



KATHLEEN BRIDLE – Artist and Teacher

Kathleen Bridle, the daughter of an Irish coastguard officer, was born in at Swalecliff, Kent, on 19 November 1897 and spent her childhood at Ramsgate. In Dublin she studied Life and Figure drawing at the Metropolitan School of Art, winning two silver medals for modelling and drawing, and in her final year the RDS Taylor Scholarship, which enabled her, in 1921, to travel to London to the Royal College of Art. There she met the sculptor Henry Moore, and worked with oils, watercolour and enamels, on portraiture, landscape and other genres. She won the George Clausen Prize for portrait art.

After a brief period working in the Harry Clarke stained glass studio in Dublin, she moved to Enniskillen to begin teaching. At first she worked part-time in several schools at once, eventually in 1955 being employed full-time in the Collegiate School in Enniskillen, where she taught until she retired. There she taught young artists including William Scott and TP Flanagan.

From 1921 to 1939 she showed more than 30 works at the Royal Hibernian Academy. She also exhibited at the Ulster Academy of Arts, where she was elected an Associate in 1935. Solo shows took place at Magee's Gallery Belfast (1936), 55a Donegall Place Belfast (1947) and the Belfast Museum and Art Gallery (1950).

She travelled extensively in Europe throughout her life. She toured Yugoslavia by bus in her 60s and saw New Zealand in her 70s. Elected a full Academician at the RUA in 1948, a major retrospective of her work was held at the Fermanagh County Museum in 1998, which later toured to the Ulster Museum and the Armagh County Museum. Mainly a watercolorist and landscape painter, she produced a number of portraits in oils.

Kathleen Bridle died on 25 May 1989.

Patrick Devlin