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# Bray Arts Journal

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Issue 5

January 2006

Volume 11



## EDITORIAL

### DILAPIDATED BRAY TOWN CENTRE

One of the recurring topics that has popped into casual conversation over the last while has been the visual environment of town and county. Wicklow town is frequently cited as a place that has transformed itself over the last few years. The streetscape is very pleasant and inviting with a great variety of well-presented shops, pubs and restaurants. Likewise Greystones with its new 'shopping mall' and underground car park gives one a sense of growth and confidence in the community.

Unfortunately the same cannot be said about Bray. Although it has exceptional natural assets like the promenade, Bray Head, the Dargle River, Peoples Park etc etc a kind of despondency creeps into the conversation when one discusses



the town. Despite some fantastic developments like Mermaid and the Civic Offices the town centre has a haphazard and dilapidated feel to it that must be discouraging for those shop owners who make a real effort in presenting their business premises. The promised Florentine Centre that looks like it will never happen is one reason why people despair of any real progress and of course the appalling lack of car parking facilities seems almost incomprehensible.

This is not a finger pointing exercise, its an expression of concern about our visual environment and everything that goes with it and asks the question 'what's wrong.' Has the artistic community a view or suggestions on how matters might be improved? Indeed, has anyone views on how we might go about improving the urban landscape of Bray town centre? If you have why not express them in the journal .

Front Cover : From Emma Colyle's Floating World Series. Acrylic on Canvas. See page 7 for details of Emma's upcoming exhibition in the Bank of Ireland Art Centre.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

### ARTSPEAK AND GOBBLEDEGOOK CONTINUED

The discourse continues. Tom Conroy writes :-  
Lorraine Whelan's contention that we need to have  
*"intelligent art discourse that is not "dumbed down" for general consumption"*  
epitomises the mindset of the those who mistakenly believe that the general public could not possibly understand the

deep insights of the art intelligensia. What hogwash! It brings to mind George Orwell's words

*"You have to be an intellectual to believe such nonsense. No ordinary man could be such a fool."*

If you believe, as I do, that art is concerned with discovery and communicating that unique artistic discovery or insight to the public , then there is an onus on the artist to deliver that insight with as much clarity as possible. The greatest philosophers, artists, critics, scientists and Christ himself have delivered profound ideas and thoughts in the simplest of language.

You may of course take the view that art creates its own reality, that it has no purpose and therefore there is no obligation to communicate anything to anyone. If however that is your view then why inflict this 'no purpose' art on the public by putting it on public display nor is there any reason for critiqueing this 'no purpose art' except of course to make some sense of it, which in a way defeats the purpose of having no purpose, if you know what I mean. Enough! If I keep this up I might be invited to write for CIRCA.

But back to the topic of *"dumbing down for general consumption"*. C. P. Snow in his famous lecture 'The Two Cultures' and his subsequent commentaries hits the nail on the head when he talked about the *"attempt at excessive unsimplicity"* and it being the defence of *'conservative functionaries...as they ingeniously protect the status quo: it is called 'the technique of the intricate defensive'*. The art world, in its attempt to cast off the shackles of Academia has now become even more conservative than that which it displaced and defends itself by condescendingly saying the ordinary public could not possibly understand 'modern art' and in defense of this position hides behind incomprehensible jargon. Any attempt to use simple language is condescendingly dismissed as 'dumbing down.'

I will agree with Lorraine Whelan on one thing - the ads in Circa are very good.

Tom Conroy

### KATE MINNOCK

Kate's paintings and recent exploration of mono-prints are concerned with the fragility of the natural environment. Interested for some years in lichens, Kate



s work focuses on the structural correlations between these forms and other plants and animals. Intrigued by

recurring patterns in nature, her new body of work aims to draw attention to these subtle and delicate minutiae.

Kate Minnock graduated from the National College of Art and Design with a BA in Fine Art (Painting) in 2003. Since then she has had several exhibitions in Ireland and has recently exhibited her work in New Zealand. In January of this year Kate received a Travel and Mobility Award from the Arts Council of Ireland to part-fund her 3-month residency at New Pacific Studio, New Zealand. Kates recent solo exhibition at the Signal Arts Centre in Bray, brought together the ideas and works made while in New Zealand and during her residency last year at The Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Co.Monaghan.

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## TURNER PRIZE 2005

An artist who has said of himself: "I have a bad record with destroying things," has won this year's Turner prize. Simon Starling is no provocateur. Nor was he a shock winner - the bookies made him the even-money favourite. But none the less, it will come as no surprise to those who regard the Turner prize with disdain that he has won £25,000 for dismantling and assembling a wooden shed.



Starling, who was born in 1967, found it on the banks of the Rhine, took it apart, made parts of it into a boat and used the vessel to carry the remaining parts of it downriver to Basle. It was then reassembled as a shed in a Swiss museum.

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## SIAR 50; 50 YEARS OF IRISH ART FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE CONTEMPORARY IRISH ART SOCIETY

by Emma Coyle

Siar was founded in 1962 by Irish artists, architects and collectors, as a response to the lack of serious patronage for the visual arts in Ireland. Since 1962 the group has continued to purchase and donate Irish art to institutions around the country. Over 40 institutions have benefited, including the Crawford Municipal art gallery in Cork, the Butler gallery in Kilkenny and the Irish Museum of Modern Art.

.M.M.I has recieved work over the years from such artists as Paul Doran, Brian Henderson and Alice Maher. The present exhibition in I.M.M.I celebrates almost 50 years of a collection of Irish art. There are over 100 works which styles vary greatly from painting to sculptures. This exhibition is perfect for anyone who has an interest in Irish art from the past 50 years.

The exhibition is curated by Catherine Marshall, Senior Curator: Head of Collections, IMMA, and Professor Campbell Bruce, Chairman, CIAS.



Nude by Barrie Cooke

The exhibiton runs till: Feb. 19th. 2006 at: Irish Museum of Modern Art

There is more information on this exhibition on the IMMA website ([www.imma.ie](http://www.imma.ie)) including Aidan Dunne's Essay *An Alternative History of Contemporary Irish Art* which is part of the catalogue for the exhibition.

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## PREVIEW OF NEXT ARTS EVENING

On Monday 9th Jan. 2006 Bray Arts presents its first Arts Evening of 2006 with a delightful mix of Art, Poetry and Song. **Kate Minnock** (see Kate's statement on opposite page) will present her delicate art work. This young artist hails from Newcastle, Co. Wicklow and it is a pleasure to introduce her to the Bray Arts audience. You may have seen her work already at her solo show in Signal Arts last Nov.

Last Nov. is also the month when the **Dalkey Writers** launched their very fine selection of Poetry, Prose and Drama called *Echoes from the Deep*. We will have an opportunity to hear a selection of poetry and prose read by the authors themselves om Mon 12th.

If you are lucky, every now and then you may have the exciting experience of hearing a new voice and instantly, after the first few notes, realizing that you are hearing something special. Last year this writer had such an experience in Christ Church. **Ross Scanlon** has a natural and unforced tenor voice that needs to be minded and handled with the greatest of care. It is a real pleasure to welcome this young man onto the Bray Arts stage. If you have not heard him before, even if you have, you will not wish to miss his delightful singing.

In our youth spot we have a duo **Ruth O'Mahony-Brady** on keyboard and **Eoin Dixon-Murphy** on guitar. They call themselves "Gunshot Glitter."

**WE DEDICATE THESE POEMS TO PAT O'LOUGHLIN. A RIVER SERIES**



Just as this journal was ready to go to print we heard the devastating news that Pat O'Loughlin died shortly after a tragic road accident. Pat, a gentle and quiet man was a staunch supporter of Bray Arts. To his wife Zan, children and extended family we offer our heartfelt sympathy.

By Mark Lawlor

On the loneliness of long shore drift  
 Companioned by echoes  
 I write in the little gaps away from you  
 Constructing a bridge of words  
 Scaffolded with stillness and consonants,  
 Reflected windows  
 And retinal inversions.  
 I am all tubercular willowness  
 To your dark resinous semaphores,  
 Offering a pulse and searods  
 Fish scales and sadness  
 To slip silently between the sheets,  
 A feathered nest of vowels and kisses  
 In the hollow of your back  
 That lets me hide a while.  
 An arc  
 The dark outline of your areola  
 The radius of your breast  
 A meridian  
 A reference point from which to sleep...  
 Your heel,  
 A cot  
 Your ear,  
 A currach  
 A coracle of whispers  
 To sail a rhyme upon...  
 A box of tiny lights  
 Phosphorescent, yet no longer incendiary;  
 Happy fires crackle to a welcome hearth,  
 Above a river series oozes  
 With opulent ochres  
 And crimson blood  
 Brought fresh  
 Drawn by your knife  
 Selected fingers of another making;  
 I come to you trailing tone poems  
 Gathered from cool fathoms  
 The darkness of the water and still deeper to my eye  
 And off into the night  
 To catch the last of the fading light.  
 Furlled and unfurld  
 The newly formed leaves on an apology of sycamores  
 A tattered surrender to your beauty.  
 I acquiesce to a shoal of swimmers  
 And spiral in the anticipation of almost touch  
 Your body a mosaic to sweeping panarama of the universe.

You are wild and chaotic  
 A true force of nature  
 The wing above the wave  
 Waxed and oily  
 Ichthyornis and Hesperornis prefiguring the storm  
 And I cannot help but love you.

Pat singing at Bray Arts Carols Night 2004

**WE ARE ALL THINGS**

By J. W. Donlon

We are all things.  
 We are the parched sahara  
 The icy peaks of everest  
 We are Caesar Agustus  
 Christ, the great Khan,  
 We are all things  
 Rock and beast and man.

We are of all ages  
 A fusion of each  
 Nugget of time  
 Gifted  
 To every creature, every stone,  
 Planet, meteor and star.

Deep in the valleys  
 Of the oceans  
 Under the creaking polar ice  
 We are listening  
 To the whales endless sighing  
 Listening  
 To the earths moleten heart.

We are the rock flowering  
 Into dark mountains.  
 We are the laughing rivers  
 In the sweet forests.  
 We are the dance of the antelope  
 The thunder of the ghost herds  
 Forgotten words  
 Drifting forever  
 Across  
 Our short wakening,  
 Into the unknown  
 Forever beckoning.

**AN AMERICAN IN IRELAND SUSAN SMALLWOOD HEROLD**

On my second visit to Ireland I was in Ballyferriter attending Oidreacht Chorca Dhuine's Irish language school. During my first week of class there was a fire in the village. I was impressed at the way the villagers worked to quell the fire. Had it not been stopped the fire would have consumed several pubs, a grocery store, private living quarters and perhaps the museum. What made this experience more serious was the lack of modern fire equipment in the village. The fire was put out by people passing buckets of water from one to another in a fire line. By the time the firemen arrived from another larger town the fire was under control. I question how change could have made this scenario different, less desperate. With trained firemen in the area would the fire have been doused quicker with less chance for a gas explosion and tremendous loss? If a new fire station were built closer to the village how would this affect the tax base or the landscape? Would it also mean less personal connection, no lifeline forming, of both men and women, who care about the livelihood of the village?

My first eight trips to Ireland have been by plane, train, bus, taxi, and on foot. These various modes of travel have allowed me time to think, listen, observe, and converse. My first trip was a guided tour. It was both informing and detached: no time to connect with the people of Ireland but for one. Our B & B host took me for a walk in the Cameragh Mountains. He taught me how to recognize fire pits and ancient cultivated fields on the hillsides and how to find round forts in the fern. He pointed out a lime furnace, built into the stone fence, along the bóithrín and taught me the name for the Foxglove.

Walking the streets of Dublin is a very different experience. I am confronted daily by the face of change - it is more abrupt than in the countryside. Immigration brings change, rapid change. Ireland's face is far different than when I first arrived those many years ago. In John Irving's book *A Widow for One Year*, Harry, the Dutch policeman, is thinking about change and human behavior, "...Harry didn't believe that the world (or human nature) could be changed. Harry's job was to understand and accept the existing world..."

I am not in total agreement with Harry. I see the world as more hopeful, have even been called a Pollyanna. I know that change, such as immigration, which we suffer the aches and pains of, in Colorado, can open us to a wider vision of what can be, force us to call upon our ability to expand, to accept what we cannot totally control. The speed of change is often what is most frightening.

Traveling by train to Trá Lí I look through a window moistened by the soft day. I see the Irish landscape gouged by huge equipment and I think of my home in the American West, of the un-harnessed growth and destruction and I grieve what we do both here and there. I think of the once beautiful wheat fields on Highway 14 now a landfill sight or of the hillside where children went sledding in winter, now a Wal-Mart parking lot. When my taxi whizzes by the tunnel under construction near Dublin airport I want to scream stop - stop the rocks are speaking. They are confused and unsettled by the relentless hunger for change: for bigger, better, faster. I know this earth voice. It rumbles constantly as I drive through the city of Denver and elsewhere.

However, change is not always a bad thing. It can free us from drudgery, same-ness, or, self-inflicted limitations. Something as simple as a new haircut can change the way we see ourselves, and how other people see us.

Change can also be mystifying, like walking down Denmark Street Great and realizing the old Belvedere Hotel has been erased since I was last here. This revelation provoked questions about losing the familiar. By familiar I mean the marks etched in stone, the history by bullet hole, the buried secrets, the memories. When all that is familiar is obliterated by "change" do we lose what is human? Do we lose the lifeline so important to remaining humane?

I have learned that I must be open to change not to always agree with it or to like it. This of course requires at least partial acceptance of that which rocks and rolls in high gear around me. It is at times mind-boggling. When I feel I am in overwhelm I step out my back door and follow the Big Dipper to the North Star my own guaranteed global positioning system. I know that my friend in Sandycove can see it as well. As I stand in the chill night air, a memory of recognizing the sound of high tide takes me to a more reasonable place, evoking a slower rhythm.



SUSAN SMALLWOOD HEROLD TEACHES FINE ART AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO.

BETWEEN O'CONNELL AND PARNELL

Allowing in these faces not of us, we loose ourselves somehow to blend away what we were. Not anyway pure of race but a mere throwing out the ancient with the bath water, leaves a void which only shopping can fill; from new found money and two cars, a lifestyle to become accustomed to. From which when all gets tight and tough only Visa can buy us out of, and yet it pulls us in, impoverishes us by how easy it all is, just stand in the line, the hole in the wall spits it out until the sign says, *cannot deliver*. And the hole becomes rusty because the well runs dry of promises. Conversations on telephones we used never hear, expose us. We are so empty. Nothing is held in sacred secre-tued walking back toward, moved along by the masses, we missed the turn, so busy being a part of that for which we forget, where we are going, fast forward toward delete. Civility for commerce in the litter of all, we measure ourselves by it.

## DURER ON DISPLAY

The collection of over 120 prints by Albrecht Durer held by the Chester Beatty Library was first brought to public attention in the 1980s with a series of exhibitions held in Ireland, England, Germany and later Japan. Twenty five years on, the Chester Beatty Library is mounting another Durer exhibition. but this time—thanks to its new facilities at Dublin Castle—



the CBL has been able to borrow important works from two German institutions. The Berlin Kupferstichkabinett is lending one of the most important images of 16th-century Irish-



men—Durer’s watercolour of Irish Soldiers and Peasants. The Kunsthalle in Bremen is lending two drawings: The Proportional Figure of a Standing Man (1513) and the remarkable Sick Durer, a self-portrait of the artist when suffering from an internal ailment. These works of art will feature along side Beatty’s collection of Durer prints, which represents nearly one-third of artist’s output. Albrecht Durer: until 7 February

## WELCOME INCREASE IN BOOK OF ESTIMATES

The Arts Council has welcomed the news that it is to receive a grant of 72.3m Euro in 2006 an increase of 11.3m over last year. Mary Cloake, Director of the Arts Council said: *“This is a major vote of confidence in the arts community and a recognition of the important contribution the arts make to society.”*

Bray Arts has frequently made applications to the Arts Council for funding for the journal without success. Perhaps 2006 will be different. As we have frequently pointed out, the Journal is permanently under financial pressure and this year will be no exception. We do of course acknowledge the contribution of Bray and Wicklow Councils. We’ll keep you posted.

## SIGNAL ARTS

### “STICK PEOPLE WITH HUGE HAIRCUTS ARE TOP HEAVY AND FALL OVER”

(A collection of paintings by Derek Cummins)

From Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> January to Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2006

Derek was born in Dublin in 1979. He attended the National College of Art and Design where he obtained and honors degree in fine art/painting. His degree show was in 2002 and



featured in the Irish Times.

Derek’s ideas are fired by the imagination, one idea changing as the painting progresses. There is rarely a fixed composition in mind at the beginning. Somewhere along the way the final image makes itself known. Drawings and photographs tend to inspire his work. The photographs act as idea generators. Photomontage suggests hitherto unrealized scenarios. His paintings are a blurring of the boundaries between the real and the imaginary.

Opening: Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2006

### “THE MIDNIGHT AUTOMATIC”

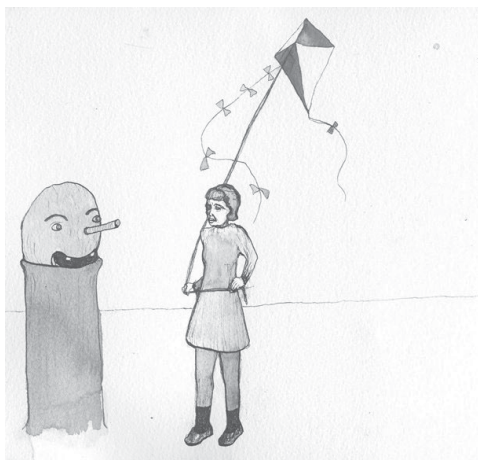
(A collection of drawings by Marianne Shorten)

From Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January to Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2006

Marianne enjoys the kind of direct expression one finds in outsider art and the drawings of children, and this is something she has tried to develop in her own work. Ordinarily, the drawings are unplanned, spontaneous, and so the outcome is unexpected. She initially uses pen and ink and begins the drawing with fine lines, which gradually develop into forms. The initial process is intuitive, and then the images are refined by building up some area with colours and shade and leaving others blank.

Her themes and influences come from film, literature, children’s book illustration, comics, television, art history and

everyday life. In the course of the drawings, she has found that a kind of fragmented narrative is suggested. Often imagery is repeated. Characters are repeated in different situations. Characters from film and literature coexist with characters and situations from dreams and real life. Fantasy and reality coexist in a fluid dreamlike reality. Certain themes like



good, evil, fear, dependency and coercion arise frequently. There is a strong sense of the absurd.

Marianne creates a structure or shape in which to contain her drawings and uses this as a starting point for the installation. Some drawings are left unframed. There are a variety of colours and textures present in the final structure. The pieces are not confined to being hung at eye level; some are hung close to the top of the wall, some touching the ground.

**Opening : Friday 20th January 2006**

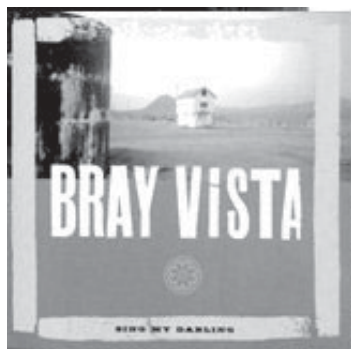
**7pm - 9pm**

**Signal Arts Centre, 1 Albert Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow.**

**Gallery Open Hours 10 to 5pm Mon - Fri. Closed for lunch.**

## **BRAY VISTA**

The very popular Bray band Bray Vista announced their first full-length album called **Sing My Darling**. There are 14 tracks



on the Album which was produced by Karl Odum and mastered in Nashville.

To celebrate their new album, they will be hosting a Bray Vista Christmas Party in the Cobblestone on 18th Dec before embarking on a nationwide tour early next year.

## **EMMA COYLE EXHIBITION**

Emma who is a regular reviewer for this Journal is exhibiting her own work at the Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, Foster Place, Temple Bar from Jan 10-Jan 28. As you can see from the cover of this Journal and the sample of her work below Emma is very much influenced by American Pop Art. In her own words :-

“I have always had a strong interest for American POP Art, and a fascination with society’s morals. Through these influences, and combined with my own desire to create a personal option through my paintings, I create



work that reflects my own curiosity in society. My recent purpose for working on my paintings has been to make a visually intriguing or a mind-opening piece of work, something that will hold a persons attention. Over the years of working in art I have used many mediums to reflect my ideas as an artist. I am very interested in using different mediums of art as I think it allows me to be as free as possible.

I have been making art for the last eight years and am extremely dedicated to the progress of my work. I also have a great interest in writers such as, Lee Ranaldo and Patti Smith, and I have written 3 books over the past year, and have had one released in the U.K and America.”

## **CORCADORCA PLAYWRIGHT AWARD**

Entries are being accepted for the 2006 Corcadorca Playwright Award. The prize is 2,000 euro for an original play not previously published or performed.

The award was inaugurated in 1999 to unearth new and challenging plays and writers. Corcadorca is committed to producing theatre in non-theatre venues. It will look more favourably on scripts which reflect that.

Send two bound copies of the script which do not identify the writer. Supply a separate identification sheet and a brief biography.

Closing date January 31st 2006.

Post to :Post Concadorca Theatre Company  
11/12 Marlboro Street, Cork, Ireland  
[www.corcadorca.com](http://www.corcadorca.com)

## SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

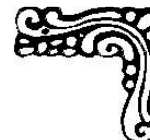
There's no maths involved. It is simply an application of logic and reasoning that will solve the puzzle. Solution next month.

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|   |   | 7 | 2 |  | 6 | 9 |   |   |
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## Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : [bacj@eircom.net](mailto:bacj@eircom.net)  
Creative Writing Prose/Fiction Editor : Anne Fitzgerald :  
[afitzgerald3@ireland.com](mailto:afitzgerald3@ireland.com)  
Poetry Editor : Eugene Hearne : [poetrybray@yahoo.ie](mailto:poetrybray@yahoo.ie)

Email submissions to any of the above or post typed submissions to  
The Editor BAJ 'Casino',  
Killarney Rd. Bray,  
Co. Wicklow  
Visual material: Photographs by Post. Digital Images by Email or CD in JPEG format.  
Deadline 12th of each month.



**BRAY ARTS EVENING MONDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> JAN 2006 8:00PM**  
**HEATHER HOUSE HOTEL, STRAND RD. SEAFRONT, BRAY**  
**EVERYONE IS WELCOME**

**ADMISSION 5 EURO AND 4 EURO CONCESSION**

**KATE MINNOCK WITH A PRESENTATION OF HER BEAUTIFUL ORGANIC ARTWORK.**

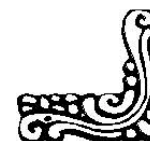
**THE DALKEY WRITERS READING FROM THEIR VERY SUCCESSFUL PUBLICATION**  
**ECHOES FROM THE DEEP**

**ROSS SCANLON - YOUNG BRAY TENOR - STAR OF THE FUTURE**

**IN OUR YOUTH SPOT RUTH O'MAHONY-BRADY ON KEYBOARD AND EOIN DIXON-**  
**MURPHY ON GUITAR. THEY CALL THEMSELVES**  
**GUNSHOT GLITTER**



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