

Books/Book Chapters

---

2014

## Jaki Irvine, Biographical Entry

Niamh Ann Kelly

*Technological University Dublin*, [niamhann.kelly@tudublin.ie](mailto:niamhann.kelly@tudublin.ie)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/totalarcsbk>



Part of the [Contemporary Art Commons](#), [Fine Arts Commons](#), and the [Theory and Criticism Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Kelly, N. A. (2014). Jaki Irvine, Biographical Entry. Royal Irish Academy. DOI: 10.21427/X0M4-NS68

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by ARROW@TU Dublin. It has been accepted for inclusion in Books/Book Chapters by an authorized administrator of ARROW@TU Dublin. For more information, please contact [arrow.admin@tudublin.ie](mailto:arrow.admin@tudublin.ie), [aisling.coyne@tudublin.ie](mailto:aisling.coyne@tudublin.ie), [vera.kilshaw@tudublin.ie](mailto:vera.kilshaw@tudublin.ie).

 **RIA** ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY  
ACADAMH RÍOGA NA HÉIREANN

# ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF IRELAND

Andrew Carpenter, General Editor

**VOLUME III**

## Sculpture

1600–2000

Paula Murphy  
Editor

Máire Byrne, Volume Assistant

Máire Byrne and Rita Larkin, Volume Researchers

Published for the Royal Irish Academy and The Paul Mellon Centre by  
Yale University Press

DUBLIN – NEW HAVEN – LONDON



Copyright © 2014 The Royal Irish Academy

All rights reserved. This book may not be reproduced in whole or in part, including illustrations, in any form (beyond that copying permitted by Sections 107 and 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law and except by reviewers for the public press), without written permission from the publishers

Typeset in Frutiger LT and Minion Pro  
Designed by Fred Birdsall  
Printed in Italy

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA  
Art and architecture of Ireland.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-300-17919-4 (v. 1)

ISBN 978-0-300-17920-0 (v. 2)

ISBN 978-0-300-17921-7 (v. 3)

ISBN 978-0-300-17922-4 (v. 4)

ISBN 978-0-300-17923-1 (v. 5)

1. Art, Irish. 2. Architecture—Ireland. I. Moss, Rachel (Rachel Laura), editor of compilation. II. Figgis, Nicola, editor of compilation. III. Murphy, Paula, editor of compilation. IV. Loeber, Rolf, editor of compilation. V. Marshall, Catherine, editor of compilation.

N6782.A83 2014

709.415--dc23

2013044526

FRONTISPIECE

Edward Ambrose, *Psyche discovering Cupid* (detail), 1840, marble, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork [see 33]

PAGE X

Oliver Sheppard, *The Death of Cúchulainn* (detail), 1911–12, bronze, General Post Office, Dublin [see 356]

PAGE XXIV

Sculpture studio, Dublin Metropolitan School of Art (detail), c. 1912–14, Oliver Sheppard Collection, National Irish Visual Arts Library [see 403]



Hutson chose his bronze bust of *Thomas Davis*, which was commissioned for Cork City Library (RTÉ documentary, 2002). The bust was considered 'a noble work in the classic tradition' at the RHA in 1946 (*IT*, 16 April 1946), further confirming Hutson as a traditionalist rather than an innovator.

Hutson participated on one occasion at the RA, exhibiting busts of Gibbings and of the painter *James Sleanor* in 1948. There is little evidence that he concerned himself with recognition in Britain after this date.

Living in Sunday's Well in Cork, Hutson was married with two children. His wife Clare Kelleher, who had modelled for him, designed costumes for the ballet, and their son Lawrence became a painter and a maker of Cruith harps (*Sun Ind*, 9 February 1964). Hutson's long service to the School of Art was recognized in the M.C. Hutson Award, instigated in 1998, when he had already been retired for more than thirty years. As a mark of respect for Hutson's dedication to different artistic disciplines, the award was designated for the postgraduate Diploma in Art and Design Teaching.

Marshall Hutson died on 31 October 2001 at the age of ninety-eight. A documentary of his life was shown on RTE in 2002 and a retrospective exhibition of his work was held at the CAG in 2004. PAULA MURPHY

**IRVINE, JAKI** (b. 1966). (see also *AAI v*). Contextualizing Jaki Irvine's work in his history of video art, Michael Newman remarked: 'the object is always the object *re-found*, there is no 'original' or 'first' object. And what better medium in which to speak of the lost object than film or video?' (*Art Press*, 202 (May

1995), 46). When the newly renovated Project Arts Centre in Temple Bar, Dublin, opened in 2000, Irvine was invited to curate a moving image exhibition. *Somewhere Near Vada* epitomized Irvine's pioneering of film and video work over the preceding decade. She was a founding member of the artists' collective Blue Funk, 1989–93, and, though the group was short-lived as a discreet entity, its success in promoting time-based and collaborative art practices had a lasting impact on the art scene in Ireland.

Born in Dublin, Irvine has lived in London and Italy and now moves between Dublin and Mexico City. An internationally active practitioner, she was included in the 1995 Venice Biennale in *General Release: Young British Artists* and represented Ireland at the 1997 Venice Biennale. She graduated with a degree in Fine Art Sculpture from NCAD in 1989 and in 1994 was awarded an MA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths College, London. She won the 1990 Guinness Peat Aviation Emerging Artist's Award, has work in collections of IMMA, Arts Council England and Moderna Museet Stockholm and has participated in group exhibitions in Japan, Australia and across Europe.

Her video *Eyelashes* (1996) was shown in Tate Britain's 2003 exhibition *A Century of Artists' Film in Britain*. In *Eyelashes* a man and woman sit casually across a table from each other in an unremarkable domestic interior. A man's fixation on a woman's eyelashes is recounted in a female voice-over; the narrative tension heightens, echoing the man's deepening fetishistic obsession. A meditation on the gap between intimacy and fantasy, reality and desire, is transformed into an art of ellipsis that mirrors the abstruse perceptual chasm between people. Romance is



159. Jaki Irvine, *Margaret Again*, 1995, multi-screen video installation, Irish Museum of Modern Art



more overtly the theme of *Star*, 1994, where again a disparity between the scene suggested from the outset of the film sequence is destabilized by unfolding events, and an unresolved story is left suspended to enthrall the viewer.

Irvine's first solo exhibition at Anthony Wilkinson Fine Art, London, in 1995 was a five-screen colour installation shot on video, *Margaret Again* [159]. Theatrical in gesture, humorous in tone and gently absurd in content, the work was based on a character from Richard Brautigan's novel *Watermelon Sugar* (1968), who hangs herself following a lover's rejection. Irvine resurrects her: a young woman on a London rooftop unfurls tinfoil and then descends to an apartment interior to meet her double. An acrobatic communicative exchange ensues while the spoken dialogue, an excerpt from the film *An Awful Truth* (1939), cannot be heard over the intrusive strains of a Stravinsky waltz. The two Margarets eventually become one and she leaves the apartment. Kate Bush wrote: 'Gloriously unhinged, the film nevertheless supplies its own strangely coherent logic. It is a fantastic reverie on the nature of difference and similitude' (*Frieze*, 24 (September–October 1995), 44).

Through the 1990s Irvine used multiple screens to cue fragmented narratives, with whimsical undertones also evident. Composing the text for *Sweet Tooth* (1994), a lighthearted reflection on a girl's experience of having false teeth fitted, Irvine, when travelling to work, happened upon a sculpture restoration studio. Her footage of the studio was paired with spoken text interposing connections between moulding and filling, art and self-representation. This phantasmagorical aspect to Irvine's practice, where fiction and reality commingle in the dreamlike quality of her work, was apparent also in her two-screen installation on lifesize scale, for the exhibition *Pandemonium* at the ICA, London, in 1996. With elegiac mood, *Losing Doris* enlivened dead images by subtly animating two found photographs. One photograph was of a woman seated on a chair; the other of a woman on a windswept street. By structuring a dialogue between the two images, with shared music and English voiceovers spoken in a German accent, Irvine proffered a scenario of imaginative possibilities. She has repeatedly drawn on her geographical surroundings: made while on residencies in Italy, the five short films of *The Hottest Sun*, *The Darkest Hour* (1998–99) refer to the Italian land and cityscapes, song choices and filmic style. These films also indicated Irvine's burgeoning thematic interest in nature which she has pursued in subsequent works.

In her early works, Irvine's commitment to the physicality of film was evident in her use of video, Super 8 film and 16 mm projections, often resulting in grainy images. Her deployment of black-and-white film avoided indulgent nostalgia in lieu of a modest sentimentality intimating time incessantly passing. These works, drawing in her viewers through mesmerizingly sequenced imagery interpolated by audio elements, read like extracts from larger inexplicable narratives in which Irvine presented enduring poetic contemplations on the self and other and the viewer recognized the wonderment of everyday living. NIAMH ANN KELLY

SELECTED READING *Yet on the Other Hand*, exh. curated by Margrit Brehm and Axel Heil, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden, 1998; Henry Moore Institute, *Jaki Irvine: Plans for*

*Forgotten Works*, Leeds, 2005; Jaki Irvine, Michael Sarah Glennie, *Jaki Irvine: The Square Root of Minus i or Minus i*, New York, 2008.

**JAMMET, YVONNE** (née Auger) (1900–67). sculptor Yvonne Jammet was born in Paris and had a sister, Suzette (Basso). She studied at the Académie Julian and the Atelier Jean-Paul Laurens in Paris. Jammet came to Ireland in 1928 with her husband Louis to take over his father's restaurant at 46 Nassau Street. The couple arrived with their two children, Michel and Raymonde, and Patrick and Róisín in 1929. Their restaurant, glamorous and central to the social life of Dublin, was frequented by, among others, the poet John Hilton Edwards and Micheál Mac Liammóir, the painter Séamus J. Philipson, gallery owner Victor Waddington and many other local and visiting international luminaries. It was in 1929 that Jammet first emerged on the art scene in Dublin. Her work in the field of her costume design is noted in the reviews of a production of *Shakespeare* by Hilton Edwards at the Gate Theatre in 1929.

Jammet, unusually, was both a passionate medievalist in her sculpture and a progressive Modernist in her painting. In the foreword to her paintings invariably stated that she was either 'distinguished and successful exponents of contemporary tendencies in art' as noted by Thomas MacGreavey in *The Hibernian Academy, An Exclusive Exhibition* (1943), or that she was 'too modern', as suggested by an *Irish Times* review in 1946 (12 April). Her carvings, on the other hand, reflected her passion for medieval cathedral sculpture from which she drew her inspiration. As early as 1929 she became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries.

Jammet first began carving at her home, 46 Nassau Street, Queens Park, Monkstown, Co. Dublin, and once she had moved to her new home that she enjoyed it because with carving 'you are in a world of your own' (RTV Guide, 5 April 1963). Indeed the success of her carving appealed to her contemplative side and was a relief from the hectic social whirl of the restaurant (interviewed by Róisín Hood, Jammet's daughter, June 2009). Some of her single figures, while derivative of French cathedral sculpture, are beautiful and full of expression.

The Jammets purchased Kill Abbey, Kill o' the Sheep, Co. Dublin (1947), one of the oldest houses in Dublin, built on the site of an ancient monastery. In French over the last few centuries, the house had many historical and unusual features that delighted Jammet, such as a subterranean space in the basement, a bullaun stone at the entrance, and a well with steps leading down to it from the front lawn. She designed a studio 50 ft × 18 ft, built of granite with a garden and goldfish pool and spent long hours working in it. The blocks of wood she used varied in hardness and required considerable physical strength and skill. The reviewer of her *Paintings and Wood Carvings* at Waddington Gallery (September 1951) remarked how one of the carvings was wrought from a pear tree, another from a huge sycamore while yet another was carved from the branch of a cedar tree in her own garden.

An article in the *Father Mathew Record* (44, 1951, 5) examines Jammet's religious subject matter.