

# Laurence O'Dwyer

Laurence O'Dwyer, IR

Presentation 22.10.

Residency September–October



Laurence O'Dwyer extended and revised the manuscript of *The Lighthouse Journal* while working as writer-in-residence with RaumArs.

*The Lighthouse Journal* is an exploration of a small Arctic island in poetry and prose that stems from time spent working on Litløy Fyr (Little Island Lighthouse) as well as subsequent travels through the Lofoten archipelago. Built in 1912, Litløy Fyr is located eight kilometres from the Norwegian coast and one hundred and sixty kilometres north of the Arctic Circle. Litløy has an eclectic history, including occupation by German soldiers during World War II. Long before the Germans arrived, the island experienced a golden age of trade with Russian Pomors from the Kola peninsula in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This period is alluded to in the poem, *The Old Light*, which received the Yeovil Prize for Poetry (UK). *The Lighthouse Journal* is a celebration of a remote Arctic environment, as well as an ode to the comradery of manual labour.

While working as writer-in-residence with RaumArs, Laurence O'Dwyer presented his work to the students of the Rauman Lyseon High School. He also gave an artist's talk at the Tamella Renovation Centre in the heart of Old Rauma.

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Laurence O'Dwyer holds a PhD in paradigms of memory formation from Trinity College Dublin. His first book of poetry, *Tractography* (Templar Poetry) received the Straid Collection Award. In 2018, he was a visiting scholar at the Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge. He has received the Patrick Kavanagh Award for Poetry, a Hennessy New Irish Writing Award, the Yeovil Prize and fellowships from The MacDowell Colony, The Bogliasco Foundation and the Rensing Center. His journalism is published in *The Guardian*. Excerpts from his project about a lighthouse located in Arctic water off the coast of Norway have been published in *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Cyphers* (Ireland), *Contrary* (US), *Mudlark* (US) and *The North* (UK). Norwegian translations of *The Lighthouse Journal* were published in 2019 by *Vinduet*, Norway's oldest literary journal.