

Ruth Le Gear Biography

Le Gear (b.1985) graduated from Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) with a degree in sculpture in 2007. As an artist she is strongly attracted by the scientific method behind investigation of non physical phenomena, as well as the more intuitive process of understanding these phenomena including homeopathy. These methodologies are polar opposites but she feels that crucial connections are involved in perception and a unified experience is created from differences.

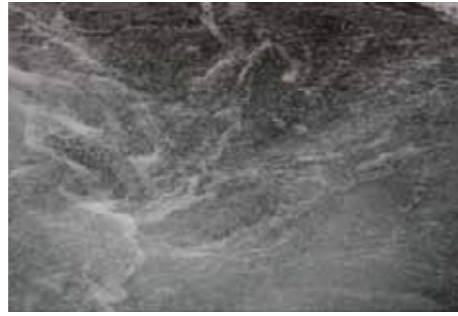
In 2011 Ruth was awarded a 6 month residency in Fire Station Artists' Studios, as part of the Fire Station & Arts and Disability Ireland Studio Award. Other residencies include Berlin (Cultura 2012), Iceland (SIM, 2012/09) Cill Rialig, (Kerry, 2011) Tyrone Guthrie (2010) and Limerick City Gallery of Art (2008). In Nov 2012 she completed a residency in the Arctic Circle. Exhibitions include a solo show in Galway Arts Centre (2009) and group exhibitions in Ev+a (2008), Claremorris Open (2008) and Millenium Court Arts Centre (2012). She was awarded an upcoming residency and exhibition for 2013 in the Leitrim Sculpture Centre.

www.ruthlegear.com





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It was a time of quiet reflection and gathering of myself in lots of ways. I arrived in Fire Station quiet discombobulated



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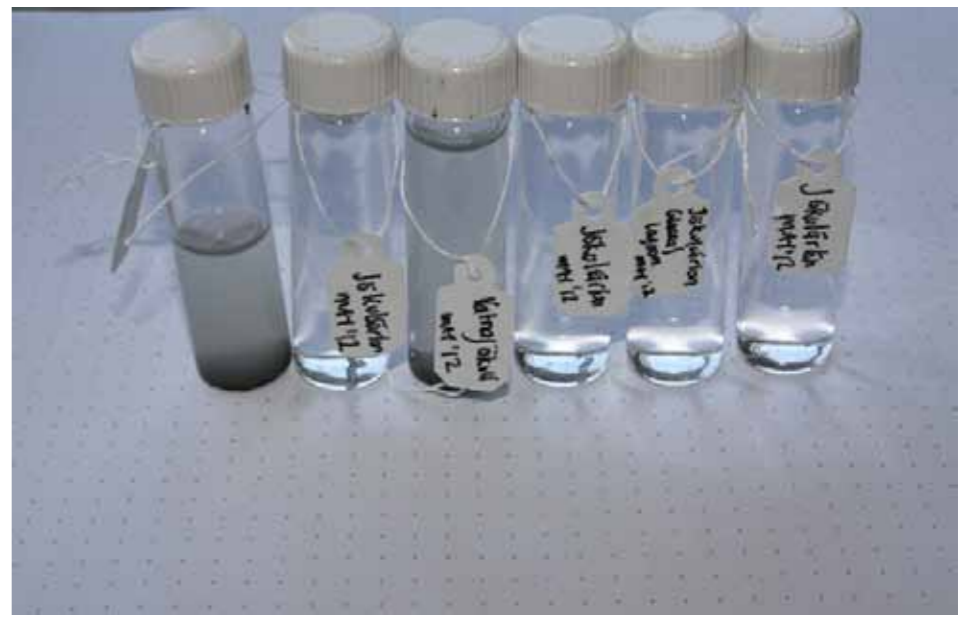


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I found my time at Fire Station really gave me the space to examine my practice and figure out where I wanted to go with my work.



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The following excerpt is from an email correspondence that took place between Ruth Le Gear and Pádraic E. Moore in late Spring, 2012.

Your work displays an interest not only in the aesthetics – but also the methodologies – of science. Much of your research has been carried out in laboratories alongside people working in a variety of fields. Would you agree that the research that you have carried out in these laboratories and the resulting documentation does not merely inform your practice but is rather an integral aspect of it? Clearly you believe that the realm of visual art is suitable for exploring and investigating these ideas.

My work is an exploration. It confuses people that I see homeopathic evidence and scientific evidence as equally valid. These methodologies are considered by some as polar opposites but I feel that crucial connections are involved in perception and a unified experience is created from differences. I feel this leads to a balanced approach. Perhaps this might be considered artistic research as practice.

At the moment I am hugely interested in the neuroscientific side of emotions. I have been attending lectures at the School of mind and brain in Berlin with the Association of Neuroesthetics. I am starting my research into emotional resonance in their library next week. I have been collecting experience here; collecting peoples tears again over the past months. I am intrigued by the idea that there is an emotional content within a tear. An ongoing strand of my work involves the systematic collecting of tears from the public and experimenting with them. When viewed under a microscope it is revealed that each tear is like a snowflake and has its own unique fingerprint. Part of my research into this took place last year in the the chemistry lab in National University of Galway (NUIG) where we crystallised tears. I presented the idea that the perception of the infinitesimal is common to both scientific and intuitive methodologies.

During our first studio visit last winter you mentioned your deep interest in Homeopathy and some of the practices it entails. You also showed me photographic documentation of work you had previously made that was clearly informed by this concern. Ultimately it would seem that you have a particular interest in the concept of what might be called subtle energies and the hidden character of substances. Can you elaborate on this? I believe that this is one of the interests that we both share.

I am also certainly interested in things that cannot be seen, the unquantifiable or the immeasurable. The essence of beings or substances we cannot see but know to be there. This relates to the notion of feeling and intuition as a form of knowing. As a part of my research methodologies I use a processes termed potentisation or trituration homeopathy. The word potentised can be a general term used in various contexts with energetic or vibrational medicine. It refers to any of a number of methods that release the potential of a substance from its physical matrix so it can operate in an energetic field. Homeopathic potentisation is a very specific form of potentisation which was developed by Samuel Hahnemann Homeopathy's Law of Infinitesimals says that the lower the concentration of a substance, the more potent it becomes. This is counter intuitive to most of us, the more you dilute something the stronger it gets. Infinitesimals have been used to express the idea of objects so small that there is no way to see them or to measure them. Hahnemann, who is now credited with creating homeopathy, refers to two different kinds of knowledge: Wissen and Kenntniss. Wissen is the kind of knowledge you get from studying or reading books, while Kenntniss is that deep personal knowledge you gain through experience. This is the difference between knowing about wetness by reading about it versus knowing wetness by immersing yourself in water.

My own work has led me to research Megalithic sites. Some of this research has fed into exhibitions such as that I am currently organising that will take place in Dublin this summer. It would seem from our dialogue that this is also something that you have an interest in since you've evidently photographed and spent time in stone circles. Can you share with me what attracts you to these sites?

I have spent a lot of time in so called fairy circles and at megalithic sites, particularly in the west of Ireland. I am interested in the memory of the space. Is the memory of the space perpetuated by this stream of people coming to it, or is there a particular consciousness to the space? There have been sacred sites and sacred streams in every country in the world. People have traveled to these spaces for years searching for a cure and to consciously acknowledge the space. One could say that the space does not mean anything unless you recognise the emotional significance and semantic association of what you are looking at. I feel that this questions the way that our impression of the world is given and how we extend into it. I became curious about the myths and stories of the Tuatha de Danann and the Magh Tuireadh battles.

The Tuatha de Danann were said to have been driven underground where they became the Daoine Sidhe fairies. I began to try and communicate with the land in order to find out its story. Each sense of the body had a rotation of 'lectures', 'conversations', 'presentations with the land, in order to try and unfold the story of the space. Particular movements on the land and changes to the land were necessary in order to speak to the space.

Research is clearly a significant facet of your practice. In relation to your recent work, how have you been translating this research into tangible artworks or have you been doing this at all?

I'm not entirely sure if I am aware of how I translate the research into 'tangible' artwork. I see my 'artistic research' as being independent of 'discipline', the research as being a negotiation or meditation with knowledge. It is to me just as valid as the work produced and not a stepping stone to creating tangible artworks. Of course one informs the other, naturally but in a way they are two different modes of being. There is always a sense of a holding period with the artwork, creating a space for it and allowing it to settle and see where it fits. I don't think I hold this space with research. With the work in the Crawford Observatory undertaken while I was on the Fire Station Artists' Studios residency, the research I was undertaking mainly explored ways to capture or contain star light. Which sent me off on a tangent, quiet unrelated to the site of the observatory. This is an extremely intangible idea to try and convey but it was portrayed through a performance meditation in the space and documentation of the space, and with research writings. I am still working with this concept and see it coming to fruition on my expedition to the arctic this winter.

In relation to this upcoming residency / expedition to the Arctic – will you be continuing your research into water there? Have you any ideas how this might be manifest?

As I have mentioned much of my practice revolves around water. The work that will take place in the arctic will examine the unfolding of a consciousness. It engages with how a drop of water has the capacity to hold the memory of a substance that has passed through it almost as if it has been locked in an iceberg. I wish to explore emotional resonance and atmospheres in the ice and light of the arctic.

To find out whether these ideas of water memory are just products of imaginations or an potential leap in understanding will require experimental research. This will be examined through mainstream

scientific experiments with scientists on board the tall ship and the more intuitive methods. Sound, video and photography will document this research, drawing together the intuitive strands from the collisions between science and varied intuitive phenomena.

I plan to take water samples at various points in the arctic and to create remedies from them, which I will then take. I will experiment with ice and glass; using a combination of natural materials such as water, light and motion coupled with experimental set ups and scientific devices. In my mind I see large scale delicate forms representing ice and light to be made. However, as with any invested and dedicated periods of study – these may change.

Pádraic E. Moore (b.1982) is an art historian, curator, writer and public speaker based in Dublin. In March 2012 Moore participated in a curatorial residency at the Israeli Centre for Digital art and was invited to contribute his findings in *eva International* 2012.



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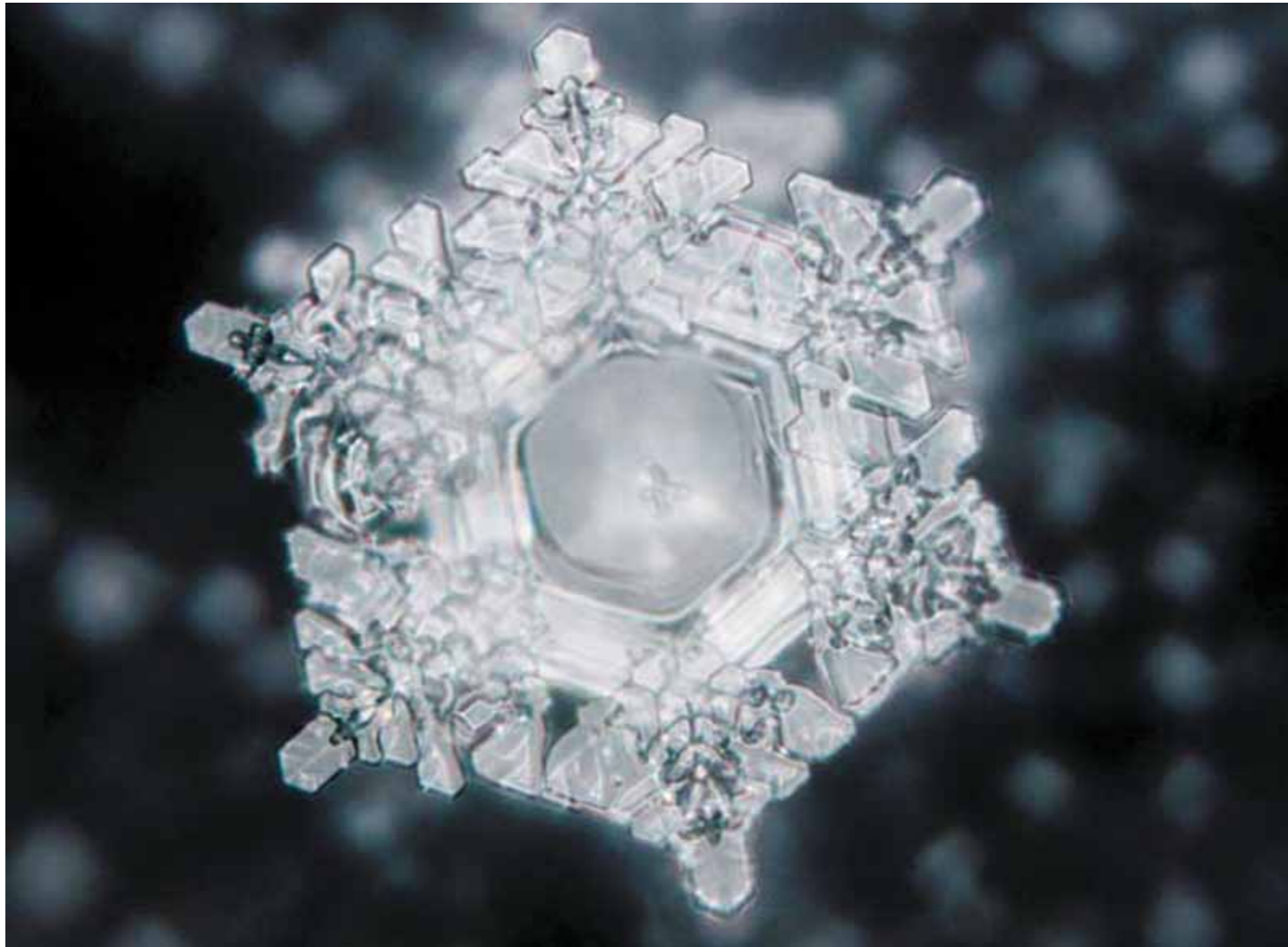


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I felt renewed from my time there and even though I felt afterwards that I did not fully use the residency to its fullest (I would have liked to use the workshop more), the time reflected the space I was in, as does the work I made while I was there.



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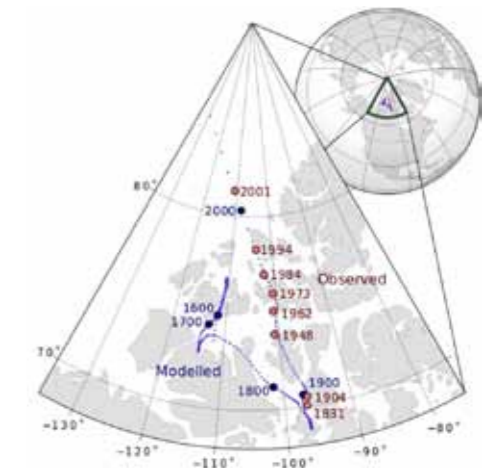
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Ruth Le gear Image list

1. Collecting vibration and resonance, 2012
- 2–11. A collection of spirits and water from Iceland (2009-2012)
12. Water samples from Dritvik, Snaefellsnes, Iceland (2012)
13. Water samples from sacred points on Snaefellsnes and Skaftafell (2012)
14. Manifestations, Lambda print (2012)
15. Crystal Archive – Snowflake, Lambda print (2011)
16. Observatory, Lambda print (2012)
17. Water crystal from the water exposed to the words “love and gratitude” © 2010 Masaru Emoto
18. Fairy Circle, Lambda print (2012)
19. Contemplation of the spring, Lambda print (2011)
20. Introspection, Lambda print (2012)
21. Crystal Archive, the invisible world, C print (2011)
22. The movement of Earth’s north magnetic pole across the arctic, 1831–2001.

Observed pole positions taken from M. Mandeia and E. Dormy, “Asymmetric behavior of magnetic dip poles”, Earth Planets Space, 55, 153–157, 2003.

Modelled pole positions taken from the National Geophysical Data Center, “Wandering of the Geomagnetic Poles”

Cover image: Distilling, Lambda print 2012

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