

Winterjoy

December 2020 – February 2021



A Self-Directed Guide

This is an exhibition of rarely seen work from our permanent collection. For this guide I have chosen a selection of works that I feel pertain to the theme of Winterjoy and can reflect on the year 2020.



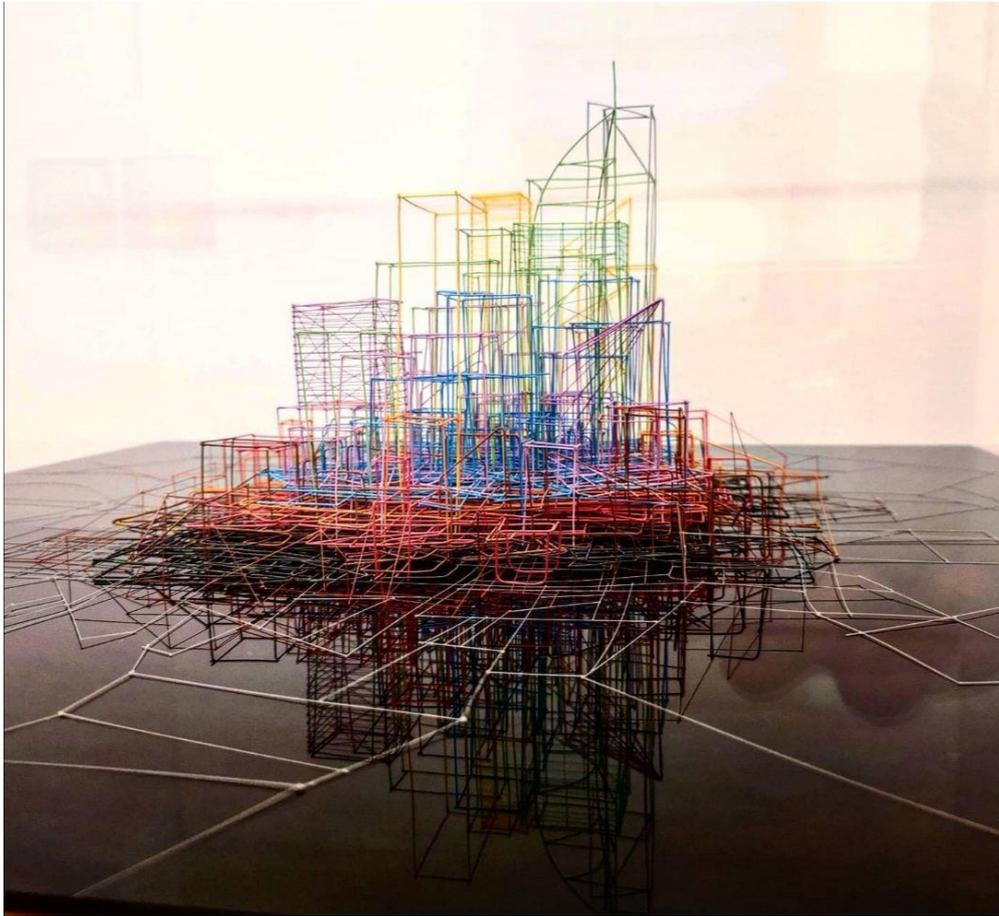
Karen Giusti. *Safety Net* 1998 silkscreen 45 x 45cm

“We are all in this together” - Everyone, 2020

‘Safety Net’ by Karen Giusti, was originally created as part of a memorial project to celebrate the life of a friend who had passed away. It is clear to see the piece hovers between the joy and the sorrow that comes with life and death.

At first glance, it can appear to be a type of fine lace doily but on closer inspection, the pattern is made up of skeletons holding hands, as if engaged in a joyful line dance.

This piece also reminds me of hearing - ‘we are all in this together’ - a statement that has repeatedly circulated amid consumer culture and government responses to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Who is the ‘we’ in ‘we’re all in this together’? While we can recognise that no lives may be untouched by the impact of COVID-19, we can also admit the importance of acknowledging and addressing the ways that deeply embedded societal inequalities mean that not all lives are affected by COVID-19 in the same way, can’t we?



Maggie Madden, *Untitled*, 2008. Telephone wire

“Madden’s pilgrimage always leads her here – to no-man’s land between forms” Sara Baume, 2017

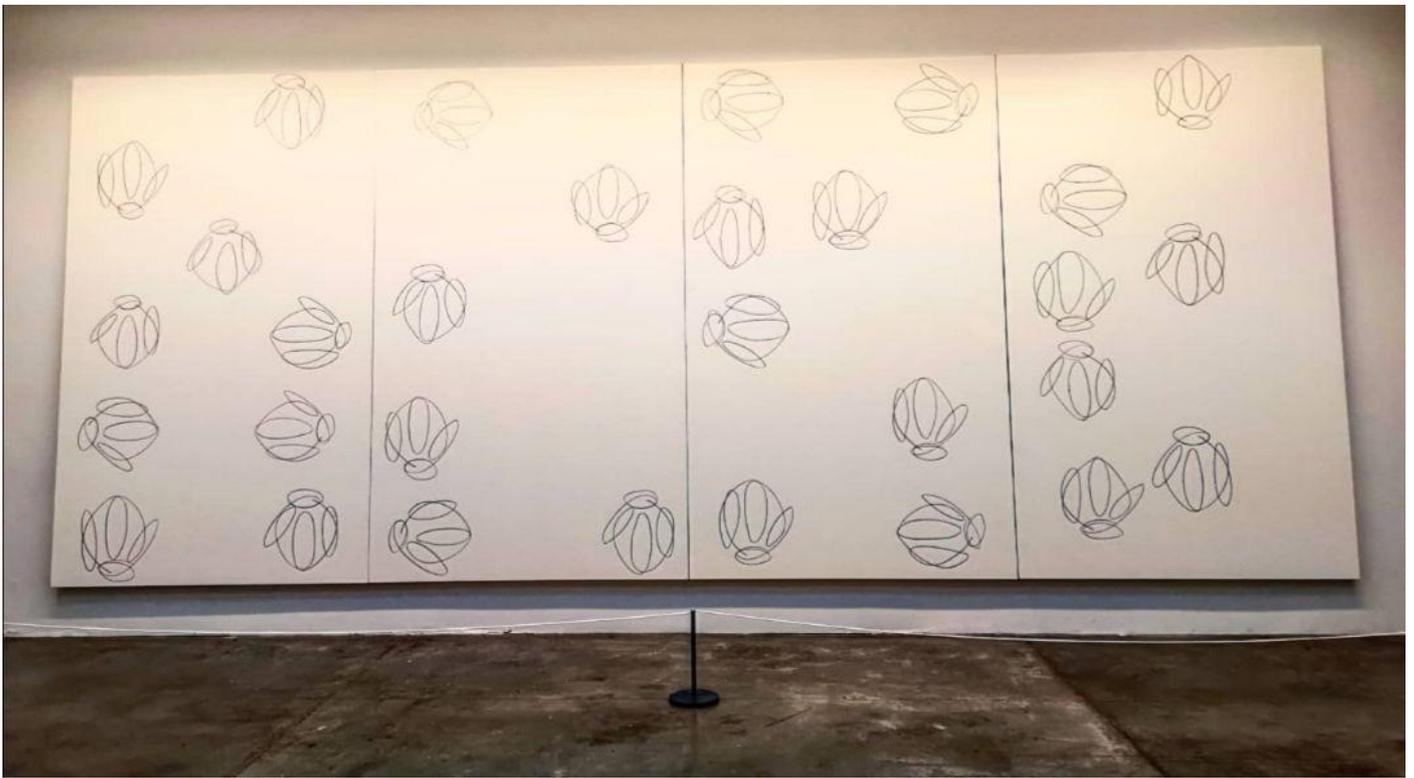
Maggie Madden is a multi-discipline artist from Connemara and a graduate of Limerick School of Art & Design. She is known for assembling a diverse array of collected materials to create fragile sculptural formations with geometric affinities. What strikes the viewer initially when confronted this particular work is the excruciating delicacy of her detailed construction.

Sara Baume is a writer based in West Cork. In 2017, she penned an essay to accompany Maggie Madden’s first solo exhibition here at LCGA. She mentions a “no-man’s land between forms”

Which is where we find ourselves asking – is this sculpture? Alternatively, is this a drawing? Can it be both and neither at the same time...?

Limerick 2030 is a long-term plan to support Limerick as a “city on the rise”. Claiming that Limerick is Ireland’s most future focused city, there are several architectural projects now underway to transform the city skyline.

With this in mind, Madden’s work emerging from the collection archive at this time can remind us of the joy of believing in a better future to come, however fragile even the best laid plans can be.



Royden Rabinowitch *'Handed Operator Bundles Through Two Axes Limited to Local Ocular Descriptions'* 2000's Pencil on Linen

"He is considered by some to be one of the pioneers of modern sculpture." National Gallery of Canada

Born in Toronto, Royden Rabinowitch is an internationally renowned artist, exhibiting works in New York's Guggenheim and Amsterdam's Stedelijk museums, among others. He is known as an innovator in non-figurative sculpture, producing minimalist sculptures informed by his interest in science and drawing particular attention to the object's relationship to the floor.

One would have to argue that if Maggie Madden's sculpture can be considered a drawing, then Rabinowitch's drawings could be considered sculptures.

The sheer scale of these canvases creates an immersive experience for the viewer, and in seeing the clear, confident and repetitive mark making, one can't help but envisage the artist performing a type of hypnotic ritual, over and over again.

The forms themselves bring to mind a swarm of some kind, buzzing around in different directions, maybe water beetles or ladybugs or even some sort of crustacean.

Combined with Sarah Campbell's fossilised ceramic plates – as though salvaged from the bed of the River Shannon – and placed on the floor, the space becomes an almost avant-garde museum of local natural history.



Paki Smith, *Various drawing*, 1990's, Mixed media on paper.

"It would be rash to try to pigeon-hole Paki Smith"
Aidan Dunne, 1999

Paki Smith is an accomplished artist and designer. Born in New Zealand, he is now well known for his work in set design, having worked on many big budget films including Christopher Nolan's Batman series.

In His earlier work, Smith created paintings and drawings that drew inspiration from dreams and took elements of Christianity and Eastern religions, and various kinds of myth, to create his own rich personal symbolism.

It is said that these paintings and drawings also take inspiration from two very different landscapes. Sri Lanka, where he spent some time in 1995, and north Mayo, which he visited more recently, courtesy of the Ballinglen Arts Foundation in Ballycastle.

His drawings are included in this section of *Winterjoy* exhibition that has been intentionally designed for younger children to enjoy. There is certainly something dreamlike and fantastical about the various figures that can be enjoyed by children and adults alike.



Mariele Neudecker *Diamonds Form Under Pressure* 2019 Mixed Media on Paper

“I wanted to hint at the unknown and to highlight that all we see are little fragments of something much bigger.”
Mariele Neudecker, 2016

In September 2015, artist Mariele Neudecker and photographer Klaus Thymann embarked on a joint project to detail the glaciers of Narsarsuaq, south-west Greenland. The collaboration is part of a mission by UK charity Project Pressure to record the world's vanishing and receding glaciers using art as inspiration

Neudecker discusses how the Arctic has always been a metaphor for climate change and human shortcomings, so there are many cliché images of glaciers representing the environment. That provokes her to add other layers to that representation. The challenge is to avoid the clichés.

This particular piece is a recent addition to the collection, acquired last winter when Neudecker had a solo show that took over every space of LCGA, a highlight of 2019. With an active interest in cartography, it is an example of work that maps her arctic experiences. Greenland's glaciers through an artist's eyes



Elizabeth Magill, *Hoar*, 2017, Oil on canvas

“The tree is your teacher, roots at once more firm from experience in the soil made fragile.” Michael D Higgins
March 25th, 2020

One of the prevailing joys of winter are the skeletal systems of tree branches that are laid bare and exposed, allowing us to witness their complex curling, twisting ascension.

This particular joy is evident in much of the work of Elizabeth Magill. Where a background illuminated by an ethereal light often defines the bare, silhouetted trees in the foreground. She does this usually by painting on to a screen-print, with a non-naturalistic palette, the results are both real and dreamlike.

At the beginning of the Covid19 lockdown in Ireland, Michael D Higgins, shared an original poem of his to uplift the spirits of the nation during the crisis.

The Irish president, 78, has been in office since 2011 and is known first and foremost as a politician, but the Limerick man is also a dedicated poet and supporter of the arts.

Using trees as an analogy in the poem he had penned in 1993 which illustrated the need for people to come together during trying times and emerge stronger on the other side. The poem is called 'Take Care'.