

Crawford Art Gallery



George Mounsey Wheatley Atkinson, *Naval Steam Frigate Moored off Queenstown (with Haulbowline in Background)*, 1838.

Press Release 17/11/2021

Crawford Art Gallery announces a major donation of artworks from The Port of Cork to the National Collection.

A major donation of unique maritime artworks has been gifted to Crawford Art Gallery by The Port of Cork Company

The significant collection amassed over years, consists of 17 maritime paintings, including works from George Mounsey Wheatley Atkinson (1806-1884), Henry Albert Hartland, Robert Lowe Stopford, and Seán Keating RHA. Also included in the generous donation are a Ship's Register (1912) from The Cork Harbour Commissioners which includes a page showing the Titanic

and Lusitania, an illuminated address to CS Parnell (1889) and a silver Admiralty Oar (1686). Most notable among the collection are 11 maritime paintings by George Mounsey Wheatley Atkinson. A former ship's carpenter, Atkinson painted marine views and vessels that provide great insights into the shipping of the time and glimpses of a thriving harbour.

In recognising the gift, the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin T.D., said “I wish to thank the Port of Cork for this generous donation to the National Collection. This gift further augments the Crawford Art Gallery’s rich collection which has expanded in recent times, providing a wealth of maritime paintings for the public to enjoy.”

As the offices of the Port of Cork Company move from the city centre, the custodianship of this collection will now be vested in Crawford Art Gallery where it can be widely appreciated by visitors, researchers, and other institutions. The building which now houses the Crawford Art Gallery, was originally built, in 1724, as Cork’s Custom House and recalls the ties between commercial success of the port and the development of Cork city in the early eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This donation to the Crawford Art Gallery significantly enhances the Gallery’s maritime collection and greatly strengthens the connection to the building’s maritime past. The Gallery expects to exhibit a selection of these paintings in 2022 and to make them available for research.

On the donation, Conor Mowlds, Chief Commercial Officer, Port of Cork commented “*We consider this to be a very fine collection and one that would be extraordinarily difficult to replicate. The collection contains a number of extremely rare and historically important items which would be highly unlikely to ever appear on the open market again – in particular the silver Court of Admiralty Oar of Cork Harbour dating to 1686, which is*

unique without comparison and therefore irreplaceable. This donation to the Crawford Art Gallery will further preserve Cork's maritime heritage."

Rose McHugh, Chair of Crawford Art Gallery, stated that "The Gallery welcomed this fantastic addition to the collection, which will ensure that Crawford Art Gallery, a National Cultural Institution, can continue to build its collection and share our rich maritime history for generations to come.

Mary McCarthy, Director of Crawford responding to the news said "This generous donation adds significantly to the already extensive maritime collection at Crawford Art Gallery. We are deeply grateful to The Port of Cork and excited to continue to tell relevant maritime stories across the centuries to our visitors. The Gallery can also offer unparalleled opportunities to researchers and other institutions on Cork's maritime history."

The Crawford Art Gallery collection now comprises over 3,000 works, ranging from eighteenth-century Irish and European painting and sculpture to contemporary film and photography. At the heart of the collection are the Canova Casts, which were brought to Cork in 1818 from the Vatican Museums in Rome.

As well as the purchase and receipt of donated artworks throughout the years, the collection has been greatly enhanced and expanded through the Gibson Bequest (1919), Fr. McGrath Bequest (1998), Great Southern Collection (2006), and part of the AIB Art Collection (2012). Most recently Crawford Art Gallery expanded its collection of contemporary works by adding 39 artists, this was made possible through Department funding.

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Notes to the editor : Imagery on request.

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More about Crawford Art Gallery

Crawford Art Gallery is an Irish national cultural institution, dedicated to contemporary and historic visual art, located in a significant heritage building in the heart of Cork city. Home to a collection of national importance, it tells a compelling story of Cork and Ireland over the last three centuries, while also offering a vibrant and dynamic programme of temporary exhibitions.

Originally built in 1724 as the city's Customs House, the Gallery is home to the famous Canova Casts, gifted to Cork two centuries ago. Featured in the gallery's collection of 4,000 objects are well-known and much-loved works by Irish artists James Barry, Harry Clarke, Mainie Jellett, Seán Keating, Daniel Maclise, Norah McGuinness, Edith Somerville, and Jack B. Yeats, as well as contemporary artists Gerard Byrne, Maud Cotter, Dorothy Cross, Eilis O'Connell, and Hughie O'Donoghue.

An oasis of calm and tranquillity, Crawford Art Gallery is open seven days a week, free to enter, and a must-see for locals and tourists alike. Welcoming over 265,000 visitors annually, the Gallery boasts an award-winning Café in stunning surroundings, serving fresh local produce for which Cork is famous.

More about The Port of Cork

The Port of Cork is the key seaport in the south of Ireland and is one of only two Irish ports which service the requirements of all six shipping modes i.e. Lift-on Lift-off, Roll-on Roll-off, Liquid Bulk, Dry Bulk, Break Bulk and Cruise.

The port has made impressive strides in recent decades. Since 2000, the Port of Cork has invested €72 million in improving Port infrastructure and facilities. Due to its favourable location on the south coast of Ireland and its modern deepwater facilities, the Port of Cork is ideally positioned for additional European trading as well as for yet unexploited direct deep sea shipping services.

A well-developed road infrastructure eases the flow of traffic from and to the port. The Port of Cork's growing reputation for quality service, including prompt and

efficient vessel turnaround, ensures its position as a vital link in the global supply chain.

Current Exhibitions at Crawford Art Gallery

Rembrandt in Print

Until 9 January 2022

Rembrandt in Print presents 50 of the finest works from the Ashmolean's world-class collection of over 200 etchings and drypoints by Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669).

Widely hailed as the greatest painter of the Dutch Golden Age, Rembrandt was also one of the most innovative and experimental printmakers of the seventeenth century. This touring exhibition will present Rembrandt as an unrivalled storyteller through a selection of fifty outstanding prints ranging from 1630 until the late 1650s. These works demonstrate Rembrandt's inventive techniques and extraordinary skills. They are displayed together for the first time.

Brian Maguire: REMAINS

Until 9 January 2022

In 2019, Brian Maguire visited Dr Greg Hess, Chief Medical Examiner for Pima County, Tucson, Arizona. Dr Hess gave the artist access to some thousand visual records of migrant lives lost in the crossing from South and Central America and Mexico, into the United States.

Each discovery of a body in the desert creates a case file and digital images. Using a selection from this photographic source, Brian began a new series of paintings, acknowledging the many unidentified victims who undertook this perilous journey.

Rembrandt in Print and REMAINS-Brian Maguire run until, 9 January 2022. The catalogues that accompany these exhibitions can be purchased online or at the Gallery bookshop.

Opening Hours

Open daily | Free entry

Monday–Saturday 10.00am–5.00pm

Late opening Thursdays until 8.00pm

Sundays and Bank Holidays

Gallery: 11am - 4pm Entry Free



An Roinn
Cultúir, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta

Department of
Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht