

# New Horizon

Architecture from Ireland

London Festival of Architecture  
1st – 30th June 2015

**ID2015**  
A Year of Irish Design

Lewis Cubitt Square  
King's Cross  
London N1C 4AA

Yellow Pavillion  
Hall McKnight

Red Pavillion  
Clancy Moore  
Steve Larkin  
TAKA

Tank  
Design Museum  
Shad Thames  
London SE1 2YD

Nine Lives  
Emmett Scanlon

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Introduction

Ireland’s selection by London Festival of Architecture as the inaugural country of focus is a major coup during the year that sees Irish design in almost every form being showcased in Ireland and around the world.

The idea of designating a year to celebrating and promoting Irish design emerged from the Global Irish Economic Forum in 2013. The Government backed this proposal, supporting a comprehensive programme of national and international events and activities throughout 2015.

The aim of Irish Design 2015 (ID2015) is to bring visibility to Ireland’s dynamic design businesses, supporting them in trading in competitive foreign markets and ultimately creating jobs at home. The initiative is being convened by the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland (DCCoI), in collaboration with partner organisations, on behalf of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Enterprise Ireland.

As one of the highlights of the ID2015 programme, *New Horizon\_architecture from Ireland* offers a unique opportunity to promote emerging Irish practices working in the architecture and built environment space to discerning audiences in high profile venues around the world.

*New Horizon\_architecture from Ireland’s* presence at the London Festival of Architecture and the subsequent instalments at Chicago Architecture Biennial and the Shenzhen/Hong Kong Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture will be instrumental in positioning design at the heart of our creative economy and in growing Ireland’s reputation abroad as a source of innovative design products and services.

**Foreword**

Showcasing Irish design to the world is central to all of the events and activities taking place this year as part of Irish Design 2015 (ID2015). Through the year-long programme, we are presenting the work of contemporary Irish designers at major international design events, developing commercial opportunities and establishing strategic partnerships for the ongoing development of this vibrant sector. As an Irish initiative with a global reach, ID2015 offers Irish designers a unique opportunity to highlight the significant role and impact that design has in every facet of life.

Ireland’s creative output has long been framed by literature, music, theatre, filmmaking and art yet these represent only a fragment of the breadth of Irish creativity. *New Horizon\_architecture from Ireland* writes a new chapter in Ireland’s creative story, presenting a selection of Ireland’s most exciting architectural practices in a flagship, touring exhibition.

*New Horizon* takes its inspiration from important thresholds in the history of contemporary Irish architecture, drawing from both Irish and global design culture. Curators Nathalie Weadick and Raymund Ryan have developed a flagship presentation of architecture that brings together a number of Ireland’s emerging practices, and seeks to cultivate new ideas and talent, stimulating discussion and demonstrating the potential of innovative architectural approaches in 2015 and beyond.

Working across the island of Ireland and internationally, the exhibiting practices have been selected for the innovative outlook of their work and for their ability to collaborate in addressing complex issues. Coming out of the austerity of recent years, Irish architects have developed a real understanding of materials and craftsmanship and a true sense of place. Many are already establishing international reputations and winning high profile awards.

With London as the exhibition’s first outing, we are extremely honoured that Ireland has been selected as the inaugural Focus Country for London Festival of Architecture. Together with our partners, we have been developing a comprehensive programme of events throughout the month-long festival to engage both the public and designers.

A highlight of the programme is *We Built this City*, a collaborative project between the Irish Architecture Foundation, Irish Design 2015 and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The London Irish connection in the built environment has always been strong, from the men who travelled from Ireland and constructed London’s infrastructure, to the Irish construction companies who built the recent Shard and developed Kings Cross amongst other projects.

*We Built this City* aims to tell the story of how built environments are created and the people that participate in the construction, design and development of the built environment as well as the contribution they make to a city’s culture. It will connect with the Irish diaspora and aim to raise awareness of and celebrate the contribution Irish people have made to leading international cities from historic to contemporary times.

For further details on *New Horizon\_architecture from Ireland* and our full programme of events during London Festival of Architecture, visit [www.irishdesign2015.ie/newhorizon](http://www.irishdesign2015.ie/newhorizon). Please join us in celebrating how architecture and the built environment benefit us all, enhancing our lives, our environment and our society.

Karen Hennessy,  
Chief Executive  
*Irish Design 2015*

**Practice Reimagined**

From its inception, Irish Design 2015 (ID2015) has recognised that design and architecture are allied and interdependent, and that this interdisciplinary synthesis is a critical premise under-pinning the programme for the year.

Connecting creative communities of practice with communities of place, ID2015 describes a space where new ideas, methods and practices can traverse traditional disciplinary boundaries. This year and this flagship architectural show demonstrate how a holistic approach to the design sector builds cultural and economic assets for people, industry and society as a whole.

Building upon a rich legacy of vernacular and internationally informed architectural Irish practice, *New Horizon\_architecture from Ireland* is grounded in a profound engagement with the collaborative potency of architecture. The commissioned projects do not present a narrow, national style, but rather a nuanced series of innovative and provocative explorations that reflect on Irish architecture’s capacity to engage and foster new social narratives, in the context of local and global change.

Creative collaboration is a permanent work in progress; it is a collective process made and remade, revised and reiterated, reinterpreted and reimagined. *New Horizon* is an architectural laboratory revealing this evolutionary process, presenting, archiving and transforming spaces at a series of public events at architecture festivals and biennales across the globe.

*New Horizon* showcases a rising generation of Irish architectural talent, with the commissioned projects acting as a point of departure for further debates about the future of architecture, design and the built environment. The pavilions and installations provide a spatial and social platform to bring together the public or professionals, encouraging them to cultivate new ideas, talent and stimulating discussion between Ireland and a global audience.

Design must start with concepts and questions. From that position it is enabled to challenge established precepts and socio-cultural, ethical and technical assumptions in order to ensure that we don’t simply play a role in shaping objects, materials and communication for today’s customers, but begin to define the very nature of what society may need, want and desire in the future.

In bringing together these ten architectural practices, Nathalie Weadick and Raymund Ryan curate a conversation that transcends historic disciplinary bandwidth to create an exhibition that shifts the paradigm of architecture from the design of buildings, to becoming a strategic tool in addressing and incorporating society’s concerns.

Irish Design 2015 seeks to champion the highest standards in Irish architecture, design and placemaking, advocating a better understanding of the importance of design in both the public and private sectors. *New Horizon* presents a transformational moment in Irish architecture for 2015 and beyond.

Professor Alex Milton  
Programme Director  
*Irish Design 2015*

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### *The room and the city*

Sometimes, it seems, a new generation emerges in this or that cultural activity, offering new insights, or adjustments in the perceived canon. Such is the promise of this new generation of Irish architects, a generation born in the 1970s and 80s and trained in Irish schools of architecture in the 1990s and 2000s.

A critical constituent of Irish Design 2015, *New Horizon\_ architecture from Ireland* presents the work of ten emerging Irish practices to an international audience. In London, as part of this June's London Festival of Architecture, and cognisant of the Festival's theme, *Work in Progress*, five practices have each been set a complex task, full of potential to engage Londoners and visitors alike.

In October, three other practices – A2, Ryan Kennihan, and GKMP – will work with the Chicago Design Museum as part of that city's first Architecture Biennial. In December, two further practices – Urban Agency and AP+E – will make an installation as invited participants in the sixth Shenzhen Hong Kong Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism\Architecture.

Back in 1991, as Ireland emerged from the economic doldrums, eight practices working collaboratively in Dublin as Group 91 won the master plan competition for Temple Bar. Born in the 1950s, several of these urban-minded architects have gone on to international careers, as witnessed here at the London School of Economics by the splendid Saw Swee Hock Student Centre by Sheila O'Donnell and John Tuomey.

Between Ireland's initial pavilion at the Venice Biennale – *N³*, by Tom dePaor – in 2000 and the most recent in 2014, significant architects born in the 1960s have represented Ireland with flair at that meeting ground for global architectural culture. Key members of this generation are Róisín Heneghan and Shih-Fu Peng, responsible, here in London, for two bridges at the Olympic Park and the new library and academic building at the University of Greenwich.

The architects participating in *New Horizon\_ architecture from Ireland* are younger again, educated (in many cases by the aforementioned architects) during the heady days of the Celtic Tiger and commencing practice as the Irish economy suddenly staggered. Not only have these architects weathered that unprecedented storm; each has found ways to practice critically, to look at what actually exists in Ireland, to discover potential in often peripheral situations, and to collaborate across disciplines.

Whether allocated to London, Chicago or Shenzhen, each practice was asked to work in a setting or installation specific to its site and host city. In our mind, as curators, these interventions could range from mini-retrospectives, including photography, film, drawings and models, to free-standing structures erected temporarily in the public realm. The architects were encouraged to work together.

*Nine Lives* is the title of Emmett Scanlon's installation in front of the Design Museum close to London's famous Tower Bridge. Scanlon and a band of collaborators have visited and documented one built project by each of the nine other practices included in *New Horizon*. Scanlon interrogates the nature and assumptions of his profession. Here he shows us rooms and spaces as they are *in real life*, complete with their occupation by their users and the users' various worldly goods.

Across town, in a vast hard terrain behind King's Cross railway station, different kinds of use and occupation are manifest. Here former yards and warehouses, relics of Britain's robust modernisation in the nineteenth century, are undergoing rapid transformation to accommodate new technologies, new industries and new lifestyles.

The young architects' interventions are two temporary and festive structures in the long, paved space of Lewis Cubitt Square. Suddenly there are two colourful pavilions – one red, the other yellow.

The Red pavilion has been designed by three Dublin practices: Clancy Moore, TAKA and Steve Larkin. Their approach to urbanism is to emphasise the collective fabric of cities and to doubt arbitrary expression. Their vividly-pigmented pavilion is an open, double-storey structure, a permeable membrane between the square and the park behind. Like a fragment of some classical system, it provides shelter for educational and cultural programmes during the run of the Festival as well as offering unexpected views from the communal *piano nobile*.

At the south end of Cubitt Square, the Yellow pavilion is a homage to the humble brick, and the many brick arches at King's Cross. Designed by Belfast practice Hall McKnight, architects for a major new intervention at King's College London, this matrix of sheet-timber arches is now home to one thousand bricks, some of them selected by students and faculty from the University of Ulster.

By realising free-standing structures in this challenging metropolitan domain, these young Irish architects have grasped the *New Horizon* challenge more than we had perhaps even envisaged. Embracing the Festival of Architecture theme, these embellishments to the built environment play with preconceptions of labour and pleasure, old and new, public and private, the room and the city.

If you require further evidence of design ambition, look around. For soon these new Hibernian additions to the vital conglomeration of London will be, simply, another summer memory.





# Clancy Moore Architects

Andrew Clancy  
Colm Moore

**Do you think of your work as distinctly Irish? If so, in which way or ways?**

*AC & CM* Yes, unavoidably so! The place we are from has shaped how we see the world and how we work in it. We were lucky to be educated and surrounded by thoughtful people with a profound love of architecture. And in an Irish way it is a passion held deeply but with a lightness of spirit, which we find very enjoyable. In some sense it is occasions like this *New Horizon*, which allows us to step outside to look back and observe the distinct qualities of our own culture.

**How do you see your work, as Clancy Moore Architects, in the contemporary international context?**

*AC & CM* A hard question for a young practice. We are a small practice. We admire and look to places where the ambitious, intense and ambiguous nature of this form of practice fosters a culture that makes room for beautiful architecture in everyday life. Places such as Ticino, Stockholm, Porto.

**Which buildings or places, personalities or cultural phenomena do you find inspirational?**

*AC & CM* By way of example we might describe one fresh in our heads, close to where Andrew grew up. It is a series of farm buildings built in various stages around a 17th century country dwelling. You can track the changing technologies of the time in the buildings – mud wall, brick, cast iron and mass concrete. What is incredible is the way that they make such a well-balanced ensemble, one that is functional in the life of the farm yet also rich with detail, delight and occasional ornament. This tending of a place, its iterative reimagining within a consistent spirit, is such a common-place occurrence it can be missed. To us, these places, their anonymous authors and their ongoing life are incredibly inspiring.

**What role does context play in the work of Clancy Moore Architects? How might we best define “context”?**

*AC & CM* We draw and sketch a lot, for so many reasons but one of them is to observe, to simply look with care at the world around us and the places we visit and build in. This description of the physical world is the primary context of our work. Perhaps somewhere between our observation of these places and our buildings is the search for something beyond the physical. And of course there is also your long list below, other contexts, pragmatic, ethical, metaphysical concerns. We find the strongest ideas emerge through the collision of these different ways of seeing in a design process that is necessarily risky and unpredictable.

(opposite)  
Verandah, Slievebawnogue,  
Two houses in a quarry  
County Dublin  
2011  
photo: Alice Clancy

How would you prioritise the following issues, starting with the most important: Landscape, History, Community, Social Equity, Sustainability, Performance, New Technologies, Form?

*AC & CM* This is impossible for us, but what a great list. It makes it so clear why being an architect is such a privilege. In his writings the Portuguese architect Alvaro Siza describes a point in every project where it becomes an unpredictable animal. He even spoke of it as having restless feet and shifting eyes! We laughed about this in the studio but it is true. Each project has its own life and makes unique demands. In that sense we hope that each project becomes a character born of multiple authors, multiple concerns. We are learning that it is in this tension, complexity and compromise that our work becomes characterful.

How has the theme of the Festival – *Work in Progress* – influenced or resonated with your work in London?

*AC & CM* The pavilion emerges from an observation that all cities are a collective work in progress. This is their permanent condition. So we were excited by the opportunity to add a temporary physical work in King's Cross that might become a permanent memory in the on-going progress of London. We also saw an opportunity to work collaboratively with close friends, to explore so many conversations we have had through a collective project. Gladly we discovered the fluency of this working collaboration to be a delight. So this new relationship with our friends and the fully public nature of the pavilion now becomes part of the ongoing progress of our practice's work.

How do you see your practice evolving? Where do you see Clancy Moore Architects in ten years' time?

*AC & CM* We have been in practice only a short time relatively speaking. In that time we have met incredible people, had opportunity to visit wonderful places and learnt so much from those who make and think about the world and how we live in it. We simply hope that this will continue, that, like our projects, we will remain restless and inquisitive.

Colm Moore's research leading to these results has received funding from the *People Programme* (Marie Curie Actions) of the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme FP7/2007-2013/ under REA grant agreement n° 317325.



(opposite)  
Artists studio  
cast model study  
2010  
photo: Clancy Moore  
Architects

(above)  
Kitchen with rooflight,  
Kerry House  
County Kerry  
2009  
photo: Alice Clancy





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# Hall McKnight Architects

Alastair Hall,  
Ian McKnight

**Do you think of your work as distinctly Irish or Northern Irish? If so, in which way or ways?**

*AH* I think of our work as Irish but I am quick to recognise that we lie outside of the particular architectural culture that has emerged in the last few decades, and exists so identifiably, in Dublin. By contrast, any such culture is largely absent in Belfast and so, to some degree, a sense of contemporary Northern Irish Architecture remains elusive. Our practice has developed, despite connections to both Dublin and London, with some sense of detachment.

*IMK* I don't think of our work as Irish, or Northern Irish. I think we come from a place that, in my lifetime has had a lack of certainty about its identity. I think any architect's work is largely defined by personal experience, of society, of space – and would observe that both of us were born and raised in Northern Ireland – a place with a distinct landscape, atmosphere and culture. I visited Dublin, Cork, Sligo and Galway often during my childhood – they were all very easy to visit, but all felt very different from home.

**How do you see the work of Hall McKnight Architects in the contemporary international scene?**

*AH & IMK* We feel part of a wider architectural culture that recognises a sense of architectural continuity – rather than the pursuit of individual authorship. We hope that our work suppresses ego and is more concerned with identifying and revealing some particular qualities of a place, whether physical, cultural or historical. We want our projects to be placed somewhat ambiguously within history. It is our hope our buildings might endure because they have become valuable to the society, rather than because they have been 'recognised' by our architectural peers.

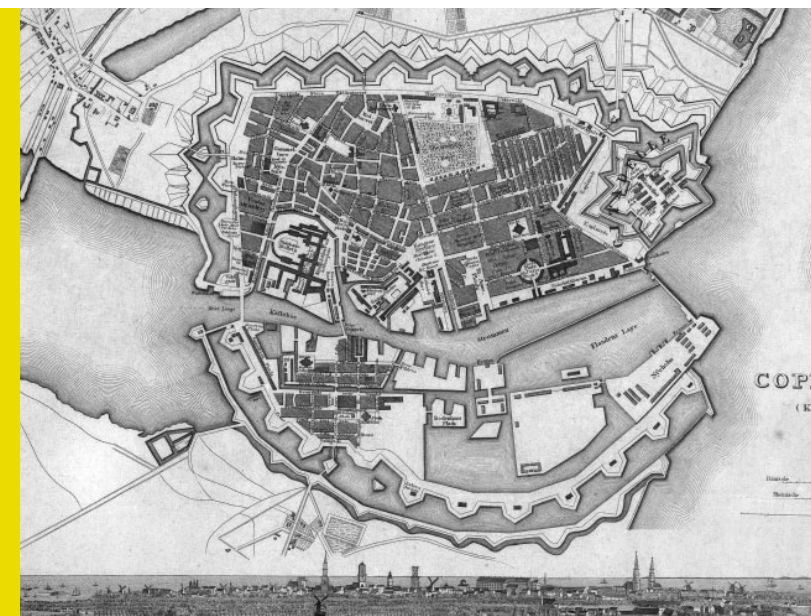
**Which buildings or places, personalities or cultural phenomena do you find inspirational?**

*AH* There are many things – many of them are poetic in nature. For example, the images of some architects: Lewerentz stooped over some bricks; Kahn at a blackboard with his back to the photographer... somehow these figures, these images, are both empowering and challenging... reminding me of our responsibility to something much more than any expression of personal interest or authorship. *IMK* I have always been influenced by the creation of environments in fiction; the use of language to construct places and experiences within the mind of the reader is something that I find an inspiration. The period of history between 1880 and 1920, and the myriad and range of ideas that this period produced fascinates me.

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(opposite)  
View over Belfast  
from window of Hall  
McKnight's Studio  
2015  
photo: Hall McKnight

(right)  
Map of Copenhagen  
1844  
source unknown





**What role does context play in the work of Hall McKnight Architects? How might we best define “context”?**

*AH & IMK* We recognise context as a choice – or collection of choices. We choose which contextual characteristics to engage with. Also, these choices are framed within the context of the individual architect’s own experiences and preoccupations – context is as much an intensely personal matter as it might be understood as existing within the site awaiting identification. For us, each project also exists within the context of our own work – contributing to our developing sense of self-awareness. Projects are reviewed and re-understood – in that sense, context can adjust. Our work is about gauging a place between a reading of the received context and the imposed context of our own experiences, memories and preoccupations.

**How would you prioritise the following issues, starting with the most important: Landscape, History, Community, Social Equity, Sustainability, Performance, New Technologies, Form?**

*AH* First of all, I’d add ‘City’ as first on the list... then place History and Landscape next; Community and Social Equity would follow, with the others in no particular order.

*IMK* I think it depends on the context and the programme. Surely ‘City’ should be a primary consideration for architects. I struggle with the idea of community and social equity being relegated below these concerns – in reality all of these things are interdependent; if we engage with the first things on the list properly, the others follow.

**How has the theme of the Festival – *Work in Progress* – influenced or resonated with your work in London?**

*AH & IMK* Our project recognises the city as an open project – alive, ongoing. The pavilion is a vehicle to carry a collection of bricks that speaks of the city as a work in progress. In this sense the project is not ours. It belongs to the city and, just as the city is a collection of many projects, made by many, both the bricks’ characteristics of individuality and collected cohesion are expressed. The bricks have already had a life (in a terraced street in Belfast) – now they have another life as they are modified and worked with – their individuality being amplified through that process, as they are placed in the pavilion

with renewed value – collectively defining a space yet valued individually. Their placing and arrangement has allowed them to assume different forms and expressions; to adjust and amplify spaces in a range of ways.

The city as collected collections – streets, experiences, buildings, memories, people... bricks. The collection never complete, continuously adjusting. Bricks seem to absorb and hold memories – like little citizens of construction... occupying both the old city and expecting the new one.

**How do you see your practice evolving? Where do you see Hall McKnight Architects in ten years’ time?**

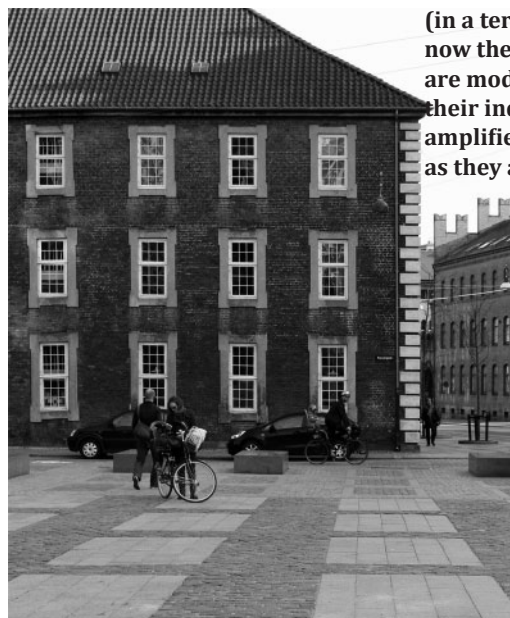
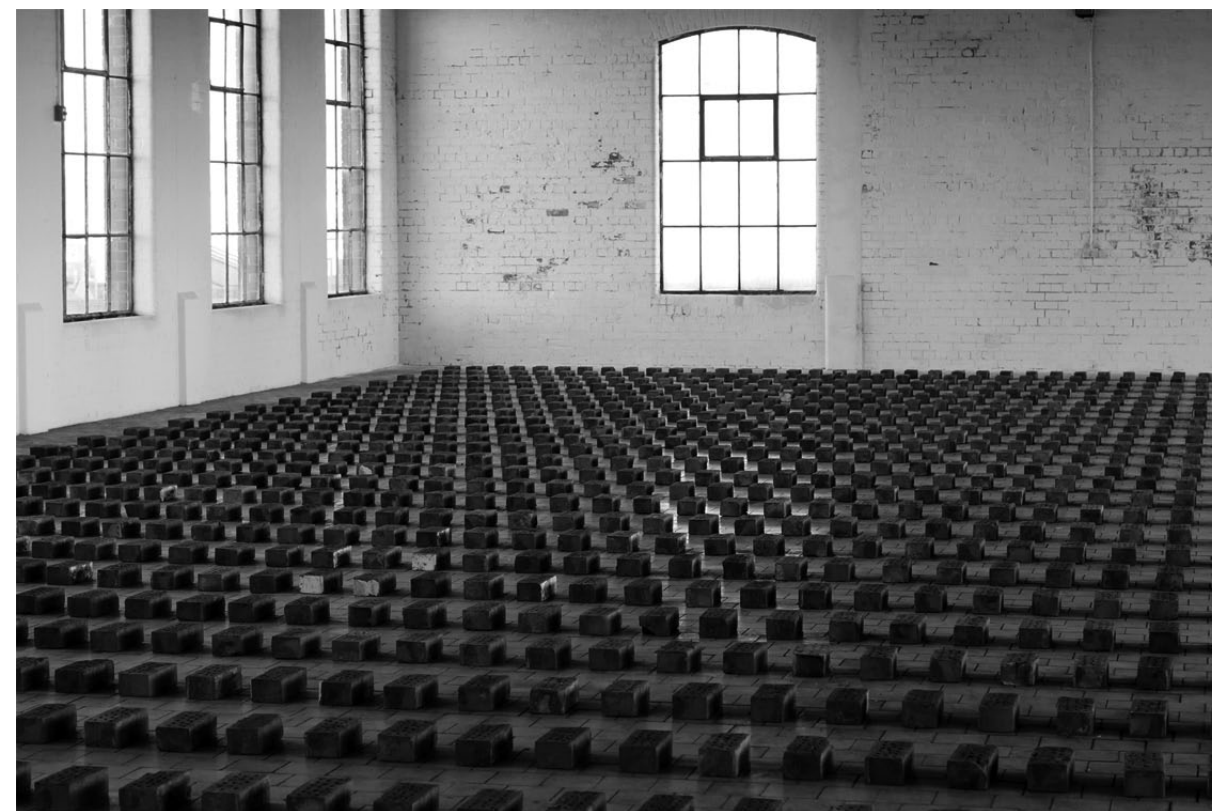
*AH* I hope that we’ll still be making projects – that’s not something to take for granted. We want to have earned the opportunity to have worked on more public projects within mature urban settings.

*IMK* Our experience of real projects has taught us that the skill in making good projects is being able to work with budgets and programmes whilst also maintaining a studio environment with time for investigation and discussion.

(left)  
Vartov Square,  
Copenhagen  
Reconstructed by Hall  
McKnight, 2013  
photo: Hall McKnight  
Architects

(opposite above)  
1000 reclaimed Belfast  
bricks laid out at  
Strand Mill where Hall  
McKnight’s Studio  
is located  
Belfast  
2015  
photo: Hall McKnight  
Architects

(opposite below)  
Historic photograph of  
the Vartov Building  
overlooking Vartov  
Square, Copenhagen  
date and source unknown







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# Steve Larkin Architects

**Do you think of your work as distinctly Irish? If so, in which way or ways?**

*SL* Yes I would say the work is definitely Irish. Mostly due to the fact that the work is built in Ireland rather than seeking to be distinctly Irish. I think the idea of place is important. Generally work is indebted to the building traditions around it, often for simple economic and practical reasons. The study of these traditions provides an understanding of weathering, climate and the local techniques of construction. However, examining building traditions also allows us to explore meanings and associations given to built artefacts and construction techniques by the community over time.

I generally don't think of the work as 'Irish' outside a relationship to context. Sometimes defined identities are narrow and the realities of work or place are far more diverse and interesting. This is certainly what we find when exploring the nature of places where we work.

**How do you see your work in the contemporary international scene?**

*SL* I am certainly inspired by many architects and especially communities of architects working in the contemporary international scene. Many of these work in conversation with a material culture by using inherited attitudes to materials and construction and develop new work with these insights. This becomes very interesting in international work as this sensibility seems to persist, providing distinct perspectives to new contexts.

**Which buildings or places, personalities or cultural phenomena do you find inspirational?**

*SL* I have been listening to the Ukrainian composer Valentin Silvestrov a lot lately. I find his music very beautiful. He talks about a 'meta-music', a music that hovers in the atmosphere, emerging and receding from memory and culture. His ability to listen to this and to give it space in his work seems very insightful. His music is in conversation with earlier beginnings (for example Mahler and JS Bach). Or, as Silvestrov says, in "coda" or "epilogue" to earlier beginnings.

I think there is wisdom in this approach. The music is joyous and loving. It is his relationship with music which comes across.

**What role does context play in the work of Steve Larkin Architects? How might we best define "context"?**

*SL* Context provides the potential to explore a place in landscape, history and culture. Context is also one's own reading of place coupled with one's own personal histories. Generally I think the realities of context are too complex to be understood. We can only put across our idea of what a place or context might be in our work.

I also think that context is register. We cannot understand buildings purely on their own terms but through difference and, as Henry Glassie points out, "it is these differences that carry us towards meaning." Context allows a register for difference and meaning in the most ordinary terms.

Judgement is therefore important in context. We are required to balance the differences between things. How much something is new or similar has the potential to capture old ideas in culture or humanity in new ways. As a result, work that searches for explicit difference or novel form doesn't seem interesting to me.

(opposite)  
House at Baile Éamoinn  
County Carlow  
2012  
photo: Alice Clancy

**How would you prioritise the following issues, starting with the most important: Landscape, History, Community, Social Equity, Sustainability, Performance, New Technologies, Form?**

*SL* Landscape and History, I think these are the same thing. Form but as 'gestalt' only (as a synthesis of individual ideas forming an artefact that has its own distinct character). Community and Social Equity (communities must have social equity to be healthy communities). Sustainability and performance. Finally New Technologies (useful tools when required, but only as required).

**How has the theme of the Festival – *Work in Progress* – influenced or resonated with your work in London?**

*SL* It has been central to our work in London. We see the pavilion as a contributor to the work in progress at King's Cross. A kind of temporal elevation briefly establishing relationships between the new city spaces that will give way to the more permanent buildings currently being constructed.

**How do you see your practice evolving? Where do you see Steve Larkin Architects in ten years' time?**

*SL* We would like to contribute more to the urban environment and develop projects that have a greater public life. That is why the Red Pavilion is exciting because it will have a very public, although temporary, life. We would also like to continue designing buildings in landscape in order to develop what we find to be a fascinating area of our work.

I am currently a postgraduate Research Fellow at RMIT Barcelona. We are identifying areas of research, that relate to our practice. I would hope to develop this research and bring findings to our built work.

The research leading to these results has received funding from the People Programme (Marie Curie Actions) of the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme FP7/2007-2013/ under REA grant agreement n° 317325.

(opposite)  
Steve Larkin  
House at Bogwest  
County Wexford  
2011  
photo: Alice Clancy





Alice Casey  
Cian Deegan

# TAKA Architects

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House 4 – front door  
Dublin  
2011  
photo: Alice Clancy

**Do you think of your work as distinctly Irish? If so, in which way or ways?**

*AC & CD* The answer is both yes and no. We certainly feed off the immediate context of every project but the buildings also have another context – which are our influences and things we have seen when travelling. These also feed into the projects and ‘disrupt’ any straight contextual approach. I used to think ‘the vernacular’ was the great ideal for us, but now I understand our ambition is less straightforward, which is good.

**How do you see your work, as TAKA Architects, in the contemporary international scene?**

*AC* It sort of intimidates me to think about our buildings being situated in the contemporary international architecture scene. The buildings tend to come out of a personal relationship to the client, the site or the brief – so it’s difficult to think of them as relating to some sort of genre

of architecture. With that said, we are obviously aware of and respect many contemporary international practices – not least our collaborators on the *New Horizon* pavilion – and are aware of many perceived similarities between their work and ours.

*CD* I wouldn’t know where to begin with that. I think we’re embedded in one facet of Irish architecture and I feel that Irish architecture has a lot to say in the contemporary international scene. I think we have a clear understanding of the values we would like our projects to possess – that they engage with a cultural continuity, perhaps expand aspects of this culture in a small way and importantly are good places to inhabit.

**Which buildings or places, personalities or cultural phenomena do you find inspirational?**

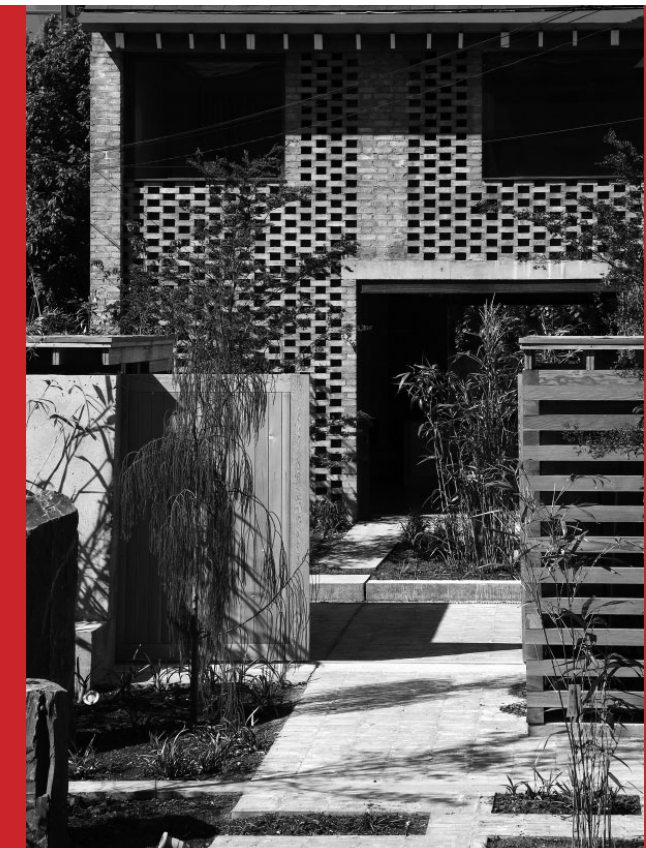
*CD* Without a doubt the most inspirational thing for us both has been travelling. Both myself and Alice have travelled

the world in our earlier years, and continue to seek out new places whenever we can. Memories of Asia in particular still captivate me – seeing these exotic buildings as an outsider and trying to piece together why things were the way they were was a very pleasurable education.

*AC* I agree with Cian – travel continues to be deeply inspirational to our work. I’m also interested in places or things which have an inherent modesty. I think maybe our interest in vernacular architecture could be seen to be an extension of this.

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House 1 – garden facade  
Dublin  
2009  
photo: Alice Clancy





**What role does context play in the work of TAKA Architects? How might we best define “context”?**  
*CD* Context plays a huge role and it's probably the single thing that shapes our projects the most. We don't have a series of designs ready to implement once we get a new job, the design always comes as a reaction to the specific situation. But, as mentioned before, our understanding of context has shifted from only being about the physical vicinity, to including pragmatic site issues, client desires, our fascinations and other things. I think this more inclusive but less definitive understanding of context is a more honest one – more reflective of how we work.  
*AC* Context – cultural, physical, social, familial - is the driver for everything in our work. I thought maybe this was the same for all architects, but perhaps this relates more to the first question – what it is to be ‘distinctly Irish’.

Irish architects seem to be slightly obsessed with context – whether as a rejection of it or as a sophisticated reading of a project's circumstance.

**How would you prioritise the following issues, starting with the most important: Landscape, History, Community, Social Equity, Sustainability, Performance, New Technologies, Form?**  
*AC & CD* History, Community, Form, Landscape all together – then the rest!

**How has the theme of the Festival – *Work in Progress* – influenced or resonated with your work in London?**  
*AC & CD* Well simply the fact of working so closely with Clancy Moore and Steve Larkin on the London pavilion has been a work in progress. We decided early on to work together – we wanted to make a collective statement about ‘the city’ and civic architecture.

We believe the city needs multiple voices for vitality. So the working process of multiple voices on the pavilion has been really important. It hasn't been – ‘you design this bit and I'll design that bit’ – it has been genuinely collaborative and discursive.

**How do you see your practice evolving? Where do you see TAKA Architects in ten years' time?**  
*CD* We love designing houses, but we have really enjoyed the recent taste of more public work (Merrion Cricket Club and St. Patrick's Park tearoom). We would like to begin working with the city in a more public way. It would be great to grow a bit (not hard, as there's only the 2 of us in the office) but not so much that we lose contact with the projects.



The research leading to these results has received funding from the *People Programme* (Marie Curie Actions) of the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme FP7/2007-2013/ under REA grant agreement n° 317325.

(opposite above)  
House 2 – dining room  
Dublin  
2009  
photo: Alice Clancy

(opposite below)  
Merrion Cricket Pavilion  
Dublin  
2014  
photo: Alice Clancy



# Emmett Scanlon

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**Do you think of your work as distinctly Irish? If so, in which way or ways?**

*ES* I rarely think about my own work in this way – but I do think about what might be “an Irish architecture”. I write about Ireland in a European context for *A10* magazine and so my job there is to present work that might reveal some aspects of ‘Irishness’. This really has influenced my observations in *Nine Lives*. I visit a lot of built work and very often the work is more exciting in reality and in use than the photographs and drawings promise. I think there is something compelling about how Irish architects are currently negotiating that gap between use and ‘high’ architectural culture which does not always value these aspects of design.

**How do you see your work in the contemporary international scene?**

*ES* I look abroad a lot – to the UK and France for example. I’ve aligned my work strands in recent years to both conceptually understand and practically support a wider societal engagement with architecture and the

built environment. I am researching at the University of Sheffield to participate in their specific research culture and to go away in order to understand the work that I am doing more fully in a wider international context. I do think the international scene might benefit from hearing more about our Irish story, in particular our recent “boom-bust”, and the effect that this really has had on Irish society and the role architecture and building has played in that.

**Which buildings or places, personalities or cultural phenomena do you find inspirational?**

*ES* Right now my mind is full of admiration for all of the occupants of the projects documented in *Nine Lives*. The profession refers to them as “clients” but I always find that kind of pejorative and it doesn’t give “them” nearly enough credit. I am not sure where young Irish architects would be today without those who take a chance, embrace risks and hold their nerve to make a small extension down a lane or build a house up a hill. I could list other architects, or artists, or all kinds of people I admire, but those people, the people who

want to know what architecture is and want to use it to make their everyday lives better – they are the heroes of *Nine Lives*.

**Emmett, what role does context play in your work? How might we best define “context”?**

*ES* It is impossible to be Irish I think and not consider context in terms of place. We Irish are deeply rooted in our surroundings, not always I think productively or selflessly; nevertheless, when you say context I immediately think of the physical, material place around me. This is how I was trained at University College Dublin and I value this greatly. But now context for me is more sustaining if I think of it as a social and political one. Context is about how and why people do things, the ways in which people occupy and use houses, for example. *Nine Lives* is about observing and researching how people are consuming the architecturally designed homes they have made without judgment – I want to know about *that* context. This is critical to better understanding the value architecture and design might have to a society.

(opposite)  
Extension to a home,  
Dublin, 2013  
Emmett Scanlon / Sarah  
Cremin  
photo: Alice Clancy

(right)  
The restaurant at Brown  
Thomas, Dublin, 2013  
Emmett Scanlon / Sarah  
Cremin  
photo: Alice Clancy





**How would you prioritise the following issues, starting with the most important: Landscape, History, Community, Social Equity, Sustainability, Performance, New Technologies, Form?**

*ES* Each of these terms is loaded and provocative and open to a really wide and personal interpretation. Community is the one that interests me most; the others follow and can flow from this. And then what does one mean by “community”? Is it a community of place, a community of interest, or a virtual community? I think in architecture and design we sometimes retain a romantic and simplistic idea of what community is because we want to provide for it in concrete form. However it is a more open term now, and communities are complex and sometimes hard to grasp. I am curious as to how we,

as architects, might now consider community and use our skills to work with and for them. This suggests more open and process based work, rather than work that will always result in built form.

**How has the theme of the Festival – *Work in Progress* – influenced or resonated with your work in London?**

*ES* The nature of how society works and produces is changing. We work more and more from home. When visiting and revisiting the built spaces documented in *Nine Lives* with the photographers, we sought out these spaces. Home offices, studios, purpose built or appropriated were recorded and some of these are portrayed in *Nine Lives* – this reveals aspects of how we work now in Ireland.

**How do you see your practice evolving over the next ten years?**

*ES* I have had a number of key stages in my practice thus far. With Grafton Architects I learned so much about a certain kind of architectural wisdom – Yvonne and Shelley make magic out of the messy process of architectural design and production. In CAST, I worked towards another kind of practice, broadening the range of ways in which I grappled with architecture – policy, research, criticism, built practice, pedagogy. Now, I am starting a third stage, going it alone, taking what I have learned, editing out what I no longer wish to do, focusing on initiatives, exhibitions, projects and research that aims to grasp and map out the social role of architecture in Ireland.

**Curator:**  
Emmett Scanlon

**Participants:**

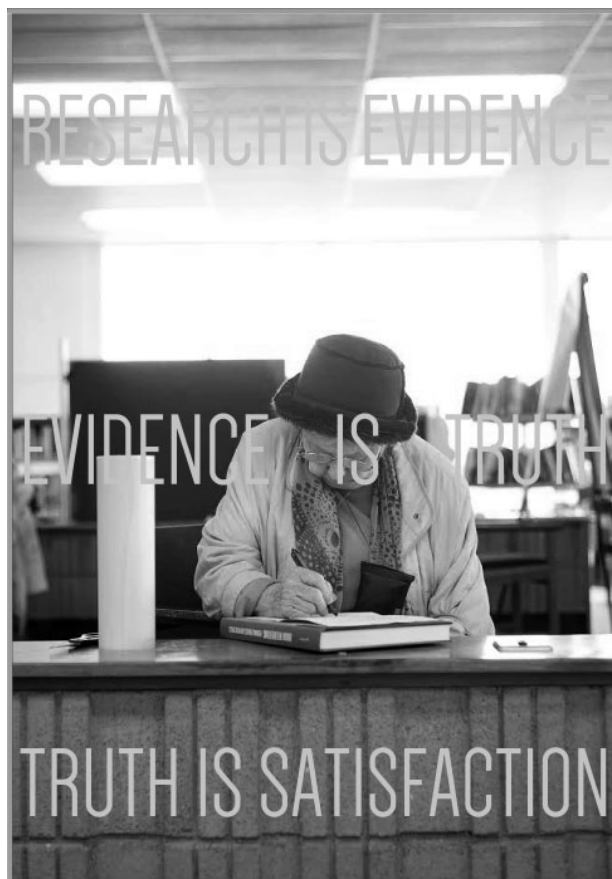
**The occupants and home-makers**

**Architects:**  
A2, Clancy Moore, GKMP, Steve Larkin, TAKA, Urban Agency, AP+E, Hall McKnight, Ryan Kennihan

**Photography and drawings:**  
Noel Bowler, Alice Clancy, Rachel Glass, Matthew Thompson, Ros Kavanagh, Paul Tierney, Marie-Louise Halpenny, Aisling McCoy, Jennifer O'Donnell and Jonathan Janssens

**Illustration and graphics:**  
Fuchsia McAree and Paul Guinan

**Exhibition assembly:**  
Edwin Jebb/PropMeUp  
Assistant: Simon McGough



National Survey on  
Public Awareness of  
Architecture 2014  
Photo Jed Niezgoda,  
Text Emmett Scanlon

# Nine Lives



### ***Nine Lives***

*Nine Lives* presents extracts from the ongoing life stories of nine rooms designed by nine architects from Ireland. These stories – containing people’s ideas, needs and dreams of how to work, dwell or play – began some time ago, were made concrete through architectural design and continue to develop through occupation and use. Moments from key chapters of each room – production (design) and consumption (use) – are presented here side-by-side, using photographs and drawings. All projects were revisited in April and May of 2015 as part of an ongoing study into how the Irish design and use built space. *Nine Lives* invites you to consider both sides as parts of the layered, ongoing story of how we build and occupy.

If we accept buildings support life and thus have a social purpose, when you really think about it, design and occupation cannot logically be separated. More than this, revisiting, reviewing and discussing the rooms presented in *Nine Lives* suggests that both architectural production and everyday consumption are each creative acts, all different, all equal. To consider how we build without continuously observing and accepting how we occupy and change, limits architecture to its design function only, a beautiful cog in a wheel of cyclical production. *Nine Lives* presents rooms made with skill and intent, occupied with hope and with love, each fat with opportunity, thriving on the diet of ordinary, awkward and messy life being fed to them by those that continue to use them.

Emmett Scanlon  
Curator  
***Nine Lives***

AP+E, Hedge School, Carlow. Photo: Aisling McCoy, 2015





**Ryan Kennihan, House, County Galway. Photo: Alice Clancy, 2012**



**A2, House, Dublin. Photo: Marie-Louise Halpenny, 2010**





**TAKA, House, Dublin. Photo: Alice Clancy, 2012**



**Clancy Moore, House, County Dublin. Photo: Alice Clancy, 2011**





Urban Agency, Home Studio, Dublin. Photo: Noel Bowler, 2015



Hall McKnight, House, Belfast. Photo: Ros Kavanagh, 2015



GKMP, House, Dublin. Photo: Noel Bowler, 2015



Steve Larkin, House, County Wexford. Photo: Noel Bowler, 2015





## Biographies for the exhibitors

### Clancy Moore Architects, Dublin

Established by Andrew Clancy and Colm Moore in 2007, Clancy Moore is a practice dedicated to creating beautiful spaces and objects through an open and collaborative process with clients and crafts-people. The practice is involved in a wide range of work from domestic to public and commercial projects, and has a strong track record of delivering high quality, sustainable architecture in all settings. The quality of the resultant work has been borne out by numerous awards and publications. Clancy Moore won a Wood Award for Slievebawnogue in 2014. [www.clancymoore.com](http://www.clancymoore.com)

### Hall McKnight Architects, Belfast, London

Hall McKnight is an architectural practice with offices in Belfast and London. The work of the practice has been internationally recognised through various awards and nominations including RIBA National and European Awards, nomination for the BSI Swiss Architectural Award, nominations for the European Union Mies Van der Rohe Award and the European Public Space Awards; finalist in the Design Museum 'Designs of the Year'; and, in 2013 the practice received the Downes Medal, awarded by the Architectural Association of Ireland for the MAC. The practice's recent work includes Vartov Square in Copenhagen and the MAC Arts Centre in Belfast. Hall McKnight's current projects include a housing project in the Czech Republic and a major development for King's College London. [www.hallmcknight.com](http://www.hallmcknight.com)

### Steve Larkin Architects, Dublin

Steve Larkin is a musician and architect based in Dublin. He studied architecture at University College Dublin and graduated in 2002. He established Steve Larkin Architects in 2007. Since then the practice has been the recipient of

a number of national and international awards and commendations including RIAI Best Emerging Practice 2012. The practice was nominated for the Mies van der Rohe European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture in 2013. Steve has taught as a Senior Lecturer (Education) at Queens University Belfast and is a Studio Tutor at the Dublin Institute of Technology. He is a guest critic in a number of universities in Ireland and the UK. He is currently a EU Marie Curie ITN ADAPTr Fellow in PhD postgraduate research at RMIT University Melbourne. [www.stevelarkinarchitects.ie](http://www.stevelarkinarchitects.ie)

### Emmett Scanlon, Dublin

Emmett Scanlon is an architect focused on the social purpose of architecture. His practice includes the design of buildings, academic research, architectural education, policy development, curation and criticism. He graduated from University College Dublin, (MArchSc) in 2000 and is a PhD candidate at the School of Architecture, University of Sheffield. Appointed Lecturer in Architecture in 2006 at UCD, he has also taught in University of Ulster and is external examiner at University of Limerick. Emmett is Irish correspondant for *A10* the Journal of New European Architecture and Architecture Adviser to the Arts Council (Ireland). [www.emmettscanlon.ie](http://www.emmettscanlon.ie)

### TAKA Architects, Dublin

TAKA, founded by Alice Casey and Cian Deegan, has exhibited in the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2008 and co-curated the Irish Pavilion of *de Blacam and Meagher* in 2010. As well as numerous national and international awards, TAKA have been nominated for the Mies Van der Rohe award and were finalists in the 2014 BD Young Architect of the Year Award. TAKA is a practice concerned with the communicative potential of architecture, with tectonic expression and with place making. TAKA is based in Dublin, Ireland. [www.taka.ie](http://www.taka.ie)

**New Horizon team**  
**Raymund Ryan and Nathalie Weadick** *Curators*  
**Rachel Gallagher** *Assistant Curator*  
**Yvonne Thunder** *Events Coordinator*  
**Susan Brindley** *Communications Director*  
**Alex Calder** *Communications Officer*  
**Sandford PR** *PR*  
**Sadhbh Garvey** *Project Assistant*

**Raymund Ryan – Curator**  
**New Horizon, London, Chicago, Shenzhen 2015**  
Raymund Ryan is Curator of the Heinz Architectural Center at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Museum of Art. Exhibitions by Pittsburgh include *Frank Lloyd Wright: Renewing the Legacy* (2005), *Gritty Brits: New London Architecture* (2007), *Laboratory of Architecture/ Fernando Romero* (2009) and *White Cube, Green Maze: New Art Landscapes* (2012). A graduate in architecture from University College Dublin and Yale, Ryan was first Irish Commissioner for the Venice Architecture Biennale (2000; 2002). He is the co-author of *Building Tate Modern* (2000), author of *Cool Construction* (2001), and a frequent contributor to *The Architectural Review* (London), *The Plan* (Bologna), and *Architecture Ireland* (Dublin).

**Nathalie Weadick – Curator**  
**New Horizon, London, Chicago, Shenzhen 2015**  
Nathalie Weadick is Director of the Irish Architecture Foundation. From 2004 to 2007 she was Deputy Director of the Architecture Foundation, London. In 2008 she was co-commissioner/curator of *The Lives of Spaces* at the 11th International Architecture Exhibition at Venice, and in 2010 she was Commissioner for the Irish exhibition at the 12th International Architecture Exhibition at Venice. In 2014 she curated an architecture season in the Irish Museum of Modern Art called *The Everyday Experience*. She is a committee member of the *Government Policy on Architecture Advisory Panel* (Ireland) and *Built Environment Advisor* for *Irish Design 2015*.

**Peter Maybury – Graphic Design**  
Peter Maybury works as an artist, graphic designer, and musician. With formal training in visual communications in Dublin and London, his creative practice encompasses design for print and screen and wayfinding systems, music and sound works; editorial, authoring and book production; film and photography. He was co-curator of the *Underground* exhibition (Dublin, 2008), and the Irish Pavilion at the 11th International Architecture Exhibition (Venice, 2010). Gall is the multi-disciplinary practice of Tom dePaor and Peter Maybury. Their output includes film, sculptural works and books. They have published four titles to date including *Of* (2012), and *Make Ready* (2015), a monograph of Peter's work. [www.petermaybury.com](http://www.petermaybury.com)

**New Horizon...architecture from Ireland**

**London Festival of Architecture**  
**1st June – 30th June 2015**  
Clancy Moore Architects, Hall McKnight Architects, Steve Larkin Architects, Emmett Scanlon, TAKA Architects

**Kilkenny Arts Festival/National Craft Gallery**  
**8th August – 27th September 2015**  
**Nine Lives** curated by Emmett Scanlon

**Chicago Architecture Biennial**  
**3rd October 2015 – 3rd January 2016**  
**A2 Architects, GKMP Architects, Ryan W. Kennihan Architects**

**Shenzhen/Hong Kong Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture**  
**4th December 2015 – 4th March 2016**  
**Architecture Practice + Experimentation, Urban Agency**

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We would also like to thank the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Enterprise Ireland for their continued support of Irish Design 2015.

Finally we'd like to thank the curators, designers, and selected architectural practices in *New Horizon* who have made this exhibition possible.

About Irish Design 2015 (ID2015)  
Irish Design 2015 is the start of a job creation journey exploring, promoting and celebrating Irish design and designers through events and activities on the island of Ireland and internationally.

Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland, is Patron of Irish Design 2015 and the Initiative has been included in the Irish Government's Action Plan for Jobs.

ID2015 is being convened by the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland, in collaboration with partner organisations on behalf of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Enterprise Ireland.

[www.irishdesign2015.ie](http://www.irishdesign2015.ie)

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