

ESTUARY

An exhibition celebrating the 25th Anniversary
of Fingal County Council Municipal Art Collection



**12. September —
16 November 2019**

Draíocht, Blanchardstown

Fingal County Council is proud to present this major exhibition curated by Una Sealy RHA, James English RHA, Joshua Sex and Sanja Todorović, to mark the 25th anniversary of the collection. Artworks have been acquired since the collection began in 1994 and it has been continually evolving since with new acquisitions being added when the opportunity and resources present themselves. ESTUARY features works by national and international artists, graduates, emerging artists and local artists.

← Cover image:
Dianne Whyte, Wheatfield, Fingal, 2006
medium format archival print
mounted on dibond, 76 x 76cm

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Programme of Events

All events are free, for bookings and further information

contact Draíocht Box Office on (01) 885 2622.

ESTUARY Exhibition Tour

Friday 20 September / 7.00—8.00pm

Join us on Culture Night for a curator's tour of *ESTUARY* exploring key themes and artworks in this major exhibition. The curators Una Sealy RHA, James English RHA, Joshua Sex and Sanja Todorović will guide you through the artworks from the collection.

ESTUARY Exhibition Tour and Visit to THE HIDE SCULPTURE

Saturday 28 September / 12 noon—2.00pm
20 participants

Join the curators of *ESTUARY* for a tour of the exhibition followed by a site visit to *THE HIDE SCULPTURE*, Rogerstown Park for an artist talk with Garrett Phelan and the opportunity to observe birdlife along Rogerstown Estuary with the Fingal branch of Birdwatch Ireland. www.thehideproject.com

A courtesy bus will be provided for the return journey from Draíocht to Rogerstown Park.

Where the Tide Meets the Stream

Printmaking Workshop in association with Graphic Studio Dublin

Saturday 26 October / 2.00—4.00pm
10 participants

Create your own handmade intaglio print. Join Clare Henderson for this drypoint and monoprint workshop which will focus on the horizon line. Clare will guide participants through the drawing and making of a drypoint plate, finishing with monoprint techniques. All levels welcome. All materials provided.

CPD for Primary School Teachers

Tuesday 29 October / 10.00am—3.00pm

Primary school teachers are invited to encounter the contemporary artworks featured in the current exhibition *ESTUARY* and participate in a responsive workshop led by professional artist Clare Breen. Teachers will be supported to enhance their artistic skills and expand their approach to teaching in the classroom by exploring the potential of the gallery context as an educational resource for the primary school curriculum.

Fingal Arts Office is offering a stipend to support Fingal teachers attend. For more information please contact julie.clarke@fingal.ie

ESTUARY Life Still-Life Painting Workshop

Thursday 7 November / 10.30am—1.30pm
15 participants

This still-life painting workshop with Una Sealy RHA will look at objects and aspects referencing the *ESTUARY* exhibition. She will lead participants through the painting process from planning the composition, tonal underpainting, second pass with colour, through to finishing touches. Una will demonstrate each step of the process and guide participants individually. All levels welcome. All materials provided.

Programme of Events continued inside back cover



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medium format archival print
mounted on dibond, 76 × 76cm

Introduction

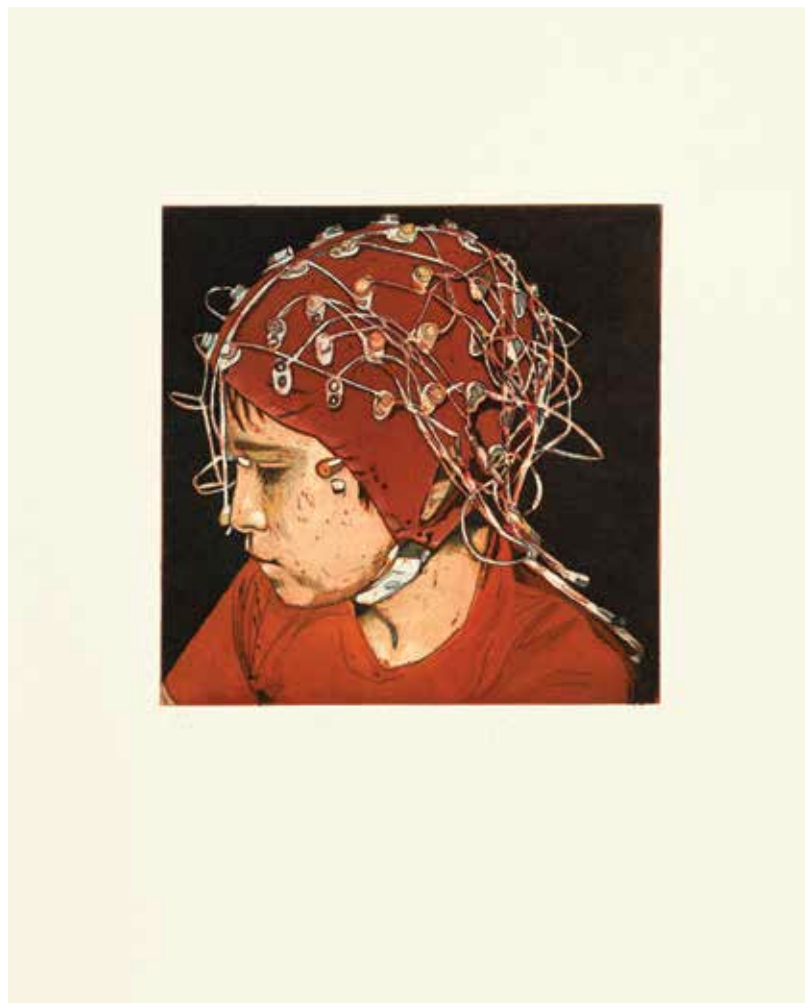
Rory O'Byrne, County Arts Officer

Estuary sits within Fingal County Council's 25th anniversary year celebrating the establishment of Fingal County Council. The artworks contained in this exhibition, have been chosen from the council's Municipal Art Collection which features some 200 works and is representative of some of Ireland's most prolific artists.

The works in the collection have been accumulated by the arts staff of Fingal County Council in their capacity to support arts development in Fingal. Stories detailing artists' reflections and the timing and circumstances of recent acquisitions to the collection all feature in a new publication *Not in Alphabetical Order, Volume Two*, and make an interesting companion piece to this show.

To celebrate this significant occasion in Fingal County Council's history we wanted to present the collection in a way that illustrated the depth of our commitment to its future development and to local artists, many of whom feature prominently in this exhibition. Four Fingal artists were invited to curate *Estuary*. Una Sealy RHA, James English RHA, Joshua Sex and Sanja Todorović are painters at various stages of their careers, and ones which we have been delighted to support over the years.

The work of acquiring a large Municipal Art Collection such as this is not merely a career long commitment, but a process that never ends and continues to present decisions and opportunities to collect or not. In a broader sense I think the accumulation of this treasury of artworks helps define who we are in a time when our county is changing faster than ever before, and this exhibition *Estuary* reminds us to take stock of where we are at twenty-five. **RO'B 09/19**



↑ **Colin Martin**, *Neural Lace*, 2019
 etching (edition of 75), 54 × 47cm
Graphic Studio Dublin, Sponsors Portfolio 2010–2019

Foreword

AnnMarie Farrelly, Chief Executive (Interim), Fingal County Council

As Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, I am pleased to present *Estuary*, an exhibition featuring artworks from the Fingal County Council Municipal Art Collection. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the council, this is one of the ways we have chosen to celebrate an important milestone of our history. This exhibition includes works from many of Fingal's most prominent artists, together with national and international artists whose works have been acquired over this period.

Throughout the last quarter of a Century, Fingal County Council has remained resolute in its commitment to provide its citizens with opportunities for access and participation in arts and culture regardless of social circumstance, or geographic location, and this includes the assembling of a major municipal art collection, which people can have access to, in their public buildings, libraries, and places of work. The collection has grown steadily in recent years, with significant works of art added along the way.

We have taken a careful, planned approach to developing the arts in our county, and have worked energetically with others at local and national level, to develop Fingal into a place in which the arts can flourish. The collection is testament to this commitment. The exhibition is accompanied by a full public engagement programme for adults, children and young people comprising of art workshops, curator tours and talks.

I would like to thank the Arts Office staff and congratulate our four Fingal curators for realising this major exhibition on the occasion of its twenty-fifth year. **AF 09/19**



↑ **Eva Rothschild**, *Classics*, 2012
screen print, 69 × 56cm

Curators' Statement

Joshua Sex, Artist/Curator

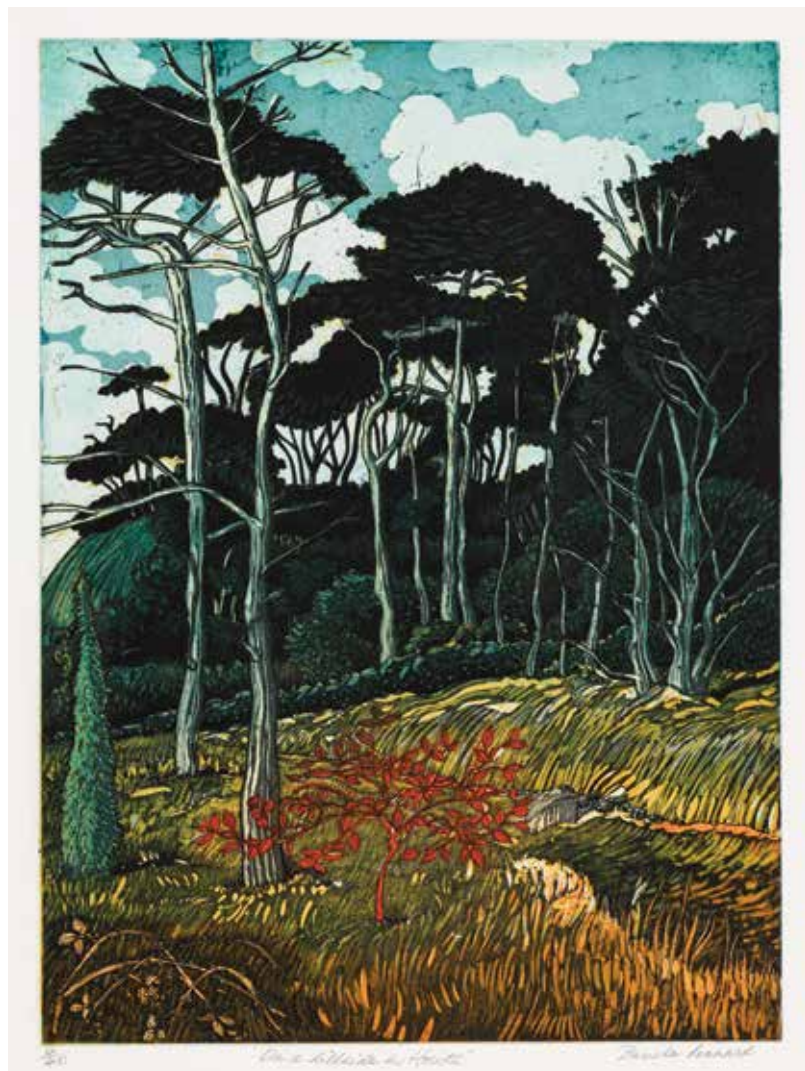
On behalf of Una Sealy RHA, James English RHA, Joshua Sex and Sanja Todorović

Fingal has three estuaries – special places where the tide meets the stream. Such a simple phenomenon in nature carries powerful potential both metaphorically and as a prism through which to view art. In other words the collection could be described as a mixing point, or a meeting point, where seemingly opposed works hang alongside one another. The show can be experienced in conjunction with much of its inspiration: nature itself. After seeing the show we can meditate on the works and perhaps understand them more fully while visiting one of Fingal's watery treasures.

While the County Council Collection features plenty of significant works by national figures, the four of us agreed, quite instinctively, to focus primarily on Fingal artists. There is a strong flow of nature imagery: skies, birds, harbours, trees.

We have also chosen works that we intend as counterpoints to this theme. These include unexpected pieces by artists such as Robert Russell and Eva Rothschild. One of the advantages of having counterpoints like these is that we begin to see the likes of Patrick Leonard's *Lengthening Shadows – Evening, Rush Harbour*, c. 1958 in a fresh light. The viewer cannot mistakenly assume that this is a chocolate-box image, or that it's a provincial picture-postcard style painting. Instead, in this mix of works, the viewer will be more inclined to start again with each painting. They will engage anew each time, and the works will have a moment to themselves.

It is our hope that this show will prove playful, thought-provoking and inspiring. **JS 09/19**



↑ **Pamela Leonard**
 On a Hillside in Howth, 2015
 etching (4 of 40), 63 × 52cm

Where the Tide Meets the Stream

Sara Muthi

Flúirse Talaimh is Mara – the abundance of land and sea. This is the motto of Fingal County Council and is reflected in the theme of estuaries from which the exhibition takes its name. *Estuary* celebrates the 25th anniversary of Fingal County Council's Municipal Art Collection. Fittingly for an exhibition presenting a taste of its vast collection; Fingal artists Una Sealy RHA, James English RHA, Joshua Sex and Sanja Todorović were proudly selected to curate this major milestone showcase with an agreed intended focus on Fingal artists.

Bringing together a group of early to late career artists to communally dictate this selection is reflective in the range of mid to early career artists featured in the collection that have been carefully considered for this exhibition. The collection spans across both national and international artists, as well as work purchased from graduates, emerging artists and local artists. Spanning a vast 200 artworks since the conception of the collection in 1994 it continues to generously evolve with what is being developed in Irish arts practice. Artists featured within the collection include the curators of *Estuary* (who notably do not feature in the exhibit), Eva Rothschild, George Potter, John Kindness among many notable others. Acting as an informal archive, the collection straddles work from 1958 to 2019 of which over thirty artworks were carefully chosen by the curators for this public showcase.

An estuary is a tidal mouth of a large river – where the tide meets the stream. Where salt-water and fresh-water have the opportunity to meet, clash and concoct. Partly referring to the three estuaries present in the Fingal landscape and partly to the mingling of one of the most diverse populations in Ireland, estuary acts as a metaphor. The expansive backdrop of Fingal's landscape is also highlighted throughout the collection, notable in the work of Pamela Leonard whose etching *On a Hillside in Howth* depicts just that. Dianne Whyte's *Wheatfield*, 2006, Fingal, and Patrick Leonard's *Lengthening Shadows – Evening, Rush Harbour*, c. 1958, all consider their own nuggets of the abundance of this land.

Sitting side by side and face to face are not only those artworks which take the Fingal environment as its subject matter but also less-traditional contemporary art practices which the curators generously represented in proportion to the collection. These differing yet equally important practices of traditional and non-traditional artworks, fresh-water and salt-water, are curated in such a way as to ease the viewer from one to the next. Perhaps the familiarity of one can encourage a nudge toward more alien artforms across the gallery floor to bring up new possibilities or answer questions we may not have asked yet. What happens when Eva Rothschild's *Classics*, 2012 sits face to face with Kevin Flood's *The Gathering Storm*, 2000. What links can we draw between Colin Martin's *Neural Lace*, 2019 and Garrett Phelan's *THE HIDE SUITE*, 2016. These questions seep far beyond the gallery walls into the landscape and environments present in Fingal – encouraging contemplation and engagements with the art and its local roots. Art allows us to consider the perspectives of others, those which may be similar or very different from our own; it is through the artistic expression of the selected Fingal talent that we are exposed to alternative viewpoints in this instance. A common thread of imagery features many skies, seas, harbours, trees and domestic environments as is particularly evident in Catherine Barron's small scale acrylic ink on sheet metal paintings. The sheet metal material from which it's painted is in fact a domestic building material, referencing itself both literally and representationally in its physical form.

Rather than an attempt to catch up to the future and to showcase the potential "next big thing", Fingal County Council Municipal Art Collection concerns itself with the here and now. It draws attention to the immediate practices and potential of the arts community while collecting and showcasing works of the past to enhance the environment for all staff and visitors of Fingal County Council.

Estuary straddles together both enthusiastic arts audiences and novice gallery visitors, a meeting of streams, at the cross section of more traditional practice, contemporary practice, cultures, background, lifestyles

etc. The gallery becomes the estuary, a rendezvous point to consider unity within diversity as organised by the curating Fingal artists, those who contribute to its developing collection. It would also do well to remember that art cannot help but absorb its environment, and never has that been as evident than in *Estuary*. **SH 09/19**

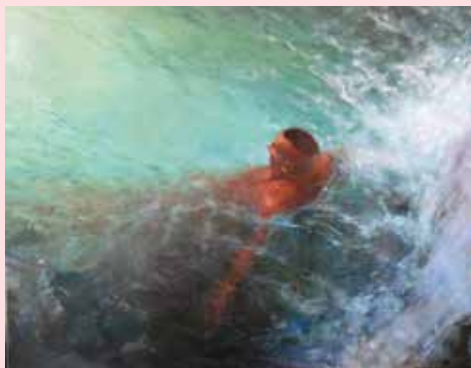


↑ **Catherine Barron**
 Soup and Bread, 2013
 acrylic ink on sheet metal
 21 x 24cm



↑ **James English** RHA, *Emerging*, 2017
oil on canvas, 50 × 61cm

← **Una Sealy** RHA, *A Tupelo Dandy*, 2018–19
oil in canvas, 100 × 100cm



Curators & Contributors

James English RHA

James English (b. 1946, Co. Dublin) came to art relatively late, although he was painting from an early age. On leaving school he first served an apprenticeship in cabinetmaking. Not finding fulfilment in that he then started a career in horseracing where he was soon granted a jockeys licence riding for the Draper stable. It was during that period that his interest in art was rekindled. In 1974 he studied painting, part-time at NCAD, exhibiting work for the first time the same year in the Tattan Gallery, Malahide, Co. Dublin. This was followed by four solo exhibitions in the Tattan Gallery, 1976–1979 and a number of solo exhibitions in Gallery 22, Dublin; Kilcock Art Gallery; Lavit Gallery, Cork; the Europa, Brussels; the James Gallery, the RHA Ashford Gallery, Dublin and the Seamus Ennis Arts Centre, Co. Dublin. He has also exhibited in many group exhibitions both in Ireland, the UK and the USA.

James, who first exhibited in the RHA Annual Exhibition in 1979 was elected an Associate of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 2003 and subsequently a full member in 2005. He served two terms as Treasurer of the RHA 2005 to 2010 and 2013 to 2017. He also served two terms as a Board Member of the RHA School and the RHA Programme Board.

He is currently a serving member of the Board of Governors and Guardians of the National Gallery of Ireland where he is Chair of the Acquisitions and Exhibitions committee.

← **Joshua Sex**, *Marksman*, 2015
permanent marker and oil on canvas
35 × 60cm

Una Sealy RHA

Una Sealy (b. 1959, Dublin) is a graduate of Dun Laoghaire College of Art and Design, (now IADT), in Fine Art, Painting, (1980), and UCD, Higher Diploma in Arts Administration, (1988). She is currently undertaking an MSc by Research in Anatomy for Artists at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

Sealy was elected an Associate of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 2010, and a full member in 2016. She has had ten solo exhibitions, including a major mid-career review show at Draíocht, Blanchardstown in 2012. She has exhibited in numerous juried and invited shows in Ireland, the UK and the US. She was the winner of the Adam's Award at the RHA Annual Exhibition 2015, and she was one of 12 finalists shortlisted for the inaugural Hennessy Portrait Award at the National Gallery in 2014. At the RHA in 2011 she was awarded the Ireland-U.S. Council/Irish Arts Review Award for Outstanding Portraiture. She has received several bursaries and awards from Fingal County Council and the Arts Council of Ireland. She was invited Artist in Residence at the National Gallery in 2018, where she made a body of work in response to the Roderic O'Connor and the Moderns exhibition. In October 2019, Sealy was invited to exhibit in Shanghai and Hangzhou, China, as part of a cross cultural initiative entitled Youyi (Friendship).

Joshua Sex

Joshua Sex (b. 1985, Dublin) studied Painting at NCAD and at the RCA, London. Joshua has exhibited in Almanac Projects in London, Melange in Cologne, Fortes D'Aloia and Gabriel in Sao Paulo, Berthold Pott in Cologne, 53 Beck Road in London, Plaza Plaza in London. As a curator he co-founded and helped run Westminster Waste in London, and has organised one-off exhibitions such as in Basic Space, Dublin. Currently he's running Fál Linnreog, a roving project space in Dublin. Joshua is interested in all kinds of art, especially painting, drawing, and chair-making.



Sanja Todorović

Sanja Todorović (b. 1987, SFRJ) is a Dublin based artist. She is a graduate of NCAD and the RCA. She was also a co-founder of Westminster Waste, an artist-run project space in London and is currently co-curating, with Joshua Sex, a roaming exhibition platform called Fál Linntreog.

Sara Muthi

Sara Muthi (b. 1996, Transylvania, Romania) is a Dublin based writer and performance art researcher. She is a recent graduate of MA in Art in the Contemporary World at NCAD and now undertaking a Masters in Philosophy at Trinity College. As opposed to publishing text as the result of her research Sara prefers to forefront the questions, shortcomings and potential surrounding live-art practices in the Ireland through performance and open dialogue by way of commissioning live-art in collaboration institutions and venues.

As managing editor of *inaction.ie* she commissions critical writing on Irish performance art while developing events such as the performance and panel discussion *Anticipation: Actualisation* (2018) at the NCAD Gallery. Sara is also communications assistant for Block Universe, London's leading performance art festival and international commission body for the London and upcoming Berlin programme. She was awarded the INCUBATE residency at Draíocht from June–July 2019 to research and curate an event introducing Post-Dance to the Dublin context at the Project Arts Centre in August 2019. Sara is currently a Gallery Assistant at the Hang Tough Gallery in Portobello.

← **Sanja Todorović**, Henry VI, 2019
silk and cotton thread on Aida cotton
40 × 32.5cm

Acknowledgements

A huge thank you is due to all who have contributed in some way to the **ESTUARY** exhibition.

The Curators

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James English, RHA
Joshua Sex
Sanja Todorović

Sara Muthi, Writer

Emer McGown, Director and all the staff of Draiocht
Maurice Ward Handling Limited
Gillian Buckley, Photographer
Dolores Lawlor, ARTdesign Picture Framing
Fr. Kit Sheridan

The Mayor and elected members of

Fingal County Council / Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
AnnMarie Farrelly, Fingal County Chief Executive (Interim)
Staff and colleagues of the Community, Culture
& Sports Division (Department of Community & Housing)
Margaret Geraghty, Director of Services
Íde DeBairtiseil, Senior Executive Officer

Fingal Arts Office Team

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Sarah O'Neill, Deputy Arts Officer
Caroline Cowley, Public Arts Co-ordinator
Julie Clarke, Youth & Education Officer

Denise Reddy, Art Project Manager

Veronica Forsgren, Exhibition Assistant

David Smith and Oran Day at Atelier TypoGraphic Design

Programme of Events continued

Children & Young People Early Years Arts

Early years artist **Lucy Hill** will bring the current exhibition *ESTUARY* to life for early years children and educators from local community crèche services through a series of explorative workshops. Together they will creatively explore art materials and prominent themes of nature and the environment, igniting curiosity and the imagination along the way.

A series of workshops will take place in the Gallery and off-site in local crèche services.

Family Day

Saturday 19 October / 12 noon – 3.00pm

Families are invited to spend time in the Gallery, interact with the artworks and respond to the compositions, materials, patterns, textures and themes that they encounter through creative and interactive workshops facilitated by exhibiting artist **Catherine Barron**.

Age: all ages / families.

Primary Schools

An Appetite for Adventure

Thursday 14 November

10.00 – 11.30am and 12.30 – 2.00pm

Artist **Atsushi Kaga** is here to guide you on an adventure that explores the development of fictional characters through drawing. You will create and develop your own unique fictional character, revealing their individuality through the exploration of symbols, line, form, tone, texture and narrative.

Age: primary school children aged 10 – 12 years.

Post-Primary Schools

Drawing in a Digitally Mediated World

Tuesday 8 October

10.30am – 12 noon and 1.00 – 2.30pm

Artist **Sean Molloy** invites you to reimagine drawing as he guides you on a journey exploring traditional old master drawing techniques from the baroque era to the present day.

Age: TY students.

Leaving Certificate Art History Appreciation: Revision Day

Tuesday 5 November / 10.30am – 1.30pm

Designed for Leaving Certificate students and teachers, this day will use the exhibition *ESTUARY* as a starting point to support those preparing for the Leaving Certificate Art Appreciation section through a series of talks and practical activities. Guided by artist **Bridget Flannery**, participants will gain an understanding of the curatorial process and installation considerations from meeting with two artists and *ESTUARY* exhibition curators – **Una Sealy** and **Joshua Sex**, before meeting with artist **Martin Gale**, whose work features in the exhibition and on the leaving certificate curriculum, to hear about his processes, techniques and inspiration. A tour of the exhibition will be facilitated with a focus on two artworks to compare and contrast style, subject matter, and artistic techniques.



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**Aoibheann Greenan
Atsushi Kaga
Bernie Masterson
Catherine Barron
Charles Tyrrell
Colin Martin
Cormac Dennis
Denise Nestor
Des Kenny
Dianne Whyte
Eva Rothschild
Garrett Phelan
George Potter
Jim Kilgarrieff
John Kindness
Kevin Flood
Maeve McCarthy
Martin Gale
Mary Lohan
Mel O'Reilly
Pamela Leonard
Patrick Leonard
Robert Russell
Sean Molloy
T.P. Flanagan
Thomas Brezing**

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25
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YEARS

Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council

