

Artists:
Svenja Michelle Behle
John Graham
Eva Nielsen
Sam O'Reilly
Tracy Staunton
Lee Welch

Curated by
Noémie Coursoux,
2026 Emerging Curator Award

Commissioned by
Black Church Print Studio

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February 6 - 28, 2026

The Library Project
4 Temple Bar, Dublin 2

Curated by Noémie Coursoux, Winner of Black Church
Emerging Curator Award '26

Artists:

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Opening Hours: Tuesday - Friday 11am-6pm; Saturday
12-6pm

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Curator Statement

Slow Image brings together practices that explore and question the materiality of the image in relation to contemporary visual culture. The title of this exhibition is inspired by Helen Westgeest's publication, *Slow Painting*, in which the author reflects on handmade image-making as a counterpoint to the rapid, consumable imagery of our media-saturated world. As Westgeest writes, *"these works serve to counterbalance the fugitive images of the digital age [...]. This automatically implies attention for the relationship between slowness or stillness and contemplation versus the fastness and fleetingness of the countless images today."*^[1]

This exhibition features works by **Svenja Michelle Behle, John Graham, Eva Nielsen, Sam O'Reilly, Tracy Staunton and Lee Welch**. Their work examines and

responds to the highly saturated visual context of the contemporary world. Through both shared and unique approaches, their practices often highlight textures, layers, imperfections, and irregularities.

In **Eva Nielsen's** works each layer is visible. Her compositions unfold through accumulations of printmaking and painting, sometimes obscuring the figures. Through this process, Eva Nielsen reveals the stratification, laying and building of slow images and landscapes. **Lee Welch**, conversely, reveals the materiality of painting through an economy of gestures. His spontaneous and unfinished shapes simultaneously build and obstruct the figures. Therefore, his work invites reflection about the perception itself. *All at once* (2025) highlights the lack of vision, and *Novak Djokovic reading the NY time* (2024) explores the idea of seeing through mediated representation. On the other hand, Welch underscores the power of creativity, resilience and meaningful conversations in facing the complexities of reality – through the representation of Palestinian artist and activist Samia Halaby staring at the viewer in *It's an interesting question* (2024).

Alternatively, other artists use precise, delicate, and subtle gestures to emphasise slow image-making while exploring its fragility. **Svenja Michelle Behle** gives physicality to images shaped from memory and hypnagogic states – between wakefulness and sleep. She translates transient and fleeting landscapes onto soft silk utilizing the fluidity of ink. The fabric preserves what would otherwise disappear. Inspired

by Giovanni Battista Piranesi's etchings, *The Cherry was an Ice Cube* (2025) explores the perception of perspective in fantasy like spaces, and their warping and malleable qualities. Therefore, her practice reveals the impermanence of images, which shifts through manipulation, circulation, and interpretation. **John Graham's** delicate grids, by contrast, slow the gaze by leading it across the surface, with perceptible hints of an underlying realm. His overlapping lines build and cancel the surface at once, a subtle binary of opposites. For ***Slow Image***, John Graham has also designed a playlist of slow music to complement this register of attention.

Also, some of the artists incorporate digital aesthetics into traditional print techniques, revealing that digital and printed forms are not opposites but can also enrich one another. **Sam O'Reilly**, for instance, articulates pixelated structures with screen printing, enhanced by saturated strong colours. His prints move between revealing and hiding, reminding us that every image is the product of construction, and that transparency is never guaranteed. In his series about bodybuilding, he highlights the construction of both these bodies and their imagery, questioning the superficiality of representations in social media culture. Slowness and fragility are also explored in a conceptual way in **Tracy Staunton** series *The Blue Rooms* (2019–2023), Staunton reflects on the ambivalence between presence and disappearance in Dublin homes, revealing layers of time and traces of memory through projection and photography.

Slow Image highlights the enduring importance of handmade imagery, such as printmaking, painting, and drawing, in contemporary visual culture. Amidst a climate of visual overload and ambiguity, these art forms prompt viewers to consider what images genuinely communicate. Representations are never neutral or objective; they arise from decisions, opinions, omissions, perception, and interpretation. This project encourages a slower, more attentive and critical way of looking.

Noémie Coursoux

[1] Helen Westgeest, *Slow Painting: Contemplation and Critique in the Digital Age*, London, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2022, p.152.

BIOGRAPHIES

Svenja Michelle Behle

Svenja Michelle Behle (1996, Berlin) is a Dublin based visual artist and printmaker whose practice merges traditional printed imagery with ink painting and light box installations. Behle's practice explores themes of temporality, internal experience of image and space and how subconscious imagery intersects with its psycho-mythological framework.

Central to her current research is the hypnagogic state, a transitional state between sleeping and waking that leaves vivid spatial accounts on the viewer, where environments take on a sacred presence and inanimate items appear animate.

Marked by the fluidity of the ink stencils which give her screen printed matter a painterly touch, the soft colours of the light installation and ink evoke echoes of internal realms.

Svenja Michelle Behle graduated from the National College of Art & Design in 2023 (BA in Fine Art Print). She received three graduate awards for her Degree Show and has exhibited in Brussels, Berlin and throughout Ireland, including the Mermaid Arts Centre (Bray). She has her studio at Richmond Road Studios in Dublin and is a member and part of the teaching panel at Black Church Print Studio. Her work is held in the Office of Public Works Collection (OPW, Ireland) and she is co-founder of The Art Shelter Collective.

John Graham

John Graham (1962, Dublin) is a Dublin based artist and writer. Founded in drawing and printmaking, his studio practice explores the intrinsic qualities of these mediums and how mark-making relates to our shared experience of time. While formal and conceptual concerns include aspects of music, architecture and design, the recurring patterns of walking, breathing and daily routines ground his work in a tangible reality.

John graduated from the NCAD with a BA (Printmaking) in 1993 and an MFA (Media) in 2006. In 2024 he received a 1st class MA (Art in the Contemporary World), also from the NCAD. He is a member of Black Church Print Studio. Recent solo exhibitions include Familiar Things Highlanes Gallery, Drogheda (2024/25), and Hold to the now, the here, through which all future plunges to the past, RHA Ashford Gallery, Dublin (2024). His publication Titles, Etcetera, an unbound book designed by Peter Maybury and including artworks, photographs and multiple texts, was published in 2025. Public collections include the Irish Museum of Modern Art, National Gallery of Ireland, Arts Council of Ireland, Chester Beatty Library and New York Public Library.

Eva Nielsen

Eva Nielsen (1983, Les Lilas, France) is a French Danish visual artist based in Paris. Renowned for her hybrid paintings, Eva Nielsen draws on materials such as latex, leather, silk, and silkscreen to introduce a complex and unexpected dimension to her singular pictorial compositions. Her work invites viewers to delve into the landscapes she navigates, unfolding through successive and immersive layers. As a painter, photographer, and visual artist, she superimposes these stages to cast doubt on the very process of the making of the artwork.

Eva Nielsen graduated from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Paris in 2009. She is represented by Galerie Peter Kilchmann (Paris/Zurich) and The Pill gallery (Paris/Istanbul). Her work has been exhibited in major institutions: Kunsthau Baselland, Switzerland; Mac/Val, France; LACE, Los Angeles; Plataforma Revolver, Portugal; BNKR, Munich; Perm Museum, Russia; Kunsthau Charlottenborg, Denmark, among others. In 2025, she was nominated for the Marcel Duchamp Prize, resulting in an exhibition at the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris.

Sam O'Reilly

Sam O'Reilly (2002, Dublin) is a Dublin-based artist whose work focuses on the medium of print, specifically screen print. Through his practice, he highlights the beauty and complexity of the process itself, in both art and bodybuilding. Through obscuring and abstracting his imagery, he attempts to shift the value from the imagery to the process it took to make it, reflecting his ideas of process over product. His project about bodybuilding draws a rejection of the pressure put on people's body image, set by our contemporary celebrity and social media dominated culture.

Sam O'Reilly recently graduated from NCAD in 2025, followed by a residency in AGA LAB (Amsterdam). He is a new member of Black Church Print Studio.

Tracy Staunton

Tracy Staunton (born in Dublin) is an artist with a background in architecture. Her practice includes printmaking, drawing, installation and film, and engages with architecture in different forms. She is interested in the trace of time and memory of cities and buildings. *The Blue Rooms* is a photographic series (2019–2023) capturing projected images inside a variety of Dublin homes. These interiors evoke a poetic sense of domestic space – private, intimate, and shared across human experience. Each room feels both unique and universal, holding memories, emotions, and layers of time. Objects and moments echo other places and other days, suggesting that every home contains all homes. The series recalls the quiet weight of “home-time,” where familiar scenes summon past lives, relationships, and everyday rituals.

Tracy Staunton graduated from The School of Architecture at UCD in 1988 and NCAD in 2009. Her work has been shown at the Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin; the RHA, Dublin; the RUA, Belfast; DLR Lexicon, Dun Laoighaire, among others. She has taught Art, Design and Architectural courses at Colaiste Dhulaigh, NCAD and TUD since 2002. She is a member of the Black Church Print Studio.

Lee Welch

Lee Welch (1975, Louisville, Kentucky) works in painting, drawing, and installation, but his true medium is the space between knowing and not knowing – the familiar made strange. His paintings are fragments of a dream you can't quite place: figures and objects pared to their essence, hovering in a world both intimate and alien. Emerging from the shadows of art history, architecture, literature, and tennis, as well as his own private archive, Welch's work distills, abstracts, and rebuilds, creating a visual language entirely his own. Figures appear in domestic scenes or leisure, their mundane actions charged with eerie resonance. They feel close yet distant, their flattened forms and muted textures like memories just out of reach. Welch's paintings are not just seen; they are felt – a faint ache, a distant hum, lingering long after you've looked away.

Lee Welch received his BFA from NCAD in 2009 and his MFA from Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam in 2011. He has since been exhibited internationally: The Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University; Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, Spain; Glucksman Gallery, Cork; Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, among others. His paintings are in private and public collections (Arts Council, Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane, OPW).

Curator - Noémie Coursoux

Born in France, Noémie Coursoux is a Dublin-based curator, art critic, and PhD researcher in Art Theory at Aix-Marseille University. Her research focuses on expanded painting practices and the construction of images in relation to socio-political and technological issues.

She recently organized the seminar *Possibilities of the Contemporary Landscape* (Aix-Marseille University, January 2025) and has published several essays, including *Eva Nielsen, Alluvion*, Bullukian Foundation, 2025; *Landscape Painting in the Digital Age*, in *Peinture et Numérique* (Painting and Digital Technology), 2025; *Brice Robert, Liminal*, 2025; and *Yann Lacroix, Imago*, Bullukian Foundation, in *Artpress*, 2024.

Her curatorial projects include shows at L'Espace (Saint-Arcons-d'Allier, 2022–2023) and Capsule Bikini (Lyon, 2023). She gives lectures in Art History at Aix-Marseille University and is part of the visitor engagement team at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), Dublin.

Limited edition zine printed on the occasion of the exhibition *Slow Image* curated by Noémie Coursoux. Commissioned and presented by Black Church Print Studio and hosted by The Library Project.

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