

The Jennings Gallery

Acquainted with the Night

28 November 2013 - 9 January 2014



An Exhibition of Paintings
by Gráinne Tynan

The Jennings Family and Brookfield House

The Jennings were a prominent Cork merchant family through the 19th and early 20th century with business interests in chemicals and bottled mineral waters. They built up substantial land holdings, mostly on the west side of Cork city.

Part of the original site of Queen's College Cork in the 1840s belonged to them, and most of the land acquired subsequently was also former Jennings land. The most recent transfer to the University was that of Brookfield House and its remaining grounds in 1998.

Francis Jennings was active in the affairs of the College during its early years. Francis was a member of the Royal Irish Academy and a Fellow of the Geological Society of London. His independent and relatively liberal outlook is reflected in the pamphlets he wrote on Irish social and economic issues.

It was his son, Thomas, who built Brookfield in 1898. Thomas had strong views about house building, with an almost obsessive concern about fire. Hence the austere yellow fire-brick, specially imported, the steel panelled fire doors and the 5000 gallon lead water tanks in the attic.

When Thomas Jennings died in 1935 Brookfield passed to his three daughters, Meg, Eithne and Muirne. Muirne (Mona) spent her latter years in the house and needed company and some additional income.

George and Eileen Coomber, who had just moved to Cork from Dublin, found in Brookfield an ideal home, and they, with their son, Brian, shared it with Mona for some 35 years until her death.

In 1998, Eileen Coomber, widowed, and no longer able to live alone, sold Brookfield House to UCC in 2001 to become the centre of its Health Sciences Education Complex.



The Jennings Gallery was created out of the circulation space in the first floor of Brookfield House by converting storage bunkers and wall to ceiling cupboards into exhibition cases and extra walls and taking advantage of the beautiful wooden floors to create a focal point for visual arts in the building.

The conversion work was generously funded by the Buckley Foundation who continue to support the Gallery.



Gráinne Tynan

Gráinne Tynan is a Visual Artist working in Dublin. Her practice centres on drawing, but also includes painting and sculpture. She received a B.Sc. in Occupational Therapy from TCD in 2006. Tynan's strong interest in the social sciences translates from her academic training into her artwork.

Acquainted with the Night portrays scenes from suburban Dublin, conveying the isolation of contemporary life. The paintings were inspired by Robert Frost's 1928 poem *Acquainted with the Night*, which describes the paradoxical sense of isolation in a city. The paintings are titled after excerpts from this poem. The painting *Acquainted with the Night* was shortlisted for the *Eigse Awards in 2012* and exhibited in the *Visual Centre for Contemporary Art, Carlow* as part of *Eigse in 2012*.

"There's a growing interest, both in Ireland and abroad, in the cross over between art and health science. Art gives me another way to understand themes I see in my work as a mental health OT."

Recent exhibitions : *Superstitious Aura* (solo show) in The Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely; *Day of the Dead* in Pallas Projects; *Circulation* in Monster Truck Gallery; *Eigse* in Visual Centre for Contemporary Art, Carlow; *NLA II* in Irish Museum of Contemporary Art; *Link Culture Fest* in Block T.

"My practice arises from, and feeds into a fluid and troublesome nexus of science, cultural studies, and visual art. In particular, my work is informed by my background in Occupational Therapy, which has driven me to observe the complex effects of environmental contexts in shaping people's experiences."



Tynan has been awarded an *Exhibition Support Bursary* from Fingal Arts Office (2013), a *Travel & Training Bursary* by The Arts Council of Ireland (2012), NCADs Continuing Education in Art and Design *Drawing Prize* (2012).

She has participated in residencies in The Good Hatchery and The Guesthouse. She is co-founder of IMPRINT zine and is an active member of The Market Studios.

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Acquainted with the Night

Robert Frost 1874 -1963

I have been one acquainted with the night.
I have walked out in rain—and back in rain.
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.
I have passed by the watchman on his beat
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet
When far away an interrupted cry
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-bye;
And further still at an unearthly height,
One luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither
wrong nor right.

I have been one acquainted with the night.

Jennings Gallery

The concept of the Jennings Gallery is to encourage a wider appreciation of, and involvement in, the visual arts in UCC by demonstrating how visual creativity can emerge from a wide range of human experience shaped by different personal, social and cultural circumstances. The Gallery aims to facilitate creativity amongst students and staff by the provision of a dedicated exhibition forum.

It provides support for established arts practices within the College of Medicine and Health, UCC and increases their visibility by bringing them into the framework of the Jennings Gallery. One of the primary aims of the Gallery is to integrate Arts Education into Healthcare Education in order to develop skills of observation, critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning and communication.

The Gallery promotes STEAM teaching across campus and encourages the development of elective modules in visual arts within the schools of the College of Medicine and Health.

Visual Thinking Strategies at UCC

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is a teaching method that uses visual observations to enhance critical thinking and observation skills and is based on open-ended yet highly-structured discussions of visual art of increasing complexity. In addition to teaching students the importance of detailed observation, VTS aims to help students cultivate a willingness and ability to present their own ideas, while respecting and learning from the perspectives of their peers. VTS is thought to increase the frequency of supported observations and speculations (evidence-based reasoning) and to foster critical thinking strategies and communication.

‘Seeing is an Art that must be learned’

The College of Medicine and Health at UCC has commenced a VTS programme across all Schools in the College led by academic staff who have been trained in this methodology. This innovative programme was developed and introduced by the Jennings Gallery.

Patrons' Project

The Patrons' Project is dedicated to the funding and mentorship of arts education in the College of Medicine & Health. You can donate to the Jennings Gallery in a tax effective manner through the Cork University Foundation. Donation forms & further information available from the Jennings Gallery.

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