



# Interlace

Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**The material of time and memory...**

Angela O'Kelly

Introduction: Interlace, Contemporary  
Interpretations of Lace

**Interlace.** An exhibition which takes traditional lace as a starting point for eight artists and designers practicing in Ireland today. The concept of the show is to explore how traditional material culture creates a resonant source for contemporary practice. As you will read in the following essay by Gemma Tipton, each of the participating artists tells her own individual story through her work and this exhibition offers an insight into the way that they have been influenced and inspired by lace heritage.

# Interlace

The title of the exhibition aptly describes the artists' creative process and influences. Interlace traces its origin from late Middle English, from old French 'entrelacier'; entre 'between' and lacier 'to lace'. Interlace is currently defined as 'cross or be crossed intricately together, interweave, or mingle'. This exhibition mingles many sophisticated contemporary material outcomes. Through the narrative it also crosses and interweaves time, memory, passages of life and social history.

Sincere thanks to Ann Mulrooney who initiated this exhibition for the National Craft Gallery; Mary Whelan who has researched Irish lace tirelessly in the last three years and Alex Ward, Kathy Earle and Veronica Rowe for their inspired advice.

Finally I would like to thank each of the makers; Anita Elliott, Caroline Schofield, Cathryn Hogg, Helen McAllister, Natalie B Coleman, Patty Murphy, Róisín de Buitléar and Saidhbhín Gibson. It is only your deep engagement with materials and process and the resultant stunning outcomes that have made this exhibition possible. — Angela O'Kelly, Interlace Curator, Kilkenny, 2014

Gemma Tipton

The material of time and memory:

Returning lace to the world

With contradictions and paradoxes woven into every stitch, lace is a beguiling swatch of social history, and also something of an enigma. Does it conceal or reveal? Is it the embodiment of empty luxury, or the very stuff of survival? Masculine or feminine, fragile or robust? It could be easy to think that lace is less than relevant today, mired in the clichés of the past; but it can speak to a contemporary audience with a voice that is clear, persuasive and meaningful, as it gently nudges us towards different habits of thinking and being. A tall order for stitching, appliqué, hooking? Not necessarily.

In christening robes, wedding veils, and the softened edges of funeral trappings; lace ushers us into, through and out of life, so why is it so frequently exiled in our contemporary consciousness to doilies and the desultory trimmings of nylon knickers?

**“The looping, twisting, abstraction and braiding to other threads is reminiscent of the human brain; the fragile networking of a piece of art.”** [CATHRYN HOGG]

Traced through the work and insights of the eight makers in this exhibition, a fascinating story emerges: of women forming collectives to earn money to keep their families alive; of men adorning themselves with lace, their frothing cuffs proof that, no, these hands never sully themselves with labour; and of a fabric that creates shadows, images of what is not actually there, as it both symbolises modesty, and hints at the promise of naked skin.

**Lace is about time.** “Craftspeople are tied to time,” says Patty Murphy, whose work explores her fascination with lace through ceramic and installation. “Our sense of time is different.” She describes how time and cultural changes can come between us and looking at things. “We see lace with our contemporary

senses, and can be blown away by the intricacies, by the labour; so trying to present lace today, in a contemporary way, is very difficult.” Murphy has a particular interest in the lace makers of Youghal in East Cork. The surviving pieces of their work are testament to the personal stories of the more than 500 women who have otherwise slipped to the half-forgotten edges of history. Taking crocheted Youghal lace garments from their storage boxes in the archives of the National Museum in Collins Barracks, Dublin, Murphy had that sense, exquisite to any lover of history, of smelling, touching, falling into a past made immediately present. “It was the sheer weight and volume of the cotton threads, still smelling freshly, that surprised and delighted me,” she writes. “Their immaculately white pristine condition was as unaltered as the day they were made, over one hundred years earlier.” Looked at this way, stitch by stitch, lace is all about time.

**Lace is about place.** A crocheted tea gown, maybe on a mannequin in a museum, speaks first of the wealthy women who idled away their afternoons, until it was time to dress, differently, for dinner. But the strength of craft is how it also draws us back to its making alongside the stories of later ownership and use. Irish lace is a paradox: white or creamy coloured, delicate, luxurious, costly, it was introduced to Ireland by nuns, returning from the Continent with samples of Venetian and French lace, and was later more fully developed as a means to create employment during the Famine. Delicate beauty from dark times.

Because of these origins, diffuse, regional, and of a time before mass communications, variations in Irish lace are enormous. Not only did families create their own motifs, but methods were widely different too. Carrickmacross lace, which is the type most recently famous for being all over Kate Middleton’s wedding dress, is netted and stitched, Kenmare lace is needlepoint, while Youghal lace is crocheted. I am drawn to wonder about the lace I have, in a box at the bottom of a wardrobe. It came from my grandmother, on my mother’s side. It’s crocheted, and it might have been a wedding present, I don’t know if she used it. It was given to my mother for me when I was born. Was I wrapped up in it once upon a time? I don’t know if there are any photographs to prove it. There’s a

tablecloth too, that I once, briefly considered using as a bedspread, before deciding that no, it was too precious.

**Lace is about how we live.** Grandmother to mother to me, am I breaking the story of the lace by leaving it in its protective tissue paper in a cardboard box? Absolutely and definitively, yes — according to Róisín de Buitléar, whose glass objects and installations reveal lace's illusory delicate magic. "It looks fragile, but a lot of it is extremely durable. They used to boil wash it," she tells me. Using lace is, she says, about a different way of living, of seeing things, of valuing time, and valuing what you have, what you choose to treasure. "Use your tablecloth," she insists. "And tell me how it changes everything at the meal." Imagining this, I begin to think about the impoverished nature of a life where good things live in dark boxes, and only the throwaway and unvaluable is allowed out to play. If lace is about time, it is also about thinking of, and valuing the material once more.

**"We see lace with our contemporary senses,  
and can be blown away by the intricacies,  
by the labour"** [PATTY MURPHY]

But even as you consider the material, lace is a tricky customer. Engraving interpretations of lace onto glass, de Buitléar describes how, in the right light, the object itself can almost dematerialise, lending its substance instead to the shadows and light plays it creates. I'm reminded of the story of artist Mark Rothko, who would sit for hours in his studio, watching the changing patterns of daylight turning the painted surface of his Minimalist masterpieces into fluid movement.

So lace can be transcendent, alchemical almost, which is a far cry from the lace that most of us experience, poorly made nylon fraying at the edges of chain store underwear. de Buitléar suggests thinking about it differently. "The fact that you'd hide the most wonderful piece of material, under your clothes..." she begins, suggesting the idea of precious fabric, hinting at skin, and how you might feel knowing you're wearing a secret to be shown only to someone who really deserves to see it.

**Lace is about memory.** If lace is about time and material, it's also about memory. Caroline Schofield's black lace birds also play with shadows, and use the medium to suggest "that primal feeling you get in your stomach when you see a raven. They're there, watching, linking past and present." Different societies give different meanings, usually ominous, to ravens. In Schofield's work they pick up on the tricky, darker aspects of memory. "Memories change, shift, they alter the past. You can't have the same memory twice," she says. Schofield's ravens take on the role of the real birds, in the theories of some thinkers (French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, for example) as mediators between life and death. Made in lace, they link the long-ago makers and their untold stories of Famine survival with a present where living memory has slid into history, and on towards conjecture and misty forgetting.

## **"Traditional lace is achingly beautiful. But I like the angular better."** [ANITA ELLIOTT]

Birds also appear in the work of Anita Elliott, whose interest in lace came from her experience of a kind of exile. Living in Australia for seven years, she discovered that heightened sense of identity that happens to anyone who lives away. Remembering her mother hand knitting Aran sweaters, to sell by weight, and learning the stitches in her childhood home in Dublin, "suddenly it all seemed so romantic. But I didn't want to replicate that, I wanted to make it finer..."

"Traditional lace," says Elliott, is "achingly beautiful. But I like the angular better." Her work, which is between lacemaking and illustration, draws on how lace makers used elements of their surroundings, in her case, swans, to inform their patterns and designs. "It's the memory of lace, rather than the lace itself. Like a brass rubbing, maybe," she says.

**Lace is about nature.** It's the organic nature of traditional lace that particularly appeals to Elliott, and that is also a feature of Saidhbhín Gibson's work. Gibson's beguiling mendings of leaves, re-created crocheted lines of malachite in stone, and stitched "fossils", explore the structures in nature that underpin everything.

The simple “magic” of a growing leaf, revealed in retrospect through the process of its decay is made apparent by Gibson’s choice of stitching. “I haven’t come to the work by any clichés of lace,” she says. “Lace highlights the dexterity of man, and the nimbleness we’re capable of. It references the pleasure man obtains from the decorative and man’s desire to beautify.”

**“Lace is a fabric that creates shadows, images of what is not actually there, as it both symbolises modesty, and hints at the promise of naked skin.”** [GEMMA TIPTON]

“The key,” she says, “is to acknowledge the skill and tradition while not being afraid to experiment. Lace for me represents labour and the time taken to complete the task. It displays dedication and attention to detail.” Gibson does what the best artists do, she draws attention to what is important by means of her own time and attention. Here, lace denies forgetting, restoring as a source of wonder something as small, as potentially insignificant as a broken leaf.

**Lace is a metaphor.** Lace’s presence in the grand passages of life: birth, marriage, death; is celebrated by designer Natalie B Coleman, whose wedding dress updates the traditions in a way that is arrestingly, uncompromisingly contemporary. A wedding dress embodies contradiction — passing from one family to another, historically from virgin to wife, child to adult and mother — and lace captures these contradictions. “They’re the contradictions of being a woman,” Coleman says. “It’s a craft,” she continues, “it’s love, it’s effort, it’s special. Hardly anyone would use handmade lace any more, it’s gone beyond price.” I like the idea of something that can be valued but not priced, of lace escaping the contemporary idea of economics that have so enslaved our generation. Perhaps love needs to come back into the equations of labour? Lace suggests it might.

In Cathryn Hogg’s work, lace takes on a further aspect of metaphor: “the looping, twisting, abstraction and braiding to other threads is reminiscent of the human brain; the fragile



networking of a piece of art.” Not specifically influenced by any particular piece of lace or region of lacemaking, Hogg’s work stems more from “a fascination with its creation, the repetitions and interweavings.” Seeing these as a parallel to the networks of experience, thought, emotion and habit that describe our lives, Hogg constructs laced “containers”, knitting corded wires fashioned on a self-made circular loom.

Maybe it’s inevitable that in Hogg’s work lace so accurately serves to describe the mind. After all, it is the embodiment of a slow process of thought, design, routine, and the desire to construct and create. No wonder it can come out looking like the inner lives of us.

**Lace is wild and magnificent.** Lace as adornment, as a symptom of the magnificent, is a feature of Helen McAllister’s marvellous shoes. She draws inspiration from frequent trips to Venice, spiritual home of impossible beauty and the triumph of a determination to glory (just think about it, a city whose stones dissolve into light, built on water). McAllister’s shoe forms aren’t exactly lace, but instead they are a deceptively ordered chaos of making. “Truth be told,” says McAllister, “I am undisciplined and fight against the rules and norms that would expose the lack of perfection that is needed.”

Chaotic but structured, organic but handmade, revealing and concealing, fragile and robust, about memory and time but passing from living history, both luxurious and the stuff of survival; lace is a delicious enigma. This exhibition recasts it for a contemporary audience, a timely reminder to all of us with lace in boxes, cupboards and drawers, not to break the chain of its presence and meaning. Love it, use it, revel in it, and lace will stay part of our stories.

Gemma Tipton is a writer on contemporary art based in Dublin and West Cork. She writes regularly for the Irish Times and Artforum.com. Gemma has also published a number of books and works as an independent curator. She is now determined to get her family’s lace out of its box and enjoy it once more.

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott · Caroline Schofield · Cathryn Hogg · Helen McAllister · Natalie B Coleman · Patty Murphy · Róisín de Buitléar · Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)



**Why Lace?** While researching for a college essay on a visit to the National Museum in Collins Barracks, Dublin, I saw two display mannequins, an adult and a child, both wearing long dresses that were described as 'Crochet Lace Afternoon Tea Gowns made in the Youghal Lace-making Co-operative around 1905'. My curiosity was aroused, not only by the intricate and delicate needlework of the crochet lace, but by the enormous scale of undertaking for such a large handmade object. On further investigation, and with the help of the curator, I was allowed to view other Youghal crochet lace garments that were held in storage. The sheer weight and volume of the cotton threads, still smelling fresh despite their many years in storage, surprised and delighted me. I discovered that they were made in the early 1900s and had never been worn. Their immaculately pristine condition was unaltered from the day they were made, over one hundred years earlier.

I was instantly transported to that time and place. I realised that each piece had its own story and bore a direct physical connection to the past and to their makers. These are significant pieces and are a manifestation of a social history containing individual identities, community, fellowship, power, politics, relationships and material culture. This started me on a long journey of investigation into Youghal lace and an exploration around the workers and their practices during the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries. While I am not an expert on lace per se, my research has helped to inform me about some of the many types of laces there are, especially needlepoint, for which Youghal was particularly famous.

**What particular lace processes and techniques are you interested in?** While the lace objects are very beautiful and significant in themselves, my interest lies not in the objects, but in the fragmented meaning that is embedded in the lace fabric motifs. I regard these objects as a physical manifestation of a social history, containing individual identities, community, fellowship, power, politics, relationships and material culture. It is qualities of identity and individuality that I wished to convey in my work, while also restoring honour and giving attention to the anonymous laboured lace-workers of Youghal.

**“Murphy had that sense, exquisite to any lover of history, of smelling, touching, falling into a past made immediately present.”** [GEMMA TIPTON]

**Do you think lace is clichéd or contemporary?** To me it holds both of these considerations. There is no doubt that lace is associated with the past and can be considered old fashioned in design and content. But presently lace is going through a process of revival, regeneration and interpretation and is now being viewed and designed with a contemporary twist. Lace can hold emotions of femaleness, sensuality, durability and persistence. Handmade lace is laden, with the stuff of labour and it was this aspect of lace-making and the people who created it that intrigued and interested me, and is what eventually led me to create this piece of work.

**Do you think lace is about hiding or showing?** It's about both. Lace covers up and exposes at the same time. In part it allows light to pass through, giving exposure to particular areas, while denser threads holds the light at bay. It is this interplay between hiding and showing that gives lace fabric its illusive and alluring quality.



Patty Murphy  
'Interweave'  
2013

Patty Murphy  
'Interweave'  
2013





**Patty Murphy on Interlace** — This work examines the labour, material and fellowship of the small lace industry of Youghal, Co. Cork in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It explores the role lace-workers played in the survival of their east Cork community. The objects they created persist as a medium through which we access the past and keep it in living memory. The sewing needle and crochet hook — their tools of labour — were valued personal possessions.

I have selected the sewing needle as a metaphor for the 500 female lace workers of Youghal to commemorate their achievements. My work pays respect to their strength and power as a community as well as to their skills and the beauty of their craft. By referencing their motifs and tools I hope to encapsulate their accomplishments in order that others may think about them.



Patty Murphy is a freelance ceramic artist. She graduated from the National College of Art and Design, Dublin with a first class honours degree in 2011 and an MA in Ceramic Design in 2013. She has exhibited in group shows in NCAD and Zozimus Gallery. Her work is represented in private collections in England, Spain, Italy and Canada.

Patty Murphy  
11 Beechfield Road,  
Walkinstown  
Dublin 12, Ireland  
p. 086 164 4713  
e. toomeypatty11@gmail.com

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott • Caroline Schofield • Cathryn Hogg • Helen McAllister • Natalie B Coleman • Patty Murphy • Róisín de Buitléar • Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)



**Why Lace?** I lived in Australia for seven years and during that time my practice became hugely influenced by traditional Irish textile techniques. Aran knitting became a major influence (I grew up around Aran knitters and patterns). I love its history and its functions as a means of identifying the owner through patterns and their arrangement. My work evolved through knitting fine threads in Aran stitches — these became my lace.

**What particular lace processes and techniques are you interested in?** Shetland lace is knitted and I am particularly interested in this method. Its structure, lines, and patterns are more graphic than other types.

I am also drawn to Carrickmacross lace and I particularly like how lace makers incorporate motifs and patterns from their natural environment.

My process involves a layering of media. Handmade paper is painted with acrylic which is then screen printed. The surrounding unpainted area becomes the frame and a burn-out technique of removal is used to create an intricate border.

**Do you think lace is clichéd or contemporary?** As lace goes in and out of popularity, it skirts the terrain of authentic and kitsch — but I think there is a contemporary respect for the handmade which is not clichéd.

**Does lace suggest any particular words or emotions to you?**

Time, memory, meditation, connection, absorption.

Structure, line, repetition.

Stillness.

**“It’s the memory of lace, rather than the lace itself. Like a brass rubbing, maybe.”**

[ANITA ELLIOTT]

**Do you think lace is about hiding or showing?** My first response is both. However the more I look at lace, I see it as showing. The non space, the areas between is where the eye falls. We are drawn in closer and the non spaces reveal themselves.



Anita Elliott  
'Heart 1'  
2014





Anita Elliott  
'Blackberry  
Dreaming'  
2007

**Anita Elliott on Interlace** — Knitting and lacemaking have always interested me, both as a practice and a visual drawing together of tradition and memory. This series of works take their structure from a lace made by knitting in an Aran ‘blackberry stitch’, reworked as screen prints.

The prints unravel the traditional elements — handcraft, motifs, thread and links and piece them together again like memories from a fabric of time.



Anita Elliott studied Textile Design at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin and Fine Art at the National Art School, Sydney.

Her career began as a commercial designer in Dublin. On moving to Australia, a studio practice developed. During this period she liaised with architects and designers creating textile artwork for projects such as Bedarra Island in association with Pike Withers Architects. While living in Sydney, Elliott also lectured at The Whitehouse Institute of Design.

In 2003 Elliott returned to Dublin where her work was commissioned and collected by: The Office of Public Works; The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Farmleigh Estate. Exhibitions include; 'Abstraction', Tim Olsen Gallery, Sydney; 'Forty Shades of Green', Glucksman Gallery, Cork; 'Seomra' at SEMA Paris and 'Ecology Mythology Technology', Kilkenny and Dublin.

Elliott lectured in design at Colaiste Dhulaigh for a number of years. In 2013 she set up Clover Rua where she is Co Creative Director.

Anita Elliott  
Studio ( by appointment only )  
p. 087 122 7332  
e. anitaelliott@yahoo.com

[www.cloverrua.com](http://www.cloverrua.com)

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott • Caroline Schofield • Cathryn Hogg • Helen McAllister • Natalie B Coleman • Patty Murphy • Róisín de Buitléar • Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)



**Why Lace?** Most of the inspiration for my work comes from places or stories. In 2009 I was involved in a Public Art Project organised by Kilkenny Arts Office in Woodstock. My interest in lace and in particular the lives of the women involved in lace making started when I read about Lady Louise Tighe from Woodstock, Inistioge. She introduced Brussels lace to local women, setting up a small scale cottage industry in the process. There is little evidence or memory of this now.

In Ireland, lace families survived the famine of 1845/6 due to the foresight of women who introduced lace into their communities and their ability to create beautiful work in very poor conditions.

**What particular lace processes and techniques are you interested in?** I love looking at old lace and lace made by hand, particularly heirloom lace. Probably because it is made by hand with many stories attached to it and is often more like a crochet lace.

In this work I have explored ravens. For me, ravens and crows are primeval.

In his structuralist theory, French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss believed ravens could 'mediate' between life and death.

During battles ravens circle over the losing opponent which encourages the winning side. In different cultures ravens are recognised as both good and bad creatures and so are deeply rooted in our psyche. I suppose for me this completely links to

the feelings I have about lace, the memory of hands and stories and the memory of ravens and crows flying over the same space. The ravens acting as the mediator between life and death links lace to this same past. I think lace with light and shadows creates another dimension. In clothing it's invariably showing the body. As an art form it's transforming and creating another world.

**“Schofield’s ravens link the long-ago makers and their untold stories of Famine survival with a present where living memory has slid into history, and on towards conjecture and misty forgetting.”**

[GEMMA TIPTON]

Drawing is a very important part of my practice. In the work made for this exhibition I have used a sewing machine along with thread with water soluble fabric. This has enabled me to draw with the machine. Using this technique creates drawings which are strong and fragile. They can't be completely controlled — each drawing, by being pinned, creates a new drawing and another dimension.



Caroline Schofield  
'Muninn'  
2014

Caroline Schofield  
'Muninn'  
2014





**Caroline Schofield on Interlace** — In Norse mythology the God Odin had two ravens, Huginn meaning ‘thought’ and Muninn meaning ‘memory’. Odin sent them out into the world every day and worried about them coming back. He particularly worried about Muninn (memory).

In this work I explore memory in thread-stitched drawings pinned to the wall using continuous threads. These catch and join creating lace-like fabrics and drawings of shadows.

The drawings reference Muninn/memory. In Ireland, lace families survived the famine of 1845/6 due to the foresight of women who introduced lace into their communities and their ability to create beautiful work in very poor conditions.



Caroline Schofield studied Textiles at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and is in many private and public collections. Recent exhibitions include: Culture Craft, during Derry/Londonderry City of Culture including a residency to coincide with the exhibition and a second showing in the National Craft Gallery, Kilkenny; 'Woven into Memory' at the Wexford Arts Centre and Blue Egg Gallery and a solo exhibition during Kilkenny Arts Festival 2013 in Grennan Mill, Thomastown.

In 2013 Caroline was awarded a studio through Kilkenny County Council's 'Not an Empty Space' programme. This summer she will be undertaking a residency in Grote Kerk Veere GKV, Netherlands and showing in 'Irish Wave' in Beijing, China.

Caroline Schofield  
55 Richview, Castlecomer Road,  
Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny, Ireland  
p. 086 3801288  
e. caroline@carolineschofield.ie

[www.carolineschofield.ie](http://www.carolineschofield.ie)

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott • Caroline Schofield • Cathryn Hogg • Helen McAllister • Natalie B Coleman • Patty Murphy • Róisín de Buitléar • Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)



**Why lace?** I have always been intrigued by the complexity of lace, the interweaving of various threads to create an overall artwork. The looping, twisting, abstraction and braiding to other threads is reminiscent of the human brain — the fragile networking of a piece of art. It has not been a particular piece of lace which has influenced me, more a fascination in its creation — how threads can join, bond, and hold. A routine detail. Repetition of technique. My work has always been influenced by the complexity of the human condition and how the human mind functions. Each of our lives is made up of a multifaceted network of emotions, routines, experiences and thoughts. Looking at traditional lace pieces brings my influences together and helps me to actualise my ideas. From here, I take on my own style to bring a contemporary style to a traditional craft.

**What particular lace processes and techniques are you interested in?** The repetitive looping and braiding of threads. Repeat pattern.

**Do you think lace is clichéd or contemporary? Can it be both?** Lace is a traditional craft which will always be highly appreciated. As a contemporary artist, I feel it is essential for me to take the tradition of lace as an inspiration, but to always work towards moving on with the craft. A contemporary outlook on lace keeps the tradition fresh, and reminds new generations to appreciate and understand how lace has evolved. Although I am working in a contemporary medium, it is important for me to also incorporate

traditional techniques. In a world of developing technologies, the art of the handmade will always have a personal, individual and more meaningful edge.

**“Lace is the embodiment of a slow process of thought, design, routine, and the desire to construct and create. No wonder it can come out looking like the inner lives of us.”**

[GEMMA TIPTON]

**Does lace suggest any particular words, emotions or feelings to you?** Lace provokes many feelings and emotions to me. Studying the fine interweaving of threads and the repeating loops involved in lace inspire the work I create. Lace is complex yet fragile, and this is something I can relate to very well. In my job I work for a Belfast charity called Brain Injury Matters, and I am constantly influenced by my training about the brain and acquired brain injuries. Lace, to me, is similar to the brain as it is so multifaceted yet so delicate. The emotions and relations which I make to lace are what truly inspire my artistic practice.



Cathryn Hogg  
'Oscillation II'  
2014





Cathryn Hogg  
'Oscillation II'  
2014

**Cathryn Hogg on Interlace** — My work is made up of multiple lace-like vessel structures, brought to life by the incorporation of corded threads and coloured fibres. Crossing over the disciplines of craft, textile art and sculpture, I wish to reassess the traditions of handmade work in an age of developing technologies.

Through colour and technique I subtly reflect on characteristics, routines, and the fluctuations of equanimity in the human condition. My experiences gained through my passion of working with people with acquired brain injuries are a continual inspiration for my work. The complex yet fragile lace-like structures of our brain provide a subtle influence over my work. A love of colour theory takes great significance throughout, it is carefully considered to accentuate my themes whilst providing a strong visual impact to the work.

Knitting thread corded wires on a self-made circular loom, I create the repeating loop motif which is the foundation of my practice. Each piece is then anchored in colour by weaving in hand-dyed hairs. Encasing these strong wire lines with fine, organic hair is something I find particularly enjoyable to experiment with and wish to continuously develop in my work.



Cathryn Hogg is a mixed media artist from Belfast, Northern Ireland. She graduated from University of Ulster with a First Class Honours degree in Textile Art, Design and Fashion in 2013. She received 1st prize in Knitting & Crochet at the RDS National Crafts Competition in 2013. Hogg creates small scale knitted wire structures which are brought to life by the incorporation of corded threads and hand dyed fibres.

Cathryn Hogg  
22 Elsmere Park,  
Belfast, Northern Ireland,  
BT5 7QZ  
p. +44 795 057 1136  
e. cathrynhogg@hotmail.com

[www.facebook.com/cathrynhoggartist](http://www.facebook.com/cathrynhoggartist)

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott • Caroline Schofield • Cathryn Hogg • Helen McAllister • Natalie B Coleman • Patty Murphy • Róisín de Buitléar • Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)



**Why Lace?** My interest in lace came as a result of research during my MA. The study was not about lace but became one aspect of surfaces — made or manipulated — that could be found in Venice. It was no accident that lace was exploited by a collective vision and understanding of ‘making’ in Venice. All surfaces in Venice share two key responses; that the eye dances over surfaces finding no resting place and that the light articulates all surfaces, an element considered in all outcomes from oil painting, glass, mosaics, and fabrics. One can see at once that lace with its structure of pattern sits well within these readings, its often undulating form and positive and negative shapes creating depth of field.

**What particular lace processes and techniques are you interested in?** I have never learnt lace techniques — with the excuse that my eye sight isn’t good enough — but if the truth be told, I am undisciplined and fight against the rules and norms that would expose the lack of perfection that is needed. Yet I like to find other techniques that subvert the ‘correctness’. This I found in the buttonhole stitch, a stitch that has always addressed qualities that I am after, passing itself off as something else, but not the same. Whether by its use as loose open grid, worked as a frothy edging or used to trap objects — it is limitless in application and ‘look’.

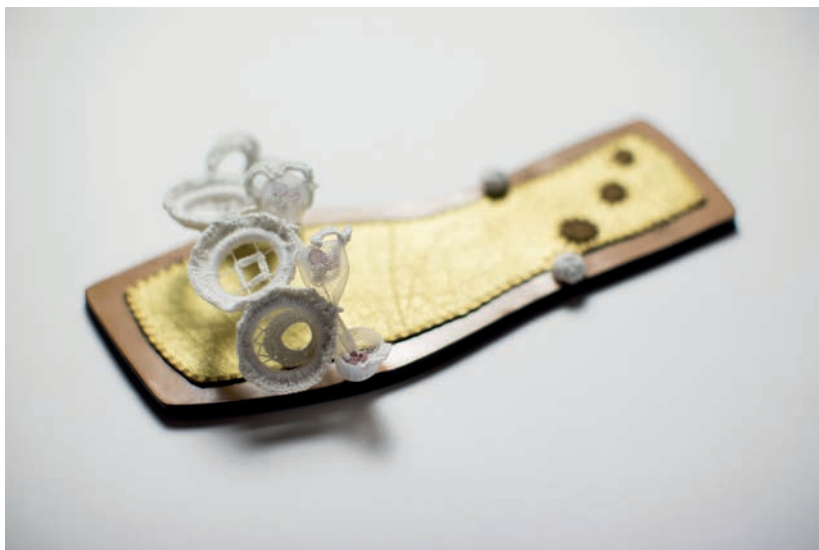
**Inspiration, design process.** At the same time of researching Venetian traits of culture, society and a collective aesthetic, the shoe form became a discursive platform to visually convey concept. The supposedly accidental inclusion of a pair of understated chopines in Carpaccio’s painting of

'Two Venetian Women' has been the springboard of production of shoe derived forms that my work now considers. The design process has been to 'know' my materials and to exploit often simple techniques.

**"McAllister's shoes draw inspiration from frequent trips to Venice, spiritual home of impossible beauty and the triumph of a determination to glory."**

[GEMMA TIPTON]

The older I get the more I like the detail and the small scale, often alongside a restricted colour palette which focuses the design on texture, composition and three dimensionality.



Helen McAllister  
(all images)  
'Lace Series'  
2014





**Helen McAllister on Interlace** — For this lace series, the shoe form (or in this case the minimal sandal sole), seems a suitable base to work on. Uncomplicated by the form, the scale and detail of embroidery now makes the form its own. Motifs of circles become roundels and baubles. Repetition is broken as motifs morph. Light changes shapes and patterns and articulates form. The eye moves around and in and out of the detail. My interpretation of the lace structure takes the two dimensional structure into three dimensional form. While these are clearly not lace examples, they are a homage to the beautiful medium, a thinking paired with an affinity to make and interpret my own response to the intricate skill.



Helen McAllister's practice is rooted in embroidery. She studied at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin and graduated with an MA in Embroidered Textiles in 1999 and a practice based design PhD in 2006. She is currently the Head of Fashion and Textiles and the Head of Research at NCAD. In 1985 she won a 'Kilkenny Travel Scholarship' which funded a trip to Italy. Venice has had a profound impact on her ever since and is a lasting influence and inspiration for her art and design practice. She was the first winner of the Golden Fleece Awards in 2002. Her work has been exhibited widely, nationally and internationally.

Helen McAllister  
69 Drumcliffe Road,  
Dublin 7, Ireland  
p. 083 373 9031  
e. mcallisterh@staff.ncad.ie

[www.helenmcallister.com](http://www.helenmcallister.com)

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott • Caroline Schofield • Cathryn Hogg • Helen McAllister • Natalie B Coleman • Patty Murphy • Róisín de Buitléar • Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)



**Why lace?** I have always been inspired by the heritage lace that is unique to my home town, Carrickmacross. This was my starting point. I have also recently worked with a French mill house bonding wearable plastic to lace in black and cement grey colours for my Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection 'Get Your Own Mistress.'

**What particular lace processes and techniques are you interested in?** Carrickmacross lace is particular to my home town. I worked with award winning lace maker Martha Hughes to create the wedding dress and the lace detailing on the lambskin leather dress. I was first inspired by the drawings that were used to make the patterns for priest's garments. Lace work was traditionally passed from one family to the next until completion as it is so time consuming.

We used traditional motifs like the flower as starting points on both dresses. The sleeves for the wedding dress were finished in wire-edged 3D Carrickmacross lace butterflies. Carrickmacross lace has a looped picot edged finish, net embroidery, pops and buttonhole stitches. We worked every evening for several hours over a two month period to complete the lace work for the wedding dress. For the raincoat I worked with a French mill which specialises in lace. We created the garment by bonding the lace and plastic together.

**Do you think lace is clichéd or contemporary?** Lace is not clichéd, though sometimes it can be used in a clichéd manner. It is down to taste, but practitioners working with lace have

been very successful in making it current. By starting with tradition and bringing contemporary technique, design and thought to the process, the result is a modern interpretation — a balance between the inherited and the now.

**“Lace is a craft, it’s love, it’s effort, it’s special. Hardly anyone would use handmade lace any more, it’s gone beyond price.”**

[NATALIE B COLEMAN]

**Does lace suggest any particular words, emotions or feelings to you?** Tradition, purity, ceremony, romance, innocence, contemplative, sexual, refined, delicate, elegance.

**Do you think lace is about hiding or showing?** It can be either, there is an austerity and emotion related to lace that is ingrained in me. It evokes memories of my mother and of being taught Carrickmacross lace by one of the nuns in the convent where I went to secondary school. It makes me think of my holy communion, my wedding, funerals, tablecloths. It is part of everyday life but also brings a sense of ceremony. It is at once romantic but also isolating as it is so pure and virginal. It has a dual identity — it is sexual yet pure, romantic yet austere. It hides as it reveals.



Natalie B Coleman  
'Lambskin Dress  
With Handmade  
Carrickmacross  
Lace', 2012





Natalie B Coleman  
'Lambskin Dress  
With Handmade  
Carrickmacross  
Lace', 2012

**Natalie B Coleman on Interlace** — For me working with lace is very personal. It is part of my childhood. It was my communion veil that I slept with for months after my communion day. It was my mothers' wedding dress. It was curtains that cast gorgeous shadows and shapes on the wall depending on how the sun shone. It was Christmas day using the 'good' tablecloth. It was special occasions, history, tradition and heritage. When I wear it, I feel full of memories. I also feel gestures of femininity, romance, purity, refinement and sensuality. For me it is interesting to work within the inherited framework of the rituals of lace making but practice it in a contemporary creative context.



Natalie B Coleman graduated with a degree in fashion from Limerick School of Art & Design and an MA from Central St Martins, London. She worked for fashion labels threeASFOUR, New York and Ragna Frodadottir, a textile designer in Iceland and established her own womenswear label in 2011. She has shown at Berlin, Copenhagen and Amsterdam Fashion Weeks as an invited guest. Coleman has also shown during Milan, New York and Paris Fashion Weeks. Awards include: The Golden Egg Innovation Award for Designer of The Year, 2012; The National Designer of the Year 2012 by Image Magazine at KFW and The Future Maker Award 2012 from the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland. She is currently a Microsoft Ambassador in Ireland and was runner up in The Image Magazine Women in Business Creative Category 2013.

The label has been featured extensively in magazines and periodicals nationally and internationally including: Harpers Bazaar; Dutch Vogue; Glamour; Company; Grazia and Marie Claire. Natalie has dressed stars such as Lily Collins, Sharon Corr, Angela Scanlon and Laura Whitmore as well as Mary J Blige, Esperanza Spalding, Suki Waterhouse and Marina & The Diamonds.

Natalie B Coleman  
Corleygorm, Broomfeld,  
Castleblayney,  
Co. Monaghan, Ireland  
p. 087 793 6081  
e. info@nataliecoleman.com  
  
www.nataliecoleman.com

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott • Caroline Schofield • Cathryn Hogg • Helen McAllister • Natalie B Coleman • Patty Murphy • Róisín de Buitléar • Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)



**Why lace?** My love of lace started at home through my mother's interest in her own family lace. Each generation in my family has been taught to sew at an early age — it is something I have continued with my daughter. We sew for pleasure and economy. Lace making in the past, by contrast, was a way of life or survival for many Irish lace makers. They are identifiable only through their particular combination of stitches. I am interested in the unknown craftsman/woman and the value of craft in our society — in particular those deemed as 'domestic' crafts made by women.

**What particular processes and techniques are you interested in?** Limerick, Tambour, Chantilly, fine handmade laces, wearables and furnishings that move and fold. I am also interested in drawn thread work and linen damask, another family influence.

**Do you think lace is clichéd or contemporary?** Lace is always in vogue. Commercial industrial execution often sullies the image of the authentic handmade object. Authenticity is key.

**Does lace suggest any particular words or emotions to you?** Lace is made to intrigue, that is its enduring quality.

**Do you think lace is about hiding or showing?** To me neither of these words apply, lace is about creating allure. Lace is a captured drawn line on a complex layered matrix. Its structure appears fragile yet is durable. It is made of thousands of miniscule repetitive gestures that record skill and history in every loop. It is made to be admired, an ultimate in ornate luxury.

**“de Buitléar describes how, in the right light,  
the object itself can almost dematerialise,  
lending its substance instead to the shadows  
and light plays it creates.”**

**“Róisín de Buitléar’s glass objects  
and installations reveal lace’s illusory  
delicate magic.”** [GEMMA TIPTON]



Róisín de Buitléar  
'Moon Shadow'  
2014





Róisín de Buitléar  
'Time Spent'  
2010  
(Collection of the  
National Museum of  
Ireland)  
Photographer:  
Mike Kay

**Róisín de Buitléar on Interlace** — I work in layers, using the inherent beauty of the material to draw the viewer into the pieces through light, shadow and colour. At the core of my work are stories of my culture which are told by using pattern, colour, form and the characteristics of glass. In this work, I pay homage to the heritage of Ireland's lace makers, young women aged between 11 and 14 who in the 1830s, financially supported their families by making lace pieces in lace schools from 6am – 6pm each day. The engraving is an interpretation of archival lace from the Rowe collection. They have been engraved using a drawing style, catching the light as it might fall in a drawing of the lace but imitating the actual stitches, which are intricate and varied in pattern throughout.

'Honeyed Meadow' encompasses the qualities of the material and what they bring to an idea. The piece aims to capture the movement of molten glass in its solid form and the visualisation of a breath. In order to make this piece I worked with a team, coaxing and shaping the glass until it became the desired form. This piece speaks of a carefree time of tripping through meadows as a child, unconscious of time and chasing the elusive. There is a certain wistfulness expressed in this work — in wanting to remember to make time to dawdle, to see the beauty in the ordinary, and to celebrate the little things we can so quickly forget when life gets too busy.



Róisín de Buitleár is a visual artist and graduate from the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. She has completed many site-specific installations of blown, cast and architectural work, drawing her inspiration from her cultural heritage. These can be seen in public and private buildings throughout Ireland, including; the Blasket Island Centre Dunchaoín, Kerry; National Botanical Gardens, Dublin; W5 Science Museum, Belfast; Highfield Hospital, Dublin; Castle Espie Wetland Centre, Strangford Lough and Ballyroan Public Library, Dublin.

After a working tour and exhibition in Japan in 1986 she joined the National College of Art and Design, and taught in the glass department for two decades until 2006. She continues to be a mentor nationally and internationally and has taught in the UK, Japan, Canada, USA and France. This year she will return to teach at the renowned Pilchuck Glass School, USA, for the third time. As an invited speaker, she has lectured in Japan, USA, France, Denmark and Finland and writes regularly on glass, education and art practice.

Following a Design and Crafts Council of Ireland Bursary award in 2009 and a residency at the Museum of Glass Tacoma Washington in 2010, she began working on 'CAUTION! Fragile', a collaborative exhibition with Irish glass masters, expanding on her experience of participatory and collaborative practice. This is currently on show in The Museum of Glass, Tacoma, USA. In 2011, her work 'Catch a breath' featured on a special stamp series issued by An Post to mark Year of Craft 2011. She represented Ireland in the European Glass Biennale in Denmark in 2012. Her artworks are represented in national collections in Ireland, Britain, Japan, China and the USA. Róisín is the outgoing chairperson of the Golden Fleece Advisory Committee and the co-founder of the Glass Society of Ireland Contemporary Makers.

Róisín de Buitleár  
37 Ashfield Road, Ranelagh,  
Dublin 6, Ireland  
p. 087 7751938  
e. rdebuitlear@yahoo.com

[www.roisindebuitlear.com](http://www.roisindebuitlear.com)

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott • Caroline Schofield • Cathryn Hogg • Helen McAllister • Natalie B Coleman • Patty Murphy • Róisín de Buitléar • Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)



**Why lace?** Lace features in my work for a number of reasons. It highlights the dexterity of man and the nimbleness we're capable of. It references the pleasure man obtains from the decorative and man's desire to beautify. Also, the small scale of needlepoint lace mirrors the minute details found in nature.

**What particular processes and techniques are you interested in?**

I employ stitches from needlepoint and crochet lace in their simplest of forms rather than collectively in a large motif design. The lace I construct doesn't try to impose man-made upon nature-made. Rather, it aims to embellish the organic matter in a harmonious manner.

**Do you have any examples of lace you are drawing inspiration from?** I am interested in needlepoint lace. However, the specifics of a particular lace style don't feed directly into the work. It's more the essential components, the foundation of stitches of the lace and the labour involved that interest me and inform the work I produce.

**Is lace clichéd or contemporary? Or both?** Lace is contemporary. It's interesting to consider the roots of a craft and the journey the skill has taken to arrive where it is today.

The key is to acknowledge the skill and tradition while not being afraid to experiment.

**Does lace suggest any particular words, emotions or feelings to you?** Lace for me represents labour and the time taken to complete the task. It displays dedication and attention to detail.

**Is lace about hiding or showing?** I use lace in my work to highlight the decorative features found in the natural world.

**The simple “magic” of a growing leaf, revealed in retrospect through the process of its decay is made apparent by Gibson’s choice of stitching.** [GEMMA TIPTON]



Saïdhbhín Gibson  
 'As Little As  
 Possible And As  
 Much As Necessary'  
 2014



Saïdhbhín Gibson  
 'Make Good, Make  
 Better-Ace'  
 2014





Saidhbh n Gibson  
'Don't Stop Till  
You Get To The End'  
2014

**Saidhbhín Gibson on Interlace** — My work in Interlace is concerned with a number of themes. The addition of lace to limestone in 'Don't stop till you get to the end' serves to mimic the lines of calcite found in rock. With 'As little as possible and as much as necessary', semi decomposed holly leaves are adorned with tiny areas of lace seeking to highlight the venation that has become exposed. 'Tension (a)' and 'Tension (b)' are photo-etch prints of the artist's hands — posing in a demonstrative manner while showcasing nimble capabilities.



Saidhbhín Gibson is a visual artist based in the south-east of Ireland. She graduated with a BA Fine Art in 2000 from D.I.T. Mountjoy Square, Dublin. She has exhibited in group and solo shows nationally and internationally including: 'Common Thread International' Ontario, Canada (2012); 'Winter Open Exhibition' Rua Red, Tallaght (2012) and 'An Exhibition of Local Lace' VISUAL Carlow (2012).

In 2013 she was a featured artist in Carlow Arts Festival with the solo show 'Sojourn' in Carlow County Museum. She also had a solo show, 'Make good, make better', in The Arthouse Gallery, Stradbally, Co. Laois.

Saidhbhín Gibson  
Castlecomer,  
Co. Kilkenny, Ireland  
p. 087 962 3658  
e. [sadbh.gibson@gmail.com](mailto:sadbh.gibson@gmail.com)

[www.sadbhgibson.blogspot.com](http://www.sadbhgibson.blogspot.com)

**NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY:** Established by the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland in 2000, the National Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

**DESIGN & CRAFTS COUNCIL OF IRELAND:** The Design and Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCol) is the main champion of the design and craft industry in Ireland, fostering its growth and commercial strength, communicating its unique identity and stimulating quality design, innovation and competitiveness. DCCol's activities are funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation via Enterprise Ireland.

**INTERLACE CONTRIBUTORS:** Anita Elliott • Caroline Schofield • Cathryn Hogg • Helen McAllister • Natalie B Coleman • Patty Murphy • Róisín de Buitléar • Saidhbhín Gibson

#### EXHIBITION

**National Craft Gallery Manager,**  
**Curator and Editor:** Angela O'Kelly  
**Gallery Assistant:** Brian Byrne  
**Education and Outreach Officer:**  
Susan Holland  
**Technician:** John Whelan  
**Press:** Christine Monk

#### CATALOGUE

**Design:** an Atelier Project,  
David Smith and Sarah Fox  
[www.atelier.ie](http://www.atelier.ie)  
**Photography:** Peter Rowen  
**Print and Production:**  
Print Media Services, Dublin

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CRAFT GALLERY

## **Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

**28 March – 7 May 2014**

National Craft Gallery  
Castle Yard, Kilkenny, Ireland  
[info@nationalcraftgallery.ie](mailto:info@nationalcraftgallery.ie)  
+ 353 (0) 56 779 6147

[www.nationalcraftgallery.ie](http://www.nationalcraftgallery.ie)





**Interlace is an exhibition which takes traditional lace as a starting point for eight artists and designers practicing in Ireland today. The concept of the show is to explore how traditional material culture creates a resonant source for contemporary practice.**

Anita Elliott  
Caroline Schofield  
Cathryn Hogg  
Helen McAllister  
Natalie B Coleman  
Patty Murphy  
Róisín de Buitléar  
Saidhbhín Gibson

**ISBN 978-1-906691-37-0**

Published by the National Craft Gallery on the occasion of

**Interlace** Contemporary Interpretations of Lace

28 March – 7 May 2014

Edited and curated by Angela O'Kelly



**NATIONAL  
CRAFT  
GALLERY**



**Crafts Council of Ireland**