

## Press Release

### New Director for the Hunt Museum

24th January 2018

The Board of the Hunt Museum is delighted to announce the appointment of Dr. Jill Cousins as Director and CEO of the Museum.

Dr Jill Cousins joins the Hunt with over 10 years of involvement in the European cultural heritage sector as the Executive Director of the Europeana Foundation, which she created from a project idea with 4 people to an operational service with 62 persons across 4 European offices. Funded, by the European Commission and the Ministries of Culture across Europe, Jill has worked with cultural heritage organisations across Europe to increase the use and visibility of their collections in education, research, creative industry and towards the general public. She has extensive business development experience and has previously worked in the publishing, event, marketing and information industries. Europeana is now a thriving platform for cultural heritage and is the cross border, digital face of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. Finding new ways to make our cultural heritage work for the benefit of society, Jill looks to democratize and increase access by making it work where people are already online. She is keen on culture being the starting point for societal improvement and creating an understanding of our shared history in Europe and looks for it to have practical, lasting impact on our cities and lives.

Brought up in Wales, Jill earned a PhD in Geography on 16<sup>th</sup> Century Arabic and Turkish Sea-Charts studying in Paris, Istanbul, Sfax and Rome. She lived briefly in India and for the last fourteen years in the Netherlands where her son and foster son continue to live. She speaks French and Dutch and continues to serve on several boards relating to cultural heritage and digital libraries. Not surprisingly, given this wide experience, she is a frequent speaker at conferences and fora across the world.

John Moran, Chairperson of the Board, said “We are absolutely thrilled that Jill has agreed to take up this role with us. Under the direction of Naomi O’Nolan, as acting Director, the Museum has expanded and enhanced its activities in important ways and plays an even more central role in the cultural life of Limerick. I would particularly like to express my own personal thanks and that of the board to Naomi for all the great work she has done and we are delighted that she will continue to be a key part of the new management team for our expanded mission.

With Jill coming on board we now have the additional resources, expertise, contacts and experience to further develop in the new directions the board wishes to travel and play our part in Limerick’s renaissance and rebirth as an exciting and vibrant European city. Jill’s pan European and strong digital and entrepreneurial experiences are exactly the skills to enrich the proud tradition and influence of the Hunt Museum and we look forward to supporting her in this challenge.”

Patrick T Murphy, Chairman of the Hunt Trust commented “The Hunt Trust and the Hunt Family are delighted to see someone of Jill’s calibre take over the direction of the Museum. It opens up the prospect of a really exciting new chapter for the Museum and the potential to take the collection of which we are so proud to new audiences.”

Jill Cousins said “I love what the Hunt has done in the last year or so under Naomi’s direction and what it represents for Limerick and Ireland. It is a treasure trove that an even wider world will get to enjoy once we increase its digital presence and connections to other museums across Europe. I am excited about the move to Limerick and relish the challenges ahead. Having collaborated with the

Hunt for the Europeana1914-1918 campaign in 2012, I know the quality of the collection and the team there and look forward to working with them and Naomi and all of the other stakeholders to further develop the museum's role locally and internationally. “

Jill will take up her position early in 2018 augmenting the existing team as the Museum continues to expand its activities under a new strategic direction.

### **Th Hunt Museum**

**The Hunt Museum is one of the greatest private collections of Art and Antiquities dating from Neolithic Period to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century on public display in Ireland today. Generously donated by John and Gertrude Hunt this diverse collection is housed in Limerick's 18<sup>th</sup> century Palladian style building, formerly The Custom House. The Hunt Museum collects, exhibits, preserves, documents and promotes the Hunt Collection to maximise its cultural and educational potential for the people of Limerick, Ireland and across the globe.**

**The Hunt Museum receives support from the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and Limerick City and County Council.**

### **Europeana**

Europeana is Europe's platform for digital cultural heritage with a mission to 'transform the world with culture'. Europeana Collections is Europe's digital library, museum, gallery and archive. From books, photos and paintings to television broadcasts and 3D objects, Europeana Collections provides online access to a vast store of cultural heritage material from 3,7000 museums, libraries, archives and audio-visual collections across Europe for everyone to find, use and share: for research, for learning, for creating new things. (@EuropeanaEU)

Europeana DSI is co-financed by the European Union's Connecting Europe Facility.