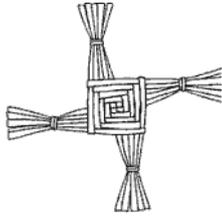

Bray Arts Journal

Issue 6

February 2011

Volume 16





Anois Teacht an Earraig le Antaine Ó Raifteirí 1784-1835

Anois teacht an Earraigh
beidh an lá dúl chun shíneadh,
Is tar eis na féil Bríde
ardóigh mé mo sheol.
Go Coillte Mach rachad
ní stopfaidh me choíche
Go seasfaidh mé síos
i lár Chondae Mhaigh Eo.

Fágaim le huacht é
go n-éiríonn mo chroí-se
Mar a éiríonn an ghaoth
nó mar a scaipeann an ceo
Nuair a smaoiním ar Cheara
nó ar Ghaileang taobh thíos de
Ar Sceathach an Mhíle
nó ar phlánaí Mhaigh Eo.

Translation
by Frank O'Connor 1903 - 1966

Now with the springtime
The days will grow longer
And after St. Bride's day'
My sail I'll let go
I put my mind to it,
And I never will linger
Till I find myself back
In the County Mayo.

I swear
that my heart rises up
as the wind rises up
or as the fog lifts
when I think about Ceara
or about Gaileang on the lower side of it
about Sceathach an Mhíle
or about the plains of Mayo.

Antoine Ó Raifteirí was from Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo. He was blinded by smallpox when a child and lived by playing his fiddle and reciting poetry. His poetry was passed on orally. None of it was written down in his own lifetime.

Anois Teacht an Earraig is a beautiful melodious poem that expresses that feeling of renewal and joy in Spring which is heralded in on Feb 1: Lá le Bríde.



Front Cover :
Oil Painting by Joanna Morrissey
Joanna will be at the Feb Bray Arts Evening
See Page 2 Preview.

Some Bray Arts Activities for 2011

In the spirit of Antaine Ó Raifteirí, Bray Arts is raising its sails and moving along nicely with its usual plans for the highest quality performance evenings. But also *The Sonic Love Project* is in preparation. Just be patient; you'll know when it hits. A float in the St. Patrick's Day parade will be a first for Bray Arts and other activities are in train that will be announced as the year progresses.

Review of Jan Bray Arts Evening

The first performance of 2011 opened in the aftermath of the coldest spell in living memory.

Michael Monaghan and Chelcy McDermott started the evening off with a sparkling array of original music and songs. Michael led off, singing "VHS (Its all OK!)" to his own guitar accompaniment and supported by Chelcy in which their voices blended well. Then Chelcy moved out into her own solo rendition of "All the right words" in which her outstanding singing drew tremendous applause. (X-Factor eat your heart out!) Michael sang "the endless river of pain" a moving piece with good use of the



Michael Monaghan

guitar. Chelcy followed with "be who I wanna be" displaying her effective use of softer tones within her powerful vocal range. As a final encore, both joined together with "Don't Wait For Me" which they sang with attractive harmony and rounded off a bright and cheerful performance to enthusiastic applause.



Chelcy McDermott

Angela Cooke, well-known writer, followed with a series of readings from her latest book "Alien in Japan" delivered in her unique chatty style that pulls the listener into the scene described in the story. There is something "mesmeric" about her writing that drew enthusiastic applause for her story telling. Angela described the complications of different cultural meanings for such a simple act as bringing a gift of flowers to a patient in a Japanese hospital where a plant "rooted in a pot" means that the patient stays where he is and is not likely to leave! On the other hand, an innocent bunch of cut flowers has the complication in Japanese culture that when the flower head drops off this symbolises the imminent death of the poor patient! Angela concluded with the advice to her intrigued listeners that all who would try to partake in another culture would do well to "ask for the symbolic pitfalls of the culture if in doubt!"



Angela Cook

Next up, singer, Painter and sketch artist, Dermot McGowan, declared that he carries a sketch book instead of a video camera asserting that "A pencil sketch will last 130 years whereas a

photograph will fade long before that!" He displayed a wide range of sketches of Bray, Dublin and elsewhere including such themes as: portraits of children, Marley Park, Merrion Square, the huband bridge "beside the Pepper Canister Church", Tailor's Hall near Christchurch cathedral, the Colliemore Harbour in Dunlaoghaire featuring a number of clinker-built boats, Bray Head and the Promenade and reaching outside the county to a bicycle shop in Youghal and interesting features of Bunratty castle.



Dermot likes to sketch on the spot in order to capture the transient quality of the moment that so easily fades from memory. He also likes to share his ideas by teaching adults and children – especially the latter who stimulate him by asking a lot of questions.

Dermot turned from the display of his artwork to reveal his singing talent and invited Padruig MacFarlane-Barrow to join him as



Padruig MacFarlane and Dermot Mc Gowan

accompanist on the accordion and mandolin in a series of Italian light operatic pieces sung in a powerful tenor redolent of the singing of the early drawing rooms of Ireland. He delivered such prizes as: "Torna a Sorrento", "The Road to Ballyshee", "Tiritomba", "Kalinka". His rich singing combined with humorous asides to his accompanist raised much laughter and ensured a tremendous reception for his performance which finished with a powerful rendition of the Percy French song "Bridget Flynn" by way of encore.

After the break, Chaos In Harmony took the stage. This community based chorus of female vocalists, dedicated to promoting the joy of singing, music making and creativity entertained the fascinated audience with an enthusiastic series of



Chaos in Harmony

songs from a wide range of cultures delivered in close harmony. With songs like "Get On And Do It", and "All Will Be Well" their individual voices painted a harmonious wall of sound. Turning to mediaeval sources, the group brought out a piece that is some hundreds of years old from the time of Julian of Norwich that called for a series of drone notes against which the melody rises and falls to intriguing effect. This was followed by the Mauri song "Ahara" with unusual weaving harmonies that contrasted richly with a leading solo voice.

Chaos in harmony is well-known for its treatment of traditional African music where the voice can move freely within a tight rhythmic structure that invites percussive improvisation from its hearers. Nothing daunted, our guests called upon members of the

audience to join in with clapping or percussive sounds of any sort and even to take the brave step of coming up and joining them on stage. It is a measure of their success in winning over the entire audience that many listeners became singers and movers and rose to join the group so that very quickly there were more performers than audience! Thus, an evening that began with a new and vibrant start, closed with an exciting and creative finish.

Cearbhall E. O'Meadhra

Art criticism is Dead?

On 19 December 2010, Cristin Leach, published an article in The Sunday Times (Culture) titled 'Long Live the Critic' in which she argued that art critics should be honest. In it she decried the use of the turgid English so typical of the Art establishment. She drew attention to the magazine CIRCA and just how unreadable it was. Her views have stirred quite a bit of interest in the art establishment. In her blog on the same topic (<http://cristinleach.com/?p=3#comment-692>) she refers to James Elkin, who, in his book *What Happened to Art Criticism?* states that Art Criticism is dead because no one is reading it.

Cristin sets out her views on the essential points of art criticism. They are :

- Critics have to be allowed to be critical
- What they write must be readable
- The critic's prime relationship is with the reader, not the gallery
- The critique is about the critic's response to an artists work without preconceptions
- The critique is about the work presented, not past work or reputation or whether the critic liked or dislike past work.

I am greatly heartened that this type of debate is coming from within the art establishment itself. Hopefully this is the start of an open and honest debate about the role of the art critic and her/his relationship with the public.

In particular I would like to see an end to the excruciating mangling that the English language is subject to by so many visual arts commentators.

For too long the arbiters of the visual arts world have hidden behind the impenetrable jargon in order to obfuscate and browbeat the public into thinking that contemporary art is beyond the comprehension of the ordinary citizen.

C. P. Snow in his *Two Cultures* refers to this type of jargon as "This attempt at excessive unsimplicity ... involves a skill which all conservative functionaries are masters of, as they ingeniously protect the status quo: it is called the technique of the intricate defensive."

Might I suggest that anyone proposing to write anything for public consumption download George Orwell's brilliant essay "Politics and the English Language."

Your opinions on this topic, positive or negative, would be most welcome. See back page for submission details.

D. McCabe

The following poems are from
Rosy Wilson's
Scaling the Heights
Boland Press

A sense of loss

circles this Christmas
like the Christ child's halo
hovering a few inches
overhead.

Does it arise from absences
across the Irish Sea,
the Atlantic Ocean or
a searing lack of loved ones

passed over to the other side
this year, past years, are their
spirits entering into the spirit
of festive cheer or are they

prickly as dark holly leaves
blooded by red berries
tangled in ivy -
no mistletoe.

Sisters both widows
shut indoors by ice on the road
revisit Christmas past, unwrap
presents, fold away paper
for the year to come.

Neighbour's gift

Big John Murphy brings round
new-fished mackerel,
filleted peppered,
fresh-dug earthy potatoes
tells us what the story is.

Double Plot
by Rosy Wilson

He'll be lonely out there on his own
Atlantic storms, slanting arrows of rain
and guillemots' cries blowing over
the perilous cliffs of Moher,

a double will be better, Bridie says,
we agree a price and embrace
though I puzzle the journey we'll make
from east coast to west.

Our son says it's easy, he's been
driving that road again and again,
they'll put my wicker coffin in the van
take the scenic route through Sally Gap

to Killaloe where, since I love picnics,
they'll lift me out, spread a lace-edged
tablecloth on the casket, take guinness,
soda bread, Dubliner cheese

garden apples, avocado pears
out of the basket, tell stories on shores
of Lough Derg before resuming the journey
to bury me in the double bed on Liscannor
Bay.

Serenade

Hear the crested waves heaving
on a rocky shore under bedroom window

in time with our bodies moving

dark duvet rising and falling
to the same music

smells of seaweed in the room

moon governs tides
pulls us together.

After Rumi, Sufi master



An As For the Ferryman

Extract from a work in progress by Stan Regal

Stanus tried to hold his nose as he shovelled the elephant dung into the wicker basket. As an immunes¹ he thought he would be exempt from all hard labour but shovelling dung was not exactly easy or work. He thought whoever had given the Emperor Claudius the idea of taking elephants to Britania needed to be crucified. What were they taking them there for, just to impress the natives, to show the might of the Roman army, or just to prove that it could be done?

Whatever the reason, elephants did not take kindly to sea travel, the constant motion of the transport ship was making their bowls work frequently and what it was producing was extremely foul smelling.

The constant motion wasn't doing his own gut any good either. And if he wasn't shovelling dung, he was leaning over the side heaving up his own dinner.

Growing up in Ostia, Primus didn't seem to be bothered, either by the sea or the motion of the boat. He had been working in ships since he was a child. He glanced over at Stanus and laughed, "Do you know how to tell the difference in low ranker and a Centurion shovelling elephant dung?"

He frowned not thinking the question deserved an answer but Primus continued on with his own opinion. "A Centurion's shovel has a longer handle."



He shook his head, "No Primus, a Centurion wouldn't be doing any of the shovelling. We still would."

He set the blade of the shovel on the deck and rested his foot on it. He reached under his fatigue tunic and felt for his ²bullae. The two ³ases were still safely tucked inside. He was extremely superstitious and he wanted to be sure that he had the fare to pay Charon to ferry him across the Styx in case any kind of disaster happened.

Primus watched him and laughed. "Magnus Victrix Stanus, I keep telling you. Sea travel is extremely safe. We will reach Masillia without any problems."

"I prefer to have terra firma under my feet. I can't swim. I hate the water."

"Don't worry. We will all be on solid ground very soon. We should be in Gaul soon after daylight. Then there will be a nice walk to Portus Itius. There will be plenty of room to let the elephants do what they want, where they want."

He laughed. "And then the legions have miles of dung to walk around, or through."

Primus nodded and laughed, "Or through."

Stanus wrinkled his nose at the smell. "Let's go dump this load."

They threaded the pole through the woven handles of the wicker basket and tried to lift it. They couldn't get it off the deck. The Centurion on duty walked over, tapping his vine stick in the palm of his hand. "Has someone given you two the word to rest for a bit? Are you tired?"

"No sir. We've tried to lift the basket but we couldn't budge it."

"I thought you two had more brains than that stuff you're shovelling." He tapped his palm several more times. "Don't put that much dung in the baskets. Or I'll personally see to it that you have a little bit of extra flavour in your rations."

Primus brought over two empty baskets and they shovelled the dung into smaller loads.

The Centurion nodded. "I think you can carry a basket each. Put your backs into it and be quick about it. I want this veterinarium spotless when I come back to inspect it again."

They both struggled with their baskets to opposite sides of the deck and dumped it over. The Centurion watched them as they continued on with their work. He looked up out at the sea then walked to the side of the ship for a closer look.

"Imagine that. It's floating! I was sure it would sink. The way you two were carrying on about how heavy it was I was sure it was as heavy as iron."

He looked up and saw that the first of the ⁴triremes was extremely close. "By Jupiter they're getting a bit close."

The transport ships had started out at dawn but under sail and it took the legions till noon to load all the men on board the triremes and now they were pressing forward under oars to beat the transport ships to Gaul.

The Centurion watched the dung float towards the trireme. He called his ⁵Optio over. "Tell me Optio, which bit of dung do you think will reach the trireme first, that on the ⁶dexter, or the ⁷sinister side?"

The Optio stared at the floating dung for a few seconds. "The sinister."

"Care to put a wager on it?"

The Optio pulled an as from his pouch. Several other ranking legionaries walked over and watched what was going on. Soon there were wagers going on between all the men all over the transport.

In the first trireme there were shouts from the deck as the dung fouled up their oars. Fists were shaken and threats were shouted.

"If you dirty my ship I'll see to it that you clean it off with your tongues," someone shouted over.

The Centurion slapped Primus on his legs with his vine stick. "Don't just stand there admiring your work. Get back to duties and start hauling the rest of that dung out here."

Stanus nodded and tried to hide his smile, then rushed back to bring



out another basket of elephant dung hoping to join in the excitement of the betting. He wouldn't waste any of his money on betting but he was as just happy to watch and break up the boredom of the day.

The Centurion shook his fist at the following trireme. "That will teach you bastards to try to beat us to Gaul."

Stanus half carried and half dragged the basket to the side.

"Go on lad, over the side with it."

He had a struggle lifting it up.
 The Centurion gave his second in command a shove. "Go on Optio, lend a hand there."
 The Optio stared at his Centurion unsure if he had heard his right.
 "Go on, it's only dung. That's an order."

The Optio helped Stanus tip the dung over the side. It didn't matter which side it floated down. Now the main object was fowl the oars of the following ships with as much dung as possible.

"Oh one other thing Optio. Be sure wash your hands before you eat tonight." He bent over laughing as he made his comment. The following triremes changed course and gave the transports a wide berth as they tried to pass. But they had lost momentum in the course change and couldn't take advantage. They had to struggle to keep up their station but could not pass the transport.

"Land ho," was called from the prow of the ship and the transport was the first to land in Gaul. The Centurions were the first off the ships and made sure the elephants were off loaded and formed up so that the legions had to pass between them and not head into the brothels and wine shops of Masillia.

They started their march. They were not allowed to rest until they were 25 miles north of the town and had their marching camp built. As the sun was setting men were sitting by their campfires. Someone started a song and soon the whole legion was singing.

*Dead Celts roasting on an blazing fire
 War arrows sticking from their guts
 Wartime songs being sung by the flame
 And roasting corpses all painted in shades of wood*

¹ the immunes were legionary soldiers who possessed specialized skills, qualifying them to perform duties atypical of a Roman soldier. ² Amulet worn round the neck ³ Roman coins ⁴ galley ⁵ officer ⁶ right ⁷ left

SIGNAL ARTS EXHIBITIONS

Under the Iron Bridge

Exhibition of Paintings by Tom Fox

From Tuesday 1st February to Sunday 13th February 2011

Signal Arts Centre is pleased to present this series of works by artist Tom Fox.

Regrettably Tom Fox passed away suddenly at the premature age of 44 in the midst of his preparations for this exhibition. We are



fortunate that he left behind many finished pieces which will now form part of this last and posthumous exhibition.

Tom holds a BA Degree in Fine Art Painting from the Limerick School of Art and Design (L.I.T.). Tom's recent exhibitions include solo shows, 'The Hobbyhorse' in the Limerick Printmakers Gallery and 'Ordo' in the Normoyle Frawley Gallery, inclusion in 'Inertia and Beyond' at the Black Mariah Gallery, Cork, 'Inscapes' at the Thinkkcreative gallery, Limerick, 'A Hybrid Account' at the Bank of Ireland Art Centre, Dublin, Iontas Small Works Competition in Sligo and Quadrant at the Belltable Arts Centre, Limerick. He has had paintings exhibited in New York and Hong Kong.

Tom was heavily connected to and influenced by nature and the landscape and these his last paintings were created in his studio which nestles in the heart of the Ballyhoura valley, surrounded by a forest and eco-garden he had planted himself. A child of the eighties his work was heavily influenced by the graffiti/expressionist painters of the New York 80's particularly Jean-Michel Basquiat, also by the Smiths, the Beastie Boys, the Stone Roses, the Punk movement, Charles Bukowski amongst a legion of other influences.

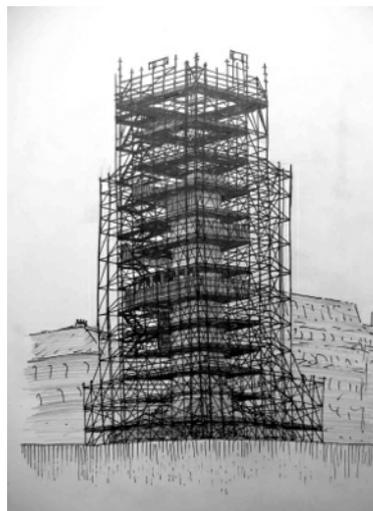
Please do visit us from the 1st February to view what will unfortunately now be the final showing ever of Tom's work.

Opening Reception: Friday 4th February 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Myriad Visions

Exhibition of Drawings and Prints by Invited Artists

From Tuesday 15th February
 to Sunday 27th February
 2011



This exhibition is an open submission of works from Artist's practising both in Ireland and abroad in the disciplines of Drawing and Print and will be held in February at Signal Arts Centre. The drawing and print section includes as well as conventional exploration.

The idea for this exhibition

came about from a need to exhibit drawings and printmaking as a mainstream art form, rather than a peripheral form of visual note taking. There is a richness and depth within the field of drawing which stems from both its universality and its uniqueness. The work chosen will be on show for two weeks and will introduce the vision and obsessiveness of the compulsive draughtsperson.



Opening Reception: Friday 18th October 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Preview of Arts Evening on Mon 7th Feb 2011

Upstairs at The Martello, Seafront, Bray

Doors open 8:00pm Adm. €5 / €4 conc.

Bray Arts has a brilliant, not-to-be-missed, line up for its February Arts Evening.

Poetry

Andrej Kapoor

"Andrej is a poet and spoken word performer originally from Sarajevo. His influences range from classical and neo-classical international poetry, to hip-hop and general slang, elements of both being most evident in his charismatic live shows. He has performed at a wide range of events, including most notably; Electric Picnic (2009 & 2010), Knockanstockan, Festival of the Fires, Dun Laoghaire Culture Festival, Love Poetry Hate Racism, BalconyTV, Red Line. He has also been featured in a number of anthologies and journals of poetry, as well as on a CD release titled 'Naked and Hungry'."



Rosy Wilson



Rosy will read from her latest collection called **Scaling the Heights**. This is an exceptional book of intimate and honest poems. In last months Journal the review of this collection stated "This book is a beautifully sustained evocation of the natural cycle of life, the coming into, the going out of, human frailty, fear, loss, love, the consolation of nature and the life enhancing power of poetry of which

Scaling the Heights is such a powerful example." See page 4 for a sample of Rosy's poetry.

Floral Sculptures by Joanna Morrissey

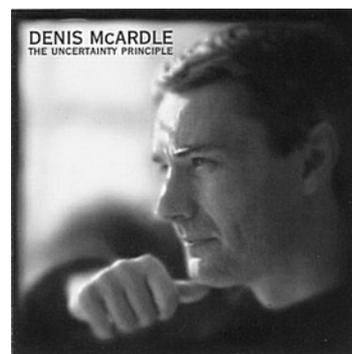
Joanna's beautiful floral designs are on display at her retail outlet, fashion Flowers, on Parnell Road, Bray. She will show and discuss her approach to creating floral sculptures and arrangements. As you can see from the front cover, Joanna, is a very accomplished painter.



Music

Bray Arts is delighted to welcome Denis McArdle back to Bray Arts to perform a recital called 'Let Us Garlands Bring: A Shakespeare song-cycle, composed by the English composers Gerald Finzi and Vaughan-Williams. This cycle is the start of a major theatrical stage work, themed to the words of Shakespeare. Denis will elaborate & explain the song-cycle to the audience. If you want to sample some of Denis's exceptional music and singing go to <http://www.songwayfilms.com>.

Denis was classically trained at the College of Music, Dublin. He



was awarded the Baritone Solo Cup and the John McCormack Cup in the Feis Ceoil. His Recordings include the début folk album 'Untold' and 'Canticle of the Sun for the plainchant choir - Schola Cantorum Dublin'

Joining Denis for the recital is pianist **Jillian Saunders**. Jillian graduated with a BA in music from Trinity College Dublin, then went on to complete a piano performance degree at the DIT College of Music. Jillian has worked as a freelance musician and music teacher. She is accompanist to the Three Tenors in Concert and performs regularly with her string quartet the Avalon String Quartet. She has performed with many artists over the years including Rod Stewart, Brian Kennedy, and Sinéad O'Connor.

Lotfi Zadeh's Law of Incompatibility

"As complexity rises, precise statements lose meaning and meaningful statements lose precision."

Lotfi Zadeh is the father of Fuzzy Logic

Note on Funding

Bray arts appreciates the work of Cllr. Ann Ferris in securing a grant of €500 from Bray Town Council for each of the past two years and her own generous support over the years.

Bray Arts has established the category of "Sponsor" to acknowledge an annual donation of €800.00. In return for this sponsorship Bray Arts is happy to publish the business logo and details of the sponsoring business in the Journal each month.

Bray Arts is particularly grateful to Joseph Coleman for becoming the first Sponsor. Further sponsors are urgently needed and will be announced as they come on board. Bray Arts is pleased to acknowledge the receipt of substantial donations from Hilton Chemists and other businesses.

Funding provides essential support for the ongoing voluntary effort of many individuals that keeps Bray Arts going.

PS

Bray Arts is now on Facebook. And don't forget Bray Arts also has its own Website www.brayarts.net.

We would encourage everyone to input opinions and views to Facebook or send them to The Bray Arts Journal. We are open to receive creative work: Poetry, Prose & Short Stories - see opposite for submission details.

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20 Main Street., Bray, Co. Wicklow
Tel: 2762883/ 086 826 0511



Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : editor@brayarts.net
Creative Writing Editor : Anne Fitzgerald :
annefitz3@gmail.com

Email submissions to the above or post typed submissions to :

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'Casino'
Killarney Rd.
Bray
Co. Wicklow

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Bray Arts Evening Monday 7th Feb 2011

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

Poets : Rosy Wilson and Andrej Kapoor

Art : Joanna Morrissey - Floral Sculpture and Design

Music : 'Let Us Garlandes Bring' - Shakespeare Song Cycle
with Denis McArdle (Singer) and Jillian Saunders
(Pianist).

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