

Sheep thrills and earthy pleasures: this week's art highlights

Alan James Burns goes underground, Nick Miller gets flowery and Orla Barry gets woolly

© Wed, Jul 26, 2017, 13:00



Gemma Tipton

0

Vessels – [Nick Miller](#)

Catherine Hammond Gallery,
61 Bridge Street, Skibbereen, Co Cork, Until August 10
hammondgallery.com



Nick Miller, Blackthorn Blossom, 2014, at Catherine Hammond Gallery

Since Nick Miller won the inaugural Hennessy Portrait Prize in 2014, he has been turning his attention to a different kind of subject. Partly in response to a residency with Sligo's North West Hospice, and partly due to time spent with his mother during her terminal illness, Miller has been painting still lifes of flowers. Miller describes these images, thickly painted in oil on linen, as a way of "seeing the fullness of life before it passes". The *Financial Times* raved about them when they were shown in London: "ravishing, exquisitely delineated . . ." Capturing blackthorn, elderflower, honeysuckle and hazel in all their exuberance, forever alive in paint, these are plants with personality, portraits to glory in.