



Paula Rego, *Little Miss Muffet*, 1989, Etching and aquatint, 23/50, 52 x 38 cm, Collection Irish Museum of Modern Art

Seanscéalta / Myths and Legends, an exhibition developed through the continued partnership between Inisceiltra Festival of the Arts and IMMA National Programme, opens to the public at Raheen Hospital Day Care Centre and Scariff Library, Co Clare on Monday 25 May 2009. *Seanscéalta / Myths and Legends* explores the world of childhood stories and memories, nursery rhymes and fairy tales.

In Scariff Library, artworks from IMMA Collection by Irish artist **Alice Maher** are exhibited alongside works made by local primary school children and visitors to the Raheen Hospital Day Care Centre in workshops inspired by both Alice Maher and **Paula Rego** practices. Born in Tipperary, Alice Maher works within the realms of nature and culture, subversion and transformation, mythology and memory. Maher explains that working with materials like bees, berries and hair, she builds up a strong relationship with their histories and cultural associations in the creation of surreal works, that appear, like enchanted objects from a medieval folk tale.

Maher *Berry Dress*, 1994 presents the delicate shape of the child's dress, decorated with berries. On closer inspection, the dress loses its innocence and protective role, taking on a more sinister appeal. The pins, which hold the berries in place, are arranged internally - should the dress be worn, these pins would pierce the skin. Maher frequently uses materials in such a way that they challenge our interpretation of them.

Prints from IMMA Collection by Paula Rego, the celebrated Portuguese painter and print-maker, are exhibited in Raheen Hospital Day Care Centre. Rego works are highly figurative and explore, often through illustration of well-known works of literature, frightening or disturbing situations, many of which have a semi-overt sexual aspect. A number of her prints relate specifically to children's literature, to fairy tales, nursery rhymes and longer fictional works which have a wide popular appeal. Using powerfully contrasting light effects, sharp, angular forms and child-like shifts in scale she communicates a sense that cherished children's stories often contain messages that are profoundly unnerving from a child's perspective or, alternately, are accepted by the child while it is the adult reader who is not comfortable with them.



Paula Rego, The Baker's Wife, 1989, Etching and aquatint, 14/75, 33.5 x 26.3 cm, Collection Irish Museum of Modern Art

Rego *Little Miss Muffet*, 1989 was made in response to a request from her grandchild, who did not seem distressed as Rego recalls by the enlarged spider and adult face. The etching has Freudian connections, as Freud believed that the mother was often perceived by a child as a spider, capturing it in her limbs and encroaching on its life. Daughters and their relationship with their mothers is a recurring theme in Rego's work.

IMMA National Programme is designed to create access opportunities to the visual arts in a variety of situations and locations in Ireland. Using the Collection of the Irish Museum of Modern Art and exhibitions generated by the Museum, the National Programme facilitates the creation of exhibitions and other projects for display in a range of locations around the country. The National Programme establishes the Museum as inclusive, accessible and national, de-centralising the Collection, and making it available to communities in their own localities, on their own terms, in venues with which the audience is comfortable and familiar.

The exhibition will be accompanied by workshops and tours funded by the Department of Education.

Opening Hours:

Scariff Public Library, Mountshannon Road, Scariff, Co Clare

Monday - Friday: 12.00am – 5.00pm

Tel: (061) 922893

Raheen Hospital Day Care Centre:

Monday - Friday: 11.00 am 5.00pm

Seanscéalta / Myths and Legends continues until Friday 29 May 2009.