



Marie Hanlon, Mio, acrylic on panel, 28.5 x 30cms, 2012

EXHIBITIONS

Wexford Arts Centre

Palimpsest
John Noel Smith

Long Journey in a Short Space
Marie Hanlon

Night and Day
Oonagh Latchford

..fishes, cockerels, felines..
Mary Wallace & Gilly Thomas

Palimpsest

John Noel Smith

Long Journey in a Short Space

Marie Hanlon

Sunday 21st October – Saturday 17th November 2012

Opened by art historian Mairead Furlong on Saturday 20th October at 4pm

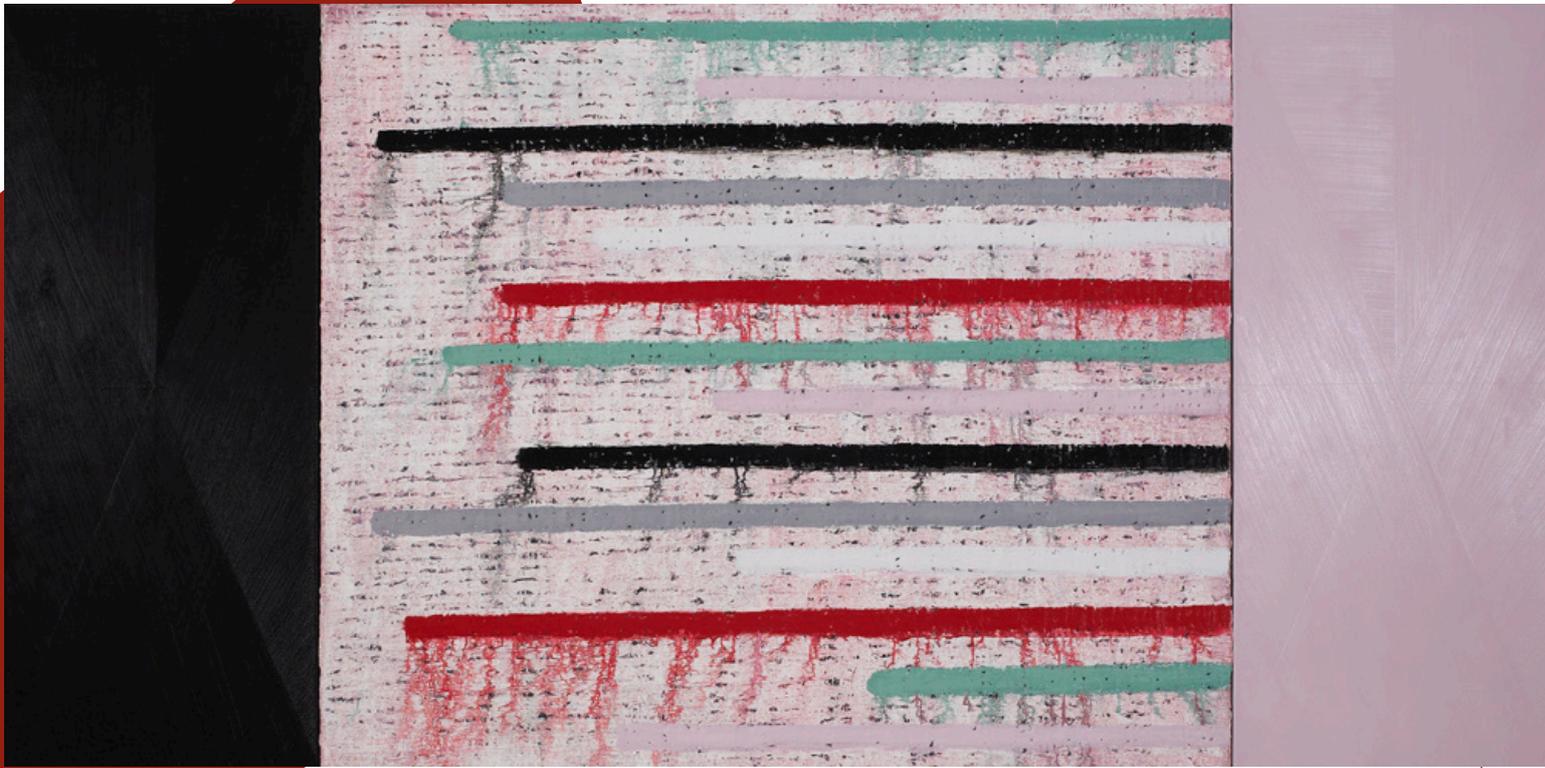
As part of what has become widely known as one of the countrys most remarkable arts experiences; Wexford Festival Opera and Fringe Festival, Wexford Arts Centre is delighted to present exhibitions from two of Ireland's leading contemporary artists; John Noel Smith and Marie Hanlon, to coincide with the overall programming of the month long, multi-faceted event.

On a year round basis, Wexford Arts Centre operates a three-tiered approach in terms of delivering its high quality visual arts programme which involves providing exhibition opportunities for recent graduates, emerging artists and established artists, and originating and producing exhibitions and programmes for touring to other venues. However, during the Opera Festival, the centre strives to deliver shows of a particularly high caliber and in the past has hosted exhibitions by renowned artists such as John Shinnors, Hughie O'Donoghue, Robert Ballagh and most recently U.S. based practitioner, Colin Thomson.

For the 2012 festival exhibition, Wexford Arts Centre shall play host to *Palimpsest* and *Long Journey in a Short Space*, solo exhibitions from two artists that are simultaneously related and yet highly diverse in that while the individual works of both John Noel Smith and Marie Hanlon may be abstract in nature, the process each employs to achieve this realization is entirely unique.

John Noel Smith, Fold Cluster, oil on canvas, 180 x 360cms, 2011





A painter of large scale, heavily layered, abstract canvases, John Noel Smith was born in Dublin and attended Dun Laoghaire School of Art, Dublin before moving to Berlin with a “Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst” scholarship (DAAD) where he studied at the “Universität der Künste Berlin” UdK (Berlin University of the Arts). He has been described as “a brilliant painter” whose works are “frictions torn from conversations, sometimes shouted, between order and chaos, truth and lies, space and time. They do not know their place. In company with them, neither should you. They use boundaries to question limits and use limits to question what might be elsewhere. They celebrate the sheer joy of paint and what you might do with it. Then they object to the illusion that paint could ever make things complete”. (Aidan Dunne and Medb Ruane, respectively, Profile 26 - John Noel Smith, Gandon Editions, 2007). Smith himself says his works are drawn from the realm of culture; they are not directly rooted in the natural world, concept replaces empirical observation, art is seen in terms of reconstruction instead of being a simulacrum of the visible world and painting instead constructs a clear vision of the essence of the phenomenal world.

In the work he has created for *Palimpsest*, Smith uses cruciform as a central theme, the sacred and the profane mingle in interchangeable and enigmatic ways. The physical divisions of the canvas can be read as a logical delineation of a flat surface while also referring back to the tradition of the cruciform in early European painting (Duccio, Cimabue, Giotto). The triptych panels here are not to be seen as disparate forms but as a continuum of interrelated forms. They are a development from the early “Block Icon” works of the middle to late 1970’s where light as distinct from colour was the theme. In these works the successive folds of the cruciform reflect light back to the viewer. The refracted light does not attempt to create a window, a continuation of “real space” or of fictive reality; it challenges the viewer to see the triptych as a set of cohesive forms which are spatially coherent. The orientation is towards the viewer not away from the viewer. In

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this way the work projects into the world rather than offering a passive window. This sculptural or 3D aspect facilitates engagement; by moving around the works colour changes as light falls on the successive folds of the painting.

In Palimpsest, the ideal for Smith is to create a work in which time becomes redundant in the face of accomplished form, thereby creating the effect whereby everything becomes simultaneous.

Marie Hanlon is also concerned with time but rather than focusing on removing measurable pasts and presents, her paintings strive instead to transform everyday experience into timeless image.

Born in Kilkenny, Hanlon studied History of European Painting and English at University College Dublin and has worked as a professional artist since 1990. Although known mainly as an abstract painter, recent developments demonstrate an interest in other forms of art making. She has collaborated with composer Rhona Clarke on projects such as Pas de Quatre - a projection of still images with live performance, Relic, a ten minute video work and Between the Lines a two person exhibition for The Burren College Gallery, Co. Clare. This collaboration will continue in a new work for Solstice Art Centre, Navan and a two person exhibition at Draiocht Art Centre Dublin. For Long Journey in a Short Space at Wexford Arts Centre, Hanlon has returned to art in its painted form and produced a body of delicate and cleanly composed works which explore spatial relationships, seeking to bring paintings to a point where those relationships are both elegant and mysterious.

Marie Hanlon, *Big Deal*, acrylic on panel, 30 x 25cms, 2012



press release

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For Hanlon, source material is often generated by arbitrary encounters with intriguing details to be found in the urban environment. The idea is not to represent the thing seen but rather to transform it into a new reality. Hanlon's painting vocabulary is abstract, made up of shapes, lines, dots, holes and various markings. Sharp colour works against subdued tones with white often playing a key role. A recent development in her practice is to combine drawing with painting, thereby extending the range of expressive possibilities within the work. Loose lines establish pathways of motion, connecting, separating, but mostly agitating the underlying geometry of a piece. Work comes into being slowly. Finding the right line, the right colour, the right placing is the business of painting. Elements are added then removed again but ultimately it is the painting which defines itself. Finished works hold contradictory elements together at their finest point of balanced tension. Symmetry is nudged into disorder; formal elements may be disrupted and precision occasionally invaded by the casual mark. Ultimately the tug of opposites is what makes the work compelling, moving it beyond its own materiality towards something more, and moving towards that indefinable quality of timelessness.

John Noel Smith and Marie Hanlon have exhibited widely both nationally and internationally, and are represented in Ireland by Hillsboro Fine Art and the Rubicon Gallery respectively.

Marie Hanlon, Drop, acrylic on panel, 30 x 25cms, 2012



Night and Day

Oonagh Latchford

Saturday 20th October – Sunday 4th November, 2012

D'Lush Cafe - Wexford Arts Centre

Night and Day, an exhibition of new paintings by Wexford based artist Oonagh Latchford, explores the depiction of light and in particular, the effects of high contrast and over-saturation produced by strong sunlight. Similarly, artificial lighting at night is explored as the artist is concerned with the obliteration of detail by both natural and artificial sources to reveal what is essential of her subject. By incorporating figurative elements into these investigations with light, Latchford continues to develop work in an area that has been the main subject of her recent practice.

Oonagh Latchford graduated from Wexford Campus School of Art & Design, Carlow IT, with a BA (Hons) in Fine Art. Recently, her work has been featured in Studentzine, an online publication for contemporary art, and her writing has been published in Paper Visual Art Journal. Her work is held in many private collections and also with Wexford VEC and IT Carlow. Facilitating both adult and children's workshops, she is currently working with Wexford Arts Centre on a youth visual art project in association with Wexford County Council's Artist in the Community Scheme.

Opening hours:

Monday – Saturday: 9.00am – 5.00pm and Sunday: 10.30am – 4.30pm

Oonagh Latchford, Selskar Sun, oil on canvas, 30 x 60cms, 2012



...fishes, cockerels, felines...

Mary Wallace and Gilly Thomas

Saturday 20th October – Sunday 4th November, 2012

THE ANNEXE - Wexford Arts Centre

The Annexe, at 3 John's Gate Street, will host an exhibition by Wexford based artists Mary Wallace and Gilly Thomas entitled "... fishes, cockerels, felines..." comprising of a collection of new paintings and sculptures exploring the natural side of life – pure intuitive shapes, simplicity of lines and beauty of colour found in nature.

Mary Wallace's mixed media works portray an exuberant response to nature and capture the sensory essence of her subject. Experimenting with a wide range of medium including paint, beeswax and egg tempera, Wallace incorporates a visual exposition of colour and texture into her painting to distil the intrinsic elements of the natural world. Gilly Thomas, her exhibition partner, is a figurative sculptor creating pieces in bronze and other media. This year, her work explores how natural forms give an elegance and quietness to a space.

Both artists have regularly showcased their work throughout the South-East, displaying a shared energy, enthusiasm and passion for their practice. They first exhibited together as Wallace & Thomas in Dublin in 2009 and have collaborated at Wexford Festival Opera since then.

Opening hours:

Monday - Sunday: 11.00am - 6.00pm from 20th October – 4th November 2012

Mary Wallace, Red Cockerel, mixed media, 23 x 23cms, 2012



Gilly Thomas, *Haughty, cassini*, dimensions variable, 2012



Palimpsest and *Long Journey in a Short Space* will run in Wexford Arts Centre from Sunday 21st October to Saturday 17th November, 2012.

For further information on the exhibitions or artists please contact Catherine Bowe, Visual Art Manager of the Wexford Arts Centre on 053 9123764 or email catherine@wexfordartscentre.ie.

Wexford Arts Centre gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the Arts Council, Wexford County Council and Wexford Borough Council.

EXHIBITIONS

Wexford Arts Centre

Gallery opening hours from Sunday 21st October to Sunday 4th November:

Monday – Saturday: 10.00am – 5.30pm

Sundays: 10.30am – 5.30pm

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