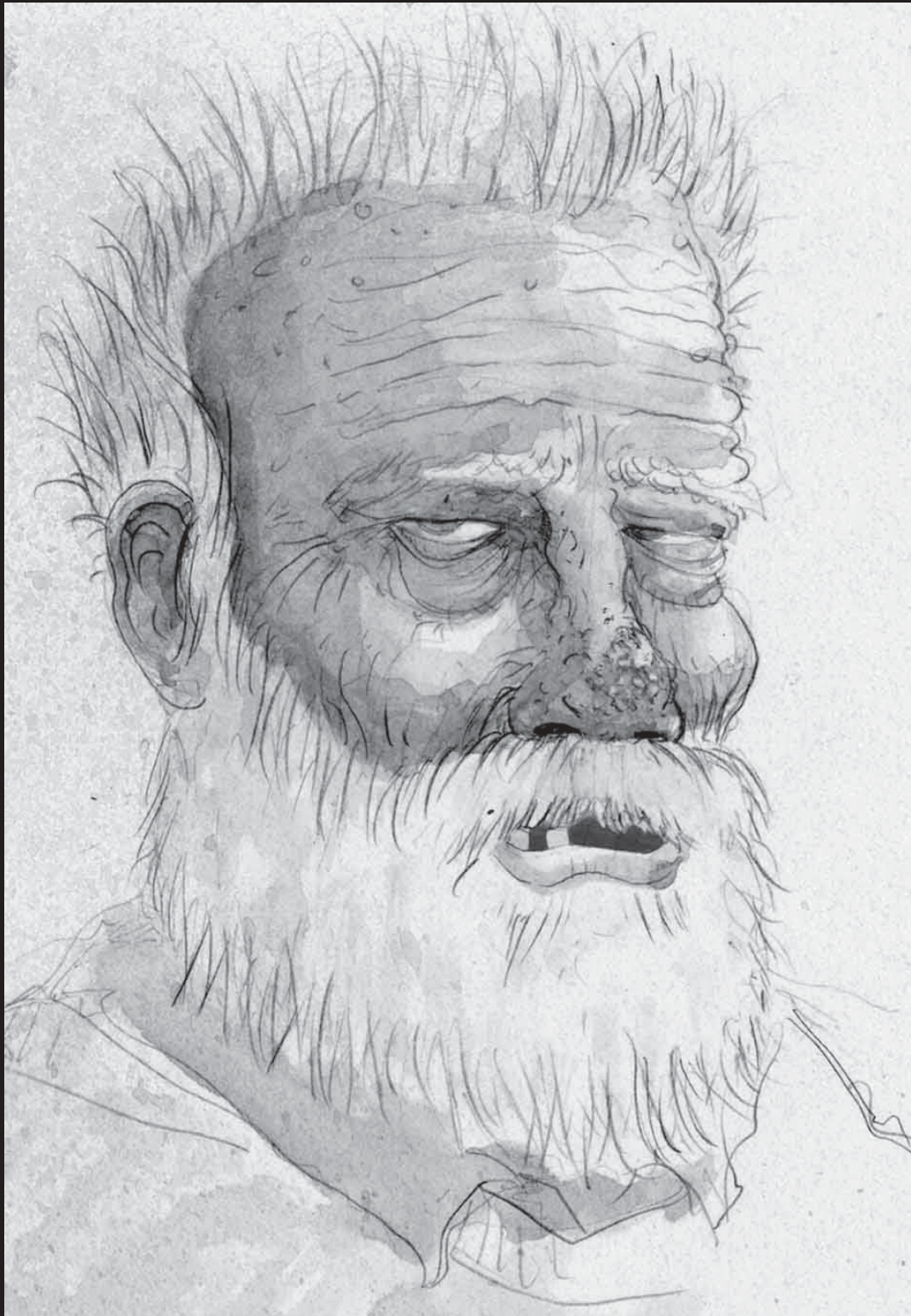

Bray Arts Journal

Issue 8

April 2009

Volume 14



The Impediments to action advances action.

Marcus Aurelius

Like everyone else, Bray Arts is trimming its sails to weather the ubiquitous recession. The cost of printing our Journal has risen dramatically. We have applied to Wicklow and Bray Council for some arts funding, as we do every year. Wicklow has already informed us that they will not be able to provide any funding this year but we are hopeful that Bray Council will be more positive.

In the meantime, we are taking the following action: We will print and distribute fewer journals. We had the option of reducing the quality and content but we have decided that that would be a retrograde step. It will continue to be available (only fewer) free of charge in the libraries, banks, credit union, Mermaid and a selection of restaurants.

In the meantime we want to bring to the attention of all our readers that the Journal is available on the Internet at our website www.brayarts.net. We invite you to send us your email address so that we can alert you each month about our Arts Evening and the latest Journal. Your email will not be used for any other purpose. We will keep the information to an absolute minimum and your address will not be made known to any other party.

You can forward your email address either from our website contact page or email directly to editor@brayarts.net.

Finally, some people opt for having the Journal posted to them every month. For this service we charge 10 Euro per annum. If anyone is interested in this, the time to sign up is before our next season, starting in Sept. You can send a cheque, payable to Bray Arts to The Editor, Bray Arts Journal, c/o Casino, Killarney Rd. Bray.

Review of Bray Arts Evening

Monday March 2, 2009

By Cearbhall E. O'Meadhra

The evening opened to a happy atmosphere of banter and a sense of enjoyment pending. The large audience came from as far away as Strangford Lough to share in the fun.



Pat Conroy

Opening the night, Zan introduced artist **Pat Conroy** who fascinated his audience with his drawings of castles, dragons and amazing feats of mountain-climbing From Caranthual to Everest base-camp and on to New Zealand and Australia. From his experience in mountain climbing he found himself looking

down on things with a different perspective and tried to capture a feeling in his work of what it would be like to be suspended above the scene.

Never having been to college nor taken art classes he found that he possessed a natural talent through which he was able to portray imaginative flights of fancy: "putting castles above the clouds," "dragon taking down a Terex". Pat commented that the dragon took 3 months to draw.

Ever eager to experiment, Pat created a heavy steel sculpture of a castle with lights inside projecting up through the stained glass windows.

Back to reality, Pat took his audience through a number of his works including drawings of Adair Manor worked from a photograph which he took from the more difficult side; Dromolin Castle drawn to scale and the flagship Dromore Castle drawn from research because it is now completely in ruins. He showed many more castles including Castle Oliver which he started at the age of 15 and put off for many years because he might not do it right. He was particularly concerned to illustrate the very real height of these buildings. He likes to explore unusual views of his subjects such as the view from within a ruined building as he would imagine it to be.

He closed with his latest project: a painting of a magical castle on the bedroom wall of his daughter Cloey. "I never painted in my life before" he remarked.

Phyl Herbert, Short Story writer, followed with a reading of her published work: "Lunar Ladies". This story sets out an affectionate portrait of the often neglected lives of ladies in their mature years. Through witty dialogue and attention to detail, it brought to life the story of Annie and

Front Cover : 'Man in Pub' Watercolour Print by Francisco DeBorja

Francisco's work will shortly be exhibited in Signal Arts; see page 7



This delightful sketch of Sonny Condell was done by Aoife Fitzgerald at the March Arts Evening. For anyone who was present on that night this drawing captures something of the soulfulness and magic of the evening. I believe Aoife also did a sketch of Robbie Overson. She presented the sketches to Robbie and Sonny at the end of the evening. Nice one.

her tennis-playing companions meeting in Annie's apartment for their annual new year get-together. Revisiting last year's resolutions to see how well they have been put into practice, one-by-one the ladies reveal their own characters as they respond to the need to expose themselves and their fragile wishes.



Phyl Herbert

"Lunar Ladies" is a celebration of the yearnings and, still very much alive, needs of older women. Phyl Herbert's delicate, yet resolute, handling of this sensitive subject allows us to fully appreciate well-rounded characters, deter-

mined to live to the fullest despite their confined lives.

Phyl Herbert has written plays for radio and for teenagers. She completed the M.Phil for creative writing in Trinity College, Dublin last year.

After the interval Zan introduced the veteran duo of Sonny Condell and Robbie Overson who delivered an enthralling display of guitar virtuosity and a rich portrayal of the power of the ballad.

Featuring such tunes as: "The Sun Is Going Down" and "Taking the Train from Kent Station, Cork on a Cold Morning" and the blues setting of "Boy Child Gone to Pieces". Robbie Overson displayed his virtuosity with a variety of guitar styles including characteristic Spanish riffs and a poignant setting of "My Lagan Love".



Sonny Condell



Finishing with a rousing encore, the famous duo closed a memorable night of living arts in Bray.

Robbie Overson

Preview of April Arts Evening
Monday 6th April 2009 - Doors Open 8:00pm
Heather House Hotel, Strand Road, Bray

Bray Arts has lined up another night to delight the eyes, ears and mind. In the warm and intimate setting of another Bray Arts Evening we present Literature, Art and Music. Everyone is welcome. There will be the usual admission charge of 5 Euro / 4 Euro conc.

Literature: Susan Lanigan is a writer and programmer living in Bray, Co Wicklow.



Twice shortlisted for the Hennessy New Irish Writing Award in 2005 and (currently) 2009, she has been published in *Southword*, *Mayo News*, and *The Stinging Fly*. She was a prizewinner in the George Bermingham competition in 2005 and has been thrice shortlisted for the Fish Short Story Award, as well as twice for the Albedo One Science Fiction

short story award.

Music: "If you want to go on a journey from protest songs through love songs to those that squeeze every drop of emotion out of you, then **Jimi Cullen** is the man for you. You will laugh and nod with understanding when he sings of hangovers and you'll cry when he reminds you of how many of us walk by homeless people on the street.



He does not preach from a high horse, instead he shows us, sometimes not too gently, of what is really going on and then leaves it up to us."

Visual Art: Elis Taves is a well-known Brazilian photographer with a special interest in Ireland. During 2003 she came to Ireland to further develop her photography skills.



While here, her exhibition "Celebrating Easter in Brazil" was held in the Chapel of Trinity College sponsored by the Brazilian Embassy and The Chaplaincy of Trinity College. On returning to Brazil her exhibition "Ireland" was held in the Irish Embassy, Brasilia. In 2005 she came back to launch her book called *City of Children* at Oscar Wilde House, The American College. Elis Taves is now back in Ireland, living in

Bray, working on her new project focused on Irish women, "Behind the Eyes".

Cat amongst the Pigeons

By Shirley Jane Farrar

The brooding hill stands above the bay,
once clothed in sheep the farmer sent
trimming summer grass.

Ten years, developers tried to block the light,
fill up the goldfinches orchard with jangled
houses unsuited to the country life.

Ten years, architects broke their teeth
on denser plans to thrust suburbia
down the throats of sailors
before a final battle taken to appeal-
commissioned men decided justice,
style, the greater public good.

Autumn tore leaves from fire-red maples.

Our house stood up against the tide,
marking time with tide as planning,
glove-in-hand with builders did not hear
the birdsong in the wood, held high
white flags to men behind the money
making bigger plans for bulldozers,
houses in wolves clothing.

Rains drowned and in the winter-dark

a digger worried at the hill scooping out
a crater in ferocious rain, moving
mountains, saturated clay until it stood
house-high against the hawthorn hedges
and the land wept, flooding through gardens,
boundary walls and fences
seeping down to lower ground.

Under a full moon the tiger twists his tail,
no ordinary cat amongst the pigeons.

The foul deceptive stench-old sewers ooze
up through roads, seep into the lough.
A solitary heron stands waiting in deep water.

The Budget

By Lauren Norton

Got a taste
of the old fear
when the mounted police
clopped down Dawson Street,
of an eyeball torn
from its gaze,
or some other loss,
the chocolate hands
stood on their own lopped
wrists for sale
on carts in Belgium.

Painted students
were rushing by the horses,
as large, inapt,
as dinosaurs, and the cars
were patient as crocodiles.

There were still some pensioners
rattling about since their morning hurrah
outside the Dail,
where they croaked for blood
and medical cards,
resurrected deV and that other beaked thief
who had the flamin' decency
to give them transit.

Found the bike
where I left it,
there were socialist pamphlets
in the spokes
that broke the quiet ticking
wheeling down Kildare Street.
A hundred keepers of the peace
milled outside the library,
looking grim,
the riot squad wore darker motley,
sniffing for skulls.

Withour:

By Sean Ryan

And here we are today
gathered, idle, in everydayness.

Redolent of buttered burnt toast
and whiskey, air carries
somnolescent hums of
this and that (the murmur of mourners).

My glass glints empty now
and a lover's comfort crooks close in arm;
her green eyes welled deep with mine.

I will not gaze empty at space
as mother has done tonight,
but find my peace
in rage

and stare furious at dawn.

We are at odds with this world
that gets on with itself.
I watch pinking clouds, bluing sky,
winkling sun on black horizon
while
about us rises
the gloaming September seeping grey
gathering, idle, in everydayness.

RHYME or REASON

by Hugh Rafferty

He was almost curled around the desk, head down, tongue caught between teeth, brain clenched, as he struggled for inspiration.

'What are you doing?'

'Writing.'

'What?'

'Writing, I said.' He almost screamed the words but he held his temper. Marge had a way of provoking that always got him going, but not today. Today he was transported; he was getting thoughts on paper, deep lyrical thoughts boiling up from his very soul. There was no room for distraction. 'I am writing,' he said more gently. *Perhaps*, he thought, *if I keep it neutral she might go away.*

'I heard you the first time. I want to know *what* you are writing.'

Oh shite! He could sense his muse falter and fall back before this carefully enunciated offensive. Still, he smiled and stayed cool under fire.

'Poetry,' he said.

She laughed and he cringed inside. But it was an honest laugh, a real belly laugh. She was genuinely amused.

'You!' She stumbled the word and had to catch her breath. '*You!* Writing *poetry?*'

She had stopped laughing but he could see that she had difficulty keeping a straight face. He said nothing, only stared at her as his anger began to burn.

'Oh diddums,' she giggled, 'don't look like that. Did big bad Margie upset her little poet?' She burst out laughing again. He uncoiled himself, gathered his papers and stood.

'Sometimes,' he said, 'you can be a right cow.'

'Wait ... please.' She grasped his arm as she fought for self control. 'I'm sorry,' she said at last, 'it's just that I don't see you as the soulful, sensitive type.'

He was not sure whether to feel insulted or not. And it was a long time since he had heard Marge say she was sorry for anything. He waited.

'What's it about? Your poem.'

'I have just started,' he said. 'It's about the mystery of life.'

'Will you read it for me?'

She had never asked him to read anything before but he thought that she sounded sincere. 'I have done only the first stanza,' he said.

'Go on. Read it for me.'

Why not, he thought. He knew it would knock her socks off

'Okay,' he said and he cleared his throat.

The midwife smacks the infant arse
new lungs suck in that saving breath

and soon enough the tightwound heart
starts ticking down the days till death

'That's it,' she asked.

'I told you I had only one stanza,' he said. And, of course, I may need to polish it, although I believe it stands up pretty well as is.'

'I don't like it.'

'What the hell do you know about poetry?' He was really pissed. 'You're just being bloody. What's supposed to be wrong with it, anyway?'

'Oh, I don't know. It's sort of singsongy, like a child's rhyme.'

'Singsongy!' Now he was shouting.

'Old fashioned,' she added. 'You know...blah, de blah, de blah, de blah.'

'Old fashioned,' he could hardly believe his ears.

'Will you stop repeating what I say and, for pity's sake, lower your voice.'

'Blah de blah,' he croaked.

'Yes,' she said. 'I thought poetry was about the essence of things, about insight boiled down to its purest form.'

'Yes,' he answered, 'and that is what my poem will explore over the full ten stanzas.'

'Don't get tightwound with me,' she snapped. 'I'm entitled to my opinion. If you're going to write ten stanzas on this, then you are all about rhyme and form rather than substance. It would be like following a tired horse about a field.'

'Tired horse? What are you raving about? You have no appreciation of what's involved.'

'Really!' Now she was getting cross. 'It seems to me that your poem would be better if it focussed on the duality of things. The dichotomy of existence ... that's what your poem should capture.'

She struck a pose and declaimed,

'We are born to live
We are born to die.'

When Marge had long left the room he still sat on at his desk, no longer inspired, afraid to laugh in case he might cry.

END.

Books

Five Minutes to Midnight ?

Ireland and Climate Change

by Kieran Hickey, published by The White Row Press.

The title of this book is based on the imaginary clock used by philosophers during the Cold War to determine and declare how near the world was to nuclear war due to tensions between the superpowers. The phrase went out of use in the 1990's when the Cold War ended but has been re-introduced by climatologists to indicate how near we are to dramatic climate change.



In this excellent and thought provoking book, Dr. Hickey looks at how climate change will affect Ireland within the next hundred years and the impact it will have on our people and lifestyle unless concerted corrective actions is taken in the

immediate future.

He opens his book with a brief overview of weather patterns in Ireland down through the centuries, providing a more detailed picture from the 20th century, in which Ireland suffered extremes - the extremely wet autumn of 1946, the 6-week 'freeze up' of early 1947 and the subsequent spells of hot summers and extreme cold winters that have followed at intervals.

He then goes on to show how long term global warming if allowed to grow and continue unchecked will affect Ireland. Sea levels will rise and low lying areas will flood frequently during spells of tropical type rainstorms. These areas may become permanently flooded due to the rise in sea levels resulting in the displacements of people and industry and there are some very thought provoking maps showing how Dublin and Cork might appear should this occur.

Irish agriculture and industry will be affected by this climate change and Dr. Hickey provides a series of scenarios of how Ireland might appear in 2080 and the type of lifestyle that people will have.

But it's not too late to take corrective action and if this is implemented sooner rather than later by all nations around the globe, the rate of global warming can be slowed down and perhaps stopped.

This is a truly remarkable and interesting book and one

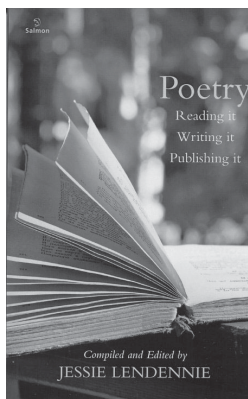
that everyone should read. Dr. Hickey explains clearly the issues facing us regarding climate change and the effects that it will have on us, some of which are affecting Ireland already, and the immediate action that needs to be taken.

A book that should be essential reading for everyone.

James Scannell

Poetry

Reading it, Writing it, Publishing it
Compiled and Edited by
Jessie Lendennie (Salmon Poetry)



‘This book offers frank and carefully considered information for poets and others who are interested in knowing more about how the poetry world “works”.’

The collection of essays from thirty one international contributors gives a fascinating insight into the disparate views on poetry from distinguished poets, publishers and administrators deeply involved in the business of poetry.

Bray Arts and this Journal get an honourable mention in Anne Fitzgeralds contribution to the collection called “The Translatable Rhythm of Breath”.
Highly recommended.

Video Voyeur

Harold Chassen

Quantum of Solace is the latest in the Bond series. The film continues just minutes after the end of Casino



Royale but unlike that film it reverts to the old clichés of lack of plot, Bond girls, explosions and car chases. I have no problems with those things as long as they are part of the plot but the recent Bond films have explosions and car chases with a thin plot attached to them. It isn’t one that I would recommend but if you feel you must watch it to continue with the series then I suppose wasting a few hours

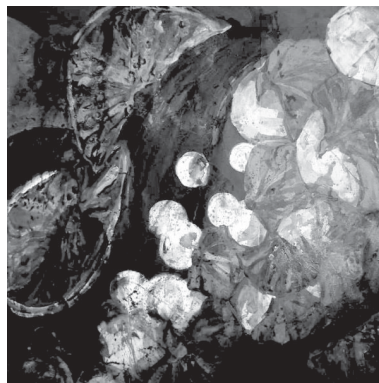
watching the film won’t hurt.

Signal Arts

Genesis II

Mixed Media Exhibition by Síofra Artists Group
From Tuesday 15th April to Sunday 26th April 2009

Signal Arts Centre is pleased to present this collection of work by Síofra Artists Group. The Group consists of nine artists who formed in 1995 with informal meetings to provide mutual support and to create a forum for discussion on art practice. In 1998 they decided to work together to mount collective exhibitions.



Garden of Eden
by Beatrice Stewart

The members of Síofra are interested in exploring the tension between the individual’s freedom of expression and the constraints of working for a group show and to agreed themes. They seek to exhibit in a variety of venues, especially those that

are as accessible as possible to the public.
Opening Reception: Friday 17th April 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

‘Who’s Yer Paddy?’

An Exhibition of Watercolour Prints by Francisco De Borja
From Tuesday 28th April to Sunday 10th May 2009

Francisco, born in the late seventies in the newborn Spanish democracy, came to Ireland in 2004 with a one-way ticket, a few euros and a dossier of design, media and animation work. He got a job in an emerging animation company and since then he has been involved with various different animation projects. He currently works as an art director and creative.



Gin Lady
by Francisco De Borja

The theme for this exhibition concerns real people he has come across since coming to live in Ireland - a portrait of the average Irish person, from all walks of life. The work consists of prints of hand drawn watercolour portraits, each accompanied by a short written description of how the person was encountered.

Opening Reception:
Thursday 30th April 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Artists Talk: Theresa Nanigian

at Mermaid Gallery - 4 Apr 2009 - 15:30

Theresa Nanigian spent 18 months researching the village of Enniskerry. Using the village as her muse, she created a series of large-scale photographs with the valley's captivating landscape providing the backdrop for allegories of contemporary Irish life. Theresa Nanigian has produced an artist's book of facts, figures, opinions and images to reveal the peculiar idiosyncrasies of a specific place whilst addressing universal concerns. In this talk, Theresa Nanigian will describe the skills she employed to capture the essence of a town in a rapidly changing Ireland.

Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : editor@brayarts.net

Creative Writing Editor : Anne Fitzgerald :
afitzgerald3@ireland.com

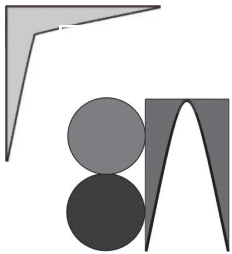
Email submissions to any of the above or post typed submissions to

The Editor BAJ 'Casino',
Killarney Rd. Bray,
Co. Wicklow

Deadline 15th of each month.

Bray Arts website : www.brayarts.net

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*Arts Evening Monday 6th April 2009
at the Heather House Hotel Strand Road 8:00 pm
5 Euro / 4 Euro Conc. Everyone is welcome.*

Elis Taves: Well-known Brazilian photographer with her new project focused on Irish women, "Behind the Eyes".

Susan Lanigan i: Award winning writer and vice shortlisted for the Hennessey New Irish Writing Award.

Jimi Cullen: This man will take you from tears to laughter with his brilliant repertoire of songs, ranging from protest to comedy.

Bray Arts is grateful for the support of Bray Council, Wicklow Council, CASC and Heather House Hotel.
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