

New artworks commissioned by IMMA for As Above, So Below are located in the South East & East Galleries and Courtyard. Each work is accompanied by extended information:

Stephan Doitschinoff, *Interventu* (2017)
Grace Weir, *In Parallel* (2017)
Matt Copson, *The Spoilt in War* (2017)
Pádraic E. Moore (curatorial advisor), *Drawing down the Moon* (2017)
John Russell, *In Filth [Spiritualized]* (2017)
Eoghan Ryan, *The Modern Dance (In Light of Today's Questions)* (2017)
Linder, *The Hag's Mountain* (2017)
Nora Berman, *Port (Highest Self)* (2017)
Alan Butler, *On Exactitude in Science* (2017)
Hayden Dunham, *WELT* (2016)

Courtyard

Stephan Doitschinoff, *Interventu* (2017)

For the exhibition the Brazilian artist Stephan Doitschinoff's (b. 1977) new work is an ambitious display for the facade of IMMA. The piece is made up of three parts inspired from Brazilian rituals and traditions. The archway's have been decorated with original blessed ex-votos from the city of Juazeiro do Norte. These are objects offered as gifts to saints in exchange for a blessing and are made from wood and brass. Under the balcony is a veiled structure that is made up of donated secondhand and traditional Brazilian wedding dresses found at pilgrimage sites. The work is completed by a brass hand sculpture engraved with a number of symbols created by the artist.

List of As Above, So Below Artists:

Hilma af Klint, Kenneth Anger, David Beattie, Nora Berman, Annie Besant, Agnieszka Brzeżańska, Alan Butler, James Lee Byars, Cameron, Marcus Coates, Ira Cohen, Ithell Colquhoun, Matt Copson, Stephan Doitschinoff, Hayden Dunham, Susan Hiller, Alejandro Jodorowsky, Wassily Kandinsky, Rachid Koraïchi, Emma Kunz, František Kupka, Paul Laffoley, Liliane Lijn, Linder, Josiah McElheny, Steve McQueen, Henri Michaux, Pascale Montandon-Jodorowsky, Pádraic E. Moore (curatorial advisor), Bruce

Nauman, pascALEjandro, Sigmar Polke, The Propeller Group, Patrick Pye, John Russell, Eoghan Ryan, Aura Satz, Penny Slinger, Austin Osman Spare, Suzanne Treister, Grace Weir.

The exhibition is co-curated by Rachael Thomas, Senior Curator: Head of Exhibitions, IMMA and Sam Thorne, Director, Nottingham Contemporary.

IMMA would like to thank the artists and their galleries and the various lenders, all of whom have made this exhibition possible, including amongst others: Hilma af Klint Foundation, Sweden; Cameron Parsons Foundation, New York; The Ithell Colquhoun Collection, UK; Emma Kunz Centre, Würenlos; The Estate of Paul Laffoley, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; and numerous private collections and galleries worldwide.

Catalogue

The accompanying exhibition catalogue is on sale in the IMMA Bookshop, priced €20

Talks + Event Series:

Curators' Discussion & Preview *As Above, So Below*
Thursday 13 April, 6pm – 7pm
An introduction to the exhibition with co-curators Sam Thorne and Rachael Thomas (Head of Exhibitions, IMMA) with selected exhibition artists.

Curator's Lunchtime Talk
Friday 19 May, 1.15pm – 2pm, drop-in, free
Meeting point: Main Reception
Rachael Gilbourne, Curator Exhibitions, IMMA, gives an insightful walkthrough of this exhibition.

Art as Compass towards the Future / Mark Patrick Hederman
Date tbc
Drawing on art, psychology and living a monastic life in the 21st century, Hederman discusses his proposition that art is its own kind of religion and therefore is prophetic.

IFI / IMMA Screening Series

May – July
IFI and IMMA present a special series of feature titles and artists' experimental film, opening with a rare screening of Alejandro Jodorowsky's 1973 cult classic *The Holy Mountain*.

Live Event / Wilder Beings Command!

Saturday 29 July
Formal Gardens & Meadow, Great Hall, Chapel
Wilder Beings Command! is an evening of live performance, music and choreography, to reach out and involve generations both young and old. Celebrating the outdoor site of the museum as an activated space, the evening features moments of procession, ritual and collectivity, where visitors can play an active part in its unfolding.

Live Performance

***The Modern Dance (In the Light of Today's Questions)* / Eoghan Ryan**
Thursday 17 August

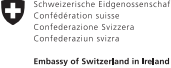
South East & East Galleries
An intimate performance work by Eoghan Ryan that runs over the course of an evening, *The Modern Dance (In the Light of Today's Questions)* questions what constitutes the sacred and divine within secular Western culture. It looks at ideas that are inherited from previous generations and how this forms our personal identities, specifically within an institutional setting. Incorporating sound, song, sculpture and moving image, the performance becomes a live multi-disciplinary installation in motion.

For a full programme with talk and event details and to book tickets, visit www.imma.ie

Booking is essential for all talks, unless otherwise stated.
For further information, contact Sophie Byrne, Assistant Curator, Talks and Lectures, IMMA. email: sophie.byrne@imma.ie; Tel: + 353 (0)1 6229913.

IMMA would also like to thank Matheson for their ongoing and visionary support of new work at IMMA, our partner hotel The Dean Dublin and our invaluable IMMA Members and Patrons, all of whom have made this exhibition possible.

For a full programme of talks and events visit www.imma.ie
For further information contact talksandlectures@imma.ie



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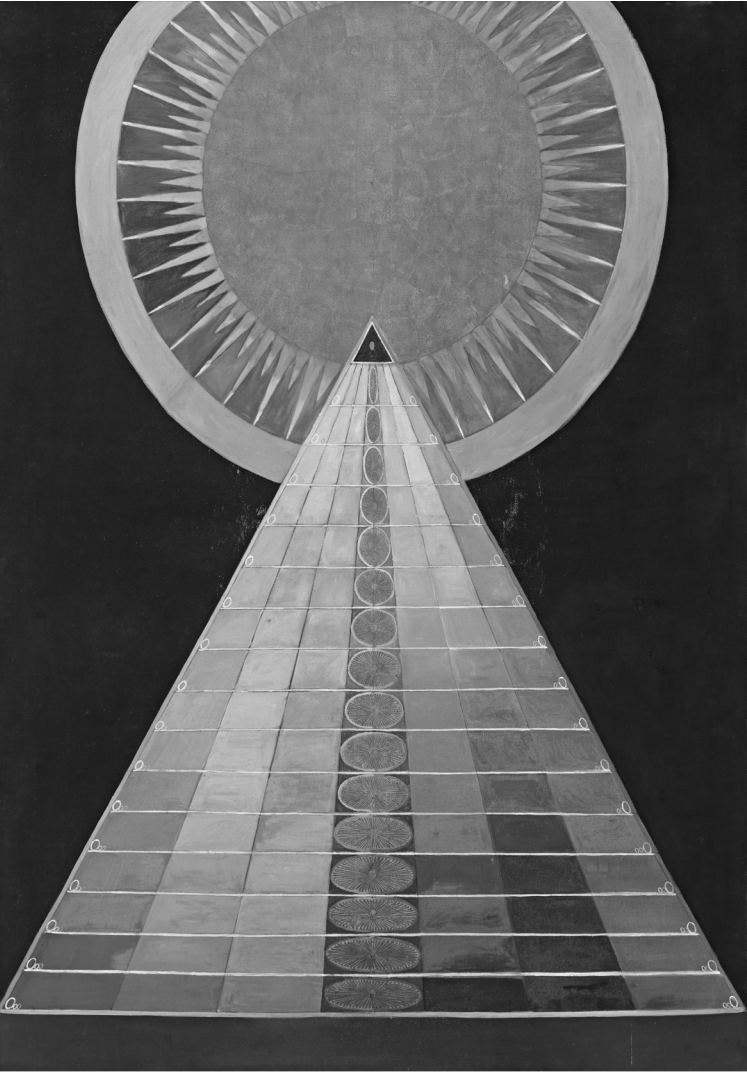
Irish Museum of Modern Art
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Royal Hospital
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Kilmainham
Dublin 8
Ireland

Front Cover:

Cover image credit: Hilma af Klint, *Altarpiece, No 1, Group X, Series Altarpieces*, 1915, Oil and metal leaf on canvas, 237.5 × 179.5 cm, Courtesy Hilma af Klint Foundation, Sweden

IMMA - IRISH MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
SOUTH EAST GALLERIES, EAST WING GALLERIES & COURTYARD
13 APRIL – 27 AUGUST 2017

As Above, So Below:
Portals, Visions, Spirits & Mystics



As Above, So Below is a major exhibition tracing how artistic ideas of spirituality have evolved through the 20th and 21st centuries. It features a wide overview of artists' encounters with the spiritual, whether they are true believers, sceptics or fellow-travellers.

The exhibition includes almost 200 works by 40 artists, many of which are being shown to Irish audiences for the first time. **As Above, So Below** presents a range of very different voices and geographies. It spans from early abstract works that reshaped our view of the natural world at the turn of the 20th century via post-war works between 1945 and 1979, influenced by the use of psychedelic drugs and emergent technologies, to works by living artists, as well as a number of new works commissioned by IMMA that respond to the themes of the exhibition.

Rather than following a chronological structure, the exhibition is broken into four sections: Portals, Below, Above and Beyond. Each section explores a different aspect of spirituality, through painting, photography, installation and video, and the exhibition is set within the East and South East Galleries and extends to the courtyard of the museum. The first section centres on the idea of exploring other worlds. The second focuses on the fiery depths and the occult, described as the 'Below'. The third section offers work by artists that explore the ideas of healing and heavenly imagery through painting and installation. The final area displays work from living artists that challenges the ideas of spirituality and what lies beyond death.

The exhibition title suggests parallel worlds, which is when something that happens on one level of reality can also take place in another reality. The popular phrase comes to us from the *Tabula Smaragdina* (or Emerald Tablet). Produced in Egypt during the second and third centuries AD, it is said to be inscribed with the secrets of the universe. **As Above, So Below** takes the visitor beyond the limitations of what is perceived as spiritual and embraces the other world, the occult, mystics and rituals, creating a space for us to reflect and explore these gateways to wonder.

Visitors are advised that this exhibition contains nudity and some explicit imagery. Please talk to a member of our Visitor Engagement team if you need any more information.

**Portals
1896 to now
Rooms 1–4**

Within these rooms there are works of historic importance ranging from 1896 to the present day and consisting of sculpture, painting, drawing, video and installation. The artist and theorist Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) published *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* in 1911, which is on view here. In this book, Kandinsky discusses the psychology of colours, the language of form and colour, and the responsibilities of the artist. He believed that artists should call for a spiritual revolution in painting to allow them to express their perception of the world in non-material terms; this became known as abstract art.

The exhibition *As Above, So Below* begins with paintings by the Swedish artist Hilma af Klint (1862–1944), a visionary female artist, who was producing work decades before Kandinsky's pioneering text was even published. Af Klint understood her paintings to be messages from the universe, from 'High Powers'. The artist's work could be described as diagrams that illustrate the structure of a portal, as seen here in the painting *Altarpiece, No 1, Group X* (1915). In her will, af Klint wrote that her work wasn't to be made accessible to the public until at least twenty years after her death. She was convinced that their full meaning could not be understood until then. One hundred years ago, Hilma af Klint painted pictures for the future.

Continuing through this section, we enter into other worlds created by a selection of artists. Echoing the spirit of af Klint, we find the elegant and absorbing 16mm film *Running Thunder* (2007) by the Oscar-winning film-maker Steve McQueen (b. 1969). This work is an exploration of spirituality through film, depicting a motionless horse, lying dead – or asleep? – in a grassy meadow. It questions stillness and movement and the line that exists between life and death. František

Kupka's (1871–1957) *Le Rêve (The Dream)* (1909) is displayed next. Here a figure rises up into a dreamlike space; this work refers to Kupka's colours of harmony series inspired by Sir Isaac Newton's colour theory.

In Room 3, James Lee Byars's (1932–1997) *Diamond Floor* (1995) consists of five large crystal diamonds placed on the floor in an arrangement that Byar's describes as "a slightly compressed pentagon". The shape implies a human figure as each diamond represents the head or one of the four limbs. The work represents Byars's love for fleeting beauty, perfect form, and the possible differences between the physical body and the spiritual mind.

Moving to the last room, there are Liliane Lijn's (b. 1939) kinetic sculptural cones, titled *Koans*. 'Koan' is a Japanese word for a riddle given to young Buddhist monks as an aid for meditation. *Mars Koan* (2008) could be used as a tool for meditation. The work spins slowly at a constant speed so that the viewer's eye focuses on the lines, which, as a result, appear to dissolve the volume of the sculpture as it moves.

**Below
1906 to now
Rooms 5–8**

Moving into the East Galleries, there are a selection of works from 1906 onwards, concerned with the theme of shadows, other worlds and fiery depths. This is the domain of the occult, meaning 'knowledge of the hidden'. Occult is the study of a deeper spiritual reality that extends beyond pure reason and the physical sciences. One artist in this section is Kenneth Anger (b. 1927), seen here with a series of six photographic stills from his series of experimental films, *The Magick Lantern Cycle* series (1947–81). Anger has had a lifelong devotion to the adventurer-occultist Aleister Crowley since the mid-1950s, and has said about this relationship, "The occult is an undercurrent, it never quite goes away."

In the same room you will find works by the artist, poet and actress Cameron (1922–1995). Cameron was also an occultist. A follower of the religious movement Thelema, founded by Aleister Crowley, she was a

close friend of Kenneth Anger. Her dark yet whimsical painting series titled *Pluto Transiting the Twelfth House* (1978–86) features what look like supernatural figures and are displayed here alongside a film still from Anger's *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* (1954–66), in which Cameron also starred.

In the corridor is the new work *In Filth [Spiritualized]* (2017) a digital backlit vinyl work by the British artist John Russell (b. 1963) which transforms the gallery space. The work presents an experimental alternate reality. It is an apocalyptic vision that the artist has described as "humanity's murderous path to locate origins, truth and beauty in the realm of spirituality".

This section features a room dedicated to one of Bruce Nauman's (b. 1941) first immersive art works, *Natural Light, Blue Light Room* (1971). The installation is an intentionally disorienting space, a room that fuses daylight and blue glowing neon. Nauman has noted about the work, "The idea was that it would be hard to know what to focus on and even if you did, it would be hard to focus." For the visitor, it offers an alternative experience, like entering another world.

The tarot is a common feature throughout this section. Tarot is a pack of playing cards, used from the mid-15th century in various parts of Europe to play complex games such as 'Italian tarocchini'. In the late 18th century, it began to be used by occultists for divination. In this section is the tarot deck titled *22 Tarot Cards* by Alejandro Jodorowsky (b. 1929), a spiritual guru and cult film-maker. Jodorowsky co-wrote *The Way of Tarot* (2004) and in it demonstrates how tarot can be a powerful tool for creativity. Also in this section is the art historically significant work *Austin Osman Spare tarot deck* (c. 1906) by English artist and occultist Austin Osman Spare (1886–1956). The early dated work demonstrates the artist's influence on the British Occult Revival at the beginning of 20th century. From tarot, to occults and other worlds this chapter focuses on an idea of spirituality that has been around since the 15th century and remains mysterious and alluring.

**Above
1940s to now
Rooms 9 & 10**

The works in this section are concerned with healing and transcendence. Transcendence is the potential to move our mind and body beyond our perceived limits. The section features artists such as Susan Hiller (b. 1940), whose work *Homage to Marcel Duchamp* (2011) on display here is described as an 'aura photograph'. This technique was perfected in the 1970s by inventor Guy Coggins. When a photograph is taken the electrical frequencies are measured from the subject's hand, the frequencies are then translated into colour by a computer and appears as a halo around the sitter. Susan Hiller's reference to cubist artist Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968) in the title originates from the 1910 portrait of his friend Dr Dumouchel, where he painted a halo of colours to follow the contours of the body.

Following this are the works by the pioneering Swiss artist and healer Emma Kunz (1892–1963). Her geometric patterns on graph paper produced from 1938 have been described as her answers to questions about life. Kunz's apparent skills of healing were not miracles but instead were attributed to her ability to use and activate powers that Kunz believed lay dormant in everyone that she met.

In this section there is a close connection to the works in 'Below'. This is seen through the extraordinary British Surrealist painter Ithell Colquhoun's (1906–1988) work *Attributes of the Moon* (1947), depicting an occult goddess-like figure with luxurious folds of her dress and hair in a mystical landscape. Her work was inspired by her travels as a young woman, alone in the unruly Irish countryside. There is a definite religious layer to her paintings, which can be compared to the heavenly landscape *God Pitched His Tent Among Men, 'a Nativity'* (2000) by the Irish artist Patrick Pye (b. 1929), displayed in the next room.

Pye paints what he sees as the essential questions about life and human nature through biblical references. Despite the traditional themes, Pye remains a thoroughly

modern artist; his work is vibrant and alive, as can be seen in *The Life of Heaven: The Transfiguration* (1997). Also in this room is the new work, devised in two parts, by Irish artist Eoghan Ryan (b. 1987), *The Modern Dance (In Light of Today's Questions)* (2017); the artist has reconstructed the memories of a recently closed sauna and rehabilitation centre in Berlin, a place used to reflect and meditate. The second part of this work will take place in August as a performance.

**Beyond
1990s to now
Rooms 11 & 12**

Artists who challenge the notion of spirituality are in the final section, which considers endings, death and what lies ahead for us. The works on display here are influenced by the digital age of technology and its influence on spirituality. Beginning this section are three paintings by Polish artist Agnieszka Brzezańska (b. 1972) that depict what the artist believes are the flows and energies found in nature that are often invisible to the human eye. These shapes can be seen in the work *The Event* (2012). Beside these paintings is the new work by Los Angeles-based artist Nora Berman (b. 1990) titled *Port (Highest Self)* (2017), responding to the theme with a monumental installation representing a portal or way to the artist's idea of her 'highest self'.

Within the rooms, are a series of works by American artist Paul Laffoley (1935–2015) titled *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1995–7) and which is made up of 75 parts. The title of this work comes from a collection of lyric poems by the 11th century Persian astronomer and mathematician and Sufi (Islamic mystic) Omar Khayyam, and describes the deep feelings and emotions of the narrator on subjects such as life, death, love, and religion.

Towards the close of this section is a film projection by artist collective The Propeller Group. Their ideas of the spiritual are brought into question in a work that presents the funeral rituals of Vietnam. The film merges documentary footage of processions with stunning re-enactments of rituals – a reflection on death and the people that pay homage to the dead.