

PRESS RELEASE
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Couture meets fine art at The Great Hall, Kilkenny Castle

Two Kilkenny artists, Couturier Mary McGuinness and Fine Artist Brock Butler will bring their talents and skills together in an exciting event at Kilkenny Castle this November. Coming from two different disciplines, the designer and the artist will, over the coming months, create work inspired by the other, and a total of 20 pieces – 10 dresses and 10 pieces of visual art – will be presented to their guests in a showcase evening in the historic setting of Kilkenny Castle. “Couture Meets Fine Art” also includes an orchestral harp performance and all proceeds from the event will go to the Susie Long Hospice Fund. Tickets cost EUR125.00 and are available from Mary McGuinness and the Susie Long Hospice Fund. Further details are available on www.marymcguinness.ie and www.susielonghospice.com.

The idea behind “Couture Meets Fine Art” was to explore the correlation between fashion and art, and to understand how each might interpret the other. Having prepared specific pieces for each other, Mary McGuinness and Brock Butler have presented these pieces to each other and are currently experimenting and interpreting each other’s work in their own style and discipline, in their own studios.

The unveiling of the results of this creative and innovative project in the sumptuous surrounds of The Great Hall at Kilkenny Castle promises to be a truly special occasion. From the fashion perspective, Brock Butler’s images will be used in a daywear collection, made by Mary McGuinness at her studio in the Castle Yard, just across the road from Kilkenny Castle. Mary will work with five of Brock’s pieces of art and, using her own style and interpretation, will transcend the usual, the expected, and create wearable art, all the while maintaining the essence and energy of each piece.

Brock, in turn, will work with five of Mary’s preliminary concepts, which integrate unusual technique and classic style lines. Using his own individual expression and symbolism, and working from his studio in St Michael’s Gate, Brock will create five pieces of art, reflecting his own concept of art transcending fashion.

Announcing the details of “Couture Meets Fine Art” this week, Mary McGuinness revealed that her inspiration and motivation for this event comes from her sister, Fran, who passed away earlier this year. “I had dreamed of collaborating with a fine artist of the calibre of Brock Butler for a long time. With Fran’s passing this year, I learned that we have to live our lives to the full; we can do anything and, instead of wishing or thinking about a dream, we should just go and do it. And I’m delighted to be donating the proceeds of “Couture Meets Fine Art” to the Susie Long Hospice Fund, who are campaigning to build a hospice in Kilkenny – an incredibly worthy cause, which will greatly benefit the people of Kilkenny and Carlow”.

Background info:

Mary McGuinness specialises in providing a concierge experience for the commission she undertakes for her clients. “I constantly challenge myself in how I approach my craft and try to incorporate new techniques to highlight classic style lines. With the combination of superior fabrics, this approach results in high quality crafted couture garments”. Her studio is located in The Castle Yard, across the road from Kilkenny Castle. Further details are available on www.marymcguinness.ie

Brock Butler has exhibited successfully at Art Ireland at the RDS throughout this decade and has also had several solo and group shows. Collectors of his work

include Dermot Desmond, Frances Black and Mary Coughlan. Often asked about abstract art, Brock explains “This can be a difficult question to answer, because even though there may be ideas and concepts that inform a painting, there is not an easily articulated narrative, as there would be with writing or figurative or landscape painting. Each individual’s response to a painting, therefore, can vary according to their own interpretation, experience and current psychological perspective. The overall aim is to create work that is meditative, harmonious and life-enhancing”. Further details from www.brockbutler.com

The Susie Long Hospice Fund (SLHF) was set up in October 2007 to provide the highest possible quality of end-of-life care for patients and their families through the establishment of a 10-bed hospice in Kilkenny, for the people of Kilkenny and Carlow. The Fund is meeting this challenge through fundraising, increasing awareness of the need and benefits of local hospice care and by lobbying Government for support. Donations can be made directly to the fund at AIB, High St, Kilkenny, Account No: 3462705, Sort code: 93-31-98. The Susie Long Hospice Fund is a registered charity, number CHY17950. Further details from www.susielonghospice.com

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