



RACHEL JOYNT
Fathom - outstretched arms



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Tara Murphy requests the pleasure of your company
at the private view of

RACHEL JOYNT

Fathom - outstretched arms

to be opened by

Clíodhna Shaffrey

Director, Temple Bar Gallery + Studios

Thursday 29 May 2025

from 6pm to 8pm

The exhibition continues until Saturday 21 June 2025

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday 10.00am – 5.30pm / Saturday: 11am – 4pm

Artworks may be viewed and acquired in advance at the gallery by appointment, via the Online Viewing Room
at www.solomonfineart.ie - or simply scan the QR code below for prices and availability.

Solomon Fine Art

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front cover: *TURN II (detail)*, bronze & black granite, unique, from a series of 10, 49 x 32 x 16 cm

inside cover: *BREATH 4:8*, film still

back cover: *INVISIBLE BECOMES VISIBLE*, film still



*What it seems it is and in such seeming all things are*¹
Wallace Stevens

I wonder when was the first time Rachel went down to Lough Hyne, and when did she notice the Lake's irregular rhythm? Surely the sea urchins and mussels who live in these salty waters would have grabbed her attention. This skilled artist has always been drawn to underwater life and the micro elements of the natural world. Her scaled and exquisite sculptures bear their presence as isolates. Rachel's bronze versions revel in her abilities to bring out the sensual qualities of her material; those calcareous nippy shells, those pearly dark surfaces. She gives us forms we can look inside and peer right through. She wants to bring us close. Utterly approachable, we cannot contain our human foolishness to anthropomorphise. She wants us to see, to really see, the marvel that is there. This is work of compassion. Transfixing invisible entities as objects of substance, so as to bear fruit to her argument that we are knitted into complex biological systems. We are nature, not separate from it.

Artists sometimes speak of their secret sense - the thing that draws them to something. A something outside of themselves that reflects something inside of themselves. We might call this simply paying attention, but it is more than noticing (although that is a primary part of it); it's an empathy, a need to grasp and create and bring the force or the fury into view. It is Lough Hyne's intertidal irregular rhythm that beckoned, this time, the point in which her work, *Fathom, outstretched arms*, is hinged. This is a new path, there is a sense of a turning. There is the continuing subject of anemones and molluscs and the puzzling inhabitants of Lough Hyne who exist because it is sea, river and lake all at once. It's an extraordinary place, scientists long ago set up a station, and ground-breaking ecological research takes place on its shores. Rachel has walked there umpteen times. Halted, this one day by its unusual cycle, watching the kink between ebb and flow. The precise moment at the turn of the tide. The single spot at which you can see it happen. Hear the swish, a moment of pause, and then the ground-swirl of shallow water over rocks. The air, perhaps, latent with thousands of translucent species. Eight hours to four, (not six to six). Tide in, tide out. Like the breathing exercise they promote to expel pain, awaken senses, imagine ourselves being gently re-fitted into the world, where the question, 'who am I' dissolves into a bigger picture - the infinitesimal, cyclical, fleeting. The conundrum, as Rachel declares it, 'to know an ungraspable thing'².

Fathom: outstretched arms is the title settled on for this exhibition. Its different meanings potently suggestive. It conjures the spatial and the bodily. It is a system of measurement, generally in relation to the depth of water, and, a puzzle, something to be figured out, fathomed. Outstretched arms brings quick to mind images of an embrace, an opening up to, an invitation towards. Threads tie meanings together in this new body of work. There is a different slant. There is the extension out to others; invitations to collaborate; an embrace of new skills Scientists consulted. A poet's (Kerry Hardie) words are planted. New processes tried. There is a step into moving image; a revisiting of print; trialling the technique of liquid marbling, and an innovation of cut-off plastic bottle ends for casting bronzes. Delightful are the breakthroughs achieved. Meanings possess layers. It is not so much a divergence from what her art has always been about, charged with wonder for complex interconnectedness at the root of life. Rather, it's like her art grows new branches. A flowering that holds lightness, as she strives to comprehend

¹ Wallace Stevens, *Description Without Place*, 1945

² Rachel was referring to Steve Mentz who uses this phrase in his book, *At the Bottom of Shakespeare's Ocean*, where he writes about the ocean's inherent mystery and its challenge to human understanding, The sea possess a complex and dynamic nature that is difficult to fully grasp.

a place and crosses the misty boundary that sees the self in a vast and shifting world.

I visit her studio at the foothills of the Blackstairs Mountains. At her kitchen table, we talk about things she has been reflecting on, and how the sharing of books and conversations with Kerry led her to some interesting finds. Significant was Adam Nicholson's book, *The Sea is not Made of Water*, whose dive into life between the tides explores the physics of the sea and our human relationship with it. And she is keen to talk about Leonardo's 'Vitruvian Man', the famous Renaissance drawing that epitomises the concept of an ideal ratio of human proportion. A male nude stands in both a circle and a square with two pairs of arms and legs in superimposed positions so they touch the perimeters of both the circle and the square. Rachel has always been fascinated by mathematical patterning – the golden ratio, the Fibonacci series, the rules governing systems. Da Vinci's drawing speaks to her with its openness to meaning and pushes beyond calculating a formula for the ideal proportion of man at the centre of the universe, suggesting an alternative expression of human diversity. It symbolises different aspects of the universe and our human place within - the circle representing the infinite, the sphere of the divine and the feminine; the square, the material world and the masculine. Might it be possible, Rachel proposes, that Leonardo intended there to be a figure of a woman beneath the superimposed male nude? It's beguiling.

Outside in her studio, a spacious corrugated barn, I get to see her work in train. There are finished pieces displayed on plinths. A white bronze sea urchin is instantly striking. It commands the voluminous studio in spite of being just the size of a human head. It will set a vantage point for viewing the exhibition. Through a hole at its centre we can look inside and right through to glimpse a group of delicate, perforated cast diatoms (microscopic algae, specific to Lough Hyne). A large mollusc elevated on a tall plinth and the size of a human lung is also ready for the foundry. Its modulated shell hinges open to let us see inside - an intricate bronchial inlay like a strangle of branches. On a table are a series of starfish. Their shapes resonate something of 'Vitruvian Man'. They will balance on one arm, their spiny surfaces angle into the room and form a line so their collective impact reads like a dance. Plinths of differing heights, capped by a cushion of polished granite for the sculptures to sit on, also perform their part. It is possible to imagine the rhythmic dazzle achieved by this scenario. It wants to take us out of ourselves and into another realm.

Her three moving image works compound this affinity to something bigger. In one, she drops a camera into Lough Hyne at the point of the turning tide. Clusters of seaweed are made to sway back and forth at an unusual, effortless pace. Tendrils, free and easy go this way and then that, and the sun's radiance pierces the lake's surface so under the water the colours are blue and pink, purple and green. The sound of the artist breathing, four in, eight out, keeps with this beat. Engaging her son's filmic skills, Rachel floats like a starfish on the lake, filmed from high above, distance is accentuated and her scale diminished. She is free, she lets go. Footage of the scientist examining diatoms through her microscope is superimposed and their pale spirits swim over and around. Untethered, the self is on a par with the microscopic. We are part of a whole and the whole is vast and mutable and marvellous. The final film is Kerry Hardie's poem, looped and cyclical so we cannot know its beginning or end. It takes us on a journey from light to dark to light, into time and before time, 'when nothing was anything, having no I-ness'.

I say goodbye to Rachel and get on the train to go home. And I write these words, Rachel is an artist true to herself.

Clíodhna Shaffrey, Director, Temple Bar Gallery + Studios, Dublin



TURN II
bronze & black granite
unique, from a series of 10
49 x 32 x 16 cm





TURN I
bronze & black granite
unique, from a series of 10
49 x 32 x 16 cm



TURN III
bronze & black granite
unique, from a series of 10
49 x 32 x 16 cm



TURN IV
bronze & black granite
unique, from a series of 10
49 x 32 x 16 cm



TURN V
bronze & black granite
unique, from a series of 10
49 x 32 x 16 cm



BREATH
bronze, nickel plate & black granite
edition of 8
53 x 16 x 17 cm





UN SEEN I
bronze & emerald pearl granite
varied edition of 5
32 x 15 x 10 cm



UN SEEN III
bronze & emerald pearl granite
varied edition of 5
32 x 15 x 10 cm



WONDER
bronze & black granite
edition of 5
47 x 27 x 21cm





UN SEEN II
bronze & emerald pearl granite
varied edition of 5
32 x 15 x 10 cm



UN SEEN V
bronze & emerald pearl granite
varied edition of 5
24 x 12 x 9 cm



UN SEEN VII
bronze & emerald pearl granite
varied edition of 5
19 x 9 x 9 cm

FATHOM - outstretched arms
cast silver & fishing line
unique
2.5 x 2 x 2 cm





UN SEEN VI
bronze & emerald pearl granite
varied edition of 5
19 x 9 x 9 cm



UN SEEN IV
bronze & emerald pearl granite
varied edition of 5
24 x 12 x 9 cm



INHALE/EXHALE V
 marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper
 unique
 40 x 30 cm



INHALE/EXHALE VI
 marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper
 unique
 40 x 30 cm



INHALE/EXHALE I
 marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper
 unique
 80 x 60 cm



INHALE/EXHALE III
 marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper
 unique
 25 x 35 cm



INVISIBLE BECOMES VISIBLE
film still



BREATHE 4:8
film still

RACHEL JOYNT RHA

- 1984-89 BA Hons, Fine Art Sculpture, National College of Art and Design, Dublin
- 1988 Exchange student, Edinburgh College of Art, Scotland
- 2022 Elected as Member of Aosdána
- 2005 Elected Full Member of the Royal Hibernian Academy

Awards

- 2016 Award & commission for Áras an Uachtaráin
- 2015 Nominated for Golden Fleece Award (Commendation winner)
- 2012-19 Artlinks Visual Arts Bursary, Carlow Co Council

Selected Public Commissions

- 2021 *ÉIST - listen*, Scartleigh National School, Saleen, Co. Cork
- 2017 *Dearcán na nDaoine - The Peoples Acorn*, Áras An Uachtaráin, Phoenix Park. Comissioned by OPW and President's Office
- 2014 *Waggle Dance*, collaborative sculpture with Remco de Fouw, Íontas Building, NUI, Maynooth
- 2013 *Instinct*, walkway along River Moy, Ballina, Co. Mayo, Mayo County Council
- 2012 *Golden Apple*, St Nessan's College, Limerick
- 2009 *Guiding Star*, Port Oriel, Clougherhead, Louth County Council
- 2007 *Love All*, Templogue village, South Dublin County Council
- 2007 *Clutch*, Baltray, Drogheda, Louth County Council
- 2005 *Free Flow*, North Quay, Dublin Docklands Development Authority, Dublin
- 2004 *Noah's Egg*, Veterinary Building, UCD, Belfield, Co. Dublin
- 2003 *Arc Hive*, Pearse Street Library, Dublin City Council
- 2002 *Moonwalk*, Morecambe Bay, Lancashire City Council, England
- 2001 *Egg*, Redrow Homes, Cardiff Bay Arts Trust, Cardiff, Wales
- 2001 *Starboard*, Gregg's Quay, Laganside Corporation, Belfast
- 1999 *Mothership*, Newtownsmith, Sandycove, Dun Laoighaire Rathdown County Council, Co. Dublin
- 1997 *Shoreline*, Strand Road, Derry, N. Ireland, Derry City Council
- 1996 *Perpetual Motion*, Naas Bypass, collaboration with Remco de Fouw, Kildare County Council
- 1995 *Vane as a Peacock*, weather vane & pool, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin Castle, OPW
- 1994 *A Spine Path*, Library Headquarters, Clare County Council, Ennis, Clare
- 1992 *Red Stone*, Visitors Centre, OPW, Kilrush, Co. Clare
- 1991 *Wood Key Walk*, Winetavern Street / Patrick Street project, Dublin City Council
- 1990 *Solas na Glasrai-The Green Light*, Moore Street (now Church Street), Dublin City Council
- 1988- 17 *Peoples Island - Oileán na nDaoine*, Dublin '88 Millennium (redesigned in 2017), Dublin City Council & Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Selected Commercial Commissions

- 2024 *New Leaf/Duille Óg*, Glencar House, Merrion Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin
- 2022 *Síol*, Glencar House, Merrion Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin
- 2019 *Keepsake / Cuimhneachán*, Chartered Land Ltd, Lansdowne Place, Ballsbridge, Dublin
- 2018 *Metropropolis*, collaborative sculpture with Remco de Fouw, Green Properties, Sandyford, Dublin
- 2006 *Mother of Pearl*, private garden, Killiney, Co. Dublin
- 2001 *Eccentric Orbit*, Portmarnock, collaborative commission, Co. Dublin
- 1997 *Meltdown*, collaborative sculpture with Remco de Fouw, Newcastle upon Tyne Eco Centre, UK

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2025 *Fathom - outstretched arms*, Solomon Fine Art, Dublin
- 2013 *SEA - CHANGE*, Ashford Gallery, RHA, Ely Place, Dublin
- 1999 *FEED*, installation, Temple Bar Gallery and Studios, Dublin
- 1996 *Route*, residency and exhibition in La Friche Belle de Mai, Marseille
- 1993-94 *SELENE*, installation, Project Arts Centre, Dublin & Arts Council Gallery, Belfast

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2024 *It Took a Century*, Women Artists and the RHA, National Gallery of Ireland
- 2020 *Connected*, Kilkenny Sculpture trail, National Design Craft Gallery, Kilkenny
- 2020 *SHEKINA* sculpture garden collection, Glenmalur, Co. Wicklow
- 2019 *The Book Project*, 9 Stones Artists, VISUAL, Carlow
- 2019-25 Solomon Fine Art, Dublin 2, Winter & Summer group exhibitions
- 2017 *The Sea*, Catherine Hammond Gallery, Skibbereen, Co. Cork
- 2016 *The Possibility of Place*, VISUAL, Carlow
- 2015 *EIGSE*, VISUAL, Carlow Arts Festival, Carlow
- 2015-19 *VUE*, Solomon Fine Art, RHA Gallagher Gallery, Co. Dublin
- 2014 Boyle Arts Festival Main Exhibition, Boyle, Co. Roscommon
- 2014 *Dublin Biennial 2014*, CHO Building, IFSC, Docklands, Dublin
- 2012 *9 Stones Artists*, EIGSE, Deighton Hall, Carlow
- 2011 *CAST 25*, Solomon Gallery, Dublin & James Wray & Co. Gallery, Belfast
- 2010 Festival Art Exhibition, EPA, Johnstown Castle, Wexford
- 2009-15 *9 Stones Artists*, Norman Gallery, Wexford & Borris House, Carlow
- 2005-25 Royal Hibernian Academy Annual Exhibition, RHA Gallagher Gallery, Dublin

Collections

National Self Portrait Collection, Office of Public Works, Bank of Ireland, AIB Bank, The Gallery of Photography, VAI/Visual Arts Ireland, Temple Bar Gallery + Studios, Temple Bar Properties

creation loop

the thing was we were used to just drifting around,
lounging about on a raft in the twilight,

not being, since there was nothing to be,
not doing, since there was nothing to do,

not even sex, since both of us had both,
and anyway, we were each other:

then a Light-God shinned down on a length of old rope,
and the raft began spinning about on the nothing,

and sky became sky and under it, water
on which we seemed to be floating around

above strange stripey creatures with wavering tails,
and bright voices skimming the skin of the shining,

until with the sound of an egg cracking open,
some plug was yanked so clean from its hole

that the Light God went shimmying back up the rope
and everything changed from No-time to Hurry,

the grey light turned blue, we forgot to remember
that old violet drifting about on the raft

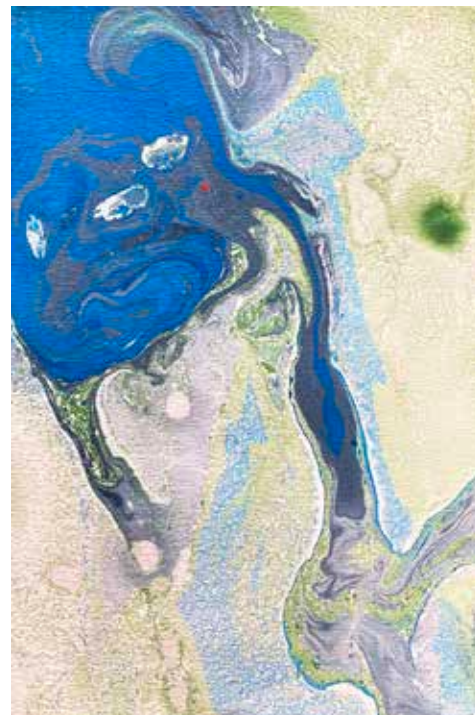
when nothing was anything
having no I-ness,

now Hurry spun round in a whirlpool of sucking—
then a scraping and grounding, some slimy osmosis,

but not a beginning,
there was no beginning,

we are old gods, small, and not like you humans,
it was all a very long time ago—

Kerry Hardie



INHALE/EXHALE VII
marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper
unique
25 x 35 cm

CREDITS

This is a show with bronze marine sculpture forms, print, video and is complemented by a *Creation Loop* piece written by Kerry Hardie.

"the work is rooted in my own personal journey of change and to seek a deeper connection to our irregular but natural world that is in constant flux. As a focus, I am exploring Lough Hyne's unique marine reserve as a living breathing entity, making the invisible more visible". RJ

www.racheljoynt.com

Thanks to:

Poet Kerry Hardie

Louis Joynt de Fouw - drone videography & editing

Marine biologist Prof. Rob McAllen & PhD student Maria McGuinness, UCC

Cóilín Brennan & the amazing crew at CAST Ltd foundry

Clíodhna Shaffrey, Director, Temple Bar Gallery + Studios

Ros Kavanagh – catalogue photography

Emma Jane Champley, jeweller – who taught me how to sand cast silver

Stephen O'Briain

Phoenix Framers

Royal Hibernian Academy

Aosdána

Katherine Sankey

Killian Schurmann

Christine Wyss

Oliver Joynt de Fouw

Tara Murphy and all at Solomon Fine Art

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Photo: *Trip with Prof. Rob McAllen, UCC in search of sea species in Lough Hyne*



SCULPTURE

1.	Wonder	bronze & black granite, edition of 5	47 x 27 x 21 cm
2.	Breath	bronze, nickel plate & black granite, edition of 8	53 x 16 x 17 cm
3.	Turn I	bronze & black granite, unique from a series of 10	49 x 32 x 16 cm
4.	Turn II	bronze & black granite, unique from a series of 10	49 x 32 x 16 cm
5.	Turn III	bronze & black granite, unique from a series of 10	49 x 32 x 16 cm
6.	Turn IV	bronze & black granite, unique from a series of 10	49 x 32 x 16 cm
7.	Turn V	bronze & black granite, unique from a series of 10	49 x 32 x 16 cm
8.	Un seen I	bronze & emerald pearl granite, varied edition of 5	32 x 15 x 10 cm
9.	Un seen II	bronze & emerald pearl granite, varied edition of 5	32 x 15 x 10 cm
10.	Un seen III	bronze & emerald pearl granite, varied edition of 5	32 x 15 x 10 cm
11.	Un seen IV	bronze & emerald pearl granite, varied edition of 5	24 x 12 x 9 cm
12.	Un seen V	bronze & emerald pearl granite, varied edition of 5	24 x 12 x 9 cm
13.	Un seen VI	bronze & emerald pearl granite, varied edition of 5	19 x 9 x 9 cm
14.	Un seen VII	bronze & emerald pearl granite, varied edition of 5	19 x 9 x 9 cm
15.	Fathom - outstretched arms	cast silver & fishing line, unique	2.5 x 2 x 2 cm

WORKS ON PAPER

16.	Inhale/Exhale I @ Lough Hyne	marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper, unique	80 x 60 cm
17.	Inhale/Exhale II @ Lough Hyne	marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper, unique	80 x 60 cm
18.	Inhale/Exhale III @ Lough Hyne	marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper, unique	80 x 60 cm
19.	Inhale/Exhale IV @ Lough Hyne	marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper, unique	80 x 60 cm
20.	Inhale/Exhale V @ Lough Hyne	marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper, unique	40 x 30 cm
21.	Inhale/Exhale VI @ Lough Hyne	marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper, unique	40 x 30 cm
22.	Inhale/Exhale VII @ Lough Hyne	marbling ink & carrageen size on watercolour paper, unique	35 x 25 cm

FILM / MULTIMEDIA

23.	Breathe 4:8	filmed by the artist at the rapids in Lough Hyne, edited by Louis Joynt de Fouw
24.	Creation Loop	poem by Kerry Hardie, motion graphics by Louis Joynt de Fouw
25.	invisible becomes visible	drone filmed at Lough Hyne & edited by Louis Joynt de Fouw, microscope footage from Lough Hyne water sample, supplied by marine biologists Maria McGuinness & Prof. Rob McAllen, University College Cork

Photo: *Trip with Prof. Rob McAllen, UCC in search of sea species in Lough Hyne*





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