

Galway Art Club

GALWAY ART CLUB 1937-2017

This exhibition celebrates the eightieth anniversary of the foundation of the Galway Art Club in October 1937 and includes pictures and sculptures by both past and present members of the club.

Paintings by Geraldine Dillon, Hubert Broderick, Francis Corbett, Cara Donagh, Archie Barnett and Matt Flynn, who were founder members of the club, are on display. The early exhibitions only included pictures, but the arrival of Clare Sheridan in Galway in 1947 led to the inclusion of sculpture.

The club held its first exhibition in 1943 at a time when there were few art exhibitions in the West of Ireland. Many Irish artists found inspiration in Connacht, but took their paintings to Dublin for exhibition. However, the Galway Art Club Exhibitions provided Galway people with an opportunity to see contemporary Irish art and this contributed to a growing awareness and appreciation of art in the city. Apart from four years during the 1950s the Galway Art Club Exhibition became an annual event. It began in 1943 with about forty exhibits, in 2017 the exhibition opened with 249 paintings and sculptures, the work of thirty-four artists, on display.

Charles Lamb, who has been described as one of the leading exponents in the depiction of the West of Ireland, was the best-known artist who exhibited with the Galway Art Club.

The exhibition provides evidence of the artistic talents of the members of the Galway Art Club, but their skills were also used in support of dramatic, musical, sporting and charitable events in Galway. They also joined the Galway Literary Society and the Galway Art Gallery Committee, which was formed in 1943, with the purpose of establishing a municipal art gallery for Galway. The strength of artistic talent in the club today is apparent in the collection of contemporary art by the present members of the club. This exhibition is a tribute to those amateur artists, who established an Art Club eighty years ago, which continues to thrive today.