

Luan Gallery in collaboration with Westmeath Arts Office presents

# LET THE MIRROR

TELL THE WIRROB

# EXPRESS THE ROOM

EXBBE?? THE BOOW

30 NOVEMBER – 2 FEBRUARY

Nataliia Bobak    Alan Crowley    Nicole Gill    EL Putnam  
Anne Marie Burke    Bertille de Lestrade    Jacinta Guinan    Amanda Ralph  
Eoin Butler    Maebh Donovan    Tina Hayes    Paul Roy  
Emma Carter    Mark Duffy    Fiona Kelly    Nólín Shaw  
Richard Clarke    Lorraine Dunne    Hilary Kinahan    Celine Sheridan  
Kyle Collins    Trish Findlater    Lorraine Mimmagh    Annette Treacy  
Mary Cosgrove    Olivia Finn    Muiris Moynihan    Ann Wingfield  
Martina Coyle    Paul Flaherty    Emma O' Brien    Lesley Wingfield

A group exhibition featuring work by Westmeath Artists  
selected by Guest Curator Benjamin Stafford

Luan Gallery, Elliott Road, Athlone  
Tues-Sat 11-5pm Sun 12-5pm  
090 6442154 @luangalleryathlone

LUAN GALLERY  


 WESTMEATH ARTS OFFICE  
Oifig Ealaíona na hEimear

 arts council  
ealaíona  
funding visual arts

# LET THE MIRROR EXPRESS THE ROOM

30 November 2024 - 2 February 2025

In *Landscape and Memory* (1995), Simon Schama writes; “Before it can ever be a repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock.”

In looking at works in this year’s Westmeath Artists Award exhibition, it was apparent that landscape in these various forms Schama identifies is both subject and inspiration for many of the artists. These landscapes are both literal and metaphoric, and run from figurative representation through to surrealist interpretation and speculative narrative. Memories and dreams play a part in inspiration as much as physical experience of place.

If landscape is understood as visual or physical experience of space, then this exhibition might be considered a record of both literal external and metaphoric internal space. Artists such as Trish Findlater cite memories or past experiences as catalysts for depicting the landscape in the present. Between these places and temporalities is a threshold, a gap or a doorway, a dissolving of borders. Multiple worlds imply journeys between them, whether literal, such as those taken by migrants seeking safety or a better life, recorded in work by Amanda Ralph, or those examining spiritual and mythological questions in works by Muiris Moynihan, Emma O’Brien, and EL Putnam.

What is striking about the selection of works in this exhibition is how many are rooted in a sense of place, and respond directly to the environment of Westmeath. It is there in the rose-tinted memories of childhood translated to contemporary depictions of the landscape by artists like Eoin Butler or Alan Crowley. These contrast with a more deadpan response to the bittersweet prolonged distance from one’s homeland in Mark Duffy’s *Irelands*, in which the shape of the island is recorded in puddles, melting pats of butter, discarded papers. In juxtaposition with the faithful depictions of landscapes seen in many of the artist’s work, there is a thread of surrealist imagery running through the exhibition, that speaks to disparate experiences of the natural, human and digital worlds – in works by Lorraine Dunne, Olivia Finn, and Paul Flaherty we see how these versions of the world can be made poignant and strange with a certain perspective.

The title of this exhibition comes from a lyric by the late American poet and musician David Berman, who recorded and occasionally performed as Silver Jews. The suggestion of a mirror ‘expressing’ implies not a true reflection of the room in which it hangs, but rather an unavoidably distorted and inherently subjective version thereof – a portal to, or glimpse of, another world.

It has been a great pleasure to spend time with this work; my congratulations to both the selected artists and those who for reasons of space could not be included – it’s wonderful to see such a diverse and exciting range of artistic practices existing in Westmeath. My thanks to Luan Gallery and Westmeath Arts Office, and to all the artists for the opportunity to be involved in this year’s exhibition.

**BENJAMIN STAFFORD**

Luan Gallery in collaboration with Westmeath Arts Office presents *LET THE MIRROR EXPRESS THE ROOM*, the Westmeath Artists Awards exhibition featuring work by 32 Westmeath artists selected by Guest Curator, Benjamin Stafford.

Nataliia Bobak  
Anne Marie Burke  
Eoin Butler  
Emma Carter  
Richard Clarke  
Kyle Collins  
Mary Cosgrove  
Martina Coyle  
Alan Crowley  
Bertille de Lestrade  
Maebh Donovan  
Mark Duffy  
Lorraine Dunne  
Trish Findlater  
Olivia Finn  
Paul Flaherty

Nicole Gill  
Jacinta Guinan  
Tina Hayes  
Fiona Kelly  
Hilary Kinahan  
Lorraine Mimmagh  
Muiris Moynihan  
Emma O' Brien  
EL Putnam  
Amanda Ralph  
Paul Roy  
Nóilín Shaw  
Celine Sheridan  
Annette Treacy  
Ann Wingfield  
Lesley Wingfield



Photo: Chris Burke @wolfbaneviking

The Westmeath Artists Award is a collaboration between Luan Gallery and Westmeath Arts Office, aiming to celebrate, showcase and support the development of Westmeath visual artists' practices and careers with funding support from the Arts Council of Ireland.

*Let The Mirror Express The Room*, the Westmeath Artists Awards exhibition, is the 86th exhibition presented by Luan Gallery. As the municipal gallery for Westmeath, Luan promotes a dynamic contemporary visual art programme featuring established and emerging artists on a county, national and international level. It aims to make visual art accessible to all and offers a unique cultural tourism experience for the community and visitors to Athlone.



Elliott Road | Athlone | N37 TH22 [www.luangallery.ie](http://www.luangallery.ie) Open: Tues-Sat 11am-5pm Sun 12pm-5pm

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