

From his drawings of skulls at the Horiman Natural History Museum, UK in 2003-04, the artist made skulls in ceramic from memory in the studio: "hybrids which are not finished sculptures...just components...they just sit there waiting for something which might happen..."

Also on loan are some of the drawings which the artist did for a set of prints called *Pond Life* (2004) in which skulls are somewhere hidden. *Eye to Eye*, 2012 which is cast bronze was inspired by a pair of binoculars which "suddenly just looked like two figures...and became this Adam and Eve (with snake)...I wanted to make it very crudely in terms of 'this is just a lump of clay', yet shamanistic in a very rough way".

Basement

Les Levine: Using the Camera as a Club - Media Projects and Archive

This exhibition includes suites of works from the 1970s by the New York based Irish artist Les Levine (born 1935) entitled *The Troubles: An Artist's Document of Ulster* (1972 & 1979) and *Using the Camera as a Club* (1979). Together they comprise a generous donation by the artist to the IMMA Collection. In donating these works, the artist has stated, "I have always believed this work should belong to the people of Ireland and I am happy that they are now in the collection of IMMA."

A selection of archival material on loan from Levine for the purpose of this exhibition is presented alongside a number of works, recently donated by Barbara and Donald Seligman, which illustrate Levine's media campaigns. He is regarded as the founder of Media Art and is responsible for the terminology Software Art, Disposable Art and Camera Art. In 1974, Levine

wrote the seminal essay "Media: The Bio-Tech Rehearsal for Leaving the Body".

In contrast to Nick Miller and the studio of Edward McGuire in the upper gallery, Levine does not see himself as a studio artist in the traditional sense stating, "Most of what happens in my so-called studio is thinking. As I am a media sculptor I work in a similar way as an advertising company, which is to say I think of the ideas or issues that I'm concerned with and then I go to various manufacturers to have them realized, i.e. billboard printers, photo printing houses and media buying agencies". Levine refers to his 'studio' as the urban environment as the majority of his work is made to be displayed in the centre of cities, such as *Win the Race* in Aalst, Belgium and *We Are Not Afraid* which was displayed in premium advertising squares in the New York Subway System.

In 2004, Les Levine edited/curated Printed Project 04 in an issue called *The Self Express*. This presented a multi-faceted portrait of the artist conducted by 15 different interviewers. The title comes from the idea that all art is a form of self-expression. One could think of *The Self Express* interviews as mental portraits of the interviewers. Since the age of media, it is unclear whether realities or illusion are the primary driving force of self image. The interviews can be viewed in the stairwell.

IMMA would like to thank Nick Miller for his dedication and commitment to the project and resulting exhibition, *Nick Miller and the Studio of Edward McGuire*, and for his time spent meeting and interacting; not only the sitters but the Edward McGuire studio. We would also like to extend our thanks to the sitters: Tresa Browne, Anthony Cronin, Paul Durcan; Garech de Brún and Wanda Ryan-Smolin, the lenders to the exhibition including the National Gallery of Ireland and Crawford Art Gallery. We thank IADT especially lecturer Sinead Hogan and former students for photographing the entire studio contents and Shane McCormack for producing the resulting documentary.

Special thanks to Tresa Browne for her time and knowledge and to the memory of her mother Sally McGuire who donated the Edward McGuire studio contents to IMMA.

IMMA would like to thank Les Levine and the artists included in Approaches to paper: Edward Allington, Andrew Folan, Antony Gormley, Alice Maher, Hughie O'Donoghue, Kiki Smith, Kara Walker, Hermione Wiltshire and Bill Woodrow. Special thanks to Alice Maher, Les Levine and Bill Woodrow for the loan of supporting artwork and archival material for the exhibitions.

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IMMA Collection: Nick Miller and the Studio of Edward McGuire Approaches to paper Les Levine: Using the Camera as a Club - Media Projects and Archive



On this occasion, the selection of works presented from the IMMA Collection has taken its cue from the studio of Edward McGuire which was donated to IMMA in 2009. Works have been curated in three exhibition displays, floor by floor, for the Garden Galleries. They are: *Nick Miller and the Studio of Edward McGuire, Approaches to Paper, Les Levine: Using the Camera as a Club Media Projects and Archive.*

First Floor

Nick Miller and the studio of Edward McGuire

Edward McGuire (1932-1986) is best known for his minutely detailed portraits of writers and poets, many of which have a surreal quality derived from McGuire's love of unusual studio props such as stuffed birds and highly stylised leaf decoration. This feeling is strengthened by the often remote and static pose of the sitter defying the realist precision with which they are executed.

In 2009 Sally McGuire, wife of the late Edward McGuire formally donated the contents of the artist's Dublin studio to the National Collection at IMMA. The artist Nick Miller was invited by IMMA to respond to the contents of the McGuire studio and the exhibition is the culmination of this process. Miller's response provides a timely focus on Edward McGuire's preoccupations and processes and opens up the opportunity to reflect on the concept of the artist's studio in all its interpretations.

Nick Miller moved from London to Ireland in 1984, and has been based in Co. Sligo since 1992. His work, whatever his subject: a person, an object, or landscape, is concerned with portraiture and with how we experience and meet the world.

Commenting on the project Nick Miller stated, "I want to step briefly into the Studio of Edward McGuire, into his shoes. Not into the way he painted, as our methods are so clearly different, but by addressing some of his subjects, both human and otherwise, that interest me on my own terms".

Rooms 1 to 3

These rooms present a number of McGuire's portraits, including those of poets Paul Durcan, Pearce Hutchinson and Anthony Cronin, examples of still lifes and a favourite motif, the white barn owl, as well as Miller's own painted responses to some of the same sitters and studio props. For instance, Room 1 includes McGuire's first commissioned portrait of Wanda Ryan as a child in 1968. During his residency at IMMA Miller invited a number of sitters to his studio including Wanda Ryan-Smolin, who's portrait is displayed alongside contents from the 1968 portrait including her doll and one of the books she listened to while sitting for McGuire. Similarly, the portraits of Anthony Cronin are accompanied by the props used in the McGuire portrait. Nearby is Miller portrait of the poet painted in September 2015. Other sitters include Garech de Brún whose portrait established McGuire's critical reputation and Tresa Browne, McGuire's step-daughter, as a child.

Room 4

This room presents a profuse selection of objects, accoutrements and materials from the older artist's studio accompanied by a short film by Miller that examines McGuire's extraordinary Colour Dictionary and love of jazz.

In the stairwell hangs the portrait of the artist Patrick Collins from the IMMA Collection. It is unusual in the

relaxed pose of the sitter. In the upper stairwell are preparatory sketches by McGuire of Collins showing the graphic approach that characterised the former's initial process.

In reception, two documentaries can be viewed: The Edward McGuire studio contents, co-produced by IMMA/IADT and the 1977 documentary on McGuire which can also be viewed on the RTE Player.

Ground Floor

Approaches to paper

Approaches to Paper presents a selection of completed works and support material referencing the significance of preparatory work in studio practice.

The exhibition offers a snapshot of the scope of artistic attitudes towards the subject of drawing and working on/ with paper. The works on display range from preparatory works on paper for existing sculptures to the book as object and motif, animation film and papier mâché.

Room 1

Drawing has always formed a large part of Alice Maher's practice (born 1956). While on on residency at IMMA in 1996 her drawings "grew and grew until I finished up with three giant *Ombre* drawings", one of which is in the IMMA Collection. Also in the collection and projected in Room 1 is *The Music of things (Sleep)*, a film work by Maher. While the field of animated film is a relatively new departure for Maher, she feels the medium as a very natural development, with the methodology of animation mirroring her own way of drawing. Beginning with a sheet of A4 Hahnemühle paper, in order to 'find'

an image Mahers draws and draws, erasing each layer as she goes. The original paper *The Music of things (Sleep)* has been borrowed from Maher's archive for the purpose of the exhibition, there is no 'actual' drawing, just the record of its many stages.

Also in Room 1 is *Peacock* by Kiki Smith (born 1954), a work which combines print and sculpture. *Peacock* is a papier mâché sculpture of a crouched female, hugging her knees in a self-protective pose. The woman's head is slightly cocked as she inquisitively and contemplatively ponders the prints of female genitalia, which are fanned out on the wall like a peacock's tail. Numbering 28 in all, the prints are physically linked to her body by umbilical-like threads of paper; a direct reference to the female reproductive cycle.

Room 1a

African-American artist Kara Walker (born 1969) studied painting and printmaking at the Atlanta College of Art. Since the 1990s, Walker has used black cut paper silhouettes to explore challenging issues of race, gender, and sexuality. Here, the pop-up book on display, illustrates the themes of her work.

Room 2

Combining photography and sculpture in her visual art practice, Hermione Wiltshire (born 1963) references the history of art and contemporary culture to consider questions of the representation of women and self-image from a feminist perspective.

My Touch consists of ten photographs, each between 30 and 40 cms in diameter. These images are enlargements of the of the artist's

own fingerprints. The photographs are printed in a saturated red tone. Over each photograph is a globe of clear glass from which projects a delicate but very sharp spike, pulled from the glass while in a semi-molten state. The work is accompanied by a preparatory sketchbook.

British artist Antony Gormley (born 1950) is known for his sculptures in elemental materials such as lead, iron, clay or steel which frequently use a cast of his own body as the starting point for a phenomenological or 'psycho-spatial' experience.

Gormley's *Hold* (1988) and the works by Edward Allington and Hermione Wiltshire in Room 2, along with the central work by Bill Woodrow in the adjacent room, are all part of the Weltkunst Collection on longterm loan to IMMA.

Hughie O'Donoghue's 24 part work, *Anabasis*, made during his studio residency at IMMA in 1995 shortly after his father's death, resonates today in the light of Ireland's 'Decade of Centenaries' and related themes of memory and place explored in IMMA's programme. The ancient Greek title is adapted to the notion of a spiritual journey of self-discovery and the work arises from the artist's response to his father's photographs which documented the latter's journey through Italy on active service during World War II.

Exploring the cross over between his work as a printmaker and sculptor, *Imago* (1999) by Andrew Folan (born 1956) is an elegant construction consisting of a stack of 90 etchings on 640 g paper sheets. The fragility of the layered work is symbolic of the final stages (imago) of the insect.

Three Steps Towards the Sea (1985)

is one of a series of works by Edward Allington (born 1951) where sculptures are concealed within books. Allington's work addresses questions about the setting for modern sculpture. *Three Steps Towards the Sea* can potentially exist in different modes of display or of non-display - a hidden state. When asked how he chose these shell-like forms to use in this bookwork, the artist replied "It's a sort of case within a case ... shells or containers are like garments, they are like clothes, there is a certain amount of poignancy to them."

Room 3

In Case of, (1988) is a key work by Bill Woodrow (born 1948), who became renowned for subverting traditional sculptural materials by his use of consumer goods such as fridges, scrap yard metal and various material found in dumps. Along with other British sculptors Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, Avis Newman and others, he challenged accepted ideas of what sculpture could be.

In Case of was made when the artist worked in residency at the glass factory in Pilchuck, US while working towards a show in Seattle in 1988. It comprises a glass turtle submerged in a tank on top of clear plastic cutlery, against which leans a glass axe.

In Case of is accompanied by a selection of works borrowed from the artist's studio that show his sustained exploration of natural systems. Always interested in the animal world, throughout his work he has used the sculptural forms of animals as abstract shapes. The skull as a container has been a predominant motif and "an interesting way of making a connection between the animal and the human world".