Suggestions for Children*

This piece is a sculpture installation. A sculpture is [three-dimensional](#) artwork: it is not just flat like a picture but has depth, so you can walk around it or through it. An installation is a kind of large sculpture. The artist reshapes the gallery space and changes the way you experience it. Did you ever expect the gallery space to look like this? An installation also makes you think of many different things, and it affects your feelings.

What kind of world does the artist create in this work? Have you ever seen or been in a place like this? How does this space make you feel?

In this sculpture installation, you find yourself in a world of sea plants and tentacles. Plant life in the sea is very important both as food and shelter. Do you know any plants that live in the sea? Some animals living in the sea have tentacles. Do you know any? Tentacles are long flexible organs used for feeding and feeling. What else could they be used for?

Cristina Iglesias, the artist who made this piece, is from Spain. She used a mould as well as resin and bronze powder to make it. Resin is a liquid discharged by plants such as pine trees. It is often thick and sticky. Endless copies can be made from a mould and be used like wallpaper.

Did you notice that the installation doesn't cover up the ceiling? Why might this be?

### **Dorothy Cross, *Parachute*, 2005**

#### *Background Information for Teachers*

Dorothy Cross was born in Cork and studied at the Crawford Municipal School of Art, the Leicester Polytechnic in England and the San Francisco Art Institute in California. She works in diverse media including sculpture, photography, video and installation. Central to her work are themes such as cultural and sexual identity, personal history, memory and the gaps between the conscious and the subconscious. She has exhibited regularly since the mid 1980s.

Cross's *Parachute* is a comment on loss and remembrance. The work is a composition pertaining simultaneously to the incidental found object (a washed-up gannet) and the scrupulous assemblage. The installation both recalls and transcends the accident of the gannet's death.

### *Viewing Suggestions for Children*

The piece is an installation or kind of a large sculpture made of a parachute and a gannet. The gannet, its beak near the ground, hangs upside down from a parachute suspended from the ceiling. The artist Dorothy Cross says that the idea of the work is that it has fallen from the sky. Through the ceiling so that it is tangled... the gannet hangs just above the floor.

What's most eye-catching about this work? Do a gannet and a parachute have anything in common? Does the shape remind you of anything? How would you describe the atmosphere of the work?

The artist found this beautiful gannet washed up on the Atlantic coast. In her artwork, she combines the incidental (the sea bird she happened to find) with the carefully planned (the creative composition of parachute and bird).

Do you think this is an easy work to hang? How long do you think might it take to get the folds right?

Gannets hunt [fish](#) by [diving](#) from a height into the sea and pursuing their prey underwater. Gannets can dive from a height of 30 m. They achieve speeds of 100 km per hour as they strike the water, enabling them to catch fish much deeper than most airborne birds.

Why is speed important for the gannet? What do you think might be the most fragile parts of the gannet? Think about the different spaces that the work might be shown in. What difference might the surroundings make? Notice the different colours on the inside and the outside of the parachute. How much do you think might it measure in diameter? (Answer: approx. 30ft)

Dorothy Cross was born in Cork and is one of the most respected artists working internationally today. She works in many different media including installation, sculpture and video.

### **Dorothy Cross, *Medusae*, 2003**

#### *Background Information for Teachers*

Artist Dorothy Cross collaborated with her scientist brother Tom Cross to investigate the aesthetic, anthropological and scientific aspects of jellyfish, and *Medusae* is the result of this collaboration. It is one of a series of video-based works by Cross that combines the mythology of Irish amateur naturalist Maude Delap (1866-1953) with present-day scientific research.

The project involved juxtaposing new scientific experiments of Tom Cross' exploration of the swimming techniques (biomechanics) of a deadly species of jellyfish known as the Box Jellyfish found off Queensland, Australia, with historical experiments of Maude Delap. A thirty minute film capturing the beautiful, pulsating movements of the Box jellyfish swimming in their natural territories is interspersed with graphs and charts of Delap's experiments.

*Medusae* is the Latin term for jellyfish. Drawing on both literal and poetic interpretations of the theme, *Medusae* weaves documentary style narratives and explicit demonstrations of the swimming techniques of the jellyfish with vignettes referencing the imagined and recorded aspects of the life of Delap. *Medusae* explores the notions of mystery and the relationships between art and science, the known and the unknown, the imagined and the real.

Maude Delap (1866-1953) was a marine biologist who lived most of her life on Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. She was self-taught and spent most of her life studying the marine life of the rock pools and shoreline of the Valentia area. Like many other naturalists of the time, she was also interested in archaeology, folklore, botany and zoology.

Although remote, Valentia Island was nevertheless well-connected to the wider world via the transatlantic telegraph station, weather station and observatory. In the late 1890s, it was chosen for a detailed marine study, partly on the basis of work already carried out by Delap family members. The study was led by Edward T Browne of University College London and involved eight other British naturalists, in addition to Maude and Constance Delap. The published results of the survey comprised 188 pages of scientific papers in the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*.

### *Viewing Suggestions for Children*

Artist Dorothy Cross worked on this video with her scientist brother Tom. She used Tom's exploration of the swimming techniques of a deadly species of jellyfish known as the Box Jellyfish found off Queensland, Australia, together with the historical experiments of Maude Delap.

Box Jellyfish are umbrella-shaped rather than dome- or crown-shaped. They can move up to 6 metres per minute. The Box Jellyfish can weigh up to 2 kg and have tentacles 3 metres long. Some Box Jellyfish are among the most venomous creatures in the world. Stings are extremely painful and sometimes fatal to humans.

Maude Delap (1866-1953) was a marine biologist who lived most of her life on Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. Marine biologist study life in the ocean, and Delap made a detailed study of jellyfish which she reared in her home-made laboratory. *Medusae* is the Latin term for jellyfish. Maude helped explain the complex life-cycle of the *Medusae*.

The original Medusa was a monster in Greek mythology. Her parents were sea gods. If you looked on the Medusa directly, you would turn to stone.

Maude Delap had received little formal education. She was largely self-taught. At the time, few girls were educated or trained for a profession. When Maude was offered a job in the Marine Biological Station at Plymouth in 1906, her father said: 'No daughter of mine will leave home, except as a married woman'. What does that sound like to you today? Nevertheless, Maude collected many specimens of local marine creatures for the Natural History Museum in Dublin where some are still on display. She also published important articles and notes in the *Irish Naturalist*. Maude's scientific work was acknowledged in 1928 when a sea anemone, *Edwardsia delapiae*, was named after her.

### **Elizabeth Magill, *Forest Edge 2*, 2000**

#### *Background Information for Teachers*

Elizabeth Magill grew up in Northern Ireland. She studied at Belfast College of Art and the Slade School of Fine Art, and she now lives and works in London. She is a painter of prodigious versatility and inventiveness drawing on a wide range of visual sources. In a number of novel ways, she has integrated photographic materials and processes into her painting. Magill's work engages with the tradition of landscape painting. Her eerie forest landscapes re-vision the work of the German Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840). It also draws on contemporary kitsch. Landscape is used as a device for emotional reflection. According to the artist, 'These works are not landscapes as such, but more like suggested backdrops to how I feel, think and interpret the world.' The work hovers between dream and reality.

#### *Viewing Suggestions for Children*

This artwork is made of mixed media on canvas. Did you think it was an ordinary photograph when you first entered the room? Have you any idea how the artist Elizabeth Magill might have made this piece? It seems that she begins by scanning a photograph and spraying the resulting image on canvas before overpainting it with washes of thinned oil paint to add highlights and contrast. Why do you think would she work like this?

Look carefully at the shapes and colours. Notice the light and what you can see and what you cannot see. How does this artwork make you feel? The artist says, 'I'm not so much painting what is there but what I imagine might be there'. Can you see in the painting what she means by that? What creatures do you imagine might be living in this forest? What plants would you find there?

### **Grace Weir, *Dust Defying Gravity*, 2003**

#### *Background Information for Teachers*

This work is a 16 mm film transferred to DVD. The various scientific instruments provide the backdrop to the dance of dust molecules. The artist focuses on the sense of time passing. The film consists of a single four minute long shot tracing through the rooms at Dunsink Observatory. It is like a silent inventory of the aging telescopes and measuring instruments displayed throughout the building. As the camera passes over a mechanical model of the solar system, the dust in the air of the room becomes visible, floating and scintillating like a field of stars. The relationship between the observer and the observed is as critical in science as it is in other disciplines including art. The film exposes the camera as an optical device with its own limitations, thus appraising film critically through the actual making of a film. Weir fuses documentation with highly constructed situations. In its inventory of instruments for measuring time and space, *Dust Defying Gravity* creates a flowing meditation on these very subjects. The artist is concerned with aligning lived experience with scientific knowledge and philosophical theory. Weir's approach crosses many disciplinary boundaries.

#### *Viewing Suggestions for Children*

Grace Weir's film conveys a sense of time passing. If you have watched it to the end: how long do you think did it last? Does the film express how you experience time, and why, or why not? In our dreams, we experience time very differently. Does anything about this work remind you of a dream?

*Dust Defying Gravity* was filmed at Dunsink Observatory. Observatories are places used for observing events both on the planet Earth and [in](#) the sky. Dunsink Observatory was built in 1783-1785. It is one of the oldest scientific laboratories in Ireland.

Scientific instruments are used to measure all sorts of things. They magnify our senses. They are designed to be as precise as possible. Why would people want to measure things? When you think of time, do you think of it as something that can be measured? Do you think you can feel it?

The artist decided to concentrate on dust rather than, say, stars. Dust is something that we tend not to notice or we want to get rid of. What might be special about dust?

## **Carlos Amoraes, *Dark Mirror*, 2004-2005**

### *Background Information for Teachers*

Carlos Amoraes is one of Mexico's leading contemporary artists. He was born in 1970 and studied in Spain and Holland before returning to live and work in Mexico City.

'Dark Mirror' is an animation which evokes an apocalyptic scenario through compelling sequences of images. Amoraes collaborated with German graphic designer André Pahl and Mexican composer José María Serralde to create a world of nightmarish animation depicting man and beast. The imagery of the ominous landscape is rooted in contemporary popular symbols and Mexican icons. The graphics which dissolve from one entity into another create a sense of ambiguity.

Amoraes had asked Pahl and Serralde to respond to a collection of digital drawings which he had begun in 1999 and which now comprises more than a thousand drawings. Pahl selected some and sequenced them into a silent animation. Serralde, a silent movie pianist, also worked on a selection of images and, without seeing Pahl's animation, composed music to accompany it. Amoraes then united animation and music to form Dark Mirror.

'Dark Mirror' is a double-side projection on a two-sided floating screen hanging from the floor. On one side is a video of Serralde performing his composition on a grand piano, and the other, Pahl's soundless animation. The music comes from one source; the animation side has no sound.

### *Viewing Suggestions for Children*

What kind of creatures can you make out? And which colours does this artist use?

Watch how the graphics of animals, humans and machinery dissolve and how they merge and separate. Can you make out a story or identify with a character?

Amoraes uses silhouettes a lot. Silhouettes are outlines of people or objects, and they are often black (against a lighter background), and the interior is completely plain. Do you find this animation beautiful, puzzling or rather frightening or all of these? Why so?

This piece is a double video projection on a two-sided screen. One side is a video of José María Serralde performing his composition on a grand piano, the other is André Pahl's soundless animation.

Can you see how this artwork is put together? What is special about a floating screen? Can you make out where the sound is coming from?

Carlos Amoraes said: 'Art makes it possible for fantasy to become reality.' What do you think he means by that? Do you have a dream that you would like to make real?

You can find out more about Carlos Amoraes and his work on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DavCDIIVAA>

## **Eva Rothschild, *Stalker*, 2004**

### *Background Information for Teachers*

Eva Rothschild is an Irish artist based in [London](#). Her work references art movements of the 1960s and 1970s, for example Minimalism where the work sets out to expose the essence or identity of a subject through eliminating all non-essential forms or concepts.

Rothschild is interested in volume and how a sculpture can define a space rather than just filling it. Her objects tend to have a powerful and often magical presence. They often transcend their material properties.

Rothschild is interested in working with basic shapes that are understood immediately. However, she turns them into something rather magical. The familiar remains familiar, but with a difference, as her work explores how objects acquire meanings that are extraneous to their material reality. As Rothschild puts it: 'I'm interested in the ways of looking that go with concepts of faith and in how things are invested with a power above and beyond their materiality, the transference of spirituality onto objects'.

*Stalker* is made of wood, Plexiglas and oil paint.

### *Viewing Suggestions for Children*

This kind of artwork is called a sculpture. Sculptures are three-dimensional, and you can walk around them. You should always walk around a sculpture. Look closely as you walk and note how it keeps changing.

The artist Eva Rothschild is Irish but lives in London. She likes to work with simple forms. *Stalker* is made of simple shapes. What shapes can you name? Can you think of a science that uses simple shapes?

How does this sculpture make you feel? The title of a work makes you look at it in a particular way.

Rothschild's sculpture is called *Stalker*. The word describes a person or a group who pays unwanted and often frightening attention to another person. Why do you think the artist gave her sculpture this title?

Without knowing the title, would you have looked at the piece differently?

The artwork is made of wood, Plexiglas and oil paint. How do you think does it fit into this space? Does it

make the room look bigger or smaller?

### ***Suggested Practical Uses in the Classroom***

Discuss with the children various meanings of the word 'science' (Latin *scientia*, meaning 'knowledge') including science as a body of knowledge that can be logically explained; science as philosophy; science as natural science; science as reliable knowledge about a topic (as in political science).

Explain how during the 19<sup>th</sup> c, the word 'science' became increasingly associated with the scientific method, ie, a disciplined way to study the natural world including physics, chemistry, geology and biology.

Talk about the differences and similarities between the sciences and the arts, for example, subjective vs objective, rational vs intuitive, historical vs ahistorical.

The artists in *Time out of Mind* in following their ideas have engaged with all the above disciplines as well as mathematics, physics, archaeology, psychology, neuro-science, acoustics and computer science. Whichever of these areas you decide to cover with your class, encourage the children to draw, paint, sketch or make collages of scientists, plants, animals, artefacts or artworks. Try to use recycled materials whenever possible and connect the project with environmental and historical issues and in connection with picture books or a class novel to give more scope to your work.

Topics addressed in the exhibition that you may want to address in the classroom include time, memory, space, metamorphosis, perception, and knowledge creation. Children could draw two identical cards for a memory game. You might study frogs or butterflies as examples of amphibian and insect metamorphosis. You could make timelines with the children to visualise the concepts of time and chronology.