

April Review Josephine Leahy A DIVERSITY OF ACTS...

t started for me with a poet, book in hand, standing at the window, deep in thought – the magnificent chandelier barely reflected into the brightness outside, like an aerial spray of Disney dust. It all started with a sealed letter – as mystifyingly attractive as the curious storm of whirling missives that blew their way into Harry Potters little domicile below the stairs. The poet and writer was Brian Quigley the oeuvre was Tommy, so authentically and poignantly a labour of love, from start the sealed letter to finish the lone oration at Tommy's grave at the end. Tommy started out as a possible history of Bray, but with Brian's input slowly changed into a heartwarming memoir of Tommy, his beloved grandfather.

Brian read five excerpts out of sixteen chapters, which gave a comprehensive insight into his grandfather's world in Bray; born in 1906 and passing away in 1999, thus spanning a whole century. The memories are heart-warming, because they are almost universal, bringing up similar memories of our own grandparents, like an invigorating shower of spring rain will release the earthy scents of a fecund garden.

"Tommy was on the walls of the lane behind the Carlisle Grounds, on the old shelters in Naylor's Cove, on the ruins of the Turkish baths, on the bike shed in school" – a genius intro', planting us firmly in the familiar places of a hometown keenly embedded in Brian's memory and imagination.

"Grandad saw two World Wars, the 1916 Rising, the introduction of motor cars, trade unions, televisions and telephones." We were treated to a ghost story, factual adumbrations of the bus service in Bray, and its rail service, and a humorous insight into Grandads witty temperament. "Once I remember the telephone rang in the middle of a story. Rather than break the flow of memory, he told the caller there's nobody here, and when the caller had the cheek to reply, "Well, who are you then?" he snapped back "I'm a ghost. I'm haunting this place. Now go away!"

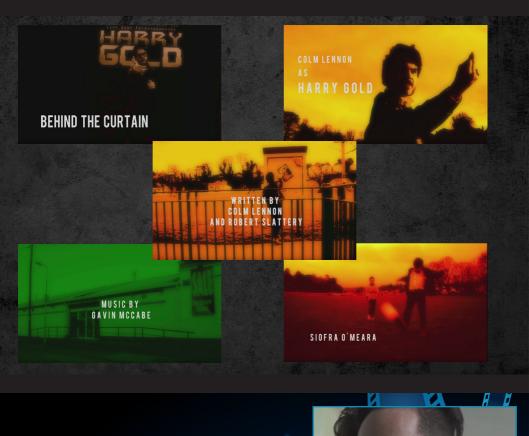
There is so much more, memories, history, and a scattering of poetry throughout. I was moved to thoughts of my own Grandmother, and moved by his dedication to his mother Dolores, and the thoughtful manner in which he wound up the whole endeavour, with his Grandfather by his grave.

And then, Lucy, our clown, came tiptoeing in. That first glimpse of her, looking over her shoulders furtively, sporting a Rudolph nose - so like a young untamed deer in that lightning glance backwards, in that quick bounding flight to the top of the room. ..

But what had she in the bag she clutched over her shoulder? What was she about to excavate from its interior? Tentatively, she made several forays into the bag, sometimes her face descrying distress, and eventually brought out a shiny tape recorder - which she used to relay a raunchy song, which was so at odds with her ethereal, other worldly visitation - and a blue sweeping brush.

With gentle, artists brush strokes, as if she were sweeping the heavens of cobwebs, she danced about mystifyingly, in an aura of simplicity all her own. And from this faery like interlude, to a mantra like piece of visual and literal poetry that exhorted us to mindfulness – we will never find this moment again, in a million years, let's not blow it. This was a thought provoking piece from Polyana.

And then to take us from that space of lonely cogitation, Chaos In Harmony brought the whole room together in their performance of harmonies that blended so beautifully, like the colour of their scarves. Mary White recited some of her Haiku poetry, which was quite beautiful, and which they later set to music, and sang. And to bring us to a wonderful conclusion, like a dramatic crescendo, we were all invited to sing along, as they melded with the audience physically and vocally. Quite seraphic!



#### THE SHED BY STEPHEN HAYDEN





May Preview 2017

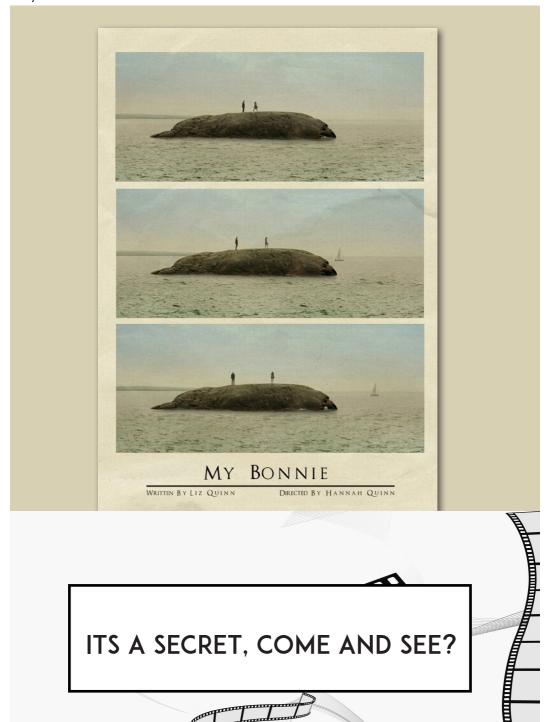




## THE NIGHTINGALE BY JOAQUIN GAFFNEY



#### May Preview 2017



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## SIGNAL ARTS CENTRE EXHIBITION

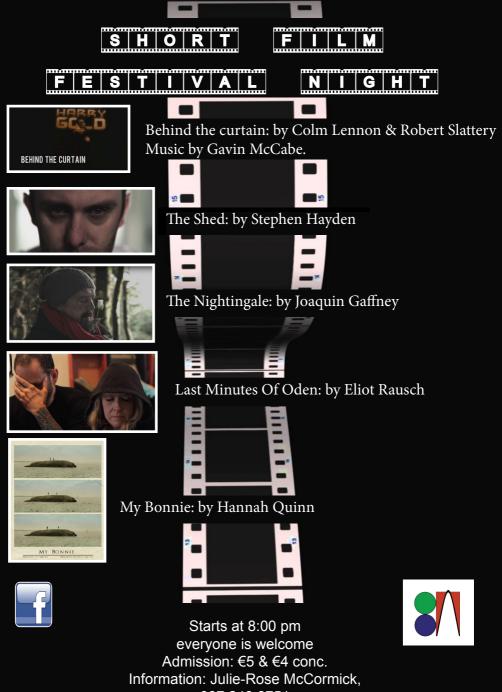


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