

Selma Mäkelä, *Fragment*, 2024, oil on linen, 40 x 50 cm

Jane Hughes and Selma Mäkelä
“Forward,” said granny in the snow
“Eteenpäin,” sanoi mummo lumessa

28 March to 16 May 2026

Opening on Saturday 28 March at 3.00pm
by Roger Hill, Honorary Consul of Finland

followed by a Gallery Conversation
between Jane Hughes and Selma Mäkelä
and the curator Paula Barrett.

All welcome



Uillinn

West Cork Arts Centre

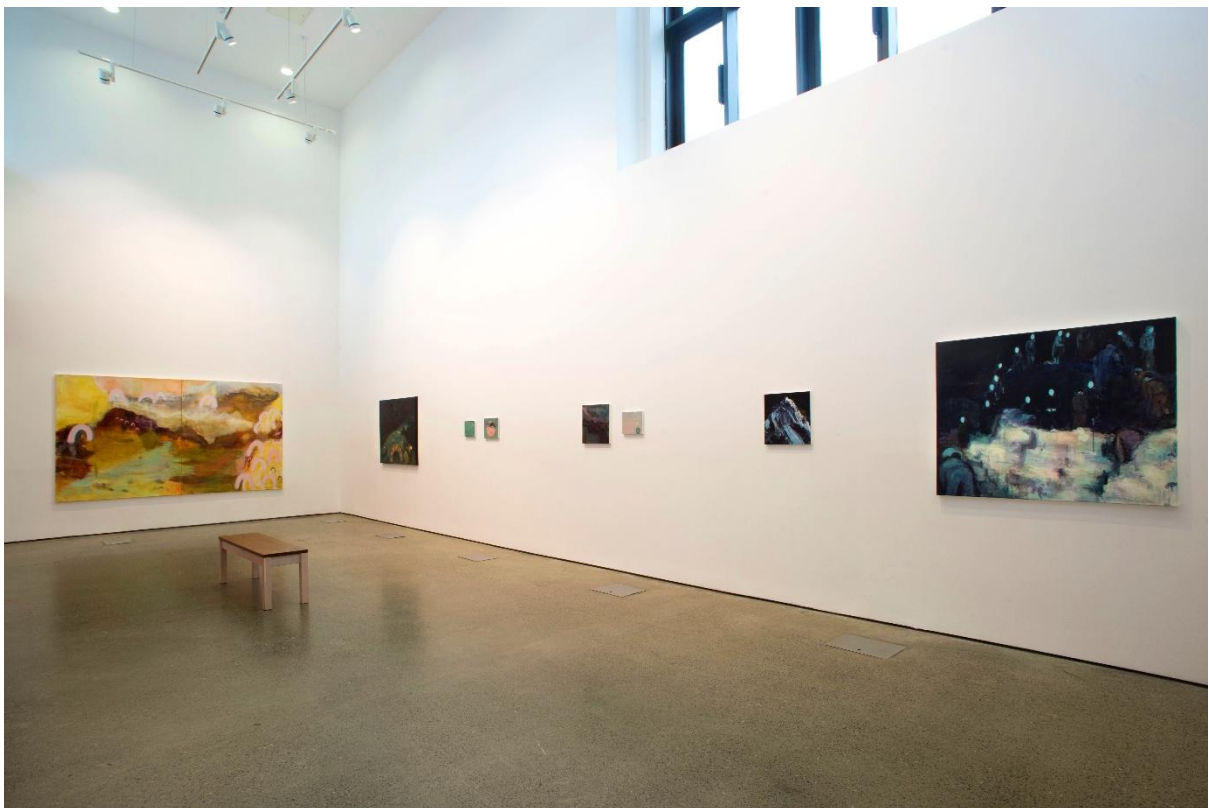
Monday to Saturday

10.00am - 4.30pm

www.westcorkartscentre.com



Forward said Granny in the snow at Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, April 2026. Photo Credit: Tomasz Madajczak



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Alpine Diner, Selma Mäkelä, 2020, Oil on Canvas, 36 x 31cm

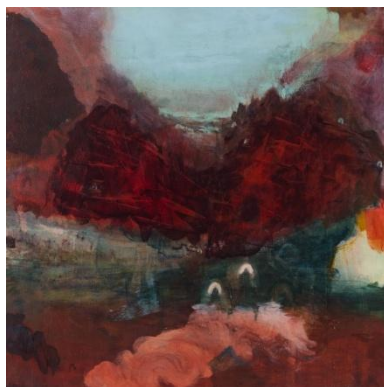


Spectrolite, Selma Mäkelä, 2022, Oil on Canvas, 29 x 36cm

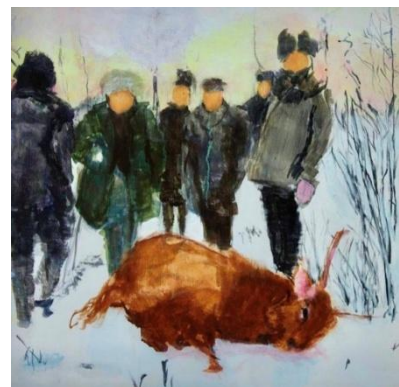
Notes from the Curator, Paula Barrett, March 2026

There is a Finnish proverb "*Eteenpäin, sanoi mummo lumessa*" which translates as "*Forward,*" said granny in the snow. It is an expression of perseverance, Finnish *sisu*, a steady, grounded resilience. It is the determination to continue even when the path is soft beneath your feet and your vision is obscured.

Across these rooms, landscape dominates, while human figures drift in and out of view. The figures that do appear are explorers, scientists, tourists, extractors. In one painting, hunters stand in line, proudly presenting their prize. In another, a group appear masked, suggesting acts of control. An expedition tentatively picks their way over a glacial crevasse, while elsewhere a group gathers scattered debris. In Mäkelä's *Retreating Glacier* a solitary figure sits at a table before a valley, presenting a world where geological change unfolds at human pace.



Blood Mountains, Jane Hughes, 2025, Acrylic on Panel, 40 x 40cm



The Hunters, Jane Hughes, 2025, Acrylic on Panel, 40 x 40cm



Our time was then, Jane Hughes, 2025, Acrylic on Canvas, 160 x 130cm

Walking a Waterford shoreline some years ago with geologist Dr Bill Sheppard, I learned to read the ground differently. Where I saw texture and colour, he saw movement. Stones that appeared to lie still were records of transformation, still in motion. Every pebble carried a fragment of a larger story. Both geological and cosmic materials ask us to consider how time writes itself into matter. To look at landscape is to look at what has already happened. Snow reminds us of this in its ability to record footprints. In Hughes' painting *Our Time Was Then* a skeleton sinks towards its silt bed, already beginning its slow transition into sediment and, eventually, rock. Ice, stone and sediment hold traces that will remain long after we are gone, much like the starlight that reaches us long after its source has extinguished.



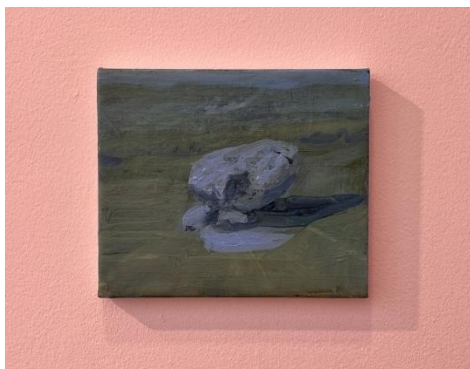
Aurora, Selma Mäkelä, 2025, Oil on Canvas, 21 x 26cm

This exhibition stages a dialogue about time, unsettling the familiar arc of human progress. In these paintings, deep time becomes perceptible, stretching beyond human experience into the long temporal continuums of matter. Through pigment, gesture and layered surfaces, the paintings offer tactile entry points into those continuums. Their nonlinear, dreamlike structures acknowledge the difficulty of grasping such immensity. In *Underland*, Robert MacFarlane describes a shift from a horizontal imagination of paths across surfaces to a vertical one of descents into deep repositories where matter keeps time; these paintings share that vertical sensibility.



The sky is thick, shadowed and grey, Jane Hughes, 2025, Acrylic on Panel, 40 x 40cm

Both artists create composite landscapes shaped by migration, remoteness and cultural multiplicity, drawing on residencies in edge places such as Inis Oírr, Achill Island, Fogo Island and Arctic regions. Selma Mäkelä was born in London to Finnish and Turkish Cypriot heritage and is now based in the west of Ireland. She works with meteorological, geological and geographical phenomena to think through environmental crisis and our position within vast timescales. Through the act of painting, she captures fleeting natural events such as snow, ice or meteor activity, holding them still long enough for us to consider them. Jane Hughes was born in Ireland and is now living in Finland after a decade in Berlin. In her paintings, she builds dense, layered surfaces that evolve slowly and hold traces of earlier histories; as she notes, a painting may take years to settle, the surface growing with layers, erasures and scratches, the remnants of earlier mark making remain like buried seams, her canvases stratigraphic, material geology as much as depiction. Both move between figuration and abstraction, between memory and imagined terrain, using painting to navigate shifting timescales and to incorporate archival fragments and historical imagery. Their lives and practices contribute to a shared sense of dislocation, exploration, connection, and the resulting artworks bring time, memory and ecological complexity into a shared orbit.



Glacial Erratic, Selma Mäkelä, 2022, Oil on Canvas, 16 x 21cm
Photo Credit: Paula Barrett



*Devil's Glen, Jane Hughes, 2022,
Marble Dust and Acrylic on Canvas, 180 x 300cm*



*Prologue, Jane Hughes, 2025,
Acrylic on Panel, 80 x 100cm*

In one of the opening works, *Prologue* by Hughes, a landscape painting takes centre stage. This placement acknowledges the long and complicated history of landscape as a genre, with its associations with beauty, possession and power. Rather than fully rejecting or embracing that history, Hughes and Mäkelä expose its layers, resisting simple conclusions, leaving space for complexity. Here, we see images within images, landscapes compared to their own likenesses, then and now held side by side.

A long habit of observing, collecting, naming and categorising is acknowledged. In Mäkelä's paintings birds appear as fleeting encounters with the head of a bronze monument or a marble fountain's edge, while also appearing as taxidermied specimens, archived according to the logic of natural history, hinting at the type of surveying gaze that interweaves curiosity with imperial ambition.



Mountain looking back on its former self, Selma Mäkelä, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 21 x 26cm



Fountain of the Birds, Selma Mäkelä, 2024, Oil on Linen, 34 x 44cm



Museum Bird, Selma Mäkelä, 2024, Oil on Linen, 28 x 34cm

Water and light, forces that dissolve and reshape, shift continually across the works. Snowflakes catch the light as they fall from cloud to ground. Ice becomes glacier and iceberg. Both melt. Cool palettes deliver a visceral chill. Tides sparkle. Fountains repeat their steady rhythm. Puddles catch fleeting reflections and dew glistens on fragile cobwebs. We sense rhythms that water has carried through ages beyond our own. A branch casts its shadow at the moment a beam of sunlight touches the Earth after making its 150-million-kilometre journey. Small, transient details sit beside vast geological scenes bridging the instant and the epoch.

Like that walk along the beach, this exhibition places the act of looking within a larger temporal field, where human experience sits alongside geological history and astronomical time. *"Forward," said granny in the snow*; here, moving forward is not a gesture of confidence, it means adjusting our sight, and letting uncertainty share space with knowledge. To hold a photograph against a mountain and notice the difference between them is an invitation to recognise the limits and possibilities of representation. It is to recognise that every image contains gaps shaped by time, distance and perspective. What we see is layered, shaped by forces from below and beyond and by the light that reaches us, at last, from far away. *"Forward," said granny in the snow* is not a march toward mastery, it is a steady practice of attention, stepping carefully and moving on through the drift.



Long Evening Shadows, Selma Mäkelä, 2022, Oil on Canvas, 26 x 31cm



Portal, Selma Mäkelä, 2024, Oil on Canvas, 21 x 26cm



A cobweb in my morning walk, Selma Mäkelä, 2024, Oil on Linen, 26 x 31cm





Deep Time, Selma Mäkelä, 2022, Oil on Canvas, 26 x 31cm



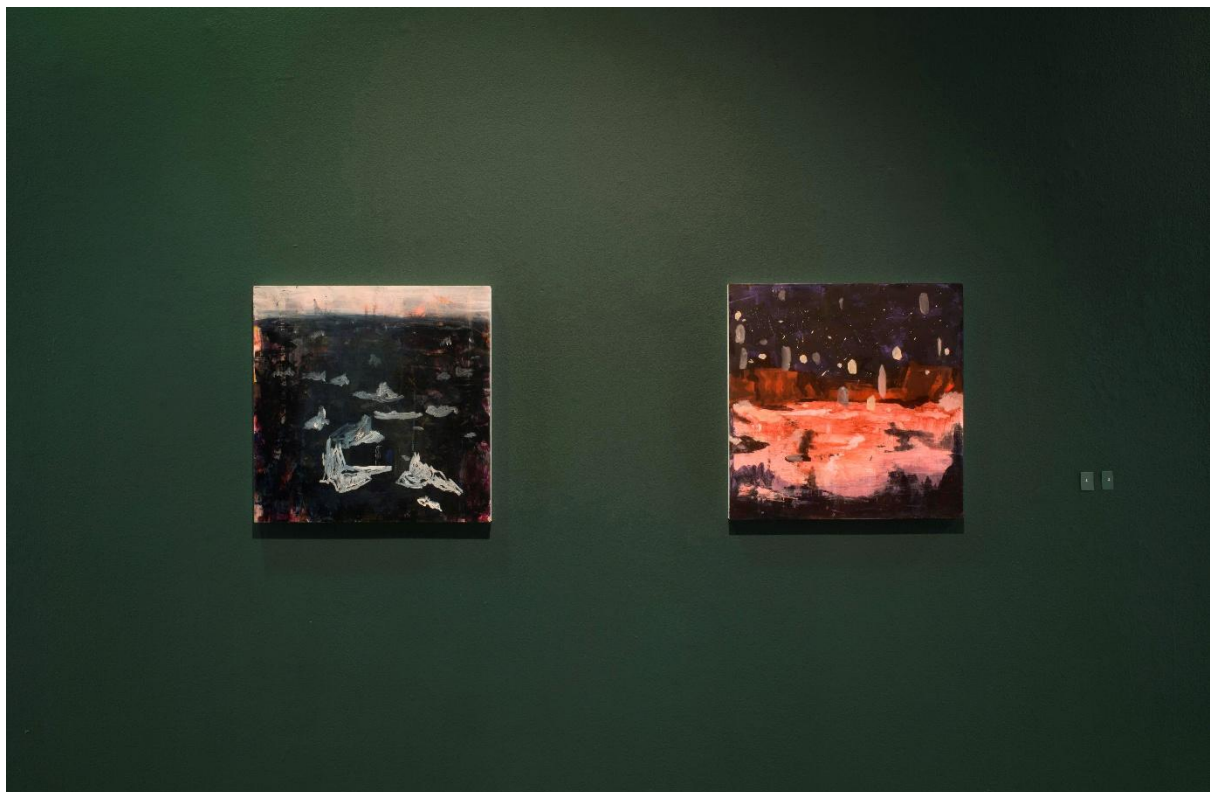
Scars, Jane Hughes, 2023, Acrylic on panel, 40 x 40cm

Picking up the pieces, Jane Hughes, 2019, Acrylic on Canvas, 100 x 120cm



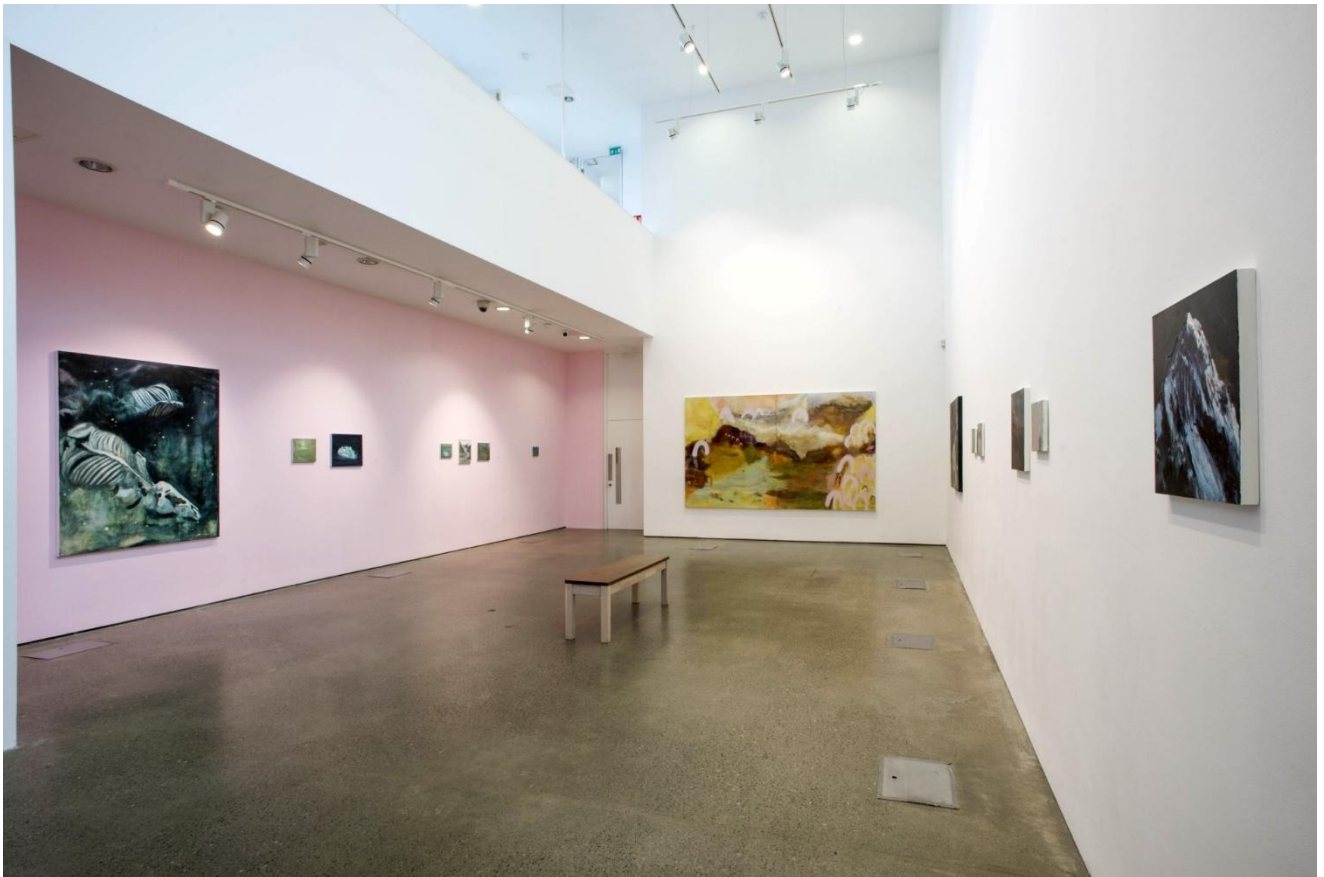


Forward said Granny in the snow at Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, April 2026. Photo Credit: Tomasz Madajczak





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Leaving Letters of Ice, Selma Mäkelä, 2026, Oil on Canvas, 21 x 26cm



*Glisten, Selma Mäkelä, 2026,
Oil on Canvas, 21 x 26cm*



Forward said Granny in the snow at Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, April 2026. Photo Credit: Tomasz Madajczak



Telescopic View, Selma Mäkelä, 2022, Oil on Canvas, 26 x 31cm



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Fireflies and Spaceships, Jane Hughes, 2025, Acrylic on Canvas, 100 x 120cm





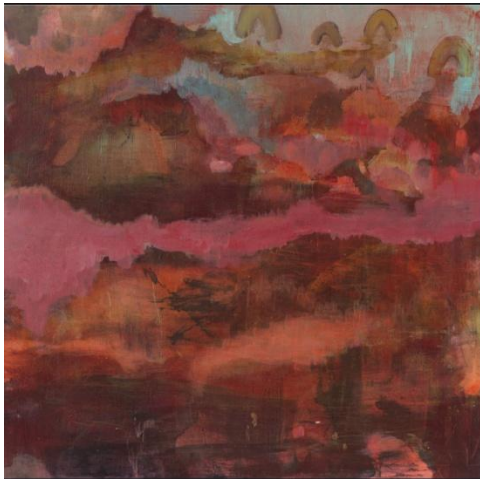
Forward said Granny in the snow at Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, April 2026. Photo Credit: Tomasz Madajczak

Return of the White Sun, Selma Mäkelä, 2026, Oil on Linen, 26 x 32cm





Moon Geese, Selma Mäkelä, 2019, Oil on Canvas, 26 x 31cm



The Afterglow, Jane Hughes, 2025, Acrylic on Panel, 40 x 40cm

Forward said Granny in the snow at Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, April 2026. Photo Credit: Tomasz Madajczak



Jane Hughes, *Space Junk*, 2025, acrylic on panel, 40 x 40 cm

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Above: Photo Credit: Áine Ryan



Right: Uillinn West Cork Arts Centre, photo credit: Paula Barrett

Opening and Gallery Discussion, *28th March 2026*

This exhibition comprised a total of 45 paintings created between 2019 and 2026 by artists Janes Hughes and Selam Mäkelä. The exhibition was curated by Paula Barrett. It opened at 3:00 pm on Saturday, 28 March 2026, and featured a gallery discussion led by the curator. Approximately 70 people attended the opening event.

Forward, said Granny in the Snow, Gallery Discussion, 28th March 2026 Photo Credit: Noah Rose



Outreach Events *Sherkin Island Sunday 29th March 2026*

Deep Time: Geology & Astronomy Events on Sherkin Island

To complement the exhibition, the artists and curator delivered **a programme of outreach events on Sherkin Island** centred on the theme of **deep time**. These interdisciplinary and immersive activities brought together art, science, and place-based learning, encouraging reflection on time, change, and environment while fostering meaningful community engagement.

The programme was **supported by funding from Creative Places West Cork Islands**. Despite inclement weather, the events were very well attended, **with approximately 60 participants** gathering in Sherkin Community Hall. Attendees included students from the TU Dublin BAVA programme, local island residents, and other visitors with interests in art, geology, and astronomy who had travelled by ferry from the mainland.

One of the most significant outcomes of the programme was the **creation of a meaningful networking opportunity at a local level**. The events brought together like-minded individuals, many of whom were aware of each other's work but had not previously met, enabling new connections across artistic, scientific, and local communities. **This fostered a strong sense of exchange and highlighted the value of such interdisciplinary gatherings in a rural context.**

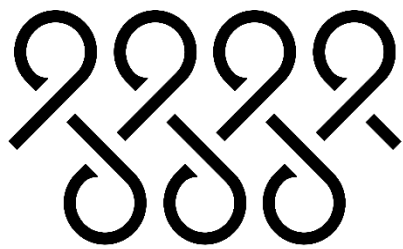
The afternoon began at 2:30 pm with **a guided geology walking tour led by Dr. Bill Sheppard**. Starting at Sherkin Abbey, the session included an illustrated talk and slide presentation in Sherkin Community Hall. Refreshments were provided by Sherkin Community Centre.

Additional contributions included **an introduction by Roger Hill, Honorary Consul of Finland, who spoke about Finnish–Irish relations and the importance of cultural exchange**. A **photographic exhibition** of night-time imagery by Sherkin-based artist **Robbie Murphy** was also presented.

At 4:30 pm, astronomer **Magnus Burbanks delivered an illustrated talk on astronomy**, expanding on the exhibition's engagement with deep time and cosmic perspectives.

The evening concluded with **a stargazing walk under Sherkin's dark skies** for participants who remained overnight on the island, offering a direct and memorable engagement with the astronomical themes explored throughout the day.

The programme also incorporated **Nordic walking intro sessions with Kasia Tarnowska on Sherkin Island on 24th of May**, reflecting on movement through landscape as a site-specific and embodied practice. Originating in Finland in response to its flat terrain, Nordic walking has grown in popularity in Ireland and internationally. Its inclusion reinforced themes of place, orientation, and perception, inviting participants to consider their relationship to the environment in physical and experiential terms.



Creative Places | Cumas Ceantar
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West Cork Islands

Dr. Bill Sheppard leading a geology walking tour on Sherkin Island, Sunday 29th of March, 2026. Photo Credit: Paula Barrett





Above: Dr. Bill Sheppard speaking on the geology of Sherkin Island at the Sherkin Island Community Centre

Below: Magnus Burbanks delivering an engaging presentation on astronomy and deep time. Photo Credits: Paula Barrett





Magnus Burbanks speaking at Sherkin Community Centre 29th March 2026, featuring the photography of Robbie Murphy in the background. Photo Credit: Noah Rose



Artists Selma and Jane traversing Sherkin Island, Sunday 29th March, 2026 Photo Credit: Paula Barrett



Night Sky from Sherkin Island, Sunday 29th of March, 2026 Photo Credit: Paula Barrett