

# Body Conscious

An Exhibition by  
Dorothy Ann Daly

29 June – 3 August 2012  
Waterford Regional Hospital

As one of Ireland's leading Arts and Health programmes, the Waterford Healing Arts Trust is concerned with the various meeting points of the world of health and the world of art, and, in this regard, there can be few greater shared concerns than the body.

This exhibition by Dorothy Ann Daly is the first in a series of exhibitions curated by the Waterford Healing Arts Trust which explores a range of artistic responses to this theme. In this exhibition, the artist's diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis back in 1999 has given her a particular perspective on the body. There can be few more immediate ways of understanding how our bodies work than to experience its inability to do what we need it to do.

The lightness and elegance of this work belies the long and slow journey taken to make it. This exhibition is a celebration of the creative spirit overriding physical limitations which artists over the generations have demonstrated.

Mary Grehan  
Arts Director, Waterford Healing Arts Trust

## Waterford Healing Arts Trust

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Cover image:  
*Straighten Up* (detail)  
Dorothy Ann Daly  
2012  
Crochet cotton  
34.7 x 44.7 x 4.5 cm

Photography: David Saturra  
Design: edit+  
www.stuartcoughlan.com

Waterford Healing Arts Trust  
presents



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## Dorothy Ann Daly writes

I moved to Germany in 1998 and in 1999 I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. This was a difficult time. Having been in Berlin for only 15 months, my German was basic. Dealing with the worries of an illness and the problems of communicating made hospital visits even more scary. Everyone could speak English but I needed to learn the language of illness which nobody wants to learn!

Much of my past work referred to self image. However I am no longer concerned about my size and body shape in terms of fashion. It is now more important to me to maintain what muscles I have and to strengthen my body.

I see these pieces as 3D drawings. Words like *stiff*, *spasm*, *tension* and *wobbly* were starting points in making them. I started to crochet lengths that look like legs, using cotton thread, stitches and marks in the same way that I would use different pencils when making a drawing.

I work on several pieces at once, moving from one to another and then pinning the work up at my table. They are always there just as my MS is always present. I have had to adjust to my body not doing what it should or what I wanted it to do and my working processes had to change accordingly. This is an ongoing learning process.

Crochet has been my chosen medium for over 20 years. As an Irish artist living abroad, it connects me to my homeplace and history. It is a slow process and I am now only able to work for short periods in the morning. I spend time looking and thinking about what could be the next row or what I am trying to achieve with a piece. I have become selective with how I use my time. I envision what I want in advance and have learned how to get this in my work both despite and because of my body.



*Legs 2*  
Dorothy Ann Daly  
2012  
Crochet cotton on paper  
28.5 x 22.5 x 4.5 cm



## Dorothy Ann Daly Biography

Born in Kilkenny in 1969, Dorothy Ann Daly now lives in Berlin with her husband and eight year old son. She studied fine art painting in NCAD and textiles in Glasgow School of Art. Since graduating in 1991, she has been making work and exhibiting in Ireland and abroad. She has been a member of the 62 Group of Textile artists since 1993.