

Call to Celebrate Ireland's Designer Makers this September

- National consumer campaign launched to promote Irish craft and design
- Upcoming Irish exhibition at prestigious London Design Festival announced

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland played host to a pop-up lunch today to celebrate and showcase contemporary Irish design. This once-off dining experience took place to launch the Crafts Council of Ireland's "Celebrating Ireland's Designer Makers" campaign throughout the month of September. Guests were seated at stunning Irish hand crafted tables adorned with elegant linen, glassware and candles, and dined on food served on exquisite ceramic tableware, all made by craftspeople throughout the country.

The campaign – which highlights beautiful craft products "**Imagined, Designed and Made in Ireland**" and the talented people behind them – focuses on **furniture, interiors, fashion and accessories**. It will be promoted in 60 retail outlets around Ireland, in makers studios and through a dedicated website www.giveirishcraft.com where consumers can browse gift suggestions and view stockists of Irish craft throughout Ireland.

Reflecting the diversity of contemporary Irish craft and design, the makers featured in the campaign include **Noel Whelan Furniture Design, Cushendale Woollen Mills, Jerpoint Glass, Ana Faye leather bags and Edmund McNulty knitwear**.

The craft sector is a key component of Ireland's creative industries, and there is a real sense of excitement in this area with talented and exciting craftspeople unveiling innovative, world-class new work on a weekly basis. According to **Brian McGee, Head of Market Development at the Crafts Council of Ireland**, in the current economic climate it is more important than ever to promote entrepreneurship and demonstrate excellence in innovation and new product development.

"Consumers are looking for more than the over-priced mass-produced premium brands where often quality can be compromised to pay for elaborate marketing campaigns and celebrity endorsements," McGee said. "Buying something designed and made in Ireland brings with it a story, authenticity and an emotional connection that you can't get with glitzy advertising."

"The value of Irish craft and design is complex. Part price, part quality, it is deeply rooted in the story of the maker and where it was made, and in our long and rich heritage of fine design and craftsmanship."

Brian McGee said there is a new crop of young Irish designer makers emerging who need to be acknowledged. "From early Celtic expression to Georgian style, and on into 20th century modernism and today, Irish designers and craftspeople have been creating world-renowned beautiful objects to adorn our homes and our bodies. Irish design's unique style has been celebrated over the years at home and abroad. But there is a new generation of young designer makers emerging who are bringing fantastic ideas to life with great energy and passion. The tougher the climate gets, the more creative and switched on they get. And they are determined to succeed."

"The Crafts Council of Ireland is committed to giving these young designers a voice, to help their remarkable work to be seen and appreciated and bought by consumers in Ireland and overseas", he added.

As part of these activities in promoting Irish craft and design internationally during Year of Craft 2011, the Crafts Council of Ireland also announced today that later this month 12 of the country's top designers will be exhibiting at **TENT London**, a prestigious, cutting-edge and progressive trade exhibition during the **London Design Festival**.

TENT, which takes place from September 22nd to 25th, will feature over 200 international exhibitors showing the very latest in contemporary interior products - furniture, lighting, ceramics, textiles, materials and accessories. Exhibiting under the name "Design Island – the Cream of Irish Design", the group of Irish craftspeople at TENT will include Shane Holland Design Workshops, Stephen O'Briain Furniture, Dunleavy Bespoke and textile designer Sinéad Mitchell.

"Ireland is quickly gaining a reputation around the world as a hotbed for beautifully-crafted products," said McGee. "With over 19,000 international visitors expected from 44 different countries during the four days, TENT provides the participating Irish craftspeople with an incredible opportunity to promote their work to a discerning international audience."

About Design Island at TENT

The 12 makers from Ireland exhibiting at TENT under the name "Design Island – the Cream of Irish Design" are:

- **Ceadogán Rugs** - www.ceadogan.ie
- **Gabriel Furniture** – www.bengabriel.com
- **Horizon Furniture** – www.horizonfurniture.ie
- **Shane Holland Design Workshops** – www.shanehollanddesign.com
- **Patrick Casserly Design** - www.patrickcasserlydesign.com
- **Sinéad Mitchell** - www.sineadmitchell.com
- **Wedge** - www.wedge.ie
- **Stephen O'Briain Furniture** - www.obriainfurniture.com
- **Omos** – www.omos.ie
- **Klimmek & Henderson Furniture** - www.klimmek-henderson.com

- Dunleavy Bespoke – www.dunleavybespoke.com
- Killian Schurmann Glass Studio - www.schurmannglass.com/

TENT London is one of the largest design trade shows taking place during the London Design Festival each September. Now in its fifth year at the Old Truman Brewery, TENT London presents over 200 international exhibitors, showing the very latest in contemporary interior products - furniture, lighting, ceramics, textiles, materials and accessories. Over 19,000 international trade buyers, high calibre specifiers, opinion forming media and design savvy consumers from 44 different countries attend the four-day event. It is regarded as the most cutting-edge and progressive trade exhibition during the London Design Festival and a “must attend” for those who need to be seen with their finger on the pulse. For more information, visit www.tentlondon.co.uk

About Year of Craft 2011

Promoting authentic Irish craft to consumers is one of the Crafts Council of Ireland’s key marketing activities during **Year of Craft 2011**. The Crafts Council of Ireland and Craft Northern Ireland designated 2011 as the Year of Craft to showcase the very best of craft made on the island of Ireland. The year marks the 40th anniversary of the Crafts Council of Ireland and is being celebrated through a diverse range of dynamic events and programmes.

For more details visit-

www.giveirishcraft.com

www.craftinireland.com

www.ccoi.ie

