

# A Celebration of Irish Contemporary Silver

## A day of talks and demonstrations

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Images: 'Organism' silver vessel by Junko Mori, 2005  
Photograph by Clarissa Bruce

# TREASURES *of* TODAY

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SILVER FROM GOLDSMITHS' HALL, LONDON 1980 - 2008

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Saturday 25th October 2008  
9.30am - 5.00pm

National Museum of Ireland  
Decorative Arts and History  
Collins Barracks, Dublin 7.

**museum**

National Museum of Ireland  
Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann

Decorative Arts & History

This seminar is organised in conjunction with the temporary exhibition, 'Treasures of Today: Silver from the Goldsmith's Hall, London, 1980 - 2008' on display in the National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts and History, from Wednesday 1st of October 2008 to Sunday 18th of January 2009.

A number of Ireland's leading silversmiths will speak about what inspires and informs their work. This seminar is for anyone with a general interest in design or the history of design. It is also for those interested in Irish contemporary silver, including those working in the field as practitioners, students and educators.

## SATURDAY PROGRAMME

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9.30-10.00am	Registration
10.00am	Welcome with Helen Beaumont, Education and Outreach Officer Introduction with Michael Kenny, Keeper of Art & Industry, NMI
10.15am	Dr. Alison FitzGerald Tradition and Innovation: An introduction to contemporary British silver and 'Treasures of Today'
10.45am	Séamus Gill The Art of Silversmithing in Ireland from the Bronze Age to the present
11.15 am	Coffee Break
11.45pm	Brian Clarke From a Silversmith's Perspective
12.15pm	Cara Murphy The Silver Landscape
12.45pm	Séamus Gill My work as a Silversmith
1.15pm	Lunch
2.15pm	Brian Clarke Silversmithing Demonstration
3.15pm	Coffee break
3.45pm	Kevin O'Dwyer My Journey as a Silversmith over 30 years
4.15pm	Derek McGarry (NCAD) The Challenges of creating work in Ireland and showcasing work
4.45pm	Panel Discussion chaired by Derek McGarry
5.00pm	Close of Seminar

## SPEAKERS' PROFILES

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**Dr Alison FitzGerald** is a lecturer in art history and material culture in the Department of Modern History, NUI Maynooth. Her PhD (Royal College of Art, London) examined the production and consumption of goldsmiths' work in eighteenth-century Dublin. Her research interests include Irish design history and material culture, in particular the study of Irish silversmiths, jewellers and allied traders. She is a member of the Antique Plate Committee for the Company of Goldsmiths of Dublin.

**Derek McGarry** is currently Deputy to the Head of the Design Faculty at the National College of Art (NCAD) in Dublin where he has worked since 1992. He continues to make his own work, exhibiting nationally and internationally. His work is included in a number of public and private collections. He established a contemporary NCAD student silverware collection at the National Museum of Ireland and in 2004 he curated the exhibition 'Influence – Contemporary International Metals and Jewellery' at the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks. In February 2008, he organised the international design industry conference 'What is Design Added Value?' hosted by the NCAD. He was recently appointed to the board of the Institute of Designers in Ireland.

**Brian Clarke** is an Artist Metalsmith who has been running his own workshop since 1972. Clarke has studied at the National College of Art in Dublin, The Ecole Des Arts Appliqués in Paris, and Loughborough College of Art. In 1980 he was a sponsored representative at the World Craft Council Conference in Vienna. Clarke set up the Irish school of metalsmithing in 1993 and some examples of his work are held in the National Museum of Ireland's collections. In 2002 Brian made a presentation at the 'International Symposium on Ancient Goldworking Techniques' held in Madrid Spain, on his then recent discovery of how the Ribbon Torques in the Museum in Kildare St., were made in 1200 BC.

**Kevin O'Dwyer** began his working life as a biotechnologist and has been working as a silversmith for 30 years. In the late 1970s he began studying metalwork in Chicago. He left industry to apprentice with master silversmith Bill Frederick and Heikke Seppa. O'Dwyer has represented Ireland in over 40 international exhibitions and has been commissioned to make state gifts for President Mary Robinson, those presented include Nelson Mandela and President Bill Clinton. His work features in a number of important permanent collections including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, the Ulster Museum, Belfast, the National Museum of Ireland, the High Museum, USA, and the Company of Goldsmiths of Dublin.

**Séamus Gill** is a silversmith practicing in Dublin who in recent years has developed a growing international reputation. His work is distinguished by his use of traditional silversmithing skills combined with his contemporary design ethos. This year his work is exhibited at the 15th Silver Triennial, which is touring Europe. He has been commissioned by many of Ireland's leading companies and his work is in some of the most important collections of Irish Silver including the Department of Foreign Affairs Embassy collection, the Irish Company of Goldsmiths and the National Museum of Ireland.

**Cara Murphy** is a contemporary silversmith based in Northern Ireland. She exhibits her silverware internationally and her work has been showcased in numerous high profile exhibitions. Her silver tableware is represented in many national and international public and private collections such as the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the Ulster Museum, and the Royal College of Art, London. Murphy leads research in contemporary silversmithing at the University of Ulster where she is Associate Lecturer in Silversmithing and Jewellery. She has been a selected member of Contemporary British Silversmiths since 1996 and her work is included in the Crafts Council of Ireland Portfolio.



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9.30am – 5.00pm

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Decorative Arts and History  
Collins Barracks, Dublin 7.

Tickets: €30.00  
Students, Senior Citizens,  
Unwaged: €15.00

Includes morning and afternoon  
tea/coffee and light lunch.

Booking essential.

For further information or to book a place contact:  
The Education and Outreach Department  
T 01 648 6453  
F 01 679 1025  
E [bookings@museum.ie](mailto:bookings@museum.ie)

Bookings Office Hours are  
Monday – Friday, 10.00am – 2.00pm.

Places are limited and booking is essential.  
Car parking available or take the LUAS red line  
to the dedicated Museum stop.

This Seminar is organised by the Education and  
Outreach Department in conjunction with the  
temporary exhibition, 'Treasures of Today, Silver  
from the Goldsmiths' Hall, London 1980 – 2008'.  
This exhibition runs until the end of January 2009.

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