



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Hillsborough silversmith wins inaugural Heritage Crafts Northern Ireland Maker of the Year Award supported by the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation**

**Silversmith Cara Murphy has won this year's inaugural *Northern Ireland Maker of the Year Award*, supported by the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation, including a £1,000 prize awarded at a special presentation at Eltham Palace on Tuesday 26 November 2024.**

**Heritage Crafts** was set up 14 years ago as a national charity to support and safeguard heritage crafts skills, and has become well known for its *Red List of Endangered Crafts*, the first research of its kind to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they will survive the next generation.

The award, supported by the **Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation**, celebrates a heritage craftsperson in Northern Ireland who has made an outstanding contribution to their craft within the previous year. It recognises a contribution

that is far beyond the ordinary, either in pushing their craft to new levels, contributing to its promotion or continuation in an exceptional way.

**Cara Murphy's** silverware has been recognised through high-profile awards including an RDS Irish Craft Bursary, Rosy James Memorial Award, and through the public and private collections where her work is held. In the last year she has completed her Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust scholarship, following completion of which she created a new body of silver and enamel bowls which were chisel engraved and vitreous enamelled inside and out.



The two other finalists for the award were **Bernard Cunningham**, a heritage buildings conservator who over a 25 years has worked on a range of vernacular buildings and mansion houses throughout Ireland, and **Aaron Leach**, who switched his focus from blacksmithing to the luxury golf market during COVID-19, and has since made putters for some of the world's top golf clubs.



The **Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation** supports innovative people working in field-based science, art and craft, teaching and protection of the natural world.

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**Contacts:**

- For press information and photographs, contact **Tess Osman**, Grants and Awards Officer – [tess@heritagecrafts.org.uk](mailto:tess@heritagecrafts.org.uk).

**Photo captions:**

- **Cara Murphy**, winner of the 2024 *Northern Ireland Maker of the Year Award*, and **Imogen Bright Moon**, Heritage Crafts Trustee. Photo by Robert Wade.
- Work by **Cara Murphy**, winner of the 2024 *Northern Ireland Maker of the Year Award*.

**About Heritage Crafts**

Founded in 2009, the Heritage Crafts is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered as the 'Heritage Crafts Association', the advocacy body for traditional heritage crafts. Working in partnership with government and key agencies, it provides a focus for craftspeople, groups, societies and guilds, as well as individuals who care about the loss of traditional crafts skills, and works towards a healthy and sustainable framework for the future. Its aim is to support and promote heritage crafts as a fundamental part of our living heritage.

[www.heritagecrafts.org.uk](http://www.heritagecrafts.org.uk)

### **About the *Red List of Endangered Crafts***

The Red List of Endangered Crafts, created by Heritage Crafts, was the first to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they would survive the next generation. The 2023 edition of the Red List, funded by the Pilgrim Trust, assessed 259 crafts to identify those which are at greatest risk of disappearing, of which 62 have been classified as critically endangered, 84 as endangered and 112 as currently viable.

The Red List shows that the craft knowledge, skills and practices that form an important part of our shared cultural heritage are – for a number of reasons – at risk of being lost. Heritage Crafts believes that these cultural assets are as important as unique heritage buildings and ancient beautiful landscapes and could provide future generations with fantastic opportunities to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

<http://redlist.heritagecrafts.org.uk>