

Taylor Wessing

Irish Photo Prize 2026



Large-print

Introduction

Photo Museum Ireland is delighted to present the inaugural Taylor Wessing Irish Photo Prize. Showcasing work by 34 shortlisted artists selected from over 1,300 entries, this major new award exhibition celebrates outstanding contemporary Irish photography.

The shortlisted artists offer powerful and diverse responses to the 2026 theme, *Community – Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine – It is in each other's shadow that we live*, as a timely portrait of contemporary Ireland shaped by connection, creativity and shared experience. Spanning documentary, conceptual, and experimental practice, the works reflect the vitality of photography in Ireland today, offering nuanced perspectives on belonging, identity, and collective experience, foregrounding ways of seeing, representing, and understanding community.

Presented in partnership with Taylor Wessing, Photo Museum Ireland and Business to Arts, the Taylor Wessing Irish Photo Prize is the largest combined prize fund for contemporary photography in Ireland and is a significant investment in our cultural life.

Thanks to our panel of judges for their expertise and valuable insights: Zoe Harrison, curator and head of Awards at British Journal of Photography; Anne

Nwakalor, curator, artist and writer, founding editor of *No! Wahala* magazine, and Fintan O'Toole, journalist, writer and broadcaster, Trish Lambe, CEO & Artistic Director of Photo Museum Ireland and Darren Campion, Curator at Photo Museum Ireland.

The Prizes

The Taylor Wessing Photo Portrait Prize is open to photographers who are Irish or based in Ireland (including Northern Ireland), aged 18 or over. Exhibited at Photo Museum Ireland, Dublin, the Prize showcases talented professional and amateur photographers from around Ireland. The winner of the competition receives €10,000, with judges' selections receiving €2,500. In addition, Taylor Wessing awards a €10,000 bursary for a photographer from an underrepresented community.

Taylor Wessing Irish Photo Prize Winners 2026:

First Prize Winner

Conor Horgan

Judges' Selections

Salem Anowe Chukwuezi

Laura Dunwoody

Taylor Wessing Irish Photo Bursary

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Level 1, First Small Space

Niamh Barry

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Evanna Devine

Niamh Barry

Queer Irish Diaspora, 2024

About the work

The Irish proverb "it is in each other's shadow that we live" reflects how Irish identity has never been formed in isolation. We are shaped by forces such as centuries of emigration and inherited norms. This image conveys how "community" can be both a source of belonging and a force that pushes people to the margins. Although Ireland has been celebrated as a safe haven for LGBTQ+ people, this perception risks becoming a dangerous illusion. For many, queer visibility still comes at a cost. Living in the shadow of family and religious expectations, public scrutiny and social conformity, queerness can feel conditional. At times, it can only be tolerated when softened or hidden. Our refusal to dilute who we are can fracture community ties by forcing some to seek refuge elsewhere. Friends and local support networks may offer care, but they are not always enough to counteract the weight of exclusion.

For Irish individuals like Rebecca, emigration becomes an act of survival and self-preservation. This echoes a long Irish tradition of emigration, but one rarely discussed through an LGBTQ+ lens. This photo of Rebecca, captured in London, therefore, honours the

past, present and future geographical movement of all queer Irish diaspora around the world in the pursuit of one's most authentic queer self. It urges us to reconsider “community” as something we must actively reshape so that we can all live in each other’s shadow without fear.

Artist biography

Niamh Barry is a queer Irish photographer and visual storyteller based in Dublin. Her personal documentation of LGBTQ+ visibility within Ireland’s Catholic-influenced culture has evolved into a broader photographic practice that links theory and visual form to foreground intersectionality and examines gender, sexuality, identity, and embodied experiences. By building relationships among diverse communities, her analogue work is increasing the visibility of Ireland's underrepresented groups. Self-funded series like *Queer Hearts of Dublin* (2020), *No Queer Apologies* (2021), and *Interpersonally Queer* (2023–) have established Barry’s contribution to visual culture in Ireland. In 2024, she received the Diversity Award from the Irish Photo Network. Her current photography project, *Something in the Air* (2025–), explores the life of Raychel Sanner, a Native American storm chaser, climate advocate, and transgender person. Barry's work has been featured in *BJP's Portrait of Humanity* and exhibited at the Royal

Hibernian Academy Annual Show and Photo Museum
Ireland's *Talents 2025*.

Xuying Li

*Anyone can judge me, but I can
become anyone, in a positive way,
2024*

*From the series Free-floating
Jellyfish*

About the work

Free-floating Jellyfish tells the story of Asian women on a journey of self-discovery across Europe, far from their homeland. Existing between two cultures and two identities, their migration journey is bound to be filled with uncertainty and confusion, like a jellyfish drifting in unfamiliar waters, sometimes moved by ocean currents, sometimes floating in place, and at times losing direction. Through photography, Li aims to capture the emotions and inner worlds of this group, portraying their complex search for self-identity on European soil and

showcasing their loneliness, struggles, resilience, and warmth on the path to finding a sense of belonging.

Artist biography

Xuying Li is a lens-based artist living in Dublin, and part of the DesignOpp event team as a project manager. Her work captures the subtle interactions between individuals and their surroundings through the lens, conveying genuine emotions and vitality in fleeting moments.

Evanna Devine

*Sean and Petey, Craigmore A.B.C,
Newry, 2024*

From the series Quiet Fighters

About the work

Quiet Fighters is not just about boxing; it is about childhood, diverse cultures and the unwavering support that these young athletes receive from their coaches and mentors. In a small boxing gym, new stories of Northern Ireland are being told. Boxing is traditionally a uniquely inclusive sport. Despite Northern Ireland's deep-rooted sectarian separatism, boxing clubs

remained an inclusive space for Catholics and Protestants to train together, even in the height of the conflict. In Newry's Craigmore A.B.C different stories of Northern Ireland are being told. Alongside boxers from both sides of the traditional divide, Craigmore has boxers from Africa, China, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, the Irish Traveller community and more among its growing membership. Exploring the profound impact of a community-driven boxing club, *Quiet Fighters* seeks to capture the transformative power of boxing in fostering unity and providing a positive outlet and discipline for youth from both sides of the traditional divide and beyond.

Artist biography

Evanna Devine is an Irish artist from Belfast, working primarily through photographic portraiture. Her practice centres on long-term, community-led storytelling, exploring themes of class and identity in contemporary Ireland. She holds a First Class Honours degree in Photography from the Institute of Art, Design and Technology. Her first solo exhibition, *It is Different for Mothers* (2023), was developed in collaboration with Relatives for Justice and presented at Belfast's Botanic Gardens. It responded to themes of legacy, motherhood and future generations. Recent projects include *Quiet Fighters*, exhibited at Photo Museum Ireland (2025), and her first solo publication, *Every Glove* (2024), published

as part of Photolreland's TLP Editions. Devine has been awarded the Early Career Artist Award from Photo Museum Ireland, Photolreland's RADAR Residency, and the Mason Hayes & Curran–Photolreland Award. She was recently awarded a studio residency at the International Centre for the Image.

Level 1, Main Gallery

Salem Anowe Chukwuezi

Cat Gundry-Beck

James Mahon

Joe Laverty

Mandy O'Neill

Laura Dunwoody

Yvette Monahan

Chris Reid

Conor Horgan

Laura Smith

Chad Alexander

Salem Anowe Chukwuezi

Unseen, Yet Always Here, 2025

From the series Covert

About the work

This work showcases the reality for Black men in Ireland, making visible what often goes unseen. Growing up in rural Ireland, a quiet ostracisation is taking place. It is covert, but like camouflage, it remains present, lurking beneath the surface. Camouflage is often understood as a physical action, but it can also describe how easily we in Ireland pretend that there isn't a significant issue of racism and xenophobia.

Artist biography

Salem Anowe Chukwuezi is a Nigerian student photographer currently studying Photography + Visual Media at the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire. Her greatest strength as a photographer is her ability to uncover stories hidden in people and their environments.

Cat Gundry-Beck

*Ailo, Shamrock Síoga LGBTQIA+,
2025*

*From the series An Irish Expat
Finding Community After Moving
Home*

About the work

Shamrock Síoga basketball group provides a safe space for LGBTQIA+ individuals, offering both competitive and open training sessions, making it inclusive for those who want to meet others without the pressure of competition. It is a strong community of like-minded people, having social gatherings and trips abroad for members. After joining Shamrock Síoga, Ailo felt he'd finally found a community and place to belong as a trans person in Ireland. His first training session helped heal the trauma he had experienced. He proudly wears one of the team's jerseys featuring the trans flag colours.

Artist biography

Cat Gundry-Beck is an Irish photographer who has just returned home after 14 years living abroad in Iceland, Norway and the UK. A graduate of Norwich University of the Arts, she works in commercial photography and

photo education, giving workshops and lectures in Ireland, Norway and Iceland. She has also worked on an expedition ship travelling from Greenland to Antarctica. Having moved back to Dublin in 2025, she is interested in capturing the communities she has become part of. She identifies as queer and has found a real sense of community in joining the Shamrock Sióga basketball team, as well as through sea swimming and music communities.

James Mahon

Antoinette in her Bedroom, 2024

From the series To Win Just Once

About the work

To Win Just Once is a collaborative project between Antoinette Foley and James Mahon. Born into a Traveller family, Antoinette's life spiralled following teenage love, heartbreak, and the trauma of family separation. *To Win Just Once* builds on the success of the earlier series, *The Hawk against the Dove*, which documented Antoinette's battle to overcome addiction, confronting the weight of judgment placed on women, Travellers, and addicts. It

follows Antoinette's life as she continues her journey to recovery, affirming the power of storytelling as a path to healing and change. This timely and resonant work invites audiences to bear witness, not only to struggle, but to survival.

Artist biography

James Mahon is an internationally award-winning photographer based in Athy, Co. Kildare. He holds distinctions from the Irish Photographic Federation (LIPF), the Royal Photographic Society (LRPS), the Photographic Society of America (PPSA) and the International Federation of Photographic Art (EFIAP). Mahon's first interest was sports photography, and while he still pursues this, his emphasis has shifted towards street and documentary photography.

Joe Laverty

Declan, fisherman, Lough Neagh,
2025

From the series *Shallow Waters*

About the work

It is believed that eel fishing on Lough Neagh dates back

to the Bronze Age, meaning Declan comes from a long line of eel fishers on the Lough. However, that tradition is under threat from annual blooms of blue-green algae suffocating the fragile ecosystem. The 2025 eel fishing season was stopped after only two weeks; a combination of pollution, extraction and poor regulation threatens to end this tradition for good. The decline of fishing on Lough Neagh could be seen as slow violence inflicted upon rural Loughshore dwellers by decades of inadequate governance. The island of Ireland has a complicated relationship with its natural environment, often celebrating over-consumption of the land while nature takes a secondary position to industry. Vivid green fields are celebrated, but when our water turns the same hue, we might start to question nature's secondary position to 'industry at all costs'.

Artist biography

Joe Laverty is an Irish photographic artist and filmmaker. He completed his MFA in Photography at Ulster University, Belfast, in 2022. His work explores place and our human interaction with it, with a particular focus on marginal or overlooked areas in both urban and rural contexts. His recent practice investigates the intersection of extraction industries and historical narratives within the rural Irish landscape. His work has been exhibited in Dublin, London, Belfast, Galway and Tallinn. His work has been published in *Source*, *British*

Journal of Photography, Huck, RIBA Journal, Architects Journal, Irish Times & The Guardian. His current body of work, *Shallow Waters*, was nominated for the Prix Pictet and shown at Belfast Photo Festival. He was shortlisted for the AIB Portrait Award in 2026.

Mandy O'Neill

20th/21st Century Housing, 2026

From the series Best Laid Plans

About the work

Best Laid Plans is a study of the social and material impacts of housing-led development in the inner suburb of Cabra, Dublin 7, from the early 20th century to the present. The main Cabra public housing schemes were developed by Dublin Corporation between 1929 and 1949 to address the dire living conditions of Dublin's poor. Many of the early inhabitants of Cabra moved from Dublin's inner city, where poverty and the close proximity of tenement living led to a reliance on one another. New residents of the Cabra houses often struggled to survive with higher rents and transport costs. A common struggle led to the development of support systems in

the new suburb (for example, stew kitchens and a fuel depot), which forged strong community bonds. These bonds are still maintained today through a community network that encompasses care for both young and old. The Dublin Corporation houses served as a support system which allowed citizens with little resources to eventually thrive and prosper. The recent construction of 485 build-to-rent apartments (Hamilton Gardens) marks the largest housing development in the area since the mid-20th century. While this development expands the possibility of new communities residing in Cabra, the nature of apartment living and the high cost of rent may render them inaccessible to many. Though it should be noted that 20% of the units are allocated to social housing.

Artist biography

Mandy O'Neill uses expanded photography practice in an instinctual and responsive manner to understand, process and contain the material and social environments in which we live. She is interested in the political and social contexts of our built environment, from schools and community venues to housing and institutional buildings, with an emphasis on working-class histories. Her multi-layered methodology begins with walking and photographing to identify sites of interest. Geo-historical research and social engagement with communities reveal the lived

experiences of these sites, often unearthing their socio-political and ideological underpinnings. O'Neill holds a PhD from DCU, an MA in Public Culture Studies from IADT, and a BA in Photography from TU Dublin. Her work has been exhibited widely both nationally and internationally, and her images are held in public and private collections. She won the Zurich Portrait Prize at the National Gallery of Ireland in 2018 and was commissioned to create a portrait of writer Edna O'Brien for the NGI collection. She has received funding from the Arts Council of Ireland, Culture Ireland and the Irish Research Council, and completed multiple commissions for public institutions.

Laura Dunwoody

Caoimhe on the Bus, 2025

From the series Nothing Lasts

Forever – Youth of Ballymun

About the work

Laura Dunwoody is drawn to working-class communities similar to the ones she grew up in. Her latest work is

focused on Ballymun, a suburb on Dublin's north side. The area suffers from high levels of unemployment, addiction and social issues. *Nothing Lasts Forever – Youth of Ballymun* is a photographic exploration of the fragility of adolescence and life, offering a contemplative look at themes of belonging, identity, and coming of age in a community impacted by negative stereotyping in the Irish mainstream media. Dunwoody portrays the lives of the young people of Ballymun by reflecting on the complex relationship we often have with the places that shape us, our outlooks, and our identities. This series challenges the viewer to reconsider photography's role in representation, to question its power and what lies beneath.

Artist biography

Laura Dunwoody is a photographer, educator and social activist. Her practice is community-focused, navigating socially engaged work through documentary photography. Driven by questions of representation in marginalised social groups that were harmed by photography and denied access to the medium, she is committed to making photography more accessible by exploring the complexities of representation and the ethical frameworks surrounding visual documentation. She is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Visual Arts

(KABK) in the Netherlands.

Yvette Monahan

*Helen Keys in the summer fields,
Mallon Farm, Co. Tyrone, 2024
From the series *The Clean Blue of
Linen**

About the work

“I visited Mallon Farm over a calendar year, but my favourite trip was in August last year. I pulled up along the path just off Pomeroy on a rare sunny Autumn day. The narrow road was full of overgrown bushes, and the sun shone brightly on the fields. As always, we started with coffee and cake, and Charlie's mum and sister joined us. There was a mix of local chat and global thoughts. The 1940s scutching turbine in the shed stayed silent as it was a field day. We set off on the farm tour across fields that had been bare and lean on my previous May visit. The farm had exploded, and an Edenic garden unfolded before us in place of the brown earth. We waded through chest-high grasses full of Devil's Bit Scabious, where peacock butterflies feasted.

The unbroken hedgerow-edged fields dipped for deer beds; the hazelnut tree branches weighed down with boughs of nuts, the rich rosehips bursting from the brambles. The bees fed uninterrupted, and their low hum sat low in the wild meadow. We cooled off in an old-growth glade of silent mosses, trees where badger sets inhabit the cool, dark undergrowth. The blue flower of the flax blossom filled the fields, swaying in the evening light as the family gathered to harvest. The restoration of Irish linen is driven by these passionate individuals, Helen and Charlie, alongside their community of families and friends who practice daily acts of practical reverence, gently re-story-ing Mallon Farm by human touch because caring is not abstract.”

– Yvette Monahan

Artist biography

Yvette Monahan is an Irish photographer and artist known for her research-driven approach. Her practice intricately explores the intangible qualities of both external and internal landscapes, weaving together elements of myth and geography. Through her lens, she seeks to uncover deeper narratives beneath the surface. She employs various photographic techniques, including film and digital photography, as well as alternative methods like lumen printing. Since earning her MFA in Photography from Ulster University, Monahan has exhibited her work in numerous venues, including

Belfast Exposed, PhotoIreland, the Royal Photographic Society in Bristol, TULCA, Unseen in Amsterdam, Fotohof in Salzburg, and the Lishui Festival in China. Additionally, she has been nominated three times for the Prix Pictet Sustainability and Environment prize, underscoring her commitment to meaningful storytelling. Monahan is one of the award-winning artists featured in Project Groundswell, a major EU-funded creative project led by Photo Museum Ireland that harnesses the power of photography to illuminate climate action.

Chris Reid

Bonfires at Kilcooley Estate on the 11th of July 2025

About the work

Since 2024, Chris Reid has attended the 11th of July celebrations at the predominantly Loyalist Estate in Killcooley, Bangor, County Down. In 2025, it was said that the Bonfire in this Estate would be the largest in Northern Ireland and was generally less photographed than other sites. In the photographs Reid took in 2025, he wanted to emphasise what he found on the day: a

wide variety of people, an emphasis on community, and access for anyone who may want to attend. Reid plans to attend again in July 2026 and to donate copies of the images he makes to the residential association in Killcooley Estate.

Artist biography

Over the last twenty-five years, Chris Reid has been using photography to document Irish institutional buildings, the built environment, and their relationship with place. Since 2024, Reid has been documenting the phenomena of Loyalist Bonfires in Northern Ireland, photographing the preparations for the bonfire celebrations on the 11th of July in Shankill and Sandy Row, Belfast and at the predominantly Loyalist estate of Killcooley in Bangor.

Conor Horgan

EDGE 53, 2024

From the series EDGE

About the work

EDGE is a personal response to the hostile architecture of the barriers that were installed throughout 2024 along Dublin's Grand Canal and nearby areas in an attempt to deter homeless people seeking asylum from sleeping

there. These semi-abstracted images are intended to convey a sense of the often traumatic experiences of these men as they made their way to Ireland and, after they arrived, were met with the opposite of what they most needed – protection. The works are not documentary images, not least because conventional documentary photographs could cause these unprotected men to be identified online and further expose them to danger. Under European law, it's illegal to photograph people seeking asylum without their permission. They have more rights to privacy than citizens, as they are deemed more vulnerable.

Artist biography

Conor Horgan is an artist and photographer best known for his portraiture, as well as an award-winning filmmaker and writer. His work is concerned with identity, vulnerability, trust, and the need for meaningful connections to the self, others, and the natural world. It is regularly exhibited nationally and internationally and is included in the National Gallery of Ireland and State Art collections, as well as many private collections. *Post-State*, a solo exhibition of his landscapes and found objects, was held in the Royal Hibernian Academy in 2022. His exhibition *En résidence* (2021) is a permanent installation in the Irish Cultural Centre in Paris. Works from his latest project *EDGE*, were shortlisted for the Photo Museum Ireland's

International Open Awards exhibition, *Reflecting the Real*, in 2025. Further works were featured in the recent exhibition *ARCHIPELAGO*, the largest photographic group show ever presented by the RHA, and one of the *Irish Times* Top Ten Exhibitions of 2025.

Laura Smith

Archive Fever, 2025

About the project:

Archive Fever explores how photographs hold and transmit collective histories. Digitally collaged from personal family photographs and contemporary imagery, the work uses layering and repetition to collapse multiple temporalities and locations into a single image.

In the foreground, Smith's grand-aunt sits with relatives beside the lake at the ancestral home shortly before emigrating to America. Once a place of gathering and shared life, the house now lies in ruin, its collapse echoing the absence of those who once lived there. A framed photograph within the image shows another grand-aunt and friends emigrating by boat to Manhattan. Rendered as rippling negative forms, the image evokes the dispersal of communities that reshaped Irish communities across generations and geographies.

Through these layered images, *Archive Fever* reflects on how community persists beyond physical presence, sustained through shared spaces, photographs, and memory.

Artist Biography:

Laura Smith is a visual artist and educator whose research-led practice centres on moving image and photography. Her work explores how memory and identity are shaped beyond events and official records, often through inherited beliefs and unresolved histories. Frequently juxtaposing archival and contemporary footage to examine how historical narratives persist in the present. Smith has exhibited nationally and internationally, including at EVA International, TULCA Festival of Visual Arts, Galway Arts Centre, Enclave Gallery (London), Neu/Now Festival (Paris), and Fastnet Film Festival.

Chad Alexander

Patrice, 2024

From the series *Tropicana*

About the work

Tropicana stands as a site of inclusion, solidarity and care within Northern Ireland's evolving social landscape.

For many immigrants, some of whom have lived here for three or four decades, with children and grandchildren born and raised, navigating an increasingly hostile environment has become a reality. This shift is both troubling and disheartening, particularly considering Ireland's own history of subjugation rooted in bigotry and narrow ideologies. The project underscores the commonalities that bind individuals across cultural divides, emphasising the fundamental human need for community and mutual support. It highlights the importance of spaces such as the Tropicana Café, which serve as vital counterpoints to division. The preservation of such spaces is essential to a society capable of confronting ignorance and prejudice.

Patrice is originally from Cabo Verde, an island nation off the coast of West Africa. He relocated to Northern Ireland several decades ago for factory work in Belfast. Later, he acquired the former Irish National Foresters building in Dungannon and transformed it into the Tropicana Café, where he serves authentic Portuguese cuisine and hosts nighttime events. Over time, it has become a gathering place for first and second-generation immigrants from around the world to connect and share a sense of community.

Artist biography

Chad Alexander is an artist from Northern Ireland. His practice centres on societal shifts and negotiations with the region's fractured past. He is interested in the connections between people and their environments, exploring the tensions and harmonies between place and identity. Alexander has exhibited internationally, including at Africa Foto Fair, Abidjan (2025); Street Level Photoworks, Glasgow (2025); Impressions Gallery, Bradford (2025); Belfast Photo Festival (2025); and Belfast Exposed Gallery (2024). Selected by Impressions Gallery and Bradford City of Culture (2025) to produce new work, he was also commissioned by Belfast Photo Festival to create a project on peatlands in the North of Ireland. He is a recipient of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Artist Award and the International Development Award, and his work is held in the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's contemporary collection.

Level 1, Gallery Room 2

Michael Cassidy

Jeanette Lowe

Lisa Bennett

Keelin O'Shea

Emma O'Brien

Emily Roche

Jilly McGrath

Michael Cassidy

D'Island Horse

From the series The Island Field

About the work

St Mary's Park, known locally as the "Island Field," a mile from the centre of Limerick, has faced significant social challenges, including high levels of unemployment, low educational attainment, and a reputation for anti-social behaviour. However, one thing that unites people on the Island is the love of horses.

Artist biography

Michael Cassidy is a freelance sound recordist working in film, TV and documentary. He has been taking photos as an amateur photographer since his teens, influenced by a desire to document ordinary life. Through his work in documentaries, Cassidy has been privileged to get close to people and to travel to over 80 countries.

Jeanette Lowe

Madison, Pearse House, 2024

From the series A Village in the City

About the work

Madison is the fourth generation of her family to be raised in Pearse House flats. Built in the 1930s by acclaimed architect Herbert Simms, the red brick, Art Deco complex was once considered state of the art and a civic response to Dublin's devastating tenement crisis. Today it houses a community in limbo.

Dublin City Council's 2025 regeneration plan, long awaited by residents, was rejected by the government over concerns that the proposed retrofit would result in a net loss of homes. As new plans are prepared, Madison along with the many families and essential city workers who live in this 'Village in the City' continue to wait.

Artist biography

Jeanette Lowe is a Dublin-born visual artist whose work explores the relationship of people, place and culture in contemporary inner-city Dublin. A fourth generation Dubliner, she brings a deep, lived connection to a city in constant transformation.

Her long-term projects bear witness to communities navigating change. *Village in the City* documents the displacement of established old Dublin communities as historic flat complexes are demolished and their residents dispersed. A separate six-year project recorded the demolition and rebuilding of the landmark ESB Head Office on Fitzwilliam Street. As Artist-in-Residence at the National Maternity Hospital, she turned her lens on the human realities of staff working within an ageing institution, capturing how housing and transport pressures shape the lives of those who keep the city running.

Lowe exhibits in both gallery and public settings, with the intention of broadening access to contemporary art and opening dialogue across diverse audiences. Her work has been shown at the National Portrait Gallery, London, the Royal Hibernian Academy, and in the USA and South America, and is held in Irish and international collections.

Lisa Bennett

Na buachaillí i tí Deirdre, 2025

From the series Irish College

About the work

The boys of Tí Deirdre prepare for a theme night at the Coláiste Chamuis céilí. Taken in August 2025, this image is part of an ongoing documentary exploring the "Irish College" experience, a summer ritual where young people from across Ireland gather in the Gaeltacht to immerse themselves in the Irish language and culture, forming friendships and community along the way.

Artist biography

Lisa Bennett was born in Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. After school, she moved to the UK to study photography and lived in London for 14 years. Bennett currently lives in Bristol with her family. She returns home frequently and has spent the last three summers making work in Connemara. The late Martin Parr mentored Bennett in 2025 while she was making this project. Bennett continues to work in London and beyond as a digital tech, working on assignments for *The Times*, *The New York Times*, and private clients.

Keelin O'Shea

Jen & Sophie at Stretch – Sweet Embrace, 2025

From the series Queers

About the work

Queers is a body of work that revolves around community, documenting everyday queer life and Dublin's night scene. This image captures a moment of connection and ease between two individuals, reflecting the importance of visible queer presence in shared social spaces in Ireland.

Artist biography

Keelin O'Shea is a Dublin-based documentary photographer. She is currently undertaking the Photography and Digital Imaging programme at the National College of Art and Design. Firmly embedded in Dublin's queer community, her practice focuses on documenting the vulnerability and care found within these spaces, building trust through forging relationships with her subjects to create work highlighting both Dublin's nightlife and club scene and intimate moments between lovers and friends.

Missy Brinkmeyer

Kissing Crocs, 2025

From the series Seen

About the work

Missy Brinkmeyer's *Seen* offers an insight into her ongoing encounters with the contemporary city and the life that unfolds on its streets. While much of the focus is on Dublin and its unique character, the work is an expression of the nature and pulse of urban streetscapes and communities anywhere. For Brinkmeyer, these two young women embody a freedom of expression and identity that is vibrantly, defiantly Dublin, a freedom she recognises is neither rooted in our past nor yet universal.

"Her images probe the fragile boundaries between self and other, between seeing and being seen, between you and me on ordinary streets."

— Neva Elliott

Artist biography

Missy Brinkmeyer is a fine art street photographer and an active figure on the photographic scene in Ireland. Brinkmeyer has shown internationally in the US, EU, and UAE, as well as prominently in Ireland. She received the

Curtin O'Donohue Emerging Artist award at the RHA *Annual Exhibition* in 2024, following her solo exhibition *Dublin in Black and White* at the Central Bank of Ireland, supported by Dublin City Council, NEIC, and 5 Lamps Arts, in 2023. She has been shortlisted for the AIB Portrait Prize at the National Gallery of Ireland. Her recent solo exhibition at The LAB in 2026 was curated by Margarita Cappock.

Emily Roche

Corporation Tax, 2025

From the series Corporation Tax

About the work

When Christianity arrived in Ireland, it inserted itself into existing hierarchical structures. Those already in power adopted new titles—Bishop or Monk—and continued to live in the style to which they were accustomed, rather than distributing wealth and power more fairly within the community. The Catholic Church operated as a corporation requiring constant revenue, funded by the average layperson through donations and collections. However, members often paid their dues in other ways: mirroring acceptable family status, sacrificing bodily autonomy, adhering to dress codes, hiding sexuality,

tolerating abuse, and withholding information, all in the hope of appearing faithful and loyal. Not adhering to these rules was like an unpaid tax, and as the debt grew, so did isolation from the community. *Corporation Tax* explores how this façade was upheld for so long by an organisation drunk with power. As the sun rises on a more secularised state, the cracks of the past begin to open, and the truth reveals itself.

Artist biography

Emily Roche is a visual artist and primary teacher based in Dublin. Her experience as an educator has informed her practice in meaningful ways. Through self-discovery and play, Roche builds constructed worlds in her photography, creating alternate realities not far from everyday life. Her practice is heavily influenced by her teacher training, where she explored how children apply a fictional lens to their play to mirror the real world. Through these worlds, Roche explores themes of isolation, facades, hiding, self-discovery, and the search for community. She recently graduated from the Photography and Digital Imaging programme at NCAD and is currently studying Art and Ecology there. Roche is a recipient of the Photolreland RADAR award and was chosen as part of the *Source Magazine* Undergraduate Selected Works 2025 for her *Corporation Tax* project.

Jilly McGrath

I can't hear my eyes, 2023

From the series A Gift, A Goodbye

About the work

Portrait of the Irish artist Bex Fahey (she/they) at home in London, UK. This image is part of *A Gift, A Goodbye*, a series that reflects on Irish immigration and queerness. Through her lens, McGrath seeks to capture the complexities of the human experience, portraying her subjects with nuance and empathy.

Artist biography

Jilly McGrath is a multidisciplinary artist based in Dublin. She recently attained her MA in Photojournalism and Documentary Photography from the University of the Arts London. Drawing inspiration from her Irish identity and her exploration of queer identity and mental health, McGrath's artistic practice is a tapestry of introspection and cultural reflection. As a member of Gift Horse Theatre, an environmentally conscious theatre company, she further explores storytelling and adaptation, through narratives that resonate with audiences on a personal level and within the broader social context.

Level 2, Second Small Space

Patryk Gizicki

Patryk Gizicki

From left:

Reflection

Home

Heaven Sent

The Fog

Mika and Ryan

From the series *Stay Forever More*,
2023 – ongoing

About the project:

Stay Forever More is a reflective body of work in which Patryk Gizicki revisits his childhood and adolescence, attempting to reconstruct and confront difficult memories. The project centres on ideas of home, belonging, and coming of age, shaped by displacement and return.

Gizicki's family emigrated from Poland during a period of financial instability, arriving in Ireland at the height of

the Celtic Tiger. The idea of home has since remained unsettled, defined as much by absence as by attachment. The title is drawn from *Green and Red of Mayo* by The Saw Doctors, a song closely associated with his hometown of Castlebar, where its lyrics became an early reflection on emigration and identity.

Settling into Ireland was a gradual and uncertain process, which Gizicki expresses through images that focus on in-between states. Castlebar is framed as a place of transition, somewhere he moved through rather than fully belonged to. Over time, a sense of connection emerged through others who shared similar experiences of dislocation.

Returning to Castlebar as an adult, Gizicki encountered a shift in perspective. The small-town inertia he once resisted now mirrors broader social and economic pressures, as rising living costs in Dublin force many to leave. Gizicki uses the work to reflect on the complexities of his upbringing, his hometown, and his evolving understanding of what it means to be Irish. *Stay Forever More* operates between document and reconstruction, drawing from lived experience, but shaped by distance, memory, and the instability of recall.

Artist Biography:

Patryk Gizicki is a Dublin-based photographer, originally from Poland and emigrating to Co, Mayo in his early

years. He graduated with a BA in Photography from TU Dublin in 2023.

Gizicki's practice is grounded in personal narrative, drawing on his Polish heritage and Irish upbringing to explore themes of identity, belonging, and memory. Working primarily with analogue processes, he demonstrates a distinct sensitivity to colour and atmosphere, creating images that reflect on lived experience and the passage of time.

He is currently developing *Stay Forever More*, an ongoing body of work that reconstructs and reimagines the experience of growing up in Castlebar, Co. Mayo. The project has been supported by Arts Council Ireland and developed through the Early Career Artist residency at Photo Museum Ireland.

Recent exhibitions include *Stay Forever More* at Outset Gallery as part of the Galway International Arts Festival programme, and a solo presentation at Súil Gallery, Ennis (2026). His work was also presented in *Talents 2024* at Photo Museum Ireland, and in the RHA 195th Annual Exhibition, where he received the 2025 Progressive Vision Curtin O'Donoghue Emerging Photographic Artist Award.

Level 2, Bridge

Blaise Smith

Philip Arneill

Emma O'Brien

Michael Croghan

Shane Coughlan

Blaise Smith

Doire Bhó Riada 2, abandoned school, Connemara, 2025

About the work

“This building stands alone at the base of the Maam Turks, overlooking a lake whose view, in the May heatwave, looked like Wyoming. I was fairly gobsmacked because it just seemed so surreal, the way it sat there, and the mountains formed a perfectly symmetrical V behind it. What was the little wall for? Why was it so alone? While I stood there photographing it, an elderly man drove up in a car. The backstory he told makes this even more appropriate because it touches on so many features of Irish life indirectly: he told me he had been to school in this building in the 1950s. When he was there, there were seventy children at school, and they came from the five villages around. He gestured in the direction of each, which we could see from where we stood in front of the school. Each was now represented by one or two houses. It was a Gaeltacht area, and he spoke their names in beautiful Irish. When he left school, he went to London and worked there for 49 years, digging tunnels under the city. He had retired and come back to farm his sheep on the

rocky mountainsides next to us under the wide blue sky. And so many people came out of small places like this. Harsh but incredibly beautiful. So few returned. The school is now disused. There are only a handful of children in the valley. The building belongs to the community; they keep it maintained, but can't decide what to do with it. Location: At 53.497973, -9.686481”

– Blaise Smith

Artist biography

Blaise Smith RHA has a well-established career as a figurative painter, exhibiting widely in Ireland and abroad. A full-time visual artist since 1996, his artistic practice documents Irish life in the 21st century with painterly realist works, often concentrating on communities that share a common workplace and environment, notably *ROADWORKS* (1999) for Cork County Council and *SCHOOLWORK* (2011) for Presentation College Carlow, both large Per cent for Art commissions. He has been commissioned to paint many notable portraits, including *8 Scientists* for the Royal Irish Academy, and work for *Accenture's Women on Walls* campaign. He has had nearly twenty solo shows, most recently *The Still Lives of Blaise Smith* at the Butler Gallery (2021) and *Irish Landscapes* at the RHA Gallery (2023). He uses photography extensively in his preparatory work and has lately taken the step of exhibiting these photographs as

works in themselves, and, most recently, exhibiting his film *CROP* at the Butler Gallery in Kilkenny in Spring 2025.

Philip Arneill

Untitled, 2024

From the series I Am Where I Am Not

About the work

In contemporary Northern Irish society, the Protestant community is in a state of crisis. There are approximately 650 Orange Halls dotted across the landscape, outward-facing markers of the Orange Order and a once-dominant identity. Their architecture, symbolism and socio-cultural context are inseparable elements of contemporary life. The gradual decline of the Orange Order as a socio-political force reflects irreversible advances towards a more inclusive society. For the community that maintains these buildings against the flow of secularisation, they represent a material expression of heritage preservation. For others, they are symbolic of historic oppression. For Arneill, the project encapsulates the ambivalence with which he views the Protestant community into which he was born. This ambivalence inspires the title of the project, *I Am Where I Am Not*, which draws on Foucault's description

of the mirror as both utopia and heterotopia: “I see myself... over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent...”

Artist biography

Philip Arneill is a Belfast-born photographer and author. Since 2015, he has been documenting the unique subculture of Japanese jazz listening cafes (*kissa*). His photobook *Tokyo Jazz Joints* was published by Kehrer in 2023 and is currently in its fourth edition, with a Japanese version published by Seigensha in 2025. Arneill's work explores ideas of home and culture through insider-outsider dynamics and questions of place and identity. His current long-term project, *I Am Where I Am Not*, is a personal photographic exploration of inherited Protestant identity through the architecture of Northern Ireland's Orange Halls. In 2024, he was selected as an artist for the Rencontres D'Arles festival, received SIAP funding from Arts Council NI, and was awarded the Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society (FRPS).

Emma O'Brien

Michael's Chair, 2024

From the series Cluain Lir

About the work

An empty chair, marked by the lingering impression of its last occupant. Community here is quiet and habitual, people returning to the same places, day after day, shaping them through ordinary use. This collaborative photographic project was developed through conversation, listening, and shared authorship with residents and day care clients of the Cluain Lir Community Nursing Unit in Mullingar. Through portraits, interiors, and personal belongings, the work offers glimpses into lives shaped by memory, routine, and care. Empty chairs, shared tables, and moments of stillness point to a form of community built through proximity, repetition, and attention rather than performance. The work challenges narrow perceptions of aging by foregrounding agency, dignity, and connection, and raises questions about how older people are seen, heard, and supported in everyday community life.

Artist biography

Emma O'Brien is a lens-based artist from Westmeath with a BA in Photographic Media from Griffith College,

Dublin. Her work explores the psychological, physical, and metaphysical landscapes of care. She is particularly interested in ecologies of care, exploring how interconnected systems of nurturing relationships offer new ways to navigate uncertain futures. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including selection for FUTURES for European Contemporary Photography in 2022. Her photobook, *The Holding Place* (2023), was published by PhotoIreland. O'Brien's work has been acquired by the Office of Public Works for the permanent State Art Collection. She has received awards from the Arts Council of Ireland, including the Artist Bursary Award (2022), the Agility Award (2024/2021), and the Professional Development Award (2020). She is a 2025 recipient of the Brinsley Macnamara Award from Westmeath Arts Office.

Michael Croghan

*Untitled (Grian Ard Suntown Festival,
Motte Hill, Granard, Co. Longford),
2024*

From the series Memory of Gatherings

About the work

Memory of Gatherings is a personal self-reflexive work on Irish social gatherings. It is an ongoing archive of poetic visual observations that uses the 'real' to highlight and explore identity. Like Plato's allegory of the cave, identities and culture are formed through the visuality of shadows. Gatherings are an intersection of communal exchange and understanding, somewhere between the forming and the formed. These are not everyday experiences, but rather places where the everyday is transcended. Croghan's work offers an almost theatrical view of the thin line between lived reality and amplified existential experience.

Artist biography

Michael Croghan is a documentary photographer who photographs in-between spaces, in a poetic realist and formalist style, adapted to the everyday vernacular. He collaborates with communities of interest to explore social tropes and hidden histories, transcending the familiar to draw attention to the poetry of the commonplace. BA Honours degree 2021 TUDublin, Photography, and First Honours Degree with a Master's

at IADT ACR program Art & Collaboration, Research, Dún Laoghaire, Dublin.

Shane Coughlan

Low Tide, 2025

From the series Elders

Shane Coughlan's ongoing series *Elders* pays homage to the leaders of families and communities, who pass on wisdom, traditions and reassurance to younger generations.

In this image, Hannah and her granddaughter embrace after a late summer sea swim at Coliemore harbour, Dalkey.

Artist biography

Shane Coughlan is a documentary and portrait photographer from Dublin whose work focuses on themes of place, belonging, social issues, and community. Growing up in Dublin's north inner city, Coughlan was always aware of the cultural and historical importance of his surroundings, but also conscious of the stigma and negative image often attached to it. The ever-changing landscape and

demographics of Dublin are central to his practice, finding overlooked beauty in passing moments. Coughlan frequently looks for remnants of his upbringing, reminders of his childhood, and what remains of the city while exploring the new people and cultures who share the same streets, ultimately creating a more realistic picture of city life.

Level 2, Balcony Room

Ishmael Claxton

Deirdre Brennan

Caroline Guinan

Shane Hynan

Clodagh O'Leary

JP Keating

Polina Cosgrave

Ishmael Claxton

Mood Indigo 2, Dublin, Ireland, 2026

From the series Mood Indigo

Turquoise Film

About the work

Mood Indigo continues Ishmael Claxton's ongoing projects *Dead Zoo in Blue* and *Phenomenal Irish Women*, extending an ongoing inquiry into visibility, memory and belonging. Developed through time spent working within the Natural History Museum, the series brings Claxton's African American perspective into dialogue with Irish institutional and cultural histories. Using specialised blue-tinted film stock, the work references the Irish term *duine gorm*, historically used to describe Black people, establishing a visual language that is both reflective and immediate. The series centres on individuals and communities shaping change while navigating contemporary life, politics, and the enduring presence of colonial structures. Blue functions as both a historical marker and an emotional register, drawing on early twentieth-century African American music, from Duke Ellington to Nina Simone, where sorrow, resilience and dignity coexist. Here, it becomes a connective thread across diasporic experience, linking Europe, the

Americas and Africa through light, presence and shared memory.

Artist biography

Ishmael Claxton is a Dublin-based visual artist whose practice spans photography, installation and collaborative projects. Born and raised in Brooklyn in the 1990s, he grew up in a neighbourhood shaped by drugs, gentrification and shifting cultural landscapes. Raised by a politically engaged mother, he developed an early awareness of social change, visibility and collective memory. Photography is his primary tool for exploring identity, migration, race and belonging. Long-term projects such as *Migration/Integration* and *Capall Gang* examine how communities navigate change, while *Dead Zoo in Blue* and *Phenomenal Irish Women* engage with institutional histories, decolonisation and recognition. His work has been shown at the National Concert Hall, Photo Museum Ireland, the Irish Georgian Society, the RHA, Russborough House, and internationally at CENTRE Visual Storytelling in Santa Fe. He has undertaken residencies at the Photo Museum Ireland, Cow House Studios, 3 Walls Gallery, and Culture Vulture Autumn AIR. Co-founder of the ÍOVA Collective, he has been shortlisted for the *LensCulture* Editors' Pick, the Taylor Wessing Portrait Prize, and the Royal Photographic Society.

Deirdre Brennan

*Jean-Vieve Kelly & Ronan Lyons,
2025*

From the series *Irish Radio:
Connecting Communities for a
Century*

About the work

Irish public radio has been bringing communities together for a century. This series of street portraits commemorates the 100th anniversary of the first radio broadcast in Ireland at 7:45 pm on 1 January 1926, when station 2RN made its first transmission, laying the foundations for what would later become RTÉ. Each person holds a vintage radio while speaking about what radio means to them. It was heartening to encounter so many young people and people from diverse ethnic backgrounds who still listen to RTÉ radio today. Their enthusiasm challenges the idea that radio belongs only to the past. This work holds a personal resonance for Brennan, who listens to the radio daily as a way of

staying connected to the wider world, drawing from it a source of education, information, and inspiration.

"I have a lot of memories of listening to music on the radio during road trips with my parents. There will always be radio. I am in a band, and we recorded a TV show with RTÉ. They used our music to advertise the show on the radio, so I would get together with my friends to listen to the ads. It was surreal hearing ourselves."

– Jean-Vieve Kelly & Ronan Lyons

Artist biography

Deirdre Brennan holds a Bachelor's in Fine Art from the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. Her work has been published internationally in *The New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *The Guardian*, *American Photography*, *The Irish Times*, *BBC*, *The Sunday Times*, *Newsweek*, *Mother Jones*, *Portrait of Humanity*, *Le Monde*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Der Grief*, *Marie Claire*, *Der Spiegel*, *British Journal of Photography*. Her practice fuses historical and social research with image experimentation informed by a lifelong interest in social justice, politics and history. She was a *British Journal of Photography* Female in Focus X Nikon Single Image Winner. Her series, *Reflecting on 100 Years of the Irish State*, was launched simultaneously in New York and

Paris. Awarded silver at Prix de la Photographie de Paris and bronze at The Tokyo International Foto Awards. Her photobook *Following Ulysses* was published by Hi Tone Books in 2022 and exhibited at Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris for the *Ulysses* centenary. One of her photographs from *Portrait of Humanity* was featured in the World's First Exhibition in Outer Space.

Caroline Guinan

Family, 2025

From the series Paper Bag

About the work

Guinan's series *Paper Bag* explores how identity is shaped within the intimate structure of a family household. Each family member appears wearing a simple paper mask, a gesture that removes the usual cues of age, expression, and individuality. With the faces concealed, the viewer is invited to read the family through posture, spacing, and the quiet choreography of their standing together. The masks introduce a sense of anonymity and vulnerability, echoing the ways families negotiate privacy, protection, and the roles assigned to them, both chosen and inherited. Despite the concealment, the group remains a cohesive unit. Their

closeness suggests connection, interdependence, and the subtle ways belonging is communicated without words. The work reflects on how family can be both a site of identity formation and a space where identities blur into a collective whole. By stripping away recognisable features, the images ask what remains when we remove the most visible markers of who we are, and how community persists through gesture, presence, and shared history.

Artist biography

Caroline Guinan is an Irish photographer whose work moves between the raw presence of wildlife and landscape and the more conceptual terrain of identity and environmental fragility. Known for her refined black-and-white aesthetic, she creates images that balance stillness with tension. Alongside her landscape work, Guinan is developing the *Paper Bag* series, an ongoing project using everyday materials to explore themes of concealment, vulnerability, and the quiet pressures of contemporary life. Her work has been exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy, the Royal Ulster Academy, Dunamais Arts Centre, and Birr Theatre & Arts Centre. She won the Errigal Photography prize at the RUA 144th *Annual Exhibition*. She continues to develop long-form bodies of work that examine ecological vulnerability, personal identity, and the quiet power of observation.

Shane Hynan

Re-enactment of traditional turf cutting, 2023

From the series Beneath | Beofhód

About the work

Beneath | Beofhód (2017-2026) is a photographic series examining the cultural and environmental dimensions of bogs in the Irish midlands. The term *Beofhód*, meaning “life beneath the sod” in Irish, evokes the primal and totemic significance of bogs in Celtic tradition. The project considers themes of social and environmental justice, topographical mapping, and pre-Christian reverence for elemental forces within the landscape. It also contemplates evolving perceptions, use and value of peatlands in an era of de-industrialisation.

Referencing Joseph Beuys’ assertion that bogs are “the liveliest elements in the European landscape” and “preservers of ancient history,” the work reflects on the endangered status of these habitats in the artist’s post-industrial surroundings. Although urgent ecological imperatives have ended large-scale peat extraction, this has also created tension with the remaining small-scale

turf harvesting by communities for domestic use. Drawing on Hynan's authentic connection with the local landscape and community, this series traces the remnants of industrial peat harvesting by exploring the de-industrialisation of the landscape and the erasure of industrial heritage, while offering a local, human, and personal insight into the struggles and losses facing affected communities. This series is a case study of a global issue, and a meditation on the realities of a 'Just Transition' and what the future holds for the region without the economic benefits of the peat industry.

Artist biography

Shane Hynan is a visual artist whose practice centres on photography, incorporating experimental elements in sound, video, collage, and sculpture. He holds an MFA in Photography from Ulster University (2019). His work explores place, land, and architecture, drawing on conceptual, performative, and subjective documentary approaches. He has exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally. He has received multiple awards from the Arts Council, Creative Ireland and Kildare Arts. In 2025, he was shortlisted for the AIB Portrait Prize (National Gallery of Ireland) and selected for the FUTURES Photography platform. He also won the Sidney Nolan Trust Residency and PhotoWorks Digital Residency Awards at Earth Photo 2025, held at the Royal Geographical Society in London. In 2024, he undertook

residencies at the Centre Culturel Irlandais (Paris) and Roscommon Arts Centre and was awarded a Visual Arts Bursary and Project award from the Arts Council for his *Beneath | Beofhód* project, which will premiere at Photo Museum Ireland in 2026, followed by a nationwide tour. He is part of the *Tóch | Dig Collective*, working on a phased, intergenerational, collaborative and community-engaged project exploring communities of place and interest connected to bogs in County Kildare, and the effects of climate change on communities past, present and future.

Clodagh O'Leary

Christening Day, 2024

From the series *Sublicks & Lackeens*

About the work

Christening Day shows a young mother preparing for her son's Christening at a horse fair. This is from my project, *Sublicks and Lackeens*. This project invites the viewer to look at Traveller children for what they are: children. Through candid portraits and intimate scenes, these photographs show moments of pride, playfulness and mischief, traits shared by all children. The project aims

to challenge negative stereotypes forged by The Report of the Commission on Itinerancy 1963, which marked the first systematic attempt by the Irish government to “settle” travellers and force assimilation. The report outlined steps to be taken in order to “promote their [travellers] absorption into general society”. Particularly harrowing was the threat of institutional care for children. The report outlined children could be used as a tool for assimilation, stating “a separation of parents and children would result in the children growing up outside the itinerant life and thus in one generation, itinerants as a class would disappear”. With this recommendation, some children were moved into institutional care. The effects of the state's efforts to remove and exclude Travellers are still reflected in the lives of Traveller youths today. They experience significantly worse healthcare and education outcomes than the general population. While the reasons for this are multifaceted, research across the board cites lack of trust and discrimination as leading barriers.

Artist biography

Clodagh O'Leary is a self-taught photographer from Kerry who also works in Dublin as a Speech and Language Therapist. Her documentary practice explores Ireland, capturing the relationship between tradition and transformation. She is drawn mainly to film photography and to the remnants of Ireland's social and political past.

She has received two Agility Awards from the Irish Arts Council. O'Leary has exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy (2025) and the National Gallery of Ireland as part of the *AIB Portrait Prize* (2025). She is a committee member of the Íova photography collective, which has hosted exhibitions in galleries such as TØN, Reds and GalleryX.

JP Keating

Courtown Woods, 2024

*From the series Documented Males /
Life at the Courtown Hotel*

About the work

Documented Males / Life at the Courtown Hotel is a documentary series on the lives of men living in the Courtown Hotel IPAS centre in 2024. During the growing anti-immigration sentiment seemed to permeate through all forms of media. What was becoming lost was that these asylum seekers are people, not 'aliens' or 'illegals', someone's son, brother, or father. They are fellow human beings, a lot of whom have fled from unspeakable atrocities to make a better life for

themselves and their families, and they were being demonised and dehumanised at every opportunity.

Baba Williams, pictured here, fled conflict in Sudan to make a better life for his family in Ireland. His wife and son currently live in Egypt while he tries to find suitable accommodation to begin reunification. Baba is extremely well-liked by the local community. He currently lodges with an Irish family in Gorey, and when he's not working, he's playing soccer for a local team. This portrait was made in Courtown Woods, Co. Wexford, a place that was falsely rumoured online to have been taken over by gangs of refugees living in the Hotel. Nothing could be further from the truth – the men living in the Hotel are generally at work during the day, and they rarely venture out at night, for their own safety.

Artist biography

JP Keating is an Irish photographer whose work spans portraiture, documentary, and commercial photography. With over 15 years of experience, Keating has established a reputation for capturing compelling narratives to examine the complexities of the human condition. His career encompasses a diverse range of projects, from documenting homeless heroin addicts and photographing UNICEF programmes throughout South Africa to, at present, the travelling community. His

first book, *The LIR is Forever*, was published in 2014. His documentary work has been featured in *The Guardian*. Keating's body of work reflects a dedication to capturing the human experience, drawing attention to stories that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Polina Cosgrave

Princes of Ballyfermot, 2025

About the work

Half of the population in Ballyfermot and Cherry Orchard, Dublin, cannot afford nutritious meals, with food poverty currently at 43 percent. Nevertheless, this is a vibrant and close-knit area, proud of its gifted and joyful youth. Pictured are Harry (left) with his horse Fred, and Frankie (right). Frankie is a talented horse rider who also trains younger kids, and he dreams of having his own horse one day. His family cannot afford it now, so they got him a kitten named Nacho. Frankie is a very caring and conscientious child. When his dream finally comes true, his horse will be very lucky.

Artist biography

Polina Cosgrave is the author of two poetry collections, *My Name Is* (Dedalus Press, 2020) and *Cargo* (The

Gallery Press, 2024), and numerous plays and short stories. She was described as one of the most fearless and exciting voices in contemporary Irish poetry by Adam Wyeth (Poetry Review Ireland). Her work has appeared on TV, radio and in many anthologies and magazines, including the *Forward Prizes Book of Poetry*, *Winter Papers*, *The Stinging Fly*, and the *Irish Times*, as well as the Scene and Heard, Dublin Fringe and Dublin Theatre Festivals. She has been a recipient of multiple Arts Council Awards. Her poetry film *Currency Exchange* was selected for the 11th Ó Bhéal International Poetry-Film Competition and Bloomsday Film Festival among others. Polina contributes to *Film Ireland* as an essayist.
