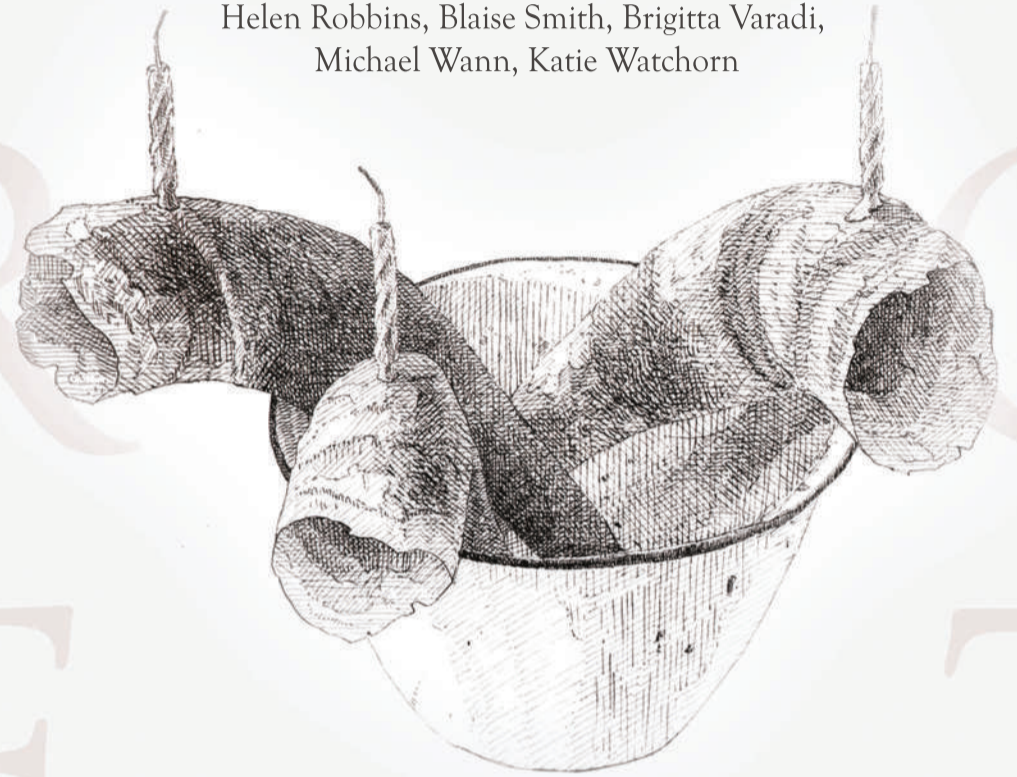


BARE ROOT

Frank Abruzzese, Michael Canning, Els Dietvorst,
Michael Fortune, Janet Mullarney, Rosie O’Gorman,
Helen Robbins, Blaise Smith, Brigitta Varadi,
Michael Wann, Katie Watchorn



Bare Root will run in Wexford County Council, Carricklawn until Friday 1st December 2017. Opening hours are Monday to Friday from 9am-5pm. For further information on the exhibition please contact Catherine Bowe, Visual Arts Manager, Wexford Arts Centre, Cornmarket, Wexford on +353 (0)53 91 23764 or email catherine@wexfordartscentre.ie. Alternatively, contact Lisa Fortune, Assistant Staff Officer, The Arts Department, Wexford County Council, Carricklawn, Wexford on +353 (0)53 9196369 or email lisa.fortune@wexfordcoco.ie.

Wexford County Council, Carricklawn, Wexford
T: +353 (0)53 9196369 | W: www.wexfordcoco.ie



The Arts Department of Wexford County Council in partnership with Wexford Arts Centre are delighted to present *Bare Root*, a group exhibition exploring rural and farmyard environments, and the points where nature and the man-made intersect.

Situated in the County Buildings, *Bare Root* features the work of artists including Frank Abruzzese, Michael Canning, Els Dietvorst, Michael Fortune, Janet Mullarney, Rosie O’Gorman, Helen Robbins, Blaise Smith, Brigitta Varadi, Michael Wann and Katie Watchorn.

The term bare root refers to a technique of arboriculture whereby a plant is removed from soil in a dormant state, from which it can more rapidly acclimate to new soil conditions. This exhibition emphasises time, materiality, and the transference of traditions from one generation to the next within rural communities. The work is diverse and reflects the sensibilities surrounding land and labour, illuminating the nuances and materiality of Irish rural farming, capturing the traditional and common place in a profoundly uncommon yet relatable way.

Materiality and documentation is to the fore of the exhibition. Traditional photographic principles are utilised in a distinctly modern way, while paintings and delicate drawings in graphite and charcoal recollect artefacts, archiving, and early archaeological and horticultural illustrations. Sculptural works encapsulate the essence of life and growth, represented through twisting forms and natural shapes. The improvised, functional and adaptable nature of materials on a farm is explored, underlining personal experiences within these environments and humanity's impact upon these landscapes. The inclusion of heat lamps and dyed sheep's wool offer a tangible and textured basis from which contemplate the sequence of life, death and the identification of animals, plants and territories.

The progression of time underscores much of the exhibition; the time between frames where subjects and sequences are frozen in a single channel of light and captured on film. The time and cycle of husbandry and cultivation, of seasons, changing practices, traditions and lineage. Our relationship with the natural, yet agrarian environment, is also dissected as *Bare Root* observes our own behaviour and engagement with the landscape, and the behaviour of animals within such spaces. Folklore and stories, both ancient and combined with contemporary references, are presented through video and animal pelts, highlighting the rich oral history that exists in this country, associating the rural landscape with myth and fairy tales. Together these elements represent and record the intuitive innermost workings of agricultural spaces. A world which is emotional, historic, and deeply seated within the Irish consciousness.



Originally from Philadelphia, **Frank Abruzzese** is an artist, educator and Co-Director of Cow House Studios alongside his wife and artist, Rosie O’Gorman. The Cow House Studios is a progressive, artist run studio in rural Wexford. Abruzzese obtained his Bachelors Degree in Moving Image Arts from the College of Santa Fe, New Mexico in 2000, and Master of Fine Arts from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2004. His work has been featured in *Domus* magazine, was included as part of the 2012 Istanbul Design Biennial, and resides in the permanent collection of the Office of Public Works, Ireland. He received the Emerging Photographer of the Year award from San Francisco Magazine, and as a photographer has extensively exhibited his work nationally and internationally in galleries and universities.

Michael Canning lives and works in County Limerick. He studied at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin; the Limerick School of Art Design, Limerick; and the School of Fine Arts, Athens, Greece. Canning graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sculpture from the National College of Art & Design before completing a Fine Art Painting Masters Degree in 1999. In 2003, Michael was awarded the Royal Academy’s prestigious Hennessy Craig Prize. In 2007, he was awarded the Ballinglen Arts Foundation Fellowship and in the same year, The Oriel Gallery Award, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin. Michael’s work has been shown widely across Ireland, the UK and internationally. His work is included in the collections of Allied Irish Banks, McCann Erickson, AXA Ireland, McGraw Hill, Butler Gallery, Wexford County Council, Wicklow County Council and the University of London. Michael Canning is represented by the Oliver Sears Gallery and Waterhouse and Dodd, London.

Els Dietvorst is a Belgian visual artist, filmmaker, and shepherd who lives and works in Duncormick, Ireland. Dietvorst’s work has been shown and supported by renowned art institutes and festivals such as the Kaaitheatre, Brussels; Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Brussels; and the Museum of Modern Art, Antwerp. Her work has also been shown internationally in New York, Utrecht, Casablanca, London and Vienna. In 2011, Dietvorst she was selected for the Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, and in 2017 was chosen by an international jury as winner of the bi-annual Evens Arts Prize 2017. In recent years Dietvorst has produced major documentary works including *The Black Lamb* (2010-2014) and *The Rabbit and the Teasel* (2014) which premiered at Visions du Reel, in Switzerland.

Michael Fortune has been the recipient of numerous awards and bursaries for his work, which he presents extensively nationally and internationally in a variety of contexts, ranging from gallery exhibitions through to single screen presentations in film and video art festivals. He continues to produce project work throughout Ireland and is a part-time Lecturer at Limerick School of Art and Design. He completed his BA in Fine Art, specializing in video and performance at Limerick School of Art and Design, and undertook an MA in Film and Screenwriting at Dún Laoghaire School of Film. He is currently working for RTÉ on their National Treasure series and presents a regular slot on the Sean O’Rourke show on RTE 1 which explores Ireland’s ancient and contemporary folklore.

Janet Mullarney is an Irish artist who divides her time between Italy and Ireland. A member of Aosdana, Mullarney has had solo exhibitions in Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane, Dublin; The Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin; Crawford Municipal Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery, Limerick, and the Model Arts Centre, Sligo. Her work has been shown internationally at the Museo de Arte Contemporanea, Oaxaca, Mexico and Casa Masaccio, Valdarno, Italy. She has work in the Collections of the Arts Council of Ireland, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane, Limerick City Gallery of Art, the Office of Public Work and Allied Irish Banks. Mullarney has been awarded the RUA Perpetual Silver Medal Prize 2009, the RHA Sculpture Award 2008, the Irish American Cultural Institute’s O’Malley Award 2005, and the Pollock Krasner Award in 1998. She is represented by the Taylor Galleries, Dublin.

Rosie O’Gorman lives and works with her husband Frank Abruzzese and their two sons in her native county Wexford. In 2000 Rosie graduated with a BA in Art and Design Education from the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. In the same year she received two national awards; the Larkin Memorial Award for teaching, and the Taylor Award for painting. With the support of a Fulbright Scholarship, Rosie attended the San Francisco Art Institute, California, receiving her MFA in 2004. On returning to Ireland, Rosie and Frank established Cow House Studios at her ancestral home in rural Wexford. O’Gorman now co-directs, teaches and makes art at Cow House Studios.

Helen Robbins is an Irish based artist who studied Fine Art at Dartington and Brighton Colleges of Art and Art Therapy at Goldsmiths College. From 2000-2012, she co-directed *Art Alongside*, organizing visual arts workshops and exhibitions throughout County Wexford National Schools. This project was supported by Wexford County Council, in partnership with the Wexford Arts Centre and the Irish Museum of Modern Art. In recent years, Robbins’ work has been selected for the Carlow Arts Festival Open Submission Exhibition and Cairde Visual, and she was invited to create work for *Materialisation: Mapping the Making* (2014), a Carlow Arts Festival exhibition at the Visual Centre for Contemporary Arts, Carlow. This was followed by a two-person exhibition during the Festival of Writing and Ideas at Borris House. Recent awards include and Artlinks Bursary, Cill Rialaig Residency Award, and Carlow County Council Arts Act Grants.

Blaise Smith is an Irish artist living in Co. Kilkenny, renowned for his paintings of various everyday subjects from life as well as portraits. Smith has completed numerous private and public commissions including *Roadworks* (1999), a set of twenty-four paintings depicting machinery and labour for Cork County Council for their centenary. The following year he produced ten paintings for Kilkenny County Council entitled *The Millennium Landscape* (2000). He has won many awards for his work and been selected in various juried exhibitions, notably the RHA Annual Award in Dublin (2003) and the BP Portrait Award at the National Portrait Gallery, London (2004). He has had several solo shows in the Molesworth Gallery, Dublin, and exhibited across Ireland and abroad. He was elected an Associate Member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 2012, and completed another major commission of twenty paintings entitled *Schoolwork* in 2012 which was exhibited in VISUAL, Carlow and Crawford Art Gallery, Cork in 2013.

Brigitta Varadi has exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally including the UK, France, Finland, Sweden, Hungary and the US. She has participated in notable group exhibitions such as *Spring Break Art Show*, (2017), *Currently 80* and *Sculptors Guild* (2017), *Appetite for Destruction* (2016) in New York. Varadi is currently working on a collaborative public art commission for Sligo County Council, and a group show entitled *Wall to Wall: Evolving Tapestry* (2018) projected to open at New York’s Children’s Museum of Art in Spring, 2018. Varadi’s latest solo shows were held at the Budapest Gallery, Hungary (2017), Leitrim Sculpture Centre, Ireland (2015), Serbian Church Gallery, Hungary (2015) and the Textile Arts Centre, New York (2014). She is a recipient of awards from the Arts Council of Ireland, Leitrim County Council, Culture Ireland, and the overall winner of the Art Slant 2016 Prize.

Michael Wann lives and works in Sligo. He graduated from Sligo Institute of Technology in 1992 with a Diploma in Fine Art, and in 2003 with a Bachelor in Fine Art. He has been awarded numerous residencies throughout his career, most recently at the Heinrich Boll Cottage, Achill, Co. Mayo (2017). Michael has had many solo exhibitions of his work throughout Ireland and the UK, notably in The Model, Sligo (2012, 2013, 2016, 2017); Solstice Arts Centre, Navan (2014); and the Cross Gallery, Dublin (2011, 2013 and 2016). In 2010, Michael’s work was selected by Hughie O’Donoghue for the Tom Caldwell Drawing Prize at the Royal Ulster Academy’s 129th Annual Exhibition. He was also the recipient of the inaugural Rowel Friers Perpetual Trophy, the Sean Keating Award and Silver Medal at the RHA’s 186th Annual Exhibition in 2016, and is currently in residence in Studio 5 at The Model, Sligo.

Raised on a dairy farm in rural Co. Carlow, **Katie Watchorn** graduated in 2014 with a BA (Hons) in Fine Art from the National College of Art & Design. Since graduating, Watchorn has exhibited at the TULCA Festival of Visual Arts, Galway, 2014, and in collaborative projects and group shows in Ireland and the Netherlands. She received the Overall Winner in the Visual Arts Category of the 2014 Irish Undergraduate Awards, the Hotron Recent Graduate Award 2016, as selected by Annie Fletcher, Wexford County Council and Wexford Arts Centre Emerging Visual Artist Award 2016, and a Next Generation Bursary for the production of new work 2017/2018 from the Arts Council.

