

ORIGINS

Sophia Aftab

Ciana Clarke

Jodie Galvin

Sally Ryan

Emer McMahan

1 – 16 AUGUST 2026

OPENING RECEPTION

SATURDAY 1 AUGUST, 3PM

Lismore Castle Arts:

St Carthage Hall

Chapel St, Lismore

Co Waterford, P51 WV96

Ireland

Lismore Castle Arts is delighted to present ORIGINS, selected from the 2026 undergraduate shows across Ireland. This is an annual exhibition held each year as a way of presenting emerging artists in a gallery context, alongside Lismore Castle Art's annual programme of national and international artists.

ORIGINS 2026 brings together five emerging artists working across sculpture, installation, photography, painting and archival processes. Drawing on personal experience, their practices explore identity, domestic space, perception and the ways images, objects and archives shape our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

From bedrooms, diaries and everyday rituals to assistive technologies, self-portraiture and acts of documentation, the exhibition considers how private experience can reflect broader social, technological and emotional realities. Together, the artists reveal the significance of the ordinary, inviting us to look more closely at the spaces and objects that shape contemporary life.

Sophia Aftab is a recent graduate of MTU Crawford College of Art & Design, working across sculpture, assemblage, drawing and installation. Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* has influenced their recent work, sparking an interest in the psychological

charge of enclosed and intimate spaces: corners, interiors and places of retreat that exist between comfort and isolation. In their work, objects are compressed, encased or forced into unstable proximities, creating forms that oscillate between protection and restriction. Cats have become a recurring point of reference for their instinct to inhabit spaces regardless of scale or suitability and for broader symbolic associations with independence, femininity and domestication. Aftab is interested in the contradiction of the cat as a figure that resists control, while continually being framed within domestic space – a body that curls itself willingly into confinement.

Ciana Clarke is a recent graduate of National College of Art & Design. Her work examines external and internal conflicts between mind and body, fuelled by society's exhausted narrative surrounding the female body, distorted idealisation and the relentless influence of diet culture. She uses art to process and understand trauma, making invisible struggles visible and highlighting moments of vulnerability that we all experience. Through photography, self-portraiture and moving image, Clarke allows access into complicated and shameful aspects of our psyche. By placing herself directly within her print, she seeks to understand and justify her own presence and existence in the world.

Jodie Galvin is a recent graduate of TUS Limerick School of Art & Design, exploring the intersection of fine art, access and technology. Her practice is shaped by her use of computer vision as assistive technology to navigate blindness caused by a rare disorder known as Marfan's Syndrome. Her current body of work examines the relationship between distorted sight and the abstraction of identity and human connection in an increasingly digitised world. Informed by Hito Steyerl's 2025 text *Medium Hot: Images in the Age of Heat*, she explores how AI and algorithmic image-making reshape our perception and trust in what we can and cannot see. In the summer of 2024, Jodie was the first patient in Ireland to successfully receive a specialised intraocular lens implant, manipulating her conditions of vision and allowing her to see for the first time. Although a point of inspiration, generative AI was not used in the planning or production of these works.

Sally Ryan is a recent graduate of TUS Limerick School of Art & Design. Focusing on her relationship with her bedroom as both a physical and psychological space, she documents the small, repetitive rituals that shape her day-to-day life. Living

at home and often preferring her own company, her bedroom starts to feel like a self-contained space. Her work explores what happens in this space, from the actions that take place in her bed to the underlying anxieties connected to her wardrobe and self-image. Working across photography, video, sound, projection, and sculptural elements, she reflects on how the space feels; warm, safe, and familiar on the surface, but layered with stress and anxiety underneath.

Emer McMahon is a recent graduate of TUS Limerick School of Art & Design. Her recent body of work *At the end of the world, who will read my Diary?* considers documentation as an act of preservation and meaning making. Through diary entries, cataloguing and personal archives she gives the viewer permission to understand who she is and what she spends her time doing. She questions how ordinary lives are remembered, inflating her importance and transforming the mundane into an enduring record that extends beyond individual experience.

List of works

1. Emer McMahon, *At the end of the world who will read my Diary?*, 2026, digital photograph, frame.
2. Jodie Galvin, *Human aft3r 4LL*, 2026, paint on canvas.
3. Jodie Galvin, *Human aft3r 4LL*, 2026, paint on shower curtain.
4. Jodie Galvin, *Human aft3r 4LL*, 2026, paint on canvas.
5. Sally Ryan, *The Room That Knows Me*, 2026, digital photograph, frame.
6. Sally Ryan, *The Room That Knows Me*, 2026, digital photograph, frame.
7. Sophia Aftab, *Pangur Bán (Aisling as cat) & Above below and Beyond the duck pond*, 2026, graphite, coloured pencil, biro, marker on paper displayed on cork board.
8. Sophia Aftab, *I am not captured, this is just in case*, 2026, melamine chipboard wood, sheet metal, metal brackets, nuts & bolts, screws, Playskool Elefun Ball

Popper, cassette tape with a sticker of Garbage Pail Kids.

9. Ciana Clarke, *FISH IN A BOWL SAYS MINDSET IS EVERYTHING* Series, 2026, cyanotype on Japanese paper.

