

## Press Release

# VESSELS

Emma O'Rourke

29 November - 10 December 2022

*'Today I possess what resembles an archive, or let's say I possess a real archive that relates only to me: a kind of added memory that occupies different corners of my domestic space [...] It is an invented memory that it is exhausting me, and which I cannot liberate myself from.'*

Rabih Mroué, Text for the performance *Make Me Stop Smoking*, 2006

*'At times I think of human relationships as something soft like sand or water, and by pouring them into particular vessels we give them shape.'*

Sally Rooney, *Beautiful World, Where Are You*, 2022

**VESSELS** is a solo exhibition of the artist exploring diaspora, being displaced as a psychological state and the purpose of archives to record and preserve. The works on show shed light on the theme of dependency, what it means to belong and how we make a home. The exhibition is inspired by the Brent Museum and Archives where the artist has been conducting ongoing research into the history of Irish migration to London, the mental health challenges faced, and the traditions and values passed down without explanation. Rootless, restless and eager to belong, the figures we witness wear their relationships and encounters on the surface. The works highlight how we internalise our surroundings - porous people carrying our ancestors and exchanges with others.

**Emma O'Rourke** (b.1987) is a London Irish artist working with the human condition, archival material and narrative. Her practice focuses on drawing and painting, delicately assembling often indistinguishable forms - multiple unraveled conversations - an insight into her own history intertwined with moments from popular culture. Emma trained in Theatre Design at Wimbledon College of Art and has an MA from the University of Manchester in Museum Studies. She recently completed two years at the Essential School of Painting, Wood Green. She is based at Second Floor Studios and Arts, Wembley Park.

[www.emmaorourke.com](http://www.emmaorourke.com)  
[@emmaorourkeart](https://www.instagram.com/emmaorourkeart)



Willesden Gallery, 95 High Road, London NW10 2SF  
[brent.gov.uk/willesdengallery](http://brent.gov.uk/willesdengallery)

[info@emmaorourke.com](mailto:info@emmaorourke.com)

[emmaorourke.com](http://emmaorourke.com)