

DESIGNING IRELAND P.24


 Crafts Council of Ireland

 NCG
 2005,
 A REVIEW
 P.23


STOPRESS

7

WHAT NEW RESEARCH IS TELLING THE CRAFT INDUSTRY



6 x Tables Group

In 2005 CCol commissioned extensive research into retail trends and consumer behaviour. Now that the first stage of research is completed the Council has direct information about the issues that condition the Irish consumer's response to craft.

One of the most important findings highlighted by the 2005 research was the limited access consumers have to the wide range of work being produced by Irish craftspeople. While consumers, particularly young affluent consumers, rely on retail outlets to source their year round purchases, the industry trend has been to pursue direct selling to the consumer via studio and craft fair, to the extent that only 25% of all craft sales made last year were via retailers. This indicates that to capture new consumers, particularly those in the 25 to 35 year group, retail craft sales must be increased. As an initial response to this, CCol have introduced some exciting new elements in Showcase 2006 to increase knowledge and awareness of consumer trends and behaviour amongst retail buyers (see article page 2).

In addition, the research also offers a complex and challenging analysis about the consumer response to craft products and raises issues that both the craft entrepreneur and Crafts Council must address to ensure the continuing success of their industry. The article on consumer research on page 4 gives an overview of the initial findings, with future articles to come which will give more detail on key issues, as well as feedback from consumer surveys being carried in January and February of this year. This additional research aims to identify the market segments which offer the best return to Irish craft in terms of sales and margin, and will look in detail at the consumer response to the crafts currently on offer in those segments.

If the new research is challenging, it is important to remember that it also gives craftspeople a chance to exploit the opportunities it contains. Leading marketeers report the importance of authenticity in promoting goods and services to the current generation of consumers. In a marketplace where there is an increased valuation of the genuine and the original by the consumer, craft has an innate advantage over the mass produced import.

Finally the Council wishes all its clients and Stopress readers a prosperous New Year - a year which marks the start of a central role for consumer research in CCol policy making, and a new emphasis throughout CCol activity on assisting craftspeople to make full use of the information the research provides to help expand their sales and profit margins.

'Craft has an innate advantage over the mass produced import'.

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SHOWCASE 2006

AND IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CONSUMER!

It's Showcase time again and the 2006 show sees some exciting new developments both for buyers and for exhibitors. Over the past several months, the Crafts Council of Ireland has undertaken consumer research (the results of which can be seen in the article on page 4) which has helped shape some of the new services at Showcase 2006.

CCOI CONSUMER TREND PRESENTATIONS

Buyers and exhibitors can take advantage of a presentation by International retail trend experts, **triple dee** who will highlight the key styles/trends which are catching the consumers attention at present. The presentation for exhibitors will take place in the Merrion Room at 8.30am on Monday 23rd January, 2006 and is essential for any craft business hoping to gain a thorough understanding of consumers, their needs, desires and preferences! Buyers can also avail of this key information by attending the presentation at 10am on the same day. Places are limited and are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

CCoI CONSUMER LIFESTYLE TREND AREA

In addition to hearing about these trends, everyone attending the fair can see interpretations of each style by visiting the Consumer Lifestyle Trend area which will be situated at the end of the SOURCE aisle in the Main Hall (Area C). Each of the 6 areas depict the trends identified by **triple dee** using examples of Irish craft available at the show. The main aim of this area is to give buyers food for thought as to how these products can be presented to their consumers under the themes which are currently grabbing consumers attention.

For anyone not attending Showcase, but who would like to find out more about these Consumer Trends, keep an eye on the news section of www.ccoi.ie which will hold information on the Consumer Trend Presentation as well as images of the 6 themed areas.



SOURCE 2006

In addition, popular promotions such as SOURCE and INDEX make a welcome return in 2006. The SOURCE aisle is again situated in the centre of the Main Hall and contains 38 exhibitors selected by an international panel of experts for their quality and suitability to market.



INDEX 50

This year INDEX will feature the top 50 products at the show - with the overall winner being presented their award by Miche I Martin TD, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment on Wednesday 25th January 2006 prior to his tour of the show. The display of the top 50 products selected by a panel of buyers will be situated at the front of the Main Hall just before the SOURCE aisle.



CCoI JUICE BAR

The CCoI Juice Bar also makes a welcome return and will be situated on the stage in the Concert Hall (Area J) which has been renamed the Enterprise Hall - as it represents exhibitors from a broad variety of Enterprise Boards, LEADER groups and other support agencies.

THE BEST GROUP STAND PRODUCT DISPLAY AWARD & EXHIBITORS RECEPTION

The Best Group Stand Product Display Award will be selected on Sunday the 22nd January 2006 and the winners will be announced at a reception in the Merrion Room that evening at 6pm. This wine and canapes reception replaces the traditional Showcase Party and all exhibitors are invited to come along, unwind and enjoy some light refreshments after the opening day of the show.

CCOI MAIN STAND

The CCoI main stand will be situated in the lobby of the Enterprise Hall (Area J) again this year. The versatility of this area in terms of meeting space and functionality has proven popular with journalists, buyers and exhibitors - all of whom can access a variety of CCoI information services.

Services available from the Main Stand include:

- ¥ access to registration forms, CCoI publications and Stopress
- ¥ media services (including press packs, image services, press e-mail facilities and one-to-one support)
- ¥ information on all CCoI services and projects
- ¥ information (for both buyers and media) on all CCoI registered craftspeople at the show (including access to images held on Image Bank and promotional information held on the CCoI database and website)

WHERE TO FIND CRAFT AT THE SHOW

In addition, this year CCoI will have a small presence in the Main Hall, just before the SOURCE area. The focus of this stand is to highlight to buyers where they can find craft throughout the fair.

There will be a small meeting area which will be available to SOURCE exhibitors wishing to meet with buyers - this is accessed on a first come first served basis.

EXHIBITOR PACKS

Again this year, members of staff will visit each stand on Saturday/Sunday with Exhibitors Packs — please make sure you take the time to read through the information contained.

We wish all those attending Showcase 2006 - the 30th Showcase - a very busy and prosperous show. And for craftspeople who may be considering attending Showcase in the future, please do not hesitate to contact:

Mary Whelan T: 056 7761804

E: maryw@ccoil.ie to find out more about the benefits of exhibiting.

BUYER BEWARE:

a timely reminder.... read before you sign!

As many readers may be aware, some craftspeople inadvertently signed up to a publication called the European City Guide - and when they read the small print realised that they had agreed to pay substantial amounts of money for listings which they had thought were free.

Unfortunately, this type of practice is becoming more common and we are coming across increasing numbers of people who are becoming embroiled in such agreements unknowingly.

Unfortunately, legally there is little you can do if you have signed a contract.

Therefore we would urge craftspeople to read all booking forms and contracts carefully prior to signing - and not to be pressured into signing up to any service, scheme or publication on the spot. Such decisions can prove not only costly, but distressing and worrying.

Remember, if you are approached by a sales person, particularly at a fair or event when you may be busy and under pressure, take the time to research the offer, check references and ask around to see if other businesses have found the company good to deal with. This takes time. If the salesperson is pushing you to sign up there and then, there may be a reason and if it seems too good to be true – it probably is. So buyer beware!

KNOWING YOUR CONSUMER

Building Your Business

It was Fergal Quinn (senator and founder of Superquinn) who famously coined the phrase ‘the Customer is king’. His approach of listening to, understanding and relating to his consumer helped Superquinn create a strong and distinctive brand which focused on quality of service as much as price.

Knowing your consumer is every bit as important for a craft business wanting to increase profitability in an ever competitive market. For craftspeople, accessing your consumers is often straightforward - you can talk to the people who visit your studio, who commission work from you or who you meet at fairs. While this information is important to gather, there is a wider picture that encompasses the preferences and behaviours of consumers in general - even those who may not currently buy your products but might - which is also key in the development process. But by its very nature such information is hard to come by.

For this reason the Crafts Council of Ireland commissioned a consumer research study in the latter part of 2005 to try to establish consumers views on the craft offering - what their perception of craft is, what their buying habits are, where they make their purchases etc.

Many of the findings echo anecdotal views common in the craft sector - issues which craftspeople suspected to be the case are confirmed and the reasons for them are explained. Some findings are more challenging. All highlight a raft of opportunities which exist in the current marketplace and which, with planning and focus, can be addressed by craft businesses serious about the commercial market. The Crafts Council's role is to develop information, supports and initiatives to facilitate this - and the process is currently underway.

At present the hot topic seems to be the issue of competition from abroad - low cost products from Eastern Europe and the far East. Undoubtedly these are challenges - but what the research indicates is that there is a place in the marketplace for both the low cost imports and the high value home produced products. The key is ensuring that you offer the right product to the right consumer in the right retail environment. This can only be achieved if you understand consumers needs and know where and how they shop and what makes them decide to purchase.

A fundamental issue to appreciate is that consumers do not decide to go out and purchase a piece of craft. They are needs led. They decide they need a gift, an item for the home or an item for themselves - in other words they are connecting with words like giftware, homeware, accessories etc. The great news for the sector is that craft fits into each of these categories or market segments. The key is to think like the consumer when marketing craft items, so that they are relevant to these categories or segments. And in order to think like a consumer you must understand the consumer.

Overview of the consumer and the marketplace:

Irish consumers have never been more sophisticated or self aware. While the 80s and early 90s were dominated by indigenous retailers - often with a substantial amount of mainstream Irish craft as part of their sales offering - the late 90s and current noughties saw an explosion of retail options (national and international retail chains/high street stores, internet shopping, mail order shopping, international shopping trips etc.) to attract consumer spending. In this new retail mix, Irish craft is a smaller and even diminishing part of the offering as more craftspeople opt to sell direct.

Traditional purchasing patterns have also changed for cash rich consumers who are time poor, therefore access to the consumer's limited time is vital. In addition, brands - both product and retail - have become more influential.

Negative issues being faced by producers and retailers alike include the perception that Ireland has a rip off culture, and the feeling that buying Irish is expensive.

Key Findings

Influencing Factors:

Irish consumers are influenced by a broad variety of internal and external factors. The three key influencing factors are:

- ¥ Lifestage
- ¥ Affluence - available disposable income
- ¥ Purchase occasions - which can be event driven i.e. wedding gift or product driven i.e. buying a bed. These purchase occasions drive consumers need states (that is to say they influence consumer needs).

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News and Reviews

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Purchase occasions can be split further into:

- ¥ Buying for others
- ¥ Buying for self
- ¥ Home focus
- ¥ Non-home focus

And gift needs can be broken down into:

- ¥ Big occasions - such as weddings, anniversaries, new house, purposeful shopping
- ¥ Smaller occasions - such as birthdays, thank you gifts, Christmas, purposeful and impulse purchasing

For the big occasions recognised brand names - including some of the larger craft brands - are key, whereas for the smaller occasions craft may be one of many options - if it is visible to the consumer in the outlets they frequent. But this is a big if. The research shows us that the 25 to 35 age group are not shopping in locations where craft tends to be available - and therefore a huge opportunity exists to harness this market by placing craft in their eyeline in department stores, high street stores, specialist stores and shopping centres.

For self gifts, craft (in particular jewellery) proved popular and craft was also an option for holiday day trip purchases - where the focus tended to be in craft shops, high street shops and garden centres.

Looking at key influences by category:

Purchase Occasion	Most influential factor	Least influential factor
Big special occasion	Brand name/status	Price & whether its Irish
Smaller occasions	Functionality and style	Packaging
Holiday day trips (self gift)	Functionality and style	Emotional reward
Specific furniture items	Functionality	Retailer
Furnishings	Style and design	Brand
Homewares	Functionality, style and design	Brand, quality and price
Costume Jewellery	Fashion and colour	Brand
Precious Jewellery	Design, stones	Brand and price
Clothing and accessories	Style and fashion	Brand and price

Examining the influencing factors, we can see that there are many opportunities for craft to make a greater impact in these segments. Understanding the purchase occasion and the most influential factor within it is critical.

Perceptions of Craft:

Perceptions of craft differ depending on the consumers life stage - with the affluent over 35 s being most predisposed to buy and appreciate craft. The older less affluent groups tended to see craft as a tourist product and the younger groups tended to place least importance on the skill element involved in producing craft.

The 25 - 35 age group, when shown examples of craft were attracted by some of the products - when they were perceived as being contemporary and thus relevant to their lifestyle - but believed they were not visible on the shelves of

the stores they shopped in. This raises two issues. Firstly, about accessibility and the opportunity to target this age group by getting craft onto the shelves in the department, high street and specialist stores that they are inclined to purchase in.

The second issue relates to the link between Irish craft and a purely tourist offering in the mind of consumers. Craft products aimed at tourists are seen as irrelevant to Irish consumers. Even more negatively, as the Irish consumer has a low opinion of the quality of gifts aimed at tourists, the association of craft with tourist gift has devalued the word itself and made it a liability in marketing to the home buyer. This creates a real challenge for craftspeople.

Craftsmanship as a phrase tended to have more positive connotations for consumers - and they connected the phrase with words like bespoke, quality, premium and style.

There was also ambiguity as to what exactly was meant by the word craft. Consumers tend to think more in terms of product category (such as giftware, homeware, fashion etc.) rather than whether an item is craft and which discipline it falls into.

This does not need to create a problem for craft producers as there is a clear opportunity to identify the product categories their work fits into and market their products accordingly i.e. functional pottery could fall into the categories of homeware, kitchenware and giftware, while textiles could fit into homeware /interiors, giftware, fashion and accessories.

Likewise there was a mixed reaction to the phrase hand made with older consumers rating it more desirable than others. Even where there was a positive reaction, it was not a strong influencing factor for most consumers. In some cases it was even considered a reason not to buy. However, hand made became valuable where the consumers were informed of the craftsmanship and story behind the creation of the piece. Not surprisingly, retailers are influential on the craft image - the image of retail outlets reflects directly on the image of craft as a product. In the view of consumers the most visible retail presence is the tourist offer at present - with all the negative connotations already described.

‘Craftsmanship’ as a phrase tended to have more positive connotations for consumers - and they connected the phrase with words like bespoke, quality, premium and style.

Retailers are central to the future of Irish crafts, as they are the gateway to key markets which are currently under-developed by the craft sector (such as the 25-35 age group). Different retail options and new retail models need to be considered if the markets are to be fully tapped.

Further retailer research will be undertaken and the results distributed over the coming year.

Continued from page 5

KNOWING YOUR CONSUMER

Building Your Business

Summary of Opportunities

Knowledge is key - and understanding your consumers allows you to plan the best ways to reach and influence them.

Price is not always the key influencing factor - knowing the influencing factors for the different market segments/categories allows you to correctly target your product.

There are various consumer segments - which are currently untapped by the craft sector.

¥ **Accessibility** - having craft product on the shelves of the retail outlets that the consumer shops in - is vital. While this seems obvious, the current trend in the sector of moving to direct selling (i.e. from the studio), means that there is now less craft on the retail shelf than ever before. Indeed, 75% of all craft sales are now direct to the consumer. The risk with this strategy is that as younger consumers (currently the under 35 s), who tend to shop in conventional retail outlets such as shopping centres, department stores and high street stores, become more influential purchasers and as the older affluent groups who tend to be more pre-disposed to shop in craft, gift and specialist outlets become less active purchasers (which is the natural cycle as a population ages) the impact on craft sales will be detrimental. The research is telling us that as a group, the current 25-35 s simply will not travel to a craft studio, or indeed small rural outlets.

¥ **Relevance** - having the right product to suit the market you are targeting is just as important as having product on the shelves. This requires an in-depth knowledge of the market and consumer trends. Presentations, such as the CCol Consumer Trend Presentation by International trend experts **triple dee**, which will take place for exhibitors and buyers at Showcase (and a summary of which will be available on the web site shortly), are essential in order to keep fully informed. See Opportunities on p. 14 for details on the presentation for exhibitors.

¥ **Competences** - having the skills (both craft and business skills) to ensure you can produce the right product and match it to the right market - are also key.

¥ **Image** - so that the consumer can get an accurate perception of the variety, quality and suitability of craft that is available - underpins everything. Craftspeople, retailers and the Crafts Council of Ireland each have a role to play here to ensure a consistent image of craft is projected to the consumer.

The overall opportunity is to find ways in which to raise awareness of craft and to ensure that market-specific craft is available in more and more outlets. Over the coming months the Crafts Council will be announcing initiatives with this end in mind and we are currently undertaking a proactive PR campaign to increase the craft profile in key consumer media.

Next steps

The Crafts Council will be taking the consumer research a stage further - drilling down to find out more information on the different key segments, how large they are, what makes consumers tick in these areas etc. - over the coming months. The results will be published in *Stoppress* and on the website as they become available (towards the middle of the year).

This research is not only key to every craft business it is also instrumental in the CCol planning process. Information gathered will enable us to tailor projects, services and activities which can facilitate craftspeople in better understanding their consumers and in planning ways of reaching them with suitable products.



Furniture Designer Michael Bell the latest 'Standard Setter'

The most recent craftsman to be selected as a 'Standard Setter' is Michael Bell, Furniture Designer. Congratulations to Michael - you can read about his work and influences in the current issue of *Irish Arts Review* (Winter 2005).

Standard Setter is a joint initiative of CCol and *Irish Arts Review* that promotes the concept of acknowledging consistency in design excellence within the craft industry.

Throughout 2006 Standard Setters are selected from **PORTFOLIO** - a CCol digital catalogue of work selected by a panel of International experts, from Ireland's leading art and design led makers.

Irish Arts Review offer CCol registered craftspeople a special discounted subscription rate. For more information see P. 14

News and Reviews



Aisling McLoughlin displaying her new work, at National Craft Fair, RDS

FIRST NEW PRODUCT OF 50% SCHEME

Aisling McLoughlin is the first awardee of the 50% Scheme to complete her new product.

Aisling developed a textile handbag range using Shibori, 'Japanese shaped resist dyeing' techniques which allows the fabric to be treated in a 3-dimensional form.

With the assistance of the 50% Scheme, Aisling was able to take time out and travel to Japan to learn the new techniques from Japanese dye master Akihiko Izukura.

"My new product was very well received, everyone thought it was very different to anything they had seen in the past. The 50% Scheme has given me the opportunity to take the risk with a new product - without it I could not have done it successfully"

For further information on the 50% Scheme see page 15 in the opportunities section or visit the website www.ccoi.ie/50-percent.html



DESIGNING IRELAND - THE PUBLICATION

THE PUBLICATION WHICH ACCOMPANIES THE EXHIBITION 'DESIGNING IRELAND' CATALOGUES THE WORK OF THE KILKENNY DESIGN WORKSHOPS (KDW) AND IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE. THIS EXHIBITION WAS FIRST LAUNCHED IN CORK AS PART OF CORK 2005, AND IS DUE TO OPEN IN THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY KILKENNY, IN FEBRUARY (FORMORE DETAILS GO TO PAGE 24).

It includes an introduction by Paul Hogan who was involved with the 1961 Design in Ireland report, which led to the set-up of KDW. This beautifully illustrated book has many archival images and a facsimile reproduction of the Design in Ireland report itself. There are also contributions from the curator, Joanna Quinn, and freelance craft writers Ruth Thorpe and Eleanor Flegg that highlight the legacy and importance of the KDW.

To purchase a copy

A hardback copy is available for €30 directly from the Crafts Council of Ireland contact T: 056 7761804

Designing Ireland is organised by the Crafts Council of Ireland and co-funded by Cork 2005.



News and Reviews

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'05 bursary

CCol Bursary 2005 Presentation to Liam Flynn, Woodturner



Liam Flynn (L) after receiving his Bursary award from CCol Chairman, Martin Walsh (R)

Rapidly becoming one of the leading names, not just in Ireland but on the international craft scene, Liam Flynn of Abbeyfeale, Limerick, officially received his Bursary prize of €8,000 from the Crafts Council of Ireland at the opening of the 'Collectors at the Hunt Museum' exhibition in Limerick on 8th December last.

Liam, whose work was described as world class by the selection panel creates a wide variety of individually designed wooden vessels from Irish oak. He is recognised by his peers as one of the leading exponents in his field and his work is included in some of the world's most prestigious public and private collections. Presenting the award to Liam on behalf of the Crafts Council, Chairman Martin Walsh said he hoped that the Bursary award would enhance his reputation on the international market.

Applications are now being accepted for Bursary 2006. For details on how to apply and further information see page 15 in Opportunities.



Piece from the Designing Ireland Exhibition

Awards to Networks

The following networks were successful in their applications for funding for 2006. They are:

- Create
- Donegal Craft Guild
- Irish Artist Blacksmiths Association
- Castletomer Estate Yard
- 6 Times Tables
- Weaving Works
- Hands on Cork
- Handweavers Guild of Cork
- West Cork Craft & Design Guild
- Laois Craft Group
- Feltmakers Guild
- Cork Textiles Network

For further information on Network funding contact Mary Whelan T: 056 7761804
E: maryw@ccoie

Adaptive Craft Update:

A (CCol/AIC) Craft and science collaboration

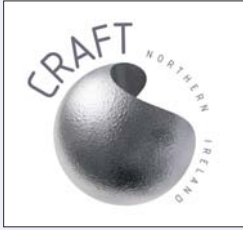
The Adaptive Craft Project marries craft and science in the creation of prototypes for industry.

An information session was held for interested applicants at Dublin City University (DCU) in December, which gave them an opportunity to tour the lab facilities and talk to AIC Scientists about live projects. As a result, CCol received a number of high quality, well thought out submissions.

A panel of experts, including Marie O Mahony, consultant in textiles and technology and author of Techno Textiles, and AIC Principal Investigator Professor Dermot Diamond, will make the selection in January. The successful applicant will be announced in the next edition of Stopress.

He or she will begin the project in February, working with AIC researchers in chemistry, engineering and computing. Six months spent on and off campus will enable an exploration of the potential of smart materials and creation of practical design solutions, integrating and exploiting this cutting edge technology.

For further information contact:
Sharon Rollston T: 056 7761804 E: sharon@ccoie



Craft Northern Ireland: A New Champion for Craft in Northern Ireland

Craft Northern Ireland, a new regional development organisation for craft, was launched on 28th November at Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast. Craft NI has been established to support individual designer-makers and businesses. It will promote the development of aesthetic and design aspects of craft in the region, while also stimulating opportunities to increase business success.

Raising the profile of Northern Irish contemporary craft among the general public, arts and business communities will be a key objective of Craft Northern Ireland.

Joe Kelly, Director of Craft Northern Ireland said, There is a wealth of talented designer-makers who have established their reputation both within Northern Ireland and further afield. Our role is to develop and support the sector and to create an environment in which individuals and businesses can build for their own success both at home and abroad.

For further information contact: Craft Northern Ireland T: +44 (0) 28 9038 8389 E: info@craftni.org W: www.craftni.org



Portfolio CD-Rom launch

The **Portfolio CD-Rom** will be launched with the Spring 2006 edition of the Irish Arts Review magazine. A supplement dedicated to PORTFOLIO and the collectors market and the PORTFOLIO CD Rom will be distributed with each magazine.

Irish Arts Review offer CCol registered craftspeople a special discounted subscription rate. For more information see P. 14

For further information on Portfolio contact:

Ann Dack
Project Manager,
T: 056 7724491
M: 087 6490463
E: anndack@eircom.net



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland



Arts Council of Northern Ireland Funding

Crafts Council of Ireland are delighted to announce they have secured funding from ACNI, enabling registered craftspeople* from Northern Ireland to apply for the following projects:

- Third Level Awards (Associate member*)
- 50% Scheme
- Photoscheme
- Portfolio
- Made for America

Associate memberunder the following category
'Student from a recognised college'*



COMING SOON.....

- ▶ Backing up your critical data
- ▶ How to measure the success of your website
- ▶ Databases: tracking your customers and suppliers
- ▶ Online Business Banking
- ▶ Using a computer and the internet to track the dispatch and distribution of your products
- ▶ Using internet news groups to expand and share your knowledge of current craft practices

ARCHIVE.....

- ▶ Stopress 1, 2005
Digital Imaging: Part 3
(for Part 1 & Part 2 see 2004 Issues 5 & 6)
- ▶ Stopress 2, 2005 Looking Back, Planning Forward
- ▶ Stopress 3, 2005
The Nasty Stuff: Part 1 Viruses
- ▶ Stopress 4, 2005
The Nasty Stuff: Part 2
Adware & Spyware
- ▶ Stopress 5, 2005
Backing up your computer
- ▶ Stopress 6, 2005
The Nasty Stuff: Part 3 Spam

CRAFT-IT

What sort of Website is best for you?

The easiest way to tackle this topic is to use the old cliché of thinking about a website like a printed leaflet or brochure.

Broadly speaking the choice here is:

- ¥ Leaflet printed on one side
- ¥ Fancier A4 printed two sides and folded in 2 to A5
- ¥ Full brochure with multiple pages
- ¥ Mail order catalogue

Lets consider them one by one together with the internet site variations of them - and then we will look at a new alternative that does not necessarily have a printed equivalent.

Leaflet printed on one side

This is cheap (usually) and cheerful (hopefully). It contains one or two photos of your crafts and maybe also yourself. It will have an address and other contact details.

The internet site version

The internet site version of this is a simple one page website that gives exactly the same details and information. The only difference being that (with some work) it can be viewed by anyone using the internet and is not limited to be distributed like its paper cousin. Every business should have this at the least - if only as a courtesy for potential customers who want to find out even basic information about you. **For an example:** Go to www.leoscarffdesign.com

Suitable for:

Any craft business which does not have the time or resources to develop a larger site. It can be done for free using the free template and hosting facilities that are offered on the internet.

For an example: Go to www.geocities.com/adebarra

Fancier A4 printed two sides and folded in 2 to A5

Here s where you start getting all fancy. And usually a little more expensive. A chance to show off a little bit more of your craft and maybe a shot of your workshop.

The internet site version

The internet site version normally has a number of pages. Usually with some of the following sections:

- ¥ About Me — giving the background of the crafts person (people)
- ¥ Contact Me — giving full contact details for you, including an email address!
- ¥ My Products/Crafts — with a couple of representative examples of your work but nothing like the full range
- ¥ Stockists — if you have stock in retailers around Ireland

Suitable for:

This is the one that the majority of craft businesses with websites have gone for - in a random look



www.mklopp-pottery.ie



www.leoscarffdesign.com



www.loobylyu.com

at over 30 sites from the CCOI search page the majority were structured like this. For this one it is an advantage to have an existing logo and a choice of good photography to work with. **Some good examples:** <http://www.treadsoftlyrugs.com/> and www.rogerbennettwoodturner.com

Full brochure with multiple pages

This one is rare enough in print format - because the expense of getting a full brochure done has to be balanced against its anticipated lifespan before the products it contains are changed or updated.

Having an internet site done with all or the majority of your products contained therein is not always expensive - however it is still a certain amount of hassle because of the need for a quantity of really good photography combined with the development of the descriptions for each product. In addition there are design issues associated with making sure that a visitor to an extensive website can find the products that they want. However an internet site has a significant advantage over paper here - a well planned site can be updated very quickly to add new products and take down old ones.

Suitable for:

A larger or more developed craft business with an extensive product line. Especially if you sell directly to consumers or if your stockists only carry a limited range of your products. **Some good examples:** www.mklopp-pottery.ie & www.alanardiff.com

Mail order catalogue

The ultimate - consumers can order directly from you using a printed catalogue. They send you the order and a cheque or credit card details and you pack up the crafts and send them back. Hey - full retail price. Could not be better. And so why not do the same with your internet site? If you are going to the trouble of taking all of those photos and putting up the details on your site then just put up a price as well and wait for the orders to roll in.

If you have an existing mail order fulfilment business and are used to dealing with multiple small orders then why not? If you haven't then be wary - one of the reasons why retailers exist is that they have to deal with consumers, and maybe you would just prefer to stick to what you do best. Combined with that there are challenging issues around security of credit cards.

The weekend lifestyle piece

You know the one - pics of the crafts person in their workshop being all creative combined with an interview where they explain the influences on their work, the inspiration they get from their family and friends, etc, etc. Who wouldn't want the exposure - if only because it helps potential craft consumers to connect with the person behind a piece of craft.

Welcome to blogging - an emerging style of internet site that offers a more personable approach to technology. The term describes sites that are updated frequently (anything from weekly to daily) with stories of day to day occurrences that have no place at all on a more formal business website.

These stories could be problems with suppliers or equipment, challenges in designing new products or interesting things or people seen at a trade show. The feeling is more open and sharing than a traditional site and visitors to a blog are usually invited to leave comments on what is contained there.

We will cover blogs in much more detail in a separate article in this series - they offer a great opportunity for craftspeople to generate publicity and goodwill for themselves and their work.

For a good example of this have a look at: <http://www.loobylyu.com/> - this is the blog of Claire Robertson — an illustrator and toy maker living and working in Australia.

CRAFTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Printmaking

By Declan Cullen

In this article on Crafts and the Environment we look at Printmaking. Printing is one of the most 'industrial' processes within the whole remit of Irish crafts. It also has the potential to be the one with the largest environmental impact.

Cork Printmakers is an open access fine art printmaking facility in Crosses Green Cork, where it shares a building with the Fenton Gallery. Dominic Fee is the facility's workshop technician. He's seen changes over the years. According to Fee, the past decade has seen great - and welcome - change in craft printing. People have made themselves very aware of the possibility that the substances with which they worked could be harmful. The greatest success has been in silk-screen printing, where the inks are now usually water based - and a whole lot more pleasant to use. "Ten years ago, everyone used solvent-based inks. Both the ink and the solvent you used for cleaning the screens were obnoxious. People used to use it, but you didn't see too many old silk screen printers who were still active, if you know what I mean." He's telling the truth: "Silk screen printing is one of the most hazardous processes in the arts and crafts. As Fee says, the downside to water-based inks is that they don't give the same intensity of colour. "It's a small price to pay."

Look through the Crafts Council's database of silk-screen printers and you would be hard pushed to find one not using water-based inks. Hans Smits, for example, runs Kes, a small scale operation by his own admission, printing Celtic designs onto tweed. He uses water based inks - even for the odd t-shirt that he prints. It is more tricky to use than solvent based stuff, but it is a lot more pleasant a substance to be exposed to. "If they're doing silk-screening in schools, they use water-based inks," he points out.

Gerry McGivern, the commercial manager for Millers, Dublin, one of the biggest print suppliers in the country, says that the difference between the two - water-



Jem Textiles

versus solvent-based inks - is not so stark a difference as perhaps it once was. "Water-based inks were originally regarded as more environmentally friendly." Solvent-based inks have improved, he says, so the difference is not so stark as it was, perhaps. His company, he points out, sells both, so he hasn't got a particular axe to grind.

County Carlow-based Jacinta Moody is another silk-screen printer. Again, she doesn't use plastisol inks. But she is also unhappy at the idea of washing water-based inks off her screens and releasing it into the environment. It is one of the reasons why she outsources some of her printing.

"We've been trying to find something more environmentally friendly," she says, "especially something to look after the water waste. We were looking at carbon filters, all sorts of things. I've contacted six or seven water treatment firms in Ireland, but I've been very disappointed with the result."

The greatest success has been in silk-screen printing, where the inks are now usually water based – and a whole lot more pleasant to use.

McGivern, who knows a bit about inks, bursts out laughing when asked. "Of course you can't wash whatever you want down the drain." Nor is he willing to give a blanket 'OK' for water based inks "You can't be absolutely sure unless you know what's in them. Some special inks might contain carcinogens, for instance." However, he knows what's in the water-based inks his company sells. These, he says, don't pose a huge environmental hazard. Consider what you do with them, McGivern says. When you are finished printing, you scrape any excess off the screen and put it back in the tin. What there is left on the screen can be safely washed. It wouldn't be responsible behaviour if there was a large quantity of the ink, he concedes, but you wouldn't consider washing gallons of bleach down the drains either, yet anyone who cleans their toilet doesn't mind washing away a few millilitres of bleach.

So what about Jacinta Moody, and her concerns over the supposedly benign water-based inks? It may be an issue of scale, but maybe she is being both responsible and prescient. The quantities of water-soluble inks flushed into drains and septic tanks may be very small, but when considering

We would do well to look at the US, which typically adopts environmental legislation a decade or so before we copy them.

environmental issues - and especially environmental regulation - we would do well to look at the US, which typically adopts environmental legislation a decade or so before we copy them. There, regulators have already started to consider all printing operations, even the very smallest. And as a recent advisory to US printers warned: "the assumption that these [water-based] inks and their wash-up wastes can simply go down the drain is misleading."

Silk-screener have moved on to water-based products. What about other types of printing? Cork Printshop facilitates

intaglio printing, etching and lithography. There is a lot of research into replacing solvent-based inks with water-based for these processes, says Fee. Unfortunately, very little of it has been successful. Americans arriving in on exchange programmes have kept him abreast of such attempts: "People in the US are not using them because they don't really work." As a result, intaglio and lithographic printmakers must persist with solvent-based inks. He is mindful that the risks of solvents are not just to the environment, but also to the individual: "We minimise solvent use, we make sure that we have very good venting." Says Fee, they don't even always have to use solvent to clean off inks. Using a detergent first allows you to drastically cut down on how much solvent you use. "A lot of it is just common sense."

He also points to other areas where progress is being made - in preparing the plates. Etching printing plates means using acid - or at least, it always used to. It is now possible to etch with light, with so called photo-intaglio. There is even a process (called Solarplate - it has a website, and is easily found with Google) which uses just naked sunlight to etch a design from a light-sensitive polymer plate. Whatever isn't fixed by the process is just washed away with water (although the same caveats as with silk-screening obviously apply).

And, of course, some older techniques are being shown to be very environmentally friendly, says Fee. For instance, the dry point intaglio technique - where the image to be printed is drawn directly onto the print plate. Limerick-based fine art printmaker David Lilburn uses just such a technique - akin to old style engraving. It minimises his use of chemicals, and that's one of the reasons he likes it.

But if you really want to talk about environmentally friendly print plate making, go and see Clare Kelly at the Clann Luan Arts and Crafts Centre in Longford. She does woodcuts. And what does she do with the waste? "They go into the fire, they keep me warm."

Opportunities

Opportunities...Opportunities...Opportunities...Opportunities




The 10th International Craft, Gift, Fashion & Interiors Fair

NOTICE

TO ALL CCoI SHOWCASE EXHIBITORS

**Consumer Trend Presentation at Showcase 2006
on Monday 23rd January, 2006 at 8.30am
in the Merrion Room, RDS** (above the organisers office)

The presentation – by international consumer trend experts, triple dee - focuses on the key trends in the consumer market at present and offers an invaluable insight into the direction the market is taking.

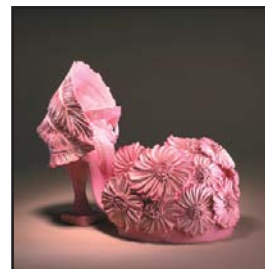
See also article on p. 4.

Spaces are limited - so if you have not already pre-booked a space by e-mail, please do not turn up without first checking availability with a member of staff on the CCoI main information stand in the lobby of Area J.

At the show this year you will also notice the **CCoI Lifestyle Trend Area** - which is located at the end of the SOURCE aisle in the Main Hall. This is a visual interpretation of the trends being discussed in the presentation - using product primarily from craftspeople at the show. Please take the time to browse through this area – it is being strongly promoted to buyers, and it could be beneficial to your sales approach to be fully informed.



Bernadette Dolan

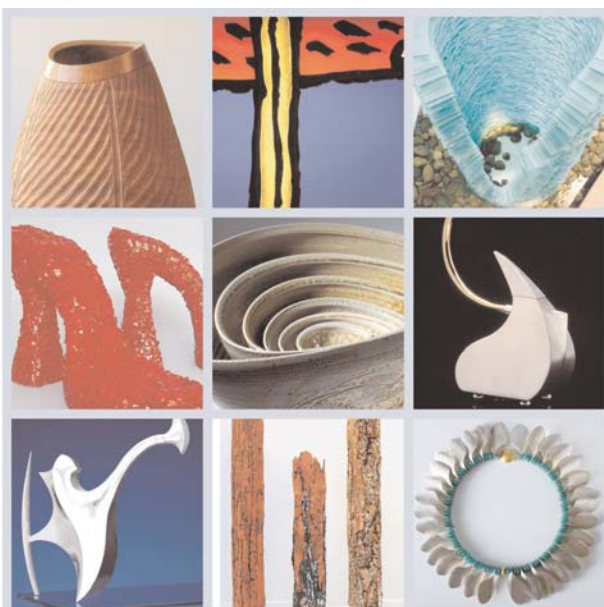
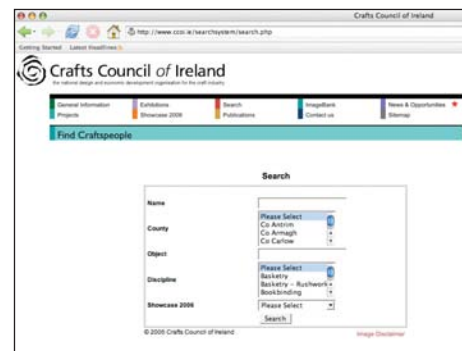


Bernadette Dolan

CCoI Website

Launch of Advanced Search System

Log onto the CCoI website at www.ccoi.ie/search to experience the latest enhancements, which enable users to search across multiple fields including: name, discipline, location and Showcase 2006.



SPECIAL OFFER FOR CCoI-REGISTERED CRAFTSPEOPLE!

The Spring 2006 edition of the Irish Arts Review will feature unprecedented coverage of Irish craft. In addition to Design Portfolio, this edition will include **PORTFOLIO**, a Special Crafts Council Edition of Irish Arts Review. CCoI-registered craftspeople may claim a **20% DISCOUNT** off annual subscription rates to the Irish Arts Review. Subscribe today to guarantee your copy of this landmark craft edition of the Irish Arts Review.

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Credits. Top (l-r): Liam Flynn, Peadar Lamb, Michelle O'Donnell; Middle (l-r): Margarita Paile, Mandy Parslow, Kevin O'Dwyer; Bottom (l-r): Seamus Gill, Jane Jermy, Inga Reed. All work featured in Portfolio, published with the Spring 2006 Edition of the Irish Arts Review.

New Year resolution! Apply to the 50% Schemeand get assistance towards those new product ideas you've been planning.

Closing date: 3rd February 2006

The '50% Scheme' gives registered craftspeople financial assistance towards making new products for a specific market opportunity i.e. exhibition, consumer event or trade show. CCol contributes 50% of the costs of developing the new product.

The first person to complete the 50% Scheme in 2005, was Aisling McLoughlin - see page 7 to read about her experience and see images of her displaying her new work at RDS craft show in December.

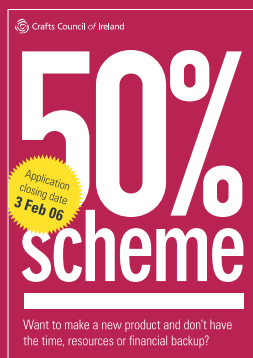
How to apply:

An application form and a CD of images must be submitted by 3rd February 2006. An independent panel will make their selection in mid February and applicants will be informed shortly afterwards. 50% of the award will be given up front and the remainder on completion of the new work. Application forms are available to download from www.ccoi.ie/50-percent.html

Closing Date 3rd February 2006.

For further information contact:

Helen Lynch T: 048 30833605 E: helen@helenlynch.net



bursary'06

worth €20,000

Closing date: Friday 28th April 2006

The Crafts Council is delighted to announce the launch of the 2006 Bursary .

What is the CCol Bursary?

The CCol recognises that Irish craft is driven by creativity, and it is this dynamic that has led to a vibrant indigenous industry that is a natural meeting point for culture and commerce. The CCol Bursary will be awarded to support professional craftspeople in the creative development of their craft, which will lead to new opportunities in their practice.

How much is it worth?

In 2006 the Bursary Scheme has a fund of €20,000 may be given as a single Bursary to an individual, or divided between two or three awardees.

What is the purpose of the Bursary Scheme?

This award is focused on the primary issue of creative development. Its essential purpose is to release the craftsperson from their usual commitments so that they can invest in creative development of their professional practice.

Who can apply?

Full time craftspeople:

- ✘ who have operated in a business based on their craft for a minimum of 5 years
- ✘ who are Tax compliant
- ✘ who are not in receipt of funding for this proposal from any other source.
- ✘ who are registered with CCol

For further information and an application form contact

Mary Whelan, Crafts Council of Ireland, Castle Yard, Kilkenny
T: 056 7761804 E: maryw@ccoi.ie W: www.ccoi.ie

For queries in relation to the Bursary Scheme contact:

Hilary Morley, Project Manager
T: 091 528524 E: hmorley@esatclear.ie

CD of Textile Conference ****OUT NOW****

A must have for anyone interested in textiles and/or who missed out on the CCol conference

You say Fiber, I Say Fibre
held last Autumn
in Kilkenny.

This CD contains video
footage of the speakers.

How to order a copy of the CD

Contact Mary Whelan

T: 056 7761804

E: maryw@ccoi.ie





Cormac Boydell

Now Showing at the National Museum of Ireland

Collins Barracks, Dublin

Not Just Pots: Irish Ceramics of the 21st Century

to March 2006

This is the first time an exhibition on the subject of Irish Contemporary Ceramics will take place in the National Museum, drawing on objects in the museum's own contemporary ceramics collection as well as showcasing loan material from some of Ireland's leading ceramic artists.

The exhibition will include contemporary ceramic artists; Cormac Boydell, Helena Brennan, Pat Connor; recent NCAD masters graduate Isobel Egan and from the 2004 Crafts Council of Ireland/National Museum of Ireland joint purchase, Sara Flynn, Vivienne Foley, Sonja Landweer; Deirdre McLoughlin, Peter Meanley, Robert Monaghan, Michael Moore, Patrick O'Hara, Marcus O'Mahony, Henry Pim, Neil Read, Ann Marie Robinson, Katharine West and Lisa Young.

When Philip Met Isabella

- Philip Treacy's hats for Isabella Blow

to 28th February 2006

This visually spectacular exhibition explores the collaboration between Philip Treacy and Isabella Blow through a collection of his specially designed hats for her.

Exhibits include an astonishingly realistic replica of an 18th Century French ship with full rigging made from miniature buttons, and the rose pink damask Pope modelled on the papal hat. Also featured is the Gilbert and George, a fantastical concoction of pink and green lacquered ostrich feathers. The exhibition includes photographs by Steven Meisel, David LaChapelle, Juergen Teller and Mario Testino of Isabella Blow wearing Treacy's hats, along with sculptures from Kenny Hunter, Tim Noble and Sue Webster.

The temporary exhibition is in the Riding School at the National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts & History.

For further information please contact:

Eileen Mahon

E: emahon@museum.ie W: www.museum.ie

The Museum opening hours are:

Wednesday to Saturday 10am - 5pm,
Sunday 2-5pm. Late Opening Tuesdays until 8pm.
Closed Mondays.



Isabella Blow with Philip Treacy Hat.
Photo: Donald McPherson



****NEWS... Jeremy Irons opens Feast**

Jeremy Irons opened the West Cork Craft and Design Guild's final "Feast" exhibition.

After setting out from NCG in June 2004, the exhibition has been travelling and evolving for 18 months. Jeremy was presented with a chair by chairmaker Alison Ospina and this photograph was taken of him spontaneously lifting it over his head saying "grown in West Cork"



Dates for your Diary - 2006

***Please note:** Stopress is published by the 15th day of the first month of issue. The March/April issue of Stopress will be published on 15th March, 2006

OPPORTUNITY DIARY DATES

Stopress deadline for March/April issue

Showcase

50% Scheme closing date

Bursary

BY/ON/CURRENTLY/TBC*

is 15th February 2006

on 22nd - 25th January 2006

on 3rd February 2006

on 18th April 2006

SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

Design is the Solution, Kilkenny - seminar in connection with Designing Ireland exhibition

*for further details go to www.ccoi.ie

on 31st March 2006

ENTERPRISE IRELAND TREND FORECAST EVENTS

Jewellery Design and Market Trend Forecast

on 21st June 2006

Womenswear Trend Forecast Autumn/Winter 07/08 - Sessions 1& 2

on 28th June 2006

Furniture Design and Market Trend Forecast

on 9th November 2006

Womenswear Trend Forecast Spring 07 and 08

on 29th November 2006

NCG EXHIBITIONS 2006

NCG Programme 2005

contact NCG or visit website www.ccoi.ie

PIECE

NCG, Castle Yard, Kilkenny Designing Ireland

on 2nd Dec - 29th January 2006

NCG, Castle Yard, Kilkenny

on 4th Feb - 2nd April 2006



**HIGHLIGHT
IMPORTANT
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Mannequin for sale. For further information contact Yvonne
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www.castlecomerestateyard.com

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ciaranadamson@eircom.net

OPPORTUNITIES

Éigse Carlow Arts Festival 2006 invites crafts people to submit their work for selection for this exhibition. An award of €1,000 will be given to an exhibitor whose work is deemed to be of an exceptional standard. Closing date for submissions is Friday 24th March.
For further information and submission forms contact T: 059 9140491 or e: eigse3@eircom.net

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E: information@covepark.org
www.covepark.org Funded by the Scottish Arts Council

Fibre Art International

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www.fiberartinternational.org
closing date 18th August 2006. For further information contact Mary Towner T: + 001 412 521 2547 or
E fiberartinternational@yahoo.com

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E: lucinda@project-planning.com

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A Journey at Bridge Gallery, 6 Upper Ormond Quay, Dublin 7 from 19th January - 17th February 2006
For Further information contact Deirdre Carroll T: 01 872 9702
E: mail@thebridgегallery.com

WORKSHOPS /COURSES

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Monday 1st - 6th May 2006
Anam-Cre Studio, Rusheens, Kenmare, Co Kerry.

For further information contact

Anne Marie O'Shea on
T: 06441849 or 06441673
www.kenmare-pottery.com

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T: 01 6405614, M: 087 2047695,
E: michelle@ceramicsforms.com
or visit website
www.ceramicforms.com

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8th - 10th March

29th - 31st March

5th - 7th April

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www.benrussell.info

Mosaic Tiles and Kits Various projects and colours. For further information contact Colette
T: 056 8833623 M: 087 0539504
or E: coletteobrien61@eircom.net

The Irish Basket Makers Association is offering a course in **Ash Splint basket making on 11th - 13th March** The tutor is John Maguire from USA. Cost €175.
For further information contact Mike Kreith T: 093 35357



Fiona Kerr

Advertisements

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7th-10th February
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28th-31st of March
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For further information contact
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E: anke@irishbears.com
www.irishbears.com

MARKETS

Farmers market being held at **Bellingham Castle, Co. Louth**, first Sunday of each month. More than 50 stalls: pottery, clothes, preserves, bread, meat, handmade chocolates plus many more.

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Janette T: 086 6060277 or
T: 086 6060277

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E: nmcraft@eircom.net

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or E: jemtextiles@eircom.net

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info@craftsupplies.ie

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For latest Opportunities log onto www.ccoi.ie/opportunities

Exhibition Snapshots

COLLECTORS at the HUNT MUSEUM and PIECE at the NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY



Ciarán Forbes (Woodturner) and Virginia Teehan (Director of Hunt Museum) at the opening of COLLECTORS at the Hunt Museum, Limerick



Eimear Conyard (Jewellery) and Helen Carroll (NCG PR) at the opening of Piece in NCG



Freda Rupp (ceramist) and Lajos Rupp (partner) at the opening of COLLECTORS at the Hunt Museum, Limerick



Dawn Mitchell (textiles) and Ken Mitchell at the opening of Piece in NCG



Freda Rupp (Ceramist) at the opening of COLLECTORS at the Hunt Museum, Limerick



Guests at the opening of COLLECTORS at the Hunt Museum, Limerick



Ann McNulty (Ceramics) and Ken Ramsey at the opening of Piece in NCG



Gillian Freedman (Textiles) and Hilary Morley (CCol Project Manager) at the opening of COLLECTORS at the Hunt Museum, Limerick



Jane Seymour (ceramist) and guest at the opening of COLLECTORS at the Hunt Museum, Limerick

National Craft Gallery

2005 - A Review

2005 was probably the gallery's most successful year to date. Not only did the gallery attract record crowds, but they also expanded. Gallery 2, a beautiful new space just across the arch from the main gallery, opened its doors to the public. This exciting new venture offers the Crafts Council of Ireland, our many talented craftspeople and, most importantly, the public, the chance to see an even wider selection of stylish, challenging and even groundbreaking exhibitions.

The 2005 exhibitions programme started on a high when *Forty Shades of Green* opened in the Lewis Glucksman Gallery in UCC in early January. One of the major exhibitions of Cork 2005, this showcase was a stunning snapshot of art practice in contemporary Ireland. After Cork, the show travelled to the USA and Lithuania and will continue its tour throughout 2006.

At home in Kilkenny, the exhibitions programme continued to draw record crowds. Early in the year, the gallery played host to some of Europe's most exciting craftspeople. *Figures in Norwegian Contemporary Ceramics* and *Origins* featured stunning examples of contemporary fibre art from Wales.

Later in the summer, the gallery hosted two fibre art shows - *Fibre: A New World View* was curated by Rick and Ruth Snyderman of the Snyderman Works Gallery in Philadelphia and *Wearable & UnWearable* curated by Angela O Kelly, was a breathtakingly beautiful body of work. These two exhibitions proved to be a high point for both practitioners and fans of fibre art.

Other exhibitions in the National Craft Gallery showed how exciting contemporary Irish craft has become. There was something of a celebration in the gallery early in the summer with *Review*, a show that looked back on the gallery's first four years. Major figures from the exhibitions programme were selected to exhibit and record crowds attended to admire some of the best work we have to offer.

And once again, the gallery played host to the *annual graduate exhibition* and this year it was the turn of the jewellery students. The CCol's Goldsmithing and Jewellery Design and Skills Course is the only goldsmithing course in Ireland. It has justifiably earned an international reputation and the 2005 graduate exhibition proved why.

A lot of visitors to the gallery, smaller ones in particular, would say that *Playthings* was the highlight of the year. Musical rocking chairs, giant dress up dolls and sculptures you could swing from. For once, children were invited to touch, feel and even play with the exhibits.

Piece, which closed the year for the National Craft Gallery, was an innovative exhibition inspired by two simple words. Artists were asked what the words Piece and Peace meant to them, they responded wonderfully. This exhibition was organised by Craftmark - a Cross-Border Initiative funded by The EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation.

Another reason 2005 was considered a major success for the National Craft Gallery was *Collectors*: A significant departure for the Crafts Council of Ireland, these events were aimed at introducing high-end buyers to the exclusive work of some of our most distinguished craftspeople and thanks to these events, collecting Irish craft is fast becoming a highly regarded activity.

There are many exciting plans for the year ahead and visitors can rest assured the high quality programme associated with Ireland's National Craft Gallery will continue to get better and better.

Christmas Presence

Visitors to the National Craft Gallery were given a sneak preview of one of the most popular events in the CCol's calendar. And healthy sales figures show that very few of them went home empty handed.

The exhibition then travelled to the RDS for the National Craft Fair of Ireland where, once again, it took centre stage. All tastes, styles and price ranges were catered for with a wonderful exhibition packed full of beautifully crafted ceramics, baskets, textiles, jewellery, glass and woodwork.

Designing Ireland is the first exhibition to open in the National Craft Gallery in 2006. To find out more see P.24



Sara Flynn



Micheál Martin TD, Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment visiting CCol exhibition Christmas Presence



Stephen Price

Upcoming Exhibition - National Craft Gallery

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National Craft Gallery DESIGNING IRELAND

4th February – 2nd April 2006

A look back at the ground-breaking Kilkenny Design Workshops. This exhibition is a stunning retrospective of the birth of contemporary design in Ireland.

In the early 1960s, few industries in Ireland recognised the commercial importance of good design. In an attempt to encourage and inspire manufacturers the Irish Export Board decided to establish a pioneering collective of designers: In 1963, Kilkenny Design Workshops was born.

Although KDW initially concentrated on craft-based industries, it wasn't long before they moved into the areas of graphic and industrial design. They also sold craft products through their shops in Kilkenny and Dublin.

KDW products dominated Ireland's visual landscape for over 20 years. They designed everything from those familiar logos for the OPW and Telecom Eireann, to products like the original yellow Bruscar litter bins and beautifully designed craft pieces. The world's first-ever State design agency literally designed how Ireland was seen from the mid 1960s.

Designing Ireland is the first exhibition of the work of KDW since its closure in 1988. Wandering through this collection of original products is a beautiful and inspiring history lesson. Curated and researched by Joanna Quinn this is a timely celebration of KDW's unacknowledged impact on Ireland's visual heritage.



Rudolf Heltzel

Designing Ireland is organised by the Crafts Council of Ireland and co-funded by Cork 2005.

For information on the Designing Ireland publication see page 7.

For further information contact the gallery at:

T: 056 7761804 E: ncgpress@ccoie.ie W: www.ccoie.ie

The National Craft Gallery is open Monday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm and Sundays 11am to 6pm. Admission is free.



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Crafts Council of Ireland, Castle Yard, Kilkenny
t: 353 56 7761804 f: 353 56 7763754
e: info@ccoie.ie www.ccoie.ie

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Communications Dept. Crafts Council of Ireland t.056 7761804, e: stopress@ccoie.ie

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