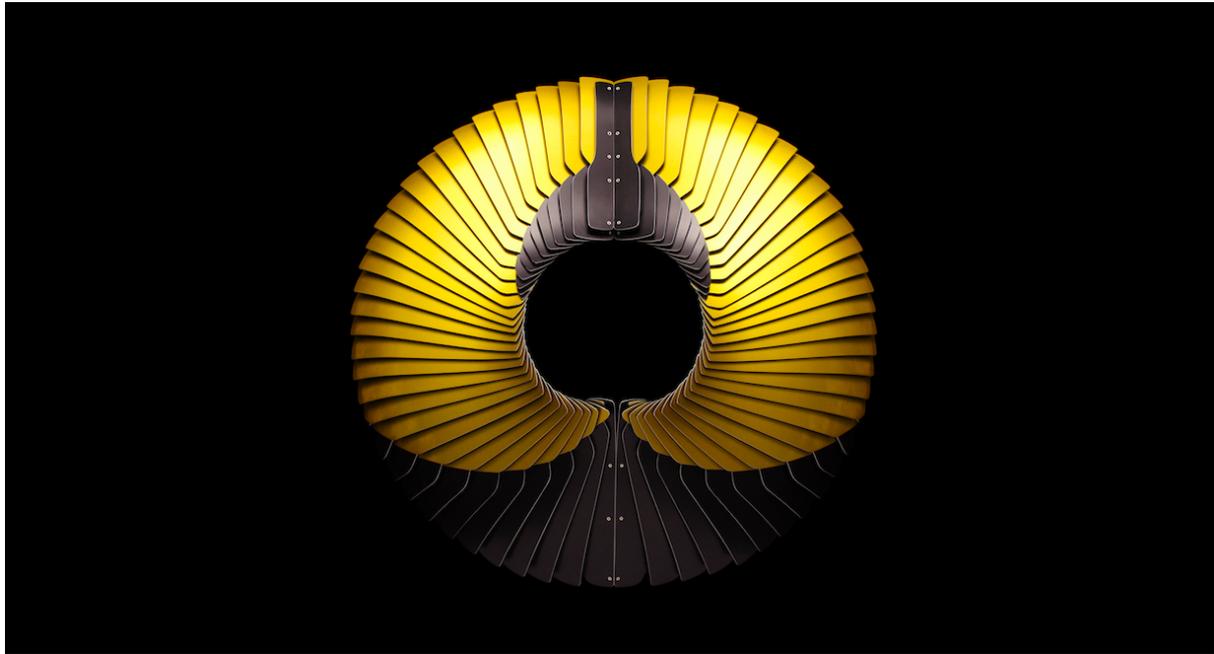


What Colour is Metal? Exhibition opens in Design & Crafts Council Ireland's National Design & Craft Gallery, Kilkenny



'Pagoda' by John Moore

- **What Colour is Metal? Exhibition moves to Kilkenny following successful run in Dublin Castle**
- **Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny Council Fidelis Doherty attends opening**
- **Exhibition viewed by over 50,000 visitors in Dublin Castle**
- **An exhibition celebrating innovative patination and colour application by the world's leading metalsmith artists**

[Jane Adam](#) | [Peter Bauhuis](#) | [Edmond Byrne](#) | [Stuart Cairns](#) | [Alison Counsell](#) | [Rebecca de Quin](#) | [Christine Graf](#) | [Koji Hatakeyama](#) | [Nicola Heidemann](#) | [Kaori Juzu](#) | [Toru Kaneko](#) | [Ruth Laird](#) | [Jose Marin](#) | [Cecilia Moore](#) | [John Moore](#) | [Cara Murphy](#) | [Thanh-Truc Nguyen](#) | [Cóilín Ó Dubhghaill](#) | [Michael Rowe](#) | [Ryuhei Sako](#) | [Simone ten Hompel](#) | [Adi Toch](#) | [Jessica Turrell](#) | [Roxanne Simone](#) | [Max Warren](#)

Curated by Sara Roberts and C il n   Dubhghaill. #WhatColourIsMetal

What Colour is Metal? is an ambitious exhibition that will bring audiences on a journey of process, experimentation and mastery through the practices of 25 contemporary metalsmiths. It is an exhibition full of beautiful pieces that are fascinating in their variety, skill and creativity, and one that all visitors are sure to love. Following a successful run in Dublin Castle, which saw over 50,000 visitors attend, the exhibition, which was opened in Design & Crafts Council Ireland's (DCCI) National Design & Craft Gallery on 6 April, will run until 27 July, 2022.

In attendance at the opening were Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny Council Fidelis Doherty, as well as DCCI's CEO - Rosemary Steen, Chair - Andrew Bradley, Board and Guilds, Associations, Networks and Societies (GANS) members.

This exhibition is a consideration of the relationship between metal and colour in contemporary silversmithing and jewellery, with a mapping of relationships and practice in key centres internationally. It examines approaches ranging from colour achieved using the inherent properties of metal to react with other chemicals or heat (or a combination); the reveal of colour as a property of the metal itself; infusing the surface of aluminium with pure colour or image; the use of enamel glazes with varying degrees of transparency and opacity - but always with a fundamentally strong relationship with the surface qualities of the metal.

Through seminal works by key international practitioners, including fore-father of metal colouration research, Michael Rowe, alongside new generations of makers, it places the artists' practices in a broader context and traces international information exchanges. It considers routes to support learning patination at all levels: from schools to professional studios; from undergraduates to specialists in conservation.

What Colour is Metal? makes vivid the connections between innovative studio practice and historic techniques, and furthermore looks to the future and profiles potential adaptations for industry. It examines notions of value, and the changes in assay regulations which have allowed a freer approach to combining precious and base metals within a single work. The possibilities for achieving colour modulations and sometimes startling colour were seemingly endless. The democratisation of the information occurred at a time when notions of precious were being re-examined, and led to a surge in the application of colour; on jewellery and vessels, but more widely in architectural practice, in mid-scale applications such as furniture and interior surfaces. It has been described by esteemed crafts writer, critic and curator Martina Margetts as *"a paradigm of the transformation of the aesthetics and creative possibilities in the last quarter of the twentieth century."*

Visit What Colour is Metal? in DCCI's National Design & Craft Gallery, April 6th 2022 – July 27th 2022. Gallery open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am – 5.30pm. www.ndcg.ie.

#WhatColourIsMetal @DCCIreland @NDCGallery on Instagram + Facebook

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@colin_o_dubhghaill @ryuheisako @roxxsimone

-ENDS-

For further information and images contact: communications@dcci.ie or Emma O'Brien, Communications Manager on 083 023 8743.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITORS:

Jane Adam

Jane Adam has been a pioneer in the use of anodised aluminium since the 1980s, initially in jewellery and more recently also in larger public art works which hang in buildings in the USA and UK. Historically her work has embraced dyed pattern, and more recently has deployed figurative images, flowing around compound curves of forms influenced by leaves, petals and other organic forms. Jane has moved on from her early hand printing processes and now outsources digital printing onto sheet material (dyed

anodised aluminium; the colour is fixed permanently into a surface layer of aluminium oxide) based on found photographic imagery which she has extensively manipulated on Photoshop. She seeks out pattern and rich blends of colour, and embraces distortion and overlay to give her the expressive quality she desires. She then cuts, textures and repeatedly distorts the material through rollers and shaped formers, further removing image and colour from its photographic source, partially exposing the granular surface of the material beneath the oxide layer. The colour in her work is both on and of the material – it shimmers and refracts where it fractures under stress.
janeadam.com

Edmond Byrne & Adi Toch

Material Dialogues is a collaboration between glass artist Edmond Byrne and metal artist Adi Toch. Provoked by the history of their respective materials, a fusion of glass making and metalsmithing, the project explores the dialogue created when substances and forms merge, as well as the confluence between them as makers. They say, “Inspired by the historical marriage of metal and glass we are making a series of silver, copper and clear glass lenses that create different visual experiences.” Their collection is a result of the meeting point between metal and glass through a unique process and joint working method that they have developed. Through experiment, they explore ways the materials react, fuse, stain or mirror, creating a new visual language of textures, colours and forms.
edmondbyrne.com / aditoch.com

Stuart Cairns

Stuart Cairns works as a silversmith combining natural materials and found objects alongside precious metals to create artefacts in the tradition of tableware and domestic objects. Following a workshop with Adi Toch, who introduced him to new techniques for accelerating the patination of metal, he has developed a characteristic experimental practice using natural material sourced from the beach, primarily seaweeds, in prolonged contact with precious metal to imprint both colour and motif. He says, “I see patina as a living thing, as it alters, grows and deepens as it ages. Found materials act as a catalyst when combined with various vapours and substances. They leave relief marks, tidelines and traces of bindings. I’m always excited to see how the found materials, fabricated elements and catalyst substances combine, it is a very live process where you set the components together and then allow the process to take over. Control is around the length of time you allow for the before interrupting the interaction.” The patinas will continue to grow and change unless fixed in place.
stuartcairns.com

Rebecca de Quin

Rebecca de Quin combines silver and base metals in related groups of vessels inspired by the practical precedents of Modernist architecture and design. She works spatially, with geometry, abstraction, function and surface finish, fabricating in sheet metal - sterling silver and gilding metal (a copper-zinc alloy) - through rolling, bending and soldering, occasionally imposing hand punched texture. The works celebrate their methods of construction, however functional, including the still-visible solder line. She is fascinated with methods of constructing three-dimensional form from the two-dimensional, through simple techniques, such as scoring and folding, to create sinuous lines in rigid, hollow forms. Templates developed from technical drawings using drawing software are transferred to the sheet material as guides. To introduce colour, she uses commercial products and heat techniques to darken and enrich the natural tones of copper alloys, and a small range of chemical patination techniques, such as

lengthy exposure to ammonia vapour, or wetted sawdust, achieving a range of hues from bright blue-greens, to muted grey-blues, to black.

rebeccadequin.co.uk

Christine Graf

Christine Graf creates her forms using hand-manipulated industrial copper mesh, working it like paper or light textile; she then applies multiple layers of fired enamel to build up the coloured body, partly masking and destroying the mesh structure but retaining an open texture, 'holding' the colour in its surface. She says "I use the applied colouration, its subtlest nuances and the texture of the surfaces to emphasise the fragility and ephemeral qualities of the work. As a result it seems as if the metal body is reduced, covered by the enamel it loses its structural qualities and in turn takes on a new visual and metaphorical identity." She produces either 'bellied, round', open vessels, sometimes with interiors in vibrant contrasting colours, or closed forms redolent of pebbles; eccentric in shape, echoing neighbouring shapes. Relationships and dialogues arise, questions are posed, by juxtaposing two brooches of the same shape, the same size, the same materials and the same concept, only different in their colouration.

galerie-ra.nl/en/christine-graf

Nicola Heidemann

Nicola Heidemann has an enduring interest in geology and how tectonic plates, glaciers and volcanoes have shaped the planet. She relates her jewellery forms to evidence of geology on a much smaller scale: stones observed on the beach, with the staining of natural materials and algae. She achieves a strong tactility and differentiation of surface in her work through vivid colour – strong families of colours within the same work, through heat treatment of titanium, and low-temperature enamels applied to silver, combined with glass components.

nicolaheidemann.de

Kaori Juzu

Kaori Juzu's objects retain a sense of the provisional, in hand-hammered collections of related forms in enamel and glass over copper, 18kt gold, bi-colour metal, shakudo (an irogane alloy of gold and copper), and steel. Surfaces are textured and granular, reflecting their origins in ground coloured glass, heated to fusion point but not high enough to liquefy and pool in glassy panels. Of this piece, she says, "*108 is a significant number in Buddhism: there are 108 defilements (sins). People can choose one piece to purify their defilement, since creating this number of pieces was already a purification rite; 'Ambition' was my defilement in this case. As I normally create a unique piece, it's always a challenge for me to repeat similar forms – they will never be same. The repetitive construction process provided me with inspiration, a focus for meditation; finishing all 108 individual pieces within a given period allowed no space for my ego.*"

klenodie.com

Ruth Laird

Ruth Laird scores and folds precious metal to achieve her lively, compressed-perspective, angular silver jewellery forms; some are articulated, with elements which slide and move. In this group, planes and arrested movement are further articulated and a hierarchy imposed with vivid sprayed gemstone colours (Lapis blue, Jasper red, Jade green), texture, dark oxidation and textured keum boo, (a kind of gold leaf). Front is distinguished from back, with its carefully-designed fixing. They describe an eccentric space and defy the orthogonal; they corral chaos into a precise form through

engineered joints and tracks for movement. She takes inspiration from architecture, and how this may be represented through geometry and measurement, art and mathematics.

ruthlaird.com

John Moore

With his '*Adventures in Wearable Objects*' John Moore blurs the lines between contemporary jewellery, fashion and performance. He is known for his sinuous, anodised aluminium constructions with a startling use of dyed colour in vanes and panels which move with the wearer, when edges move revealing inner and outer coloured surfaces, arcing through space around the body. His largest works are powerful articulated statement collars which lie against neck and shoulder, in forms somewhere between skeleton and architecture. When moving, their assertive silhouette reveals a rainbow interior. He takes natural forms as inspiration: fish scales, insect carapaces and feathers, which he considers to be the greatest displays of colour in nature, and works with a variety of materials, combining hand skills and industrial processes in sleek, highly-polished objects.

johnmoorestudio.com

Michael Rowe

The contribution of Michael Rowe to the understanding of the behaviour of materials and their cultural associations cannot be underestimated; he casts a long shadow of influence over international metalworking. With Camberwell teaching colleague Richard Hughes, he published in 1982 the seminal publication *The Colouring Bronzing and Patination of Metals*, the summation of comprehensive and systematic research into chemical treatments of different kinds, with some innovative proposals for applying patinas, such as the use of sawdust and organic matter, extending the range of colours and textures using these chemical treatments. This demystification of age-long processes, into something resembling an illustrated recipe book, revolutionised the treatment of metal and made accessible a huge range of colours to studio practitioners and designers alike. It coincided with, and to some extent stimulated, a review of the notion of value in manmade objects and a steering away from the use of 'precious' metals in luxury objects. Reprinted multiple times, the book has been used all over the world. It has taught a couple of generations of practitioners, as has Michael in his teaching role at the Royal College of Art, London. Michael has continued to forge an innovative path with his cool, angular and architectural forms; sculptural explorations of the relationship of vessels and containers to the viewer/user and the things they contain, and further to their relation to other objects and to the geometry of interior spaces. Recent work demonstrates an ongoing drive for innovation and experiment, and the current piece may be surprising to those who are more familiar with the ultimate control and cool even colouration of earlier works. He has relinquished some of this restraint to chance and time: *MakeBake* shows the transformative effect of the chemical breakdown and decay of the most basic of stuffs, bread, in prolonged contact with a brass object, opening up a number of narratives relating to metal and metalworking in material culture.

galleryso.com/artists/46-michael-rowe

Roxanne Simone

Roxanne Simone sees hydroforming, the act of forcing water into a seamed flat form to produce contour, as "like an unleashing, arriving, an erupting". She says, "There is something about the technique which spoke to me - water is pushed through the material and expands it to the point where it bursts - that spoke to me metaphorically

about experiences of black bodies in time and in history.”^[1] Roxanne sees the subsequent patination of the surface, a process she conducts at home with recipes passed on by her (BA London Met) tutor Adi Toch, as an intimate rather than an industrial process, whereby she addresses trauma and healing – the patination is nurturing and therapeutic. Roxanne writes as an adjunct to making. She says, “*the patination is like a layering of time, providing a layer of protection on the surface of the object but which also documents the evidence of unwanted touching. The outcome is quite grand and bold and beautiful, and despite all these pressures we somehow emerge in greatness.*”

roxannesimone.com

Simone ten Hompel

Simone ten Hompel asserts the significance of her longstanding ‘conversation’ with metal. Raised in the German apprentice tradition, from an early age she gained a facility with tools and manipulation which allowed an experimental approach. For years she achieved a broad range of colours on her copper, silver, bronze forms using chemical treatments. She realised in the late 1990s, however, the pollutant toll of deploying acids and the difficulty of responsible disposal, and since has primarily concentrated upon modulated heat treatments to achieve inky blacks, rusts, yellows and vivid reds. Like a conversation, these are sometimes a background exchange, sometimes an interruption, sometimes an exclamation against a background of quiet. Simone speaks of the ‘soul’ of the material; she says, “*I love the patina to demonstrate something about the metal. As with a person, who may look different under different circumstances: a person can blush; they can look pale, we bring back to the metal and we articulate that. We observe how it behaves when it is subjected to stress. It is thinking through making, it is practice-based research.*”

tenhompel.com

Adi Toch

Adi Toch addresses the skin-like surface of her hammered and raised vessels with innovative patination acid mixes; from the painterly to the highly reflective. Her colouring process is like jazz; she understands the harmonies of colour and articulations of components, and riffs on the possibilities. She is highly focussed on the social and spiritual power of vessels and imbues them with a strongly mysterious presence through different methods of presentation and rich colour. Each raised and hammered fabricated bowl or vessel has been repeatedly treated: handled; scratched; burnished with care. The surface of her works is often hand-textured through light spiralling sgraffito, holding light at points of overlap, giving the painted-on chemical treatment purchase upon the surface. She says, “*I enjoy showing the different character of the metal – even with different colours and finishes, silver is still silver, copper is still copper – it is just demonstrating other things about itself, showing a different face.*”

aditoch.com

Jessica Turrell

Jessica Turrell has developed a highly individual use of a traditional material, enamel, to achieve detailed expressive marks, textures and surfaces in a non-decorative, non-figurative way. She uses flat or hollow-form copper supports or ‘fields’ of interlocking or related forms, which work both as jewellery and independent object. A shaped and textured metal surface, achieved by acid-etching, repeatedly has enamel colour sifted upon its surface and fired. She then mattes the enamel either chemically or with diamond abrasives to remove its natural shine, to integrate the surface with the texture beneath. She says “*Enamel has a unique tactile quality – it is unlike paint or*

ceramic. I want to sit on that boundary between predictability and chance and I'm trying to get that balance right for me. I do a lot of etching underneath the enamel surface, and observe the interaction of the enamel with the textured surface, not just in terms of relief, but the heated metal interacts chemically with the colour and qualities of the enamel."

jessicaturrell.co.uk

Max Warren

Max Warren combines influences from history with the digital, image with object, chance with order. *Viewpoint 1* takes the form of a picture frame, but its irregular geometric makeup is highly unusual, and its resonant colour differentials demonstrate how it is made. Sleek parallelogram tiles of various sizes cut from copper, brass and silver are soldered together in strips, in an order determined by chance not premeditation, before the strips are in turn soldered together to make sheet material. This is hammered, hydraulically pressed and scored, to form the plate-like depression and to cut out the overall form. When subjected to flame colouring, areas of differing metals responding to the applied heat develop a range of modulated and contrasting tones.

[instagram.com/_max_warren_](https://www.instagram.com/_max_warren_)

See <https://www.ndcg.ie/exhibitions/what-colour-is-metal1> for further information.

Curators Biographies:

Cóilín Ó Dubhghaill combines studio silversmithing with an academic career in materials research. Following his doctorate for research into traditional patination techniques in 2005 from Tokyo National University of Fine Arts, in 2007 he was appointed Senior Research Fellow in J&M at Sheffield Hallam University, and is now Senior Teaching Fellow at National College of Art & Design, Dublin. He has worked on a range of projects in collaboration with the Materials and Engineering Research Institute at SHU including research into Japanese niiro patination (Arts and Humanities Research Council fellowship) and research into friction stir patterned metals (Innovate UK funding). These projects have led to international lectures and exhibitions of his work and the formation of a spinout company to exploit newfound techniques and upscale them for industry. Cólín was awarded the Bavarian State Prize in 2015 and has work in collections including the National Museum of Ireland; the Goldsmiths' Collection, London; and the Marzee Collection, Netherlands.

coilin.com

Sara Roberts is an independent exhibition curator and Senior Teaching Fellow in MA Contemporary Curation at Winchester School of Art, with a track record of projects which reveal the processes of craft: 'Hand to Eye' for The Winchester Gallery which documented, long term, six artists' creative processes through film; 'Setting the Scene: New Landscapes in Craft' for Crafts Study Centre 2013 and a vast immersive installation, 'Inundation' by Laura Ellen Bacon, for Ruthin Craft Centre 2014. She was consultant curator for the Arts Council of Wales/National Trust Artists' Residencies at NT Penrhyn Castle, 2015-17. In 1993 she curated the *The Chemistry Set* exhibition, examining the impact of ready access to information about the patination of metals on studio crafts, architecture and wider culture, for Crafts Council and The Southern Arts Touring Exhibition Service.

sararobertsblog.wordpress.com

About Design & Crafts Council Ireland

Design & Crafts Council Ireland is the national agency for craft and design in Ireland, we support designers and makers to develop their businesses in a sustainable way, and advocate for the societal benefits of craft and design. DCCI's activities are funded by the Department of Trade, Enterprise and Employment via Enterprise Ireland. DCCI currently has 66 member organisations and over 3,500 registered clients.

www.dcci.ie

[@dccireland](https://www.instagram.com/dccireland)

About the National Design & Craft Gallery

Established by Design & Crafts Council Ireland in 2000, the National Design & Craft Gallery is Ireland's leading centre for contemporary craft and design. It exhibits Irish and international designers, artists and makers who push boundaries in their engagement with the making process. Its mission is to inspire appreciation, creativity and innovation, and it plays a critical role in building understanding of craft and material culture in Ireland.

ndcg.ie