

PRESS RELEASE

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Grace McMurray, *Nest* (2018) headboard, satin ribbon weave, polycotton. Courtesy the artist.

CCA Derry~Londonderry presents *Irish Modernisms: legacies of modernism in the North*

Saturday 29 May–Saturday 18 September 2021

The Centre for Contemporary Art Derry~Londonderry is pleased to reopen its doors with a new exhibition, [*Irish Modernisms: legacies of modernism in the North*](#), launching on Friday 28 May 2021 from 7pm–9pm.

From architecture and infrastructure to everyday domestic design, the works in the exhibition include print, sculpture, textile, and architecture, highlighting the complex and nuanced influence of modernism in the North of Ireland. The exhibition is co-curated by Catherine Hemelryk and [Matt Retallick](#). This exhibition is open to the general public Tues–Sat, noon–6pm. We are hosting bubble bookings on Thursday mornings for a maximum of six people from up to two households; book [here](#).

James Ashe's work often responds to architecture and the built environment, and for this exhibition he presents a series of newly commissioned print editions of Modernist buildings

across NI from Craigavon, Banbridge, Sion Mills and Derry~Londonderry. Rachael Campbell-Palmer's work addresses seriality and architecture with two bodies of work using concrete features in the exhibition. Seriality is also a feature of Grace McMurray's hand-woven ribbon works, using geometry and patterns of Modernist art and design that also questions gendered labour and its value.

Ben Weir has created a site-specific sculptural installation to transform CCA's gallery into an abstracted domestic environment. Using modular concrete blocks the hearth and countertop host domestic objects selected by Phillip McCrilly. Phillip's research is present through the ornaments, trinkets, demijohns of Gorse Wine, foraged wildflowers and a remaking of a rejected illuminated sign amongst other items.

To coincide with the new exhibition *Irish Modernisms: legacies of modernism in the North*, the CCA Derry-Londonderry invites you to a series of mid-week talks and discussions which examine the legacy of modernism. Starting with the island of Ireland, the geographical reach will expand over the weeks to explore global contexts. Click [here](#) to book tickets on the British Art Network's Eventbrite page.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

[James Ashe](#)'s work often responds to architecture and the built environment, and for this exhibition he presents a series of print editions. Design, illustration, and typography are brought together to showcase a series of modernist buildings in Northern Ireland, some familiar, some more obscure. Included are the imposing St Theresa's Church at Sion Mills, and the unassuming Abercorn Service Station here in Derry/Londonderry. James is currently featured in the exhibition *Collecting the Past/Making the Future: Marking Centenaries 2021* at Ulster Museum, and his other exhibitions and projects include *Belfast Built Heritage* at Framewerk, Belfast (2020), and *Signboard* at The Black Box, Belfast (2020). The prints are available as limited editions, available exclusively at the gallery, and all proceeds help fund our programme.

[Rachael Campbell-Palmer](#)'s work addresses seriality and architecture. She works with concrete, plaster, and resin, materials that through their production and exhibition are situated between the industrial and the hand-crafted. In the exhibition she presents two bodies of work which demonstrate an interest in the slippages of material surface. Whether that is concrete quietly taken over by nature, or the dominant high polished finishes seen in our cityscapes. Her exhibitions include *TULCA 2016: The Headless City*, Galway, *Methods for Egress* at QSS Gallery, Belfast (2016), *Periodical Review #5* at NCAD Gallery, Dublin (2015), and *TERRA FIRMA* at PS Squared, Belfast (2014).

[Phillip McCrilly](#) is interested in the tentative adoption of Irish modernism and considers how this has affected his own life. For example, as the fireplace, or hearth was modernised in the

Irish home, the ornaments displayed on its mantel often remained the same. From bottles of holy water, beer mats or treasured trinkets such as autographs, Phillip has selected several objects that demonstrate this tension, and these are displayed on a sculpture by Ben Weir. Phillip's interest in the blurring lines between public and personal extend to other artworks on display. This includes an imagined sign for the Carpenter Club, a queer social space in Belfast. *Refused illumination*, it is inspired by a rejected sign for Hobsons of Moy that was deemed too modern, and therefore never realised. This is accompanied by a wall painting depicting the signature of St Eligius, Patron Saint of Electricians. There are also two demijohns of Gorse Wine, left to ferment throughout the exhibition duration. Made using wildflowers foraged from Shaws Bridge, an area of Belfast saved through modernist city planning in the 1960s and known as a cruising hotspot. Phillip is a member of *FRUIT SHOP*, a Belfast based arts collective, and his exhibitions and projects include, *Sauerkraut Jetty* at CCA Derry-Londonderry (2018), and *Dance Food* at Project Arts Centre, Dublin (2017).

[Grace McMurray](#) takes inspiration from the geometry and patterns of modernist art and design. The construction of her artworks appears mechanical, but on closer inspection, the intricate geometry reveals the traces of the human hand. Grace is interested in order and control, questioning gendered labour and its value. Her work refers to Irish textile traditions and takes inspiration from the architectural structures and patterns that surround her. Newly conceived and existing works are installed in such a way that the intricate processes of making are revealed. Grace is a member of the 2021 *Turner Prize* nominated Array Collective, Belfast, and her exhibitions include *Expanded Studio Project* at Primary, Nottingham (2016), and *Woven Polyhedra* at University of Ulster, Belfast (2018).

[Ben Weir](#) presents a new sculptural intervention which seeks to transform Gallery 1 into an abstracted domestic environment. The modular construction formed from concrete blocks offers the dimensions of a hearth and a countertop and will host domestic objects selected by Phillip McCrilly. Ben is Research Associate at CCA Derry-Londonderry, and his exhibitions include *Casa Vilaró: A Caress and a Blow* at Barcelona Pavilion, Barcelona (2020), *Artists in Architecture: Re-Activating Modern European Heritage* at BOZAR, Brussels (2019), and *Imagine! Belfast Festival of Politics and Ideas*, Belfast (2018).

ENDS

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Opening times:

Tuesday–Saturday

12:00–18:00

Free admission

About CCA Derry~Londonderry:

CCA is a publicly funded space within the historic city walls of Derry~Londonderry. CCA creates opportunities for audiences to experience ambitious, experimental and engaging art and for emerging artists to develop successful careers. CCA fosters a wide range of artistic, curatorial and critical practices through five programme streams: research and production, exhibition-making, public programmes, publishing and residencies.

CCA is a member of Plus Tate:

Plus Tate is a network, which comprises 35 cultural institutions – including the Tate galleries – that have strong artistic vision, a focus on contemporary art, outstanding public programming and a commitment to local community engagement through art. Plus Tate aims to support the development of the visual arts across the UK.

Safety:

CCA has a range of safety measures to ensure staff and visitors can enjoy exhibitions with the knowledge that every precaution is taken. This includes hand sanitisers at entrances and exits, track and trace, screens and heightened cleaning schedules. All who are able to wear a mask are invited to do so and a dedicated isolation room is available in the event of the onset of symptoms.

For further information and additional press images please contact:

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CCA is supported by:

