

Opening of [Rest Here](#) by Michael McLoughlin

May 24 2017

Professor Imelda Maher, UCD Sutherland School of Law

A dhuine uasail, dia dhaoibh go léir go dtí Scoil Dlí Sutherland ar and ocaíd sin.

Ladies and gentlemen welcome to the UD Sutherland School of Law and the opening of Rest Here by the 2015 artist in residence, [Michael McLoughlin](#).

We are privileged to have had Michael engage with us around his work and to have had it exhibited here. There are many people who have supported this project – I will forget some but want to acknowledge as many as I can.

To Michael for choosing us in this very real sense.

To the College of Social Sciences and Law Working Group on the Artist in Residence for choosing Michael and to UCD Parity Studios for supporting him in his work.

To Ms. Emer O’Boyle, Parity Studios for her wonderful combination of imagination and steadfastness that ensures this programme thrives.

To the College for supporting the programme and sponsoring tonight’s event.

To Professor Joe Carthy who chairs the University Working Group on the Artists in Residence for having the patience, vision and influence to get things done.

To Mr. Gary Smith (and many of his colleagues in UCD Estates) who never gave up on us having this installation: bringing art into institutions is not easy.

To Ms. Ewalina Chudzinska whose quiet stewardship of the Law School building has ensured many people have been able to experience this art work.

To our Dean, Professor Joe McMahon who cannot be here with us tonight for supporting us and to Ms. Una Kelly and Mr. Danny Moran for arranging this evening.

To several colleagues who have engaged in our ambitions around law into art: including Dr. Mark Coen, Mr. John O’Dowd and of course, to my colleague who will speak later, Dr. Liam Thornton.

Finally, we wouldn’t have got here today if Lorraine Hanlon, Professor of Physics had not agreed to meet me several years ago now to discuss how she had brought together students

from NCAD and UCD physics to work together in a module where the assessment is a joint exhibition of art work. That encounter has ultimately led to the Law School being able to move in the slip stream of Michael's imagination for a short while and for that we are very grateful.

What does it mean to have this art work in the law school? Yishai Blank drawing on Weber's description of the western state as being disenchanted, calls for a re-enchantment of the Law.¹ He identifies a divide within jurisprudence between thinkers who look to an instrumentalist and secularized view of the law and those who are trying to reenchant the law by reintroducing a degree of magic, sacredness, and mystery. He laments the lack of transcendental meaning for law and calls for this reenchantment through different means including, most radically, a re-enchantment of law as art. Law can be re-imagined as something different from its modern incarnation as positivist, instrumental, rational, a technique of government and often detached from justice. Those who make and apply the law know that the rule of law is best served by persuasion rather than coercion. A law that is framed in terms of honouring, reverence almost and with humility is one that will secure respect. In this time of fake news, of global citizens of nowhere, we are called on to reenchant the law to reweave the transcendental and the just into the fabric of law. What we are doing here today, thanks to Michael, is a small step in that direction.

¹ Y. Blank, 'The Reenchantment of Law' (2011) 96 Cornell Law Review 633.