



Making and Momentum

In Conversation with Eileen Gray

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Palais de Monaco

August 2021

I am honored and privileged to chair the Honorary Committee of the Association Cap Moderne in charge of the restoration of Eileen Gray's Villa E 1027 in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin.

This project is more than simply preserving an amazing example of architecture and design. It is a vital strand in the development of Modernism, brought there by an Irish genius and applied for the first time in a Mediterranean context. It is a faithful restoration, involving architects and artisans from all over Europe, which will help to instruct and inspire us all.

This exhibition in Dublin contains works of contemporary Irish artists inspired by Eileen Gray which will later be sold for the benefit of the restoration, helping to bring to a close this fantastic project.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to the members of the Association for their contribution and to all of you for your support in this endeavor.

The National Museum of Ireland is delighted to support the vital and important achievement of the Association Cap Moderne on the refurbishment and preservation of E-1027 through the hosting of this exhibition at our Museum. Housing one of the greatest collections of Eileen Gray material globally, the National Museum of Ireland is looking forward to building on the achievements at E-1027 through future initiatives and exhibitions that further increase accessibility and engagement with Eileen Gray globally.

Lynn Scarff



Director of the National Museum
of Ireland

Making and Momentum: In Conversation with Eileen Gray is a travelling exhibition of contemporary visual art, which aims to celebrate the legacy of modernism in Ireland, and the imagination and influence of modern Irish art and design worldwide.

The exhibition opened at the iconic Villa E.1027 in Roquebrune, France in June 2021 to celebrate the completion of an extensive 7 year refurbishment. The show later moved to the historic Salle Saint-Lucie at Roquebrune Village in July. The exhibition ambitiously places equal importance on artist, artisan and maker – observing the creative spirit present in developing an independent visual language; removing the rigid definitions and categories of art making, much like Eileen Gray's own practice.

Award winning Irish artist and designer, Richard Malone, collaborated with Association Cap Moderne (charity raising funds to restore E-1027) to curate and exhibit some of Ireland's leading visual art makers. The exhibition is in celebration of Gray's phenomenal global influence across artistic disciplines – from weaving and rug making to metalwork and painting. Each artist and artisan has been selected for their multidisciplinary and experimental approach to making. The group represents an award winning selection of some of Ireland's most prominent artists with numerous accolades and nominations amongst them, such as the Royal Hibernian Academy commission, the Loewe Craft Prize, the International Woolmark Prize and the official Venice Biennale Commission 2022.

Collectively their work is held in some of the world's most prestigious museums and institutions, including the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) New York, the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) Dublin, The Design Museum London, the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) Melbourne, The Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) London, and the Design and Crafts Council Collection Ireland.

The craft and skill visible within each body of work acknowledges age old skills and making techniques, often unique to Ireland, alongside radical modernism –

here defined as a radical and self-defining visual language. The exhibition aims to prove that the skills present, and Gray's own artistic legacy, are part of our present, not our history.

Making and Momentum celebrates the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland's 50th Anniversary.

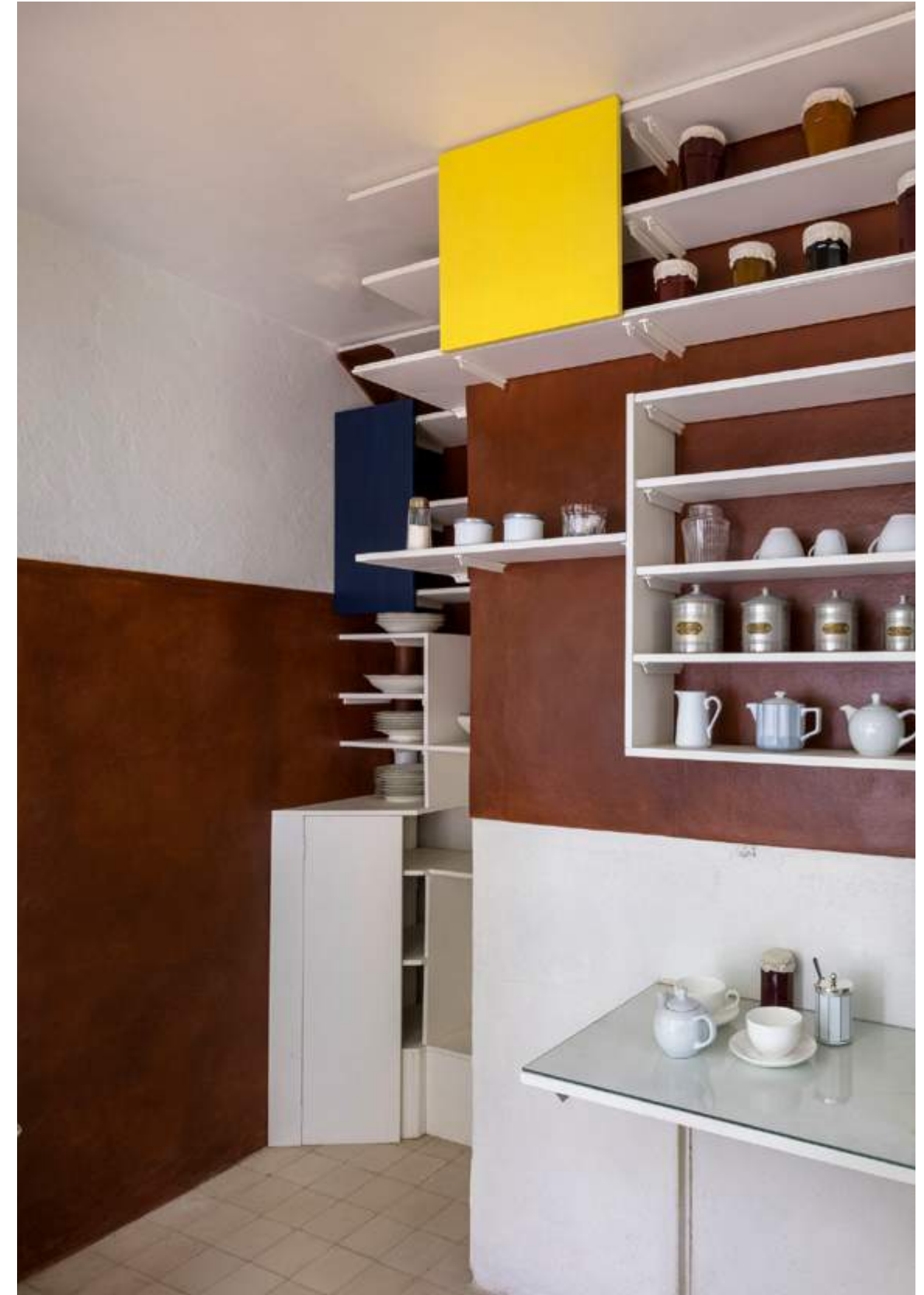
Featured Artists:

Ceadogán Rugs
Sara Flynn
Laura Gannon
Mainie Jellett
Richard Malone
Nellie Malone
Mourne Textiles
Niamh O'Malley

Curated by:
Richard Malone

Supported by:
Design and Crafts Council of Ireland
Creative Ireland
Culture Ireland
Wexford County Council
Association Cap Moderne
Conservatoire du Littoral
Centre des Monuments Nationaux
Dermot and Monica McDermott







Eileen Gray
Irish. Female. Bisexual. Genius
Association Cap Moderne 2021

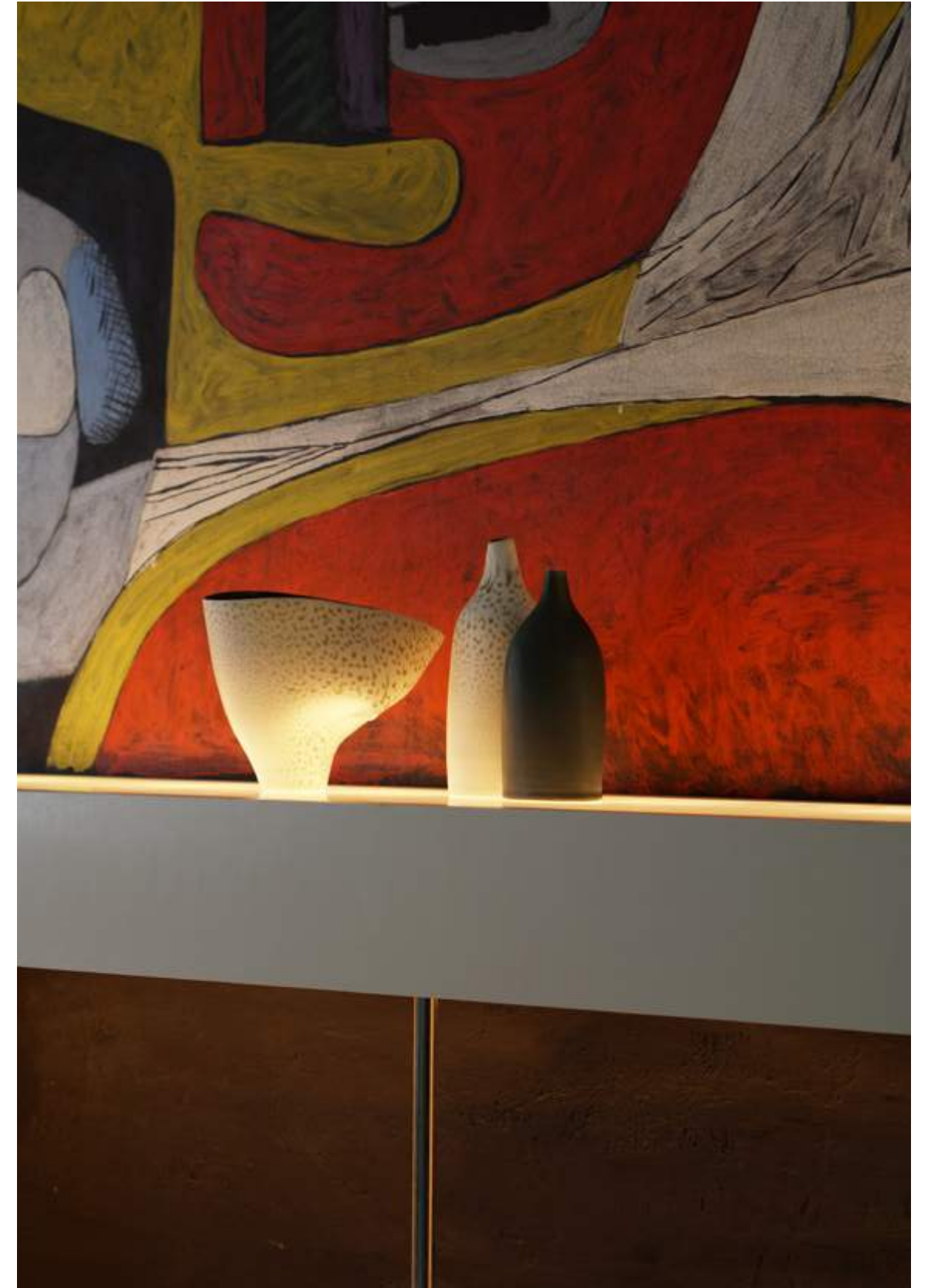
Eileen was a woman way ahead of her time: androgynous, bisexual and entrepreneurial, she lived an extraordinary life. Born in County Wexford, Ireland, in 1878 to an aristocratic mother and artist father, she became one of the first women to be accepted into the Slade School of Fine Art. At 24 she moved to Paris to continue her design education, and determinedly began designing her modernist furniture. There, Eileen became involved in the Bohemian circles of the time and was able to explore her bisexuality and, established a reputation as the most avant-garde and inventive designer in Paris based on her principle that to “*create one must first question everything*”.

She attracted the eye of a young Romanian architect, Jean Badovici. It was him who in 1926 encouraged Eileen to start building what was to become known as E-1027. Despite having no formal architecture training she forged ahead investing her genius in experimentation to design every element of the villa including its furnishings. It is here her creative spirit soars. Even before you enter the space you are confronted by surprises and once inside, at every turn, you come upon never-before-seen control of light, use of shadows, definition of space and limitless innovative furnishings that tune into her focus on detail, functionality and practicality.

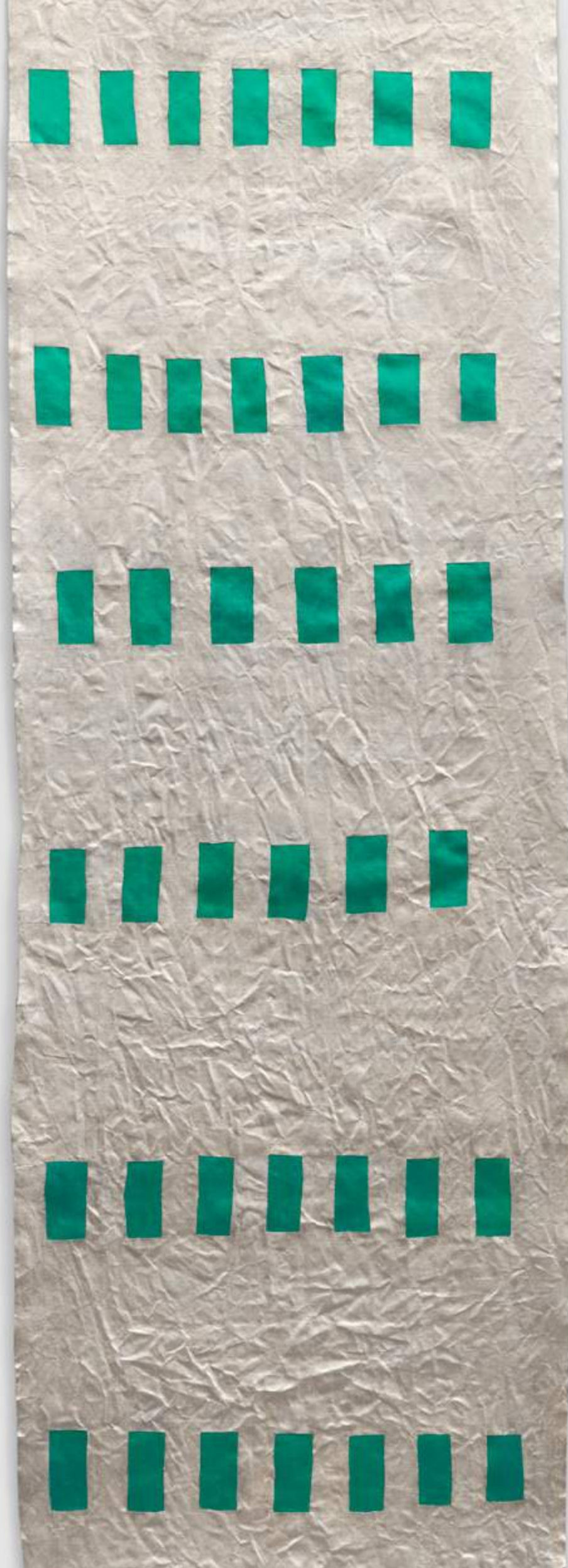
Eileen’s relationship with Jean did not last, and she left the house in 1932. By the mid 1990’s the house fell into disrepair only to be rescued by the Conservatoire du Littoral and The Association Cap Moderne, which since 2014 has led an ambitious restoration plan for E-1027. Completed in May 2021, thanks to an incredible team of architects, artisans and fundraisers guided by a scientific committee of global experts led by Michael Likierman, President of Association Cap Moderne. E-1027 is now welcoming visitors as part of a remarkable cultural heritage ensemble. *“The restoration of the Villa to its 1929 state has been a labour of love for all of us who have worked on the project, and the effect is truly revelatory of the genius of Eileen Gray and a marvellously dynamic contrast with the surprisingly intimate buildings of Le Corbusier just by.*

Magical and unique: come and see for yourselves...” Michael Likierman.

Continuing the celebration of Eileen Gray’s imagination and influence on modern Irish art and design, the group exhibition, Making and Momentum spearheaded by artist and designer, Richard Malone had its debut in July 2021 in France at E-1027 before making its way to Dublin. It features some of Ireland’s most creative and prominent artists and is a fitting tribute to the Eileen Gray’s enduring artistry.







Letter to Eileen by Laura Gannon



Dear Eileen,

I am writing to you across time and space. You continue to be a mentor for me. We are both Irish, though as part of an Anglo-Irish Scottish aristocratic family, you had a background different to most. You were able to use this background to avail of an international education and travel, including being one of the first women to fly, in the 1920's you flew on the first airmail service in America, from New Mexico to Acapulco.

The freedom to travel extensively and integrate with the Parisian creative world of your era, gave you an outlet to unleash your brilliant and exacting imagination.

Your use of materials including cork, metal, plastic, celluloid, lacquer and wood was embedded with a geometry and sensuality.

Three of your works that I often revisit:

During World War One, you produced a brown lacquer plate, as part of a series, covered in small silver circular daub marks. This gesture of pared back beauty emphasised your need to keep creating and experimenting even during wartime. Your style of modernity was always infused with sensuality and the needs of the body.

E-1027, finished in 1929, the house where you created a camping style of great pleasure for the body. Designed as the first piece of architecture that you built when you were 51 years old. It contained mirrors with arms that expanded and contracted to allow the body to be viewed from all angles.

Indents in the steps of the spiral staircase to place the foot when ascending upwards. A cork table top so that cutlery or glass made no sound when placed on the surface. A lever on the bedroom ceiling to open and close to view the moon at night.

You always moved towards new materials and experimented with unusual possibilities. You once made a series of lights from ostrich egg shells and paper. Celluloid screen, 1931; using celluloid, a

very new substance, you created a six-panel, curved metal framed screen. The celluloid, pale yellow in colour, was semi-transparent allowing a partial view through while occupying a space.

In 1972 the journalist and writer Bruce Chatwin visited you, in your apartment in Rue Bonaparte. You asked him to visit Patagonia on your behalf as you were aged 94 and unable to travel. He promised you that he would. He traveled there and the trip resulted in his experimental travel book *In Patagonia*.

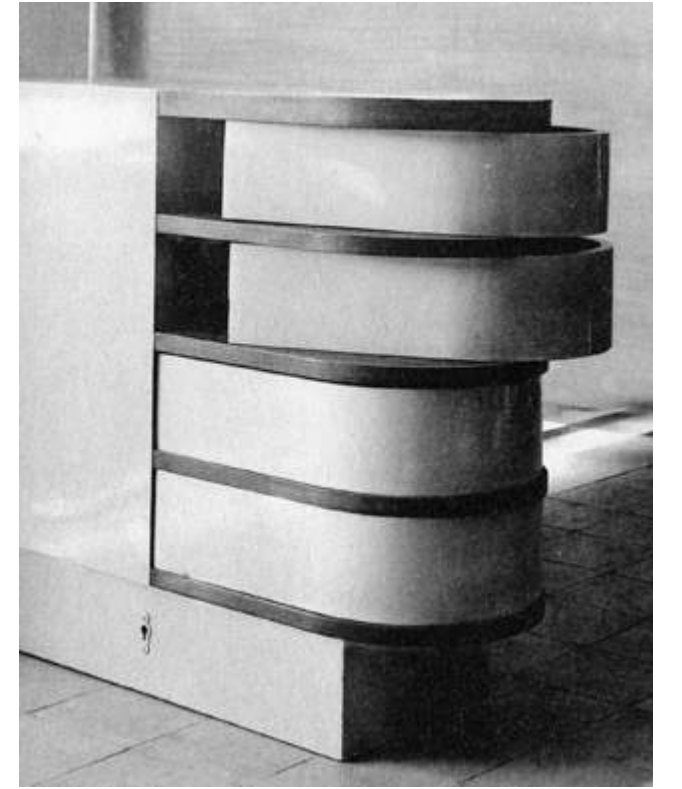
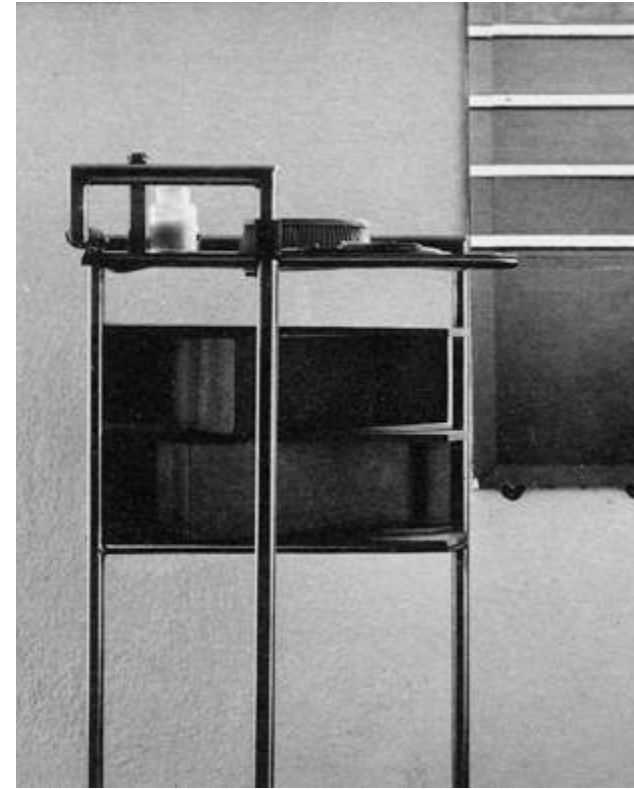
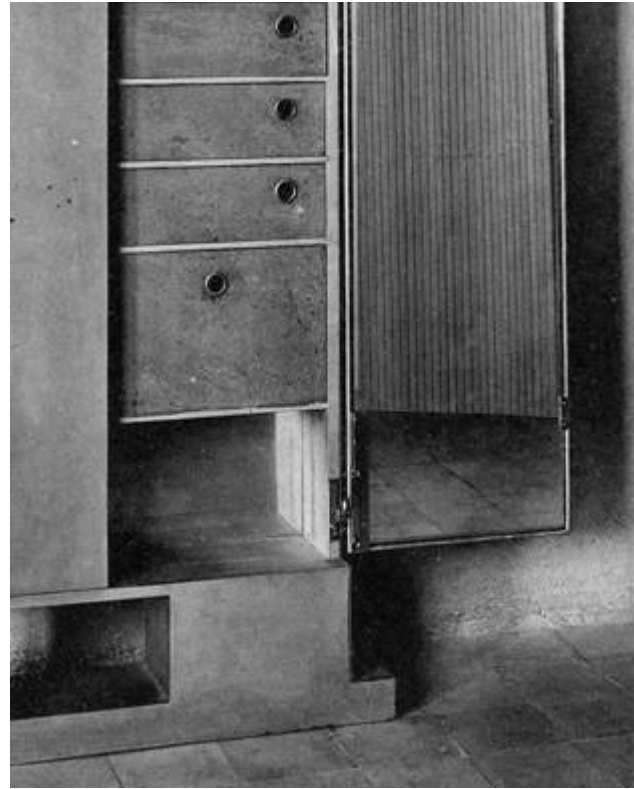
On 31st October 1976, French Radio announced your death.

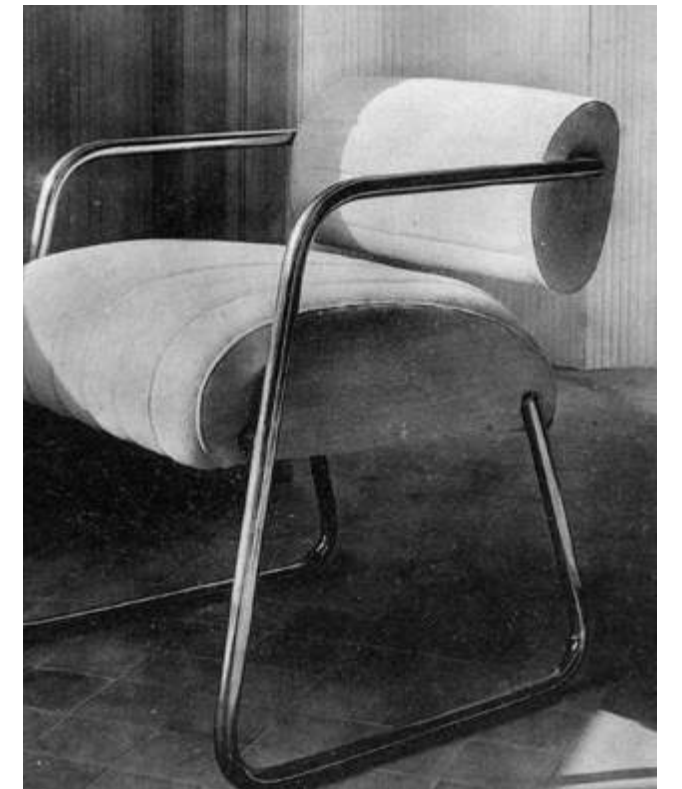
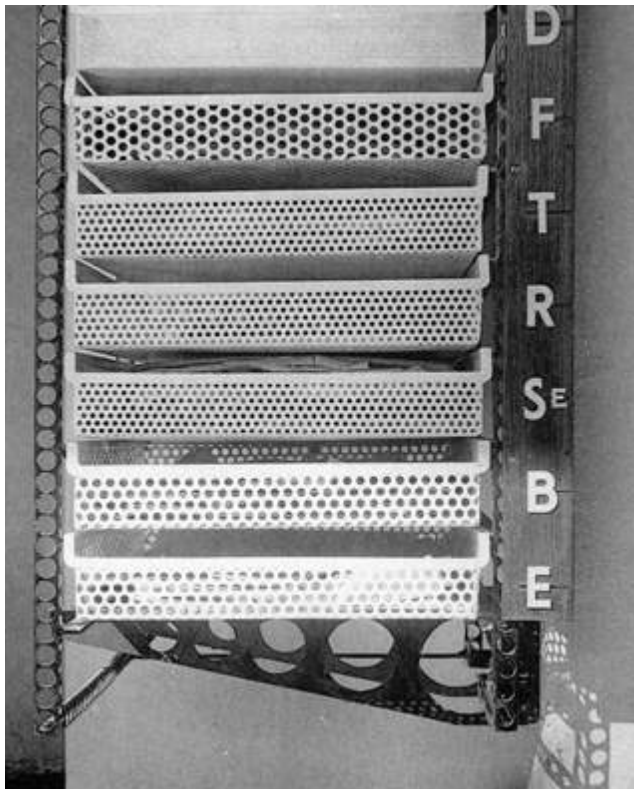
I will be in France on a residency this autumn. I will continue to look at your works and think about the life that you lived there. I have named an artwork after your Non Conformist chair. You, as a Non Conformist opened the door for future creatives. Thank you Eileen, for your legacy.

With gratitude,
Laura



















Eileen Gray – truth, love, myth, magic, legend

by Richard Malone



A seance over scones and soda bread

June 2021 will see the re-opening of Eileen Gray's E.1027 villa, after seven years of renovation by Cap Moderne to take the house back to its 1929 state. The house is widely considered a modern masterpiece, yet has a complicated history. Gray's work has gone through stages of being overlooked, almost forgotten – the house itself has fallen into several states of disrepair before renovations took place. Le Corbusier, a contemporary of Gray, was said to be envious of the space she built, and painted infamous murals there after Gray left, which she referred to – quite rightly – as vandalism. In 2020, I was asked to contribute, somehow, to the house's reopening. Through several conversations and a year of this hideous pandemic, and with support from the brilliant Cathy Giangrande, we decided to curate a show that celebrates Gray's incredible legacy. This is not a showcase of work which looks like Gray's. What Gray's work left behind is something far more nuanced than the many contemporary imitations. The show's title, "Making and Momentum" speaks deliberately of process and time, something ever-changing and always moving. The show is a celebration of the spirit of self-directed making, which places equal importance on artisans, makers and artists. Making and Momentum centres the very real creative energy that drives so much of our human spirits, allowing us to create worlds and languages. It is an incredible honour to be tasked with such an undertaking, especially in conversation with a persons whose work I so admire.

The title of this essay represents the cornerstones by which I came to understand and experience the work of the artist, architect and designer Eileen Gray. They are everything and nothing. Within the framework of my understanding, appreciation and admiration is a rejection of the academic; or 'referenced' responses to art and design making. The very act of making, and the idea of radically working against a zeitgeist, is for me, an act of love. A love of the self and an utter trust in the creative spirit that many of us believe to be guiding us, one that has been

particularly relied upon in current times. This is magic that allows – and makes real space for – creation, which in turn finds truth in the real, existing object that is left behind.

For me, a true piece of work finds itself within a larger language. One that is created, written and shared. This artistic language can be experienced and observed; learned even, by many, but is only truly spoken; invented by one.

Myth and Legend

Growing up in rural Wexford, the legend and work of Eileen Gray existed in a kind of ether, another world. Gray's work came into my life through storytelling... folklore, even. It appeared both mythical and magical. Daringly original, radically created and lovingly executed. Her objects were explained as functional, yet were entirely different from all of the things I associated with 'function'. The work had, and has, a presence to it that speaks to the human condition, of the human body, which I believe transcends the more recent academic study of her work – as well as the placing of her work within the construct of 'time'.

To write about her work in an academic sense would, I think, be to take away from my initial understanding of her practice. For excellent, broad understandings of Gray's work, we can read the exceptional essays and collected works of Dr. Jennifer Goff, Curator of Furniture, Musical Instruments and the Eileen Gray collection, National Museum of Ireland. Note the recent book –Eileen Gray, Her Work and Her World, Irish Academic Press Ltd, 2014) My relationship with Gray's work comes from someplace else.

It is interesting to refer to her work, or even her person, as 'Irish'. When we place something or someone within a specific cultural context, it is always curious to note what part of that culture we are referencing, or what "Irishness" we refer to – in one that is a complex history both associated with an ancient world and progressive modernism. The Republic of Ireland was established in 1949 – so, relatively recently. Gray emulates an

energy that I associate with ancient Ireland, when self-definition and new cultural norms were yet to be established. Long before British colonisation and the spread of Christianity. The nuanced and ever-changing surface of Ireland is an interesting place for Gray's legend to live, and within personal histories and conversation we have ideas of invention and myth.

Gray, for example, was a part of a protestant Anglo-Irish family that lived in a large stately home in Wexford; yet my experience of her work through storytelling allowed me to imagine our similarities. It is a meeting of two worlds that co-exist in one place; a place that is endlessly reimagining the modern.

There are ancient Irish beliefs in a ceantair (our world) and altar (an 'other' world) – two worlds that are separate, yet co-exist, and that some people, witches for example, can move between. Many of the ideas of ancient Ireland share beliefs that do not accommodate our current understanding of the world. Much of the wording, or word structures share meaning and form with ancient Sanskrit. Included in this the idea of creativity as a distinctly female energy – the Bó Báinne, a mythical cow who grazes eternally serves as our 'mother earth', and Prithvi, mother earth in Sanskrit, appeared in cow form and was milked by Prithu, an incarnation of Vishna. Gray's work finds itself truthfully existing in the ceantiar through form and function, yet her self-directed creation, her language, has always felt to me like something from the altar. A kind of persistence to self-investment, or a belief in that which has not yet been created... When I experienced her work and her legend, it is a distinctly creative female energy that I have learned to associate with it.

I never understood the language of modernism, the sophistication and excellence allegedly present, sometimes, in its neat forms and refined design. Even now, to use the word 'modern' to apply to a set, expired time-frame seems somehow incorrect. I find that often, defining artists and designers within these simplified and limiting frameworks, serves as a reduction of practice. It leads

to a homogenisation of culture. It allows trends to surface and to persist, often creating barriers to nuance. To define Gray's work as simply modern, speaks to our current world that reduces radical form, ambitious design, and hard fucking graft to something that makes a brilliant designer fit computably within a cis, straight male-dominated peer group. One that now understands good design through the eyes of capitalism, and often replaces criticism or critical evaluation with "likes", the very action of which is reductive, and when applied to an understanding of Gray's work, is impossible. This is why the more ancient, and the more imagined, the better.

Gray's work spoke to me from the moment that I first encountered it. Initially, this was over tea or soda bread and scones through oral descriptions, legend or béaloideas – ideas and imagined worlds that included the human form, perspectives of bodies, of imagination, of language. Hearing of a person, both rural Irish and female, who wholly formulated and created a language for themselves – without highfalutin explanation – was an invitation for me to make freely. It wasn't until much later in my life that I understood the importance and relevance of education in the art and design world, from women and men who did not have the opportunity.

For people who grow up without the privilege of education, like my grandmother – exposure to art, confidence to speak, an understanding of cultural discourse – experiencing the real human emotions that go in to creating and even inventing... how do you find a way in? When we look at work that appears now so tasteful, so radical and so beautiful, the academic response can often be isolating. Building walls around work for those who do not have the capacity to understand it through a deeply un-radical, and often inhuman lens.

As a young person whose comprehension was, and is still, far outside of this world of good and bad taste – which is often a construct in protecting ideas of class, privilege and wealth and serves as isolating those who are born without, how I could understand or find a common

ground with work which exists in another world is baffling. The 'way in' was through storytelling – myth, magic, humanity, and inevitably imagination. The act of making, finding truth, really being one's self – these actions are acts of love that come with risk and self-acceptance. This is legend. Asserting one's own presence as something fluid, undefinable, persisting to create a personal language that is instantly recognisable yet often hidden from view is true bravery. To go against a grain, or to imagine yourself outside of your physical world is a dream that often begins with a tinge of impossibility, which, of course, is the stuff that great stories are built on.

These traits radiate from the work of Eileen Gray, and – funnily enough – I have the same response to the work of my late grandmother, who always told me of this radical, queer Irish woman who went on to dominate the design world. My grandmother, Nellie, relished the fact that Gray was female, that she created opportunity for herself, that her design language was for nobody else. Every piece seems like a creation of something completely new, genuine and informed by this complete acceptance of the self. I expect that Nellie saw much of herself in Gray – or at least allowed herself to imagine the synchronicity, however different the circumstance.

What my grandmother left out in these conversations was the issue of class. Gray was born into an extremely wealthy protestant family. Her own wealth, no doubt, is what accommodated her way in. From staying at the family home in South Kensington while attending the Slade, to having an apartment in Paris, to having the means to travel. All of these no doubt allowed Gray to observe the world of good design, of 'taste'. To study drawing, to study lacquerwork were certainly all radical accomplishments for a woman at the time, yet impossible for a woman without means. Gray's environment, undoubtedly, allowed her to be radical, yet it was her spirit that created the conditions to flourish. This is not a criticism – merely an observation of circumstance, and one that is often overlooked. More often than not, and

now still, it is consistently those with access to and absorption to "good taste" and "good art" that tend to be the ones with the confidence to break tradition.

When I later came to understand this, I also understood the reason for my grandmother leaving this background out. The transient, imagined world created through folklore and storytelling allows a person to dream – and this applies to fiction as much as reality. When discussing this legacy of Gray with me as a child, the omission of her wealthy and educated background no doubt allowed me to think this was possible for myself. The experience of her education was not discussed, but Nellie's omission of it was, in itself, an act of love. We are not an educated family in the traditional sense, but instead made up of craftspeople, apprentices, carpenters, decorators, shop workers, factory floor workers – people who are more often than not referred to as 'low-skilled'. My grandmother herself left school before she was 10, and neither of my parents had a third level education, or even 'A-Levels'. Including an education in her story would have rendered it unrealistic for me. So within the act of storytelling we have a type of editing that allows someone to feel a part of a story that can feel as imagined as any fairytale.

In my life, it has consistently been women who are clever enough, protective enough and creative enough to establish imagined spaces that allow queer, sensitive young people – me in this case – the utter privilege to dream. This again feels akin with that ancient, specifically female creativity that itself creates nature, the Bó Báinne. It is this female energy I identify most with when making myself. To create, I believe is an act of kindness – it is nurturing, protective and undoubtedly magical. Also note that I mean female as an opposing energy to male, not as a defined gender.

We often neglect to mention how life-changing these simple representations can be, and the many different nuances that this can appear as. The importance of storytelling, however fictional, in allowing young people to see themselves occupy a space that feels wholly

impossible and unlikely. How much hope can come from the existence of another person from where you live in imagining yourself existing alongside them, or into who's atmosphere you hope to appear; to one day converse. Often national identities serve to reduce cultures or practices that are specific to place, for example, I am Irish, within this definition, I am from Wexford, and within this, I am from Ardcavan. All have specific connotations and traditions that can disappear under the term "Irish".

Seeing and imaging someone from the same place, especially a rural, un-cosmopolitan place, a place that I only learned, or rather experienced, on arrival in England was distinctly working class, allowed me to think that something else, something 'altar,' was an option for me. Imagining how a "future you" might find a voice to create something truthful or pure is an optimistic, manifesting and radical act. I am not sure I would have the confidence to tell a young person that anything can be done, much as my grandmother and mother had done without proof or experience of such. These storytelling women are risk-takers, protectors and have endlessly defied definition in their own right.

It would be impossible for me to speak about Gray without referencing the real way her work and life was communicated to me.

Materiality

The work of Eileen Gray, from her iconic buildings to her embracing of furniture design, to use of light and block colour to hand-woven Donegal rugs and thickly painted gouche studies – exists within a world of contrasts. Beautiful linen and chrome, tufted rugs and lacquered room dividers. Gray was ambitious with her own diversity, known for her embracing of craft, and for an acceptance that no line was to be drawn between fine art and craft.

Our present way of living enables an acceptance of speed that inevitably eliminates the human touch. Think of the knowledge we have for the names of

commonly found Swedish furniture. Individual cultures, voices and experiences should be cherished. The accepted understanding of the whole IKEA catalogue speaks to how much we allow ourselves to be swayed. Objects are important. We accept, in many ways, a life that is built for us – it's very fabrics, surfaces, textures are mass produced, taken so far from the human hand that initially made them to render them alien. We are taking away the dialogue that exists between the maker, and the person who experiences the made object – there is a human, hidden exchange between the last smooth of a maker's hand over a wooden surface and the next human skin to touch it.

Consider the love and labour in creating a hand woven blanket, the incredible skill seen in Mourne textiles that has been passed down through generations. A lamb is reared by human hands to become a sheep, the sheep is sheered. Yarn is spun and rendered ready for dye. The very dye is carefully curated, mixed and created. The ingredients come from years of unwritten knowledge, human connection to place, exploration, knowing – recipes for colour often created in female spaces. It is not simply information. It is knowledge. Culture, art, creation exist in its preservation. As does love. The final stage is an expert weaver, stringing spun yarn ready to be woven through warp and weft to create a pattern, the skeleton of which has been in existence for hundreds, if not thousands of years. Consider the hands that have created it, nourished it, designed it. The eyes and the human spirit that exist in every sleight of hand that goes into creating. Once the threads are cut, this blanket exists as a memory of place and of people. A certain energy undoubtedly exists within it. This blanket then goes on to decorate your home; it disappears into your world. So comfortably that you find your self wrapping yourself in it, relying on its touch for comfort, it's fabrication for warmth. This is a human exchange that cannot be replicated through mass making. An exchange of energies and knowledge into the truth of being, it's function both physical and metaphysically. In objects, we do not need some silent object-thing that is only as human as it

packaging, only as considered as it's factory's automation, it's quality check, it's ignorance of humanity. We have the opportunity to welcome a human energy into our lives with the things that live around us, a sort of love story that grows with us, communicating cross-generationally and instilling a culture and a place within us that knows us, that becomes us. It is ever present in the abstract hand-tufted rugs by Ceadogán, spanning vast stretches of knowledge and skill. Both are specific to different places in Ireland, and both undoubtedly protect connections to our lived pasts. Imagine how much can be learned from these processes, the lives that are lived and experienced by the feet walking over its surface.

For me, an example of this imbued energy is 'Tiddles'. Tiddles is a cross stitched cat my brother and I made with my grandmother when I was five. My friends will know it as the first thing you see when you come into my home, and previously it lived on Nellie's kitchen wall, carefully observing the makings that continued to be created on that kitchen table. This energy exists also in the linen table square embroidered by my grandmother, which she would take out for tea. Originally this particular piece came from Curracloe house, where Nellie worked as a maid and housekeeper when her husband was a farm hand for a protestant family. I never met my Grandfather, he passed away very young, leaving Nellie to rear seven children alone. When I look at these cornerstone embroideries I imagine them creating a relief between her present (at that time) and her altar. I imagine the texture of it throughout my life, see the lilac, blue and green coloured flowers explode in front of me. A floral embroidery that existed in the background of my life, a reminder of both place, situation and craft. Years later, when making a shirt as a gift for my boyfriend, I remember spending hours embroidering bluebells and ducks onto its front. Both are specific to memory and place, to Ardcavan, where I'm from. The skill was learned and observed in my grandmother's kitchen, it's absorption seeped into my being, it communicates who I am, where I'm from and within that

holds human histories, knowledge and love. It is a gift that communicates who you are to someone you love, literally giving them a piece of yourself.

In contrast, the aluminium, steel, concrete, plaster that I see in E.1027 are personal reminders of my years working on building sites with my Dad, or at least this materiality triggers a different kind of personal memory. Surrounded by a very different, "masculine" energy. Within this I understand the fabrics of two different, performed worlds – a constructed male world and a created female one. I can still smell and taste the dust, the scent of masonry paint or varnish takes me immediately back to the numerous sites around Wexford where we worked. What I mean to say with "male" and "female" ideas of materiality, is that they are often performed, and we forever retain the right to remove them completely.

Without applying academic explanation to Grays works and many masterpieces, it shows how art can be understood by anyone – through the context of their own being. The reality of a present can inform how you understand the world, and inevitably how one goes on to create.

Gray's work and legacy remove the gender associations we have with certain materials. They meld together to birth something that will not slide easily into definition. If gender was real, if there was truth in it – we would not need certain cuts of cloth or standards of beauty to define or by which to judge each other. The act of endorsing these existing stereotypes often gives them power. Gray outwardly rejected these, not through a public facing image of herself in say, a "suit" but by virtue of her own creation. The very tactility of the work and spaces she created allows for this nuance.

Truth

Within Gray's work, for me, there is great truth – real realities by which I look at things now, how I interpret objects, how I create and define a space, or react to an object's animation. Coupled with this is the experience of the story, the imagined

place. Gray's work, to me, existed in another world – a ghostly legend that I couldn't quite believe existed. There are numerous texts and cultures that believe creativity is a type of magic, and at the very least a blessing. We often hear descriptions about the "place" one goes to when making, it is as real as it is imagined. What we come back from this place with is often a surprise. The English language, and even the Hiberno-irish that is spoken in Ireland now, often eradicate wording and understandings by trying so hard to be accessible or modern. An example I love is the word *Caithnín*, which I recently rediscovered in the excellent 32 Words for Field by Manchán Magan – *"It means a speck of dust, a husk of corn, a snowflake, a subatomic particle and a miniscule smidge of butter, or anything tiny that gets into the eye and irritates it. But, most evocatively of all, it also means the goosebumps you feel in moments when you contemplate how everything is interrelated and how tiny we are in relation to the whole, like that feeling when you realise, or, maybe, remember, that we are all one – all unified"*.

The spread of christianity through indigenous place is one example in relatively recent history.

With the introduction, and by introduction I mean introduction by force, of Christianity in Ireland, we saw the loss of local language, local craft and local tradition for something that could be created and sold. An extraction of labour that supported the British colonisers and erased "Irish" traditions. In a further layer of erasure, the colonisation was of course lead by British men, and assisted with local Irish men with their ambitions set on a better, wealthier life, as well as staying alive. A neo-religious capital structure was enforced. As well as the loss of land and physical space, an erasure took place within the Irish language, or in the more commonly spoken hiberno-Irish. While this new, colonised Ireland was being created by men, for men, many words for female lead spaces and female specific words were lost – from genitalia, menstruation, sexuality and health to words relating to resources, craft, weave, dye, food recipes etc. Power was

asserted by those who could extract in order to create wealth and governance. Place-specific culture and education was in-turn erased. It is this (extremely brief) history that makes Gray's work all the more radical. When a new, enforced education system eradicates old ways, the means of making and the dialogues in craft based spaces, are often what sustains their existence. The very object contains a lived truth, history.

Designed objects are those around which we live our lives, sometimes so functional they disappear into the rituals of our everyday. Through what I observe as a capitalist ideal, design often takes on the concept of seduction, without ever giving way to that free, creative existence. The same seduction can be found in art direction, advertising, styling, production, retouching, editing – non of which allow for the trust of art making. Instead the created/imagined object is fed through several filters, allowing for a homogenised 'production' wherein the object is "for sale". To be for sale, is not to exist, to be for sale is to exist with the intention of seducing the consumer, that they need the object. It is not the same as a natural conversation or an art objects mere existence, as this transaction involves both force and influence, and it is certainly not the same as a tunnel vision, artistic creation or language.

Gray is different. Her understanding of humans is different, her spirit is different. The nature of her existence is radical, always refusing to promote herself, rarely speaking, yet constantly making and constantly delivering. The language she invented has crossed every discipline, from weaving and rug making to painting, furniture and architecture. It is pure strength and defiance. For me, she is a rare figure whose work expels something other than the aesthetic, it is an inspired confidence. The very fact that her work exists, beyond all trend and any coded definition, is an invitation to make, to create, and within that is an invitation to be.

What Gray's work says to me is something of humanity and sincerity, within that is both permanence and transience. It is a sort of totemic personage that exists

around her objects. A dedication to form, development and possibility that speaks to the core of the human condition. Its ever present in the ambitious work in our show, from the abstract and delicate forms of Sara Flynn, whose vessels invoke both an urge to touch and a fear to touching, a delicate balance that can only be created when the human hand is present. You could easily get lost in her endless forms and shapes, perfectly balanced and unique from every angle, rendered in intense bold glazes. It is again seen in the rich physicality and permanence of the sculptures of Niamh O'Malley, utilising metal, concrete, stone and glass to create work that is at once weighted and impossibly light, delicate, inviting, fragile. Abstract, yet somehow familiar in its humanity. The same ambitious surrender to material is glaring from the work of Laura Gannon, richly worked upon linen, endlessly layered to create seas of reflection, colour, shadow and animation. There is a depth and animation to each piece that invites conversation, each piece being spirited, imbued with a certain human quality. All of these works represent activation, they feel real, truthful, intentional and permanent. Each maker has a distinctive language, from which a conversation about the core of making is born.

The human hand is evident in the rich tufting seen in the works from Ceadogán, including a unique archive piece lent from the Mainie Jellett estate, an abstract painter who was a protégé of Eileen Gray. Here we see a cross century conversation appearing, the true lineage of Gray's legacy of intention and workmanship. Decades of histories and developments exist too in the fabric of Mourne textiles, teachings and tradition relevant to both land and migration – the unique collaboration between weaver, designer, dyer, spinner and maker. Languages and skill overlap, histories intertwine and a new space is made. Here is an assertion that craft and making is part of our present, not our history – it lives in us and it creates the worlds around us. It speaks to the thing that vests both modernity and the ancient in modern Irish work.

I would never say that my own work could

be compared to Gray. It is the equivalent of a drop in the ocean, but there is an acknowledgment of spirit that I believe exists, an ether conversation. It is not direct inspiration or image that is taken, but this impossible to define ideal of making. The idea of birthing a language, not the language itself. I think again, and often, of Nellie telling me about Eileen. Of this cross-century conversation, a sort of seance over soda bread and scones. The work Nellie made – the scribbles on the back of cereal boxes, the painting of birds on her shed, the stacking and gluing of seashells to create figurines for sale to tourists, the mending of people's clothes, the embroidered small animals and painted stones, are too loving acts of defiance, but by different means. It is radical to create and show work to an audience with which there is no understanding to judge. I watched from my window, often, Nellie painting stones or sketching until the early hours of the morning. And this act has no less refinement or dedication than that of Gray. My understanding of good work and creative spirit would never exist without both of these bodies of work, and the tales told in between. Both of these people gave great gifts of inspiration, creating worlds that others could hope to one day absorb and in turn, orchestrate their own.

Here is the thing that the show aims to channel. This dedication and love of work, the equal acceptance of craft in direct relation with art, eliminating the lines that separate the two and giving equal importance and agency to both maker and artist. Our rigid structures and definitions, which more often than not exist to serve sales, need changing, to understand a different world can create a groundwork by which to change our own. The more we sell define, the more opportunity we give to commercially interested parties to extract.

We desperately need to take a step back, to appreciate these acts of creativity. To embrace and sustain craftspeople, artisans and artists. New and important understandings can be found in the birth of ideas, in visits to this 'altar', and absolutely anyone can reach it.

In my mind it is human beings like Gray, like Nellie, like every artist in this show, who silently create different futures, unique spaces for real creativity and love to flourish. We owe it to them to listen; we owe these makers a conversation.

It is incorrect to say that we should never meet our heroes. The work that is left behind by those we admire is the beginning of real dialogue and real learning. Our world can facilitate a more nuanced way of 'meeting', and imagined dialogues are often as important as real ones.

The work of Gray, and so too, the makers in this show, represent the same love and legacy. This act of making is a great, ambitious and inspiring thing, which no doubt creates a certain momentum with our future, and our past. *Making and Momentum*, I sincerely hope, serves as an open invitation for others to experience the truth and generosity found in the creative spirit.

Making and Momentum: In conversation with Eileen Gray opened in Roquebrune, France this July, to coincide with the completed renovation of Eileen Gray's iconic E-1027 Villa. The exhibition will travel to Ireland's National Museum, before a closing show in Wexford, the birthplace of both Eileen Gray and Richard Malone. The exhibition is curated by Richard Malone, and celebrates the legacy of modernism in Ireland, and the influence of modern Irish making worldwide. The exhibition features some of Ireland's most prominent and daring makers – Ceadogán, Laura Gannon, Maine Jellett, Mourne Textiles, Niamh O'Malley, Richard Malone and Sara Flynn.

A special thank you to everyone who's tireless efforts, despite a global pandemic, have catapulted this show into existence. I hope it is an inspiring for the viewer as it has been for those involved in creating it. It is an optimistic and hopeful gesture to celebrate the future of radical, self defining Irish makers, who's livelihoods are constantly precarious despite the richness that their art brings to the fabric of our lives.

Thank you to the incredible team at Cap Moderne, without whom this would not be possible – especially Cathy Giangrande and Michael Likierman. To Elisabetta and Geraldine on site at E-1027, for welcoming and supporting us on site.

Thank you to the team at the National Museum, for accommodating such a grassroots project and giving us this space – namely Lynn, Terri, Clare, Charli, Martin and all of the great staff on site. Thank you Dr. Jennifer Goff for your fantastic and generous research that has fed so many artists and makers.

Thank you Tom, Isabel and Rike for your wonderful support in this endeavour.

Finally, thank you to all of the fantastic artists who are the beating heart of this show. Your work is endlessly inspiring and uplifting to so many.

Colm and Martina, Mario, Sara, Niamh, Laura, Mainie, Nellie.

And of course, the fantastic Eileen Gray. Your work, commitment and spirit continues to inspire generations of makers around the world – thank you.

Richard Malone, August 2021











Artist statement by Niamh O'Malley



To know 'intent' or to try to describe it, contradicts the act of 'finding the work' which is the act of making. A visitor would see that numerous templates and shapes have been cut from card and paper and rest in early compositions on the wall and on the ground. There are stacks of vertical steel posts and piles of wooden blocks, some from pre-existing works and others migrating as props, measures and prototypes for potential forms. Slivers of coloured and textured glass have been shaped, cut, sanded and wrapped in copper foil. Some are soldered and patina-ed and balanced on the head of a nail. They hold the light against the wall.

Things seem to be an effort to anchor and contain, Stones laid, glass cut, wood stained, hung, arranged, composed, sat, lain, stood, cornered. Handmade is only relevant in terms of 'hand-thought'.

This is not puzzle solving but puzzles examined. Can thinking through materials expand the way things are known? Any or all of these may or may not become part of an exhibition

Niamh O'Malley, *August 2021*







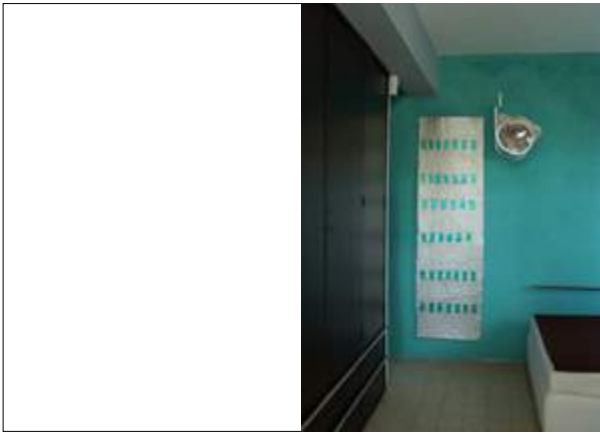








06-07 E-1027 © Manuel Bougot



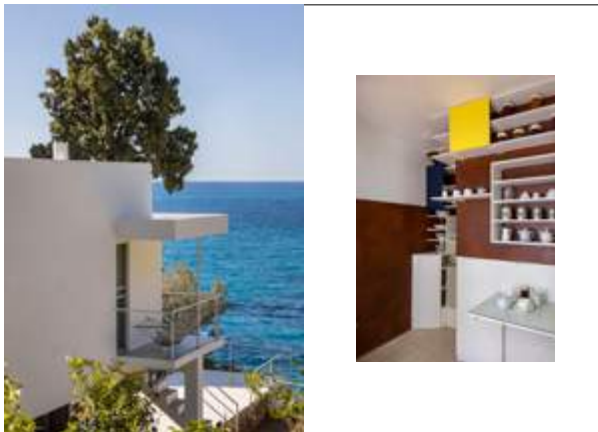
13 *Story* (2020) by Laura Gannon



20 Sculptures by Richard Malone
21 Vases by Sara Flynn, © Manuel Bougot



22-23 E-1027 with pieces by various artists in the show



14-15 E-1027 © Manuel Bougot

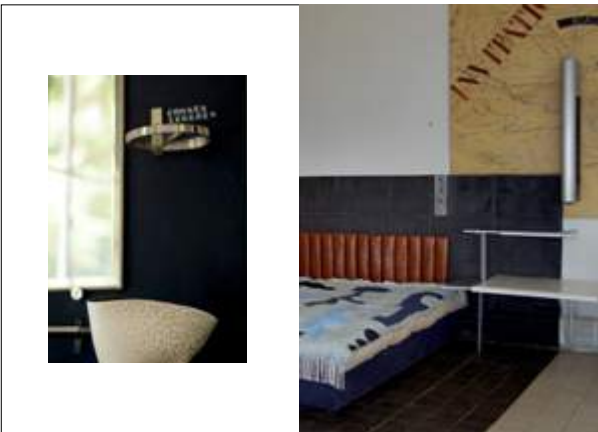


16 *Abstract i (running; rusts and yellow)* by Richard Malone x Mourne Textiles
17 Sculpture by Richard Malone, © Manuel Bougot

Abstract i (running; rusts and yellow) Handwoven wool archival blanket, based on mourne textiles founder Gerd Haye-Edies original designs. Hand appliqued by Richard Malone in woven silks and wool, designed by Malone. Only one ever made, first shown in Eileen Grays Villa E.1027.



24 *Story* (2020) by Laura Gannon
25 *S* (2020) by Laura Gannon



28 Vessel by Sara Flynn
29 E-1027 with throw by Richard Malone x Mourne Textiles



30–31 E-1027 © Manuel Bougot



32–33 Archive images © Editions Imbernon



38 *áit* (motion, form), 2021 by Richard Malone and Mourne textiles
39 Vessels by Sara Flynn

áit Handwoven wool panels encased in Mahogany. Each panel is completely hand woven in the mourne mountains, from locally sourced and grown wool, undyed. The transparent weave is extremely rare and complex to create, and based on archival 50s weaves from Mourne Textiles founder Gerd Haye-Edie. The panel is then hand-appliqued with woven silk by Richard Malone, in signature abstract shapes – alluding to human form, motion, and the ether.

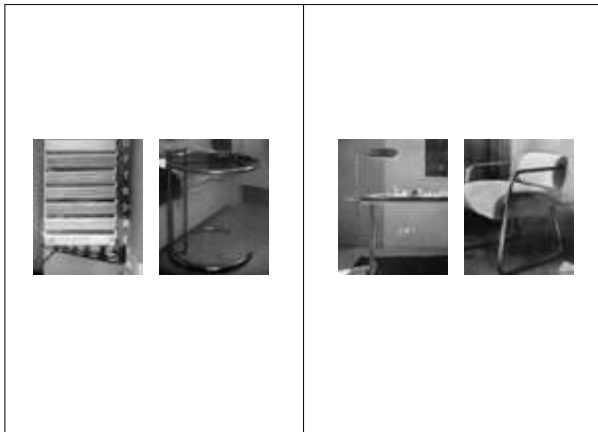
Designed by Richard Malone, with weaving by Mourne Textiles. Only one piece has ever been made, unique. First shown in Eileen Gray's villa E.1027, July 2021.



40 *Ceramic vessel grouping* (2021) by Sara Flynn
41 *no.12* rug by Mainie Jellett

Ceramic vessel grouping thrown, cut, slab-built, reassembled porcelain

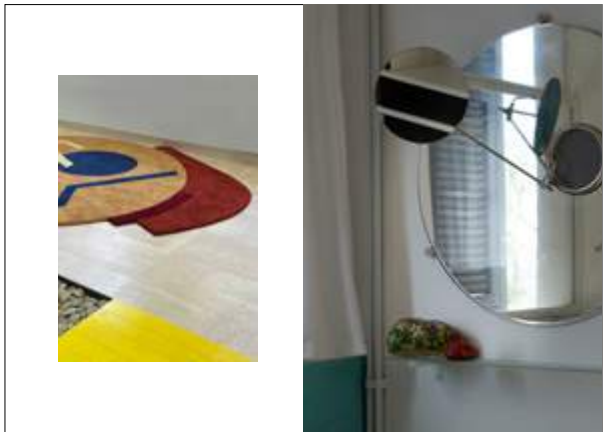
no.12 Archive Mainie Jellett designed, hand tufted rug. one of a kind. Mainie Jellett was a protege and friend of Eileen Gray. Made in Wexford.



34–34 Archive images © Editions Imbernon

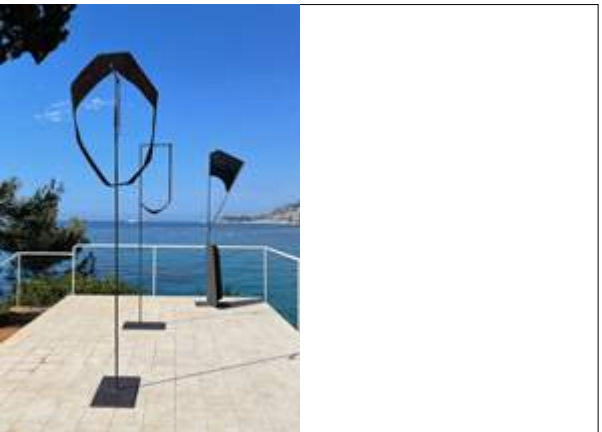


36–37 Room at E-1027 with throw by Richard Malone x Mourne Textiles



42 *éitear; R.5713 (imagining E.1027)* (2021) by Richard Malone
43 Bathroom detail at E-1027

éitear; R.5713 (imagining E.1027) A hand tufted, one of a kind abstract rug. Made from archive locally sourced and dyed wools, designed by Richard Malone. Only one ever made. Made in Wexford. First shown in Eileen Gray's villa E.1027, July 2021.



44 *Posts i, ii, iii* (2019) sculpture by Lorem ipsum

Posts i, ii, iii steel wood and glass sculptures installed on the terrace at E-1027



56–57 E-1027 © Manuel Bougot



58–59 Installation view, Salle Saint Lucie, Roquebrune village, July 2021



64–65 E-1027 © Manuel Bougot



68 *Abstract iv (twists, sea spike's blue)* by Richard Malone x Mourne Textiles
69 *Abstract iii (expanse, curves in sky's blue)* by Richard Malone x Mourne Textiles

Abstract iv (twists, sea spike's blue) Handwoven wool archival blanket, based on mourne textiles founder Gerd Haye-Edies original designs. Hand applied by Richard Malone in woven silks and wool, designed by Malone. Only one ever made, first shown in Eileen Grays Villa E-1027.

Abstract iii (expanse, curves in sky's blue) Installed at lower ground floor bedroom Handwoven wool archival blanket, based on mourne textiles founder Gerd Haye-Edies original designs. Hand applied by Richard Malone in woven silks and wool, designed by Malone. Only one ever made, first 79 shown in Eileen Grays Villa E-1027.



60 *The bone* (2020) by Laura Gannon
61 *Vessels* (2021) by Sara Flynn



62 *Camber-esker* (2021) by Sara Flynn
63 *Bibendum chair* by Eileen Gray

Camber-esker thrown, cut, reassembled porcelain



70 Bathroom at E-1027 © Manuel Bougot
71 *Abstract iii (expanse, curves in sky's blue)* by Richard Malone x Mourne Textiles, photographed in the main living area of E-1027



72 Bedroom at E-1027 with sculpture by Laura Gannon
73 Bathroom detail at E-1027

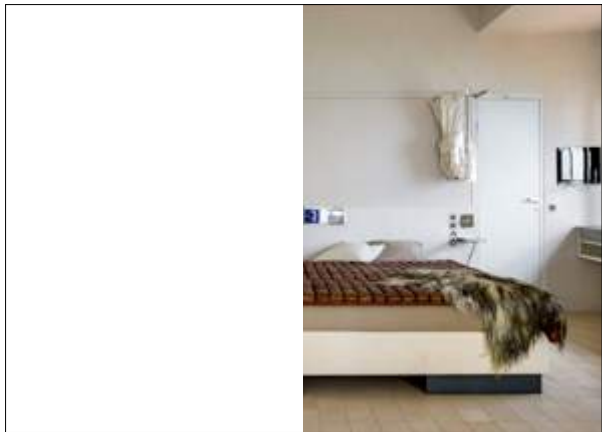


74–75 *Ghosts iii (low)* (2021) by Richard Malone

Ghosts iii (low) Hand patchworked textile sculpture. Freestanding in recycled jersey, cotton, steel. Pink/ navy, 2 pieces. Unique. 2021. By multi award winning Irish artist and designer Richard Malone.



76–77 E-1027 © Manuel Bougot



79 Bedroom at E-1027 © Manuel Bougot

Biographies

Niamh O'Malley

Born Co Mayo, Ireland, Niamh O'Malley currently lives and works in Dublin, Ireland.

‘Niamh O'Malley's artwork reveals a profound appreciation for the act of trying. Trying to catch a certain slant of light, trying to prove a pattern or uncover a composition, trying to fathom a mountain, trying to hold time still. Working with the moving image, mark making and sculptural materials such as glass and wood, O'Malley's work attempts to contain and reflect the weight and wonder of the world in its becoming. It is the act of trying, in the face of predictable failure, that gives way to conviction and a sense of hope within the artist's work. Full of reflection, both literal and metaphorical, filled with absence and framed by negative space, O'Malley's work asserts something unstoppable about the human spirit, something that neither distance nor death can extinguish’ Exhibition text by Kate Strain, Grazer Kunstverein, 2018

O'Malley has made numerous solo exhibitions in recent years including mother's tankstation limited (2020), Royal Hibernian Academy (2019), Lismore Castle Arts (2019), Grazer Kunstverein (2018), Bluecoat Liverpool (2015), Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2017) & (2015) a five venue solo show called 'The Mayo Collaborative' Ireland (2013), 'Garden', Project Arts Centre, Dublin (2013) Ha Gamle Prestegard, Norway (2012), 'Model', Green on Red Gallery, Dublin, Ireland (2011), 'Island', Centre Culturel Montehermoso, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain (2010), 'Frame, Glass, Black' Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris, France (2010), 'Echo', Gaain Gallery, Seoul, Korea (2010), 'No Distance', Void, Derry, Northern Ireland (2009). A selection of group exhibitions include Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival, CAG, Vancouver, KARST, Plymouth, eva International, Biennale of Visual Art, Limerick, Eli & Edythe Broad Museum, Michigan, Kilkenny Arts Festival, Galleria Civica di Modena, White Box, New York, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Kunstverein Ludwigsburg, Germany. Niamh O'Malley, with Temple Bar Gallery + Studios as the curator, will represent Ireland at the 59th Venice Art Biennale in 2022.

Sara Flynn

Sara Flynn was born in Cork, Ireland in 1971, and trained in the Crawford College of Art & Design, Cork City, Ireland.

Her studio is in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Having begun her career in 1999 producing small-scale functional pots, as her skill has increased she has moved entirely into making one-off Sculptural Decorative Vessels. 'Closed' Abstract Forms are also explored through the production of limited-edition Cast Bronze objects.

She is represented in London by Erskine, Hall & Coe, Mayfair; and has held five solo exhibitions with them.

Her first Solo Exhibition in Japan was held in Sokyo Gallery, Kyoto, in 2019, and her fist Solo exhibition in France will be held with Galerie d'Ancienne Poste, in Toucy in May 2021.

Her work is held in many major collections including The Victoria & Albert Museum London, England; The Devonshire Collection at Chatsworth House, England; The Gardiner Museum, Toronto, Canada; The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England, U.K., The Art Institute of Chicago, U.S.A.; The Hepworth Gallery, England and The National Museum of Ireland.

She was shortlisted for the inaugural edition of the Loewe Foundation Craft Prize in 2017.

She has been a member of the Experts Panel for the Loewe Craft Prize in 2018, 2019 and 2020 and has also been a member of the judging panel for the RDS Craft Prize (2018, 2019 and 2020).

In 2020 she sat on the Exhibition Panel for the Design & Crafts Council Ireland.

Ceadogán

Ceadogán Rugs began as a small hearth rug business in Wexford town in 1981 under dye house master Tom Ceadogain. It was acquired by Denis Kenny and Fiona Guilboy in 1989, Denis having undertook an apprenticeship with Tom (after stints as a fisherman, teacher and pig farmer, a true renaissance man!).

Over thirty years with Denis and Fiona at the helm, Ceadogán went from a small hearth rug business to a leading maker of fine bespoke rugs and wall hangings. Our work can be found hanging or lying all around the globe.

In 2021 the baton was passed again and Colm Kenny and Martina Navrátilová took the reins having spent several years deeply involved in the running of Ceadogán rugmakers. In good keeping with tradition both Colm and Martina found their way to rug making via the scenic route with backgrounds in furniture and fine art printmaking (and a few other detours along the way!)

We are now a team of eight people united in our passion for design and making. We are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in our craft and pride in our work.

We remain true to our roots – fiercely independent, committed to our local heritage and the tradition of exceptional craftsmanship. Our workshop and showroom are situated in the family homestead, a stone walled farmyard that dates back to the 1600s, overlooking Bannow Bay Estuary in Co. Wexford.

Mainie Jellett

Mainie Jellett (1897 – 1944) was one of Ireland's finest painters of the 20th century. She was part of the explosion of 'Modernism' of 1920's Europe and was a notable contributor to the 'Art Deco' movement that revolutionised thinking in design, colour and composition.

Jellett was a know protege of Eileen Gray, as Dr. Jennifer Goff, (the world leading expert on Gray and Curator of Furniture, Musical Instruments and the Eileen Gray collection, National Museum of Ireland)

explains in her essay, Shades of Gray – *“In 1922 Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone met Gray through a mutual friend Kate Weatherby. Gray had the most impact on Mainie Jellett, as she encouraged Jellett to produce her own rug designs.”* In 1927 Jellett designed and had rugs made at the Gray Wyld workshop in rue de Visconti. Though some of Jellett's carpets are formal exercises in Albert Gleizes's theories of abstract cubism – other clearly demonstrate Gray's influence. A circular rug design of 1933 is directly inspired by Gray's rug Tapis Ronde which she created for the living room of E1027”

Mainie Jellett made many rug designs through the latter part of the 1920's and into the 1930's. The current collection of rugs, made by Ceadogán Rugs at their workshops in Co. Wexford, are based on her original gouache drawings and have been produced by kind permission of the representatives of the Jellett estate. All the rugs are made with 100% pure wool but can also be made using silk / wool (55%/45%) mix. The rugs are produced in limited editions of 10.

Richard Malone

Richard Malone, 30, is a multi-disciplinary artist and designer from Wexford, Ireland. Malone graduated from Central Saint Martins in 2014, winning both the Deutsche Bank and LVMH Grand Prix prizes for his collection. In February 2020, rounding off the meteoric first chapter of his career, Malone was named the winner of the International Woolmark Prize, previously awarded to Karl Lagerfeld and Yves Saint Laurent – praised by the panel of judges for his 'radically transparent' working practise, revolutionary approach to research and a redefined notion of luxury. The lifeblood of his garments is Malone's detailed, sensitive observation of the body. A staunch advocate for women's rights, Malone was a vocal public supporter of the Repeal The 8th campaign in Ireland and the UK – including a protest at London's Selfridges department store. He has dressed and collaborated with clients ranging from art and fashion industry executives to international icons: Tilda Swinton, Roisin Murphy, Björk, Debbie Harry, Rihanna, Kate Moss and Beyoncé. Malone's essays and letters have been published by British Vogue and Luncheon magazine.

As well as his bi-annual shows at London Fashion Week, Malone's work has become highly collectible and is part of the permanent collections of some of the world's most prestigious museums and galleries – including the Museum of Modern Art (MoMa) in New York, the Design Museum in London, and the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne. His cross-disciplinary approach includes sculpture, performance, illustration and photography. Malone is internationally recognised as an advocate for conscious design and has worked across the world in researching and developing sustainable practices for the fashion industry. Malone's pieces are made in strictly limited editions, or completely unique – fabrications include handwoven cotton supporting regenerative farming, locally sourced woven wools from the Mourne mountains, regenerated ocean-waste jerseys and garments reconstructed from past season toiles. Malone is strongly against the mass production involved in the fashion industry.

Laura Gannon

Laura Gannon's work oscillates between drawing, sculpture, painting and film. Recent works include abstract drawings made with metallic ink on linen. The linen has been subjected to multiple processes to reveal its corporeality: folding, bending and wrinkling suggesting their raw physicality and directness. Her artwork titles are chosen from female literary and architectural references. She uses the titles of short stories and the names of architects, embedding the works with the possibility of narrative and architectural scale. Gannon's films mark a parallel to her sculptural drawings with their articulation of temporality, light, space and the act of looking; intimate portraits of distinctive architectural buildings.

Gannon lives and works in London and West Cork.

Recent solo exhibitions include VISUAL, Carlow, (2019-20), Kate MacGarry, London (2018), Espace Croisé, Centre d'Art Contemporain, France, (2016); Silver House, Uillinn; West Cork Arts Centre, Ireland, (2015).

Group shows include Drawing Biennial, Drawing room, London (2019) Andersen's Contemporary, Copenhagen, (2018), Show Window, Kate MacGarry, London, (2016); Folly: Art After Architecture, Glucksman Gallery, Cork, (2014); A House of Leaves, David Roberts Art Foundation, (DRAF) London, (2013). A House in Cap-Martin was included in Customary Beauty, Mor-Charpentier, Paris, (2011); Silver House was screened as part of the Official Selection Milano Design Film Festival, (2017).

Mourne Textiles

Mourne Textiles was founded in the foothills of the Mourne Mountains, County Down, in 1954 by Norwegian textile designer, Gerd Hay-Edie. Over the years that followed, Gerd's textile designs and pioneering weaving techniques became a staple of mid-century design and collaborations with celebrated designers such as Robin Day, Hille and Conran, established Gerd's lasting influence upon the world of weaving.

Gerd handed her expertise down to daughter Karen Hay-Edie, a Master-Weaver in her own right, who in turn passed the baton on to her son, Mario Sierra, who shares the family passion for weaving and now runs the Mourne Textiles studio.

Mario continues the Mourne Textiles legacy from the original site in Rostrevor and like his grandmother, seeks out opportunities to work alongside respected designers. Recent projects have included partnerships with some of the most exciting names in modern design, including Margaret Howell, Carl Hansen, Pinch and Twentytwentyone.

Mario and the Mourne Textiles Team, continue to proudly champion the beauty and community of their surroundings and combine this with a deep respect of craftsmanship, artistry and design excellence.

Postscript

In 2019 images were released in the Guardian newspaper of a luxury apartment, next to the UN headquarters in New York. The apartment was to be used by a senior diplomat charged with seeking post Brexit trade deals. The UK government paid £12 million for the apartment, featured in the master bedroom was a reproduction of the Eileen Gray E1027 glass and metal table.

In instagram posts of Ivanka Trump's bedroom, the bed was covered in a draped fur. This combination of placing a fur throw on a bed was first presented by Gray at 14th Salon des Artistes Décorateurs in 1923. She also used a fur on her bed in E1027. It has become a ubiquitous styling devise in interior decor.

Gray's tube light features in many BBC productions, often appearing in hotel scenes where modernity is implied.

Many contemporary design companies from Casa Armani to IKEA have produced close copies of her designs without acknowledging the source.

Her works remain as contemporary over 100 years later as they did when they were first designed.

Laura Gannon, *August 2021*

Making and Momentum
First published in 2021

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Designed by Rike Dreier

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