

SEAMS by Laura Wilson opens at CCA Derry~Londonderry

Tuesday 21 March, 2023

Artist Laura Wilson opens [SEAMS](#), an exhibition of new and existing work at CCA Derry~Londonderry. *SEAMS* marks her first solo show in Northern Ireland, launching on Friday 31 March 2023 and runs until 3 June 2023.

This solo exhibition by Laura Wilson comprises three installations including a significant new body of work entitled *Winding then Winding*. Laura is interested in how everyday materials such as bricks, textile, wheat, salt and bread dough transmit historical and embodied knowledge between people over time and place. Laura develops research-led projects, working with specialists and experts to communicate relationships between materiality, memory and tacit knowledge, explored through sculpture, performance, drawings and video. This exhibition is a survey of Laura's recent works connected by the body, learning, movement and labour.

Winding then Winding (2022–23) is informed by Laura's research into her family history, the production and export of linen through the Derry~Londonderry ports and the history of Linenopolis, the name given to her hometown of Belfast in the 19th Century when it was at the centre of the world's linen industry. This work builds upon previous works investigating how the body learns, adapts, responds to and performs manual work. Over the past 18 months the artist has been learning how to weave linen, whilst researching the social history of the fabric and its facture. One of the strongest fibres in existence, linen traditionally requires skilled people to produce it. The works in the exhibition are inspired by the architecture and physical movement of operating a loom as well as the political and personal histories of linen production. Laura's ancestors worked in factories in Portadown and Lisburn as weavers, warpers and yarn winders and she explores ways information is passed on from one person to another and between generations, in particular how knowledge can be stored within the body. Developed in parallel with Laura's changing pregnant body, with the largest works produced post-partum and taking their structure from the cycle of her day caring for her newborn - changing the weaving pattern or weft yarn following nursing or soothing. The linen maps the passage of time as a new parent, growth spurts, cluster feeding and naps. Laura considers that as a counterpoint to the increasing pace of mechanical production and often invisible, outsourced labour of today's new technologies and unsustainable production of fabrics for fast fashion as well as the relationship between women's work and labour.

Laura's table loom forms part of the installation and she will weave alongside her mother, whom she is teaching to weave, on the first day of the exhibition. Throughout the run of the exhibition weavers are invited to contribute to a collective weaving on the loom.

Showing alongside this work is *Deepening* (2020) a video commissioned by New Geographies and Norwich Cast Museum & Art Gallery and *To The Wind's Teeth* (2021) commissioned by the Landmark Trust.

Deepening is presented alongside costumes and performance tools from *Deep*, *Deepen*, *Deepening* (2019). This work resulted from Laura's research into the Must Farm, an exceptionally well-preserved Bronze Age settlement (c. 850 BC) at the edge of a working brick quarry near Peterborough. Laura worked closely with archaeologists and brick quarry workers, researching the found objects and questioning labour, trade, everyday life both in the past and now. The film brings together documentation from the performance alongside hand-held footage filmed during her research and additional footage featuring twelve Bronze Age vessels excavated from the Must Farm site.

To the Wind's Teeth (2021) is a film presented alongside the costumes and performance tools featured. This site-specific work was produced in Llwyn Celyn, situated in the Llanthony Valley at the edge of the Brecon Beacons National Park in Wales. Llwyn Celyn is regarded as one of the most remarkable of all surviving late-mediaeval houses in Wales. The house's adjacent threshing barn inspired Laura, a space where wheat would have been used to thrash and winnow the edible grain from locally harvested wheat, bringing together craft, work, home and ideas of labour.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of events and video interview with the artist. Visit CCADLD.org for more information and follow @CCADLD on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for updates.

Supported by a bursary from a-n The Artists Information Company; funded by the County Durham

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About CCA Derry~Londonderry:

The [Centre for Contemporary Art \(CCA\)](#) is a publicly funded space within the historic city walls of Derry~Londonderry. CCA creates opportunities for audiences to experience ambitious, experimental and engaging art and for emerging artists to develop successful careers. CCA fosters a wide range of artistic, curatorial and critical practices through five programme streams: research and production, exhibition-making, public programmes, publishing and residencies.

CCA was a Finalist in Art Fund Museum of the Year 2021, the largest museum prize in the world. CCA was recognised for its resilience and adaptability throughout the pandemic, and their continued effort to support audiences and artists including creating paid opportunities for artists and freelancers when they needed it most.

CCA is a member of Plus Tate: Plus Tate is a network, which comprises 35 cultural institutions – including the Tate galleries – that have strong artistic vision, a focus on contemporary art, outstanding public programming and a commitment to local community engagement through art. Plus Tate aims to support the development of the visual arts across the UK.

Safety: CCA has a range of safety measures to ensure staff and visitors can enjoy exhibitions with the knowledge that every precaution is taken. This includes hand sanitisers at entrances and exits and heightened cleaning schedules. All who are able to wear a mask are invited to do so and a dedicated isolation room is available in the event of the onset of symptoms.

About the Artist:

[Laura Wilson](#) was born in Belfast and lives and works in London. She is interested in how history is carried and evolved through everyday materials, trades and craftsmanship, working with specialists to develop sculptural and performative works that amplify the relationship between materiality, memory and tacit knowledge. Wilson's interdisciplinary and research-based works have been exhibited widely including at: Site Gallery, Sheffield (2022); The Collection, Lincoln with Mansions of the Future, UK; First Draft, Sydney, Australia; The Landmark Trust, Wales, UK (2021); 5th Istanbul Design Biennial – Empathy Revisited: Designs for More than One; Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Norwich, UK as part of New Geographies (2020); The British Museum, London, UK with Block Universe; Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, UK; and The Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, London, UK (2018); SPACE, London, UK; V&A Museum, London, UK; and Invisible Dust at Hull and East Riding Museum, Hull, UK (2017); Delfina Foundation, London, UK (2016 & 17). Site Gallery, Sheffield, UK (2016); Whitstable Biennial, UK (2014); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK and Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK (2013); W139, Amsterdam and De Warande, Turnhout, Belgium (2012). She is currently the MIMA Kitchen & Garden Artist in Residence where she has been encouraging new conversations and connections around food, nutrition and local producers in the North East of England. A Churchill Fellow, Wilson was awarded the inaugural Jerwood New Work Fund 2020 and the Dover Prize 2021.

Image list:

Laura Wilson, *To the Wind's Teeth* (2021) / *I Ddannedd y Gwynt* (2021). Still from video 11:19 minutes. Still from video. Image courtesy of the artist. Commissioned by The Landmark Trust.

Laura Wilson, *Deepening*, 2020. Still from video, 15:36 minutes. Image courtesy of the artist. Commissioned by New Geographies and Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery.

Laura Wilson, *Deep, Deepen, Deepening* (2020) Commissioned by New Geographies and Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery. Photo: Rui Pignatelli

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