

Welcoming a craft renaissance in Ireland



INTERIORS
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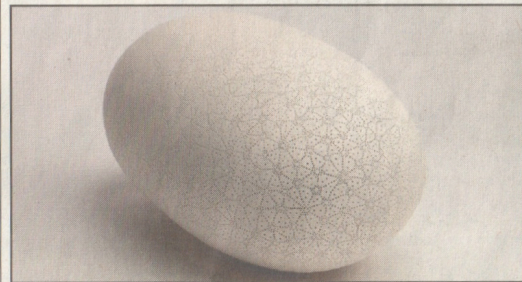
When it comes to adorning our homes with things we love, art and luxurious furniture usually come out on top. Craft, that undefined and often misunderstood sector of handmade objects, is often ignored.

That could be about to change if Frances McDonald, curator of a new craftwork exhibition at the Oliver Sears Gallery in Dublin, has anything to do with it. She is calling for a craft renaissance in Ireland, and is kicking it off with *Five into Four*, which features five of Ireland's top craftspeople bringing their talents in ceramics, metal and wood into four of the rooms at the gallery.

"The word craft often elicits a range of contradictory responses



Sara Flynn's Pair of Flection Vessels



H20 by Frances Lambe

from people, often negative – it's been muddled over the years," said McDonald.

"I think it's because it covers such a wide gamut of work, and people think it perhaps lacks the theoretical structure that exists with other mediums. In fact, beautiful, con-

temporary objects are works of art – they are different, but just as important."

To this end, McDonald is hoping to restore faith in crafts by showcasing the work of those in this country that are masters of their discipline. Sara Flynn from Cork, who recently



Inner Rimmed Vessel by Liam Flynn



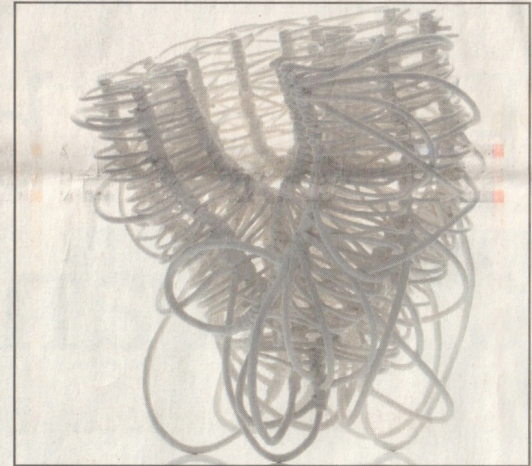
Ritual by Colin O'Dubhghaill

exhibited with Erskine, Hall and Coe in London, will show porcelain vessels from her *Pressed, Gesture and Flection* series.

Liam Flynn will present his interpretation of the vessel in turned ash, and Frances Lambe – who is influenced by the sea – will introduce de-

licately patterned abstract sculptures shaped by oceans or creatures that live in it.

Nuala O'Donovan, a ceramic artist whose sculptural forms take much from patterns that occur in nature, has created groups of forms that demonstrate the incremental



Banksia Dynamic by Nuala O'Donovan

developments that comprise the making of a complete series, and finally Colin O'Dubhghaill's work focuses on the vessel; his exploration in metal is largely driven by research into special alloys and patination techniques, old and new. For this exhibition he has created works in silver as well as copper and gold alloys. All pieces are priced from €800 upwards.

McDonald advises those that are thinking of investing in crafts to get familiar with who is out there, learn more about the medium you are attracted to and buy something because you really love it.

"From an investment point of view, these craftspeople have inter-

national reputations whose work has already received the recognition it richly deserves; it has been purchased by major collectors and has been acquired by the world's most prestigious museum collections – Sara Flynn by the Art Institute of Chicago, and Liam Flynn by the Victoria & Albert Museum in London," said McDonald.

"They will continue to hone their craft for the long term."

Five into Four runs until July 26 at the Oliver Sears Gallery, 29 Molesworth Street, Dublin 2, oliversearsgallery.com

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