

THE CRAWFORD AT THE CASTLE



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crawford art gallery cork
áiléar crawford chorcaigh

Dublin Castle
Education Resource Pack
Leaving Certificate Art History Question

Introduction



Jack B. Yeats, *A Race in Hy Brazil* 1937, oil on canvas, 71 x 91.5cm (courtesy Crawford Art Gallery, Cork)

The Education Pack – How to use this resource

This resource contains information about *The Crawford at the Castle: Three Centuries of Irish Art from a National Collection*, an exhibition held at Dublin Castle from 8 October 2016 to 12 February 2017. It includes information relevant to the written Leaving Certificate Appreciation of Art examination paper. For the exhibition question, students must discuss an exhibition they have visited.

This resource is structured in three parts based on what is relevant to the exam question: Part A – About the Exhibition – visiting the exhibition, curation, display (lighting, design and layout), Part B – Artefact or Piece from the Exhibition and Part C – Access, Engagement and Additional Resources.

Introduction



Exterior views of Dublin Castle State Apartments and Coach House

The Crawford at the Castle: A Brief Overview

The Crawford at the Castle: Three Centuries of Irish Art from a National Collection sees the collection of the Crawford Art Gallery, Cork travel to Dublin for the first time in its near 200 year history. *The Crawford at the Castle* comprises a selection of fifty-nine works of Irish art from the Crawford's permanent collection, which will be exhibited in both Dublin Castle's historic State Apartments and the Coach House.

Among the selected works are iconic pieces from the Crawford Collection, including Daniel MacDonald's *The Eviction* (c.1850), Sean Keating's *Men of the South* (1921-2), and John Lavery's *The Red Rose* (1923). Placed alongside these, sometimes in unexpected combinations, is a range of works by contemporary artists, including Vivienne Roche, Rita Duffy and Brian Maguire. In addition there are a series of lens based work, from photographic to video pieces, including Dorothy Cross' *Jellyfish Lake* (2002) and Nigel Rolfe's *Into the Mire* (2011).

Part A – About the Exhibition

Layout and Curation of the Exhibition

The layout of the exhibition is crucial, as how paintings are hung affects how we look at them. Exhibitions are organised by curators and other staff. Anne Boddaert and Dr Michael Waldron curated this exhibition. Often exhibitions are organised by a specific theme, or in chronological order. For this exhibition the State Apartments and the Coach House are divided into themes including: Neoclassicism and Romanticism, Enlightenment and Revolution, National Identity, The Natural World, The Artist as Activist, and Power and Knowledge. Visitors should be able to see the artwork at ease. Seats are sometimes provided so visitors can rest and think about the works.

Discuss

Q. How many rooms were in the exhibition? Were they easy to find?

Q. Was there information about the exhibition themes and the different artists?

Q. In your opinion, do you think there were too many or too few paintings on the walls? What types of artworks were there at the exhibition and were they all easy to find?



Sate Apartments, The King's Room, Photograph by Edwin Davison.

Part A – About the Exhibition

Display of the Artwork (Lighting, Design and Layout)

Display refers to the practical aspects of arranging an exhibition e.g. the space (where it is held), the lighting and the layout. The way in which the artworks are displayed is considered very carefully. At *The Crawford at the Castle* exhibition, artworks are hung from the midpoint of each painting, so everyone can see them. The midpoint of each painting is 61 inches from the floor. The colour of the walls should be complimentary to the works and not distract. In this exhibition, the walls are painted either cobalt blue, ox blood or grey.

Labels are located to the side of the artwork with basic information regarding the artist, the title of the artwork, the medium of the work and its size. Lighting should be bright enough to see the work, but not so bright that there is a glare or difficulty in seeing the artworks. Strong lights can cause drawings, prints and watercolours to fade, so care has to be taken with light levels. In this exhibition a combination of natural and artificial light is used.



Coach House Galleries. Photograph by Edwin Davison.

Part A – About the Exhibition

In this exhibition, ten works on paper require special lighting because of their delicate nature. These artworks are located in the State Corridor and include the James Barry engravings. The State Corridor was selected to hang these artworks as it is the space in the State Apartments where the lighting is lowest and the most suitable to hang works on paper.

The frame of an artwork is also taken into consideration when hanging and some paintings require glass to protect them. There are often barriers to protect the artworks, but these should not be a distraction and should create a comfortable distance between the visitor and the artwork.



State Corridor. Photograph by Edwin Davison.

Discuss

- Q.** Do you think the colour on the walls was distracting or made the artworks look better?
- Q.** Did the artworks have labels? What side were they on and why do you think they were placed there?
- Q.** Was the lighting too bright or too dim? What kind of lights were there?

Part B – Artwork from the Exhibition

I. James Barry (1741-1806)



A Grecian Harvest Home, 1792, etching and engraving, 42 x 50m (courtesy Crawford Art Gallery, Cork)

James Barry was born in Water Lane, Cork and is considered one of the finest neo-classical painters in 18th-century Britain. He first studied painting under local artist John Butts and in 1763 went to Dublin to study in the Drawing Schools of the Dublin Society. In 1771 he moved to London and turned to printmaking and illustrating.

A Grecian Harvest Home is an etching and engraving made by James Barry after the second painting in his monumental series *The Progress of Human Culture and Knowledge*. This series is comprised of six huge canvases representing different stages of the progress of civilisation. Each painting relates to the previous or subsequent works in the series. *A Grecian Harvest Home* is a celebration of the pastoral phase of ancient Greek life, midway between rudimentary beginnings of civilised life (*Orpheus Instructing a Savage People*) and the high point of Athenian democracy (*Crowning the Victors at Olympia*).

Part B – Artwork from the Exhibition

2. Sean Keating (1889-1977)

Sean Keating was an Irish portrait and landscape painter. He studied painting in Limerick before winning a scholarship to study at the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin. A traditionalist, he believed in strong drawing skills and an academic approach to painting. Keating painted some of the most iconic paintings of the Irish War of Independence and the early years of the Irish Free State.



Men of the South, 1921-22, oil on canvas, 127 x 203cm (courtesy Crawford Art Gallery, Cork)

Men of the South shows a group of IRA men. They are waiting for a British military group to pass. An ambush is imminent but as we see from their staunch profiles these men are not concerned for their own safety, but for the principles they hold. Keating has made heroes of these men. This painting is not about the grime and pain of war, but about the patriotism behind it.

Part B – Artwork from the Exhibition

3. John Lavery (1856-1941)



The Red Rose, 1923, oil on canvas, 102.3 x 128 cm (courtesy Crawford Art Gallery, Cork)

Belfast-born John Lavery was an Irish painter best known for his portraits and wartime depictions. Lavery was orphaned in early life and later moved to Glasgow and worked as a photographer's assistant before taking classes at the Haldene Academy of Art and the Academie Julian in Paris. Lavery was appointed an official artist in the First World War. He also gave the use of his London home to the Irish negotiators during the negotiations leading to the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

The Red Rose is a portrait of John Lavery's wife, Hazel Lavery. The canvas on which this work was created was begun in 1892 as a portrait of Mrs William Burnell. In 1912 it was transformed into a portrait of Sarah Bernhardt, and in early 1920s it was for a brief period a portrait of Viscountess Curzon. Hazel's face became well-known to Irish people because it was her engraved portrait that was on Irish bank notes from 1928 until mid-1970s.

Part B – Artwork from the Exhibition

4. Vivienne Roche (b.1953)



Tomb, 1995, bronze 64 x 20 x 20 (courtesy The Crawford Gallery, Cork)

Vivienne Roche was born in Cork in 1953 and is one of Ireland's leading public sculptors. Roche studied at the Crawford School of Art in Cork and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. Roche is a co-founder of the National Sculpture Factory and a member of Aosdana and the RHA.

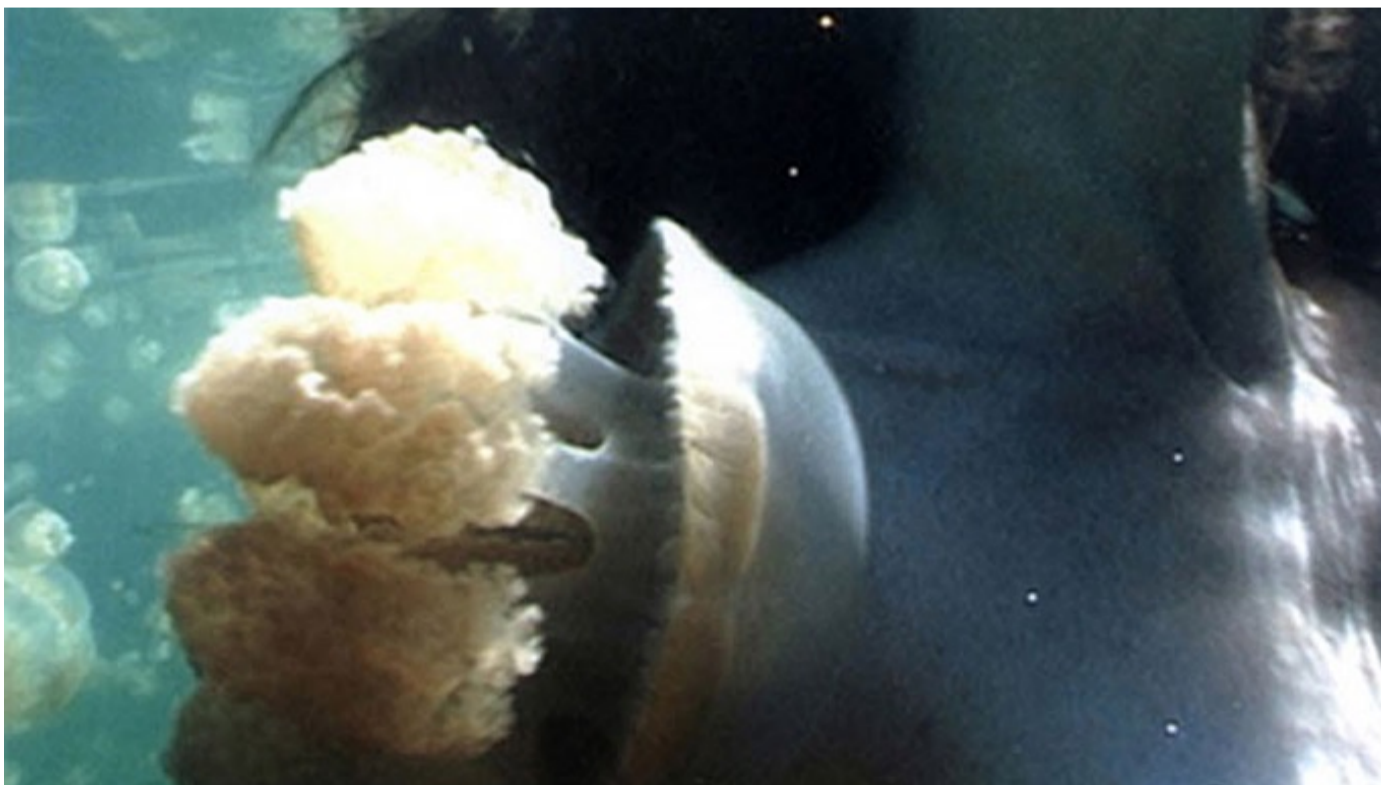
Tomb is a small bronze sculpture by Vivienne Roche which represents a new stage in her artwork. Traditionally, Roche has been more associated with large public sculptures in welded steel. Roche's work is inspired in part by her travels to Scandinavia and the material culture of the Vikings, in particular the beautifully crafted ironwork utensils preserved in many Scandinavian museums. In her work, Roche revives a Nordic aspect of Irish art evident from the seventh and eighth centuries AD, when Viking motifs were predominant in Irish metalwork and manuscript illumination, but were largely subsumed in intervening centuries as Irish artists absorbed European, British and American influences.

Part B – Artwork from the Exhibition

5. Dorothy Cross (b.1956)

Dorothy Cross was born in Cork and is considered one of Ireland's leading international artists. Cross attended the Crawford School of Art in Cork, before undertaking degree studies at Leicester Polytechnic, England, from 1974-77. She obtained her MFA in the San Francisco Art Institute in 1982. Cross works in a variety of media, including sculpture, photography, video and installation.

Jellyfish Lake is a film by Dorothy Cross resulting from investigations into the biomechanics of the jellyfish known as *Mastogias papua etpisoni*, or golden jellyfish. In 2000, Cross travelled with her brother to Palau in the Philippines. On Mecherchar, one of Palau's larger islands, a saltwater lake provides a unique marine environment for golden jellyfish, a species once plentiful but now severely endangered due to climate change. In the film, Cross lunges the viewer under water to view a naked woman, the artist, floating beneath the sunlit surface. Hair drifting and pulsating like the multiple golden jellyfish around her pale-skinned body, it echoes the hypnotic rhythms of the jellyfish. The proximity of their tendrils to the artist's body suggests danger, providing another layer of meaning in a work that is at once comforting and unsettling.



Jellyfish Lake, 2002, looped DVD, 6 min (courtesy Crawford Art Gallery, Cork)

Part B – Artwork from the Exhibition

Discuss

Q. What aspects of the exhibition did you not like?

Q. If you curated the exhibition, would you have arranged it differently?

Create

1. Do a series of five-minute sketches of your favourite artworks from the exhibition.

2. Sketch the layout of the exhibition or part of it. Include as much detail as you can, such as the position of the paintings, lights, doors and benches. Include the colour of the walls and labels. Pay attention to the different sizes of the artworks and how they were displayed.



Barrie Cooke, *The Lough Derg Pike: life size with relics*, 1980, oil on canvas, 138 x 208cm
(courtesy Crawford Art Gallery, Cork)

Part C – Access, Engagement and Additional Resources

Access & Signage

The accessibility of an exhibition is very important. How visitors engage with it and any extra resources that contribute to the understanding and experience of the exhibition greatly affect how we see and understand the exhibition. The Dublin Castle entrance on Dame Street is easy to access by bus, Luas, Dart, car or on foot.

Good signage is essential for visitors to easily navigate around the exhibition and it promotes the exhibition to visitors. Information panels and brochures should be available to visitors explaining what the exhibition is about.

In the *The Crawford at the Castle* exhibition rooms, there are text panels with information about each of the exhibition themes. Each artwork has a label listing the artwork's title and the artist. A programme of events accompanies the exhibition, including lectures and workshops. Details of these events are on our website: www.dublincastle.ie. An exhibition catalogue is also available.



State Apartments, Battleaxe Staircase

Part C – Access, Engagement and Additional Resources



State Apartments, The Arts and Sciences Room.
Photograph by Edwin Davison.

Discuss

Q. What was your first impression of Dublin Castle? Was the entrance easy to find? What information was available at reception about the exhibition?

Q. Was the exhibition accessible to everyone? Were there lifts available for wheelchair users or those who find it difficult to walk? Was there a cloakroom and was it easy to find?

Q. Was it easy to find the rooms of the exhibition? Were there signs around the Castle telling you where they were?

Q. What were the names of your favourite artworks? Who was the artist? What did you like most about the artworks?

Glossary

Key Terms and Useful Vocabulary

Acquire - to collect or come into the possession of something.

Chronological - refers to the arrangement of things based on timeline.

Collection - the works held by the Gallery or heritage site.

Contemporary - something that is current/modern.

Composition - the arrangement of visual elements in an artwork.

Curator - the creator and administrator of the exhibition who usually decides on the display of artworks.

Layout - refers to the arrangement of the artworks in the exhibition.

Media - (plural of medium) the material or technique in which an artist works.

Theme - the subject or topic of a piece of art, or exhibition.

Share your class visit with us!

Dublin Castle would like to know about any class projects that happen as a result of your visit. Please contact us on DublinCastleEducation@opw.ie