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# Bray Arts Journal

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Issue 3

November 2010

Volume 16



## A Poem for November

*With Rue My Heart Is Laden*

With rue my heart is laden  
For golden friends I had,  
For many a rose-lipt maiden  
And many a lightfoot lad

By brooks too broad for leaping  
The lightfoot boys are laid  
The rose-lipt girls are sleeping  
In fields where roses fade.

A. E. Housman



Front Cover

*Jose Domingo*

by Greg Murray

## Preview of Nov Bray Arts Evening

Nov 1st , 8:00 pm

Upstairs at The Martello, Seafront, Bray

Everyone is welcome: Admission €5 / €4

**William Gibb Forsyth**, from Edinburgh originally, has worked in a variety of mediums. He is currently creating sculptures with the techniques of life casting and silicone moulding for reproduction. He works mainly with the female form. The latest line of work is called "bound" for pleasure, using rope and material to dress the model prior to casting. "The results are very interesting" says William, 'this is the start of a new journey in art for me'



"Bound" for Pleasure

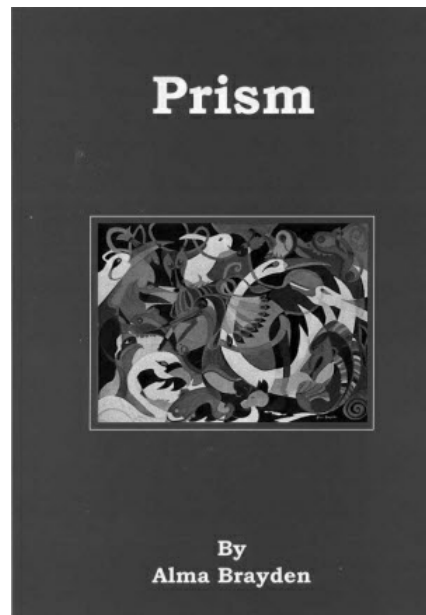
From the day of our conception we are "bound" to a journey of pleasure and pain, both physical, emotional, spiritual.

we are free to do this as we choose

yet at the same time we are restricted by our family, peers, society from moving forward in the way we wish to

the ropes symbolise this, "bound" as in the restriction, yet at the same time "bound" as in the journey, for we are all destined at some point to break free.

**Alma Brayden** is an artist and poet. She will be wearing her poet's hat for this Arts night. Her new collection of poetry, "Prism" was published last May by Seven Towers Publishing. The poetry in this collection brims with beautiful and clever imagery that is also reflected in her unique style of painting, a sample of which adorns the cover of this collection.



The first two lines of the first poem, *Celtic Animals*, instantly delight with the imaginative conceit,

'Bring them in from the narrow margins,  
unleash the snarling dogs of Kells,'

The collection sustains that vibrancy throughout creating a glowing tapestry of words.

Alma's work has appeared in many anthologies, newspapers and magazines. She has read on East Coast Radio and at the Mermaid Theatre, Bray. She is a well-known artist and teacher in Dalkey, Sandycove area where she has had many exhibitions.

Music for the night is from '**The Lennon Family Project**'. This is a 4 piece multi-instrumentalist group, although their Sax/guitar player will be away so they will be a 3 piece for this gig.



They have released an EP recently called *Regarding the Absence of Things* – a very attractive sound indeed. You can preview their music at <http://www.colmlennonmusic.com/?cat=6>

It is always great to hear new bands and Bray Arts are delighted to present 'The Lennon Family Project'.

## Review of October Arts Evening

The October meeting turned out to be a marathon of poetry, drama and song. Well-attended by some sixty supporters, the evening was hosted by the intrepid and ever witty Racker in the role of MC.

The Racker presented a five part comic epic on the fictional love affair between the notorious fifteenth century monk, **Savonarola**, and the infamous and beautiful **Lucretia Borgia**. He wove the five parts in and around the main acts giving continuity to the night and providing light relief with his farcical story.



*The Racker*

**Firststage Productions** directed by **Derek Pullen**, presented a staging of the poems of Liz Cowley enacted by **Cyrena Hayes Byrne**. This was a compilation of short poems taken from "A red Dress" and "What Am I Doing Here?". This show is going on tour this month in the UK and is a portrayal of woman in many life situations.

With a whoop of excitement, Cyrena launched into her opening, crying that it was a "relief that he chose my bed to be in!" Changing her character from giddy through coquettish to serious and solemn, Cyrena delivered a stunning portrait of the many facets of being a woman. Even the titles of the pieces were evocative in themselves! Opening with such claims as: "I'm a man's kind of woman!" and of other women: "They all know their husbands would far prefer me!" Or the working woman in office romance and dangers barely avoided. Then the anxiety of loss and dreams and hopes of romance and security played off against the need to be free and have fun.



*Cyrena Hayes Byrne*

Never serious but very much to the point with "The Joys of Motherhood" and "Recipe" with the line: "Take a woman and a man, add ..." and in the end "Take a sharp knife and slice in two"! With incisive humour and brilliant playing Cyrena brought this hilarious presentation to a close.

After recounting Act 2 of his epic saga, the Racker introduced Jay Ramsay, esteemed poet, psychotherapist and author, reading a selection of his poems. He explained that he hopes to encourage people to see poetry more creatively as a psychological and spiritual path. His first poems were thought provoking explorations of human nature.



*Jay Ramsay*

Changing to a different mood, Jay brought out three

short poems written in Ireland including "Raheen", located near Piltown, Co. Kilkenny; "Spire", set in Sligo and celebrating the lofty aims of mankind "in an ecstasy of darkest gloom," followed by "Innisfree" the unreachable island reflecting reality in life.

Jay's last poem was a "broken sonnet" written as a challenge in only "14 Lines for Britain" concluding his presentation with the hope that we can raise our spirits "where we live - in every village and street, in all we can do for each other, and the God of Love."

The Racker brought us back into the levity of his 15<sup>th</sup> century romp and then introduced Macdara Ó Conaola, sean-nós singer and Gaelic scholar, who continued the theme of human relationships as experienced in the island life of Inis Oirr.

He brought to life scenes of turf-gathering in the wind and rain and the perils of fishing on the Arran islands.

To the sound of delicate rhythms from the bodhrán, Macdara sang the great classics of conversations between a young woman and an old woman on the fears of love betrayed by the elements.

Picking up the earlier themes of the evening, he sang the great courting song "Cúnla" followed by the Napoleonic story of love abandoned for war but surviving the ravages of time. He followed with a woman's wrath where she hates the woman rather than the man who left her.



*Macdara*

Macdara finished on a lighter note with "Beidh aonach amárach i gContae an Chláir" portraying a young girl's excitement and desire to get to the fair for fun and frolics.

So ended an intensive night of deep rich poetry and verse

Cearbhall E. O'Meadhra


**HALLOW'een**  
**FUND RAISER**

Little Flower Hall, Main St., Bray  
 Sunday 31st Oct


 11am - 1pm **Cake Sale**


**2pm - 4pm Family Celebration.**

**All invited to dress up** and join in the Parade, Music making, Fun & Games, Dancing and Story Telling.


 Admission   
 Adults €2  
 Children 50cent  
 Under 3's **Free**

### ***Celtic Animals***

*by Alma Brayden*

Bring them in from the narrow margins,  
unleash the snarling dogs of Kells,  
let prophetic eagles fly  
across pale parchment sky,  
to dip and drink from hallowed waters  
holding salmon filled with knowledge  
of the sacred continuities of earth.

Unravel all the knotwork beasts  
to run untrammelled over page,  
horse and cat entwined with swan and deer,  
no longer bound with ribbon-gilt  
to serpent's coils,  
flaunt one thousand eyes of peacock's fan  
where jewelled fish swim through to reach  
the waving sway of lion's tail,  
and when they're tired of freedom,  
give them back security of interlacement  
in tau and tessellated patterns,  
ornamental spiral fret with loop,  
until they reach their terminal  
illuminated ending.

### ***Blue***

*by Alma Brayden*

Blue was your favourite colour I  
tried to paint it out, to brush  
away your memory with soft sable.

Grey sea reflected slatey sky,  
Delphiniums were out, as were  
forget-me-not and dolphin's eye.  
I censored half the world,  
obsessed with fear of blue.

It crept back quietly  
at shadow's edge,  
hidden in lavender and green  
secondary, determined  
to be seen.

You won the war last summer in  
burst of cobalt Himalayan  
poppies nodding, dancing, I  
nursed them through hard  
winter frost and early spring, to  
see you dance again in  
memories contained but never  
lost.

### ***His Castle***

*by Alma Brayden*

He's not leaving! They  
offer respite but he  
knows if he goes there's  
no coming back.

In his once cherished garden, apple  
trees bend with fruit juicy red,  
dropping into high weeds he can  
neither lift nor pull,

The house still holds  
faint aroma of her  
spectacular baking,  
though weevils invade  
the self-raising flour.  
Her chair, still covered  
with the throw she was making.  
The piano aches for her touch.

They say the place needs painting,  
he dreads a fall -they'd have him in  
seconds, strapped, siren screaming.

He's not leaving!



### ***My Daughter in Ischia***

*by Oliver Marshall*

My daughter  
Lands  
At Rome airport.

All Chianti  
Sunbathes  
In the sun.

Tangled vines  
And grapes  
Wait to fill

A thousand bottles.  
At Stazione Termini,  
She and her friend

Buy a ticket  
For Naples.  
They go south,

*Watching the sea  
I watched  
Forty years ago.*

Contd —>

*My Daughter in Ischia (continued)*

At Naples  
The loudspeaker  
Blares.

*Il treno*  
*In provenienza*  
*Di Roma*

*Arriva*  
*Con un'ora*  
*Di ritardo.*

The train  
From Rome  
Is one hour late.

Nothing changes.  
The long carriages  
Sidle into the station.

All Chianti  
Ripens  
In the sun.

They take the ferry  
To Ischia.  
The sun

Covers the sky  
Like a bandana.  
A thousand miles away

I listen on the radio  
To Schubert's  
Impromptu no.3.

*The moon*  
*Rises over Ischia.*  
*My daughter*

And her friend  
Are happy.  
The waiter

Brings spaghetti  
And cheese.  
They drink

From a glass  
Of Chianti,  
One of a thousand

Bottles  
That has ripened  
In the sun.

**Two Magicians**

**by Shane Harrison**

*He looked in at the window as black as any silk*  
*and she looked out of the window as white as any milk*

It was a rare talent that James had. He had first observed it by learning to look just beyond his range of vision, a sideways glance back at what he had just seen and not quite registered. It was difficult to explain. Most people would put it down to a trick of the light, an imperfect blink; most people would put it down to paranoia. But he was not most people.

Mary held her fingers in that curious way and held him in her sights. She had him framed. He smiled with an excess of tolerance. He had her number. He knew what she was playing at.

Mary. What an ordinary name that was. How had she lived with it for...what? Almost thirty years, he supposed. But it was hard to tell. It irritated him. Could she not have changed it to Claudia, or Gina. Honestly, it was like choosing to eat nothing but mashed potatoes for a quarter of a century. How could he ever take her seriously?

Mary took photographs. She flitted about him like a Japanese gnat. Click, whirr. She had motorised drive. She had done her aerobics and had all the right poses. She had single lens reflex.

James watched life from the corner of his eyes. There was a clock on the wall, just within his peripheral vision. He fixed his mind on it and inched it forward. Imperceptibly. Until it raised its hands in surrender. It was time.

Mary was arms akimbo and dominating the central aisle of the gallery. She jerked her head this way and that, searching for another target, another backdrop scenario with him as the victim. "It is time." he heard himself say.

There was a picture on the gallery wall of a couple praying. They were peasants. They were engaged, had been engaged, in some nameless activity of the soil. Turnip snagging perhaps, or tatie hoking. They had been engaged in this activity and had always been engaged in it until the grind was broken by the call to prayer.

It was time.

The Angelus bell rang out. Its sonorous toll unbroken by age, that subliminal knell that stilled life to the very soil. He felt tired just looking at it but its familiarity made it hard to tear himself away. The bell echoed throughout the Gallery. Each and every soul was frozen to their spot. Mary, arms akimbo and dominating



the central aisle. James turned slowly through three hundred and sixty degrees. It was the same. It worked, it really worked!

The sun was still in the heavens and sent a solid shaft of silver light through the high atrium. A million specks of dust hung suspended, arrested in their perpetual rotation. At first it was as though the people were transfixed by this display of beauty, but they were frozen in odd shapes, at teetering angles more like they were caught playing statues. James wondered would they move again if he took his eye away, look away, glance back and see them falter and freeze. But as he closed his eyes the stillness permeated everything.

He walked up to Mary. He could undress her. He could undress himself. He could undress all of them there. He looked into her eyes and they were staring past him to a space on the wall. He followed them. There, held inside a frame, bathed in a greenish glow, was a strange and empty chair. Was that where he had been sitting?

He let his clothes drop from him and stood for a while in the freshness of living. He coined a dream where, as a young boy, he had stolen at dawn to the garden shed. Naked in the half light, he had taken his bicycle to the gate. Freezing at first, then scorching through every pore, he had eased the bike onto the road and mounted smoothly as it gathered speed. All around the world was still and only he moved through it generating the breeze that goose bumped his flesh. He threw back his head. The fluorescent street lamps faded to a shallow primrose and above them the sky soared effortlessly through unimaginable shades of blue. He stood on the pedals and throwing wide his arms embraced the infinite essence of the day. The wheels whirred.

James absorbed the memory into the moment, he absorbed it, felt the thrill of his flesh goosepimpling again, then, as he knew it must, there came creeping into the exhilaration, a feeling of tiredness. He sat back on the chair, felt his limbs tucked into the bonelike shape, taped to the surface by some unseen hands. Things began moving again. Sighs, followed by voices, strangely slurred, rising and meeting and merging to a muffled roar. Who would look at him today? Who would take interest in his plight? Figures waltzed by beyond the...beyond the what? Beyond a glass, flickerings of light and colour. Only Mary stood transfixed. Only Mary saw him there. From this stasis she emerged, chrysalis, concerned. She reached a finger towards him and he felt the life again.

It was a strange power that Mary had.

## Verdi's "Requiem"

**Bray Choral Society** (musical director **Frank Kelly**) with guests from Wicklow Choral society will be performing the Verdi "Requiem" Holy Redeemer Church, Bray on 20th November 2010 at 8:00 pm. Soloists are Lynda Lee (soprano), Colette McGahon (contralto), James Edwards (tenor), Philip O'Reilly (bass).

### Lynda Lee

Lynda Lee studied classical singing with Dr. Veronica Dunne in Dublin and has enjoyed a busy classical career both in Opera and in concert. She is a regular performer in Ireland and throughout Europe. She was also a principal soprano at The Leipzig Opera for some years performing several leading roles.



### Collette McGahon

The Irish mezzo-soprano Colette McGahon started her professional career with Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Solo recitals have included appearances at the Purcell Room and Queen Elizabeth Hall on London's South Bank and for the BBC and Irish radio and television.



### James Edwards



Born in Essex, James Edwards began singing as a chorister at St Paul's Cathedral, continuing his studies at the RNCM and the RAM. Since that time has had a very busy career, taking leading roles in an impressive number of opera's.

He has appeared with major orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the CBSO, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Mikkeli City Orchestra, as well as at the *The Battle Proms 2009* at Althorp Park.

### Philip Reilly

Philip Reilly born in England embarked upon vocal study with Otokar Kraus, whilst working as a professional chorister in London.

His Operatic debut came with Glyndebourne Touring Opera in an acclaimed production of Rossini's "Cenerentola" as Don Magnifico. His concert repertoire is considerable ranging from mediæval to contemporary music, and results from performances and recordings in many countries.



### Frank Kelly

Founder and Musical Director  
Of the Bray Choral Society

## SIGNAL ARTS CENTRE EXHIBITIONS

### A Gregarious Congregation

An Exhibition of Drawings and Prints by Greg Murray

From Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November to Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2010

I have lived in Dublin all my life and I was brought up a Catholic. As with most “Catholics” of my generation Sunday mass was something we attended for the sake of our parents and also as a kind of social with friends. My parish church was Gardiner Street and at 11 o’clock on Sunday there was a singing mass which was popular with lots of local teenagers. But of course at a certain age mass became a chore, my parents themselves eased up on the church going and for a time there was a bit of a gap left in my Sunday socials.

One Sunday, years later, one of my brothers took me to McDaid’s pub, in Harry Street, and there I found a new religion, Live Music.



*Peter Moore*

The high priest was Peter Moore and the disciples included a medley of talented musicians. This was pre Celtic Tiger days and the congregation (audience) combined a mixture of wonderful Irish characters and a selection of foreign nationals. For me as an Irish person who had never been abroad this was a fantastic experience meeting people from different countries and cultures. I became addicted to this atmosphere of music, laughter, friendship, sharing and a few pints. This was a really fulfilling time for me as I met some incredibly inspiring people and formed some very strong friendships. It was an educational experience and I graduated with honours.

Things in Dublin changed with the Celtic Tiger and though the Sunday nights in McDaid’s have long ended this experience has held me in good stead and in some way I feel it was pivotal for my development as person and as an artist. Live music still plays a big part in my life and was my initial inspiration for this exhibition but as I progressed with the work I’ve realised that, as with the McDaid’s experience, the music was the catalyst but the people were the inspiration. My Groupie Degree helped me realise that most people enjoy interaction, recognition and inclusion. In Dublin and Bray, where I now work, I have met many people who continue to inspire and entertain me and this exhibition is a result of those past and some more recent encounters.

Opening Reception : Fri 12th Nov 7 - 9 pm

### A Glimpse of the White Whale

Drawings by Orla Barry, Jason Deans, Michelle Hall, Tracy Hanna, Sarah Quigley and Jenny Spain.

From Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November to Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2010



Signal Arts Centre is pleased to present this group exhibition by six artists. The immediacy of drawing to express thoughts and its usefulness as a tool to ‘work things out’ are fundamental to the ideology behind this show. They use drawing for different means in their individual practices; drawing as research, drawing as journey, drawing as finished piece. They will each present projects relating to our own artistic practices.

In the book *Moby Dick* the narrator Ishmael is on a journey of exploration in the pursuit of knowledge. They mirror this journey in their own practices. In a way they are laying the foundations of their praxis through exploration and investigation using drawing as a tool. To quote Ishmael:

“What the white whale was to Ahab, has been hinted; what, at times, he was to me, as yet remains unsaid.”

Like the White Whale to Ishmael, drawing’s meaning and the extent and form of its influence is unique to every artist. It may influence each one’s practice in ways they are not even aware of. To them the White Whale represents the spectacular, the unknown and that feeling when a drawing works.

Opening Reception: Fri 26th Nov 2 - 9 pm

“Painting is a world of its own, it’s self sufficient. Most of the time when one talks about painting, one says nothing interesting. It’s always rather superficial ... I believe that you simply cannot talk about painting. ”

*Francis Bacon*

YARN  
Bray's Festival of Story and Song  
Mermaid Co. Wicklow Arts Centre  
11th- 22<sup>th</sup> of November

This festival celebrates stories in all forms: Storytelling, Song, Children's Events, Opera, Music and Theatre. Pick up a brochure at Mermaid to find out all about this innovative initiative by Mermaid or see

<http://www.mermaidartscentre.ie/>

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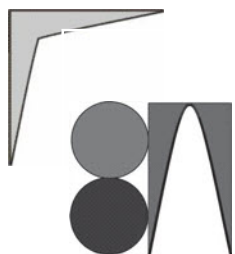
## Submission Guidelines

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[annefitz3@gmail.com](mailto:annefitz3@gmail.com)

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## Bray Arts Evening Monday 1st Nov 2010

Upstairs at The Martello on the Seafront  
€5/€4 conc. Absolutely everyone is welcome.  
Doors open 8:00pm

William Gibb Forsyth - Artist : "we are *bound* to a journey of pleasure and pain"

Alma Brayden - Poet: "unleash the snarling dogs of Kells"

The Lennon Family Project - Music: New EP launched  
"Regarding the Absence of Things"

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