



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Born in 1978, Ireland

Lives and works in Cork, Ireland

AILBHE NÍ BHRIAIN

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain is an Irish artist working with film, computer generated imagery, collage, tapestry, print and installation. Ní Bhriain's work is rooted in an exploration of imperial legacy, human displacement and the Anthropocene. These intertwined subjects are approached through an associative use of narrative and a deeply crafted visual language that verges on the surreal. She sidesteps directive positions and familiar binaries, exposing instead the layers of ambiguity and contradiction embedded in these fraught issues. The resulting worlds she creates are at once idiosyncratic, irresistible and unsettling. Her work has been exhibited widely both nationally and internationally and regularly involves collaboration with musicians and composers.

Ní Bhriain received a BA from the Crawford College of Art, Cork, an MA from the Royal College of Art, London and a PhD from Kingston University, UK. Her work has been exhibited widely at venues including Broad Art Museum, Michigan; the 16th Lyon Biennale, France; Gagosian–Deitch Projects, Miami; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Whitechapel Gallery, London; Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid.

Recent projects include solo exhibitions at Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin; Lismore Castle Arts, Waterford; and Kunsthall Gent, Belgium, alongside group presentations at MAC Lyon, France; Innsbruck International Biennial, Austria; Lahore Biennale, Pakistan; Ulster Museum, Northern Ireland, and Lagos Photo Festival, Nigeria, among others. (All exhibitions 2024–25).

Her work is held in major private and public collections such as Dallas Museum of Art, MAC Lyon, The Arts Council of Ireland, Trinity College, Dublin Office of Public Works, Cork Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin Ulster Museum, Belfast and others.

Education

2008 PhD by Practice in Fine Art, awarded by Kingston University UK; supervised by Louis Nixon & Elizabeth Price
2004 MA (Distinction) in Fine Art (Printmaking), Royal College of Art, London, UK
2000 B.A (1:1) in Fine Art, Crawford College of Art, Cork, Ireland

Solo exhibitions (selected)

2026 Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France
Interval Four, Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, France
But I / World / I See / You, Hamburger Kunsthalle, 9th Triennial of Photography; Hamburg, Germany
Incarnations: Body to Body with the Collections of macLYON h2m, Bourg-en- Bresse, France
2025 *The Dream Pool Intervals*, The Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, Ireland
Inscriptions VI, Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, Ireland
2024 *An Experiment with Time*, Kunsthall Gent, Ghent, Belgium
2023 *Interval Two (Dream Pool)*, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, Ireland
Interval One (Dream Pool), Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
2022 *An Experiment With Time*, CCA, Glasgow, UK
Inscriptions VI, Penthouse Margate, UK
2020 *Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre*, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Wisconsin, USA
Inscriptions IV, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre, Solo screening, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK

Group exhibitions (selected)

2025 *Programmed Universes*, MAC Lyon, Lyon, France; Curated by Matthieu Lelièvre
Punctum: Works from the Arts Council Collection, Glór Arts Centre, Co. Clare, Ireland
Timeless Voices, Works from the Cercle des Collectionneurs du Mudam, MALT, Luxembourg
Sidelong Glances: An Oblique Look at the Sea, Wexford County Council, Wexford, Ireland
2024 *Lahore Biennale 03: Of Mountains and Seas*, curated by John Tain, Lahore, Pakistan
Innsbruck International Biennial, Innsbruck, Austria
SUSPENSE, Ulster Museum, Belfast, Northern Ireland
2023 *Formes de la ruine*, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, Lyon, France
Ground State – Fellowship Within the Uncanny, Lagos Photo Festival, Nigeria
Following Threads, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork, Ireland
Hollow Earth, curated by Hayward Gallery Touring, Glucksman Gallery, Cork, Ireland
Carnegie Hall Citywide: Density 2036: part viii, Performance of Anfa, composed by Ann Cleare, commissioned and performed by flautist Claire Chase with screening of film works by Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, The Kitchen at Westbeth, New York
16th Lyon Biennale: Manifesto of Fragility, curated by Sam Bardaouil

Public collections (selected)

Dallas Museum of Art, USA
MAC Lyon, France
Artissima Collection, Lyon, France
Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland
Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, Ireland

Inscriptions VI

Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, Ireland

14 June-16 August 2025

The exhibition *Inscriptions VI* at Lismore Castle Arts brings together new works in tapestry, print and installation. A large scale tapestry, *The Muses V*, forms the centrepiece of the exhibition. *The Muses* series (2018-25) is a pivotal body of work for the artist – the first created in her now-signature medium of Jacquard tapestry. The series references archival photographic portraits from the 1850s, from a genre once termed 'orientalist photography'. Supposedly an authentic representation of culture, in reality these images existed as projections of western fantasies of the exotic and the erotic. Ní Bhriain works with collage to draw out the darkness behind the fantasy, fusing the portraits with imagery of excavated landscapes and damaged cityscapes. In bringing these disparate images together, the artist suggests intertwined histories of loss and cultural destruction, pointing to the ongoing fused legacies of colonial and industrial forces. In this exhibition, Ní Bhriain presents *The Muses V* in dialogue with sculptural and photographic elements, extending its motifs into a series of new material and pictorial relationships within the space of St. Carthage Hall.

The exhibition's title derives from the earliest known museological writing in the western world – Samuel Quiccheberg's *Inscriptions or Titles of the Immense Theatre* (1565), which details the practice of museums and the organisation of the world's objects into classes and subclasses. This was essentially an instruction manual for the creation of private collections, with an explicit Western imperialist agenda. Ní Bhriain's work since 2017 has made reference to this text, as she constructs an enigmatic visual vocabulary to explore the displacement embedded in familiar systems of representation.



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Installation view, *Inscriptions VI*, Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, Ireland, 2025

Gilly Fox, Essay on Ailbhe Ní Bhriain: *Inscriptions VI* for Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, Ireland

When Belgian physician Samuel Quiccheberg wrote his modest tome, *Inscriptions or Titles of the Immense Theatre* in 1565 he unwittingly penned the first treatise on collecting and museum management in Western history. Extolling the virtues of the Wunderkammer (cabinet of curiosity) Quiccheberg promoted the preservation and arrangement of objects for elucidating stories and inspiring connections, and thus sort the world's objects into classes and subclasses of import and significance. The implied taxonomy gave space for interpretation on what merits value and consideration, but given he wrote this whilst an advisor to Albert V, Duke of Bavaria, it is provident to assume the work supports a hegemonic, imperialist idea of the world. In short, it was directly aimed at the wealthy and the powerful as those deemed worthy enough to define history. By accident or from vacuum, *Inscriptions* became the blueprint for collecting and museums across the world.

This predominant object-oriented world view shifted with the invention of photography in the early 19th Century. From the belly of the industrial revolution, it was almost inevitable that a new technology of representation would emerge and be embraced by a society that was in the grips of unprecedented psychological transformation as it pivoted from an agrarian to industrial existence. Photography allowed not just new ways of reproducing the world but new sights entirely - expanding the collective consciousness and, one assumes, blowing people's minds with the sheer scale of the planet they inhabited. The act of taking or being photographed became shorthand for being up with the pace of modernisation - just a little flex, like those Wunderkammer collectors before them. In the transformation of mankind's image against the tumult of the mechanised age, humanity found a way to fool itself that it retained control.

In the early 20th Century, after the trauma of the first truly mechanical war, technology itself began to be theorised. In the same year as Walter Benjamin's *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, which primarily focused on the implications on artistic endeavour, American philosopher and historian Lewis Mumford published *Technics and Civilisation* (1935), a groundbreaking work mapping the broader cultural implications of the machine age on humanity. Predating the Industrial Revolution by half a millennium, Mumford pinpoints the medieval period as the earliest instance of technology's pervasive influence over man, starting with the invention of the first mechanical clocks (1).

When time itself became fungible (or broken down into sections), it became a commodity to trade. Henceforth, Mumford argued, technology became explicitly linked to capitalism, which has defined its relationship to human endeavour ever since.

What plays across these three examples are the politics of power. Each instance guides towards binary positions: value and worthlessness, truth or falsehood, victim or victor – an inferred simplicity that undermines the complexity of each and every decision. It is precisely in this sticky, in-between, ambiguous space that we find the work of artist Ailbhe Ní Bhriain. In her new exhibition at St Carthage Hall, *Inscriptions VI*, the artist has created a tableau of works that collectively offer a long look at the vanity of cultural imperialism, the shifting sands on which such definitions rest, and the impact of mankind's pursuit of 'progress'.

In central position in St Carthage Hall is *The Muses V*, a new tapestry produced for the exhibition. *The Muse* here referenced is one of the nine goddesses in Greek Mythology who inspire creativity and knowledge in both arts and science. It is the fifth in a series of works drawn from the same source material, each slightly shifting in their position and manipulation. Carefully balancing her urn apropos goddess style, our Muse is actually an Algerian woman, in an image from a found photograph taken in the late 1800's by a Swiss-born French photographer. Made in French colonial Algiers, this studio portrait (2) is intended to be salacious, typifying an orientalist (3) style where the East was simultaneously exoticised and othered by the colonial West. Already disrupted in form, Ní Bhriain's Muse does not show what is behind her tunic, instead it displays a cavernous centre, in which you can just start to pick out the scenes of a bombed building. Like water pouring from the urn, the insides of the building and of the body spill out, corporeally transforming the source material. This careful montage is symptomatic of Ní Bhriain's deep understanding of how images work - how subtle disruptions cause fissures that create broader meanings and interpretations.

The use of Jacquard tapestry in the presentation, standing in for technology and its influence, reinforces the arguments within the image. Jacquard was invented in Belgium in the very early 1800s: as the first automated loom, set on a punch card system, it united the mechanic and the organic, a technology that revolutionised cloth production and allowed mass market take-up due to dramatically lower costs.

It also sparked the first notable insurrection against the increasingly mechanised age. The Luddites were loom workers who, fearing for their jobs and economic security, took to sabotage these new looms. Progress of course won out, the Luddites' name only remembered by the very fact of what they feared. The history of the image, colonialist expansionism and capitalist intention is literally woven into the fabric of this Muse.

Positioned in front of the tapestry, alter like, is a raw limestone block, sourced from an Irish quarry. Quarries appear frequently in Ni Bhriain's work, with geological history and the underground seeming to signpost the emergence of modern industrial capitalism. They draw us into a contemplation of what is above and what is below, the deceptive nature of surfaces, and mankind's ability to extract what it needs it from this earth in the aura of progress, until we deplete the planet it of all its resources. (Though the narrative and geography of these mines has now shifted to the Global South, and the mining is for rare earth minerals needed for the latest iPhone).

Nearby, Ní Bhriain has placed two classic urns, echoing that held by our Muse. Such objects, which populate our museums, were often from funeral ceremonies, buried with the dead as a passage to the underworld. Here they stand in for the stories of the subterranean but also the fear of death which, Ni Bhriain suggests, has served as the driving force for much of our progress. Industrial underworlds and imperial legacy collide together here. And we are circled back to collecting and power - these urns typical of those found in museums, looted from the graves of past civilizations.

The two parts of *Untitled (plant)*, a new diptych, are large-scale and seem close to life size of the specimen depicted. The plant could be undergrowth but looks like palm fronds, suggesting again the exotic or colonial, and printed on metallic paper its surface has a lustrous, alchemic quality. The sister to this image, a brass panel, resembles the vessel of printmakers, a plate ready to be etched. As we read each image side by side, the tonal quality of the darker shadows of the vegetation start to transfer across – could this actually be what is behind the photograph? As the palm shimmers back, itself mimicking its metallic counterpoint, the work questions what we the viewers, when presented with an absence of information, assert in its place.

Across the room a deep orange velvet, carefully framed, suggests a homage to the Victorian presentation of Daguerreotype or Ambrotype images, which were often presented in velvet cases due to their fragility. Elsewhere a tiny found image of a landscape is obfuscated by bitumen - a material distilled from crude oil and a staple of printmaking. Confusing in every sense, it soon appears this image is upside-down, an illegitimate landscape. Again, questions abound of how an image is read, what information is passed from object to viewer and how we bring our own subjective narratives to every situation. Impressing the randomness of collections and the choices people make, with this upturned image Ní Bhriain reminds us how fundamentally ludicrous the whole system is.

The connective tissue that binds all of the work in *Inscriptions VI* is photographic enquiry in its most philosophical sense. The question of what is deemed important enough to be immortalised for posterity, and by whom, lies at its democratic heart. As our understanding of the mechanised world undergoes its next phase of evolution and much of human endeavour is superseded, inevitably, by the vastness of interconnected networks, we need artists like Ní Bhriain now more than ever. Artists who consider the implications of technological progress, the future we want, and what past we want to remember.

Gilly Fox is a curator and academic based in London. She has been part of the curatorial team for Hayward Gallery Touring, the UK's largest national exhibitions programme, since 2013.

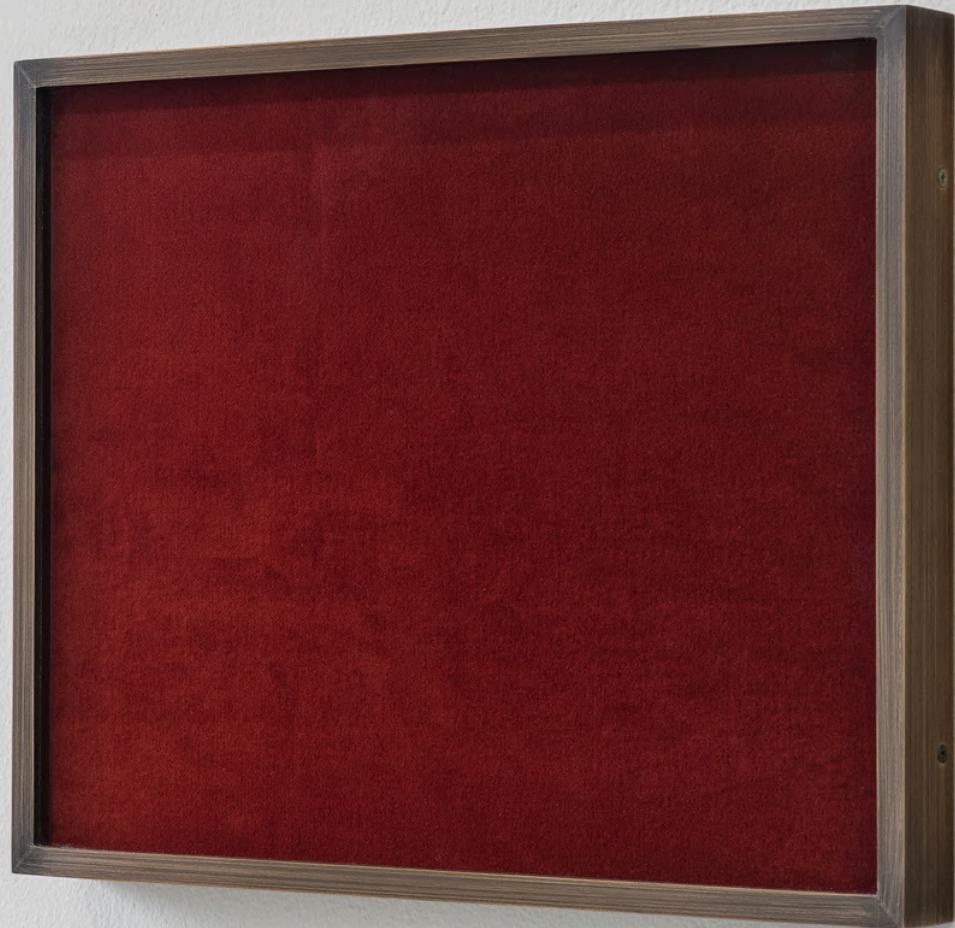
1 And then ironically, clocks and time itself did not escape technology's grasp as standard time was rolled out in the 1840s thanks to the expansion of the railways, previously local time ruled and was based on the setting sun which changed depending on how west in the country you were

2 Early adoption of photographic studios in colonial countries was notable – appearing almost as simultaneously as they did in Paris or Brussels.

3 Occident is the term for Western society. In a synchronistic circular narrative that loops this back to the early days of photography it is also name of the horse in Eadweard Muybridge's famous photographic study in motion, a pre-cursor to moving image.



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain
Installation view, *Inscriptions VI*, Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, Ireland, 2025



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Installation view, *Inscriptions VI*, Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, Ireland, 2025

Interval I-VIII 2023 – 2025

Interval I-VIII is a series of large-scale Jacquard tapestries, woven with wool, cotton, silk and Lurex. The work originates in collage and is a composite of fragments, brought together to create a visual world that is at once precise and enigmatic. The series is underpinned by loose categories of imagery: early photographic portraiture, underground caves and architectural ruins. The formal construct of the group portrait, with its projection of status and stability, is punctured at once by the deep-time of geological formations and the crumbling structures of the contemporary. The resulting scenes of threshold and collapse are inhabited by an unlikely cast of creatures, threading an imagined line between present-day threats of extinction and ancient narratives of the underworld.





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Installation view, *The Dream Pool Intervals*, Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, Ireland, 2025



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Ailbhe Ní Bhriain
Installation view, Innsbruck International Biennial, Innsbruck, Austria, 2024



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Installation view, Innsbruck International Biennial, Innsbruck, Austria, 2024



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain
Installation view, *An Experiment with Time*, Kunsthall Gent, Ghent, Belgium, 2024



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Installation view, *An Experiment with Time*, Kunsthall Gent, Ghent, Belgium, 2024



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Installation view, *Formes de la ruine*, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, Lyon, France, 2023



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain
Installation view, *Interval Two (Dream Pool)*, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, Ireland, 2023

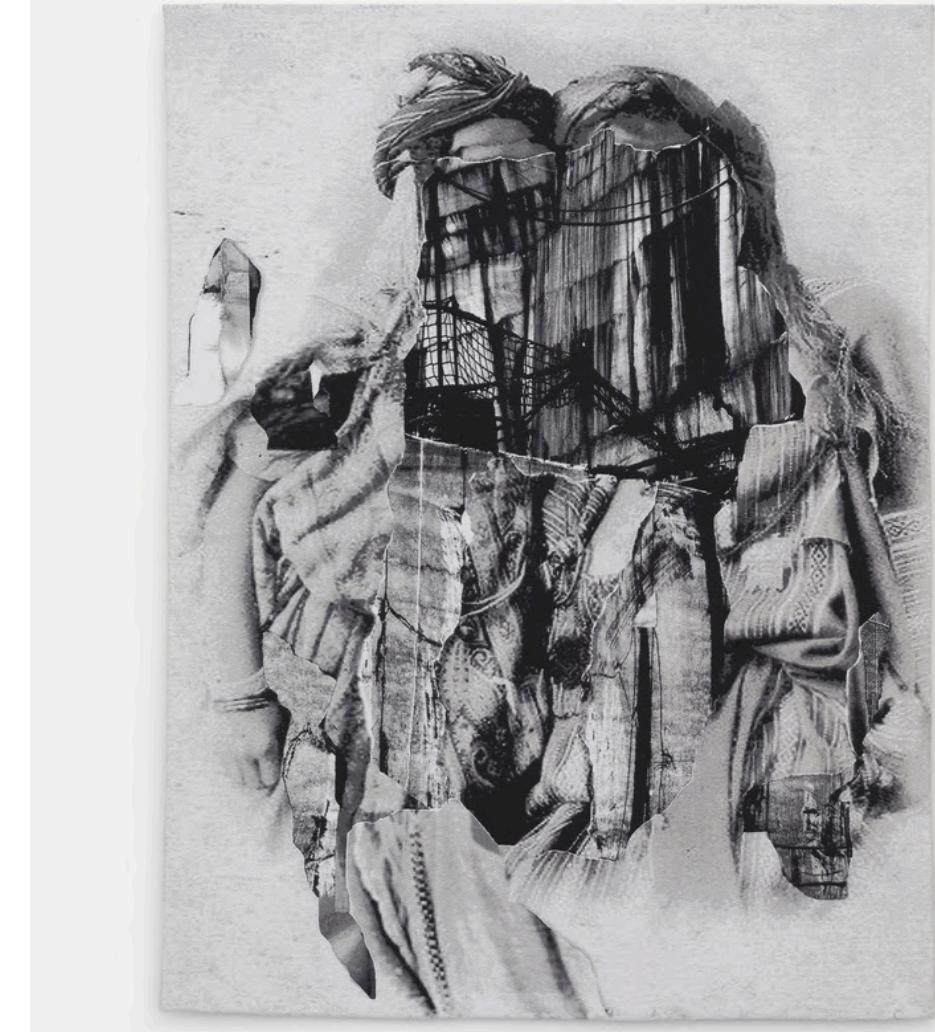


Ailbhe Ní Bhriain
Installation view, *Interval Two (Dream Pool)*, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, Ireland, 2023

The Muses 2018-2025

The Muses references early colonial or 'Orientalist' photography in combination with imagery of damaged quarry walls. Central to the work is the relationship between imperial inscription and loss. The colonial archive is considered here in its strange duality as both cultural record and cultural disruption - its surface act of preservation belying a deeper act of destruction. The quarry walls mirror this paradox: the geological history that is revealed in these walls has been made legible only through an act of geological destruction. The images are paired through loose digital collage, interrupting the familiarity of the originals and drawing them into an unexpected connection.

The work is presented in the form of jacquard tapestry, drawing on the fetishisation of fabrics within the genre of colonial photography (the ubiquitous drapes and veils, which stage both scene and figure as culturally authentic and exotically 'other'). In recalling both theatrical backdrops and luxury objects, the tapestry is also a reference to the acquisition and staging of culture which defined the colonial project.





Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

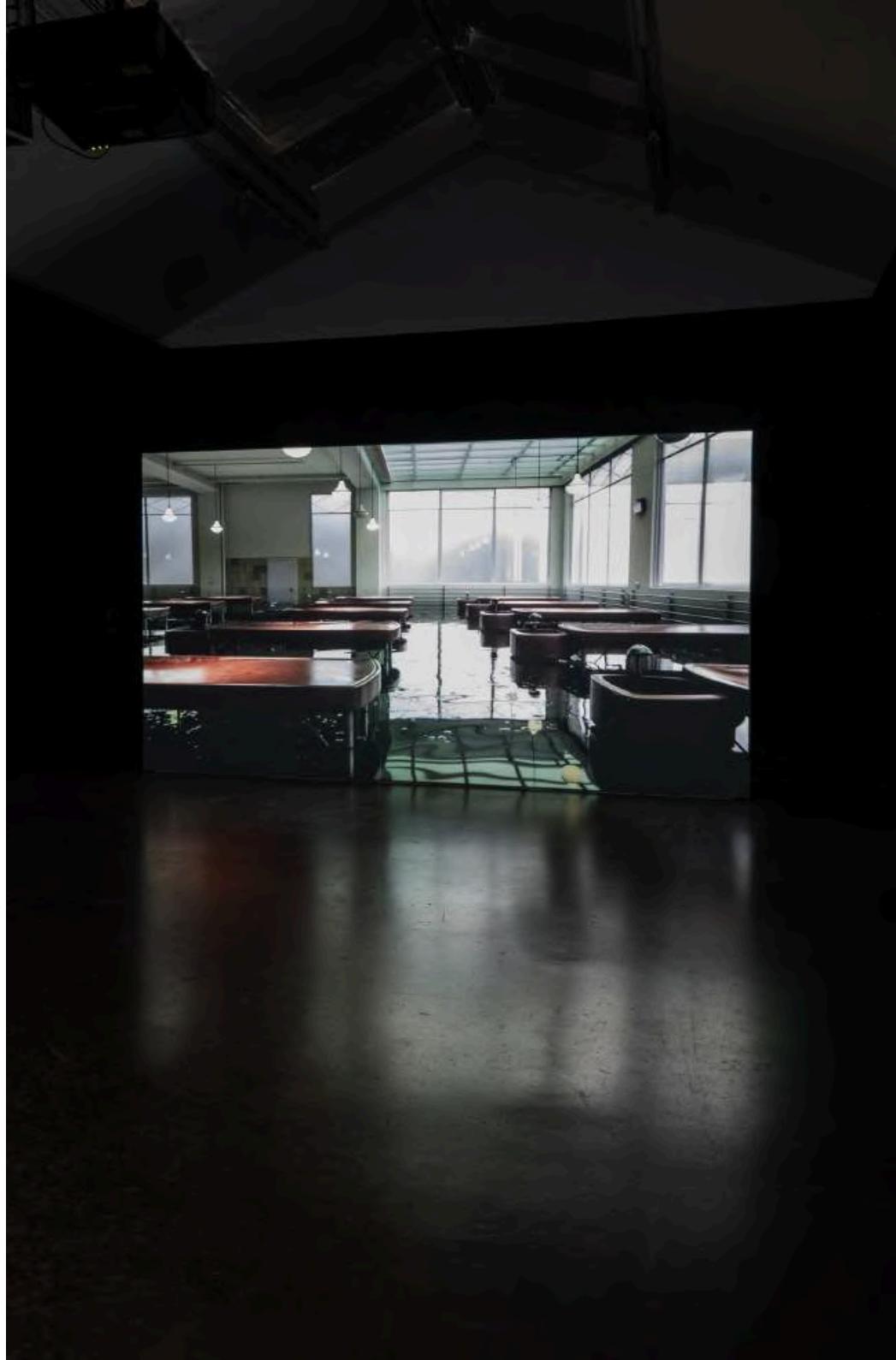
Installation view, *Social Fabric*, curated by Georgie Thompson, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland, 2021-2022

An Experiment with Time 2022

An Experiment with Time derives its title from a text by the popular scientist J.W. Dunne, published in 1927. This book proposed a belief system based on precognitive dreams – a theory of parallel timelines whereby dream narratives predict future events. The film echoes this quality of dreamlike theatricality, and uses CGI to transform sites of technological, medical and religious significance into an apocalyptic strangeness. A historic medical site is portrayed submerged in water; a chameleon is the sole inhabitant of a site of computing history; a brain coral forms the centrepiece of an iconic cathedral.

Diverse histories and systems of belief are depicted in a shared state of environmental aftermath as the film weaves a dreamlike narrative around the constructs through which we have sought to understand and control our world. Interspersed with these unpeopled scenes are spectral images relating to early natural specimen collections and AI generated portraiture; here the preserved life forms of the past become apparitions for the disembodied presences of the future

<https://vimeo.com/ailbhenibhriain/anexperimentwithtime>





Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

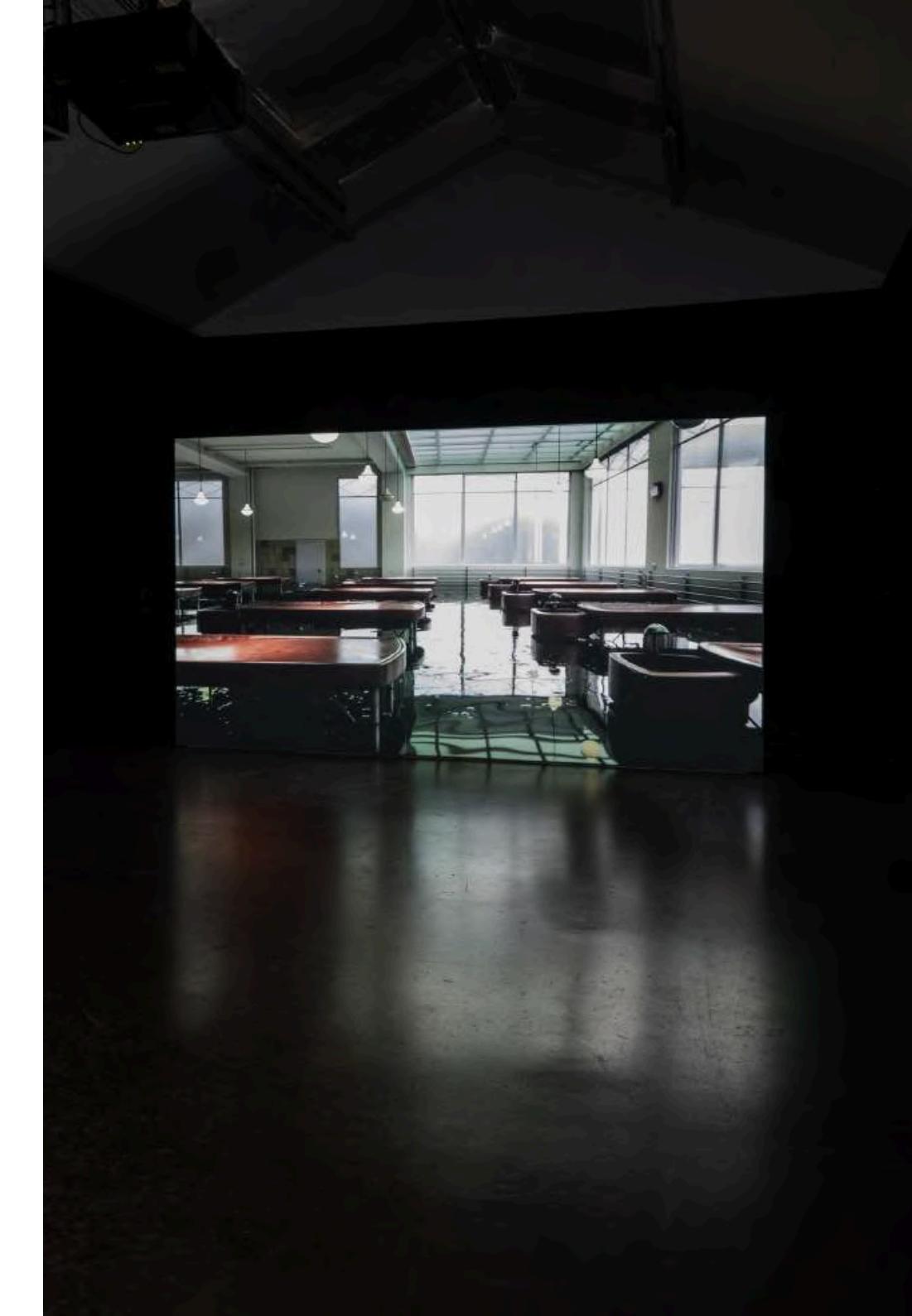
Installation view, *An Experiment With Time*, CCA Glasgow, curated by Francis McKee & Alaya Ang, Glasgow, Scotland, 2022

Intrusions

2022

A sequence of three large-scale Jacquard tapestries conjure a sense of theatrical disorientation. Translated to Jacquard from loose digital collage, the imagery depicts scenes of architectural ruination: excavated landscapes converge with remnants of damaged cityscapes to form vertiginous scenes, populated by a cast of extinct or endangered animals. The title of the series is a reference to the 1955 publication *Intrusions?* by J.W. Dunne. His final book, *Intrusions?* elaborates on Dunne's long-standing theory of time – a system he called 'serialism'. Extrapolating from the experience of pre-cognitive dreams, Dunne concludes that past, present and future are in fact continuous parallel timelines, which may be perceived and accessed simultaneously in hypnagogic states.

As in Ní Bhriain's 2022 film, *An Experiment with Time*, which references a 1927 publication by J.W. Dunne, this allusion to 'serialism' emerges as an exploration of our current relationship to our past and our future – a relationship so profoundly unsettled and called into question by the threat of climate disaster. What results is an enigmatic visual vocabulary that connects to the sense of uncertainty, contradiction and loss experienced in this time of crisis.





Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Installation view, *16th Lyon Biennale: Manifesto of Fragility*, curated by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, Lyon, France, 2022



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Installation view, 16th Lyon Biennale: *Manifesto of Fragility*, curated by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, Lyon, France, 2022



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Installation view, CCA Glasgow, curated by Francis McKee & Alaya Ang, Glasgow, Scotland, 2022



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Living Canvas, Wilton Park, Dublin, Curated by RHA, Dublin City Council and The Lab Gallery, 2022



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Installation view, *Great Good Places*, Curated by Dawn Williams, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork 2019



À Dublin, les ruines rêvées d'Ailbhe Ni Bhriain

L'image est illisible, et en même temps familière. Au centre un trou béant, une architecture événtrée soulignée de traits de rouge. Au bas de l'image, un chien-loup endormi au milieu de gravas et de stalagmites introduit le regardeur dans la scène, qui apparaît comme une projection de l'esprit de l'animal. Autour, quatre personnages creusés en négatif, silhouettes évidées sur un fond en noir et blanc de photographie d'archive. L'un d'eux arbore un de ces masques du Congo exposés au British Museum. Leurs mains sont trop grandes et ils n'ont pas de jambes. Dans un angle, un guépard nous regarde. C'est le seul être qui semble vivant. L'œuvre, *Interval VII* (2025), est une tapisserie de plus de quatre mètres de large, suspendue dans les salles de la Hugh Lane Gallery de Dublin parmi quatre

autres, issues de la série « Interval » de l'artiste irlandaise Ailbhe Ni Bhriain, née en 1978 et vivant à Cork, que l'on a pu voir notamment en 2022 à la Biennale de Lyon. L'ensemble, constitué à partir d'images d'archives de l'ère coloniale et de l'industrialisation, compilées et travaillées sur ordinateur avant d'être confié à des tapissiers, constitue une spectaculaire série de représentations de la ruine des anciens empires. De son côté, l'artiste évoque des « icônes de la guerre et de la catastrophe climatique qui semblent définir notre temps ». À la manière des anciennes tapisseries évoquant les récits mythologiques, ces allégories monumentales, qui semblent comme pelées, arrachées au temps, composent une vaste fresque de la ruine contemporaine, morale et physique, faisant s'entrechoquer les réminiscences inconscientes de l'imagerie impérialiste

et la technologie la plus pointue. Plus loin, des photographies à l'échelle un de surfaces altérées jouent avec la lucidité du spectateur, tandis que la figure rassurante d'un chien sculpté dans la résine dort en rond, rêvant pour de bon.

MAGALI LESAUVAGE
« Ailbhe Ni Bhriain: The Dream Pool Intervalls », jusqu'au 28 septembre, Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, hughlane.ie

Ailbhe Ni Bhriain,
Interval VII, 2025, tapisserie jacquard.
Courtesy of the artist, domobal & Kerlin Gallery, Dublin.
Photo : Lee Welch.

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Between worlds

Aidan Dunne talks to Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, in whose new exhibition period images are spliced together in vistas of subterranean worlds



Aidan Dunne: Five large Jacquard tapestries dominate your exhibition 'The Dream Pool Intervals'. Your works with video and film are in a way the opposite of tapestry, in that, with those, you press a switch and it captures images, whereas tapestry is slow and cumulative.

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain: It's funny you say they are opposite in that way. In my experience, putting together a film is excruciatingly slow, so slow that you can doubt ever reaching the end point. And, when you're working with CGI (computer-generated imagery), it's all intangible. You trust that it's all there somewhere, but it could go 'puff!' and you've nothing. Whereas tapestry has this physical reality to it, which I like. So, for me, it's not a temporal contrast so much as a contrast in levels of materiality. I have a yearning for materiality – I think all the more so when I'm using CGI a lot. You feel so remote from any material presence. I've been drawn to several early technologies, including early computer technology, for that reason as well, when it was very physical, mechanical, like the Colossus computer used by the codebreakers at Bletchley Park during World War II, which I've used in my work (it appears in *Inscriptions IV* and elsewhere). And of course, the Jacquard loom itself. That was in a sense one of the first computers, as it was programmed with sets of punch cards in binary code.

UNCATEGORIZED

The Dream Pool: Artistic License With Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

by [PENNY MCCORMICK](#)

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain's art explores anxieties of the present while acknowledging the past ...

Image; Ailbhe Ní Bhriain at the exhibition opening of *The Dream Pool Intervals* at Hugh Lane Gallery © Naoise Culhane Photography 2025.



Who or what was instrumental to your artistic journey?

My parents. They gave me vast amounts of freedom growing up. They just trusted us to figure things out. When I decided I wanted to go to art college, it was in my final year of school. This felt like a terrifying thing because I had no portfolio, looming Leaving Certificate, and making-skills much shabbier than my academic ones. But my parents let me take two months off school, take over the kitchen table and get to work. I stopped for the odd break and trip to Galway for materials, but otherwise I just worked for weeks on end. The work I made was nothing to shout about, but I was never happier.

“This basic permission to follow your instincts and to risk failure is so fundamental to making a piece of art. And it’s something I was given in spades growing up.”

How do you describe your artworks?

I work across collage, tapestry, print, installation, film and CGI. So, there are lots of material shifts and crossovers. The work repeatedly returns to themes of industrial and imperial legacies, but uses a heightened and dreamlike visual language. For me, tilting the imagery toward the surreal is a way of side-stepping the familiar takes and false binaries attached to these burdened subjects. Instead, I want to draw them into a territory that’s more uncertain and unnerving. The work always tries to pull the viewer into a multi-layered and disorienting world where everything is connected, but fixed narratives no longer hold.

What was the inspiration behind your new body of work?

The title of the show is “The Dream Pool Intervals.” This is a reference to a book called *The Dream Pool Essays* that was first published in 1088, written by a Chinese polymath called Shen Kuo. It covers a huge range of subjects, but among them is what is considered to be the first recorded observation of climate change. My work is in no way an illustration of this text; it’s more about using this nugget from the ancient past to connect to the contemporary moment, and in the process reconsider points of familiar history. It’s about trying to tune into the sheer existential weirdness we face at the moment as we grapple with climate disaster.

What is the symbolism of these works?

The exhibition is anchored by five monumental Jacquard tapestries which share three main strands of imagery, all of which are overlaid and combined through collage. Most immediately striking is the series of archival photographic portraits. These are mostly Victorian era images depicting portraits of upper and middle class western families. They date from the height of the industrial and imperial projects, and are in many ways coded with the symbolism of these ideologies.

The second visual strand focuses on contemporary imagery of destroyed buildings: the tragically familiar backdrop of architecture destroyed by war and climate disaster. For me, these scenes of destruction symbolise the ongoing legacy of the forces of industrialisation and colonialism – forces that shaped and continue to shape the world we know today.

The third visual strand in the tapestries features imagery of caves and tunnels. These underground spaces symbolise a much more ancient register of time: the deep-time of geology that immediately shrinks all notions of human progress and dominance. The caves also link to ideas of the underworld – myths and narratives used across so many cultures to frame the fear of death and the unknown.

“We find ourselves profoundly confronting the unknown again, both despite and because of the speed of progress. So, we return to these ancient underworld-fears.”

How and where do you work?

I work between my kitchen table and my studio with Backwater Artists Group in Wandesford Quay in Cork. But I’ve always been able to work on the fly and with any amount of distraction around me. It’s an accidental skill that has saved me over the years as I juggled jobs and small children, plus the usual pressures on time. There’s actually a kind of porousness that I really enjoy between making art and getting on with the chaos of ordinary life.

I’ve never done an artist’s residency and suspect that a totally uninterrupted spell might just send me into shock. That said, I do travel a lot for aspects of production, where for weeks I think about nothing but how to achieve the precise shade of burnt orange in a tapestry, or how to generate the perfect amplitude in a CGI water ripple. The rest of the time, my family patiently navigates the bits of in-progress art scattered across our home!

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain: Things Falling Apart

Alexander Leissle Reviews 16 June 2025 ArtReview



Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, *Interval III*, 2024, Jacquard tapestry, cotton, wool, silk, Lurex, 270 x 346 cm. © the artist and Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin

Across largescale tapestries and adroit conceptual works, *The Dream Pool Intervals* at Dublin's Hugh Lane Gallery examines the destructive forces in the world

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain's *The Dream Pool Intervals* foregrounds one fundamental opposition: time – omnipotent, inevitable – and our attempts to resist it and assert ourselves on it. Across five largescale, digitally produced tapestries, these *Intervals* (all works but three 2025) are photomontages splicing together documentation of deep-cave expeditions, historical photographs of wealthy, Industrial Revolution-era families and images of architectural destruction. The centre of *Interval III* (2024), for example, is taken up by a desaturated photograph of a family at the dinner table. Some faces are blacked out into hollow ovals, while others are overlain with rough, chalky patches – what from afar seem like rock formations become, up close, more like plumage, wool and silk weave catching the gallery light. The torso of a figure at the head of the table is substituted for what appears to be a miniature of the same photograph. In the lower corner, meanwhile, a hyena looks towards the viewer, hungrily.

In fact, similar descriptions befit the entire series: a frame within a frame, blacked-out faces, discordant injections from the natural world, and abstract red smears like dried blood to lift the works out of their sepia-toned anachronism. Within each tapestry, Ní Bhriain stages a confrontation between anthropological history and deep, geological time: in *Interval II*, the centre of the photograph on the tapestry seems to peel away from within, revealing the brilliant distortions of a ray of light, and an icy blue stalagmite, standing magnificent – as if to say, *this will last*. Her medium, too, garners a certain material awe: each work towers over the viewer, almost overwhelmingly full; their aura of power comes from the medieval French and Flemish traditions of tapestry weaving, produced at great cost for royalty and regency to peacock and narrate their might. Here, though, there's scant narrative to be found. Not retelling the stories she has pulled out and vandalised evidence of, nor critiquing them, Ní Bhriain's works omit the actual human events, lives and faces of the people whose gaze we try to meet – and, in doing so, anaesthetises them. Instead, her tapestries gather all the effects into one, like rubble – spectacular, melancholic, inscrutable.

The second half of the exhibition constitutes a series of more conceptual works, dramatising the push and pull of time and preservation – a posthuman privileging of decay, dissolution and obliteration. The centre of the gallery is occupied by empty, low glass vitrines, atop of which Ní Bhriain has placed antique ceramic pots, undecorated and bathetic. Nearby in *Untitled (surface #6)*, a pocketsize framed photograph has been brushed over in a greasy marmite-brown slick of bitumen paint. The image is protected from damage, and simultaneously its essence (as a photograph, its 'moment') is destroyed. On two perpendicular walls, *Picture XII, Diptych* and *Picture IX* present a process of germination. On one side of the former, a broad white pigment print seems speckled with black – like an expressive flick of paint, or fungal mould. On the latter, a similar white print now has a huge hairy black patch through the centre. So it's confirmed: mere spores have become a growth, a domination of nature over the manmade document; blink and you'll miss it.

If there's anything to effectively draw these works together, it's this pervasive sense of exposure: relics removed from their protective casing, vulnerable; animals circling as if attuned to a scent; artworks overrun by the elements; the past dragged out into the light. Ní Bhriain's creative redux seems to be suggesting: these things are rotting, and perhaps we should let them.

The Dream Pool Intervals at Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, through 28 September

From the Summer 2025 issue of ArtReview – [get your copy](#).

Alexander Leissle Reviews 16 June 2025 ArtReview



Once It Was a Landscape

Sergej Timofejev

26.08.2025

"It doesn't have to be your story, or my story – it's more like a shared, collective weirdness". An interview with Irish artist Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

The Hugh Lane Gallery is located in the center of Dublin, in a classical townhouse built in 1763, and was originally called the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art. It was founded in 1908 by the art dealer and collector Hugh Lane and was one of the dynamic, pioneering institutions of the Celtic Revival movement in Ireland at the turn of the 20th century. Within its walls you can see Impressionist paintings by Manet, Monet, Degas, Pissarro, and Morisot.

But this art institution is best known for housing the meticulously dismantled in London and no less meticulously reconstructed here studio of Francis Bacon, the Irish-born painter who fled Ireland as a youth to escape his father's authority, only to return in the form of the magnificent chaos of his studio after his death. Bacon loved working in complete disorder. He believed that it was precisely in chaos, and in its energy, that the subjects he needed were born. And you can now witness this on one of the floors of the Hugh Lane Gallery.

But that was not the reason I came here. What intrigued me was the exhibition *The Dream Pool Intervals* by Irish artist Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, which is open until September 28th. Ailbhe works with film, computer-generated imagery, collage, tapestry, print, and installation. Her art is deeply rooted in an exploration of imperial legacy, human displacement, and the Anthropocene. I was struck by her monumental tapestries, dense with faceless figures transplanted from old photographs, with ruins that serve as the constant backdrop in this series, with enigmatic animals – the only truly individualized beings – and with stalactites rising upwards. What we see is a kind of space of the post-everything: a world oversaturated with ruins and with the unresolved injustices of the past.

"You were surrounded by the evidence of lots of collapsed pasts," Ailbhe tells me about her childhood. "It's this idea of the past suddenly rushing up around us, in a new form, in a new way of seeing us," she says later. We no longer see any clear picture of the future, but the past – and its unpaid debts – presses in on us from every side.

But there is another crucial theme running through the exhibition – the cave, the underworld, or the "other side," signaled in the tapestries by the guiding animals and the rising stalactites. And this theme is tied also to the medium of photography itself.

"*Camera* is the Latin word for 'a vault, or vaulted room.' It was combined with the word *obscura* to describe a 'dark chamber' when modern photography began around 1840 – like the Etruscan tombs, it is a dark chamber, with a lens that projects images of external objects and captures time. When photography was introduced in nineteenth-century colonies, indigenous peoples believed it stole their souls, and I feel they may have been right in foreseeing today's digital colonisation of our behavioural data, invading new territories of the mind," writes the exhibition's curator, Michael Dempsey, in his essay.

The ruins of the past, the gaps in the fabric of the present, the ghostliness of what we take for reality – all of this, it seemed to me, deserved a separate conversation. And so, after returning from Dublin, I reached out to Ailbhe, who lives in Cork, over Zoom. The conversation took place in the morning, and while the sun was shining both in Ireland and in Latvia, we were drawn instead to speak about shadows, layers of time, and ghostly landscapes.

When I was walking through the exhibition, for some reason I started wondering what kind of house you grew up in.

Oh, that's an interesting question. The house I grew up in was almost like a postcard from old Ireland. I lived in a thatched cottage in the west of Ireland, along a small lane that was at one time a kind of a famine village. (In Ireland, "famine" refers to the devastating period of mass starvation and disease between 1845 and 1852, commonly known as the Great Famine or Great Hunger. This crisis was primarily caused by the failure of the potato crop, which was the staple food for a large portion of the Irish population. The famine resulted in the deaths of an estimated one million people and forced another million to emigrate – author's note). It was an area of commonage – so when people had lost everything during the famine they were allowed to resettle there. At one point I think around a hundred families lived on this tiny stretch. Even now, it's still peppered with the ruins of old houses.

So, it was an old house?

Yes, I'm guessing about 170 years old. The original cottage is a very basic structure but was tucked into the landscape in a very perfect way. It's small with thick stone walls and low windows. The area was a quiet farming community, though my parents weren't farmers – they just arrived there in the '70s, loved the place and never left.

When I was looking at your works, I started thinking about my own childhood. My grandfather had this old wooden house, and there were lots of old magazines and photos in the attic. I would go through them, and somehow it really inspired me. I wondered if you might have had a similar experience.

My parents weren't collectors like this at all. What I remember more is playing in the ruins on the lane we lived on – there was a sense of a deeply layered place, which made for an amazing playground. Everywhere the evidence of collapsed pasts. I do remember a trip we took to a recently abandoned island in Galway. My father built a boat when we were kids and we took these great day trips exploring Galway Bay. On island Eddy the houses were just starting to cave in, but they were still full of old LPs and photographs and magazines. It was hard to believe that the records could still be played and the magazines could still be read. Because they no longer seemed like ordinary things. They had this otherworldly quality.

But when did you start getting really interested in photography as a medium? It wasn't directly from your childhood, was it?

No, my interest in photography came from my connection to the Burren, which is the area where I grew up in Ireland. It's this very stark limestone landscape – it feels like you're walking on the surface of the moon. It's really very beautiful. When I was in art college, I tried to photograph the landscape and I was really struck by how every time you pointed the camera at it, you ended up with a cliché, an image that felt like it came straight from a calendar or a tourist campaign. The landscape has been represented so much and functions as a kind of emblem for an idea of authentic Irishness. This dates back to the Irish cultural revival in the late 19th and early 20th century – an anti-imperialist movement that was attempting to reclaim Irish culture but which was also – inevitably – reinventing it.

So this was a bit of an epiphany for me, properly understanding the photograph as a construct for the first time. And for the first time considering the cultural and political baggage that these constructs carry. There was no way to photograph this place without connecting to all these layers of performed identity. That's what drew me in.

I guess that's the thread linking to Victorian photography for me. I'm interested in the performance involved in those Victorian photographs, and their connection to an imperial past. The more you look at the portraits from that era, the more you see that they are encoded with the ideologies of the time – the way people are positioned like assertions of superiority, and the way the props and backdrops used often reference empire. There is a whole story being told that is much bigger than the individuals represented.

The figures in your works, taken from these old photographs, aren't really individuals, because they don't even have faces. Instead of faces, they have small areas of darkness, I would say... What kind of darkness is it?

Yes, sometimes the faces give way to glimpses of rock formations, other times to destroyed cityscapes, and other times... it's just the void. When we look at photographs, we are immediately drawn to the face – we automatically make the individual the centre of every narrative. By removing the faces, I'm trying to draw attention not to the individual, but to people as players within a wider project.

So when you look through the face in these tapestries to see contemporary destroyed buildings and scenes of ruination, you are seeing the present-day aftermath of those Victorian forces of imperialism and industrialization. And when you look through to see subterranean spaces – these underworlds of caves and tunnels and stalagmites and stalactites – you are seeing this very different, ancient register of time. It's not human time anymore; it's the deep time of geology – another way of understanding the world.

I think there's something so poignant about the way we pose for photographs. It's like we're looking into the future, trying to preserve ourselves and control time. I'm drawn to the folly in that – the idea that we can ultimately control anything. So in these tapestries we encounter a kind of point of collapse – with the polite portrait being engulfed both by an ancient past and a destructive future.

It makes me think about ghosts too – how we traditionally see them in our cultures, as figures without faces. And it's almost like you have some kind of camera obscura for looking at them. It's a reminder of how much has happened in every house with a hundred or two hundred years of history, or in every place.

I've never thought about that explicitly, but I'm absolutely trying to make the imagery permeable to many possible meanings – so yes, maybe I am inviting ghosts in!

Our interest in the past, in terms of collecting, documenting, archiving, is always about the future – a world preserved and narrated for a future audience. And now we're in this very strange collective moment, where we're suddenly confronting a deeply uncertain future. I think the weirdness of this realization sends a serious tremor through our understanding of the past – and yes, probably lets loose a few ghosts in the process.

And we do see these ghosts all around us – all these unrealized projects, unfinished histories, untold stories. And of course, the postcolonial subject is also present.

I've always been interested in the Irish position in this postcolonial sense, because it's quite layered. In a very real sense, we were the colonized and the oppressed. But then there is also the parallel, less retrospectively comfortable reality that we operated as the oppressors too. We became part of those colonising systems – serving the British civil service, the British army and the Catholic church in their various missions. These were all ways to 'get ahead' in Irish society. So choosing only to shape our memory around our role as victims denies a more complex legacy.

The artist Maud Cotter, when she talked to me about her encounter with the *Interval* tapestries, said that for her they ask the question "who is the accuser and who is the accused?" I like this ambiguity. I'm not trying to take a position of finger wagging or doom-mongering in these works. It's more like, look at where we are collectively: we are in this very existentially weird space, with all our familiar systems, even something as huge and ancient as our weather system, suddenly tilting towards calamity. And maybe, before we distract ourselves away from the discomfort of it, or sink into guilt-induced self-loathing, maybe we should just reside in the weirdness for a while. To kind of open ourselves up to the strangeness of it all. I do think that's worth doing.

It lets you see outside of the false binaries that are crowding around us, the false arguments and overly certain positions that become the greatest distraction. That's probably what I'm trying to reach in these images: the space for ambiguity. Where it doesn't have to be *your story*, or *my story* – it's more like a shared, collective weirdness.

But what really concentrates the strangeness is the material form itself – the fact that it's tapestry. These are ghostly images, but at the same time so present and material. The tapestries are huge in scale; they're not just flat surfaces. Because of their weight, they take on a shape of their own, and with the use of different threads and materials, the surfaces vary. So the strangeness is also very material, embedded in their physical presence.

I'm totally besotted with the exact qualities you're describing – that deep materiality of the tapestry and how dynamic it becomes. Like you say, there's a lot of variety in the yarn – most of the tapestries are shot through with Lurex, sometimes several Lurex threads, so there is this kind of metallic, glittering current running through the image. Getting the right balance in each piece between Lurex, silk and wool takes a lot of testing, but it turns the image into something very alive and dynamic.

I think I've always been restless when it comes to the surface of an image: it goes back to this discomfort with photography and the idea of the fixed narrative it carries. Weaving physically disrupts that fixity and continually transforms how you see the image... the tapestries respond dramatically to changing light, they fold and distort under their own weight, they allow for so much surface-play through the use of relief and different bindings. I studied printmaking, which tends to involve a long multi-stage process to coax out an image. I think I became attached to the emergent image in these processes – something that seems caught between a state of becoming and a state of dissolving.

The tapestry's material evokes the Victorian and imperial context – rich houses, grand carpets. But the mission of your tapestry is completely different, of course.

Yes, tapestries were historically such symbols of wealth, objects that signified status. So I do enjoy working with the medium to depict these shards of imperial aftermath. But I'm specifically working with Jacquard tapestry, which as a process also connects directly to industrialisation and social upheaval. When the Jacquard loom was invented in the early 19th century, its promise of automated production posed a huge threat to existing textile jobs and led to historic workers' riots. The loom itself represents the first practical application of binary code – in a way, it functioned like the earliest computer. I was drawn by these links, both to the histories of imperialism and industrialisation. And right now, when we are all obsessed and confused by AI and emerging technologies, it resonates even more: thinking about how these technological shifts can transform or enforce existing power systems.

But in the other space of your exhibition we see a line of vases that look almost antique, but as I understand it, they have no real museum value – they're just pretending. What are they, and why are they there?

Within this exhibition there are a lot of references to the underworld – this mythological, subterranean zone that was used across so many cultures to frame our understanding of death and fear of the unknown. The recurring imagery of caves relates to this, as do the animals that keep appearing – animals, now endangered, that were once believed to act as messengers from the underworld or companions for our journey to the afterlife.

The clay vessels also link to this idea of the underworld. There's a whole history of these kind of vessels being found in tombs and burial sites, and the role they played in death rituals. It's mostly speculation of course but it's believed that they were used both to prepare the body for the afterlife, as well as holding offerings to accompany the dead on their passage. A lot of the vessels that we now encounter in museum vitrines once belonged to burial sites.

In this exhibition I wanted the presentation of these objects to reference aspects of museum display but also to take on an odder, more ritualistic presence. Each vessel sits on top of the Perspex container that would normally enclose it, and is partially filled with carbon. I was looking for a kind of fusion between the language of museology and the language of the underworld!

I actually started collecting those vessels around the same time I began working on my first tapestry, from a series called *The Muses*. The series draws on western portraits of colonial subjects – often boudoir-style postcards, basically western fantasies of the exotic and the erotic. In the original photographs many of the women are holding these large clay vases and vessels. The repetition of this motif really alerts you to the staging of it all, and the fact that both women and objects are being reduced to props.

Over a period of years, I began collecting vases that reminded me of these images. They've been gathering in the studio for a long time, with no set plan for use. But as they've accumulated they kind of developed their own authority and attached to my thinking around underworld lore. I like how this happens in the studio, the way objects or images, by sheer proximity, start to influence each other and shift meaning. Really we're all collaging all of the time, telling ourselves a coherent story by connecting disparate fragments. We just do it instinctively, then believe in it fully. A collection of any kind is also a form of storytelling, a little fiction.

Intellect

Gallery

ALBHE NI BHRIAIN

by JOSH LUSTIG

Published towards the end of the 11th century, *The Dream Pool Essays*, by the Chinese statesman and polymath Shen Kuo, touched on an encyclopedic range of subjects from mathematics to medicine, architecture to technology. Contained within the book are some of the earliest recorded observations of climate change, and it was these that initially hooked the Irish artist Ailbhe Ni Bhriain, whose work spans filmmaking, photography, sculpture, painting and weaving. "What I like," Ni Bhriain tells me, "is just taking this nugget from the ancient past and letting it resonate with the present moment."

Her series *The Dream Pool Intervals*, which is centred around five large-scale jacquard tapestries, is an unsettling reflection of our current moment. One that is becoming increasingly engulfed by anxieties around rising inequality and environmental breakdown.

At the centre of these artworks are staged Victorian portraits, found archival images that Ni Bhriain worked on and manipulated, transfiguring the individuals into spectres. They appear as individuals shorn of their individuality and therefore any remnant of their personal histories. Instead they become emblems of a past whose crimes, and achievements, still resonate with us today. "You see how they're encoded with the ideologies of that time," Ni Bhriain says of the portraits she uses. "With people positioned like assertions of superiority and frequently featuring props and backdrops that reference empire." These found portraits are combined with imagery of the natural world, animals and caves, as well as images of buildings destroyed by war and natural disasters.

The results are haunting. Tapestry is one of our oldest storytelling devices, and these nightmarish tableaux feel at once ancient and modern, much like the jacquard weaving technique that was used to create them. The jacquard technique was also one of the first applications of binary code, essentially functioning as an early computer. "It signalled the beginning of industrialised weaving – a point of real technological progress and real social upheaval," Ni Bhriain says. "So while weaving on one level seems like this very ancient form of storytelling, there's also a huge amount connecting it to both the subject matter and the digital mediums I was already exploring."

"Ailbhe Ni Bhriain: The Dream Pool Intervals" is at Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, until September 28, hughlane.ie



IMAGE COURTESY THE ARTIST, DOMINICAL & KERLIN GALLERIES, DUBLIN. PHOTO: LEE WELCH

'INTERVAL VII, 2025'

Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

Ailbhe Ní Bhriain

Born 1978 in Clare, Ireland

Lives and works in Cork, Ireland

EDUCATION

2008 PhD by Practice in Fine Art, awarded by Kingston University UK; supervised by Louis Nixon & Elizabeth Price

2004 MA (Distinction) in Fine Art (Printmaking), Royal College of Art, London, UK

2000 B.A (1:1) in Fine Art, Crawford College of Art, Cork, Ireland

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2026 Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Paris, France
Interval Four, Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, France
But I / World / I See / You, Hamburger Kunsthalle, 9th Triennial of Photography; Hamburg, Germany
Incarnations: Body to Body with the Collections of macLYON h2m, Bourg-en-Bresse, France

2025 *The Dream Pool Intervals*, The Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, Ireland
Inscriptions VI, Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, Ireland

2024 *An Experiment with Time*, Kunsthall Gent, Ghent, Belgium

2023 *Interval Two (Dream Pool)*, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, Ireland
Interval One (Dream Pool), Domobaal Gallery, London, UK

2022 *An Experiment With Time*, CCA, Glasgow, UK
Inscriptions VI, Penthouse Margate, UK

2020 *Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre*, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Wisconsin, USA
Inscriptions IV, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre, Solo screening, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK

2019 *Inscriptions (One Here Now)*, VISUAL, Carlow, Ireland
Great Good Places, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork, Ireland

2018 *Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre*, Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin, Ireland
Inscriptions (One Here Now), Sirius Arts Centre, Cork, Ireland

2017 *Reports to an Academy*, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
Inscriptions, Galway International Arts Festival, Galway, Ireland
Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, The Dock, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co Leitrim, Ireland
New Irish Works, Two-person exhibition, The Library Project, Dublin, Ireland
Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, Illuminations Gallery, NUIM, Co. Kildare, Ireland

2015 *Reports To An Academy*, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin, Ireland
Drogheda Arts Festival, solo exhibition curated by Nexus Arts, Drogheda, Ireland

2013 *MAA (Mirrors Of Earth)*, Solo film commission with Dublin Sound Lab, Project Arts Centre, Dublin & Mermaid Arts Centre, Wicklow, Ireland

2011 *Great Good Places*, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK

2010 *Ailbhe Ní Bhriain*, Galway Arts Centre, Galway, Ireland

2009 *Skibbereen Arts Festival*, solo screenings, Cork, Ireland

2008 *Ailbhe Ní Bhriain*, The Butler Gallery, Kilkenny, Ireland

Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

2007 *Aftermath*, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2025 *Programmed Universes*, MAC Lyon, Lyon, France; Curated by Matthieu Lelièvre
Punctum: Works from the Arts Council Collection, Glór Arts Centre, Co. Clare, Ireland
Timeless Voices, Works from the Cercle des Collectionneurs du Mudam, MALT, Luxembourg
Sidelong Glances: An Oblique Look at the Sea, Wexford County Council, Wexford, Ireland

2024 *Lahore Biennale 03: Of Mountains and Seas*, curated by John Tain, Lahore, Pakistan
Innsbruck International Biennial, Innsbruck, Austria
SUSPENSE, Ulster Museum, Belfast, Northern Ireland

2023 *Formes de la ruine*, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, Lyon, France
Ground State – Fellowship Within the Uncanny, Lagos Photo Festival, Nigeria
Following Threads, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork, Ireland
This Rural, Lismore Castle Arts, Ireland
Hollow Earth, curated by Hayward Gallery Touring, Glucksman Gallery, Cork, Ireland
Carnegie Hall Citywide: Density 2036: part viii, Performance of Anfa, composed by Ann Cleare, commissioned and performed by flautist Claire Chase with screening of film works by Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, The Kitchen at Westbeth, New York

2022 *16th Lyon Biennale: Manifesto of Fragility*, curated by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath 100 Years, Gagosian-Deitch Projects, Miami, USA
Hollow Earth, curated by Hayward Gallery Touring, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, UK
Images Are All We Have, Photo Ireland Festival, Dublin Castle, Dublin, Ireland
Closer, Lavit Gallery, Cork, Ireland
The Space We Occupy, Solas Nua at Whittle School, Washington DC, USA
Mountain Language, Galway Arts Centre, Galway, Ireland
Expanded, Graphic Studio Galleries, Dublin, Ireland
The Golden Fleece Award: 21 Years, Solstice Arts Centre, Navan, Ireland
A Nation Under The Influence, Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, France
Living Canvas, continuous outdoor screening curated by RHA, The Lab Gallery and Dublin City Council, Wilton Park, Dublin, Ireland

2021 *Density 36*, with Claire Chase & Ann Cleare, The Kitchen, New York, USA
The Narrow Gate of the Here-and-Now: Social Fabric, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland
The Space We Occupy, Irish Arts Centre, New York, USA
Festival Oodaaq #10, L'institut Supérieur des Arts Appliqués & Musée des Beaux Arts de Rennes, France
Shiftings, Kilkenny Arts Festival, Kilkenny, Ireland
Fuzzy Logic, 126 Gallery, Galway, Ireland

Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

2020

Towner International, biennial exhibition curated by Polly Staple, Mike Nelson and Noelle Collins, Towner Art Gallery, UK
Inscriptions (One Here Now), screening at 22 international venues as part of Artists' Film International, including Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, Poland; Istanbul Modern, Turkey; the Whitworth, Manchester, UK & Para/Site, Hong Kong
Land Of Some Other Order, curated by Paul McAree, Lavit Gallery, Cork, Ireland
Bathyscape, Screening at Conservatoire de Rennes, France
RHA Annual Exhibition, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin, Ireland
AF!, with Lisa Tan and Dominika Olszowy, curated by Alice Butler, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK
Double Estate, Pearse Museum, Dublin, Ireland, curated by Davey Moore from the OPW State Art Collection
Houlgate European Film Festival, 19th Edition, Houlgate, France
AF!, with Raqs Media Collective, Lerato Shadi and Yo Guo, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork, Ireland

2019

Cinesalotto, Villa Erba, Lake Como, Italy
Philosophy By Postcard, curated by Clare McCumhall, a commission from An Post & In Parenthesis, Temple Bar Gallery & Studios, Dublin, Ireland
Backyard Sculpture, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
The Parted Veil, The Lewis Glucksman Gallery, Cork, Ireland

2018

Out There, Out Where, Outside, curated by Sarah Dwyer, Constance Slaughter and Beth Colocci, Boston Manor House, London, UK

2017

Periodical Review #7, curated by Mark Cullen, Gavin Murphy, Rachael Gilbourne and Kate Strain, Pallas Projects, Dublin, Ireland
Mythic Age, aCinema, Milwaukee, USA
Videoproject, Artotheque d'Angers, France
Horizons Variable, presented by L'Oeil d'Oodaaq, Les Ateliers de la Ville en Bois, Nantes, France
Houlgate European Film Fest, Normandy, France
The Way of Objects, Podroom Gallery, Belgrade, Serbia Curating New Collecting Now, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

2016

2116, Edith & Eli Broad Art Museum, Michigan, USA
New Irish Works, curated by Photoland, Espace Lhomond, Paris Photo, France
Glissements (Landslides), Museo de Ferrocarril, Gijon, Spain
2116, Lewis Glucksman Gallery, Cork, Ireland
Festival Oodaaq, Rennes, France
Passages, curated by Mary Hickson, Clonmel Junction Festival, Ireland ND4J, *Screening of Window* with newly commissioned music, La Chapelle du Conservatoire, Rennes, & Le GriGri, Nantes, France

Andréhn-Schiptjenko

STOCKHOLM PARIS

2015
Experimenta, Goethe Institute Bangalore, India
Festival De Cine de Villa de Leyva, Villa de Leyva, Colombia
TULCA Visual Arts Festival, curated by Mary Cremin, Galway, Ireland
Passages, Sounds From a Safe Harbour (Festival), Cork, Ireland
Engage Arts Festival, Bandon, Cork, Ireland
Plymouth Contemporary Open, Peninsula Arts Gallery, Plymouth UK
Festival Oodaaq, Musée des Beaux Arts, Rennes; La Ville en Bois, Nantes, France
Thin Place, Oriel Myrddin Gallery, Camarthen, Wales, UK

2014
Downstairs Dublin, curated by Gemma Tipton, Merrion Square, Dublin, Ireland
Art in the Home 2, with Domobaal, by invitation from the Contemporary Art Society North, York, UK

2013
Bonaj Lokoj, Prádelna Bohnice, Prague, Czechia
Coexist, curated by Eamonn Maxwell, Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin, Ireland
Ní Bhriain / Flood / Vari, three-person exhibition, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
The Poetry Project, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; Kinsale Arts Week, Cork, Ireland
Ireland and online Motion Capture, Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny, Ireland

2012
Motion Capture, Glucksman Gallery, Cork, Ireland
After the Future, EVA International, curated by Annie Fletcher, Limerick, Ireland
Crawford 100, Wandesford Quay Gallery, Cork, Ireland
Imprint, Kingston University, UK

2011
Void:Volume, Galway Arts Centre, Galway, Ireland
Irish Wave 2, Siemens Art Space, Beijing, China

2010
Futures 10, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin, Ireland
Postcards from the Celtic Tiger, Xuhui Art Museum, Shanghai, China
Sophisticated Boom Boom (in b&w), Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
Kilruddery Film Festival, curated by Cliodhna Shaffrey, Wicklow, Ireland
Bittersweet, Doswell Gallery, Cork, Ireland

2009
Time is a Sausage, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
In Search of Utopia, Galway Arts Centre, Nuns Island Theatre, Galway, Ireland
Darkness Visible, Belltable Arts Centre, Limerick, Ireland
No End in Sight, Vegas Gallery, London, UK
Darkness Visible, Johnston Central Library, Cavan, Ireland

2008
Refuge, The Wapping Project, London, UK
No Borders (Just N.E.W.S.)*, selected by AICA, Centre of Contemporary Art of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece; Centrale Electrique, Brussels, Belgium
Darkness Visible, Galway Arts Centre, Galway, Ireland No
End in Sight, Galerie Polaris, Paris, France
13+, Florence Lynch Gallery, New York, USA
From the Canvas to the Screen, touring to Sala Parpalló, Valencia; Unión Fenosa, La Coruña; Caixa Forum, Tarragona; Caixa Forum, Barcelona, Spain

2007
The Garden of Eden Has Vanished They Say, Cavan County Museum, Ireland
Drawing Breath, curated by Jerwood Foundation, National Art School Gallery, Sydney & NAFA Galleries, Singapore

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Oyster Grit, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
Arttrail, curated by Cork Film Centre, Atkins Building, Cork, Ireland
From the Canvas to the Screen, Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid, Spain
2006
Drawing Breath, Jerwood Gallery, London, UK
Still in Motion, Leonard St. Gallery, London, UK
Tekenlust, Kunsthalle Lophem, Bruges, Belgium
2005
Peripheral Visions, Cork Capital of Culture Programme, Ireland FEM 5, Madrid, Spain
To Be Continued... / Jatkuu..., British Council & Helsinki Photography Festival, Helsinki, Finland
Passing Through, Lewis Glucksman Gallery, Cork, Ireland
International Video Festival, Bochum, Germany (award winner)
13+, Domobaal Gallery, London, UK
Jerwood Drawing Prize Exhibition, The Lowry Gallery, Manchester, UK
Syncopations, Wetterling Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden
2004
New Media Art Festival, Seoul, South Korea
Jerwood Drawing Exhibition, Jerwood Space, London, UK
World Wide Video Festival, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

AWARDS

2023 Arts Council of Ireland, Visual Arts Project Award
2022 Cork City Council Artist's Bursary Award
Culture Ireland Funding Award
2021 Arts Council of Ireland, Visual Arts Bursary Award
2020 Golden Fleece Award
Arts Council of Ireland, Visual Arts Project
Award Culture Ireland Funding Award
Shortlisted to represent Ireland at Venice Biennale 2022
2019 Cork City Council, Individual Artist's Bursary Award
Top Shorts, Winner, Best Experimental Film
Arts Council of Ireland, Visual Arts Bursary Award
Best Shorts Film Competition, Winner, Experimental Film Category
L'Age d'Or International Arthouse Film Festival, Winner: Best Experimental Film
Global Shorts, International Film Competition, LA, Winner: Special Mention Category
2018 Arts Council of Ireland, Visual Arts Bursary Award
Shortlisted to represent Ireland at Venice Biennale 2019
2017 Culture Ireland Funding Award
Arts Council of Ireland, Visual Arts Project Award
2016 Arts Council of Ireland Visual Arts Bursary Award
2015 Solas Photography Prize (shortlist)
Cork City Council Individual Artist's Bursary Award
2013 Cork City Council Artist's Bursary Award Culture Ireland Funding Award

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2011 Culture Ireland Funding Award

2010 Visual Arts Bursary 2010, Arts Council of Ireland

2007 Cork City Council Artist's Development Bursary

2005 Bochum Film Institute Award

2004 The Stanley Picker Fellowship in Fine Art Print
Jerwood Student Prize for Drawing
Cork Film Centre Video Art Award
Alf Dunne Award, MA Show, Royal College of Art
Tim Mara Award, MA Show, Royal College of Art
Augustus Martin Award, MA Show, Royal College of Art

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Dallas Museum of Art, USA

MAC Lyon, France

Artissima Collection, Lyon, France

The Arts Council of Ireland

Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Office of Public Works, Ireland

Crawford Art Gallery, Cork, Ireland

Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland

Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, Ireland

Ulster Museum, Belfast, Ireland

COMMISSIONS

2019 Philosophy by Postcard, a work celebrating the centenary of the birth of Iris Murdoch, commissioned by An Post and In Parenthesis

2018 Inscriptions (One Here Now), a film commissioned as part of One Here Now, The Patrick Ireland/Brian O'Doherty Project, curated by Miranda Driscoll at Sirius Arts Centre, Cobh, Ireland

2015 Passages, a film in collaboration with composers Linda Buckley and Irene Buckley, commissioned by Mary Hickson and Bryce Dessner as part of Sounds from a Safe Harbour Festival

2013 MAA (mirrors of earth) a seven-part film commissioned by Dublin Sound Lab for Kaija Saariaho's composition Maa, performed as a full concert production at Project Arts Centre, Dublin and Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray, Ireland

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2021 Kirstie North, Treacherous Images and Animal Gazes: Ailbhe Ní Bhriain's Reports to an Academy, 2015, essay in Digital Art in Ireland: New Media and Irish Artistic Practice, edited by James O'Sullivan, Anthem Press

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2019 Nathan O'Donnell, *Inscriptions (One Here Now)*, published in *One Here Now, The Brian O'Doherty / Patrick Ireland Project*, produced by Sirius Arts Centre & Paper Visual Arts
Doireann Ní Ghriofa, 'Addendum after Ailbhe Ní Bhriain', poem in response to *Inscriptions of an Immense Theatre* at Temple Bar Gallery

2017 Joanne Laws, *Shrouding to make visible*, essay for solo exhibition at The Dock, Carrick-on-Shannon

2016 Doireann Ní Ghriofa, *On Art & Apocalypse*, Gorse, August

2015 Ailbhe Ní Bhriain, *Reports to an Academy*, London; text by Caoimhín Mac Giolla Leith

2014 Valérie Morisson, *The visible and the invisible in photographic works by Patrick Hogan, Ailbhe Ní Bhriain and David Creedon*, essay in *Études Britanniques Contemporain, Revue: The Imaginaries of Space*

2012 Valérie Morisson, *A People's sense of belonging: Dislocation in Post Celtic Tiger art. Works by David Monahan, Anthony Haughey, and Ailbhe Ní Bhriain*, essay in *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*

2008 *Darkness Visible*, edited by Ann Mulrooney, Galway Arts Festival/Galway Arts Centre, Ireland
Rebecca Geldard, 'Oyster Grit', published in *No Borders (Just News)* *North, East, West, South, International Association of Art Critics (AICA), Ireland
Jonathan Miles, *The Trembling Image*, essay for solo exhibition at Domobaal, London, UK Clíodhna Shaffrey, *Palimpsest*, essay for solo exhibition at Butler Gallery, Kilkenny, Ireland