

Kennys Bookshop & Art Gallery

Exhibitions Schedule | July-December, 2021



03-20



Luke McMullan, *The Tree of Life* (2021), Acrylic on Canvas, 47x31in

July 9 – August 4 | Luke McMullan *A Constant State of Motion*

Luke McMullan's second solo exhibition at the Kenny Gallery was to have been held at Kennys during the month of July 2020.

Of course the Pandemic intervened, and we held off presenting this edgy and imaginative work by one of our rising stars, until now, a full year later!

But the silver lining of this delay is that the artist has had time to paint a host of new works, and we are delighted to present these and the original paintings as our re-opening exhibition.

Luke McMullan's distinctive, often hallucinatory, contemporary collection *A Constant State of Motion* runs from Friday July 9 until the beginning of August at Kennys' Liosbán gallery in Galway City.

Luke McMullan was born in 1979 in Co. Kildare; he currently lives and works in Galway, in the West of Ireland.

His introduction to art came through writing graffiti in the 90s; it was then that he adopted the pseudonym 'Stix'. He has been honing his craft ever since and although he no longer paints on walls, the organic and adaptive nature of graffiti is at the foundation of the art he produces today.

His subject and style are in a constant state of motion as he tries to capture snapshots of the visual world, both around and within.



Luke McMullan: *Killer Crayons*, Acrylic on Canvas, 10x10in | *Prescription Rodeo*, Acrylic on Canvas, 20x20in



Luke McMullan, *Tainted Love (Joyride)*, Acrylic on Canvas, 20x24in



Luke McMullan, *Glasses Half Full*, Acrylic on Canvas, 12x12in



Luke McMullan, *I'm 'bout to Blow Up*, Acrylic on Canvas, 40x40in

Webb²

August 6 - September 8 | Kenneth Webb & Susan Webb

Webb² (Webb Squared) sees the long anticipated return of two remarkable artists to Kennys, with an exhibition of new paintings by Kenneth Webb and Susan Webb from next Friday, August 6th, 2021.

A 68-year relationship between an artist and a gallery is rare, but that is how long the painter Kenneth Webb and Kennys have been working together. Since he first walked in their door in Galway, both the gallery and the artist's work have gone through many changes. He has painted his way through a variety of themes and into a world-wide reputation. In all those years there has always been one constant in his work, colour!

For Webb, at 94 years of age, colour is still fresh, magical and exciting, and induces in him great bouts of painting, undinted and undaunted by the pandemic of the last year. When an idea comes to him he cannot wait to get it down on canvas. His work has been described as 'homage to the secret life of colour'. He is a dedicated painter who is constantly driven to bold new experiments in paint.

He started to teach his daughter Susan to paint when she was about three years old. She was a keen learner and held her first solo exhibition when she was just eighteen. Since then she has developed a serious reputation as an accomplished artist who specialises in equestrian paintings and studies of animals. She has been the recipient of many important commissions and still manages to find time to run The Irish School of Landscape Painting from her studio in Ashford, County Wicklow.

This exhibition includes a return to some favourite subjects for Kenneth, the bogs and bog pools, the wildflowers and rocks of Connemara; and for Susan it is a series of images of horses racing, hunting, grazing, ponies in the landscape, striking images of Galway and some exciting new works.

What follows is just a very small sample of the work, and we hope to issue an online video in place of a physical opening on the 6th August – **keep an eye on www.thekennysgallery.ie for the whole collection and a link to that special launch video next week!**

The exhibition will continue daily 9.00-5.00, Monday to Saturday until the 8th September - admission is free and all are welcome.

Click a thumbnail for a higher resolution image:



Kenneth Webb, Tranquility, Oil on Canvas, 20x60in



Susan Webb, Omey Pony Races (2021), Oil on Canvas, 10x12in



Susan Webb, Kenneth's View, Oil on Canvas, 24x20in



Kenneth Webb, Drift, Oil on Canvas, 30x40in



Kenneth Webb, Geometric Bog, Oil on Canvas, 30x40in



Susan Webb, The Long Walk, Galway, Oil on Canvas, 18x36in



Paula Pohli pictured at her County Mayo studio, 2020

September 10 - October 6 | Paula Pohli *Juxtapositions*

Juxtapositions brings Paula Pohli's linocuts and tempera paintings together in the Kenny Gallery, Galway from September 10th. A selection of her linocuts are juxtaposed with her tempera paintings: black and white with colour linocuts; older work with recent work; city themes with country life; county Mayo rural life held in contrast with Galway; New York with her native Dublin.

Above all, the exhibition shows the artist's love of nature and the natural world in the country and in the city. She acknowledges the beauty of the man-made too in her series of 'sheds'. This exhibition shows the natural juxtaposed with the man-made.

The Artist thinks farmers and artists have common interests: both love animals; both watch the weather for changes that occur hourly; both care for flora and fauna, and both work long hours.

Paula's beloved linocut prints are cut, inked and printed entirely by hand without a printing press, and offered in very low editions. Her egg tempera paintings are created in an expressive Giotto-esque manner with yolk of egg, purified water, and carefully selected pigments.

In 2015, *LINO and EGG* solo show in Darc Space Gallery, nearly sold-out in Dublin. Maggie Moran of Darc Space, described Paula's work as "*method meeting modernity*". Irish Times critic, Aidan Dunne called Paula "*a specialist in Linocuts and an exacting technician*" in 2020.

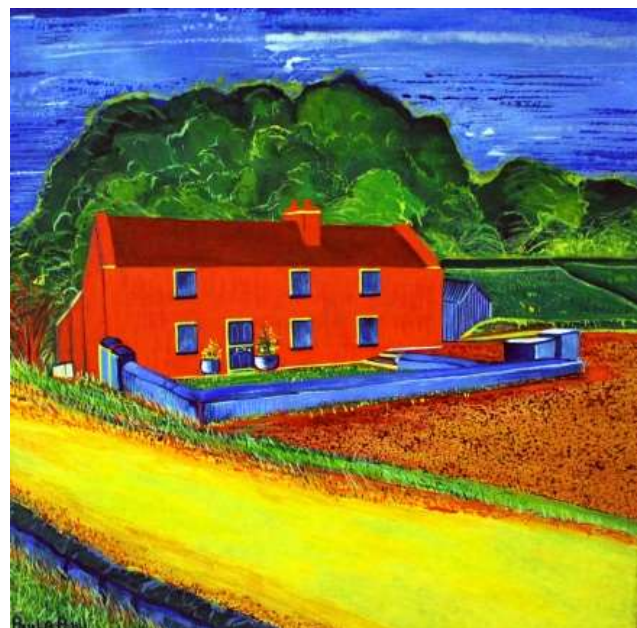
Her successful Dublin show, *Exhibition for a Good Man*, interrupted by Corona health restrictions, was dedicated to her husband Walter.

If she wasn't already active enough, Paula has also written a book about birds in her garden during lockdown!

A testament to the Artist's standing in her field, six of Paula's works have recently been acquired by the National Gallery of Ireland for the National collection.

What follows is just a very small sample of the work - keep an eye on www.thekennygallery.ie for the whole collection in the run up to the exhibition, and a link to a streamed opening speech on September 10!

This is the Artist's first solo exhibition at the Kenny Gallery after a long association, and continues 9:00-17:00, Monday to Saturday until October 6. Admission is free and all are welcome.

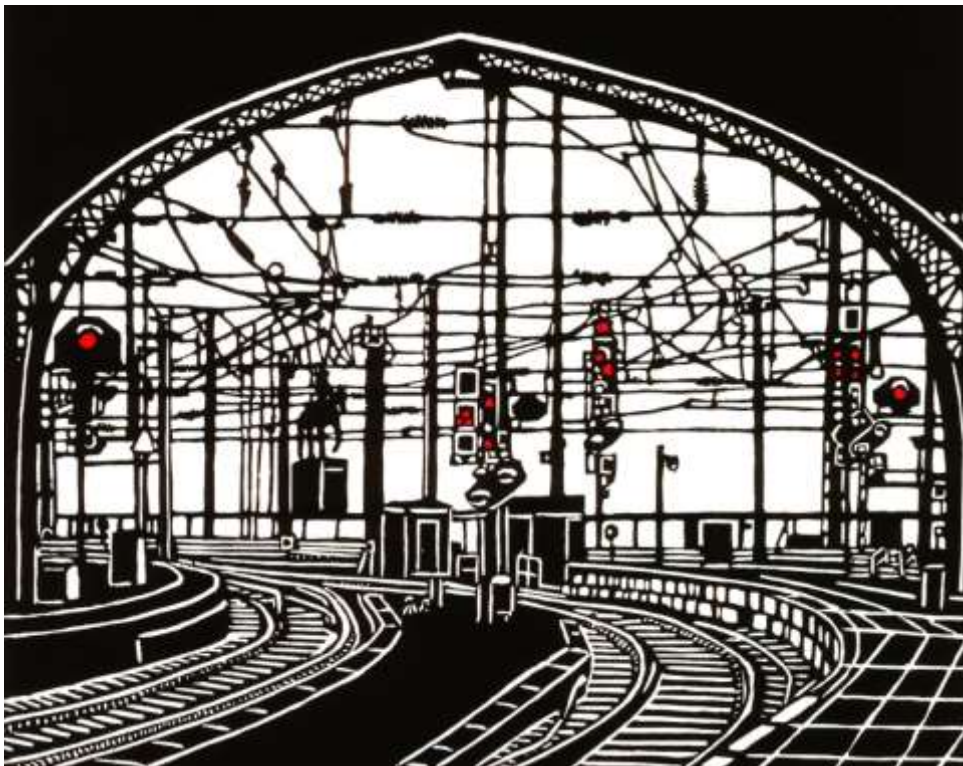


(left) Paula Pohli, 1897 (2020), Egg Tempera on Paper, 10x14in

(right) Paula Pohli, Postcard from Home, Mayo (2020), Egg and Oil Tempera on Panel, 9.5x10in



Paula Pohli, In the Barn (2018), Egg Tempera on Gesso Panel



Paula Pohli, Station (2014), Linocut 12x14in



Paula Pohli, Memory (2015), Linocut 9x11in



John Behan at The Kenny Gallery, Galway 2021

October 8 - November 10 | John Behan RHA *Shifting Ground*

Shifting Ground is an outstanding new collection of sculpture in bronze from renowned Irish artist **John Behan**. The exhibition, which will open at the Kenny Gallery, Galway in October will include works touching on the artist's experience through the Pandemic, a fleshing out his previous 'Emigrants' work including striking new versions of his iconic Famine Ship and examples of the origins of that theme in his Brighter Boat and Oar Boat series. Contemporary refugee imagery features too and there will also be some new works based on images suggested by the poetry of Seamus Heaney. The sculpture will be supported by a series of related paintings and drawings in mixed media.

The exhibition will be officially launched by RTÉ's BRYAN DOBSON at 6.00pm on Friday the 8th October at Kenny's Liosbán Gallery in Galway.

The launch is free to attend, but with limited numbers admitted due to pandemic restrictions - patrons may register for the official opening on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/john-behan-rha-shifting-ground-new-works-in-bronze-tickets-178795721817>

After the opening, the exhibition will run Monday to Saturday, 9:00-17:00 until the 10th November - booking is not required. Admission is free and all welcome.



Bryan Dobson, RTÉ, pictured at Kennys Bookshop



John Behan, Bantry Famine Ship IV (2021), Bronze, Unique, 28x27x8in

"My art is related to ancient culture as well as to modern technique... in Irish art, we have had a gap between the Middle Ages and the 20th Century when no visual art was produced. So I had to go back: the future was in the past, if you like..." JOHN BEHAN

An artist intimately attuned to early Irish culture, John Behan has actively sought inspiration for his work in the imagery of a previous era. Centuries of outside domination, ironically at a time when the Renaissance flourished in Europe, saw little further indigenous visual cultural development in Ireland through the early modern period.

Behan has taken up his visual cue from the early treasures of Irish Art - the Broighter Boat, the Corleck Head, the illustration of the Book of Kells. Harnessing these forms and tropes of ancient art to create his own work, Behan has developed his own visual language, an almost quasi-primitivism, but imbued with an authenticity of precedent, building a symbolic bridge to the past. In the early period of his work the artist used this developed style to pick up where Irish art had left off, boats and bulls are to the fore, but later the artist was free to backfill a visual gap to parallel a verbal literary tradition in his reimagining of Irish mythological themes. We see heroes of legend, outside of the Táin ink drawings of Louis le Brocquy, not before presented in a form which could have been lifted from the 4th century.

Perhaps the most significant breakthrough in the artist's work, however, may be in his talismanic memorialisation of the image of the infamous 'coffin' ships of the Irish Famine period of the 1840s - an imagery first realised in the 1990s, which coincided with the 150th anniversary of that calamity. Here Behan presents painful commentary, utilising his now fluent

personal expression to make iconic what he now rebranded his 'Famine Ship'. Skeletal souls for sails, and with maritime form, this was to become - along with his great Táin bulls - signature Behan.

If the Famineship of the 1990s spoke to the historic, albeit painful folk memory of the Irish Famine, then perhaps the most important recent development in the work of John Behan must be in his exploration of the current chilling echo of the Irish migrant crisis of the 19th century - that of the plight of African and Middle Eastern refugees coming to Europe through the past number of years.

The artist's wider thematic interest developed parallel to the introduction of increasing early European imagery to augment his Irish visual basis. Artist visits throughout Europe and further afield explain the emergence of Etruscan, Greek and African informed work.

Teetering precariously, a visual echo of the Brighter Boat but without the comfort of oars, Behan's contemporary Refugee Boats bring right up to date the artist's thematic consideration, in keeping with both the sentiment and structure of his Famine Ship work, but perhaps drawing even more direct inspiration, through that very identifiable Behan style, from a source of inspiration in early Irish art.

The Famine Ship is hugely significant in his work, indeed it forms the basis of a Irish National Famine Memorial at Murrisk Co. Mayo (1997). However, in some ways this new 'migrant' work has perhaps more contemporary significance. It is more roundly and directly realised - it is not retrospective - it has presence and urgency.

On his many journeys to Greece and Cyprus, in particular, the artist has encountered refugees as they flee Africa and the Middle-East. This couldn't but have come into the expression of this sensitive and receptive artist.

DEAN KELLY, The Kenny Gallery, Galway



John Behan, The Outlaw (2021), Bronze Unique, 11x20x7in



John Behan, Mosul (2021), Bronze, Unique, 19x8x13in



November 12 – December 8

Pádraic Reaney *Oiléan, 1988-2020, Malta – Ireland – Scotland* | Paintings & Graphics

"I've been pulled to islands since I did work in Malta in the late 1980s," Reaney says, referring to a group of local artists including Brenda Fitzsimons, John Behan and Vicky Crowley, who visited Malta as part of the group Island Connection.

This body of work takes us on a visual European island hop and comes from this work initiated in the 1980s, derived and developed from the artist's repository of sketchbooks and studies.

We enjoy the artist's continuing fascination with Island life and this collection follows his critically acclaimed Inis Áirc Project, which was exhibited in Galway 2018.



Image overleaf:
Pádraic Reaney, *Old Boat, Inishnee*,
Roundstone, Acrylic on Board, 30x31in

Pádraic Reaney was born in Carraroe, Co. Galway in 1952. Basically self-taught, he went to art college for a few years encouraged by the well-known sculptor Oisín Kelly and has been a full-time artist since leaving college. He painted for several years in Galway; later he built a studio in Moycullen, where he now lives and works.

In addition to his painting, he has worked widely in graphics (etching, silk, screen etc.) and has done sculpture in bronze and stone and ceramic with a rich use of silver and gold leaf. His work is in great demand for book covers and illustrations, and he has recently created a series of striking wall hangings done in the studio of V'Soske Joyce.

A film was made of one of his very successful exhibitions based on the Táin, which was the RTÉ entry in the Pan Celtic International Film Festival in 1988 - it was one of the three top films in the festival. This film and an interview with the artist were shown on RTÉ, where several short features on his work and interviews with him have appeared throughout the last years.

A founder member of Western Artists, Island Connection, and Drimcong Press (with Brian Bourke and Jay Murphy), he was awarded the Padraic Mac Con Midhe Prize at the Oireachtas in 1979 to do a series of etchings recording the rapidly disappearing thatched houses in Ros an Mhíl, Connemara. He also represented Ireland in the XVIth Grand Prix International d'Arts Contemporain de Monte Carlo in 1982.

A founder member of Western Artists and Island Connection, he was invited to Scotland by the North Ayrshire Council in 1996 to do a series of exhibitions on the Isles and the West Coast of Scotland. He was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Galway Arts Centre in 1996 and served on the Board until 1999.

His work is in public and private collections in this country as well as in Europe, Canada, the United States, Brazil and Japan.



Pádraic Reaney, Dún Aonghasa. Acrylic on Board, 48x32in



Pádraic Reaney, Inishark Island. Acrylic on Board. 48x32in



Pádraic Reaney, Tree, Tenerife, Block Print, 15x12in



December 10, through January 2022 | A MAGIC ROOM IN GALWAY
 Christmas & New Year Group Exhibition

Kennys' has its foundation in books, established as a bookshop in Galway in 1940 - however we have also exhibited visual art from the very beginning.

The Kenny Gallery was formally established as the first commercial art gallery in the West of Ireland over 50 years ago, and we host solo and group exhibitions each year, and we actively promote emerging talent.

Over the years we have showcased the work of emerging Irish artists, many of whom have become household names - the works of Jack Yeats, Paul Henry, Sean Keating, George Campbell, Louis le Brocqy, Andy Warhol, Salvador Dalí, Sidney Nolan and many others have hung on the walls of Kennys.

In these challenging times, when so many events have been postponed, we will mark the end of the year with a special edition of our annual Christmas & New Year Group Exhibition – A Magic Room in Galway.

We hope that this will give our gallery artists an opportunity to be seen together in a show that is bigger than ever, including several hundred artworks - oils, watercolours, sculpture, ceramics, photography and graphics.

Artists included are John Behan, Kenneth Webb, Fiona Concannon, Thelma Mansfield, Leah Beggs, Luke McMullan, Marja van Kampen, Paula Pohli, Shane Crotty, Bernadette Madden, Fran McCann, Robert Ballagh and many more!

Runs through January 2022 at Kennys' Liosbán Gallery in Galway City, 9.00-17.00, Monday to Saturday.



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