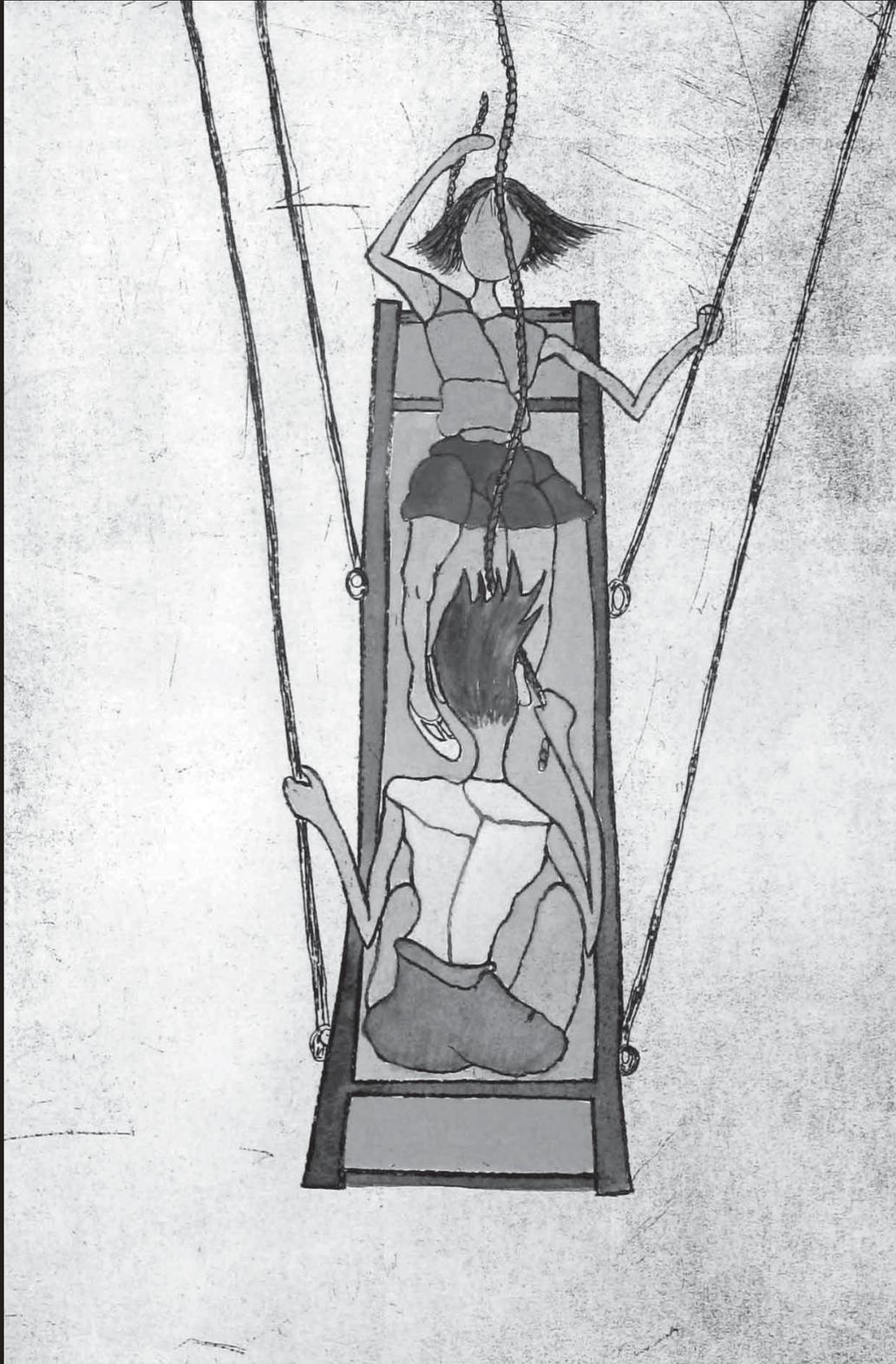

Bray Arts Journal

Issue 6

February 2007

Volume 12



EDITORIAL

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FORUM ON ART AND CULTURE

The mission of the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) is to provide advice to the Government on policies to achieve greater equality and social inclusion by analysing, monitoring and evaluating relevant programmes and policies identified in the context of social partnership arrangements, and to facilitate public consultation on policy matters referred to it by the Government from time to time. So, what has this got to do with Art matters? Well a great deal as it turns out.



Maureen Gaffney, Chairwoman of NESF

NESF in Jan 2006 set up a project team on **Cultural Inclusion**. The project's aim is to broaden the access of all to cultural resources and facilities, so as to enrich and enhance quality of life for both individuals and communities. The team concentrated on Drama, Visual Arts and Libraries. This project was set up because there is inequality and social exclusion when it comes to access to art and cultural events. It is based on the view that access to arts and culture provides an important avenue through which civic engagement and active citizenship can be built.

A Report on Cultural Inclusion is due out shortly. It is critical of the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism's lack of a clear policy to broaden participation by all in the arts. It identifies failure to carry out plans to include people from rural areas, ethnic minorities or people with disabilities in arts and culture.

Concern is expressed about the level of expertise available among teachers and within schools to adequately implement the arts curriculum.

Statistics on the library service indicated that usage of libraries by the poorest groups is low. Another very interesting observation relates to property prices. Artists have great difficulty in securing a place to live and work because of the rampant escalation of property prices which is forcing them to move away from their own communities.

If you wish to read more about the NESF and their work on Cultural Inclusion you can go to their website www.nesf.ie

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL PER CENT FOR ART PROGRAMME 2007-2008

Wicklow County Council launched its new Per Cent for Art Programme 2007/2008 in Mermaid Arts Centre on Thursday 18th Jan. County Manager Edward Sheehy, Cllr. Joe Behan, Cathaoirleach and Clíodhna Shaffrey, Programme Advisor launched the programme. They were introduced to a considerable gathering by Jenny Sherwin, Wicklow Arts Officer.

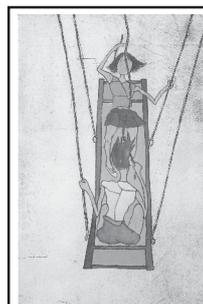


The programme seeks new and innovative ideas. Art works in Visual Arts, Literature, Music and New Media/Film will be commissioned. Each commission offers practitioners support as well as a sufficient budget and time for realisation. Briefly the commissions are as follows :-

- Commission 1 - Visual Arts: Enniskerry E35,000 ,
- Commission 2 - Visual Arts: Aughrim E35,000,
- Commission 3 - Visual Arts: Baltinglass E35,000,
- Commission 4 - Site Specific Blessington Library E60,000,
- Commission 5 - Outreach Blessington Library E25,000,
- Commission 6 - Literature: South Wicklow E40,000,
- Commission 7 - Music: North East E40,000,
- Commission 8 - New Media/Film: East Wicklow E40,000.

Sculpture in Woodlands will independently commission two further works under this Per Cent Programme.

For further information and a detailed application pack contact the Wicklow Arts Office +353 (0404) 20155 or email wao@wicklowcoco.ie



Front Cover : *Faster* by Kate Walsh. Kate is originally from Bray but is living in Clonmel since 1981. See preview of February Arts Evening on page 3 for more information on Kate.

REVIEW OF JANUARY ARTS EVENING

This was quite an unusual Arts Evening. First of all it was African in theme and secondly, at one stage, the audience and the performers melded into one and began to sing some beautiful African chants or songs. I could not distinguish the audience from the performers. It was great fun. **Eithne Griffin** was the MC and chief organiser of the entertainment and



The audience and performers singing together.

presentations. No doubt it was Eithne who arranged all these 'plants' in the audience who cajoled us unto the floor and gave us instant singing lessons. After the singing someone mentioned **Gorse Hill** where this form of communal chanting and singing takes place regularly amongst other activities. We have mentioned Gorse Hill before in the Journal but if you want to find out more visit the Gorse Hill site at www.gorsehill.net.

Eithne who is an Artist and Designer also gave her own fascinating presentation on part of her African experience. She also decorated the function room with very striking African Art (her own) along with some beautiful wall hangings.

A group called **Egbeola** (God's People) originally from Nigeria staged a one act piece from a Tom Murphy play. They called it **Home**. The four main characters are Irish emigrant workers



Vola Oguns, Gabriel Akujobi, Abiola Tubi and Rilwoa Jaiyeloia in England. Their bleak lives revolve around drink and nostalgia for home. One expresses his sense of failure while another finds some joy in visiting home under the pretence that he was successful and well off while yet another accepted the reality that they have a new life and should make

the best of it. It was poignant and one was fully aware that the actors empathised very much with the predicament of the emigrants. The actors were Gabriel Akujobi, Rilwoa Jaiyeloia, Vola Oguns and Abiola Tubi. After their drama piece Gabriel and Rilwoa played djembes while Volo and Abila sang and danced; altogether a very entertaining and versatile group.

Faith Wilson, ecologist, presented images of wild animals from her travels in Africa. This was fascinating and the photographs were very beautiful. Faith's knowledge and observations on all the different animals made the presentation really enjoyable.

Fiona Whitty gave a presentation on her project work with African nationals living in Ireland. This involved conversations, art/craft and cooking. At the end of her slide presentation Fiona played a DVD she made of ethnic cooking along with the casual conversations of the cooks. Very interesting.

PREVIEW OF NEXT ARTS EVENING

MON 5TH FEB HEATHER HOUSE HOTEL, SEA FRONT BRAY. DOORS OPEN 8:00 PM ADMISSION EURO 5 14 CONC.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

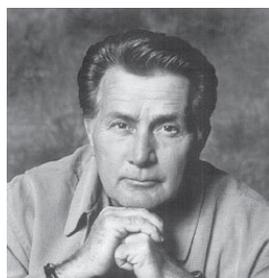
Bray Arts has another great evening of Literature, Art and Music for Feb 5th.

Kate Walsh :- Kate is an artist who left Bray in 1982 to live in Clonmel. There she has been involved in creative projects as well as rearing her family. She managed to make time for art study in Crawford College where she graduated in 2003 with a first class honours degree in Fine Art. Kate has shown her work in group and solo shows. From 16th Mar to 14th April 2007, she and Jennifer Cunningham have a joint show in the Mer-



maid gallery. Kate's work strongly reflects her childhood years in Bray. She considers memory and imagination to be part of the same process. The front cover of this Journal shows one of Kates works called **Faster**.

Yes I know it's **Martin Sheen** and no, he is not coming to Bray Arts but he is coming to Ireland to make a film of the novel **Stella Days** and...and the author of Stella Days is coming to our Arts Evening. His name is **Martin Doorley**. Martin, Martin Doorley that is, has a very wide range of interests and he is going to give us a flavour of those interests in a kind of potpourri of literature, music and painting called **Art of the Decade**. Michael is a banker by day. He hails from Tipperary. can't wait!



And yes we do have music. As we go to print **Serendipity** have confirmed they will entertain us. If you know Serendipity you'll not miss the opportunity to hear them. If you have not had the pleasure of hearing them well now is your chance. We do have another musical treat up our sleeves but we'll keep that as a surprise.

THREE POEMS BY SHIRLEY CASEY

I'm a Real Person

I'm somebody with a disability
But a person first
A person who had a voice
Which nobody understood

The person behind this mask
Found it hard to command
Knowing what I wanted to say
But nobody would listen

Hid behind this disability
Which was only a label?
But I am a real person
Which nobody could see!

Green Fingers!

Green fingers are tomorrow's lawn
From early morning to late at night - they're on the go!

As they are alive with magic!

If they touch a plant - it turns to emerald!
If they look at a lawn - it turns jade!

Every garden becomes magic with colours of the rainbow!

Living With...

Being affected by meningitis
Was told I wouldn't move
Needed care all my life
It was so very frightening

Knowing I was special
A poor commander -
This made me work harder
Now my speech is perfect

Glendalough

(a morning in June)
by Pat Kelleher

As a guilty schoolboy
Clouds of mist shrink from the upper lake
Disturbed, a lonely heron skims the mirrored water,
Then, rising with grace, turns.

A squadron of crows,
Cloned by reflection, rant hysterically.
Too late for lambs with succulent eyes.
And midges breakfast, dispelling magic.

That place where Chaoimhin knelt,
And kings in myth, and stark reality lay.
I trespass, a pilgrim in search of Mecca,
A dreamer in search of dreams.

Sleep

by Maurice Keady

One by one
I put out all light and said:
Let me borrow sleep.
From You laughing in the sky.
For tomorrow I shall give it back
with interest of attrition.

Give me the slumber that tends to madness,
that casts out the crazed ghosts of life
who takes from us our thrones;
that soften the creeping age
of this child that was once so very young;
and now dressed in skin that absorbs all rain;
seeks the comfort of the dark.

Let it come down,
its black curtain of conclusion,
on this act of the pageant of my hours.
To dream of the shrapnel of conversations;
held, conducted, provoked,
with would be lovers, tricksters, fools,
who dance in the enchanted land of sleep,
no booing nor applause.
Just these augmenting days
that have come to
one more night.

UGANDA MAY 2006

By Mairead Hennigan

Nighttime disappears suddenly as dawn arrives. The way it is at the Equator. Instant light and instant dark. People, invisible until then, emerge in numbers out of the walls and sides of roads. Men are visible on trucks, sitting atop bunches of bananas. People walking everywhere or standing as if wondering where to go. The landscape is a red road and houses of corrugated roofs, so close the iron sheets look like a continuous line under a blue sky. Children appear on the roads all carrying large yellow containers, walking long distances to fill them with water. A small child is carrying a smaller child on her back, just one of many.

Kampala

Urban Kampala, where I was born and reared is one of the oldest African settlements. I walk out of my home past the open drains, narrow culverts by the side of our houses, that take excess water off the surface. These drains have helped to prevent mosquitoes breeding in the stagnant pools after heavy rain thereby reducing diseases. The shower unit is busy today where Akello and Ochen, two local boys hand out soap and towels to those who wish to take a shower. I walk past the plastic bags of refuse, abandoned because people refuse to pay for their collection.

This is Kampala, where you buy 'air' for your mobile phone and where they 'plate' your food. We have no buses here, only taxis, in traffic jams so close you can reach out and touch the cars. The pollution is endless, day and night, waves



of red dust floating in the air. I walk a road that goes from the King's Palace which is lined with trees, each one of which is owned by a 'tribe'. I live in a kingdom with many tribes.

Malnutrition is high here. My child is but one of many who are sick. I bring him to the public clinic for a diagnosis but the prescription I get is useless as I cannot afford to go to the private clinic for the required drugs. My own teeth need attention but who would go to the dentist known as Dr. Death.

Today I go to the resource centre to borrow a book. I do my photocopying, buy my stationery here also. Seven boys have pooled their money to play a game on a PC while two women are being taught word processing. A local politician is reading a newspaper. There are too many people, you think, in one tiny space. Just wait till the toilets and showers are opened downstairs. I sleep at night drawing the blue mosquito netting around my bed.

Outside Kampala, the dry brown landscape of November has given way to a lush green forest in May. It is an easy country to travel once you accept that the road disappears from time to time. Potholes and bumps means that the surface dips and ebbs so the only way to travel is in a zig-zag fashion. We pull in



to let a vehicle pass so close to the road that I can see blue butterflies circling above the earthy red clay.

Daily my cousin sells charcoal by the side of the road and does good business due to the cost of electricity in Kampala. Or maybe you see a stall of green beans. Tomatoes are piled high on a plate like a triangle going up to the sky. Pineapples are everywhere, pale when you cut into them with a beautifully sweet taste. Drought-resistant. They make us money.

Mpigi

I am an African mother. I live in Mpigi, half an hour's drive from Kampala. My children's teacher complains that they are not doing well at their studies. How could they? They don't have time to revise. Our government schools may be free but there is still a lot to pay for - uniforms, books, meals, travel.

My children must work in the fields after school. They pick mangoes, sow maize, eggplants and bitter tomato. We live on posho, a maize flour, green cabbage some call bitter tomato, the boiled and mashed banana we call matoke. We grow cassava and sugar cane.

I am a taxi driver. My brother has AIDS. I go to the clinic and get a bottle of Aloe Vera to treat him for HIV. He could have Anti-Retroviral Therapy but his diet is too poor for the drug. He could go to the Referral Centre but as it only opens in the evening, where would he sleep? He is too weak to work so there is no one to support his family. My sister is buried in that graveyard and my two cousins also, all dead from AIDS because they refused to educate themselves to its danger as

I have chosen to do. I want to stay alive for my family. People treat AIDS like any other disease. Fortunately, the young people are more aware. They'd need to be. There are lots of orphans here.

Nakasongola

I am 79 years of age but look 100. I have an elderly brother and a younger sister. That is our pig. He lives in a piggery, four feet by three feet, roofed in at one end, with straw to lie on at the open end. I envy him his light and space where we only have a tiny dark house. The pig is the sole means of keeping us alive.

I am Jessica. I taught locally till I retired from teaching. My visitors ask how many children I have. I have to add, 1,2,3,4 children. It is not in my culture to count. My girls' names are Rachel and Fiona. I first got the pig in January 2006. With the two piglets I was able to purchase those red bricks you see stacked there. Each piglet is worth 10,000 Ugandan shillings.



When the new litter arrives which, with luck, will be as many as 10 piglets, my children and I will build a house. I will use the rest of the money to send my children to boarding school in the city. We live in the middle of nowhere where there is no accommodation for teachers. Teachers will not go to the middle of nowhere. Where is my husband, you ask? My husband is a 'single' man.

I am a tourist. I stay in the Sunrise Guest Wing. I shower for dinner before it is dark as there is no bulb in the shower area. The pace here is slow. At 6 p.m. it's chicken for dinner. At 8 p.m. they say it will be goat if they can't get the chicken. A herd of cows pass by as the ruby sun colours the evening red. At 10.45 at night brown chicken is served that looks like goat. I have long finished my beer.

I am a farmer. I buy my seeds which are expensive. I have been trained to sow seeds but the time-span to do so is short. A tractor would be useful as our animals are very weak. My favourite animals are zebra and bulls but not Longhorns.

I am a maternity nurse in the Kazwama Maternity Unit. 22 children have been born here since December '05. We do ante-natal vaccinations with post-natal follow-up. There are no curtains for privacy, no generator for power so the water

must be boiled. We have 3 staff nurses and 1 incomplete kit. I'm an 'Arsenal' nurse as you can see from my t-shirt. People trust traditional birth attendants more than us. They pay a lot of dollars for a breech birth to be reversed which would reverse itself anyway. Girls cost twenty dollars and boys ten dollars and girls are favoured because they come with a dowry when they marry.

I am a chairwoman of the local centre. I plant maize in April and reap it in July. With one eggplant, I can get anything from 30 to 50 plants. I grow the jack fruit with its sticky white insides. I sow sweet potatoes. I garden my ground nuts to remove the weeds.

So, what is Uganda? It is instant black that becomes instant dawn. It is clusters of blue butterflies that hover above the red earth. It is deep purple bougainvillea. It is black pigs that keep people alive. It is children carrying water in yellow plastic containers. It is the vervet monkeys that eat the crops. It is a mother struggling to keep her children in school. It is the drains that reduce malaria. It is a farmer educating himself about seeds and the tools he needs to work his land. It is weaver birds that sit in mango-laden trees. It is the resourceful chairwoman growing crops on the land. It is a family scrambling to survive AIDS. It is a child with brown-black eyes that puts her hand in yours.

VIDEO VOYEUR

Harold Chassen

Little Miss Sunshine is a feel good film well worth seeing. When Olive wins entry into a child beauty pageant by default,



her dysfunctional family do everything in their power to get her there in their barely working van. Each one of the family has their own problems and foibles. All of the cast puts in a great performance, especially Alan Arkin who is wonderful as a grumpy old man. There is some foreshadowing that I found a bit forced and annoying but that didn't stop from the enjoyment of the film. This is one worth watching over and over.

SIGNAL ARTS

First Hand Emotion

by Katarzyna Gajewska

From Monday 12th February to Sunday 25th February 2007

Katarzyna is living and working in Dublin but was born and educated in Warsaw. She graduated with an M.F.A from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw.

Katarzyna, who only uses her hands to paint, describes her painting process as something between dreams and documentation. Her art is situated in the middle, not realistic and



yet not abstract. Her portraits are like multilayered cocoons, profoundly intimate, sexual or innocent. For Katarzyna no subject is sacred. The role of provocative feelings, persuasion as well as the human impulse to beautify compels her works of art. Katarzyna says that her art is a first hand emotion and so using only her hands to paint allows her to get closer to the work.

“I’m trying to search for inspiration every day: To reach for the deep feelings hidden below the surface of appearances, to pull them out from behind the window pane. It is a permanent record of fleeting sensations. This release from naturalism is a real struggle between the forces of creation and destruction.”

Opening Reception Friday 16th February 7-9PM

An Exhibition of New Work

by Brian Hannigan

From Monday 26th February to Sunday 11th March 2007

Dublin based Brian uses a photographic image as a starting point in the process of making a painting. This image is a means to an end but that end is indeterminate, and is something non-objective. Brian will adhere closely to the visual information within each photographic image whilst allowing for the fluid possibilities of oil paint to be explored.

Brian usually works with images which are sourced on an ad hoc basis from TV, Film, Print Media and as found objects.



The general aesthetic qualities and particular denotative elements are what form the basis for his creative practice.

Opening Reception Thursday 1st March 7PM-9PM

Gallery Opening Hours Tue-Fri 10am-5pm Closed for lunch 1-2pm Sat/Sun 12pm-5pm Closed all day Monday

Artist Louise McSharry sent us this very fine drawing. Louise’s drawing *Desdemona Drowning* featured on our September



2005 cover. Exploring women’s experiences of love was the theme of a collection of drawings she has been working on and this drawing is obviously part of that collection.



Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : bacj@eircom.net

Creative Writing Prose/Fiction Editor : Anne Fitzgerald :
afitzgerald3@ireland.com

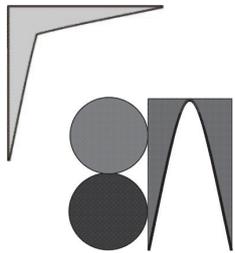
Poetry Editor : Eugene Hearne : poetrybray@yahoo.ie

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 15th of each month.



Bray Arts evening Mon 5th Feb 2007 Heather House Hotel Seafront : Doors open 8:00pm **Everyone welcome Adm : 5 Euro / 4 Euro Concession**

Art, Literature and Music

Kate Walsh - Clonmel based artist will show and talk about her work inspired by her childhood years in Bray.

Michael Doorley - Author of Stella Days will present Art of the Decade including Painting, Music and Literature.

Serendipity - always a real pleasure to hear the harmonious and exciting singing of this womens barbershop choir. **They are rapid!**
(see preview on page 3)

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

If undelivered please return to :
Editor, Bray Arts Journal
'Casino'
Killarney Rd.
Bray
Co. Wicklow