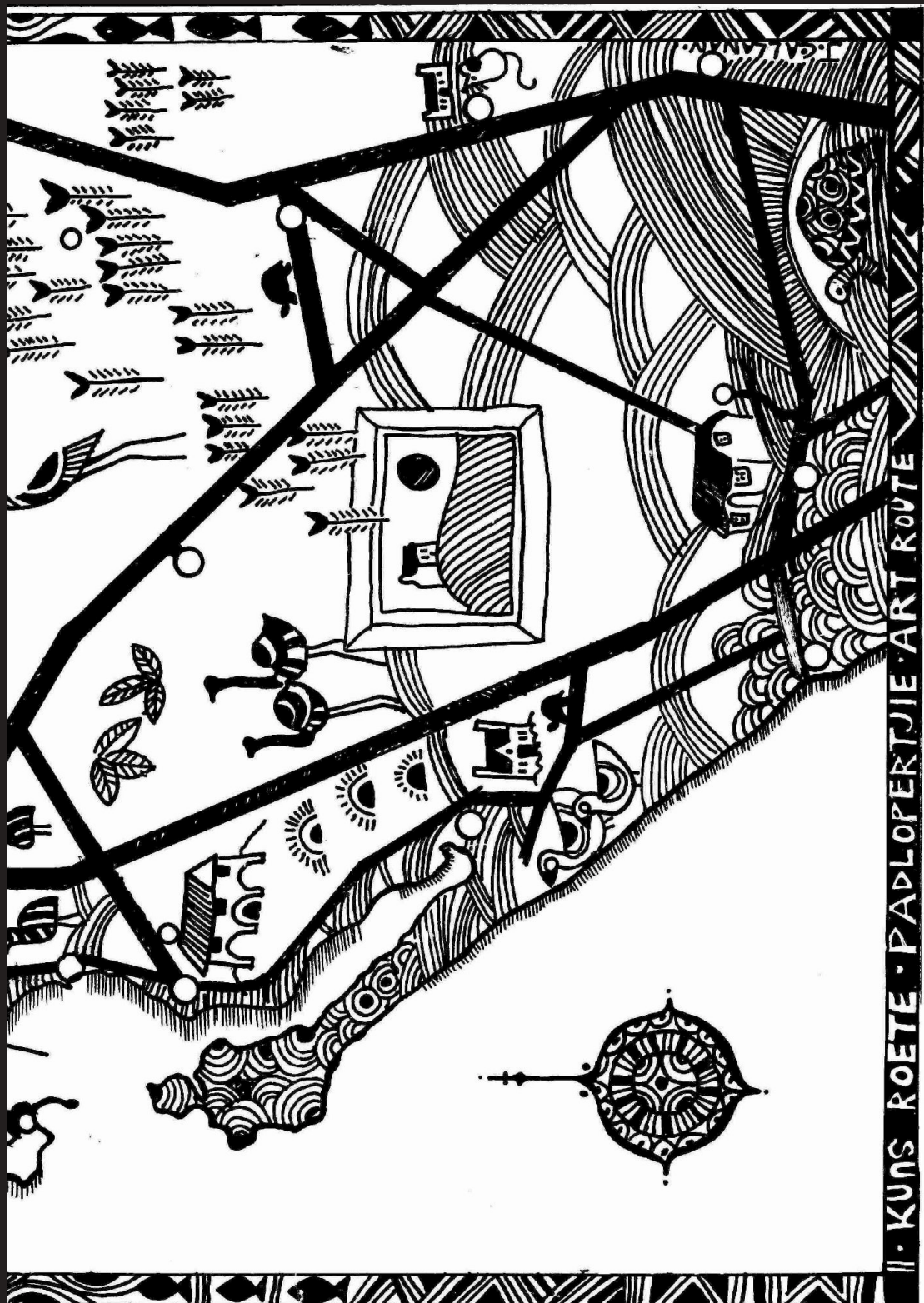


# Bray Arts Journal

Issue 10

June 2006

Volume 11



**EDITORIAL**

Well we have made it. This is the tenth and final issue of the Bray Arts Journal for the 2005/2006 Season. The Bray Arts committee, after the final Arts Evening on 12th June (see preview on opposite page) will take a well deserved break in order to charge up their batteries for the new 2006/2007 season starting next September. So do come along on Mon 12th, we have a great evening of dance, art, poetry etc lined up for your pleasure and let me remind you, dear reader, Bray Arts is open to everyone.

There is no membership fee, rules or conditions associated with Bray Arts. You simply come along to the Heather House Hotel, sit back, relax, have a drink and look and listen to talented artists and performers from Bray and surrounding districts. It is different, stimulating and one heck of a lot better than watching television. It is a place to meet artists and performers and other people who simply enjoy all forms of artistic expression. Friendships and artistic collaboration and connections are made, in the most casual way, at Bray Arts.

During the evening of the 12th we will be having the fastest and quickest agm ever. You probably will not know it has even happened but a new chairperson will be elected to guide us through the new season starting next September.



*This is a picture of a Medieval Islamic poetry reading. Not too unlike a Bray Arts evening without the bar.*

**Front Cover :-** Art Route Map 92 is by Jo Callenan the South African Artist who will give a presentation on 12th June at the Bray Arts Evening. See Opposite Page.

**WEBSITES**

Bray Arts is in the process of setting up its own website. In the meantime if you want to access some back issues of the Bray Arts Journal you will find them on :- [www.turoe.ie](http://www.turoe.ie)

If any individual artist or an arts group, gallery or agent in the Wicklow region has a website, why not let us know. We will publish it in the Journal but we will also pass on the information to WAN (Wicklow Arts Network) who will publish it on their new website links page.

The WAN website is at - [www.wicklow-arts.ie](http://www.wicklow-arts.ie)

**CHILDRENS PROGRAMME**

**FUN WITH  
SOUNDS  
TEXTURES  
TOYS  
MATERIALS &  
MUSIC**

**@ MERMAID ARTS CENTRE**

**WORKSHOPS**

Ballet Ireland  
Pottery Making  
Willow Weaving  
Jewellery Making  
Puppet Making

Mon 3 - Fri 7 July  
Mon 17 - Fri 21 July  
Mon 31 July - Fri 4 Aug  
Mon 14 - Thurs 17 Aug  
Tues 8 - Fri 11 Aug



Limited Availability, early booking advised.

**EXHIBITION**

**Playthings** - A visual art show where children are invited to touch, feel and even play with the exhibits.

19 July - 12 Aug

**THEATRE**

**Watch the Birdy** - A thrilling children's play by Italian theatre company Lyngo. - Tuesday 15 Aug

**The Emperor's New Clothes** - a charming and humorous adaptation told through the use of puppetry, live music and storytelling. - Fri 11 - Sat 12 Aug.

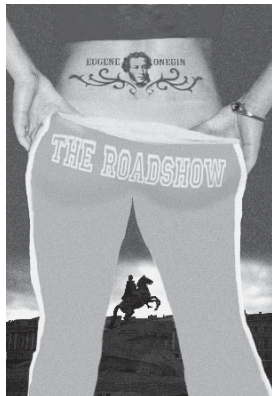


Phone: (01) 272 4030  
[www.mermaidartscentre.ie](http://www.mermaidartscentre.ie)



**THEATRE REVIEW**

**Eugene Onegin: the Roadshow** was a most enjoyable experience. By times it was funny, lofty, tender, romantic and above all it was tremendously engaging. Eugene Onegin written by Pushkin is a novel in verse form. This play is an intricate inter-



weaving of the Onegin story and Puskin's own life presented like a live roadshow or performance to the audience who sit in a circle around the performance space. The play is full of delightful surprises. The set of great circular hoops of copper suspended like the frame of a circus tent over the acting space created a strange sensation as if one was viewing the unfolding events in some kind of time capsule. Every now and then the narrator/ringmaster steps outside the the invisible capsule and addresses the audience directly creating this strange sense of observers whose presence is known by the protagonists in the play. The floor which was festooned with pages from Puskin's work which the performers picked up and read every now and then worked wonderfully well. The caste was excellent. I left the play promising myself that I must find out more a bout Puskin. A memorable experience all round. Hopefully **sOMETHINGdifferent** theatre will put this on again. I would recommend it highly.

It was written and directed by **Martin Murphy** a resident of Bray and Artistic Director of **sOMETHINGdifferent** .

DMC

**Apropos the Avant-garde (extract)**

by Greg Scheckler, artist, art professor at MCLA,

... artists need to teach audiences what's important, what good craft and good skill is, and what it means. Even incredibly good contemporary realist painting won't speak for itself. It's not made relevant because so much 20th century work was bad or so much art philosophy of the past was so idiotic. Realist painting is made relevant because the imagery, symbolism, and process of art-making are meaningful to people – relevant when people can connect with the artwork. If they don't know how to read the imagery, or what goes into the process, etc., then we need to carefully teach and reveal what these things mean.

I've generally found that people find truth and reality to be far more meaningful (and far more threatening) than imagery they can't connect with. When in painting they can quickly recognize what they are looking at, they find an immediate connection that they don't get with highly abstract or non-visual approaches to painting. People like to look at a good representational painting, to be held still for a moment to watch and to discover the illusions, and then to consider the meanings of the art. A great painting really is a big relief and great astonishment for most people – a chance to enjoy stillness and quiet of a painting, a great contrast with the helter-skelter, mercurial pace of the contemporary world.

**PREVIEW OF ARTS EVENING ON MONDAY JUNE 12TH 8:00PM**

This will be the last arts evening until next September. There will be

**Dancing, Art, Poetry.**

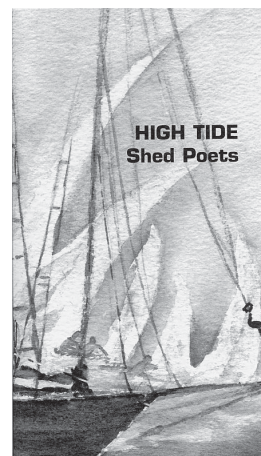
**Dancing:-** Fast, energetic, lively - The Oasis Youth Club (Hip-Hop Dancers) will 'strut their stuff' on the dancefloor.

**Art :-** **Jo Callenan** a South African now lives in Ireland. She is an artist with a keen interest in the heritage and archaeology of her new adopted home. She explores "through her paint-



ings and photography the paradigms of life -past and present". In South Africa she was Chairperson of the West Coast Arts Guild. She taught art to adults and children including individuals with disabilities. She will talk about and show her artwork on Mon 12th. Jo obviously believes in getting involved and expanding her horizons ; she is currently doing a fulltime course in Horticulture in Marlay Park. We welcome Jo to Bray Arts.

**Poetry :-** In our April Journal a small but very impressive book of poetry was reviewed. The book is called **High Tide** and it



is a collection of poems from the **Shed Poets**. What impressed about this collection was the consistent high standard of work, all different, from the contributing poets. On the 12th you will have an opportunity to hear a sample of their work read by the poets themselves and no doubt they will have copies of their book **High Tide** for those who wish to purchase it.

And something **very special**; we will be electing a new chairperson of Bray Arts and wishing him or her all the best for the next season starting in September. Do come along, relax, enjoy and celebrate the end of this seasons Arts Evenings.

**AN EARLY SPRING (EARRACH UR)**

by Brendan O’Brion

There is no winter now.  
by Tardebigge Church brown field  
shoots green of winter wheat  
It is late November.

*An early Spring is a dangerous thing  
Earrach ur, ach fuar go cnamh*

There is no winter now.  
by Cofton Canal fat ewes stand  
full bellied with spring lamb  
It is early December

There is no winter now  
By Hanbury Hall pale celandines  
stretch fingers to watery sun  
It is Christmas Day

By Shropshire grave young girl is found  
six months with child,  
naked on cold dead ground.  
It is Saint Stephen’s Day

There is winter now  
deep winter of the soul

*An early Spring is a dangerous thing  
Earrach ur, ach fuar go cnamh\**

\* Translation from Irish:  
Fresh Spring, but cold to the bone.

**ALCHEMY**

By Rory Byrne

I recall the afternoon you healed me  
You laid your carpenter’s hands  
On my splintered heart  
As you chanted incantations  
The smouldering innocence  
You liked to burn  
Left trails of the ghosts  
You have now become  
Love was our abomination  
Sacrifice passed your tainted mouth

But if love is to end always in redemption  
I would forever, rather, have none  
To die unmarked, gravely shameless  
Evermore nameless on barren pages

As sudden as we morphed  
Everything vanished  
From the side of my hung eye  
I can still imagine  
You said to me once  
That you were living your last life  
Sojourning mortality, like a tourist  
How naive was I, skating to your scent  
As the pale frost evaporated  
You flew to higher realms  
I slid to sickening rejection  
Slain and fitfully sliding  
To token imperfections

I did betray you  
But never was I deceiving  
Every damn line I tight roped  
With every angle you made me pose  
If you said squared was round  
I believed  
Like a ringmaster  
Skilfully you coaxed  
The clowns were the first to run  
Performing monkeys last  
As our naked circus blew violently down  
I beheld  
Your illustrious craft.

**UNDERCOAT**

by Lorcan Byrne

Flakes of white gloss spiral to the grass  
as I scrape down the undercoat,  
cut a scar in the concrete sill

and for no reason the moment empties.  
Perhaps it’s this Summer snow  
or my ladder-top perspective

on a ribbon of blue pinned down  
by trees and a slender steeple  
but here and now frames of grainy re-run

and there comes a scent of sandalwood,  
taste of first kiss and sea-salt skin,  
the iron smell of her hair after rain.

Daylight seeps down, I replace the lid  
seal everything in, let the membrane  
cure slowly in the darkness of the tin

*Extract from novel in progress, Heavens Above! The scene is a dilapidated lived in castle called Glenulty in southern Ireland. Phil Farrelly is an ineffectual widower. Members of the household include his small son Jack, his put upon housekeeper Angela and Fidelama the ghost of his dead wife.*

### The Begrudgers.

Phil Farrelly vaguely knew there were people in the locality who resented the fact that he'd come into a farm so easily when Fidelma died, but Angela was sure of it. She called them the begrudgers and she never wasted the opportunity to point them out. "We're having visitors later", Phil told her one Sunday afternoon coming into the kitchen and turning on the opening commentary of a hurling match on the radio, ready to sit down and listen. It was one of those sun bewitched days in summer when time stood still and a dead heat muted the tick-tock of the grandfather clock in the castle hall. "Family Eviction case for the High Court" proclaimed a headline on the Sunday newspaper as Angela folded it up .

"Well, they'd better not come when we're eating", she drew herself up, promptly going over to lower the radio volume down; "because that would be just like them. Your friends and relations only turn up here when there's a bit of grub on the table. "Do they never cook at home?" She stamped her foot impatiently and a dog in the kitchen slinked out. Or maybe they have such hungry guts they can't fill up. They're like mangy dogs you can't satisfy" She laid the table with such gusto, the plates made a terrible noise and waved a dishcloth in his face she had used to wipe off a spill on the cooker. "I wouldn't mind but they're all fat heaps, whatever you fed them they wouldn't have enough. "Except for the other scrawny fecker".

"Bartyarse. The man you don't like", Jack called out running in just then and they both laughed. "Bart McCarthy, the very man", Angela nodded but as soon as she mentioned the name Phil saw her face pale. "The skinny malincks is a bag of worms. Anything he eats just goes in one end and comes out the other" She pumped the cloth up and down in some soapy water as if she wished Bart was the offending item. A tick had developed under her right eye and her cheek jumped.

"You look as if you've eaten something bad Angela" Jack piped up and pulled at her skirt to try and get her to look down.

"Bart McCarthy has his good points," Phil said mildly.

"Don't be bothering yourself with our *rameish* she said glancing down at Jack's rounded serious face "you'll have enough of that carry-on you're grown-up. Bart the Fart" Angela exploded next and her face turned a redder hue; "the biggest begrudger in the county".

"You're a tonic do you know that Angela?" Phil couldn't help smiling. Fidelma would be tickled pink if she was alive to hear her. In tune with his merriment the kitchen curtains swung out mysteriously as if they were lifted by a ghost.

"They're begrudgers like I always say" Angela went back to the cooker to check that everything was ready. A mouth-watering aroma of roast beef filled the kitchen. "They begrudge you having this big place to yourself". She took a large carving knife from a drawer in readiness for the roast "As

soon as your down, mark my words, they'll be ready to pounce".

"You mean these people want my farm?" laughed Phil. His words hung in the air awkwardly

"God you're a right gombeen", said Angela. "Of course they want it. Isn't it the best land in the country? But hold on to it. It's yours and they haven't a right to an inch of it".

"I'm not that stupid that I'd give away a farm for little or nothing You and the children will be here for a while yet" he couldn't catch the angry woman's gaze to reassure her because she had turned away to throw a few scraps of fat outside to the hens pecking busily around a water barrell. "Make way for the train", Jack called running round between their feet like a railway engine.

"You're a mystery to me Angela" Phil murmured. He shook his head and smiled. Like all women. Fidelma had often been impossible to fathom too The sight of some milk beginning to boil over on the cooker distracted him and he rushed to take it off. . At least Angela can have no fear I'll be replacing her with another, he reminded himself, nobody could ever match up to the one he'd lost. The smell of the milk had caused him to think of the egg-nogs he used to make for Fidelama when she was too weak to eat and he put the pot down quickly.

"Aunt Clara is coming", Jack had ended his journey at the back door and was peering out. The sound of a car travelling noisily up the back lane arrived in the kitchen. "So that's the visitor" A wooden spoon in Angela's hand seemed to swipe the air of its own accord and her blue eyes flashed. "We all know it's not food that wan's after" Moving away from Phil she continued to mutter, turning the roast potatoes in the pan to give them a final browning.

Clara was a character indeed. Phil rocked on his heels. He wasn't really offended by the sting in Angela's voice because a smell was wafting around him, It was like roses with a hint of blackberries, the same as Fidelma's favourite perfume. Fidelma was never jealous, the stray thought suggested itself.

"One sister as a wife is enough for any man in a lifetime" he said gently and saw the expression on the cross woman's face ease. Though she was right in a way he thought turning up the radio volume again. He settled into a comfortable arm-chair. Clara was prettier than any of Fidelma's sisters and he knew she had a soft spot for him. A bit of female company can be quite nice at times too, he thought, as the breezy woman's sing-song tones rang out in the yard

by Carmen Cullen



4 Auburn Villas, Lr Dargle Rd.,  
Bray, Co. Wicklow. Tel 2864943 or  
0868882014

e m a i l  
carmencullen@hotmail.com

Carmen is the author of *Class Acts*,  
Folen's Educational. *Sky of Kites*  
Kestrel Books

*Under the Eye of the Moon*  
Mercier Press. This is her first  
novel.



## WHAT GOD HAD IN HIS POCKET

By Vanessa Gebbie

It was late September. Margaret sat at a lunch table for one in the farthest corner of the hotel dining room, facing the window and the mountain. She did not want to be noticed necessarily, or at least, she did not want to have to acknowledge that she had been. There was snow on the peaks, but not yet in the village.

This was the third year she had returned to this hotel since she buried Charles. This was their table, and although something told her she would be happier elsewhere, or at the very least at a different table if she must come to the same hotel, it seemed that she would be betraying something if she concurred with these sporadic thoughts. The staff had changed in the interim. Most of the old hands had left, leaving a few who remembered them both, but not many. If old Sergio was on duty, he never failed to touch Margaret's elbow or her shoulder with his arthritic fingers, and murmur something benign and mellifluous about the *Signore*. Maybe he would not ask, but would bring her a glass of *Prosecco*, just as though Charles had ordered it. This afternoon, her last this year, she would take the rack and pinion up the mountain, and walk a little. She would reacquaint herself with the crispness of the high air, the slight breathlessness that came on exertion, the clarity of the far views. Then it would be dinner here, and packing ready for the train home.

Every year Charles had sat here waiting for the first snow to fall on the village. 'It is special' he said. 'Like God has let fall something from his pocket.'

He had seen the first snows in September, once, here, the year his father died, years before he and Margaret met, late, childless. He had photographs. The square decorated with streamers blowing in the breeze, encouraging the snows to fall, so the villagers said, but you could only put out the streamers when the first powdering iced the church roof. Otherwise it was unlucky.

The little train ratcheted up the slope, jerking and wheezing. Margaret was one of only a few passengers this afternoon. The village was closing down, ready for the hiatus between walking holidays and skiing. Ready for the cleaning and refurbishment that busied the people every year at this time. The sky was a clear blue. Only the slightest of wisps blew from the mountains, breathing their snow into the air, as Charles had said, reminding the sky to do its stuff.

At the top, at the little one shack station, the train stopped for half an hour. That would be enough. Margaret stepped from the high carriage onto the platform and pulled her scarf tighter round her face. Maybe it would snow today? There was a chill, a high wind at last. The walk made her breathless. More so than last year and the year before. Her legs felt like lead had encased them ankle to calf, and they were unbearably heavy. She had Charles's stick with her, and thought of his hand bending over her own, leaning on it together. Sergio was not on duty that evening. A new young woman brought Margaret the wrong starter, and Margaret smiled, and accepted it anyway. What was the point? She watched the last of the sun pinking the mountaintop, and asked the waitress not to pull the drapery, as it was far too beautiful. The thought of going home was not comfortable. Not on her own. Again, she wondered what the point was.

Later, packed, she collected her account, and settled it. It would be an early start tomorrow, and it would be one thing less to do. "Would Signora like to make a reservation for next September?" Margaret thought not. Not yet, thank you. Maybe...

She could not sleep. The room felt stuffy, and she could not breathe. She wanted to take in the crispness of the air as it had been at the top, on the little station, with the views spread right round her like a map. She got up, and pulled on her housecoat. The balcony was icy. And yet...she breathed deeply. She rested her hands on the rail and shut her eyes, listening to the laughter from a late couple arm in arm in the street below. She went back in the room. It was hot. Maybe just a few more minutes? Taking a blanket off the bed Margaret returned to the balcony and sat on the white ironwork chair.

It started to snow, later on. First, little flecks that dusted the dark blanket. Then larger flakes, falling silently, not melting. Margaret pulled the blanket round her and tried to see this for Charles, tried to take in what he must have felt years back.

It was some time later when she half-woke, to the sound of the villagers tying streamers to every available place. Balcony rails, window latches, doors, On the chairs in the square and the tables, which would be put away now for the season. The wind began to blow, and it was not yet six o'clock. And until eleven, when the man came to fetch her bags, the snow heaped itself round Margaret, gentle as a soft hand.

*Vanessa Gebbie is a journalist living in Sussex. Her short fiction has been published widely on the net and in print. In 2005 she won Cotswold Writers, Jaqui Bennett Writers Bureau and Cadenza Magazine short story competitions. In January 2006 she won Willesden Writers Prize, judged by Zadie Smith.*

*She teaches Creative Writing as part of the treatment programme at a drugs rehab in Brighton, and is founder and editor of Tom's Voice Magazine.*

## VIDEO VOYEUR

Harold Chassen



**Match Point** is the most un-Woody Allen, Woody Allen film that I have seen. Most of his recent films either have him in them or have some Woody Allen clone. It is not a comedy either. A tennis pro Chris Wilton, played by Dublin born Jonathan Rhys Meyers, is brought home by friend Tom Hewitt. His sister immediately falls for and marries him but he has designs on Tom's fiancée Nola. The relationship with Nola threatens his cosy existence and he has to decide between the two women, a decision which surprised me. A most unusual Woody Allen film.

## SIGNAL ARTS EXHIBITIONS

### Bray Camera Club:

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June to Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June

This year's exhibition is on the theme of "Wicklow, it's people and it's places", to coincide with the Wicklow 400 celebra-



tions. The exhibition will comprise a range of Black & White and Colour images.

Opening Reception: Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June (7pm - 9pm)

### "Collared Love"

(An Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings)  
by Ilona Madden



From 20<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2006.

This is Ilona's first solo show and will be opened by artist Cora Cummins. Ilona started using her dogs as models for drawings about a year and a half ago. She found them ideal and since then has been experimenting not just with hundreds of different drawings, but also video and photographs.

Opening Reception Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July (7pm - 9pm)

### 'The Nature of the Wicklow Mountains'

(An exhibition of aerial photography by Feargus Cooney)  
From Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2006.

This collection of images is intended to give the viewer a



perspective on the Wicklow Mountains that they would rarely have the opportunity to see.

Feargus describes himself as a 'travel/adventure photographer and filmmaker. His passion lies in the exploration of different parts of the world, the places, the people. To date he has travelled to all the continents except Antarctica, having a particular focus on Africa and Australia.

Opening Reception: Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2006 7pm -9pm

Gallery Opening Hours: 10pm to 5pm Monday to Saturday  
(Closed for lunch 1pm to 2pm)

### THE COURTHOUSE ARTS CENTRE -TINAHELY

The Courthouse welcomes back Martina Galvin to Tinahely, where she once lived and worked in a local studio. Since then, Galvin has exhibited worldwide, in Australia, Israel, Poland, Finland and Germany, but this is the first time she will exhibit at the Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely. The



exhibition will feature a collection of photographs exploring light as their subject. Galvin's work has been described as "light of touch and beautiful...yet it can contain great depth and meaning...(and) demonstrates an attitude which is exciting and self-challenging...she will continue to surprise us with the strength and subtlety of her art"

## **EVERYMAN**

A novel by Philip Roth

This is a depressing novel and given its theme perhaps it could not be anything other than depressing. Simply put it is about growing old, physical decay and death. Roth's everyman is full of fear, regret and even hatred for a brother who has not suffered the same bodily deterioration as himself. This short novel gets to the heart of everyman and reveals the essential fear that lies at the core of life; and that is the slow inevitable march to extinction. George Steiner in his book **Grammars of Creation** says "*there is in the most affirmative work of art a memento mori, a labour, implicit or explicit, to hold at bay the seepage of fatal time*". This book is most certainly not that work of art. If Everyman was not written by Philip Roth one might wonder how it got published. This is a very ordinary and depressing read. **Tom Conroy**

## **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 12th of each month.



**BRAY ARTS EVENING MONDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2006 8:00PM**  
**HEATHER HOUSE HOTEL, STRAND RD. SEAFRONT, BRAY**  
**RELAX AND ENJOY A FANTASTIC EVENING - EVERYONE IS WELCOME**  
**ADMISSION 5 EURO AND 4 EURO CONCESSION**

**AMONGST THE ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS ARE :-**

**Jo Callenan** - Artist from South Africa talking about and showing her artwork.

**The Oasis Youth Club** - Fast - High Energy - Hip Hop Dancers.

**Shed Poets** - This small coterie of accomplished female poets weave their magic in a 'shed' overlooking Killiney Bay and are descending on Bray Arts to cast a spell on us.

**Bray Arts will also elect a new chairperson for the 2006/2007 season**



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