

ÁRAS NUA-EALAÍNE
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IRISH MUSEUM OF
MODERN ART

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IMMA

**PRIMARY
SCHOOL
TEACHERS
IMMA
COLLECTION:
COAST-LINES**

OCTOBER 2017 – SEPTEMBER 2018

Ospidéal Rioga
Cill Mhaighneán
Baile Átha Cliath 8
D08 FW31, Éire

Royal Hospital
Kilmainham
Dublin 8
D08 FW31, Ireland

INTRODUCTION

These notes are designed for **primary teachers**, for use before and after a class visit to the exhibition *IMMA Collection: Freud Project Gaze*. The notes are intended to support primary teachers and their pupils in **looking** and **responding** activities related to the exhibition, as well as follow-up art projects back at school.

If you are reading these notes on a screen, click on any [hyperlink](#) to access online information which will hopefully be of use to you as a teacher, both in the gallery and in the classroom. Most hyperlinks will take you through to a relevant image or text in IMMA's online [Collection database](#). There you can see an image of the artwork in question and find out more related details. Most of the following text is adapted from existing IMMA publications and online information. IMMA's own online glossary [What is --- ?](#) contains an A-Z of information about art terms and concepts, which teachers may find useful for themselves or may want to adapt for their pupils.

COAST-LINES

From October 2017 to September 2018, primary school children visiting the Irish Museum of Modern Art, IMMA, will have the opportunity to experience the exhibition **IMMA Collection: [Coast-Lines](#)**.

The title of the exhibition “Coast-Lines” plays with the idea that a coast by its nature is anything but a straight line. In the same way as a coastline defines an island, this exhibition draws a line around a diverse set of artworks and other material from IMMA’s archive, exploring a sense of place, and themes of perception, representation, and memory.

During visits by primary classes, we hope the selection and display of these artworks will ignite a dialogue between children, teachers, and IMMA staff, discovering relationships between the artworks, revealing narratives, and uncovering interpretations.

The exhibition is modular in composition, so although *Coast-Lines* continues through the summer holidays until the end of September 2018, some artworks will come and go, and individual rooms will close and reopen with new exhibits. During any given tour, for various reasons, it may not be possible to visit all the artworks outlined below. However, these information notes are a best attempt to capture all potential material for primary school teachers up till September 2018. These notes will be amended online as the exhibition content changes.

The artworks in *Coast-Lines* are selected from IMMA’s National Collection of modern and contemporary art, which includes over 3,500 artworks by Irish and International artists. We can engage children with the idea of a museum collection through their everyday experience of collecting:

What is a collection?

Most people have some type of collection – stamps, toys, coins, badges, games, tea sets, books, comics, plates, cards ...

Do you gather together or keep things that you think are interesting or important?

IMMA collects artworks.

Despite the wide range of artworks on view, there are common elements that connect various pieces throughout the exhibition. Some artworks will fit under more than one theme, and others are only very lightly linked together by a theme. Themes provide pathways to explore the exhibition with children. One initial approach to engaging with all the works on display is to consider the many **ways of making art**. Children can observe, think, and talk about the different approaches artists take in making their artworks: for instance using lines, paint, metal, stone, writing, photography and film, as well as using [found objects](#) or the artist's own body through [performance](#) or a physical activity like walking. Within any one of these ways of making art, we can discuss the qualities and processes more in depth i.e. using paint: as flat and patterned; as evocative, textured, and expressive; as a vehicle for an idea; as a visual sensation that dazzles your eyes; as a way of describing somebody, something, or someplace.

A major theme in the first two rooms of the exhibition is **looking** and **seeing**. Children can observe, think, and talk about: the difference between looking and seeing; how we see things (what we think affects how we see, and how we see affects what we think); and visual illusions and optical sensations.

Geometric shapes are essential building blocks or compositional elements in many of the images in *Coast-Lines*. Throughout the exhibition, many of the artworks clearly feature shapes such as squares, rectangles, circles and ovals (particularly in the first few rooms). Children can look out for these and identify them.

There are many artworks in *Coast-Lines* that are called [Op Art](#).

“Op” is short for Optical. Optical is a word we use when we are talking about our eyes and seeing. Op artists put together colours and shapes in a special way so that their artworks seem to dazzle or shimmer in front of our eyes.

Bridget Reily's [from Nineteen Grey, B](#) is a print featuring a pattern of grey-blue egg-shaped ovals, some of which seem to be closer, and some seem to be further away, all depending on the darker or lighter tones of each oval. Op Art and the artwork of Bridget Riley were synonymous with the Pop culture of *the swinging sixties* London scene and the style was linked to international fashion and design.

Victor Vasarely was born in Hungary. He lived in France for most of his life. His artwork in this exhibition is called [Permutations Series](#) (1 x 8). The artist often used grids like the squares in a maths copy book. The artist put a shape inside each square and often used two colours; one for the square, one for the shape. Name two colours that you can see in his artwork. Look how one of those colours was painted darker or lighter in different parts of the painting. As the colours get darker or lighter, they make us think that some parts of the artwork's surface are closer to us, and some parts are further away. But of course, it's an illusion. Victor Vasarely believed that a painting is completed in the eye and the mind of the person looking at it.

Alexandra Wejchert's sculpture [Green Lines](#) features only the colour yellow and it is see-through. It twists, and curves, and flows around on top of its pedestal. The short edge of the Perspex appears like a dark yellowish-green line compared with the rest of the transparent material. Alexandra Wejchert was born in Poland. She moved to Ireland in 1965. The artist made large sculptures in coloured Perspex, Plexiglas, and neon. Think about these materials. You tend to see these types of material used in modern objects and machines, and on the front of modern businesses. When Alexandra Wejchert used these materials in the 1970s they were understood as representing newness and modernity in Ireland.

English Op artist **Peter Sedgley** first studied architecture before turning to art in the early 1960s. Look at Peter Sedgley's luminous circle [painting](#) – does it remind you of something? Look at the circles within circles. How does the painting make you feel?

Carlos Cruz-Diez's [Psychromie No. 226](#) shows three oval shapes, one above the other, on an almost square background. The artwork is composed of lines of painted wood and perspex. The ovals appear to change colour and hue as you pass the artwork, right to left, left to right.

Brian Eno is a musician and sound installation artist. Walk back and forth past his artworks [Center Decenter](#) and [Tender Divisor](#): look how the colours shimmer and transform and then change back again.

Julio le Parc's [Continuel Mobil Argent](#) has lines of small aluminium squares hanging down on strings. The squares gently move according to air flow in the gallery. Even the presence of visitors close to the work can affect the metallic squares, moving them slightly from side to side. The aluminium reflects light as they move.

Look at **Jesús Rafael Soto's** In [Curvas Imateriales](#). There are metal rods, painted yellow and white that hang down in front of a painting of black and white horizontal lines. When you stand in front of this artwork, your physical movement can generate enough of an air current to move the rods ever so gently. Your mere presence, just looking at this artwork, is enough to activate it, thus giving you the viewer an active role in the artwork. Jesús Rafael Soto believed that the surrounding light conditions also have a powerful effect on how we perceive an art object. As the lengths of yellow and white curved rods move in front of the fixed thin black and white lines in the background, the artwork dazzles and shimmers, appearing almost magical and mesmerizing to our eyes. Some people refer to this artwork as [Kinetic Art](#).

Another strong thread linking together artworks is the depiction of **land, sea, and nature**. Children can observe, think, and talk about the natural world outdoors. How do elements of the natural world relate to our sense of home, belonging and identity? Also, the natural world provides us with a space to reflect and contemplate. Look out for works through which artists record observations of nature - the wind's movement, the changing sunlight, the ocean waves. Some artists explore actual landscapes through nature walks and recording the route they took by making drawings and maps. Some artists use simple geometric forms such as circles, lines, and spirals to describe how they experienced the land, sea, and sky. Some artists reflect on humanity's relationship with the natural environment: the effects of a changing climate on the world around us and the way we live; some artists reuse discarded materials for making new art; and some artists represent the various people who live and work in the fields, on the mountains, on the shoreline, and on the sea.

Coast-Lines includes [a large work](#) by **Dorothy Cross**. In a darkened space there is a basic wooden hut which has an up-turned currach for a roof. There is a film projection on the wall at the front of the structure. It is the image of inside a cave looking out towards the sea. The footage was shot near the bottom of the artist's land in Connemara, which is only accessible a few days

a year due to tides. The installation is called “Tabernacle”. The artwork provides a first-hand experience of the approach Dorothy Cross uses to make many of her [sculptures](#) and [installations](#): she uncovers, repurposes, reuses, or mixes and matches different types of found objects.

See the artist Dorothy Cross talk about her artistic practice in

[TateShots: Dorothy Cross](#)

Duration: 3min 37sec Link: <http://youtu.be/4CH5pjBGejw>

The artist **Clare Langan** made a trilogy of short films. In *Coast-Lines* there is a cinema-like room in which you can sit and watch one of those films called [Forty Below](#). The world appears to be under water. Everything has been covered by the sea. The world is quiet, icy, sunken, and blue.

The second film is called [Too Dark for Night](#). The world has become a desert. Sand is everywhere, filling up rooms, filling up houses, covering over everything we know. Everything is yellow and buried. The third film is called [Glass Hour](#). The world has become a furnace. We see smoking chimneys. We see black hills, and steam rising, and lakes that glow like red fire.

In all three films, the world has changed. What has happened do you think? How could people go on living in a watery world or a world as hot as a volcano? In all three films, we can see only one person moving around. This woman swims alone through ocean depths. She walks alone over sand dunes and burning land. Who do you think this woman is? Why is she all alone? What do you think she is doing as she moves around?

Look at [Kilkenny Limestone Circle](#) by **Richard Long**.

Here is a stone circle indoors. In Ireland you usually find stone circles outdoors in fields. Unlike the stone circle in this room, outdoor stone circles were made a long time ago. Also, this stone circle is an artwork, whereas the ones outdoors are ancient monuments.

But in one important way, all stone circles are the same: only human beings make them. When we see stones arranged in a perfect circle, we know somebody else has been here before us.

Anne Madden's painting, [Quadripartie Mountain Sequence Red](#), is in four individual rectangle parts which are joined together to form a single, larger rectangle. The four parts look like they were originally painted separately or in some other formation. Look: the rhythm and flow of the paintwork doesn't match-up across the surface of the whole artwork. In some parts, the paint looks like it has dried in a puddle after being poured onto the surface. In other parts, the paint is thin like a stain.

In one of the spaces of *Coast-Lines*, children can experience three very different approaches to representing a landscape. Covering all the space's floor, there is a black and white *Map of Aran* by **Tim Robinson**. The map of the Aran islands includes all the place names, which you can read as you walk across the map. On the wall there is [a painting](#) by **Paul Henry**, an artist who is credited with the creating a particular image of Irishness, by his portrayal of the landscape and lifestyle of the West of Ireland. And finally, on another wall, **Seán McSweeney's** painting [The White Road to the Sea](#) is an evocative and expressive burst of yellow from an abstracted landscape.

Artist **Nick Miller** has been based in Sligo since 1992. His work, whatever his subject, [a person](#), [an object](#), a [landscape](#), is concerned with how we experience and meet the world. Some of his landscapes were painted in a converted truck which he modified into a [mobile studio](#) to minimise the separation between him, the artist, and his subject, the landscape. Look at the big painting *White Thorn, truck view*. Look at the way the artist uses paint. The artist said about this artwork "I painted this small tree many times, but in this work encountering it like a person's physical presence for the first time, through the truck door, I really began to understand landscape in terms of portraiture."

IMMA Collection: The Freud Project

Look out for some portraits by the artist Lucian Freud as part of *Coast-Lines*.

These portraits are part of a major five-year initiative at IMMA, the Freud Project. Fifty works by artist Lucian Freud are on loan to IMMA's Collection from 2016 to 2021. The loan, from private collectors, creates a unique opportunity for primary school children to visit and revisit artworks by Freud as they move through their primary education over the next five years. During this period the Freud works will mostly be shown in a dedicated Freud Centre located in a stand-alone building on IMMA's grounds, the Garden Galleries. However, children visiting *Coast-Lines* will have an opportunity to experience some of Freud's work as part of this exhibition.

Three paintings and a copper plate (used to make prints) are on display. In *Portrait of Donegal Man*, *Fragment*, children can see first-hand Freud's process of building up a picture of a face in small painted sections. They can also see a completed portrait of the same sitter in *Donegal Man*.

Have a think about the many ways artists represent a person: as a picture of a face, head, or body; as a form of shapes or with lines and colours; as a set of objects, clothes, places, or emotions that we associate with that person.

If you made a picture of someone, what would the expression on their face be like? Happy, angry, sad, bored, calm, thoughtful? Look at the person's face in these portraits by Lucian Freud. How do you think the person felt as he was being painted by the artist? Why might he have felt that way? If you were to make a portrait, who would you put in the picture? People you know well, such as your friends, your family, your pets?

Have you got photos at home that show what you looked like when you were a baby or when you started school? Do you look different in those pictures compared to how you look now? How have you changed? Portraits, pictures, and photographs of people are a way of keeping track of time as it passes by. Portraits are a way of remembering. Portraits

remind us about how we used to look when we were younger. Portraits can show how we grow and change over the years. Portraits can remind us of people we haven't seen in a long while or people who we miss.

Artists who have work included in the exhibition:

Margaret Benyon*; [Dorothy Cross](#); [Carlos Cruz-Diez](#); [Gerard Dillon](#); [Brian Eno](#); [T.P. Flanagan](#); [Hamish Fulton](#); [Lucian Freud](#); [Gerda Frömel](#); [Helena Gorey](#); [Anita Groener](#); [Paul Henry](#); [Patrick Heron](#); [John Hoyland](#); [Clare Langan](#); [Julio Le Parc](#); [Richard Long](#); [Anne Madden](#); [Norah McGuinness](#); [Stephen McKenna](#); [Seán McSweeney](#); [François Morellet](#); [Michael Mulcahy](#); [Tony O'Malley](#); [Betty Parsons](#); [Nano Reid](#); [Bridget Riley](#); [Tim Robinson](#); [Peter Sedgley](#); [Noel Sheridan](#); [Jesús Rafael Soto](#); [Camille Souter](#); [Donald Teskey](#); [Victor Vasarely](#); [Alexandra Wejchert](#).

*IMMA Collection Online full listing or image is not yet available

FURTHER INFORMATION ON VISITING IMMA

To book a combined Primary School Workshop and Tour, click [here](#).

Each workshop/ tour is €25 per class, with Deis exempt.

For primary classes, free guided tours of IMMA's exhibitions can also be booked online. Tuesday to Friday: 9:30am, 10:00am, 10:30am, 11:00am. The tours are 45 minutes in duration and are led by IMMA's visitor engagement team.

Exhibition runs until 16 September 2018.

IMMA Collection: Freud Project is made possible through the support of the Freud Circle, and those donors that wish to remain anonymous.



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