

97. Dorothy Cross,  
*Mantegna/Crucifix*, detail,  
1996, cibachrome and  
black and white print on  
MDF, edn of 3, 76 x 51 cm  
each, Frith Street Gallery,  
London

about the use of new technologies in the production of his work, but this is misleading. He prefers to draw and paint his images by hand, using a computer only to store them.

Cronin has received Gold awards from the New York Art Directors' Club in 1990 and 1995 (acting as judge of the illustration section at their 1985 annual awards event), and the Society of Publication Designers' annual exhibition (1990, 1997), a silver medal from the Society of Illustrators, New York (1997), the Patrick Nagel Award from the Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles (1997), and a Yellow Pencil Award from Design & Art Direction. In addition to his solo exhibition at IMMA in 1998, Cronin has shown his work in design and illustration exhibitions in London, Los Angeles, Naples, Osaka, Tokyo and Zurich.  
CATHERINE MARSHALL

SELECTED READING *Brian Cronin: Fat Face with Fork*, exh. cat. IMMA (Dublin 1998); Paul Buckley (ed.), *Penguin 75: Designers, Authors, Commentary* (London 2010); Jerelle Kraus, *All the Art That's Fit To Print (And Some That Wasn't): Inside the New York Times Op-Ed Page* (New York 2008).

**CROSS, DOROTHY** (b. 1956) (qv AAI III), multi-media artist. One of a generation of contemporary Irish artists who came to the fore in the 1980s, Dorothy Cross is best known for her innovative, and often controversial, work, exploring themes of identity, gender and sexuality, and how these are prescribed within societal constraints. While her point of departure has often been read as a response to personal, local and native Irish situations, ranging from the repressive mores related to class and faith, to the wilful neglect of the surviving remnants of the past in the environs of her home, the issues her work raises have a wider relevance. Consequently, while she is an Irish female, and personal experience informs her work, Cross asserts that she is not a feminist because her explorations are intended to be germane across gender boundaries. She also questions the epithet 'Irish artist', seeing her work as relevant beyond national boundaries (Cross to author, interview, 25 October 2004). Through the methodologies of natural history, anthropology, music (particularly opera), literature and philosophy, Cross considers the parallels across biological, geographical and temporal zones. Throughout her practice to date, her work has confronted subjects or approaches considered to be taboo at the time, often producing imagery that is at once disturbing and humorous. A number of these projects have been undertaken collaboratively with her brother, zoologist Professor Tom Cross, and with actor Fiona Shaw, amongst others. She often performs in her own video and photographic work.

In common with contemporary art practice generally, Cross explores her ideas through a range of media, not only sculpture and installation but photography, video and other technological forms. She has also produced drawings and paintings, though these are less well known. Since the various formats are typically combined in installations, or form an element within a series, Cross is recognized as a multi-media artist (see 'New Media Art') and, consequently, discussion of her work is ideally considered within the context of her broader practice. The works



selected in this essay all comprise or involve technological media.

In an audacious play of ideas on the artist's own name, Cross's *Mantegna/Crucifix* [97] is an early example of work that challenges the dogmas of both the church and of art history. The naked female photographed, foreshortened, from the soles of the feet towards the head, references Mantegna's well-known painting of the dead Christ (Andrea Mantegna, *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, c. 1480, Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan), the prominence of which rests primarily on its extreme perspectival viewpoint. She provides an alternative body for the one clearly absented from the crucifix in the accompanying image, the imprint of the corpse reminiscent of the missing body from the tomb when Christ was resurrected. The work plays on the oppositional but mutually dependent notions of the sacred and profane body, and of its literal and metaphorical counterparts: the institutional (the church) and the liturgical (the host) bodies; its presence and absence in both contexts; and the respective gender roles within those ambits, paraphrased respectively by the abject and the resurrected.

The work is also about mortality, incorporated to be read literally in Mantegna's and Cross's works, and serving as a *memento mori*, a theme that she returns to in various forms in her work.



The strategy of comparative and mutually dependent opposites recurs also. It emerges in the relative gender roles suggested, inter alia, in one of her best-known works, *Teacup* [98]. This work comprises a still photograph of a genteel domestic porcelain cup and saucer with a three-minute clip from the well-known film *Man of Aran* (1934) [1] by Robert J. Flaherty, showing a four-man currach battling through heavy seas. This scene is embedded in the cup as though to form the liquid surface of the tea. This iconic film, presented as an objective documentary record of life in the Aran Islands, was subsequently criticized for deliberately presenting obsolete activities, particularly the shark hunt, as though still commonly practised, in

order to convey an image of pre-modern authenticity. The film remains a classic nonetheless, not least because of the layers of representation and interpretation of cultural, regional and gender identity that it offers – both in terms of the way of life depicted, and the processes involved in the film's production and dissemination. This work, and particularly the selected passage in *Teacup*, represented consequently an ideal forum for the cultural issues of interest to Cross, presenting the alternative spaces of feminine/masculine, indoor/outdoor, culture/nature, domestic/wild, gentry/labouring class, security/danger, containment/freedom and so forth. An element of dark humour and of the surreal is ever present in her work.

98. Dorothy Cross, *Teacup*, 1997, video, 3 min loop, edn of 3, private collections

An underlying motif in Cross's practice has been the consequences of the passage of time, from what she refers to as the 'rot and reality' of organic death, to cultural destruction through what she sees as ill-devised regulations and/or wilful neglect, and to the residues of obsolescence. These are explored in tandem with the processes of loss, recovery and memory. One of her best-known works, *Ghost Ship* (1999) [236], for which she won the Nissan/IMMA Public Art award in 1999, involved enveloping an obsolete lightship in luminous paint. Moored in Dun Laoghaire harbour, after dark the ship glowed in reflected light like a wraith. This pre-existing, 'found' sculptural work was subsequently scrapped as planned, but has a continued existence as an artwork in the form of a video and of photographic prints which in turn function both as documents to the *Ghost Ship* installation and as tangible memorials to a vanishing past.

Cross imaginatively appropriates and re-presents obsolete functional objects, whose reinterpretation incorporates their previous role, as well as the era to which they belonged. For example, *Slab* (1999) makes use of a ceramic mortuary slab, using it as a horizontal 'screen' for projecting video footage of tidal flows. As with many of her works, this example generates conflicting emotions since the inevitable associations of mortality, time and tide are evoked in a work that combines a Duchampian 'found' object and technological imaging. The tidal video in *Slab* is part of the footage gathered at Poll na bPéist (Worm's Hole), a naturally occurring rectangular pool at the foot of the cliffs at Aran Mór. The pool, filled by tides flowing through underground caves and the deposits of high tides, has local folkloric associations, as the title indicates. The shape of the pool is used in the projection of the footage into similarly rectangular spaces – on a small scale in the case of *Slab* and on a grander scale for the spectacular *Chiasm* (1999), where the image of the rectangular pool with the sea flowing into it was projected into each of the two abutting handball alleys. These alleys, once a feature of small towns across Ireland, are disappearing in contemporary Ireland; and double alleys, like the one used for *Chiasm*, are particularly rare. Cross exploited its structure to explore the tidal ebb and flow of relationships. She used the abutting alleys as partitioned spaces for a male and a female opera singer, each separated from the other by the intervening wall. They sang romantic duets selected by the artist, moving spontaneously around their respective spaces, with the possibility of meeting at points on opposite sides of the wall. In the event, they never did meet and the unfulfilled potential could be observed by an audience seated on scaffolding above the alleys.

Such themes of loss, of unfulfilled potential, of wasted opportunity, emerge in various poignant works by Cross in relation to different situations. *Endarken* (2000) represents the artist's frustration at the erosion of remaining fragments of the past, such as the crumbling Famine cottages that are disappearing from the region around her home in Connemara. A video film of a derelict cottage is shown with a tiny black dot growing from the middle of the screen. The dot, suggestive of the black pupil of an eye, enlarges until the image is obscured, a

metaphor for the 'blindness' of authorities which fail to protect a disappearing heritage. Cross's objection is not from a position of nostalgic longing, but a practical respect for those predecessors whose marks of survival are still visible in her landscape; her own fields are ridged with lazybeds, and feature also the surviving walls of cottages left roofless by the constraints of building regulations.

The new millennium has been witness to the continued exploratory practices of Dorothy Cross making use of photography (qv) and video as part of multi-dimensional multi-media schemes. The Medusae films of the artist swimming in jellyfish lakes in Micronesia were used to provide the dramatic backdrop to a production at the English National Opera of Vaughan Williams's opera of Synge's *Riders to the Sea*. With currachs made by Meitheal Mara, in Cork, appropriated for the most dramatic stage designs, and incorporating the tidal pool of Aran Mór, the production represented an extraordinary collaboration of music, art, craftsmanship and theatre connected across time and space.

Dorothy Cross was born in Cork, and attended the Crawford School of Art in Cork, the Leicester Polytechnic and the San Francisco Art Institute, California. She has represented Ireland in numerous travelling exhibitions, as well as at the 1993 Venice Biennale and the Istanbul Biennial in 1997. Her work has appeared in solo and group exhibitions in Ireland and in various locations in Europe, North America, China and Micronesia; a major retrospective of her work was shown at IMMA in 2005. Her work is represented in private and state collections in Ireland, Britain and the USA. YVONNE SCOTT

SELECTED READING Seán Kissane, *Dorothy Cross*, exh. cat. IMMA (Milan and Dublin 2005); Robin Lydenberg, *GONE: Site Specific Works by Dorothy Cross*, exh. cat. McMullen Museum of Art, Boston College (Boston MA 2005); lecture by Dorothy Cross, TRIARC, TCD (June 2008).

**CROZIER, WILLIAM** (1930–2011), painter. Combining the colour and verve of the Scottish Colourists with a painterly and instinctive response to landscape, particularly the coastal scenery of west Cork, William Crozier was an artist who defies easy classification. Moving confidently between the Irish and British cultural worlds, he exhibited on many occasions both in London and in Dublin, as well as farther afield. Although born in Scotland, his family roots are in County Antrim, and visits to Ireland were a feature of early family life, setting a pattern of migration that Crozier retained throughout his working career. An Irish citizen, he identified strongly with Ireland as both home and place of work, yet his style and approach was still clearly rooted in the painterly, yet disciplined, tradition he had assimilated in Scotland.

Born in Glasgow, William Crozier grew up in Troon, Ayrshire. At the age of nineteen he enrolled in the Glasgow School of Art, graduating in 1952. His first exhibition was held in 1951 at the Carnegie Library, Ayr, Scotland. After a few months in Paris, where he absorbed the Existentialism prevalent in intellectual circles, Crozier moved to London where he was quickly recognized as one of the leading young painters of the