



College of Tourism and Arts



CTA Times

2016

CTA Times shares student, and graduate stories, news from various events, and updates from colleagues to help keep you abreast of our work and progress.

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Annual edition of the Tourism & Arts Times. We are preparing for another busy year and bid farewell to two wonderful colleagues who recently retired - Louis Smyth and Jutta Connellan. We are enormously grateful for their valued contribution and support over the many years they served with GMIT.

Dr Fergal Barry was appointed President of the Institute and joined our team in October 2015. Dr Barry joins us from Limerick Institute of Technology where he held the post of Vice President of LIT for Research, Enterprise and Development (2005-2015) and served as Head of Applied Science.

Colleagues across both campuses have been busy working on programme development during the last year. Colleagues in the Centre for the Creative Arts and Media (CCAM) developed new awards in Design and a new MA in Contemporary Practice. On the Dublin Rd campus two new minor awards in culinary arts and culinary techniques were approved for Springboard funding and a new Hons degree in International Tourism was approved in June. September saw the approval to deliver two new honours

degrees in Food Innovation and Enterprise and Culinary Science and Gastronomy, so exciting times ahead. In September we also began the process of developing new post grad awards in Gastronomy and International Tourism, the latter in collaboration with our CUA partners.

Last December colleague Dr. Mark McCarthy kindly agreed to Chair the Institute 1916-2016 Events Committee. The team presented a wonderful programme of over 50 events and was themed 'Remembering, Reflecting and Reimagining'. Further details are available on the website and more events are due to take place this coming semester so please do join us if you are free.

Work placement activity continues to prosper in all programmes and in recent months I have met a number of alumni in the US and Asia who are leading some of the world's finest hotels and tourism brands. Earlier this year I agreed to take on an additional role in GMIT to support the strategic development of internationalisation across campuses. The Institute has recently appointed a new Director for International Engagement – John Joe O'Farrell who joins us from WIT.

John Joe hails from Kilkenny so no doubt we are all looking for to future 'All Ireland day Hurling Finals' chat as that time approaches.

Finally, the college, has some of you may have heard, is going through some new organisation changes and I hope to have more updates in the next edition of this newsletter.

My thanks as always to the LINKS office team who helped prepare this edition

Warm regards,

Cáit Noone

Vice President International
Engagement
Head of College – Tourism and Arts



Graduate Profiles



Terry Dunbar-Graduate of the Higher Diploma in Hotel & Catering Management.

General Manager, Hyatt Regency, Boston.

Terry Dunbar, a graduate of the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology is currently the General Manager at the Hyatt Regency, Boston and has worked with Hyatt for 28 years. The hotel which is perfectly located in the heart of downtown is one of Hyatt's best performing assets. With 502 rooms and the highest occupancy in the full service segment of the company the hotel is a trophy property. His role at this hotel in his own words is "to take care of people so they can be their very best". This is central to every decision and part and parcel of everyday life. Taking care of people includes not only the customer but equally important is the members of the team that work at the hotel and the people who own the property. This three pronged approach is crucial to the ongoing and sustainable success and has been proven effective over the years. Naturally there are numerous responsibilities within that framework. They include achievement of top and bottom line objectives, creating a positive engaged work environment producing great results and ensuring impeccable service and standards throughout.

Terry graduated from the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology in 1979. He started his hospitality career at the Ashling Hotel in Dublin where he was introduced to the various Food & Beverage departments within that hotel. The owner of the Hotel, Ben Naughton, encouraged Terry to take on additional roles and suggested studying Hotel Management in Galway. The course at that time was the Block Release Diploma in Hotel Management and allowed Terry the opportunity to blend practical experience at hotels with the invaluable knowledge provided by the college. During his years at Galway Terry continued to work at the Ashling Hotel, The International Hotel in Killarney and The Great Sothern Hotel in Eyre Square. With the help of the College he spent a year in Germany experiencing the business from a totally different perspective and at the same time enjoying the culture and excitement of a vibrant city. He worked at the Steigenberger Hotel in Frankfurt, again in the Food & Beverage arena and building a foundation that would serve him well in the upcoming years.,

Following graduation Terry moved to London working at the St. Ermins Hotel in Caxton Street, Victoria. He started as the Food & Beverage Cost Controller. Within a year Terry moved divisions and gained valuable experience at the front desk for the remainder of his time in London.

In 1981 Terry returned to Ireland and became the Assistant Hotel Manager at Whites Hotel in Wexford. Whites' hotel at that time was the premier hotel in the South East. In 1982 it was time for the next opportunity and Terry began his first General Manager role at the Annaly hotel in Longford. It was here that Terry experienced the entertainment side of the business and the hotel was renowned for its night life. The next step was to operate his own hotel and along with a number of investors purchased the Percy French Hotel in Strokestown, Co Roscommon. This was soon followed with the purchase of the Park House Hotel in Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford.

Entertainment was a key portion of the business in both locations. Both hotels were immediately renovated and for the next 5 years Terry made the midlands his home and continued to improve the hotels and lead them to success.

In 1988 an opportunity presented itself to work in the USA, this had always been a desire of Terrys and appeared to be the perfect opportunity. Terry made his way to Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts. In his role of Food & Beverage Director, Terry was responsible for the operation of two hotels, the Kelly House and Harborview Hotel. Both properties are unique, upscale and highly sought after. Working in such properties on one of the most beautiful parts of the country set the tone for the future and the catalyst to a much longer stay in the USA.

At the end of the season he headed to Washington DC, started working at the Park Hyatt Hotel in Georgetown and the beginning of his Hyatt career. The Park Hyatt is a 5 star hotel with the renowned Melrose Restaurant, being one of the best restaurants in the city. His first position was Director of Purchasing and shortly thereafter he was promoted to Restaurant Manager. It was here that he received an invaluable education in the operation of a 5 start hotel and restaurant. He improved his knowledge of fine wines and food and continued to build the reputation and standards. In light of his proven ability Terry was again promoted, this time as Director of Operations. Terry was now responsible for all aspects of the hotel. This all round training would serve him well for the future. It was also around this time that Terry was one of the fortunate few who received a Donnelly lottery visa and now had the ability to work in the USA for an indefinite period. It was at this stage that his Hyatt career entered a new phase.

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His tenure at Hyatt includes the following properties:

- 2014 – Present , General Manager, Hyatt Regency Boston , Boston,

- 2011 – 2014, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Jersey City, Jersey City, New Jersey
- 2009 – 2011, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Long Island, Long Island, New York
- 2005 – 2009, General Manager, Hyatt Fair Lakes, Fair Lakes, Virginia
- 2001 – 2005, General Manager, Hyatt Regency, Marietta, Georgia
- 1999 – 2001, Hotel Manager, The Stanhope, a Hyatt Hotel, New York, New York
- 1997 – 1999, Director of F & B, Hyatt Regency Reston, Washington, D.C.
- 1988–1997, Director of Operations Park Hyatt Washington, Washington, D.C.

Terry is continuing his education and currently studying Hotel Real Estate and Asset Management at Cornell University. His next move is likely to be multiple properties in a major city in the USA. He is also hoping that Hyatt open their first hotel in Ireland in the next few years and he would introduce the brand to the country. Hyatt is actively looking for opportunities and would welcome the opportunity to have a presence here. Terry is unashamedly biased in his opinion of Hyatt. He loves the company and the people who work there. The culture of caring is everywhere, it is authentic and sincere and those are qualities that are not easy to find. His 28 years with Hyatt have been exciting, eventful at times demanding but always fun. www.regencyboston.hyatt.com



Upcoming Events

Institute Open days

January 28th 2017-10am-12.30pm

May 06th 2017 -10am-12.30pm

College of Tourism & Arts Graduation

17th of November 2016- Radisson Blu, Galway

IHF Conference

Monday the 27th & Tuesday 28th of February 2017 - Lyrath Estate, Kilkenny

College of Tourism & Arts Annual Careers Fair

Wednesday 9th March, 1.30pm-4pm-Café Foyer, GMTI.

Over 60 National and International Hospitality Organisations present, to meet and recruit students for placement, graduates, alumni and the general public.

All Welcome!

"Spread the Word"





Profile of Shane Cookman Executive Director of Operations and Area General Manager-Fitzpatrick Hotels

When we look at the long list of GMIT alumni that have gone on to have distinguished careers in hospitality, Shane Cookman belongs at the top of that list. Aside from having been successful here in Ireland, he's been able to achieve success on an international level - in New York, no less. That type of success is a boon for GMIT, as it furthers our already solid reputation as well. While Shane might be an international hotelier now, his roots are planted right here.

Shane is a native of Donegal. After graduating from GMIT in 1988 with a Bachelor of Arts in Hotel and Catering Management, Shane joined the Jurys Hotel Group as an Assistant Food and Beverage Manager. Soon thereafter, he was promoted to Sales Manager at the Jurys Hotel in Cork. After a time, Shane was made Deputy General Manager of the Jurys property in Glasgow, Scotland.

In 1990, Shane was hired away from Jurys to be General Manager of the Middleton Park Hotel outside of Cork. In 1992, Shane settled in as General Manager of the Portmarnock Hotel and Golf Links. This was a watershed moment for Shane, as Portmarnock turned out to be his professional home for thirteen years. In what he described as a "labor of love", Shane spearheaded the transformation of Portmarnock from being essentially a 19 bedroom country house into a luxury golf resort with 103 guest rooms and world class food and beverage facilities. Shane described this period by saying "This was a very exciting time in my life. I saw much potential for Portmarnock, and it was exhilarating to actually realise that potential and see it as an international destination."

In 2005, Shane left Portmarnock to become Managing Director of both Dunboyne Castle and The Dylan Hotel, giving him the opportunity to oversee multiple properties at the Director level.

In 2010, Shane had another watershed moment, when John Fitzpatrick invited him to come to New York City to oversee both Fitzpatrick Hotels there. Shane said "It was a big decision, but the timing was right in my personal life, and I knew it was a golden opportunity to gain international experience while also working with someone like John Fitzpatrick. John is so well known here, but he is very well respected over in the States too. In fact, he has served as Chairman of New York City's Hotel Association, and was recently President of the American Hotel and Lodging Association, the largest hotel industry professional organization in the United States. I couldn't pass this great opportunity to expand my horizons."

As Executive Director of Operations and Area General Manager, Shane oversees all aspects of daily hotel operations, sales and marketing, human resources and food and beverage for two luxury hotels in a very competitive New York market. He also works closely with John Fitzpatrick on business development projects. Shane has already developed a solid reputation in the New York business community. He sits on the board of the East Midtown Partnership business improvement district, and was recently invited to join the Executive Board of the Hotel Association of New York City. John Fitzpatrick had this to say about him, "Shane has been a great addition to the team here in New York. His strong background as an Irish hotel operator has strengthened our ability to deliver uniquely Irish hospitality to the New York market. He is a very strong leader."

A graduate story - Amy Brannigan, MarKier Design - www.markierdesign.ie



I returned to third level education as a mature student in 2012 on the BA (hons) de-gree in Textile design at GMIT for its cross disciplinary approach to teaching and the scope to build on my experimentation with textiles and mixed media.

The course was very fluid and open and as my work evolved I had the opportunity to work with the Marine Biology PhD team on the Dublin Rd campus in 3rd year, and with GMIT Letterfrack in 4th year expanding my knowledge of different techniques such as laser cutting in Textile design.

My work primarily focused on open latticed apertures based on the Irish landscape that could be worn on the body.

In 2013 I won the "Student Designer" award in contemporary lace-making at the inaugural Kenmare Lace Festival. I was chosen to represent the Institute at the 'Knit and Stitch' show in the RDS in 2013 and 2014, where my work was scouted by the Design Centre in Dublin. It was directly from this exposure that I started my own accessory design business MarKier Design in 3rd year.

Since graduating in 2014 I completed the GMIT Graduate Entrepreneurship Programme with GMIT's Innovation Centre, this added to my skill set. In 2015 I won 'Young Designer of the

year' at Kerry Fashion Week. This year I was titled 'One to Watch' at the SCCUL Enterprise Business Awards in Galway. I would never have had these opportunities if not for CCAM and GMIT. My tutors and the overall faculty have been very supportive of my achievements.

The experiences I have had at CCAM have been extremely positive and I would recommend it to anyone who likes to be challenged and push the boundaries of design and creativity.



Luke Morgan



LUKE MORGAN – "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." One of our finest wordsmiths, W.B. Yeats, said that. And when he wasn't filling pails or lighting fires, he was winning Nobel prizes. I am a recent graduate of the Film & Documentary course in GMIT and I am in no way comparing myself to W.B. Yeats.

However, his sentiment rings true with me: my lecturers opened my eyes to Bergman, Fellini and Abrahamson, and (in true monkey-see, monkey-do fashion), I was inspired to make films.

At the moment, I am working as a screen-writer in the Irish film industry. Three of my feature-length scripts have been optioned and are currently in development with production companies around Ireland. Recently, I travelled to the Norwegian Short Film Festival at Grimstad, in the south of Norway, in order to look for a Scandinavian co-producer for my next short film. The methods by which I accomplish my work today were devised in a GMIT classroom, encouraged and refined by GMIT lecturers. Through my teachers, I received industry contacts that I am currently working with. A good word from Ce-line is almost as powerful as a shiny Level 8 bachelor's degree.

Galway is a UNESCO City of Film, and with a growing audio-visual sector that employs over 600 people, the time to jump on the reeling bandwagon is now. I've always wanted to tell stories, and doing this course enabled me to take risks, fail, improve and flourish on film sets. There was a necessary and helpful balance between practical work and academic study, with classes tailored to my individual needs.

The fire that's in me is not a candle-light, or a Bunsen flutter. It's a goddamn flamethrower. One that'll keep my future bright for years to come.



Artist Fiona Rooney with one of her exhibits at the GMIT Graduate Showcase at the Centre for the Creative Arts and Media (CCAM) at Wellpark on the Monivea Road.

CAREERS FAIR 2017

In collaboration with Sligo Institute of Technology and Letterkenny Institute of Technology (Connacht-Ulster Alliance), colleagues from both Institutes were invited to attend the very successful College of Tourism & Arts Careers Fair which took place on the 09thth of March 2016. There were over 60 exhibitors present on the day, and over 320 placement and full-time positions being offered. This year saw International representation from Hotel Hershey, Pennsylvania USA, Emirates Airlines, Dalata Hotels, Carlson Rezidor Hotels, Jurys, Hastings Hotels Northern Ireland, and Quinta do Lago Resort, Portugal. There were presentations by Hotel Groups Carlson Rezidor, Jury's and Dalata Hotels.

The Fair provides significant opportunities for students and graduates to meet with industry, and also provides a forum for faculty to network with industry.

The 2017 College of Tourism & Arts Careers Fair will take place on Wednesday the 08th of March 2017 from 1.30pm-4pm, and promises to be one of biggest to-date.



Katie Moore



A native Mayo woman, hailing from the town of Foxford, Katie Moore graduated from GMIT in 2015. Years ago, Katie discovered the Centre for Creative Arts and Media (CCAM) during time spent doing a portfolio course in Westport. After visiting the Centre on open day, she knew GMIT was the right choice for her.

"I really enjoyed the programme; I learned so much and gained invaluable skills. The lecturers were great and very generous in sharing their ideas and knowledge. Art History and Critical Theory were fascinating subjects to study, perfect for learning about, and discussing art. I equally enjoyed all that I learned from the Digital Media module." Before enrolling in the BA in Art and Design, Katie worked as a Milliner, and also interned with fashion famous design giants like Philip Treacy in London and John Rocha and his team in Dublin.

Katie's recent work has included a commission residency with the Mayo County Council on an installation piece for the 1916 Rising Commemoration. Katie also has a number of solo exhibitions this year and plans to continue developing her career as a visual artist. "I feel very lucky to have studied at CCAM. One of the most important parts of the centre is its atmosphere. It is so welcoming and everyone is very friendly and approachable. During my final two years of study at GMIT I had to spend a lot of time working from home, due to health problems related to having Cystic Fibrosis. To say that the staff and college were supportive is an understatement. It was great for me to have that support." <http://www.katiemoorevisualartist.com/about>



During summer of 2012, the Hotel School launched a new "Jobs Noticeboard" on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/GmitHotelsSchoolJobsNoticeboard> and Twitter @GMITTourismArts

This was done in response to requests from industry looking for skilled students

and graduates for specific roles or durations which are not covered by our work placement programs.

Facebook & Twitter have proved to be the best way to reach the target audience of students and recent graduates.

Roles advertised so far include management staff, chefs, operational staff, PR/event executives, and even volunteers for charity events. We also welcome jobs for Heritage, Film & Documentary & Art & Design.

UNIQUE LEARNING EVENT FOR GMIT TOURISM & ARTS STUDENTS

Wine journalist Lesley Williams delivers Albariño Masterclass

The Jobs Noticeboard is being promoted to current students to highlight part time work opportunities, and is also being used to promote job opportunities to graduates.

This service is free of charge to all industry partners and graduates, so if you have a role you would like us to advertise, please email the team at linksoffice@gmit.ie and we will post it for you.

We also welcome jobs for Heritage, Film & Documentary & Art & Design.

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[GMIT CTA Jobs Noticeboard](#)



[GMIT CTA](#)



[GMIT CTA Alumni](#)



[CCAM](#)



[Twitter CCAM](#)

Irish Examiner journalist Lesley Williams, in association with the Spanish Embassy, delivered the Albariño Masterclass which explored some of the world's most famous white wines, to students in GMIT's College of Tourism & Arts (CTA) recently (Friday 15 April).

Denomination of Origin (DO) Rías Baixas is renowned for the Albariño grape, an indigenous variety that produces some of the world's best known white wines. Located in the Galicia region of north-western Spain, which bears a strong resemblance to the green fields and rocky coasts of Ireland, Albariño is the flagship of this coastal region. In Rías Baixas' unique climate, Albariño shares the same mineral-rich soils and cool climate as the world's other renowned white wine-producing regions, including France's Loire Valley, New Zealand and the Rhine region of Germany.

The Albariño lecture was the second Masterclass delivered to GMIT Tourism & Arts students this semester. In February, world renowned sherry expert Javier Hidalgo delivered a Sherry Masterclass to first year students on the Bachelor of Business in Retail Management and third year students on the Bachelor of Business in Bar & Restaurant Management, and staff, at the Galway (Dublin Road) campus.

GMIT's own wine and sherry expert, lecturer Elizabeth Fox, also took part in organising this event. She was recently awarded a special prize for the highest result in the 'World Certified Sherry Educators Programme' in Spain. Elizabeth is now one of 25 professionals from around the world who qualify as a Sherry Certified Educator for 2015.

Speaking about the recent event, Elizabeth Fox says: "the Masterclass on Albariño was very educational for the students, who enjoyed the opportunity of tasting a selection of Albariño from the same region from various producers. All of the wines showed different characteristics however like family members; they also had a familiar flavour profile, showcasing the Albariño grape variety".



Elizabeth Fox with Lesley Williams

GMIT....proud to be part of Galway 2020



GMIT is one of the many city and county organisations involved in Galway 2020's bid to become European Capital of Culture. The Institute congratulates the team on their outstanding progress to date and remains committed to supporting this development now and in the future. The Centre for Creative Arts & Media (CCAM) and GMIT's College of Tourism and Arts (CTA) have engaged extensively with the 2020 team and contributed to the plans that were submitted.

FROM THE GROUND UP – FEEDING OUR FUTURE

EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARD FOR GALWAY



For many years now, the food community in Galway has actively been working towards its rightful title of “*Food Capital of Ireland*” as coined by renowned food writer and journalist John McKenna and now the title of *European Region of Gastronomy* for 2018 which was awarded by an International Jury of gastronomy experts on St. Patrick’s Day in The Netherlands.

This success can largely be credited to the hard working market traders, the food producers and the pioneering chefs in the region who champion local produce and also, the collaborative, collegial nature of festival volunteers, community groups, councils and educational institutions. With this strong stakeholder base at the heart of Galway food, it was natural that the approach for Galway’s bid for the European Region of Gastronomy title would ensure that stakeholder engagement be the essential ingredient to its success.

Following a stakeholder briefing workshop in September, 2015 a bid book entitled “From the ground up – Feeding our Future” was developed by the steering platform, which consists of representatives from Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Galway’s County and City Councils, Teagasc and the private sector.

The bid book reflects on our past but looks to our future and through the development of an exciting, programme of activities there is a commitment by all stakeholders to creating a tangible, sustainable legacy beyond 2018, Galway’s award year, thus “feeding our future”.

The European Region of Gastronomy Award recognises innovation and integration in gastronomy, culture and tourism, each of which is intrinsically linked. Food, tourism and hospitality are increasingly important sources of growth to the economy and regions awarded the title must demonstrate their uniqueness by offering a creative, interactive visitor experience.

The proposed European Region of Gastronomy programme for Galway, will facilitate the enhancement of our food culture but of equal importance raise awareness of food issues at a time where there is growing concern around food provenance. Food and health education emerged as priorities from stakeholder consultation and a key legacy of the programme will be the development of a sustainable food education project for primary school children and parents. A major goal will be to erase the elitist tag often associated with the word Gastronomy in an effort to ensure that locally produced, quality food be available for all and not just a privilege for some, which is often taken for granted.

Anyone interested in getting involved in the European Region of Gastronomy project can e-mail regionofgastronomy@galwaycoco.ie or interact with us via our twitter feed @gastronomy2018 website: <http://www.galwaygastronomy.ie/>



Caitriona Morgan, Galway County Council, Cáit Noone, GMIT, Jacinta Dalton GMIT wearing “Made in Galway” aprons as they serve up the wonderful Galway lunch in Nord Brabant at the ERG designation presentation.

New programmes International Tourism Management and Culinary Arts announced.

GMIT commenced offering three new awards in September 2016 and more are on the way for September 2017.

The new honours degree in International Tourism Management was approved by an external validation panel in early June.

Staff of the College of Tourism and Arts have a strong relationship with local and national employers, and there is much interaction at varying levels with partners. As such, engagement with employers, potential employers, industry analysts, and industry development is ongoing and growing.

As part of the programmatic review process a focus group of tourism industry stakeholders was undertaken and their feedback, along with other stakeholder feedback influenced this development which was led by co-joint programme chairs Maria Murphy and John Carty.



Students can expect to study a range of exciting and innovative modules including destination and resort management, tourism law, tourism economics, sustainable tourism management and history, heritage and culture in a tourism context.

If anyone would like more information on this new development please email Gerry O'Neill, Head of Department for Tourism and Heritage email: Gerry.oneill@gmit.ie

Much discussion continues to take place around the demand for chefs in

our industry and in response to the Expert Skills Group report last November GMIT has developed two new minor awards in culinary arts beginning in September 2016. Both awards will last for fifteen weeks.

Trainee chefs will study two days per week in college and spend the remainder of their time in industry and this industry based work will count towards academic credit attainment during their time on the course. More details are available for Head of Department for Culinary Arts Gerry Talbot email: Gerry.talbot@gmit.ie



GMIT CULINARY ARTS MANAGEMENT STUDENTS WIN AWARD FOR THEIR VEGGELICIOUS CAKE RANGE Cork, Meath and Galway students win 'GMIT Development Chef of the Year' accolade from Blenders

GMIT Culinary Arts students Alexandra Bourke from Co Cork, Catherine Carroll from Co Meath and Michelle Connor from Co Galway have been named the winners of the GMIT Development Chef of the Year 2016 competition in association with Blenders, for their product.



The event is the culmination of a year's work by the fourth year students on the Bachelor of Business in Culinary Arts Management degree, bringing together modules in New Product Development, Business Creation, Business Plan, Visual Design and Sensory Analysis. In groups of three, students were tasked with developing an innovative food product as well as a business plan for their product.

Five groups, totalling fifteen students, presented their ideas to a panel of judges which included Artie Clifford, Chairman of Blas na hEireann Irish Food Awards; Michele Santry, Food To Go Musgrave Retail Partners Ireland; and David Chandler, Sales Director Blenders.

The winning team's project 'Veggelicious' is a vegetable-based cake range that is gluten free, dairy free and free from refined sugar with varieties, lemon and courgette ginger and parsnip and chocolate and beetroot. The product was right on trend being entirely natural and extremely low in sugar and was presented with a clear business plan.

All the entries were to a really high standard; Products were Bellaroons Macaroons, Supergrain superfood crisps, Just Add Water gluten-free instant soup, and Strictly Vegan spiced vegan burgers. All of the students did themselves and their lecturers proud with their projects.

Lecturer and mentor Anne O'Leary says the standards were exceptionally high. "Working in groups have provided the students with the opportunity to learn collaboratively. It gives the students peer support, allowing for the sharing of ideas and knowledge and at the same time allowing student to understand the dynamics of group work. This transferable skill is required by employers of our graduates."

David Chandler, Sales Director from Blenders commented "We are delighted to be sponsoring the Blenders GMIT Development Chef of the Year and we would like to thank the students and staff of the college for all their hard work that went in to creating a truly wonderful event."

This year's competition was open to fourth year students undertaking the Product Development module as part of their Culinary Arts Degree. All competitors received a commemorative chef jacket from Blenders for participating in the event and a bursary was awarded to the winning team.

For more information on GMIT's Culinary Arts programmes, visit: <http://www.gmit.ie/college-tourism-and-arts/college-tourism-arts>

Front row David Chandler, Sales Director of Blenders, GMIT Culinary Arts Management students Michelle Connor from Claregalway, Catherine Carroll from Kilmessan, Co Meath, and Alexandra Bourke from Kanturk, Co Cork, winners of the GMIT Development Chef of the Year 2016 in association with Blenders, and Michelle Santry, Musgraves Food on the Go. Back row, L to R: Artie Clifford, Chairman of Blas na hEireann Irish Food Awards, and Turlough Rafferty, GMIT Innovation Centre.

Industry Collaboration - Irish Hotels Federation Meeting in GMIT

Dr Fergal Barry, President of Galway Mayo Institute of Technology recently welcomed delegates from across Ireland to the Irish Hotels Federation meeting hosted by the Institute on the main campus Galway campus.

President of the Federation Joe Dolan, CEO Tim Fenn and colleagues from across Ireland, including many GMIT graduates heard from the President of the ongoing financial challenges the higher education sector faces.

In addition Cáit Noone, Head of the College of Tourism and Arts (CTA) outlined how the school has grown over the last eight years and shared updates on student's numbers, staff profiles, curriculum development for the future and USP's. The event was an excellent opportunity for the school to update colleagues on all developments including new work based learning programmes currently in development and post graduate opportunities.

If any industry colleague would like to join CTA curriculum focus groups please email cait.noone@gmit.ie for further details.



Dr Fergal Barry-President of Galway Mayo institute of Technology.

INTERNATIONAL COOK SERVE CHALLENGE



Third-level students from Ireland and France gathered in GMIT in mid-March to compete in the GMIT International Cook Serve Challenge, a two-day public event showcasing the kitchen and restaurant skills of full-time students in culinary and hospitality programmes. The challenge consisted of the preparation and service of a five-course tasting menu with matching beverages and wines.

Members of the public were invited to attend this unique event by purchasing tickets for the lunchtime and evening challenges which took place in the Institute's College of Tourism and Arts at the Dublin Road (Galway)

GMIT's College of Tourism and Arts has an excellent and long established record in national and international competitions. Students and staff won the top title at Catex 2015 – one of the biggest national culinary competitions and networking events in the Irish foodservice industry, taking home the coveted Gold Medal and Overall Winner title last year.

This new event, the GMIT International Cook Serve Challenge, saw five teams competing from four Institutes of Technology, namely Athlone, Cork, Galway and Waterford in Ireland, and a visiting team from France - the Lycée Hôtelier de La Rochelle, who actually won the event. The students, with their tutors' support, will had to plan, cook and serve a culinary feast for their restaurant guests. High profile personalities from the culinary world were also on hand to adjudicate their efforts.

GMIT was delighted to have training company Gréasan na Meán of the national Skillnets Network on board to film the event, capturing both Front of house and Kitchen scenes, and showing student, judge and guest interaction.

Maria Griffin, Manager of Gréasan na Meán Skillnet, said "We are delighted to be involved in the GMIT Cook Serve International Challenge event in March and will run a training course to produce a web based magazine programme to run for the duration of the GMIT Cook Serve event aptly named 'Cook Serve TV'. It will be available to view on GMIT's website during the event. The project will be led by industry professionals including Justin McCarthy, Freelance Producer and Editor; Niamh Guckian, Freelance, RTE and The Irish Times; and Barbara Collins, Freelance Radio Journalist, Food writer, critic and blogger."

In addition to the Cook Serve challenge, all visiting teams had the opportunity to savour Galway with an exciting package of food trails in Galway city, coupled with Master Classes hosted by GMIT.

Gerry Talbot, Head of Dept, CTA, said "The objective of the event is to challenge the students to bring their skills, traditions and innovative vision to an international audience. It will highlight the highest standards in international hospitality services."



Award winning Michelin Star chef Michel Roux Jr cooks with GMIT students for local charity

Fundraising dinner for Ability West takes place in Claregalway Castle



Award-winning chef, food consultant and author Michel Roux Jr, Chef Patron at La Gavroche in London, and GMIT Culinary Arts students cooked and served a charity dinner at Claregalway Castle on Friday, 15 April in aid of local charity Ability West. The team was joined by Michel's daughter, pastry chef Emily, and GMIT lecturers Noel Loughnane, Diarmuid O'Conghaile and Sinead O'Connor Lomas.

Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive from Ability West, says "We are delighted to have Michel Roux Jr visit Galway to lead a fundraising charity dinner and auction in aid of Ability West. We are indebted to 'Friends of Ability West' for creating such a magnificent event. All proceeds from this event will be utilised to enable adults with intellectual disability to live as independently as possible in specially adapted apartments and take their rightful place in society."

"We are very grateful to the GMIT lecturers and students for giving their time and skill to support this event. And to the many businesses, companies and individuals for so generously donating to this event and supporting Ability West."

Michel Roux Jr says "This is the first time that I have cooked in the West of Ireland and I am delighted it is for the amazing charity, Ability West. It is heart-warming to see so many Irish companies and individuals throwing their support behind an event that can give increasing independence to people with intellectual disability in Galway".

Cáit Noone, Head of the GMIT College of Tourism & Arts, says: "We are delighted to be able to assist a local organisation with a fund raising activity. GMIT frequently engages with local community projects and this event is no different. We have a long-established and well-deserved reputation for excellence in culinary arts and our students are very much looking forward to working with Michel and Emily when they are in Galway next week. I would also like to thank the faculty in the College of Tourism and Arts who are outstanding professionals in this field and their constant dedication to students significantly supports the learning experience of all culinary students."



Road to Ulster Tour, November 2015

On Friday the 6th of November 2015 a joint group of Heritage Studies and international GMIT students went on an overnight field trip billed as the "Road to Ulster Tour". The initial inspiration for the trip was the Táin Bó Cúailnge medieval epic, the text of which is encountered by Heritage Studies participants during their studies. Accordingly, our first stop was at the Rathcroghan Visitor Centre in Tulsk, Co. Roscommon – the ancient royal site most associated with Queen Medb (Maeve) of Connacht. According to our native manuscript literature, it was Medb who led the great cattle raid, or táin, into Ulster in pursuit of the brown bull of Cooley. The exhibition at the visitor centre had been revamped since the last Heritage Studies trip there a few years ago, and included a new audio-visual storytelling component which was well received. Unfortunately, a combination of bad weather and time pressure prevented us from visiting the many field monuments adjacent to the centre on this occasion; we had a long road ahead of us into Ulster.

Our next destination was the Navan Centre and Fort in County Armagh. Emain Macha, or Navan Fort, is another of the principal early royal sites of Ireland and, again according to the literature, was the seat of Medb's great rival, king Conchobhar Mac Nessa of Ulster. The visitor experience at the heritage centre there involved three main components: a dramatic audio-visual presentation in the centre's purpose built cinema, a visit to the impressive tumulus of Emain Macha set in the beautiful Armagh countryside



Tumulus of Emain Macha

and an interactive experience in a reconstruction of an iron age fortified roundhouse. Visiting both Rathcroghan and Navan Fort in one day allowed us to compare the interpretation and presentation of monuments which are strongly connected in tradition, north and south of the border. To our surprise, the kindly guide who welcomed us to the Navan Centre turned out to be a Kerrywoman, but there was no doubting the Ulster allegiance of the eloquent and entertaining warrior in the fortified roundhouse, who initially expressed appropriate antipathy towards us on hearing we had come from the province of Queen Medb.



Story telling warrior at Emain Macha

Sadly, the warrior's feigned hostility to southerners was mirrored later on the streets of Belfast, where some of our group were subjected to sectarian jeers from a passing group of youths. But then again, we had unwittingly picked our spot: we found that the hostel some of us were staying in was directly across the road from the Sandy Row Rangers Supporters Club. In any case, the jeering incident was the only unpleasantness we encountered on the trip, and a very pleasant experience was the

Saturday morning we spent at Belfast Titanic.



Students at the Titanic Museum

We were greatly impressed by the exhibition, which is fabulous both in terms of content and of how an aspect of local heritage is presented commercially with great imagination and professionalism. We were also pleasantly surprised to find that GMIT was clearly shown on a map in one corner of the Titanic exhibition.

Our final tour destination was the Giant's Causeway UNESCO World Heritage Site. The weather had not looked promising, but the cloud broke for our arrival and we were treated to bright skies, and then a glorious sunset, on the stunningly beautiful Antrim coast.



Cian Marnell's Semi-selfie at the Giant's Causeway

From a Heritage Studies point of view, it was fascinating to see how a famous character from Irish folklore was used to add texture to the interpretation of this geological wonder. An enormous screen in the Causeway's visitor centre showed an animated depiction of a well know folktale purporting to explain how the interlocking basalt columns were formed by a fleeing Scottish giant following an encounter with Fionn Mac Cumhaill (Finn Mac Cool), the most prominent superhero of both Irish and Scottish Gaelic tradition.

Some of what we had seen on our trip thus far was not too familiar to most of us – many places through which we had travelled were festooned with the colours of the Union Jack, and all the staff in the visitor centre were wearing their November poppies – but here at the heart of the exhibition was one hero Heritage Studies folk knew very well.

The trip was undertaken with the active cooperation of GMIT's Heritage Society, and with the financial and organisational support of the GMIT Students' Union and of the Department of Heritage and Tourism/College of Tourism and Arts. On behalf of the students who enjoyed the Road to Ulster Tour so very much, I thank all those who helped make it happen.

-Cian Marnell, lecturer on the BA in Heritage Studies programmes.GMIT.

GMIT goes to the Berlin Film Festival – February 2016

A total of 57 students from GMIT's College of Tourism & Arts travelled to Berlin for the International Berlin Film Festival. This annual trip has been growing in popularity and numbers, and has been embraced as an educational and cultural experience for both students and lecturers.

Film & Documentary students visited the DFFB Film School with an extensive tour of the school's state-of-the-art post-production facilities; a film marketing event in Humboldt University; a guided tour of the Film Museum. Heritage students visited the Topography of Terror; Tourism and Event Management students carried out a Film tourism audit of associated film tourism products.

The visit provided an excellent benchmark for future development of film tourism in Galway in light of its UNESCO City of Film title. The students were accompanied by German lecturers, Jenny Farrell and Maeve Stapleton; Film lecturer, Felim; Tourism lecturers, Maria Murphy and John Carty.

GMIT La Rochelle-Bordeaux experience April 2016

Culinary Arts, Hospitality Studies, Hotel Management and Event Management students: Mariam, Brian, Mike, Isabela, Pdraig, Joey, Daniel, Ashleigh, Joseph, Tommy, Caroline, Lorcan, Sarah, Frank, Sorcha, Jennifer, Michael, with Colin Gilligan, Martin Ruffley and Anne Brindley spent an amazing 5 days in France, tasting, savouring, meeting their peers, soaking up sunshine and atmosphere.

They picnicked beside Notre Dame in Paris, and had a photo op under the Eiffel Tower before taking the train to La Rochelle. There they dined in the Lycée Hôtelier de La Rochelle, spent a day with their peers from the Lycée, tasting Grand Marnier and enjoying a buffet lunch in the Château of Grand Marrier, followed by a visit to the Musée du Cognac in Cognac.

Friday, a full morning in Practicals in the Lycée, a visit of the town of La Rochelle and its amazing Aquarium. On Saturday, a 2 hour train ride to sunny Bordeaux, a guided tour of the city, and a professional wine-tasting experience in the École du Vin in the CIV Bordeaux, followed by free time and an exceptional meal experience on the foodie street of St Remi.

Sunday they visited Le Marché des Capucins, feasting their eyes on and tasting the freshest of produce before heading back from Bordeaux to Dublin late Sunday afternoon.



La Rochelle-Bordeaux



Berlin

December 2015-Cormac Withero, graduate of GMIT's BB in Culinary Arts, was awarded a 5 month ICEX Training Programme in Spanish Gastronomy. He worked in the Vino Tinto in Valladolid and in Casa Gerardo in Piendes in Asturias. Just back from Spain, Cormac comments:



"My experience in Spain on the ICEX program has been unbelievable. I enjoyed a great 6 weeks in Valladolid and the numerous other locations we visited from Paco Diaz's great night in the cave to the trip to Galicia. It's been all I dreamed about and more. I really enjoyed getting to work in real Spanish restaurants. I feel that I have gained a much greater idea of the Spanish cuisine and culture. Having lived and worked in Barcelona last year I was hoping to get to know what the rest of Spain had to offer. My main aim was to improve my Spanish and cooking skills. I feel a lot more confident in both."

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology Tourism Society

Dublin Trip to Airbnb European Headquarters & Holiday World Show 2016, RDS

On Friday 22nd January 2016, the GMIT Tourism Society set out on their first day trip of the year to Dublin. An early start ensured we arrived in the heart of the Dublin Docklands for our morning visit to the **Airbnb European Headquarters**. Maria and Jim greeted the group of 20 tourism students and two lecturers in the reception area, which features a horseshoe-shaped bar using three different styles of tile found in pubs from different areas, as well as some old school Irish telephone boxes.

Unsurprisingly from a hospitality company, we were warmly welcomed to the building by Mark from the facilities department. Mark took us on an **office tour** and explained to us what work was done in each section by the nearly 500 staff. During our visit, there were also two dogs 'at work', as they operate a canine friendly environment and some staff regularly bring their dogs to work! The staff work in a 'hot desk' environment and they interacted with the students as we walked around, asking them questions and having a laugh with them. Some staff were intently engaged on their laptops or tablets and others were swinging in hammocks or lounging on bean bags! They all seemed quite relaxed and in great form, which is not too surprising considering each floor has its own dedicated dining facilities and snack areas for the staff to enjoy. The top floor even have their own trained barista at their disposal, all of this is complementary for the staff and they kindly made it available for our group too.

Throughout the building are replica scale models of actual properties offered for hire on Airbnb. This helps to bring to life the product on offer

with Airbnb and there were some really cool examples, like the captain's quarters and the apartment in Tokyo.

At the end of the tour we made our way back to the bar! This was a very apt place for Dzmityr to speak to the group about the **hospitality** ethos pursued by the company. Anna gave a very insightful overview of the **trust and safety** issues of running an online business that relies on peer-to-peer transactions and shared some very positive and very scary examples! To finish off the visit, Katie from **recruitment** talked about the roles on offer at Airbnb, the types of people they employ to fit the organisation culture and she took us through the recruitment and selection process. All of the speakers were very open and honest and gladly fielded questions from the group. Katie from recruitment had the most questions because by the time it came to her talk, most of the group wanted to work there! The opportunity for work placement for GMIT students is a very positive possibility that has come out of the visit. The group left in very high spirits and hopeful to return to Airbnb when they open their new offices on the North side of the Liffey later in 2016, either as guests or possibly as employees!

We moved on to the RDS Simmonscourt for the **Holiday World Show 2016**, which is an annual event organised on behalf of the Irish Travel Agents Association. The group enjoyed the opportunity to view and interact with exhibitors who were grouped into distinct regions: Home holidays, Africa and the Middle East, Europe and the Mediterranean, Caribbean, The Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Cruise lines and Ferries, Adventure travel, Tour Operators, Caravan & Motorhomes. Each exhibitor had lots of information about their destinations or products and the group had opportunities to see how organisations sold themselves to the crowds of people in attendance.

After a busy day of presentations and visiting exhibitors, the students were tired and the returning bus journey to Galway was very quiet!

Some images from the trip to Airbnb are below.

- John Carty & Maria Murphy, College of Tourism and Arts, GMIT.



John Joe O'Farrell and Cáit Noone on a recent trip to China.

Welcome John Joe - New Director for International Engagement

As you may know Cáit Noone become VP for International Engagement in January 2016. As the office and work is being restructured we recently welcomed the new Director for International Engagement to GMIT, Mr John Joe O'Farrell.

John Joe hails from Kilkenny and has worked in WIT for a number of years in International recruitment.

We wish him well in his new role in GMIT and look forward to working with him in the weeks and months ahead.

BA in Film & Documentary

This is a very exciting time for students to attend our Film & Documentary course.

Recently, Galway was designated as a UN-ESCO City of Film: and when one considers the multitude of agencies based in Galway (Galway Film Centre, Ros Na Run, Creative Europe, Tel-egael, TG4, Solas Studios, Picture Palace, Galway Film Fleadh etc) – something is clear: Galway's industry thrives through the passionate, can-do attitude of our workforce – of which GMIT graduates are a significant component.

The Film & Documentary course is run in partnership with the Galway Film Centre in the Creative Arts and Media (CCAM) campus of GMIT. Along with the education programmes, new creative companies are basing themselves in CCAM all the time – recently gaming and animation companies have secured tenancy. This is exciting because, as new media converges with traditional filmmaking, it serves to offer more pathways to our students.

Ours is a three-year, Level 8 course and is very intensive. The first year is broadly foundational where students get to sample a wide variety of specialist skills, and for the second and third year, students elect which areas they would like to concentrate on. In terms of genre the first year's work is within the genre of documentary, when in second year student's work within the genre of fiction, and for their final year they elect which genre they would like to work within.

There is a huge emphasis on working within teams on projects and as such, staff help students develop their intercommunicative skills to work as part of a team to serve the ambition of various project work throughout the course.

At this point, Irish Cinema is in a very healthy place which is reflected in the quality of national work in our cinemas and the record number of Irish filmmakers attending the Oscars. There has always been a very fruitful interplay between offshore productions (big budget that offer experience for Irish crews such as Star Wars) and our indigenous productions. Equally, in recent years, we enjoy a golden age of television drama and our students have been able to attend seminars such as Talking Drama (hosted by our partners in the Galway Film Centre) where they can hear the working methodologies of top tier showrunners like Beau Willimon (House Of Cards), Stuart Carolan (Love/Hate), Vince Gilligan (Breaking Bad) and Brian Cogman (staff-writer, Game of Thrones). It is enlightening for our students to recognise that the challenge to find their voice within their own work (short films/ documentaries), is one that all creatives face.

Our graduates are 'Thinking Practitioners', with a varied skillset who have a grounded, industry-ready ability to integrate within a variety of industries. Some graduates work on Television (we have graduates on Game Of Thrones, Penny Dreadful, Ripper Street, An Klondike), feature films, commercials, documentaries, and post-production facilities houses. Some students set up their own companies with the advent of digital technologies, much commercial work is now published on the net, rather than television or the cinema. Many graduates work within Galway's Audio Visual sector while others work in Dublin, London or Los Angeles.

But wherever our alumni travel to they never leave the film and documentary department at GMIT; they are part of a precious network for our staff and future graduates, a network that is creative, supportive and pioneering.

Pathways in the Film Industry

- ✚ **Editing** - Students gain an advanced knowledge of video editing software and become familiarise with the art, process and aesthetics of visual storytelling for both fiction and documentary.
- ✚ **Cinematography** - Students learn the fundamentals of camera operation: data wrangling, focus pulling, camera movement (jibs and tracks) and lighting – the photographic means to express the dramatic value of the documentary or drama.
- ✚ **Production Design** - Students explore a variety of genres and examine the functions, techniques and aesthetic of Production Design – students design and create all aspects of the visual story of a film.
- ✚ **Sound** - Students gain experience and knowledge of all aspects of location recording and post production sound to allow them to work as an audio professional in film and tv related industries.
- ✚ **4D Design** - The 4D module encompasses a range of contemporary post-production processes for film and documentary practice: these include CGI, environmental art, virtual cinematography, green screen and compositing. The module is delivered through a combination of traditional studio instruction and virtualized cloud-based materials.
- ✚ **Screen writing** - Creating an imagined plot and convincing original story for film and documentary. A core concern of the subject is to have students develop a narrative through visuals (show, don't tell). They will examine Aristotle, Joseph Campbell, Syd Field, and Blake Snyder for ethics, necessity, plot and structure.



Masters Degree in Creative Practice

The Centre for Creative Arts and Media recently received approval for a new Masters Degree and a Post-Grad Diploma in Creative Practice. The programme will be offered in September 2016 and will provide progression opportunities for graduates from a variety of creative disciplines.

The MA and PG Dip in Creative Practice offer artists, designers and filmmakers a creative and critically informed environment in which to develop and consolidate their practice. The course will support imaginative, experimental and interdisciplinary enquiry through a range of media and approaches. Students will choose one of four strands in which to base their study: (a) contemporary art studio practice, (b) digital cultures, (c) film and lens based media, and, (d) socially engaged practice.

The course is structured so as to balance general and specific demands of various practices. Students will be encouraged to work collaboratively as well as be independent, self-directed critical thinkers. The emphasis of the course is on the student completing a large practice-based project.

This culminates with the production of a final exhibition, film screening or project presentation for both MA and PG Dip students, with an additional thesis requirement demonstrating appropriate critical contextualization of the practice based work for MA students.

The MA in Creative Practice is a 12-month 90 credit course. The PG Dip is an 8-month 60 credit course. In both programmes there are three mandatory taught modules; Themes and Issues in Creative Practice (10 credits); Professional Development (10 credits); Research and Innovation (10 credits).

Students undertaking the MA would also undertake a 60-credit Research Project. Students undertaking the PG Dip will undertake the Creative Practice Projects for 30 credits. Students graduating with a PG Dip can also return later to undertake the Minor Thesis for additional 30 credits in order to achieve their MA award.

Pathways for Creative Enterprises – Dr Paddy Tobin, Head of Centre

“I see us having a very strong creative region. I would like to actively connect the region to CCAM as a source and ongoing feed of creative people. We currently have over 400 students on creative programmes in Film, Art, Design and Enterprise and we expect to grow to double this number over the next five years. We need to support development pathways for these graduates and I think the provision of centres, hubs or zones is very good for creatives. ...”

“At the moment, we seem to view the hubs as mainly start-up platforms. While it might be true that most creative enterprise are unlikely to grow to a significant size, we should consider the potential of hubs as sustaining communities for creatives, and as connected parts of a larger creative community or ecosystem. We could develop the creative enterprise centre at CCAM as incubation, feeding connected hubs with creative enterprises that can sustain themselves long term.”

“I'm interested in the idea of 'unifying' enterprises that would collaborate with a range of different types of creatives as well. The Animation and Game Design sector is a good example; they need to work with visual artists of all kinds, people with object or model making skills, people with film production skills, creative writers etc. They create virtual environments with buildings, interiors, wonderful visual scenes, in-credible stories, characters, costumes “If we, as a city and a region, can remove barriers and develop the pathways, the infrastructure and supports to enable Creative Enterprise to develop international markets, collaborate successfully and flourish as small businesses, I believe we have the people and the talent who will get on with The creative work and achieve wonderful things.”



Dr Paddy Tobin of CCAM

✂ *Extracts from an interview with Jo Lavelle, Editor, A Tribal Vision – Galway's Creative Culture (atribalvision.co/about)*

PROTECTING THE NECESSITY OF MAKING KATHARINE WEST

MARION MCENROY-HIGGINS



Extended Matter installation, nag Gallery

My interview with Katharine West coincided appropriately with Earth day, 22 April 2016. Listening to her describe the age-old geological processes of the weathering of igneous rock, producing primary kaolin's, the basis for porcelain, conveying images of riverbeds with rich mineral deposits; I understood how she draws students to work with her in ceramics. Her appreciation of the connection of ceramics with the haptic and hand-made, with ancient cultures, anthropology, and archaeology is compelling. She describes her own work as play between fluid and solid; malleable and static; interior and exterior. West attributes this to her lifelong connection to the coasts of both the East and West of Ireland, the liminal space between land and sea. In her most recent work, the forms begin with the ancient tradition of vessel making using a coil-building technique. The flax paper clay she works with, is flexible and forgiving, allowing the shapes to be teased out by hand. The fibres strengthen the clay for manipulation, permitting stretching without tearing.

Her latest exhibition, entitled 'Extended Matter', took place at the nag Gallery, Dublin in November 2015, and explored the Deleuzian concept of 'the fold' or 'pleats of matter'. The titles evoke the material's potential vectors and trajectories. Although ostensibly solid and immobile, the forms offer multiple profiles and perspectives. There are no flat bases upon which the forms rest completely. Their masses grapple with the surrounding space robustly, and yet there is a vulnerability about the pieces. Recumbent, biomorphic, with echoes of undetermined embryos; at times closing in upon themselves, at times elongating. 'Extended Matter 3' arcs, poised like a primordial *Uroborus*, ready to turn within itself. There is something in the exposure of the supine figure in this work, reminiscent of Giacometti's *Woman with her Throat Cut*, 1932. The surface tension and movement implicit in 'Extended Matter 4' is redolent of a turning back, rather like an antique Hellenistic torso fragment.

Her artists' statement quotes from 'The Fold': 'Matter tends to spill over into space, to be reconciled with fluidity at the same time fluids themselves are divided into masses'.¹ She describes engaging with philosophy in very visual terms, exploring and applying it to her practice intuitively, albeit building on a foundation of decades of practical and technical knowledge.

Working from inside to outside, she creates forms suggestive of a thin carapace – folding membranes surrounding and dividing the air, of which most of the mass will eventually comprise. Their terrasigillata glazed surfaces, reveal the intricate handling and tooling that created the skin of these layered, somatic enclosures. Sufficient air pressure is needed to uphold the forms until they are leather-hard and strong enough for a pin-hole perforation to expel a tiny breath, announcing their independence as structures

ready for firing. This idea of the interior space or lacuna within the body is conceptually key to a further series of pieces called 'Earthed Matter' and 'Suspended Matter'. Although her work is abstract, it has previously been categorised as figurative in Paul O'Reilly's *Kingdom of Heaven* catalogue of the Limerick City Art Gallery's permanent collection.



Extended Matter installation, nag Gallery

West's early education in National College of Art and Design, Dublin and School of Decorative Arts, Strasbourg, France in the 1980's felt permeated by the weight of history. Travelling to the USA as a Fullbright scholar to Alfred University, under the tutelage of Tony Hepburn, was hugely formative. Hepburn challenged her to consider whether her work was 'art or craft'. American culture seemed young and unencumbered by preoccupation with historic precedence, and she observed that her peers had the confidence to take themselves seriously. It was during that two year MFA training that she decided to allow herself to think more conceptually and identify as a ceramic artist. With a strong background in drawing, her early work was informed by the work of Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Hans Arp. A threshold moment in her understanding of the possibilities of ceramic object making was in her discovery of the work of Gordon Baldwin, and later artists such as Richard Deacon, Tony Cragg and Martin Puryear.

As a colleague, I understand the challenges and demands of full time teaching in Higher education, and I asked Katharine about her work as an educator. Teaching is a huge part of her life, and she finds the reflexive process of teaching and learning very rewarding. While it is very difficult to find the time, making her own work is a priority, as it invigorates her teaching, and keeps her connected to the idea that making things matters. She believes that working as an artist validates her teaching practice, and hopefully helps to inspire a passion for making in her students. In 2006 she received the Bank of Ireland 'Toradh Award' in recognition of her studio practice and contribution to art education in Galway.

Attending international conferences and symposia have been tremendously inspiring in this respect. As well as participating in numerous Irish and European symposia, in the past decade she has been to South Korea in 1996 and Jingdezhen, China in 2004. She found it invigorating to meet and work with other practitioners, and experience Asian cultures where clay is intrinsic to life, and porcelain has had such long and sophisticated traditions. In 2011 she participated in a symposium in Changchun, China working alongside traditional and contemporary Chinese artists and International practitioners, and in 2015 she participated in the Purple Sand symposium in Yxing, China.^{III} West was elected a member of the International Academy of Ceramics in 2014. She features in the 2014 Royal Irish Academy publication, *Sculpture*, Volume III of Art and Architecture in Ireland.^{IV}

Her work has been exhibited most recently at the Yxing Ceramics Museum, China; the Mark Rothko Centre for the Arts, Latvia; at Farnleigh Gallery in Dublin and the Norman Villa Gallery, Galway.



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GMIT's Centre for Creative Arts & Media

College of Tourism & Arts
GMIT
Dublin Road
Galway
Tel: +353 (0)91 742343
Web: www.gmit.ie

Cait Noone
Head of College
T: +353 (0)91 742236
E: Cait.Noone@gmit.ie

Gerry Talbot
Head of Department:
Culinary Arts
Service Industries
T: +353 (0)91 742320
E: Gerry.Talbot@gmit.ie

Gerry O'Neill
Head of Department:
Heritage & Tourism
Humanities & Languages
T: +353 (0)91 742294
E: Gerry.ONeill@gmit.ie

Patrick Tobin
Head of Centre
Centre of Creative Arts & Media
T: +353 (0)91 745418
E: Patrick.Tobin@gmit.ie



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